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LEADER OF WORLD MUSLIM ORGANIZATION, PRESIDENT WADE OF SENEGAL, WORKS FOR RELEASE OF AMERICAN HIKERS DETAINED IN IRAN

The Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, is working with the Iranian authorities at the highest level to try to secure the release of three American citizens detained in Iran, their families said today. President Wade agreed to intervene in the case of Shane Bauer, Sarah Shourd and Josh Fattal following a personal appeal from their mothers via Senegal's Ambassador to the United States, Fatou Danielle Diagne.

"We are extremely grateful to President Wade for agreeing to take up our children's case as an urgent humanitarian matter in his capacity as Chairman of the OIC. We believe that President Wade's involvement is helping to move the case in a positive direction that could lead to our children's release and we pray for the success of his efforts," Cindy Hickey, Nora Shourd and Laura Fattal, the mothers of the three Americans, said. "We also wish to thank Ambassador Diagne and the many other persons of goodwill who are working selflessly to try to bring Shane, Sarah and Josh home to us. All of them have our unqualified gratitude for their work."

Bauer, 28, Shourd, 32, and Fattal, 28, have been detained in Iran since July 31, 2009. They were on a brief hiking vacation in the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan when they were arrested on the border with Iran. The OIC, which groups 57 member states, works to safeguard the interests of the Muslim world and to promote international peace and understanding.