

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/106/2008

01 August 2008

UA 213/08 Fear of torture or other ill-treatment

IRAN Saman Rasoulpour (m), Kurdish human rights activist, aged 23

---

Kurdish human rights activist Saman Rasoulpour was arrested on 25 July at his home in the city of Mahabad, in West Azerbaijan province, and is in danger of torture. He is a senior member of an organisation that campaigns for better treatment of Iran's Kurdish minority, the Human Rights Organisation of Kurdistan (HROK), based in the city of Sanandaj, in the western province of Kordestan.

The police confiscated a number of his possessions when they arrested him. He is now held at a detention centre in the city of Oroumiye, in the north-western province of West Azerbaijan. He has been able to telephone his family once since he was arrested.

On 23 July he had taken part in a peaceful demonstration calling on the authorities to lift the death sentences handed down to three Kurdish human rights activists on 25 February 2008. Around 200 Iranian Kurds had taken part in the demonstration.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The HROK, which has over 200 members, was founded in April 2005. The authorities have never granted it official recognition as an NGO. Its founder, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, is serving an 11-year prison sentence, imposed after an unfair trial, for "acting against state security by establishing the Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan" and "propaganda against the system."

Iran's Kurdish population live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in Kordestan and neighbouring provinces, bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. They have long suffered extensive discrimination. Kurdish human rights defenders, including community activists and journalists, risk arbitrary arrest and torture.

Parents are banned from registering their babies with certain Kurdish names, and religious minorities that are mainly or partially Kurdish are targeted by measures designed to stigmatize and isolate them. Kurds are also discriminated against in their access to employment, adequate housing and political rights, and so suffer entrenched poverty, which has further marginalized them.

For more information on human rights violations against the Kurdish minority in Iran, see: *Iran: Human rights abuses against the Kurdish minority*, at:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/088/2008/en/d140767b-5e45-11dd-a592-c739f9b70de8/mde130882008eng.pdf>

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

- urging the authorities to ensure that Saman Rasoulpour will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated, and will have regular access to his family, legal counsel and any medical attention he may require;
- calling on the authorities to release Saman Rasoulpour immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and association.

**APPEALS TO:**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh / 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@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Governor of West Azerbaijan

His Excellency Dr. Rahim Ghorbani

PO Box: 775

Oroumiye 57135

Islamic Republic of Iran

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:**

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

The Presidency

Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** + 98 21 6 649 5880

**Email:** dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir

via website: <http://www.president.ir/email/>

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 12 September 2008.