

**IRANAzizullah Shenwari (m), Pakistani national, aged 13**

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Amnesty International has just learned that 13-year-old Azizullah Shenwari has reportedly been sentenced to death and may be executed. It is not known whether his case has been appealed, or whether it has already been ratified by the Supreme Court, which has to ratify all death sentences.

Azizullah Shenwari is a Pakistani national. He has been living in Iran at least since April 2000, when he contacted his family in Pakistan and told them that he had been kidnapped from Pakistan and taken to Iran to work in a factory. In November, the Iranian authorities reportedly informed his family that he had been arrested, charged with drug trafficking and sentenced to death.

The imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons under the age of 18 violates Articles 6 and 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which Iran is a state party. Article 6 states that "State Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life", and Article 37 states "Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age". The execution of children also breaches customary international law.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases on the grounds that it is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and violates the right to life.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In the last six years only five countries are known to have executed child offenders: USA (eight); Pakistan (one); Democratic Republic of Congo (one); Nigeria (one); and Iran (three).

Unconfirmed reports indicate that at least two child offenders have been executed in Iran in the last year. On 29 May 18-year-old Mehrdad Yousefi was reportedly hanged in a prison in Iran for a crime that he committed at the age of 16. On 14 October 2000, 18-year-old Ali Ayedeh was reportedly hanged in public in the Western province of Ilam. He had been sentenced to death at the age of 13, and had been imprisoned since.

Article 1210 (1) of the Iranian Civil Code states that persons under 18 years of age may be prosecuted for crimes in the same manner as adults, without special procedures, and may be held in detention with adults.

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

- urging the Iranian authorities to commute the death sentence against Azizullah Shenwari, noting that his execution would violate Articles 6 and 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- seeking details of the trial proceedings and any appeals related to his case, and calling for him to be granted full and immediate access to family members, legal assistance and medical attention as necessary;
- asking to be informed of his exact place of detention, and for clarification regarding whether juvenile courts and detention centres have been established in line with previous commitments made by the authorities;

urging the Iranian authorities to take immediate steps to halt and eventually abolish the imposition of the death penalty, particularly for crimes committed by persons under 18 years of age.

**APPEALS TO:**

Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei  
c/o The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegrams: Ayatollah Khamenei, Tehran, Iran**

**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 21 537 8827 (This number may be unreliable. A recorded message in English will indicate when to send the fax - please send before it gives you the voice message tone)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

President

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam Sayed Mohammad Khatami  
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegrams: President Khatami, Tehran, Iran**

**Faxes: + 98 21 649 5880**

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

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

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**

**E-mail: ihrc@Majlis.ir**

Parliamentary Committee

Mohsen Mirdamadi Najafabadi  
Article 90 Commission (Komisyon-e Asl-e Navad), Majles-e Shura-ye Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegrams: Majles, Tehran or Telex: 21 42 32 ICAI IR**

**Faxes: + 98 21 646 1746 (Can be difficult to reach, please be patient)**

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 3 August 2001.