

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

AI Index: MDE 13/005/2005 (Public)
News Service No: 023
31 January 2005

Iran: End the double talk - Time to end the death penalty for children

Amnesty International urges the all relevant Iranian authorities, including the judiciary, to act in accordance with the Government of Iran's public pronouncements and take urgent measures to bring its law and practice in line with its obligations as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) and end the imposition of death penalty on children.

On Friday 28 January 2005, following its consideration of Iran's second periodic report on its implementation of the provisions of the Convention, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee), the body of independent experts established under the Convention to monitor states parties' compliance with the treaty, urged Iran:

"to take the necessary steps to immediately suspend the execution of all death penalties imposed on persons for having committed a crime before the age of 18, to take the appropriate legal measures to convert them to penalties in conformity with the provisions of the Convention and to abolish the death penalty as a sentence imposed on persons for having committed crimes before the age of 18, as required by article 37 of the Convention."

And, *inter alia*:

"to suspend immediately the imposition and execution of all forms of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, such as amputation, flogging or stoning, for crimes committed by persons under 18." (See paragraphs 30 and 72.b of the Committee's Concluding Observations.)

The Committee noted that the Iranian delegation had stated, in the course of the public consideration of Iran's report, that Iran had suspended executions of persons for having committed crimes before the age of 18. In its Concluding Observations, the Committee "deplores the fact that such executions have continued since the Committee's consideration of the State party's initial report, including one such execution on the day of the examination of the current report."

Prior to the Committee's consideration, on 10 January 2005, the Speaker of the Judiciary reportedly dismissed reports that Iran's authorities carried out executions of those under the age of 18 as "foreign propaganda" and that the issue allegation "comes from outside the country and is aimed at distorting the image of the Islamic Republic".

Amnesty International urges all the relevant Iranian authorities, including the judiciary, to abide with the recommendations of the Committee and make public its plans to ensure their implementation.

Amnesty International believes that the representations of the delegation of Iran to the Committee

and the views of the Committee underline the fact that the time to stop sentencing children to death, the time to stop carrying out executions of children, and the time to stop all forms of violence against children in Iran is now.

Iran's second periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, along with the Committee's Concluding Observations can be viewed at:

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/crcs38.htm>