

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Q&A on involvement of Iran's former prime minister in denial and distortion campaign surrounding 1988 prison massacres

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Renewed public attention to a historic Amnesty International Urgent Action from 16 August 1988, which expressed concern about evidence of “a new wave of political executions” in Iran, has reignited a public debate about the following issues:

1. The extent to which Amnesty International believes Iran's prime minister at the time, Mir Hossein Mousavi, and his government were aware of the mass prisoner killings while they were taking place between late July and early September 1988, and
2. The findings of Amnesty International concerning the role of Mir Hossein Mousavi and his government in the official strategy of denial and distortion that was pursued in the weeks and months following the prison massacres to conceal the truth about the fate and whereabouts of those forcibly disappeared and secretly killed.

Amnesty International is issuing this Q&A in response to questions that some members of the public and journalists working for Persian-language media channels have asked the organization regarding its findings. The answers provided below are based on an extensive report, titled *Iran: Blood-soaked secrets: Why Iran's 1988 prison massacres are ongoing crimes against humanity*, which the organization issued on 4 December 2018 (hereafter *Blood-soaked secrets*), and a subsequent press release, titled *Iran: Top government officials distorted the truth about 1988 prison massacres*, which was issued on 12 December 2018.

¹ On 29 October 2020, Amnesty International made additions to the Q&A in response to further questions raised by some journalists and members of the public. In the revised document dated 27 October 2020, an additional question and answer have been added on p.4. Some additional information was also made available under footnote 4 on p. 6.

1. Were Mir Hossein Mousavi and members of his government aware of the enforced disappearances and mass killings while they were taking place between late July and early September 1988?

Existing evidence raises serious concerns that, in August 1988, Mir Hossein Mousavi and members of his government were made aware of serious allegations of crimes and human rights violations, including mass enforced disappearances and possible secret executions, but they failed in their obligations, under international human rights law, to order investigations and take urgent action to publicly reveal the truth about the fate and whereabouts of prisoners who had been forcibly disappeared across the country.

Thousands of political dissidents held in prisons across Iran were forcibly disappeared in late July 1988. As discussed on pages 37-39 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, in the weeks that followed, distressed families approached various government bodies, including the office of the prime minister, and submitted letters, which sought answers about the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones, and asked that the government take urgent action to stop the executions. The officials approached by the families either provided very little or no information or refused to meet the distraught families at all. Amnesty International has obtained the testimony of Esmat Talebi, who lost her husband and brother during the mass killings, and she recalls that one time in late July or early August, in the prime minister's office, an unknown official told them not to worry as leftist prisoners were safe and only prisoners affiliated with the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) would be "dealt with" (see page 39 of *Blood-soaked secrets*).

As discussed in detail on pages 65-69 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, Amnesty International raised its concerns about evidence of "a new wave of political executions" as early as 16 August 1988 when the organization issued its first Urgent Action, and called on its members around the world to send telegrams, telexes and letters to the head of Iran's Supreme Court and a member of Iran's Supreme Judicial Council, Abdulkarim Mousavi Ardebili, and the Minister of Justice, Hassan Ebrahim Habibi, and to send a copy of the appeals to the diplomatic representatives of Iran in their respective countries.

Today, based on the testimonies of survivors, it is established that, by 16 August 1988, the first wave of executions targeting several thousand members and supporters of the PMOI had largely been carried out across the country. The second wave of mass executions targeting political dissidents imprisoned in connection with their support for various leftist political groups had not yet started. Those took place at the end of August and in early September (see pages 86-87 of *Blood-soaked secrets*).

At the UN level, on 26 August and 14 September 1988, the UN Special Rapporteur on Summary and Arbitrary Executions sent his first cables to the Iranian minister of foreign affairs concerning "allegations that since July 1988, a large number of prisoners... had been executed and several others were facing imminent execution in various parts of the country." On 28 September 1988, the UN Special Representative on the situation of human rights in Iran similarly wrote to Iran's permanent representative to the UN in Geneva, Sirous Nasser, raising concerns about a "wave of executions" allegedly taking place in Iran and asking for a response.

