



Urgent Action Office 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 urgentaction@amnesty.ca
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IRAN

GRAVE RISK OF EXECUTIONS IN RELATION TO PROTESTS

At least seven individuals in Iran are under sentence of death in connection with nationwide protests. Dozens of others are at risk of being sentenced to death. The authorities have violated their fair trial rights and subjected many to torture and other ill-treatment, including floggings, electric shocks, death threats and sexual violence.

Amid a spike in executions since late April, on May 19, authorities arbitrarily executed tortured protesters Majid Kazemi, Saeed Yaghoubi and Saleh Mirhashemi in Esfahan, who were unjustly convicted and sentenced to death.

Write to the Head of judiciary urging him to:

- Immediately quash all convictions and death sentences stemming from the protests, refrain from seeking further death sentences, and ensure that anyone charged with a recognizable criminal offence is tried in proceedings meeting international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty.
- Release all those who have been detained for peacefully exercising their human rights.
- Provide those detained access to their families and lawyers of their own choosing, protect them from torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials.
- Grant independent observers access to capital trials and those on death row connected to protests and, more broadly, immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view of abolishing the death penalty.

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

***You can also target Iran's Supreme Leader (@khamenei_ir) on Twitter. Please include a link to the UA when you do so.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The trials of individuals for capital offences in connection with the nationwide protests have borne no resemblance to meaningful judicial proceedings. The authorities have relied on torture-tainted "confessions" and other evidence obtained in violation of international law and standards to indict and convict people. Individuals have been barred from accessing any lawyers during the investigation phase. Authorities also barred independently appointed lawyers from attending trial hearings and accessing their clients' casefiles. The right to the presumption of innocence has also been repeatedly violated with state media airing defendants' forced "confessions" prior to their trials.

The authorities have fast-tracked capital cases, with some individuals convicted days after their trials began. These trials took place across the country including Alborz province for Mohammad Boroughani and Mahand Sadrat (Sedarat) Madani; Esfahan province for Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi and Saeed Yaghoubi; Khuzestan province for Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkour; Sistan and Baluchistan province for Ebrahim Narouie, Mansour Dahmardeh, Kambiz Kharout, Shoeib Mir Baluchzehi Rigi, Mansour Hout and Nezamoldin Hout; and Tehran province for Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Saeed Shirazi, Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou and Mohsen Rezazadeh Gharegholou.

Of the eight individuals under sentence of death, at least four were sentenced to death for offences such as vandalism, assault and arson in violation of international law which prohibits the death penalty for offences that do not involve intentional killing.

Amnesty International has documented the torture and other ill-treatment of six individuals under sentence of death to extract forced “confessions”, namely Ebrahim Narouie, Kambiz Kharout, Mansour Dahmardeh, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkour and Shoeib Mir Baluchzehi Rigi. According to informed sources, interrogators subjected Ebrahim Narouie, who was convicted of “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel arz) in late 2022, to torture and other ill-treatment, including through sticking needles into his genitals, to compel him to make forced “confessions” in writing and in front of a video camera. An informed source also told Amnesty International that the authorities repeatedly beat Mohammad Ghobadlou, whose conviction for “corruption on earth” and death sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court in December 2022, and withheld his bipolar medication. A forensic report confirms that while in custody, he sustained bruising and injuries.

To date, the authorities have arbitrarily executed seven people in connection with the protests after grossly unfair trials marred by torture allegations. On May 19, 2023, Iranian authorities executed Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi and Saeed Yaghoubi, who were put on trial in December 2022 and January 2023 and sentenced to death on the vaguely worded and overly broad charge of “enmity against God” (moharebeh). The authorities imposed the charge based on unfounded allegations stemming from torture-tainted “confessions” that the men used firearms in an incident during protests during which three members of the security forces died. However, they did not charge them or convict them of murder for these deaths.

On May 10, the authorities announced that their convictions and sentences had been upheld by the Supreme Court despite due process violations, significant procedural flaws, lack of evidence, and torture allegations that were never investigated. Amnesty International obtained information that the three were subjected to torture while forcibly disappeared and forced to make incriminating statements. Interrogators suspended Majid Kazemi upside down and showed him a video of them torturing his brother and repeatedly subjected him to mock executions.

Since the beginning of the popular uprising in September 2022, the authorities have arrested and indicted thousands of people, raising concerns about the imposition of the death penalty on more individuals. In addition to the aforementioned individuals, Amnesty International has confirmed the names of at least 16 others – Toomaj Salehi, Farzad (Farzin) Tahazadeh, Farhad Tahazadeh, Karwan Shahparvaneh, Reza Eslamdoost, Shahram Marouf-Moula, Pouria Javaheri, Heshmatollah Tabarzad, Bahman Bahmani, Mohsen Ahmadpour, Behrouz Salahshour, Rasul Badaghi, Vahid Abbasi, Reza

Arabpour, Sadegh Ghasemi and Ismail Mousavi Nazari – who are in detention and are accused of, charged with or indicted on capital offences.

Since late April 2023, the Iranian authorities have embarked on an alarming execution spree of scores of people, intensifying their use the death penalty as a tool of repression in an attempt to instil fear into the population and crush ongoing acts of resistance against the authorities and establishment.