

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/036/2001

11 September 2001

Further information on UA 182/00 (MDE 13/13/00, 27 June 2000) and follow-up (MDE 13/027/00, 6 September 2000; MDE 13/007/2001, 1 March 2001; MDE 13/021/2001, 27 June 2001) - Fear of ill-treatment/prisoners of conscience

IRANEzzatollah Sahabi (m), aged 70, journalist
Khalil Rostamkhani (m), aged 47, translator

On 27 August the Supreme Court upheld the sentence of prisoner of conscience Khalil Rostamkhani. He has been arrested and imprisoned for eight years in connection with a conference debating political and social reform held in Berlin in April 2000. According to the verdict, Khalil Rostamkhani's sentence is due in part to his "bad political record".

Although the court ruled that he must serve his sentence in the city of Bandar Abbas, in the south of Iran, he was taken from his house to Tehran's Evin prison immediately after the verdict was announced and it is not known how long he will be required to stay there.

The Supreme Court reduced Khalil Rostamkhani's prison sentence from nine to eight years but on the same day upheld the 10-year prison sentence of another translator involved in the conference, Said Sadr. His sentence is to be served in the town of Birjand. At the moment Khalil Rostamkhani and Said Sadr are sharing a cell. Both men are reportedly seeking a re-trial.

Ezzatollah Sahabi, who was re-arrested in December 2000, remains in prison, although he was allowed to meet his family at his father's house on 15 July. Despite official statements to the contrary and family pleas, Ezzatollah Sahabi reportedly remains in solitary confinement.

Following the trial concerning his participation at the Berlin conference, a lower court sentenced Ezzatollah Sahabi to four and a half years' imprisonment for "Propaganda against the Islamic system by implying the existence in Iran of an atmosphere of suppression and censorship".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Many participants in the Berlin conference remain in prison following unfair trials while others wait for their trials or appeal hearings. All those detained in connection with the conference are considered to be prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International (see EXTRA 43/00, MDE 13/003/2001).

Their arrest and imprisonment forms part of an ongoing clampdown on freedom of expression in Iran by the judiciary.

Many thanks to all those who sent appeals. Amnesty International will continue to work on these cases using other campaigning methods. Please send a final round of appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, French or your own language:

- urging that prisoners of conscience Khalil Rostamkhani, Ezzatollah Sahabi and Said Sadr be released immediately and unconditionally, and that all others imprisoned solely for the peaceful expression of their conscientiously held beliefs also be released;
- seeking guarantees that Ezzatollah Sahabi will be treated humanely in detention, in accordance with international human rights commitments and Iranian law;

- reminding the authorities of their obligations as a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, notably Article 9, which states that "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention".

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

Telegrams: President Khatami, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Faxes: + 98 21 649 5880

E-mails: khatami@president.ir

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, Islamic Republic of Iran

Faxes: + 98 21 537 8827 (number may be unreliable. A recorded message, in English, will indicate when to send fax - please send before it gives you the tone to leave a voice message)

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

Faxes: + 98 21 390 1999 (Human Rights Department)

E-mail: matbuat@mfa.gov.ir (please ask for the message to be forwarded to the Human Rights Department)

Salutation: Your Excellency

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

Telex: 21 42 32 ICAI IR

Faxes: + 98 21 646 1746

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 15 October 2001.