

# URGENT ACTION

## FIVE AHWAZI ARAB MEN FACE IMMINENT EXECUTION

**Five members of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority may be at imminent risk of execution after their death sentences were upheld by the Supreme Court of Iran. All five were transferred out of Karoun Prison to an unknown location on 18 January.**

On 9 January, the families of the five men, **Mohammad Ali Amouri**, **Sayed Jaber Alboshoka** and his brother **Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka**, and teachers **Hashem Sha'bani Amouri** and **Hadi Rashidi (or Rashedi)** were informed that their death sentences had been upheld by Branch 32 of the Supreme Court. The verdict has been sent to the Office for the Implementation of Sentences, which means that the sentence could be carried out at any time. The prison authorities told the men's families on 18 January that they had been moved out of Karoun Prison, but did not say where they had been moved to.

The men had been arrested in connection with their peaceful activities on behalf of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority. They were originally sentenced to death on 7 July 2012 by Branch 2 of the Ahwaz Revolutionary Court, which had convicted them of charges including "enmity against God and corruption on earth", "gathering and colluding against state security" and "spreading propaganda against the system". Two of the men were shown "confessing" on a government television channel before the trial. All five men were denied access to a lawyer and their families for the first nine months of their detention. All five are believed to have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated.

### **Please write immediately in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:**

- Calling on the authorities to stop the executions of the five men (naming them), overturn their death sentences and grant them retrials in proceedings which comply with fair trial standards, without recourse to the death penalty;
- Calling on them to disclose the whereabouts of the five men, ensure they are protected from torture and other ill-treatment, urging them to investigate allegations that they were tortured, bring those responsible to justice and disregard as evidence in court "confessions" that may have been coerced;
- Calling on them to ensure that the men are granted any medical attention they may require, and are allowed immediate and regular contact with their lawyers and families.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 MARCH 2013 TO:**

#### Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid  
Keshvar Doust Street,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: [info\\_leader@leader.ir](mailto:info_leader@leader.ir)  
Twitter: "Call on #Iran leader  
@khamenei\_ir "overturn death  
sentences of five Ahwazi men"

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani  
c/o Public Relations Office  
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection  
Tehran  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: [info@dadiran.ir](mailto:info@dadiran.ir) (Subject  
line: FAO Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani)

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Secretary General High Council for Human Rights

Mohammed Javad Larijani  
c/o Office of the Head of the Judiciary  
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave  
South of Serah-e Jomhour  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: [larijani@ipm.ir](mailto:larijani@ipm.ir)  
(Subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad  
Larijani)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 137/12. Further information: <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/049/2012/en> and <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/029/2012/en>.

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The five men are members or co-founders of the cultural institute Al-Hiwar, registered during the administration of former President Khatami, which organizes events in the Arabic language including conferences, educational and art classes, and poetry recital gatherings in the south-western city of Ramshir. The organization was banned in May 2005, and many members of Al-Hiwar have since been arrested.

All five men were arrested at their homes in spring 2011 in advance of the sixth anniversary of widespread protests by Ahwazi Arabs in April 2005. Mohammad Ali Amouri was arrested 20 days after he had been forcibly returned from Iraq, where he had fled in December 2007. He was not allowed family visits for the first nine months after detention and was reportedly tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Hadi Rashidi was hospitalized after his arrest, apparently as a result of torture or other ill-treatment, and is said to be in poor health. Family members have said that Sayed Jaber Alboshoka's jaw and teeth were broken during his detention and that Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka has experienced depression and memory loss as a result of torture or other ill-treatment. Hashem Sha'bani Amouri is said to have had boiling water poured on him.

Hashem Sha'bani Amouri and Hadi Rashidi were featured in a programme aired by Iran's state-controlled English-language television station, Press TV, on 13 December 2011. Hashem Sha'bani said he was a "member of the "Popular Resistance" (al-Moghavema al-Sha'bia)" which he said had ties to Saddam Hussein and Mu'ammarr al-Gaddafi, the former leaders of Iraq and Libya. Hadi Rashidi was described as "the leader of the military wing of al-Moghavema al-Sha'bia" and said he had participated in an attack against a house containing four government officials. Iranian courts frequently accept "confessions" extracted under duress as evidence.

A sixth man arrested around the same time and tried alongside the five, teacher Rahman Asakereh, was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment to be served in internal exile. His sentence was upheld in January 2013.

Another Ahwazi Arab man, Taha Heidarian, was shown in the same programme making a "confession" in connection with the killing of a law enforcement official in April 2011 amid widespread protests in Khuzestan. On or around 19 June 2012, he and three other Ahwazi Arab men were executed in Karoun Prison, according to activists close to the family, after apparently being convicted by a Revolutionary Court of "enmity against God and corruption on earth" in connection with the killing.

Under Article 38 of the Iranian Constitution and Article 9 of the Law on Respect for Legitimate Freedoms and Safeguarding Citizens' Rights, all forms of torture for the purpose of obtaining "confessions" are prohibited. Iran's Penal Code also provides for the punishment of officials who torture citizens in order to obtain "confessions". However, despite these legal and constitutional guarantees regarding the inadmissibility of testimony, oath, or confession taken under duress, forced "confessions" are sometimes broadcast on television even before the trial has concluded and are generally accepted as evidence in Iranian courts. Such broadcasts violate Iran's fair trial obligations under Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which it is a state party. They also violate Iranian law, including Article 37 of the Constitution, Article 2 of the 2004 Law on Respect for Legitimate Freedoms and Safeguarding Citizens' Rights and Note One to Article 188 of Iran's Criminal Code of Procedure which criminalizes the publishing of the name and identity of a convict in the media before a final sentence has been passed.

Name: Mohammad Ali Amouri, Sayed Jaber Alboshoka, Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka, Hashem Sha'bani Amouri, Hadi Rashidi.  
Gender m/f: M

Further information on UA: 137/12 Index: MDE 13/004/2013 Issue Date: 22 January 2013