

Further Information on UA 301/06 (MDE 13/126/2006, 13 November 2006) and follow-up (MDE 13/123/2006, 7 December 2006; MDE 13/142/2006; 22 December 2006, MDE 13/006/2007, 25 January 2007) - Fear of imminent execution

IRAN **Abdulreza Sanawati Zergani (m)**
 Abdul Husain Haribi (m)
 Husain Maramazi (m)
 Husain Asakreh (m)

Executed: **Qasem Salamat (m) aged 43**
 Majed Alboghubaish (m)

Qasem Salamat and Majed Alboghubaish were reportedly executed on 14 February in a prison in Khuzestan province. The two men were reportedly convicted, together with eight others, of being *mohareb* (at enmity with God) on account of their alleged involvement in bomb attacks in 2005 in Ahvaz city, Khuzestan province.

On 13 November 2006, Qasem Salamat, Majed Alboghubaish and the eight others were reportedly shown on Khuzestan Provincial TV "confessing" to their involvement in the bomb explosions. In the programme, they were said to be members of a group named *Al-e Naser*, (a little-known Iranian Arab militant group that is not known to have been active since the time of the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s).

Early reports stated that Abdulreza Sanawati Zergani had also been executed on 14 February, along with Qasem Salamat and Majed Alboghubaish. However, further reports suggest that his execution was temporarily postponed and that a teacher, Risan Sawari was executed instead of him (see latest update to UA 57/06, MDE 13/041/2007, 2 April 2007).

On 10 January 2007, three UN Special Rapporteurs -- on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; on the independence of judges and lawyers; and on torture -- jointly called on the government of Iran to "stop the imminent execution of seven men belonging to the Ahwazi Arab minority and grant them a fair and public hearing." The UN experts stated: "We are fully aware that these men are accused of serious crimes .. However, this cannot justify their conviction and execution after trials that made a mockery of due process requirements."

Six of the seven individuals to whom the UN experts referred, including Qasem Salamat and Majed Alboghubaish, have now been executed.

In an interview with the Netherlands-based Radio Zamaneh in January 2006, Iranian human rights defender, Emadeddin Baghi, stated that the seven "did not have access to lawyers and were kept in solitary confinement for months. They did not receive a fair trial."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Much of Iran's Arab community lives in the province of Khuzestan which borders Iraq. It is strategically important because it is the site of much of Iran's oil reserves, but the Arab population does not feel it has benefited as much from the oil revenue as the Persian population. Historically, the Arab community has been marginalised and discriminated against. Tension has mounted among the Arab population since April 2005, after it was alleged that the government planned to disperse the country's Arab population or to force them to relinquish their Arab identity. Hundreds have been arrested and there have been reports of torture. Following bomb explosions in Ahvaz City in June and October 2005, which killed at least 14 people, and explosions at oil installations in September and October 2005, the cycle of violence has intensified, with hundreds of people reportedly arrested. Further bombings on 24 January 2006, in which at least six people were killed, were followed by further mass arrests. A total of 12 men have been executed as a result of their alleged involvement in the bombings.

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

- expressing grave concern at the execution of Qasem Salamat and Majed Alboghubaish and that the four remaining men (naming them) may be in imminent danger of execution;
- urging the Iranian authorities to commute their death sentences immediately;
- expressing concern that their trials appear to have been unfair, and asking for details of their trial proceedings, including whether they were granted access to independent lawyers of their choice, and, if indeed convicted and sentenced to death, whether they have been allowed to appeal against their convictions and sentences, as required by Article 14 (5) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- expressing concern that the men may have been compelled to testify against themselves or to confess guilt during interrogations which did not respect the necessary human rights safeguards, such as the right of access to legal counsel;
- acknowledging that governments have a responsibility to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but stating your

unconditional opposition to the death penalty, as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violation of the right to life.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir OR istiftaa@wilayah.org

Fax: + 98 251 774 2228 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying; send appeals by post or email if you cannot get through)

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: For the attention of Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

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

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir

via website: www.president.ir/email

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel

Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 6 646 1746

Salutation: Your Excellency

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 May 2007.
