

Iran puts forward 'evidence' that nuclear scientist was abducted by CIA

Iran lodged a written complaint alleging that the CIA had abducted one of its nuclear scientists amidst an international mystery over the fate of the man.

By Richard Spencer in Dubai

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Shahram Amiri disappeared in [Saudi Arabia](#) while on pilgrimage to the Muslim holy city of Medina.

Since then a [series of videos](#) have apparently shown Amiri make and retract claims he was drugged and flown to America against his will.



Iranian scientist Shahram Amiri disappeared after arriving in Saudi Arabia for a pilgrimage in late May. Photo: IRANIAN TV

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Tehran said it has evidence that he is being held against his will in the United States.

The country's foreign ministry yesterday said it had submitted its evidence to the Swiss embassy, which looks after American interests in the absence of diplomatic relations.

Neither Switzerland nor the United States has made any comment on the case.

Mr Amiri was a nuclear researcher at Tehran's Malek Ashtar University and also worked for the [Iranian Atomic Energy Organisation](#).

The Iranian government declared he had been kidnapped by the CIA with Saudi connivance.

There was speculation in the West that his disappearance was linked to the American discovery, made public in September, of a second secret Iranian uranium enrichment plant near the holy city of Qom.

ABC, the American television channel, claimed in March it had confirmation he had defected and was helping US officials.

But this revelation has since been followed by the appearance of three conflicting videotapes, each featuring a man resembling Mr Amiri.

In the first, played on Iranian television, he claims he was kidnapped, but briefly escaped. He says he was drugged while in Medina in Saudi Arabia.

"When I became conscious, I found myself in a plane on the way to the US," he said. "Since I was abducted and brought to the US I was heavily tortured and pressured by US intelligence."

The picture is hazy and he is wearing headphones, as if talking surreptitiously into a computer.

In the second, posted on Youtube, the same man is seen in a much more formal setting, wearing a jacket and addressing the camera directly. He says he is safe, and is pursuing higher education in America.

In a third video made public in Iran last week, the first claims are repeated. The man claims he managed to escape from US intelligence agents in Virginia.

"I could be re-arrested at any time by US agents," he says. "I am not free and I'm not allowed to contact my family. If something happens and I do not return home alive, the US government will be responsible.

"I ask Iranian officials and organisations that defend human rights to raise pressure on the US government for my release and return to my country."

American officials have dismissed claims that Mr Amiri was kidnapped and tortured, but not explained what they think has happened to him.

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