As discussed on pages 70-71 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, records indicate that, until November 1988, the Iranian ministry of foreign affairs did not provide any substantive reply to this communication. Instead, they simply dismissed the allegations on the grounds that the source of some of the information was politically biased. On 29 November 1988, during a meeting with the UN Special Representative on the situation of human rights in Iran concerning the mass prisoner killings of July-September 1988, Mohammad Jafar Mahallati, Iran's permanent representative to the UN in New York, denied the mass executions and said "[m]any killings had in fact occurred on the battlefield, in the context of the war, following the invasion of the Islamic Republic of Iran by... the National Liberation Army [of the PMOI]."

2. How did Amnesty International communicate to the Iranian government its concerns about the mass prisoner killings while they were taking place between late July and early September 1988 and in the months afterwards?

As detailed on pages 65-69 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, between 16 August and 22 December 1988, Amnesty International issued at least 18 Urgent Actions, which mobilized its membership around the world to send telegrams, telexes and letters to the Iranian authorities. Copies of these appeals were sent by Amnesty International members to the diplomatic representatives of Iran in various countries.

Concerns expressed by the international community reached the Iranian authorities. As documented on page 66 of *Blood-Soaked secrets*, on 2 December 1988, Speaker of Parliament Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was quoted on Tehran Radio as having said that the claims that thousands of imprisoned political dissidents had been executed in recent months are “nothing but propaganda”.

In response to the denial, Amnesty International sent a letter to Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on 12 December 1988, which noted, “The organization has recorded over 300 names of execution victims and it believes that the true figure may run into thousands.” The letter enclosed a list of 325 reported victims and asked the authorities to confirm whether or not these people had been executed and, if so, to provide details including “the date and place of execution; the charges brought against the accused and the nature of any trial and appeal proceedings”. The Iranian authorities did not reply.

In December 1988, Amnesty International also organized a rapid response action, which involved national sections of the organization seeking meetings with Iranian embassies around the world.² As documented in pages 67-69 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, during these embassy visits, which took place in countries including Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK and West Germany, Amnesty International delegates presented the names of execution victims and sought information on the date and place of each execution and whether relatives had been informed. As illustrated by the quotes of various diplomatic officials recorded on pages 69 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, the response of Iranian officials was, by and large, denial.

Amnesty International followed up with further action in January 1989, writing letters to the head of Iran’s Supreme Court, Abdulkarim Mousavi Ardebili, the Minister of Justice, Hassan Ebrahim Habibi, the Speaker of Parliament, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and the prosecutor general, Mohammad Mousavi Khoeniha. Copies were also sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Akbar Velayati, and Deputy Supreme Leader Hossein Ali Montazeri. On 28 February 1989, the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN in New York wrote to Amnesty International. The letter said: “Indeed, the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran have always denied the existence of any political executions, but that does not contradict other subsequent statements which have confirmed that spies and terrorists have been executed” (see page 69 of *Blood-soaked secrets*).

3. How were Mir Hossein Mousavi and members of his government involved in the official strategy of denial and distortion surrounding the prisoner killings from September 1988 onwards, when the news of the executions triggered a global outcry?

Mir Hossein Mousavi was Iran’s prime minister from October 1981 to August 1989. In this position, he oversaw the work of various ministries including the ministry of justice and the ministry of foreign affairs, which were targeted in Amnesty International’s letter-writing campaigns.

² The rapid response action is on file with Amnesty International.

Diplomatic and other government officials who denied the mass prisoner killings happened or distorted the truth about their scale, causes and circumstances (as documented in pages 64-81 of *Blood-soaked secrets*) had a reporting line to him, and their lines of response must have been prepared based on his instructions, as communicated via the ministry of foreign Affairs. Given his position, he had a responsibility to ensure that reports of such serious crimes were investigated. He shares responsibility with his ministers and others who orchestrated a campaign of denial and distortion, aimed at hiding the truth, thereby contributing to the ongoing enforced disappearance of thousands of victims.

