

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/035/2003

23 October 2003

Further Information on EXTRA 44/03 (MDE 13/032/2003, 25 September 2003) Fear of imminent execution

IRAN Afsaneh Norouzi (note amended spelling), (f), aged 34

Following national and international pressure, the Head of the Judiciary, Ayatollah Hashemi Shahroudi, has reportedly ordered that the execution of Afsaneh Norouzi should not be carried out "for the moment" (*fe'lan*).

Afsaneh Norouzi's lawyer revealed news of the stay of execution in an interview for the Tehran daily newspaper, *E'temad*, on 14 October. However, Amnesty International is not aware of any judicial initiative to review her case.

Afsaneh Norouzi's lawyer has reportedly appealed to the National Security Commission in connection with her case, and Afsaneh Norouzi has written to the judiciary about her fate. According to reports, a group of women parliamentarians in Iran, including Elahe Koula'ie and Soheyla Jelodarzadeh, had sought the assistance of the Speaker of Parliament, Hojjatoleslam Mehdi Karroubi in order to halt the execution. The group is carrying out its own enquiries into the case, and is expecting the judiciary to carry out a review of the case in a competent court.

The author of an unsigned appeal dated 5 October 2003 and published on the *Women in Iran* website (<http://www.womeniniran.org>) urged the family of the man allegedly killed by Afsaneh Norouzi to pardon her. In the letter, the author writes "Tomorrow, when they have grown up, [her children] will have to read the names of the signatories from all over the world, who signed the appeal of Amnesty International calling for her to be pardoned. And in their thoughts they will have to give a response –one by one – to the signatories, [saying] why Afsaneh Norouzi died..."

Afsaneh Norouzi was reportedly arrested in 1997 after killing the Head of Police Intelligence in Kish, southern Iran. She allegedly acted in self-defence in order to protect herself from being raped. Her death sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court (*Divan-e Âli-ye Keshvar*) in August 2003.

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

- welcoming the postponement of the execution of Afsaneh Norouzi,
- urging the authorities carry out a thorough review of the case with a view to reviewing Article 61 of the Penal Code, which details the limits of self-defence;
- recognizing the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences;
- urging that the death sentence imposed on Afsaneh Norouzi be commuted immediately, since it is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- seeking trial details of the case against Afsaneh Norouzi, including details of the review of the sentence that was carried out by the Supreme Court (*Divan-e Âli-ye Keshvar*);
- urging the authorities to ensure that the victim's family is made aware of its right, under Islamic law, to pardon the condemned;
- urging the authorities to establish a commission to investigate cases of violence against women.

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 (on the subject line write: For the attention of the office of
His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei, Qom)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Foreign Policy Advisor to the Leader

Ali Akbar Velayati, MD

Foreign Policy Advisor to the Leader

Office of His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue,

Azerbaijan Intersection

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegram: Foreign Policy Advisor to Leader, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Dear Sir

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi

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

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

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

Email: Irjpr@iranjudiciary.org (Public Relations Office of Judiciary; please mark for the
attention of HE Ayatollah Shahrudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

National Human Rights Organization

Mr Mohammad Hassan Zia'i-Far

Secretary General, Islamic Human Rights Commission

PO Box 13165-137,

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 204 0541

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 4 December 2003.