

# URGENT ACTION

## 14 PEOPLE SENTENCED TO DEATH IN RELATION TO PROTESTS

At least 14 individuals are at grave risk of execution in Iran in connection with the nationwide protests, including for acts not involving “intentional killing”, in violation of Iran’s obligations under international law. The authorities have violated their fair trial rights and subjected several to torture and other ill-treatment, including floggings, electric shocks, death threats, rape and other forms of sexual violence. Since December 2022, they have arbitrarily executed at least four young men in connection with protests following similarly grossly unfair trials.

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

**Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei**

c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union,  
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium

Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

I am gravely concerned that dozens of people are at risk of the death penalty following grossly unfair trials involving charges of “enmity against God” (moharebeh), “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel arz) and “armed rebellion against the state” (baghi) in connection with the nationwide protests. At least 14 are currently under the sentence of death and at grave risk of execution. They are **Arshia Takdastan, Javad Rouhi, Ebrahim Narouie, Kambiz Kharout, Majid Kazemi, Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mansour Dahmardeh, Mohammad Boroughani, Mehdi Bahman, Mehdi Mohammadifard, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Saleh Mirhashemi, Saeed Yaghoubi, and Shoeib Mir Baluchzehi Rigi**. At least five others – **Sahand Nourmohammad-Zadeh; Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou; Hossein Mohammadi; Reza Arya (Aria); and Mahan Sadrat (Sedarat) Madani** – are facing retrials on capital charges after their convictions and death sentences were quashed by the Supreme Court and their cases returned to lower courts. At least three others known to Amnesty International – **Saeed Shirazi, Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou, and Mohsen Rezazadeh Gharegholou** – have undergone trial on charges that carry the death penalty. At the time of writing, there is no publicly available information on the outcome of their trials. Dozens of other individuals are being investigated for capital crimes brought in relation to the protests.

The individuals have faced grossly unfair trials before Revolutionary Courts and/or Criminal Courts in various cities across the country. The rights violated included the right to: adequate defence and access to lawyers of their choosing; the presumption of innocence; remain silent; and receive a fair, public hearing.

Amnesty International has documented the torture and other ill-treatment of 10 of the individuals named above. Documented methods of torture include beatings, floggings, electric shocks, being suspended upside down, rape and other forms of sexual violence. The authorities have used torture-tainted “confessions”, some of which were broadcast on state media prior to their trials, as evidence to issue convictions.

**I urge you to immediately quash all convictions and death sentences stemming from the protests, refrain from seeking further death sentences, and ensure that anyone charged with a recognizable criminal offence is tried in proceedings meeting international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty. I urge you to release anyone detained for peacefully exercising their human rights. I urge you to provide detainees access to their families and lawyers of their own choosing, protect them from torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials. Finally, I urge you to grant independent observers access to capital trials connected to protests and, more broadly, immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view of abolishing the death penalty.**

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The trials of individuals for capital offences in connection with the nationwide protests have borne no resemblance to meaningful judicial proceedings. The authorities have relied on torture-tainted “confessions” and other evidence obtained in violation of international law and standards to issue indictments and convictions. They have barred defendants from accessing lawyers during the investigation phase, and have also barred independently appointed lawyers from representing clients at trial and accessing their casefiles. The right to the presumption of innocence has been repeatedly violated with state media airing forced “confessions” of several individuals prior to their trials. The authorities have fast-tracked capital cases, with some individuals convicted days after their trials began. At least seven people have been sentenced to death for offences such as vandalism, assault and arson in violation of international law which prohibits the use of the death penalty for offences that do not involve intentional killing.

Amnesty International has documented the torture and other ill-treatment of 10 of the aforementioned individuals to extract forced “confessions”. They are: Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Sahand Nourmohammad-Zadeh, Shoeib Mir Baluchzehi Rigi, Ebrahim Narouie, Mansour Dahmardeh, Kambiz Kharout, Javad Rouhi, Mehdi Mohammadifard and Arshia Takdastan. Reported torture methods include beatings, electric shocks, flogging, rape and other forms of sexual violence, prolonged solitary confinement, death threats and exposure to extreme cold. Informed sources told Amnesty International that [Arshia Takdastan, Mehdi Mohammadifard and Javad Rouhi](#), who were sentenced to death in December 2022, were subjected to gruesome torture and other ill-treatment. Mehdi Mohammadifard was beaten, hung upside down, and raped which resulted in him requiring hospitalization for anal injuries and rectal bleeding. Arshia Takdastan was subjected to beatings and death threats at gunpoint, resulting in a broken toe and memory loss. Javad Rouhi was subjected to beatings and floggings while tied to a pole, given electric shocks, exposed to freezing temperatures, threatened with death at gunpoint, and sexually assaulted by having ice put on his testicles for two days. As a result of this torture, he suffered shoulder and muscular injuries, urinary incontinence, digestive complications, mobility and speech impairment, and experiences severe pain in his back and hips and numbness in his right leg. Informed sources told Amnesty International that the authorities repeatedly tortured Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou, who is currently awaiting retrial on capital charges, leading to his hospitalization with broken ribs, difficulty breathing and internal bleeding in his lung for which he required three surgeries. During his initial trial in December 2022, Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou showed the judge his torture injuries, but no investigation into his allegations has been carried out. An informed source told Amnesty International that the authorities repeatedly beat [Mohammad Ghobadlou](#), whose conviction for “corruption on earth” and death sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court in December 2022, and withheld his bipolar medication. A forensic report confirms that while in custody, he sustained bruising and injuries.

To date, the authorities have arbitrarily executed four people in connection with the protests after grossly unfair trials marred by torture allegations. Since the beginning of the popular uprising in September 2022, the authorities have arrested and indicted thousands of people, raising concerns about the imposition of the death penalty on more individuals. In addition to the aforementioned individuals, Amnesty International has confirmed the names of nine others – Toomaj Salehi, Farzad (Farzin) Tahazadeh, Farhad Tahazadeh, Karwan Shahiparvaneh, Reza Eslamdoost, Taher (Hajar) Hamidi, Shahram Marouf-Moula, Pouria Javaheri and Heshmatollah Tabarzad – who are in detention and are accused of or charged with capital offences, while other organizations have reported dozens more. Two of them are accused of capital charges in connection with peaceful acts protected under international law. Political activist Heshmatollah Tabarzadi is facing 20 charges including “corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*) in relation to his peaceful activism and criticism of the authorities’ response to protests in media interviews. Rapper Toomaj Salehi is accused of charges including “corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*) stemming solely from his critical music and social media posts denouncing the authorities’ unjust practices and calling for freedom and human rights for people in Iran. Informed sources have told Amnesty International that at least six of the nine individuals – Toomaj Salehi, Farhad Tahazadeh, Karwan Shahiparvaneh, Reza Eslamdoost, Shahram Marouf-Moula and Heshmatollah Tabarzadi – have been subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Persian, English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 3 April 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Arshia Takdastan, Javad Rouhi, Ebrahim Narouie, Kambiz Kharout, Majid Kazemi, Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mansour Dahmardeh, Mohammad Broughani, Mehdi Bahman, Mehdi Mohammadifard, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Saleh Mirhashemi, Saeed Yaghoubi, Shoeib Mir Baluchzehi Rigi, Sahand Nourmohammad-Zadeh, Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou, Hossein Mohammadi, Reza Arya (Aria), Mahan Sadrat (Sedarat) Madani, Saeed Shirazi, Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou, Mohsen Rezazadeh Gharegholou (he/him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6309/2022/en/>