These actions have perpetuated the suffering of relatives and have helped block accountability and justice for widespread and systematic human rights violations amounting to crimes against humanity. Under international law, top officials can be held responsible for the acts of their subordinates if they knew or should have known of the crimes and failed to prevent or stop the crimes or to punish those responsible.

As detailed in pages 66-81 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, from September 1988 onwards, when the news of the mass prisoner killings attracted international attention, senior government officials and diplomats were actively involved in denying the mass killings to hide the truth about what had happened. These officials either flatly denied the mass killings and dismissed the reports as “nothing but propaganda” or claimed that the killings occurred on the battlefield. They also told the UN that some of the recorded victims did not exist, or were abroad, or studying at university, or being held as prisoners of war or had died due to “natural causes”. Iranian government officials also sought to deflect attention away from the mass prisoner killings by focusing on the armed incursion of the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) in July 1988 and defending their actions as a necessary crackdown against those involved.

4. The Urgent Action from 16 August 1988 does not contain any references to the secret executions which were carried out in prisons across Iran between late July and early September 1988, pursuant to a secret fatwa (religious order) that Rouhollah Khomeini had issued in late July 1988, and which are widely known today as the “prison massacres” of 1988. Why has Amnesty International included this Urgent Action in its body of work on the 1988 prison massacres?

This Urgent Action from 16 August 1988 states that “Amnesty International is concerned by evidence that a new wave of political executions is taking place in Iran.” It is crucial to recall that at the time of its writing in mid-August 1988, prisons were under lockdown across the country and the reality of the horrors that were happening inside prisons involving the execution of thousands of political dissidents was not yet known to the outside world. The Urgent Action is significant for it provides a contemporaneous snapshot of some of the developments at the time that were raising fears among families of imprisoned political dissidents and others that a wave of political executions was underway.

As referred to in the Urgent Action of 16 August 1988 and also detailed in p. 38 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, these worrying developments included the execution in public of more than a dozen individuals at the beginning of August 1988 in Kangavar, Bakhtaran and Islamebad-e Gharb, all in western Iran, for allegedly collaborating with the armed incursion of the PMOI in late July 1988, as well as the execution of multiple leftist prisoners, without prior notification to their families, in July 1988.

Today, based on official orders and other correspondence published in the memoirs of then Deputy Supreme Leader Hossein Ali Montazeri as well as reports, testimonies, memoirs and other written materials prepared by survivors, it is well established that the patterns of these executions were distinct from the prison massacres that were carried out secretly pursuant to a fatwa (religious order) issued by Rouhollah Khomeini on or around 28 July 1988, and targeted mostly prisoners who were not under a death sentence (for categories of prisoners targeted, see pp. 37-38 and pp. 86-87 of *Blood-soaked secrets*).

However, in the turbulent period following the armed incursion of the PMOI on 25 July 1988, the executions reported in the Urgent Action of 16 August 1988 together with the suspension of family visits and a speech by Abdulkarim Mousavi Ardebil, the then head of Iran's Supreme Court and a member of Iran's Supreme Judicial Council, on 5 August 1988, calling for the speedy execution of imprisoned political dissidents, had triggered widespread fears, as expressed in the Urgent Action, that a new wave of political executions was taking place.

Due to these widespread fears, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, the UN Special Representative on the situation of human rights in Iran between 1986 and 1995, reported in January 1989 that from late July 1988 onwards, the UN received "hundreds of petitions and letters from private individuals around the world ... expressing deep concern at the alleged wave of executions and calling for United Nations intervention to bring such executions to a halt."³ Those raising concern included members of national parliaments from Australia, France, Germany, Federal Republic of Germany [then commonly known as West Germany], Ireland, and the United Kingdom as well as members of the European Parliament from several countries, and trade-union and church officials.

