URGENT ACTION

WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDER RESENTENCED TO DEATH

Iranian human rights defender Sharifeh Mohammadi is at risk of execution after a Revolutionary Court in Rasht, Gilan province, sentenced her to death again in February 2025. She was convicted of "armed rebellion against the state" (*baghi*) solely for her peaceful human rights activities, including supporting women's and workers' rights. In October 2024, the Supreme Court had overturned her conviction and death sentence issued in June 2024 and ordered further proceedings in a lower court. A grossly unfair retrial took place in December 2024; her allegations of torture and other ill-treatment were never investigated.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, *c/o Embassy of Iran to the United Nations in Geneva*
Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

Human rights defender Sharifeh Mohammadi, 45, is at risk of execution in Lakan prison, Rasht, Gilan province, after Branch Two of the Revolutionary Court of Rasht sentenced her to death for "armed rebellion against the state" (baghi), in a decision issued to her lawyers on 13 February. In October 2024, Branch 39 of the Supreme Court had overturned her conviction for "armed rebellion against the state" (baghi) and death sentence, and remanded her case to a lower court for further review. On 19 December 2024, Sharifeh Mohammadi was tried again during a 30-minute session in a grossly unfair. Her lawyers' request for Sharifeh Mohammadi to attend trial in person was rejected by the court and she connected from prison via video conference for 20 minutes. In a media interview on 19 February, one of Sharifeh Mohammadi's lawyers highlighted procedural flaws during retrial, including the authorities failing to provide lawyers with sufficient notice of her trial date. Further, Amnesty International learned that Branch Two's presiding judge is a close family relative Branch One's presiding judge, which convicted and sentenced Sharifeh Mohammadi to death the first time in late June 2024. Amnesty International understands that Sharifeh Mohammadi will appeal to the Supreme Court.

Following Sharifeh Mohammadi's arbitrary arrest in early December 2023, Ministry of Intelligence agents interrogated her about her human rights activism, including supporting women's and workers' rights as well as the abolition of the death penalty, and her past membership with the Coordinating Committee to Help to Form Workers' Organizations, which advocates for trade unions. On 28 December 2023, she was transferred to a Ministry of Intelligence detention facility in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, and according to informed sources, there agents subjected her to torture and ill-treatment to compel her forced "confessions", including by repeatedly hitting her in the face and head while blindfolded, resulting in visible injuries. In late February 2024, she was transferred to Lakan prison.

I urge you to immediately halt any plans to execute Sharifeh Mohammadi, quash her conviction and death sentence and release her immediately and unconditionally, as she is held solely for her peaceful human rights activism. Pending her release, provide her with adequate healthcare and regular visits from family and lawyers; protect her from further torture and other ill-treatment; and order an independent, effective and impartial investigation into her torture allegations, bringing anyone suspected of criminal responsibility to justice in fair trials and without resort to the death penalty. Also, immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sharifeh Mohammadi's first trial, which took place on 9 June 2024 and consisted of one 30-minute session before Branch One of the Revolutionary Court of Rasht, was grossly unfair. Her lawyer was provided only 10 minutes to present a defence. The verdict, issued on 30 June 2024 and reviewed by Amnesty International, lists peaceful human rights activities as "evidence" of Sharifeh Mohammadi's acts "against the foundations of the Islamic Republic of Iran". The verdict cited as "evidence" Sharifeh Mohammadi's support for the abolition of the death penalty in Iran, her documentation of cases of women prisoners held for politically motivated reasons in Gilan province, as well as her possession of information on workers' participation in the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022 and of contact details of the Coordinating Committee to Help to Form Workers' Organizations, of which she was a member until 2011. The verdict also purported that there is a connection between the Coordinating Committee to Help to Form Workers' Organizations and the Komala Party of Kurdistan; a claim repeatedly denied by the Committee. According to an informed source, during Sharifeh Mohammadi's second trial in late 2024, the presiding judge questioned her about why she had not responded to a summons for interrogations in 2023, to which Sharifeh Mohammadi replied she never received a summons and was suddenly arrested without warning. On 19 February 2025, in a media interview, Amir Raesian, one of Sharifeh Mohammadi's lawyers, noted several points on the flawed nature of the retrial. He explained that after the trial ended, the court communicated with the interrogators who submitted the investigative report to the court, without informing defence counsel, which meant Sharifeh Mohammadi's lawyers were not provided with the opportunity to review and challenge any newly submitted evidence.

On 5 December 2023, agents arbitrarily arrested Sharifeh Mohammadi from her home in Rasht and seized her electronic devices and other personal items before taking her to a Ministry of Intelligence detention facility in Rasht. There, according to an informed source, she was subjected to torture and ill-treatment, including repeated kicks to her legs, during interrogations without access to a lawyer and denied contact with her family, while also blindfolded and repeatedly questioned. Interrogations revolved around her human rights activism, including reasons for her stance against the death penalty and support for prisoners held for politically motivated reasons. After several days, she was transferred to solitary confinement in Lakan prison, where interrogations about her activism continued. On 28 December 2023, after her sudden transfer to a Ministry of Intelligence detention centre in Sanandaj, interrogations continued and according to an informed source, agents subjected her to further torture and other ill-treatment, including by repeatedly hitting her in the face. Agents sought to compel her forced "confessions" that she had ties to Komala Party of Kurdistan, a banned Kurdish opposition group based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, which she repeatedly denied. In about late January 2024, Sharifeh Mohammadi was transferred to solitary confinement in Sanandaj prison, where she filed a complaint about her treatment in the Sanandaj Ministry of Intelligence detention facility, no investigations were conducted. Four weeks later, prosecution officials pressured her to withdraw her complaint. By that point, the visible injuries on her face had healed and prosecution officials told her that if she wanted an investigation to take place, she would continue to be held in Sanandaj prison rather than be transferred back to Lakan prison, closer to her relatives. In late February 2024, after she withdrew her complaint under pressure, she was transferred back Lakan prison, where she remains. Until she was transferred to the general ward of Lakan prison in early March 2024, she was permitted only a few very brief phone calls to her family. Sirous Fattahi, Sharifeh Mohammadi's husband, has faced reprisals from the authorities, including arbitrary arrest, solely in relation to his advocacy for Sharifeh Mohammadi's release.

In the aftermath of the "Woman Life Freedom" uprising, Iranian authorities have intensified their use of the death penalty to instil fear among the population and tighten their grip on power. This escalation includes the use of the death penalty against women on politically motivated charges. At least two other woman, Kurdish dissident Verisheh Moradi and Kurdish humanitarian aid worker Pakhshan Azizi, are also under sentence death after Revolutionary Courts convicted them of "armed rebellion against the state" (*baghi*) in separate cases. In 2024, the authorities continued their execution spree again executing hundreds of people, many arbitrarily after grossly unfair trials held before Revolutionary Courts. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. The death penalty is a violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Persian, English, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 June 2025.
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFFERED PRONOUN: Sharifeh Mohammadi (her/she).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8506/2024/en/.