

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Penalty

12 January 1994

IRAN

Mehdi Dibaj

Amnesty International fears that Mehdi Dibaj is at imminent risk of execution. According to information received by the organization, he was sentenced to death by an Islamic Revolutionary Court on 3 December 1993, and in January 1994 he was given 20 days to appeal against the sentence. He is currently held in a prison in Sari, the provincial capital of Mazandaran.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mehdi Dibaj reportedly converted to Christianity 45 years ago. He has been detained since 1954. He was reportedly never given a reason for his arrest. He may have merely exercised his right to freedom of religion and speech, without using or advocating violence. These rights are guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iran is a state party.

Mehdi Dibaj is married with grown-up children. Before his arrest he was an evangelist and missionary to Afghanistan.

Amnesty International opposes the use of the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The organization is seriously concerned at the continuing high number of executions in Iran.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing regret at the reported death sentence passed on Mehdi Dibaj, and urging that the sentence be commuted;

- seeking information about his trial procedures and the precise charges for which he was convicted, as well as the nature of the appeal.

APPEALS TO

1) His Excellency Hojjatolislam

Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani

The Presidency

Palestine Avenue

Azerbaijan Intercession

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegrams: President Rafsanjani, Tehran, Iran

Telexes: 214231 MITI IR; 213113 PRIM IR

(marked for the attention of President Rafsanjani)

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) His Excellency Ayatollah
Seyyed Ali Khamenei
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intercession
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: 214231 MITI IR; 213113 PRIM IR
Salutation: Your Excellency

2) His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Head of the Judiciary
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Tehran, Iran
Telegrams: 214231 MITI IR; 213113 PRIM IR
(marked for the attention of the Interior Minister)
Salutation: Your Excellency

3) His Excellency
Mohammad Ali Besharati Jahromi
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
Dr Fatemi Avenue
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Interior Minister Noori, Tehran, Iran
Telegrams: 214231 MITI IR, 213113 PRIM IR
(marked for the attention of the Interior Minister)
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
Dr Ali Akbar Velayati
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

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 23 February 1994.