The fears proved to be true.

In an Urgent Action issued two weeks later on 2 September 1988, Amnesty International "condemn[ed] the political executions carried out in Iran during the last month, which are reportedly still continuing", and expressed concern that that "continuing ban on family visits to political prisoners ... has fuelled speculation that hundreds of political prisoners may have been executed."

The Urgent Actions of 16 August 1988 and 2 September 1988 together show that concerns about a wave of political executions taking place in prisons across the country were raised with top government and judicial authorities while these serious crimes were taking place, and the authorities were required under international law, to ensure that such concerns are investigated and addressed.

As noted earlier under question 2 of this Q&A and also detailed in pp. 65-66 of *Blood-soaked secrets*, Amnesty International issued 16 further Urgent Actions between October and December 1988 as well as a press release, accompanied by a briefing paper. These historic documents show how further information concerning the executions of thousands of political dissidents and the secret burial of bodies in unmarked mass graves was gradually documented by Amnesty International at the time. Amnesty International stresses that these documents must be considered in their entirety and read together with other documentary evidence detailed in chapter 6 of *Blood-soaked secrets* when analysing the complicity of government officials at the time in the official strategy of concealment, denial and distortion.

- 5. In the video clip of the interview of the Austrian national public service broadcaster, Österreichischer Rundfunk (ORF) with Mir Hossein Mousavi, the question that the journalist asks about the executions cannot be heard as a result of the German-language narration that has been superimposed by ORF. How does Amnesty International know that Mir Hossein Mousavi was asked about the executions of July-September 1988?**

³ *Report on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, prepared by the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights, 26 January 1989, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1989/26, www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.4/1989/26, para. 15.

Consistent with the abovementioned strategy of denial and distortion, in his interview with the Austrian national public service broadcaster, Österreichischer Rundfunk (ORF), in December 1988, Mir Hossein Mousavi refrained from revealing the truth of what had happened when asked about the executions and distorted their causes and circumstances in an apparent effort to misrepresent them as a legitimate response to an armed attack.

The video clip of the interview was provided to Amnesty International by ORF. It is four minutes and 10 seconds long. On 12 December 2018, Amnesty International uploaded on its website an extract containing a reference by the media outlet to reports of human rights violations and executions, which begins at two minutes and 30 seconds, and Mir Hossein Mousavi's comments on them.

According to information received from ORF, the interview was initially broadcast on 13 December 1988 in a programme called *Auslandsjournal* (Foreign Affairs Journal). The journalist conducts the interview in English, but the voice of a narrator is dubbed over it in German. When Amnesty International obtained the video clip from ORF, the broadcaster informed the organization that the original interview without the German voiceover was not available in its archives.

Since the rest of the interview addresses topics unrelated to its concerns, Amnesty International made available online only the part of the video clip in which the references of the media outlet to reports of human rights violations and executions can be heard and Mir Hossein Mousavi is presented as commenting on them. Amnesty International added English and Persian subtitles to the extract. Otherwise, it released the clip in the exact same form in which it had received it. The English translation of the entire four minute and 10 second interview can be found at the end of this Q&A in Appendix 1.

In the video, at 2:30, the German voiceover states: "New reports of human rights violations are surely dampening [feelings of] homesickness for many Iranians [living] abroad." The voiceover goes on to indicate in German that what comes next in the interview is the comments of "[t]he prime minister on the allegations of executions".⁴ The video then plays Mir Hossein Mousavi's statement:

