

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/21/99

30 July 1999

Further information on UA 170/99 (MDE 13/19/99, 20 July 1999) - Possible "disappearance" / Fear for safety and new concern - Unfair trial / Death penalty

**IRANManuchehr Mohammadi
Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad
Maryam Shansi (f)**

Amnesty International fears that the three student activists named above, and possibly others, may face trials which fall far short of international standards for fair trial and which may result in mandatory death sentences.

This follows reports that, on 19 and 26 July 1999, Iranian State television broadcast two separate video recordings of "confessions" by student leader Manuchehr Mohammadi and then a series of statements issued by the Ministry of Information linked to the two video tapes. The organization is concerned that these "confessions" may have been extracted under duress.

Although the majority of students arrested in the aftermath of the demonstrations that began on 8 July have now been released, hundreds are reportedly still detained. A number of others, including four members of the Iran Nation Party have recently been arrested following Manuchehr Mohammadi's "confession".

One of the statements by the Ministry of Information refers to those arrested for their involvement in student protests as "saboteurs" and says that Manuchehr Mohammadi is "one of the influential persons responsible for the recent unrest". It goes on to say that he "coordinated efforts with a fugitive counter-revolutionary element and secured his assistance to go to America. During a two-month stay in that country, he met and conferred with spies and fugitive Zionist elements in various (American) cities. During these meetings, he obtained the necessary guidelines to organize political student associations to attract other people and ultimately to initiate and spread disorder and violence". Such charges in a Revolutionary Court would carry a mandatory death penalty.

In his introduction to the edited videotape "confession", the television announcer said that Manuchehr Mohammadi had confessed to receiving promises of financial aid from "spies and fugitive Zionist elements" he had met in the United States even though he reportedly made no mention of these in the recording.

Amnesty International regards the repeated broadcasting of videotaped "confessions" of Manuchehr Mohammadi by the State television and the accompanying statements by the Ministry of Information to be a gross violation of Article 11(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that "Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees for his defence".

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

- seeking urgent clarification of the circumstances in which the "confession" of Manuchehr Mohammadi was obtained;

- calling for allegations that detainees were tortured to be promptly investigated and for any evidence obtained as a result to be disregarded;
- urging the authorities to release the three student activists named above immediately and unconditionally if they are detained solely for the peaceful expression of their conscientiously held beliefs;
- asking if they have been charged with recognisably criminal offences, and seeking information about the laws under which they have been charged, together with details of any trial proceedings.

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
Salutation: Your Excellency

President

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

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
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

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 10 September 1999.