

EXTRA 75/01

Imminent**IRAN7 men, names unknown**

Amnesty International is gravely concerned that two men are at imminent risk of public execution after their death sentences were upheld by the Supreme Court, and that five others will be publicly flogged following their conviction for sexual, alcohol and drug-related offences.

According to press reports of 7 and 8 November, the head of Bench Seven of Qom General Court, Hojjatoleslam Ehsan Rezaie, reportedly stated that the two men will be hanged in public "soon" and that five accomplices will be flogged in various public squares in Qom, Central Iran. The names of the men are unknown and no date was given for when the sentences will be carried out.

The executions will go ahead unless the men are pardoned by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, or the victims' families.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has recorded 125 executions and 270 cases of flogging as having been carried out so far this year in Iran, although the true figures for both may be much higher.

On 17 August, Amnesty International issued a public statement in which it expressed its grave concern over the dramatic increase in executions, and urged the authorities to urgently consider a moratorium on executions as called for by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2000 and 2001. On 10 August, a medical action (MDE 13/028/2001) was issued in which health professionals wrote to the Iranian authorities expressing their concern at the dramatic increase in use of public floggings in Iran.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party. Article 6 of the ICCPR states "In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes". As there were no lethal consequences in this case, the death sentences should be commuted immediately. Amnesty International also considers the punishment of flogging to constitute cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment amounting to torture, in contravention of the ICCPR to which Iran is a state party.

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

- seeking information on the identities and trial details of the seven men involved in the case, including details of any appeals against their convictions;
- urging that the death sentences imposed on the two men be commuted immediately and urging that the victims' families be made aware of their right to pardon the two men;
- expressing concern at reports that five men are to be publicly flogged and urging that the sentences not be carried out;
- reminding the Iranian authorities of their commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 3: "Everyone has the right

to life, liberty and security of person.", while recognizing the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei
c/o The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegrams: Ayatollah Khamenei, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Faxes: +98 21 649 5880 (ask for fax to be forwarded to Leader)

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 Shahrud
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) or +98 21 311 6567 (ask for fax to be forwarded to Head of Judiciary)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Director, Organisation for Defending Victims of Violence

PO Box 16765-911, Tehran, Iran

Faxes: + 98 21 896 3091

E-mail: odvv@neda.net

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 20 December 2001