"The problem that we have with public opinion in the West is that [their interpretation of human rights] is different from [the one] in this [Iranian] society. Human rights really must be defined. For example, [take] the [situation of] Muslims who are currently being killed in Palestine by Israeli arms. There, we state that human rights have been violated. On the contrary, when it comes to a people who rises up amid a storm of events, conspiracies and various pressures, defends itself, fights against its enemies, and is naturally also after an originality, we call this defending human rights, and we don't consider this to be against human rights. One of the issues we have been criticized for is related to the Mersad Operation [the name of Iran's counter-insurgency operation against the PMOI armed incursion of July 1988]. In this operation, a number of Mojahedin [PMOI members], whom we call *monafeqin* [hypocrites], because they are two-faced and lie to their people, and because they have committed murder and pillage in our country, worked hand in hand

⁴ On 22 December 1988, the state-affiliated newspaper *Ettelaat* reported on this interview and published its transcript in Persian. The transcript does not fully reflect what is heard in the video clip provided to Amnesty International by ORF and omits any reference to the "allegations of executions", which according to ORF, Mir Hossein Mousavi was commenting on. In the *Ettelaat* article, the question asked from Mir Hossein Mousavi is reported as follows: "What is your view on allegations raised by the Western media concerning the violation of human rights in Iran?" In 2011, this historic article in the *Ettelaat* newspaper received renewed attention after Abdorrahman Boroumand Center included it in its report, *The Massacre of Political Prisoners in Iran, 1988, report of an inquiry conducted by Geoffrey Robertson QC*, published on 18 April 2011 and available at the following link: www.iranrights.org/library/document/1380/the-massacre-of-political-prisoners-in-iran-1988-report-of-an-inquiry

with Saddam [Hussein, Iraq's former president] to wage an attack to conquer Bakhtaran [in Kermanshah province, western Iran] and move towards Tehran. They had plans to carry out killings. Well, we repressed them. What else should we have done? Should we have opened the gates of our cities to them? Should we have opened the gates of Tehran so they could establish a presence and kill people? In this context, we have no mercy and our system does not deprive itself of the right to defend itself and take decisive action.”⁵

At the time of the interview recorded in December 1988, the prisoner killings of late July and early September 1988 were the only executions in Iran in the focus of international media. This was due to the tireless efforts of victims' families in Iran and political activists in exile outside the country; a number of damning outputs published by Amnesty International, including at least 15 Urgent Actions issued in November and December 1988 and a press release entitled [Biggest wave of political executions in Iran since early 1980s](#), which was sent under embargo, along with a briefing paper, to media outlets at the beginning of December and issued on 13 December; as well as a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 8 December 1988, which expressed “grave concern... that there was a renewed wave of executions in the period July-September 1988 whereby a large number of persons died because of their political convictions.”

6. What has Amnesty International said on the involvement and responsibility of Mir Hossein Mousavi and his government in the prisoner killings of 1988?

Amnesty International's position has consistently been that, instead of ordering investigations with a view to ensuring accountability and revealing the truth about the causes and circumstances of the executions and the locations of mass graves containing the victims' remains, Mir Hossein Mousavi and his government pursued the official strategy of denial and distortion surrounding the mass executions and contributed to the ongoing secrecy around the causes and circumstances of the mass executions and the fate and whereabouts of those forcibly disappeared and secretly killed.

As a top government official, Mir Hossein Mousavi was required to ensure that allegations of extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment were investigated, and that survivors and victims' families received an effective remedy. Under international human rights law, a failure to investigate in and of itself gives rise to a separate and additional human rights violation.

It is crucial to stress that, in the aftermath of the prison massacres of 1988, the failure of top government officials to investigate and reveal the truth did not just entrench impunity; it also facilitated the ongoing commission of the crime of enforced disappearance against the families of those killed, which continues three decades later on a widespread and systematic basis and constitutes a crime against humanity.

7. Has Amnesty International said that Mir Hossein Mousavi must be criminally investigated and held accountable with respect to the prisoner killings of 1988?

⁵ Despite the German voiceover, it is possible to hear Mir Hossein Mousavi's original words in Persian in this segment. In order to ensure full accuracy, Amnesty International has not used the German translation of Mir Hossein Mousavi's response, as provided in the video, but rather identified his own original words in Persian and then translated those into English.

