

URGENT ACTION

POLITICAL PRISONER FACES IMMINENT EXECUTION

The execution of Habibollah Latifi, a male member of the Kurdish minority in Iran, has been scheduled for 26 December, according to his lawyer. He was sentenced to death following an unfair trial.

Habibollah Latifi, a law student at Azad University in the south western province of Ilam, western Iran, was transferred to solitary confinement on 16 January 2010, prompting fears that he was to be executed. It is not known how long he was held there. His lawyer has now been informed by the Iranian authorities, in accordance with Iranian law, that his execution is scheduled to take place on 26 December, at Sanandaj Prison, Kordestan, in western Iran on 26 December. Executions usually take place at daybreak. It is not known whether his family has been notified of his planned execution by the authorities.

Habibollah Latifi was arrested on 23 October 2007 in Sanandaj and sentenced to death on 3 July 2008 following an unfair trial by the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court. He was convicted of *moharebeh* (enmity against God), a vague but capital charge, in connection with his membership of and alleged activities on behalf of the Kurdish Independent Life Party (PJAK), a proscribed armed group. His trial was held behind closed doors and his lawyer was not allowed to be present to defend him. Nor was his family allowed to attend the trial. His death sentence was upheld by the Appeal Court in Sanandaj on 18 February 2009.

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

- Urging the authorities to halt Habibollah Latifi's execution, scheduled for 26 December 2010;
- Calling on the authorities to commute the death sentence of Habibollah Latifi, imposed for political offences after an unfair trial;
- Stating that Amnesty International recognizes that governments' have a responsibility to bring to justice those who commit crimes, in full conformity with international standards of fair trial, those suspected of criminal offences, but opposes the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 04 FEBRUARY 2010 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: Via website: <http://www.bia-judiciary.ir/tabid/62/Default.aspx>;
2nd box (starred)=first name, 3rd
box (starred)=family name, 5th box
(starred)=email address, last
box= substance of message

To send press grey box on left bottom
side

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

[kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59](http://www.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59)

**In English, French or other
languages, use the feedback form on
the website: [http://en.ostan-](http://en.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59)**

[kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59](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 fourth update of UA 271/09. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/009/2010/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to his lawyer, Saleh Nikbakht, Habibillah Latifi denied allegations made in court that he was involved in setting off acoustic explosions in the city of Sanandaj, and then filming them; as well as attempting to assassinate a judicial official in Sanandaj

In October 2009, fears were raised that Habibollah Latifi and other Kurdish political prisoners Sherko Moarefi and Ehsan Fattahian were at imminent risk of execution after a judge in Sanandaj, the provincial capital, received orders to carry out their executions. Ehsan Fattahian was executed on 11 November 2009. Sherko Moarefi, was arrested in October 2008 and subsequently sentenced to death and remains on death row in Saqqez prison.

At least 16 other Kurdish men and two women are believed to be on death row in connection with their alleged membership of and activities for proscribed Kurdish organizations. Some have had their prison sentences increased to death sentences. For further information on some of the Kurds on death row for political offences, including those named in this UA, please see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/007/2010/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/012/2009/en>.

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 religious, economic and cultural 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, PJAK leaders reportedly called for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue in Iran, according to the mainly Kurdish Roj TV. The statement called drew attention to seven issues, including the recognition of 'the Kurdish issue'; solving it through dialogue; creation of an appropriate climate for negotiations; end of military operations; removal of barriers to people's freedom; officially permitting political organisations to work; officially allowing the use of Kurdish language in education sector and other walks of life and the release of political prisoners.

Bombings carried out in September 2010 near Mahabad did not appear to be claimed by a specific Kurdish political group, and were condemned by advocates of Kurdish rights.

Amnesty International condemns without reservation attacks on civilians, which includes judges, clerics, and locally or nationally-elected officials, as attacking civilians violates fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. These principles prohibit absolutely attacks on civilians as well as indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. Such attacks cannot be justified under any circumstances.

The scope of capital crimes in Iran is broad, and includes "enmity against God", often imposed for armed opposition to the state, but can include other national security offences such as espionage.

On 21 December, 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 13/117/2010 Issue Date: 24 December 2010

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