

PUBLIC

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1 November 2005

UA 283/05      Fear of imminent execution

IRAN      **Shahla Jahed (f), aged 35**

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Shahla Jahed is believed to be at imminent risk of execution, after Iran's Supreme Court upheld her death sentence for murdering her husband's first wife in 2002. She may have been coerced into confessing to the murder.

Shahla Jahed was a "temporary" wife of Nasser Mohammad-Khani, a former striker for the Iranian national football team and former manager of a team in Tehran. According to press reports, Shahla Jahed was originally sentenced to death by hanging in 2004 for stabbing to death Laleh Saharkhizan, Nasser Mohammad-Khani's "permanent" wife. Under Iranian law, men and women can have both "permanent" and "temporary" marriages. In a temporary marriage, men and women can commit to be married for a certain period of time, after which the marriage is null and void.

The prosecution reportedly claimed that Shahla Jahed had murdered Laleh Saharkhizan out of jealousy. Nasser Mohammad-Khani was himself initially suspected of complicity in the murder and jailed for some months, but was reportedly released.

Shahla Jahed is said to have confessed to the murder during the initial investigation, but during her trial consistently upheld her innocence. In December 2004, on being told of a previous Supreme Court ruling in the case, Shahla Jared reportedly said, "Everyone knows the conditions under which I confessed." Shahla Jahed's lawyer reportedly believes that Shahla Jahed's case has not been properly investigated and is urging the Head of the Judiciary, Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, to order a fresh enquiry.

Amnesty International is concerned that Shahla Jahed's confession may have been made under duress. The organization has recorded 67 executions in Iran so far this year, although the true figure may be much higher.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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

- acknowledging that governments have a responsibility to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but stating your unconditional opposition to the death penalty, as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violation of the right to life;
- urging the authorities to stop the execution of Shahla Jahed and to commute her death sentence immediately;
- expressing concern at reports that her lawyer has claimed that the case was not properly investigated, and asking for details of her trial, her appeal and her legal representation;
- calling for an investigation into allegations that Shahla Jahed was coerced into confessing to the murder, with the results made public and anyone found to be responsible brought to justice;
- reminding the authorities that confessions extracted under duress are prohibited by Article 38 of the Constitution of Iran, which says that "All forms of torture for the purpose of extracting confession or acquiring information are forbidden," and that Iran is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), or which Article 7 states that "No one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment".

**APPEALS TO:**

**(It may be difficult to get through to Iranian fax numbers, but please keep trying. If you are unable to get through, please send appeals by email or by post)**

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
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**Fax: + 98 21 6 649 5880 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")**

**Email: info@wilayah.org OR info@leader.ir**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email: irjpr@iranjudiciary.org (mark "Please forward to His Excellency Ayatollah Shahroudi")**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Minister of the Interior

Hojatoleslam Mustafa Purmohammadi  
Ministry of the Interior  
Dr Fatemi Avenue  
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**COPIES TO:**

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Gholamali Haddad Adel  
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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 13 December 2005.