

EXTRA 75/02

Fear of i

IRAN Five men, names unknown

Reza Parsa (m), aged 21

Arash Tajbakhsh (m)

Five men, whose identities are not known, are reportedly scheduled to be executed simultaneously at 7.30am on 29 September, in five different districts across Tehran. Amnesty International does not know the scheduled execution time of Reza Parsa and Arash Tajbakhsh, but fears that their execution may also be imminent.

According to a report in the 25 September edition of the *Jam-e-Jam* daily newspaper, the death sentences passed on the five unnamed individuals had been upheld. It is not known when they were upheld by the Supreme Court. In the course of their trial at Branch 1610 of the Tehran judiciary (*Mojtame'-ye Qaza'i*), they reportedly expressed their regret at their acts and "sought forgiveness and pardon".

All five men were reportedly members of a gang known as *Karkas-haye Siyah*, or Black Vultures. This gang had allegedly been convicted of numerous offences, including rape, murder, armed robbery, drug trafficking and blasphemy.

According to a report on 24 September in the the *E'temad* daily newspaper, the death sentence passed on Reza Parsa was upheld by Branch 33 of the Supreme Court. He was convicted in connection with the murder of his father, in an act which he reportedly claimed was intended to defend his brother. A number of relatives of the victim have reportedly not sought his execution. The same report stated that Branch 32 of the Supreme Court upheld the death sentence passed on Arash Tajbakhsh in connection with a murder committed five years ago.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International has recorded 60 executions so far this year in Iran, although the true figure may be much higher. Last year Amnesty International issued a public statement, in which it urged the authorities to urgently consider a moratorium on executions, as called for by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2000 and 2001 (see News Service 146, AI Index MDE 13/031/2001, 17 August 2001).

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 6 (4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which states that "Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence."

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Farsi, Arabic or your own language:**

- urging that the death sentences imposed on Reza Parsa, Arash Tajbakhsh and the five unnamed men be commuted immediately, possibly by means of commutation of their sentences by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in line with Article 6 (4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party;
- expressing your sympathy for the victims of violent crime and recognizing the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but stating your unconditional opposition to

the death penalty irrespective of the crime for which it is imposed, as the ultimate violation of the right to life;

- seeking details of the trials of the seven men involved, including details of any appeals against their convictions;
- urging judicial officials to inform the families of the victims (those killed) of their right to spare those convicted from the carrying out of the sentence, converting it to life imprisonment;
- reminding the Iranian authorities of their commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 3: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

**APPEALS TO:**

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**

**Email: webmaster@wilayah.org; (on the subject line write: For the attention of the office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei, Qom)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

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**

**E-mail: khatami@president.ir**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi  
Ministry of Justice  
Park-e Shahr  
Tehran  
Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegrams: Head of Judiciary, Tehran, Iran**

**Faxes: + 98 21 879 6671 (number may be unreliable; please mark "care of Director of International Affairs, Judiciary")**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**