

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/091/2007

19 July 2007

Further information on UA 171/07 (MDE 13/081/2007, 4 July 2007) Fear of torture/Possible prisoner of conscience

IRAN **Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand (m), human rights defender and journalist**

Iranian Kurdish journalist and human rights defender Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand was reportedly allowed a short telephone call to his family on 17 July, in which he confirmed that he was detained in Section 209 of Evin Prison, and said that he was being accused of "acting against national security", "propaganda against the system" and "cooperating with groups opposed to the system". He reportedly said that whenever he was interrogated he was blindfolded and bound hand and foot, and complained about the poor conditions he was held in.

He was arrested on 1 July at his place of work in Tehran by security officers in plain clothes, the day the publication ban on his newspaper *Payam-e Mardom-e Kurdistan* (Kurdistan People's Message) reportedly expired. He is facing a one-year prison sentence in connection with articles published in this newspaper, but his current detention does not appear to be connected with this. His lawyer has not been allowed to meet him and has complained about suspicious phone calls from people claiming to be members of the Intelligence Ministry received by Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand's family. Amnesty International is concerned that he may be at risk of torture and ill-treatment and believes he is very likely to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Kurds, who are one of Iran's many ethnic groups, live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in the province of Kurdistan and neighbouring provinces bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. For many years, Kurdish organizations such as the Kurdistan People's Democratic Party (KDPI) and *Komala* carried out armed opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran, although more recently they have abandoned armed opposition in favour of a federal solution. Iran continues to face armed opposition mainly from the Kurdistan Independent Life Party (PJAK), which reportedly began operations in 2004, and is affiliated to the Turkey-based Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Iran has accused foreign governments of fomenting unrest among its ethnic minorities.

Other Kurdish human rights defenders have also been detained recently. Ajlal Qavami, a member of the RMMK board and former journalist of *Payam-e Mardom-e Kurdistan* and member of the editorial board of the bilingual weekly *Didgah* (Viewpoint), was arrested on or around 9 July after being summoned to the Revolutionary Court in Sanandaj. He had previously been sentenced to three years' imprisonment by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court in Sanandaj for organizing a demonstration in July 2005 in protest at the killing of a Kurd, Showan Qaderi, by the security forces. He had appealed against this sentence but his appeal is reported to have been rejected, although neither Ajlal Qavami nor his lawyer was told this before he was arrested.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, French, Persian or your own language:

- .- asking for details of the reasons for Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand's arrest, including any charges and evidence against him and any trial which may be held;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that he is not tortured or ill-treated;
- calling for him to be allowed immediate and regular access to his family, his lawyer and any medical treatment he may require;

- stating that if Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand has been detained solely in connection with his peaceful activities on behalf of Iran's Kurdish community, or with his peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression or association, then he is a prisoner of conscience, who should be released immediately and unconditionally; otherwise he should be released unless he is to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence and brought promptly to a fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir

istiftaa@wilayah.org

Fax: **+98 251 774 2228 (mark FAO Office of His Excellency Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei)**

Salutation: **Your Excellency**

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: iranprobe@iranprobe.com

Salutation: **Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: **Your Excellency**

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: **+ 981 6 674 790 (Via Foreign Ministry. Mark "Please forward to H.E. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad")**

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir

via website: www.president.ir/email

Salutation: **Your Excellency**

Head of the Parliamentary Article 90 Commission

Mohammad Reza Faker

Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami

Baharestan Square, Tehran, Iran

Fax: **+ 98 21 3355 6408**

Kurdistan Human Rights Organization

PO Box 188-13465

Tehran

Islamic Republic of Iran.

Email: prmmkkurd@gmail.com

and to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 August 2007.