

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/023/2003

17 July 2003

**Further Information on UA 204/03 (MDE 13/018/2003, 10 July 2003) Fear for safety/ Incommunicado detention/ Risk of torture and ill-treatment**

IRAN	Ali Moghtadari (m)	]	
	Reza Ameri Nassab (m)	]	student leaders
	Arash Hashemi (m)	]	
New names:	Said Razavi Faghih (m)	]	student leaders
	Mehdi Habibi (m)	]	

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Student leader Ali Moghtadari was released hours after his arrest on 9 July. Amnesty International is not aware of any charges against him. There is no further information on the status of the other student leaders, Reza Ameri Nassab and Arash Hashemi. The three men, all leaders of *Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat*, Organization for the Consolidation of Unity (OCU), were arrested after holding an open press conference at Tehran University on 9 July, calling for freedom of expression, profound political reforms and the release of fellow students. Concerns remain for their safety.

Said Razavi Faghih, Political Secretary of the OCU and a member of the editorial team of the newspaper *Yas-e No* was reportedly detained on 10 July while in front of the offices of the Association of Journalists, a non-governmental organization. The plain clothed individuals who detained him are reported to have been security agency officials. It is not known where he was taken or where he is being held.

Amnesty International is also concerned for the safety of Mehdi Habibi, a member of the Central Committee of the Islamic Student Association of Amir Kabir University in Tehran, who was reportedly detained on 11 July. There is no further information about the circumstances of his arrest or his current whereabouts.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The arrests of the OCU members and members of affiliated Islamic Associations in various universities is widely seen as the Iranian judiciary's reaction to an open letter addressed to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, published by the OCU on 7 July. The open letter provided specific details of human rights violations in Iran and called for an end to political and social apartheid in the country.

Scores of students and other demonstrators "disappeared" and thousands of others were arrested during demonstrations, which started on 11 June when nearly 80 students living in student dormitories in the Amir Abad area of Tehran protested against draft proposals to privatize universities in Iran, fearing that tuition fees would rise as a result. They were joined by local residents and the demonstration reportedly escalated and became increasingly politicized. Organized groups of non-uniformed, plain clothed individuals, who in Iran are widely called the "*lebas shakhsi-ha*" (the plain clothed) began to attack the demonstrators and police intervened to end the clashes. As the demonstrations grew over the following nights, units of the Special Forces (*Nirou-ye Vijeh*) were deployed to disperse demonstrators. However, there were reports that the Special Forces permitted some of the *lebas shakhsi-ha* to attack peaceful demonstrators and that in certain instances, excessive force was used to break up the demonstrations. According to press reports, up to 4,000 individuals were arrested. Two thousand individuals reportedly remain in detention in connection with their alleged involvement in the demonstrations.

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

- seeking clarification of the whereabouts and legal status of Reza Ameri Nassab, Arash Hashemi, Said Razavi Faghih and Mehdi Habibi;
- seeking assurances that Reza Ameri Nassab, Arash Hashemi, Said Razavi Faghih and Mehdi Habibi will be humanely treated;
- calling for the four detainees to be granted immediate access to their lawyer, relatives and any medical treatment they might need;
- reminding the authorities that confessions extracted under duress are prohibited by Iranian law and a violation of Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party. It states that "No one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment."
- calling for all those found responsible of torture of prisoners to be brought to justice in fair trials;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into the conduct of the police and security forces in the course of the demonstrations, notably with respect to the attacks carried out by plain-clothed militants on peaceful demonstrators.

**APPEALS TO:**

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed >Ali Khamenei,

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegram: His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed >Ali Khamenei, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran**

**E-mail:** [webmaster@wilayah.org](mailto:webmaster@wilayah.org) (address may be unreliable; please try to resend if returned; 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

**Telegram: His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran**

**E-mail:** [khatami@president.ir](mailto:khatami@president.ir) (please resend your message if it does not get through the first time)

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrud

Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegram: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran**

**Fax: + 98 21 879 6671 (please keep trying; please mark "care of Director of International Affairs, Judiciary")**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

Minister of Foreign Affairs,

His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax: + 98 21 390 1999 (please keep trying; please mark "care of the Human Rights Department, Foreign Ministry")**

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 28 August 2003.

