

PUBLIC

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16 June 2006

UA 171/06 Fear of "disappearance"/fear for safety/health concern/possible prisoner of conscience

IRAN Saleh Kamrani (m), lawyer and human rights defender, aged about 34

Azeri Turkish lawyer Saleh Kamrani is feared to have been abducted by the security forces on 14 June, and to be in unacknowledged detention where he would be at risk of torture. He reportedly needs medication for a heart condition. He may be held solely for his work as a lawyer and human rights defender, in which case Amnesty International would consider him a prisoner of conscience.

He reportedly called his wife at their house in Tehran at around 3pm on 14 June to say that he was on his way home. He should have arrived by 4.30 or 5pm, and when he did not she tried to call him, but found his mobile phone switched off, which was unusual for him. She called all the hospitals and police stations in Tehran but did not find any trace of him. In the evening, she called Ministry of Intelligence officials who have reportedly refused to confirm whether they are holding her husband.

Saleh Kamrani has practised as a lawyer since 1999 and has defended a number of Iranian Azeri Turks (who sometimes refer to themselves as Iranian Azerbaijanis) who have been detained in connection with their political or cultural activities. One of his clients, activist Saleh Malla Abbasi was arrested on 17 April (see UA 115/06, MDE 13/045/2006, 3 May 2006). Saleh Kamrani has also defended members of other ethnic groups. He has reportedly suffered harassment at the hands of the Iranian security forces, including phone calls threatening him with arrest, and in 2005 was detained for three days with his brother in the town of Oromieh. He has also reportedly written articles on human rights and has helped to organise training in human rights for lawyers and students. Saleh Kamrani's brother, Maharam Kamrani, was arrested on 30 March, and reportedly tortured during his 19 days in detention (see UA 86/06, MDE 13/039/2006, 12 April 2006).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In May 2006, massive demonstrations took place in towns and cities in north-western Iran, where the majority of the population is Azeri Turkish, in protest at a cartoon published on 12 May by the state-owned daily newspaper *Iran* which many Azeri Turks found offensive. Hundreds were arrested during or following the demonstrations (see UA 151/06, MDE 13/055/2006 and UA 163/06, MDE 13/063/2006). Some of those detained have allegedly been tortured, with some requiring hospital treatment. Publication of the newspaper was suspended on 23 May and the editor-in-chief and the cartoonist were arrested. Azeri sources have claimed that dozens were killed and hundreds injured by the security forces. The security forces have generally denied that anyone was killed, although on 29 May a police official acknowledged that four people had been killed and 43 injured in the town of Naqada.

Iranian security forces frequently hold people, for days or weeks, sometimes in secret detention centres, before acknowledging that they are in custody or allowing them to contact their families. Student activist Abed Tavaneh was thought to have "disappeared" when he did not contact his family for over a week: on 5 June he was able to call them from Tehran's Evin prison to say that he had been arrested on 26 May (see UA 165/06, MDE 13/065/2006, 9 June 2006).

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

- expressing concern at reports that Saleh Kamrani, an Iranian Azeri Turkish lawyer, may have been abducted by the security forces on 14 June 2006;
- calling on the authorities to say whether he is in custody, and if so, where he is held and why he was arrested, including any charges against him;
- if he is in custody, calling on the authorities to ensure that he is not tortured or ill-treated, and to allow him immediate access to his family and a lawyer of his own choosing, and to any medical treatment he may require
- if he is in custody, calling on the authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally if he is not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

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

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

Email: info@leader.ir
istiftaa@wilayah.org

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: Please send emails via the feedback form on the Persian site of the website
<http://www.iranjudiciary.org/contactus-feedback-fa.html>

The text of the feedback form translates as:

1st line: name, 2nd line: email address, 3rd line: subject heading
then enter your email into the text box

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

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

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

Fax: + 98 21 6 649 5880

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir
via website: www.president.ir/email

Speaker of Parliament

Gholamali Haddad Adel, Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami (Parliament)

Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

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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 28 July 2006.