

Further information on UA 160/99 - Death Penalty/Unfair Trial/Torture

22 February 2000

IRAN Akbar Mohammadi, student

Akbar Mohammadi, who was sentenced to death after an unfair trial, has reportedly had his sentence upheld by the Supreme Court, and may face imminent execution. His sentence can only be commuted by Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He has reportedly been beaten and tortured in detention by having the soles of his feet whipped with a cable.

Akbar Mohammadi was sentenced to death in September 1999 by Tehran's Revolutionary Court, in connection with last July's student demonstrations. Two other students, Ahmad Batebi and Ali Shafei, were sentenced to death with him, but according to recent reports in **the newspapers** *Fath* (Victory) and *Asr-e-Azadegan* (Era of the Free) their sentences have been commuted to 10 and two and a half years' imprisonment respectively.

Amnesty International is concerned that all three were sentenced after secret trials at special courts whose procedures fall short of minimum international standards for fair trial.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Akbar Mohammadi is the brother of Manuchehr Mohammadi, a leading member of *Anjoman-e Daneshjuyan va Daneshamukhtegan Melli* (National Association of Students and Graduates), who was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in connection with the student demonstrations (see UA MDE 13/14/99, 4 November 1999 and UA MDE 13/21/99, 30 July 1999). Amnesty International is concerned that a large number of those arrested for their involvement in the demonstrations are still detained without charge or trial.

The peaceful student demonstrations of July 1999 were against new laws curbing press freedom and the closure of the daily newspaper *Salam*. Members of the vigilante student group *Ansar-e Hezbollah* who attacked the demonstrators were joined by members of the security forces, resulting in at least one death (see UA MDE 13/15/99, 9 July 1999, UA MDE 13/16/99, 13 July 1999 and Public Statement MDE 13/18/99, 14 July 1999).

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

- urging the authorities to commute the death sentence against Akbar Mohammadi immediately, and, if he has been charged with a recognisably criminal offence, seeking information on the laws under which these charges were brought;
- reminding the authorities of their commitment as signatories to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), in particular Article 6: "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law...Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence. Amnesty, pardon or commutation of the sentence of death may be granted in all cases."
- expressing serious concern at reports that Akbar Mohammadi was tortured, in contravention of Article 7 of the ICCPR, which states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment", and calling for the allegation to be investigated, and for any evidence obtained as a result of torture to be disregarded;

- seeking details of the trial proceedings brought against all three individuals, and expressing concern that they may have been convicted after trials that fall short of minimum international standards for fair trial;
- seeking information on the status and well-being of everyone still detained in connection with the demonstrations, and urging that they be released immediately if they are detained solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs.

APPEALS TO:

1)Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei,
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue,
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Ayatollah Khamenei, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

2)President

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: President Khatami, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

3)Head of Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi-Shahrudi
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs,

His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr Mohammad Hassan Zia'i-Far

Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Commission
PO Box 13165-137, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Faxes: + 98 21 204 0541

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 4 April 2000.