

# URGENT ACTION

## EXECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONER POSTPONED

The execution of Habibollah Latifi, a male member of the Kurdish minority in Iran, was postponed on 26 December 2010, just hours before it was scheduled to take place. Over 20 people were arrested at his house later that day. 10 remained detained as of 6 January and may be at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

The execution of Habibollah Latifi, an industrial engineering student at Ilam University, was not carried out on 26 December 2010, as scheduled. He was convicted of moharebeh (enmity against God), a vaguely-worded charge which can carry the death penalty, in connection with his membership of and alleged activities on behalf of the Kurdish Independent Life Party (PJAK), a proscribed armed group. Members of his family and civil society activists from Sanandaj had gathered outside the city's prison to protest against the execution when, in the early hours of 26 December, a prison official announced it would not take place. No date has been fixed for the execution to go ahead and Amnesty International believes that Habibollah Latifi remains at risk of execution.

Following the postponement of the execution, family members and activists gathered at the Latifi household, when up to 50 members of the security forces raided the house and arrested seven members of the Latifi family, along with around 17 others. By 30 December 2010, the members of his family had been released on bail of around 220 million Iranian rials or around 21,000 US dollars, each. On 6 January 2011, an NGO activist and a journalist were also released, but 10 of those arrested at the Latifi household remained in detention. Amnesty International fears they may face torture or other ill-treatment while in detention.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, Kurdish, English, or your own language:

- Welcoming the postponement on 26 December 2010 of Habibollah Latifi's execution;
- Calling on the Iranian authorities to commute the death sentence of Habibollah Latifi;
- Stating that Amnesty International recognizes that governments' have a responsibility to bring to justice those who commit crimes, in full conformity with international standards for fair trial, but opposes the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained on 26 December 2010 at the Latifi household if they were arrested solely for their presence at the gathering, and urging the authorities to ensure that they are protected from all forms of torture or other ill treatment while in detention.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 FEBRUARY 2011 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: Via website:

<http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter>

(English);

<http://www.leader.ir/langs/fa/index.php?p=letter>

(Persian)

Salutation: Your Excellency

#### Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani  
Office of the Head of the Judiciary  
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of  
Serah-e Jomhuri,  
Tehran, 1316814737

Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: [bia.judi@yahoo.com](mailto:bia.judi@yahoo.com)

Salutation: Your Excellency

#### And copies to:

Governor of Kordestan Province

Esmail Najjar

Email: In Persian and Kurdish, send via  
feedback form on the website:

<http://www.ostan->

[kd.ir/Default.aspx?tabId=150&cv=4@0\\_1](http://www.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?tabId=150&cv=4@0_1) In

English, French or other languages, use  
the feedback form on the website:

<http://en.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59>

Salutation: Dear Governor

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fifth update of UA 271/09. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/009/2010/en>

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## EXECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONER POSTPONED

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Habibollah Latifi is an industrial engineering student at Ilam University. He was arrested on 23 October 2007 in Sanandaj and sentenced to death on 3 July 2008 following trial by the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court. He was convicted of *moharebeh* (enmity against God), a vaguely-worded charge which can carry the death penalty, in connection with his membership of and alleged activities on behalf of the Kurdish Independent Life Party (PJAK), a proscribed armed group.

On 27 December 2010, his lawyer reportedly said that the trial was not held behind closed doors and that he was able to defend his client. He also stated that an appeal court had reviewed the judgement and that he had no complaint about it. He added that he has also made two further requests for a judicial review, one of which was refused; another of which remains to be clarified. He stated that the temporary halt to the execution of Habibollah Latifi was due to judicial procedure in Iran.

The members of the Latifi family detained were his father, Abbas Latifi, sisters Shahin, Elahe and Bahar; brothers Iraj and Eghbal and a relative called Jian Matapour.

Those who continue to be held as of 6 January 2011 are journalist Saeed Saedi; workers' rights activists Pedram Nasrollahi, Hashem Rostami and Zahed Moradian; students and students' rights activists Deler Eskandari and Jawad Andaryari, the latter a PhD student in chemistry at Bu-Ali Sina University in Hamedan; civil society activists Jian Zafari, Yahya Ghawami and Hiwa Masoudi along with environmental rights activist Hamid Malakolkalami.

Journalist Mahmoud Mahmoudi and environmental rights activist Afshin Sheikholeslami Watani were released on 6 January 2011 on bail of 40 million toman, or over 38 thousand US dollars.

On 27 December 2010, the website Human Rights Activists News Agency reported that the death sentences of three other Kurdish prisoners - Iraj Mohamadi, Ahmad Pouladkhani, and Mohamad Amin Aghoshi - had been overturned. However, two other political prisoners Ali Saremi, also convicted of *moharebeh* for his alleged membership of another banned organization, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (see UA update MDE 13/002/2011, 05 January 2011), and Akbar Siyadat, convicted of espionage for Israel, were executed without warning in Tehran on 28 December 2010.

Kurds are one of Iran's many minority groups and live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in the province of Kordestan and neighbouring provinces bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. They experience discrimination.

For many years, Kurdish organizations such as the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and the Marxist group *Komala*, have conducted armed opposition against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Another armed group, the Kurdistan Independent Life Party (PJAK), formed in 2004, continues to carry out armed attacks against Iranian security forces. However, on 19 October 2010, PJAK leaders called for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue in Iran, though in December 2010 PJAK reportedly threatened to break their ceasefire if Habibollah Latifi was executed.

The scope of capital crimes in Iran is broad. The death penalty is one of four possible punishments for those convicted of *moharebeh*, a charge often brought against those accused of armed opposition to the state. Other capital crimes include other national security offences such as espionage.

On 21 December 2010, the United Nations General Assembly passed, by a vote of 78 for; 45 against, along with 59 abstentions, a resolution expressing deep concern at the widespread violations of human rights in Iran.

Further Information UA: 271/09 Index: MDE 13/003/2011 Issue Date: 7 January 2011