In line with established principles of international criminal justice, Amnesty International has said that criminal investigations and prosecutions shall not be limited to those who ordered, planned or carried out the prison massacres but must also address the criminal liability of those suspected of conspiring to commit, aiding or abetting, or otherwise assisting or facilitating the commission of the crimes against humanity relating to the mass prisoner killings carried out in July-September 1988 and the subsequent concealment of the fate of those disappeared and secretly killed, including the causes and circumstances of their secret executions, and the location of their remains, as well as superiors who knew or should have known that a subordinate was committing or about to commit a crime but did not take all the reasonable and necessary measures within their power to prevent, repress or punish the crime. On this basis, as prime minister at the time, Mir Hossein Mousavi falls within the pool of such suspects.

In addition to criminal investigations and prosecutions, Amnesty International has called for the establishment of a competent, independent and impartial truth commission, commission of inquiry or other appropriate mechanism to establish fully the truth regarding the mass enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions of July-September 1988, with powers to compel current and former officials to testify.

8. Why is Amnesty International focusing more on Mir Hossein Mousavi than on those suspected of direct involvement in the mass executions?

Amnesty International has not focused more on Mir Hossein Mousavi.

In fact, Amnesty International has extensively documented, in *Blood-soaked secrets* and subsequent materials on the 1988 prison massacres, the role of Shari'a judges, prosecutor generals and assistant prosecutors, and ministry of intelligence representatives in the "death commissions" and identified the names of several officials who participated in the "death commissions", some of whom continue to hold senior positions in the judiciary or the government, including:

- **Alireza Avaei.** He was tasked with participating in the Dezful "death commission" as the prosecutor general of Dezful and is currently the minister of justice.
- **Hossein Ali Nayyeri.** He acted as the Shari'a judge in the Tehran "death commission". He was promoted to the position of the deputy head of Iran's Supreme Court in 1989 and remained in this post until September 2013. He was subsequently appointed as the head of the Supreme Disciplinary Court for Judges, a position which he holds today.
- **Ebrahim Raisi.** He was the deputy prosecutor general of Tehran in 1988 and a member of the Tehran "death commission". He was later the prosecutor general of Tehran between 1989 and 1994, the first deputy head of the judiciary from 2004 to 2014, the country's prosecutor general from 2014 to 2016, and the current head of the judiciary.
- **Mostafa Pour Mohammadi:** He was the representative of the ministry of intelligence in the "death commission" in Tehran. He was later the minister of justice between 2013 and 2017.
- **Mohammad Hossein Ahmadi.** He was the Shari'a judge of Khuzestan province in 1988 and a member of the Khuzestan "death commission". He is currently a member of the Assembly of Experts, a constitutional body that has the power to appoint or dismiss Iran's Supreme Leader.

As stated above, those who ordered, planned or carried out the prison massacres are not the only people who must be subject to criminal investigations. Given the authorities' past and ongoing refusal to reveal the fate of those forcibly disappeared and secretly killed, including the causes and circumstances of their executions, and the whereabouts of their remains, all former and current officials who have

contributed to the climate of secrecy and denial facilitating the continued commission of the crime enforced disappearance against those killed and their families must also be held to account for their own actions.

9. What has Amnesty International done about the house arrest of Mir Hossein Mousavi?

Since 2011, Amnesty International has consistently raised concerns about the human rights violations committed by the Iranian authorities against Mir Hossein Mousavi, his wife Zahra Rahnava, and Mehdi Karubi, including in all its annual reports since 2011, several Urgent Actions, public statements and press releases, and submissions to the human rights mechanisms of the UN, most recently in its August 2020 [submission to the UN Human Rights Committee](#). Amnesty International continues to call on the Iranian authorities to immediately end their arbitrary house arrest and provide them with effective remedies.

