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IRAN

26 PEOPLE RISK EXECUTION IN RELATION TO PROTESTS

At least 26 people are at great risk of execution in connection with nationwide protests after Iranian authorities arbitrarily executed two individuals following grossly unfair sham trials in a bid to instill fear among the public and end protests. Of the 26, at least 11 are sentenced to death and 15 are charged with capital offences and awaiting or undergoing trials.

The 11 people facing death sentence include Sahand Nourmohammad-Zadeh, Mahan Sadrat (Sedarat) Madani, and Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, who were tried separately before Revolutionary Courts in Tehran; as well as Mohammad Boroughani, Mohammad Ghobadlou and Kurdish rapper Saman Seydi (Yasin), who were tried in a group trial by a Tehran Revolutionary Court. Authorities have also sentenced to death Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou, Mohammad Mehdi Karami, Seyed Mohammad Hosseini, Hossein Mohammadi and an unnamed individual in a group trial of sixteen people for “corruption on earth” before a Revolutionary Court in Karaj, Alborz province.

At least 15 others are also at risk of execution. They include Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou, Mohsen Rezazadeh Gharagholou, and Saeed Shirazi who have been tried on capital offences but there is no publicly available information on the outcome and status of their cases. The remainder are awaiting or undergoing trials for offences that carry the death penalty, namely Akbar Ghafari and Toomaj Salehi in Tehran; Amir Nasr Azadani, Saleh Mirhashemi and Saeed Yaghoubi in Esfahan province; Ebrahim Rigi (Riki), a from Iran’s Baluchi minority; and brothers Farzad (Farzin) Tahazadeh and Farhad Tahazadeh, Karwan Shahiparvaneh, Reza Eslamdoost, Hajar Hamidi and Shahram Marouf-Mola, from Iran’s Kurdish minority in West Azerbaijan province.

The 26 individuals have all been denied fair trials, including the rights to adequate defence and access to lawyers of their choosing; to be presumed innocent; to remain silent; and to receive a fair, public hearing. According to information available to Amnesty International, at least 10 of them, including Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou, Toomaj Salehi and Mohammad Ghobadlou were tortured and authorities used their torture-tainted “confessions” or those of others as evidence. State media also broadcast forced “confessions” of several defendants prior to their trials.

Write to the Head of Judiciary urging him to:

- revoke all convictions and death sentences with immediate effect
- refrain from seeking further death sentences
- ensure that anyone charged with a recognizable criminal offence receives fair trial without recourse to the death penalty
- release all those detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly

Write to:

Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei

c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union

Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium

Email: secretariat@iranembassy.be

Salutation: Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

Additional information

Thousands have been arrested and indicted in the context of nationwide protests, raising fears that many more people could face the death penalty in connection to protests. Consistent with a long-standing policy of concealing human rights violations and seeking to dehumanize victims, Iranian authorities have not disclosed the identifies of those sentenced to death. In the course of its ongoing investigations, Amnesty International obtained information confirming the names of 10 individuals sentenced to death. The identity of the 11th person, sentenced to death in a group trial of 16 individuals before a Revolutionary Court in Alborz province, remains unknown. Based on publicly available information clarifying the sentences against a number of defendants in the case, he could be one of the following people: Reza Arya, Mehdi Mohammadi, Shayan Charani, Mohammad Amin Akhlaghi, Reza Shaker Zavardahi, Javad Zargaran or Behrad Ali Kenari.

On 8 December, the authorities [executed](#) protester, Mohsen Shekari, after convicting him in a grossly unfair trial of “enmity against God” less than three months after his arrest. On 12 December, authorities publicly [executed](#) another young man, Majidreza Rahanvard, in Mashahd, Khorasan-e Razavi province, after convicting him of “enmity against God” in a grossly unfair trial. He was executed less than two weeks after one court session on 29 November 2022.

The trials against individuals sentenced to death in connection with the nationwide protests have borne no resemblance to meaningful judicial proceedings. Authorities have fast-tracked the cases with some convicted only days after their trials started. Iranian authorities have also sentenced at least four individuals to death for offences such as vandalism, assault, and arson, in a further serious violation of international law, under which capital crimes must be limited to “the most serious crimes” involving intentional killing.

Amnesty International has also documented serious allegations of torture and other ill-treatment against at least 10 individuals at risk of the death penalty. For instance, the authorities subjected Saman Seydi (Yasin) to severe beatings and forced exposure to extreme cold to extract forced “confessions” according to information gathered by Amnesty International. In the case of medical doctor Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou, who was sentenced to death for “corruption on earth” on 5 December less than a week after undergoing an unfair trial; informed sources told Amnesty international that the authorities repeatedly tortured him to extract his forced “confessions”, leading to his hospitalization with broken ribs, difficulties breathing, and internal bleeding in his lung for which he required three surgeries. During trial, Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou showed the judge his injuries from torture, but no investigation into his allegations has been carried out.

Judicial and prosecutorial authorities have relied on torture-tainted “confessions” and other evidence obtained in violation of international law and standards to issue indictments and verdicts. For instance, in the case of Akbar Ghafari, arrested after sheltering protesters at his sister’s home in Tehran, according to a prisoner detained alongside him, authorities tortured him to sign a forced statement, which he was unable to read and later discovered falsely incriminated him in a killing. Authorities also coerced Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou’s wife to make incriminating statements against him which were used in court to convict him. She retracted her “confessions” in court.

Authorities have denied the right of individuals they have prosecuted for capital offences to access lawyers of their choosing during the investigation phase and at trial, and have barred independently appointed lawyers from representing clients in court and accessing casefiles and verdicts. The rights to presumption of innocence has also been repeatedly violated by the authorities with state media airing forced “confessions” of several individuals at risk of execution prior to trial. In the case of Amir Nasr Azadani, a footballer charged with the capital offence of “armed rebellion against the state”, on 11 December 2022 in an interview with state media, the justice department head of Esfahan pronounced him guilty prior to trial by saying “the accused has unequivocally confessed to his criminal actions” and “there exists sufficient evidence establishing his participation in the armed group” while his trial was ongoing.

***** PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 9 February 2022**