

URGENT ACTION

FOUR ARAB MEN EXECUTED; FATE OF ONE UNKNOWN

At least four members of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority are believed to have been executed in the south-western province of Khuzestan on or around 18 June. The fate of a fifth man held in the same case is unknown.

Three brothers, **Abd al-Rahman Heidarian** (also known as Heidari), **Taha Heidarian** and **Jamshid Heidarian** were executed on or around 18 June, along with a man called **Ali Sharifi**. A man believed to be their cousin **Mansour Heidarian** was taken with them to an unknown location from Karoun Prison, in the provincial capital, Ahvaz, on or around 9 June; it is not known what happened to him. Other prisoners told relatives that prison officials told them that all of the men were being taken for the implementation of their sentences imposed after they were convicted of charges including *moharebeh va ifsad fil-arz* ("enmity against God and corruption on earth") for the killing of at least one person, said to be a law enforcement official, in April 2011. Their families have said the men "confessed" to the killing following torture and other ill-treatment. "Confessions" extracted under duress are frequently accepted as evidence in Iranian courts. It is not known when they were put on trial or if they had any legal representation.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and as a violation of the right to life, and is calling for all death sentences in Iran to be overturned or commuted.

Please write immediately in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:

- Expressing dismay at reports of the executions of Abd al-Rahman Heidarian, Taha Heidarian, Jamshid Heidarian and Ali Sharifi, and calling on the authorities to clarify the fate of Mansour Heidarian, informing his family immediately, and not execute him if he is still on death row;
- Asking about the trial of these five men and a sixth man, Amir Muawi (or Mo'avi), including whether they had access to lawyers of their choice;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that all those held are protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and are immediately granted regular access to their families, their lawyers and adequate medical care.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 AUGUST 2012 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic
Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid
Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info_leader@leader.ir
Twitter: "#Iran leader @khamenei_ir:
clarify fate of death row inmate Mansour
Heidarian

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
[care of] Public relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street
Vali Asr Ave., above Pasteur Street
intersection, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@dadiran.ir (Subject line: FAO
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani)
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Secretary General, High Council for
Human Rights
Mohammad Javad Larijani
High Council for Human Rights
[Care of] Office of the Head of the
Judiciary, Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave.
south of Serah-e Jomhouri, Tehran
1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@humanrights-iran.ir
(subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad
Larijani)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 77/12. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/013/2012/en>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

FOUR ARAB MEN EXECUTED; FATE OF ONE UNKNOWN

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The men are believed to have been arrested in April 2011 in Ahvaz, during unrest taking place across Khuzestan province, and were detained incommunicado for many months. On or around 5 March 2012, Ministry of Intelligence officials told their families that the Supreme Court had upheld death sentences handed down to at least five men, who would be executed in public "in the next few days". One man, Amir Muawi (or Mo'avi), thought previously to have been sentenced to death, has been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment to be served in "internal exile", far away from his home.

The Ahwazi Arab minority is one of many minorities in Iran. Much of Iran's Arab community lives in the oil-rich south-western province of Khuzestan. Most are Shi'a Muslims but some of those are reported to have converted to Sunni Islam, heightening government suspicion about Ahwazi Arabs. Some Sunni Arab communities live in southwest Iran, on the shores of the Persian Gulf. Minority Arab citizens have repeatedly drawn attention to their marginalization in Iran and the way in which they are subject to discrimination in access to education, employment, adequate housing, political participation and cultural rights.

There were mass demonstrations in Khuzestan province in April 2005, followed by a series of bombings and mass arrests after it was alleged that the government planned to disperse the country's Arab population or to attempt to limit their peaceful exercise of their right as a minority – as provided by international human rights standards - to enjoy their own culture and use their own language. At least 15 men were later executed for their alleged involvement in the bombings.

Scores, if not hundreds, of members of the Ahwazi Arab minority were reportedly arrested before, during and after demonstrations on 15 April 2011. Some were reportedly tortured or otherwise ill-treated; at least four Ahwazi Arab men reportedly died in custody between 23 March and mid-May 2011, possibly as a result of torture or other ill-treatment. At least eight Ahwazi Arabs were subsequently executed, including one said to have been aged only 16. The demonstrations had been called a "Day of Rage" to mark the sixth anniversary of the 2005 mass demonstrations. At least three (according to the authorities) - and possibly many more - people were killed in clashes with the security forces, including some in Ahvaz's impoverished Malashiya neighbourhood. Amnesty International received the names of 27 people allegedly killed. Ahwazi Arab sources have claimed the casualty figures were even higher. Amnesty International cannot confirm the reports as the Iranian authorities do not allow the organization to visit the country. The authorities maintain a tight control on the flow of information in and out of the province, preventing foreign journalists from visiting Khuzestan.

Between 10 January and the beginning of February 2012, in the lead-up to parliamentary elections held on 2 March, between 50 and 65 people were reportedly arrested in at least three separate places in Khuzestan province; at least two deaths in custody were also reported in this period. Some Ahwazi Arabs, mostly in the city of Shoush, north-central Khuzestan, called for a boycott of the elections, and arrests in Shoush reportedly followed the appearance of anti-election slogans painted on walls. Others may have been pre-emptive arrests aimed at preventing any gathering of Ahwazi Arabs either on the anniversary of country-wide demonstrations held on 14 February 2011 in support of the people of Tunisia and Egypt, which were violently repressed, or on the 15 April anniversary of the "Day of Rage". In the immediate lead-up to the 15 April anniversary, from late March until mid-April, at least 25 Ahwazi Arabs were reportedly arrested following protests in cities across the province. Others are reported to have been arrested in June, immediately before and also after the executions, as the authorities increased security in the province, in anticipation of unrest in response to the executions.

Names: Mansour Heidarian and Amir Muawi, or Mo'avi
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 77/12 Index: MDE 13/042/2012 Issue Date: 28 June 2012