Appendix 1 – Transcript of ORF’s December 1988 interview with Mir Hossein Mousavi

German	English
<p>ORF 00:00-00:10</p> <p>Für den Regierungschef soll es beim Wiederaufbau politisch eng werden, sagt man in Teheran. Er gilt als Vertreter der staatlichen Handelskontrolle. Musavis Vorlagen werden öfter im Parlament blockiert.</p>	<p>They say in Tehran that reconstruction will be politically difficult for the head of government. He is regarded as a supporter of trade control by the state. Mousavi’s bills are often blocked in parliament.</p>
<p>Mousavi 00:10-01:19</p> <p>Bei den Gesetzesvorlagen der Regierung gab es zwischen dem Expertenrat und dem Parlament Meinungsverschiedenheiten.</p> <p>Jetzt haben wir Mechanismen geschaffen, mit denen wir Reibungsverluste zwischen Exekutive und Legislative vermeiden können. Juristische Experten bereinigen Probleme der Auslegung im Sinne des Islams.</p> <p>Andere Probleme im Bereich der Verwaltung können wir bald besser definieren.</p> <p>Ähnliche Probleme haben wir bei Ministerbesetzungen, die vom Parlament gebilligt werden müssen.</p> <p>Drei Instanzen sind eingeschaltet: der Präsident, der Premier und die Madschlis. Das erschwert Entscheidungen, dafür müssen wir eine Lösung finden.</p> <p>Bis jetzt konnten solche Streitfälle durch die Intervention des Imams geschlichtet werden. Doch für die Zukunft müssen wir nach einer tragfähigen und beständigen Lösung suchen.</p>	<p>There have been disagreements about the government’s bills between the expert council and parliament.</p> <p>Now we have created mechanisms to avoid factional losses between the executive and the legislative. Legal experts are resolving problems of interpretation in line with Islam.</p> <p>We will soon be able to better define other administrative problems.</p> <p>We have similar problems with the appointments of ministers, who must be approved by parliament.</p> <p>Three bodies are involved: the president, the prime minister and the Majles [Iranian Parliament]. This makes decisions more difficult, and for that, we must find a solution.</p> <p>Until now, any such disagreements have been resolved through the intervention of the Imam [Iran’s then Supreme Leader Rouhollah Khomeini]. But in the future, we must look for a viable and lasting solution.</p>

<p>ORF 01:19-01:30</p> <p>Ohne Reform der politischen Kultur wird Irans Wiederaufbau nur schwer vorankommen. Auch der Ruf nach jenen Exiliranern wird lauter, die man als Fachkräfte dringend braucht.</p>	<p>Without a reform of the political culture, Iran's reconstruction will be difficult. The call for Iranians living in exile, who are urgently needed as skilled workers, also becomes louder.</p>
<p>Mousavi 01:30-01:59</p> <p>Wir begrüßen die Rückkehr der Spezialisten. Der Krieg verhinderte leider die Heimreise der Experten. Ich muss aber sagen, dass die Mehrzahl geblieben ist und viel Arbeit geleistet hat.</p> <p>Unser Volk achtet daher die Experten, die geblieben sind. Aber die Bevölkerung begrüßt auch die Rückkehr der Experten aus dem Exil – ausgenommen jener, die schwere kriminelle Verbrechen begangen haben.</p>	<p>We welcome the return of specialists. Unfortunately, the war prevented the experts from returning. However, I must say that the majority remained and carried out a great deal of work.</p> <p>Our people respect the experts who have remained, but the population also welcomes the return of experts from exile – except for those who committed serious crimes.</p>
<p>Mousavi 01:59-02:30</p> <p>Wir veranstalten jetzt viele wissenschaftliche Seminare und Konferenzen. Wir werden das Forschungsbudget erhöhen.</p> <p>Ich habe eben in der Wirtschaftskommission vorgeschlagen, dass man zwei Prozent des Inlandsbruttosozialprodukts für Forschung aufwenden soll. Damit unsere Landsleute im Ausland ermuntert werden, ihre Forschungstätigkeit zu Hause fortzusetzen.</p>	<p>We are now organizing many scientific seminars and conferences. We will increase the research budget.</p> <p>I have just suggested to the Economic Commission that two percent of the domestic gross national product is spent on research. This is to encourage our fellow citizens abroad to continue their research at home.</p>
<p>ORF 02:30-02:39</p> <p>Neue Berichte über Menschenrechtsverletzungen dämpfen sicherlich das Heimweh vieler Iraner im Ausland. Der Premier zu den Hinrichtungsvorwürfen:</p>	<p>New reports of human rights violations are certainly dampening [feelings of] homesickness for many Iranians abroad. The prime minister on accusations of executions:</p>

