

EXTERNAL

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Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishment

11 August 1997

IRANMahmoud Jafari

An Iranian court in Tehran is reported to have sentenced Mahmoud Jafari to be burnt with acid.

In February 1997 Hamid Khoshnevis reportedly hired Mahmoud Jafari and another man to carry out an acid attack on Fa'ezeh Mahmoudikia, after his request for marriage to her was rejected by her father. The court ruled that the family could exact the same punishment as the crime and that the 17-year-old girl and her 10-year-old sister could throw acid on the attacker. Hamid Khoshnevis was sentenced to 15 years' in prison and the second assailant to 10 years' imprisonment and internal exile. Reports state that the two sisters are to appeal against the court verdict because they want a harsher punishment against Hamid Khoshnevis, who ordered the acid attack.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The law of Qesas, part of the Islamic Penal Code, permits the imposition of an identical retaliatory punishment in cases of premeditated physical injury.

Amnesty International, while acknowledging the right of states to punish anyone found guilty of violent criminal offences, considers burning with acid to be a cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment prohibited internationally by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

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

- appealing for the sentence of burning with acid against Mahmoud Jafari to be commuted to a more humane punishment;
- expressing concern at the penalty of burning with acid as a judicial punishment for any offence, as it is a form of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, contrary to Article 7 of the ICCPR, to which Iran is state party.

APPEALS TO:

1) 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

2) President

Hojjatoleslam 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

3) 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

4) Minister of the Interior

His Excellency Mohammad Ali Besharati Jahromi
Ministry of the Interior
Dr Fatemi Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Minister of the Interior, Tehran, Iran
Faxes: +98 21 899 547/650203 (note: it can be difficult to obtain fax tone)
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
His Excellency Dr Ali Akbar Velayati
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: +98-21-674790

Chairman of the Islamic Consultative
Assembly's Human Rights Committee
Iman Khomeini Avenue, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

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Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Committee
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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 27 September 1997.**