<p>Mousavi 02:40-04:10⁶</p> <p>Das Problem, das wir mit der öffentlichen Meinung im Ausland haben, liegt daran, dass es wohl unterschiedliche Interpretationen der Menschenrechte gibt.</p> <p>Was den Palästinensern widerfährt – ist das keine Menschenrechtsverletzung?</p> <p>Andererseits kann man ein Volk, das die Revolution verteidigt – wobei manche zu Schaden kommen – auch als Verteidiger der Menschenrechte bezeichnen.</p> <p>Ich glaube, dass wir für die dritte Welt überhaupt die Menschenrechte neu definieren müssen.</p> <p>Wobei ich betone, dass wir natürlich auf Seiten der Menschenrechte stehen.</p> <p>Was man uns jetzt zum Vorwurf macht, das sind unsere Maßnahmen gegen die militärischen Attacken der Mujaheddin, die wir Heuchler nennen, weil sie zwei Gesichter haben.</p> <p>Diese Leute haben in unserem Land Verbrechen begangen und vieles kaputtgeschlagen. Sie haben mit dem Irak gemeinsame Sache gemacht und versucht, uns anzugreifen.</p> <p>Sie wollten Teheran angreifen und sie haben Attentate vorbereitet. Natürlich haben wir sie bekämpft. Was sollten sie sonst tun? Hätten wir ihnen Tür und Tor öffnen sollen? In solcher Hinsicht kennen wir kein Pardon. Das heißt: Unser Staat hat die Pflicht, sich zu verteidigen.</p>	<p>The problem that we have with public opinion in the West is that [their interpretation of human rights] is different from [the one] in this [Iranian] society. Human rights really must be defined.</p> <p>For example, [take] the [situation of] Muslims who are currently being killed in Palestine by Israeli arms. There, we state that human rights have been violated.</p> <p>On the contrary, when it comes to a people who rises up amid a storm of events, conspiracies and various pressures, defends itself, fights against its enemies, and is naturally also after an originality, we call this defending human rights, and we don't consider this to be against human rights.</p> <p>One of the issues we have been criticized for is related to the Mersad Operation [the name of Iran's counter-insurgency operation against the PMOI armed incursion of July 1988]. In this operation, a number of Mojahedin [PMOI members], whom we call monafeqin [hypocrites], because they are two-faced and lie to their people, and because they have committed murder and pillage in our country, worked hand in hand with Saddam [Hussein, Iraq's former president] to wage an attack to conquer Bakhtaran [in Kermanshah province, western Iran] and move towards Tehran.</p> <p>They had plans to carry out killings. Well, we repressed them. What else should we have done? Should we have opened the gates of our cities to them? Should we have opened the gates of Tehran so they could establish a presence and kill people? In this context, we have no mercy and our system does not deprive itself of the right to defend itself and take decisive action.</p>
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⁶ Despite the German voiceover, it is possible to hear Mir Hossein Mousavi's original words in Persian in this segment. In order to ensure full accuracy, Amnesty International has not used the German translation of Mir Hossein Mousavi's response, as provided in the video, but rather identified his own original words in Persian and then translated those into English.

