

URGENT ACTION

THOUSANDS AT RISK OF EXECUTION IN IRAN

There is an ongoing execution crisis in Iran, which has reached horrific proportions. Thousands of people are at risk of execution after being sentenced to death, including for drug-related offences or overly broad and vaguely worded charges following grossly unfair trials, or are facing investigations or prosecutions on capital charges. Since the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, the authorities have weaponized the death penalty as a tool of oppression, with over 800 people executed thus far in 2025 alone.

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,

Thousands of people in Iran are at risk of the death penalty following grossly unfair trials in Revolutionary Courts, including for drug-related offences or overly broad and vaguely worded charges that do not meet the principle of legality under international law, such as “enmity against God” (moharebeh) and “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel-arz). The Iranian authorities refuse to publish statistics on the use of the death penalty, and the exact number of people sentenced to death or facing criminal proceedings for capital offences is unknown. However, statements from officials indicate a very large scale of those who may be at risk of the death penalty. For example, in June 2025, the Anti-Narcotics Headquarters announced that 194,700 people were arrested between March 2024 to March 2025 (the year 1403 on Iran’s calendar) on allegations of trafficking and distribution of drugs, which can incur the death penalty. Additionally, in August 2025, authorities announced that over 20,000 people were arrested between 13 June and 12 August 2025 in connection to the armed conflict between Israel and Iran, including hundreds accused of “espionage”, which can also incur the death penalty under the abovementioned overly broad charges.

Between January and late August 2025 the authorities executed at least 841 people, according to the UN Office for Human Rights, marking a steep increase in the authorities’ use of the death penalty since 2024, when the number of people executed between January and August 2024 was at least 429. Amid an ongoing execution crisis since the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, the authorities have intensified their use of the death penalty under the guise of national security in the aftermath of the June 2025 armed conflict between Israel and Iran. Since then, judicial officials have called for expedited trials and heavy punishments, including the death penalty, for those accused of “supporting” or “collaborating” with Israel and Parliament passed legislation that will expand the use of the death penalty, if approved by the Guardian Council.

Amnesty International’s research consistently shows that Revolutionary Courts, which exercise jurisdiction over national security and drug-related offences, lack independence and impose harsh sentences following grossly unfair trials. Individuals tried before such courts are systematically denied their fair trial rights.

I call on you to immediately halt all planned executions, quash all death sentences and establish an official moratorium on all executions with a view to fully abolishing the death penalty. Pending this, take steps to bring national legislation in line with international law and standards, including by removing the death penalty for drug-related offences and vaguely worded offences, and repealing mandatory death sentences.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to information available to Amnesty International, including from primary sources and human rights defenders based outside Iran, scores of individuals are under sentence of death and at grave risk of execution following grossly unfair trials and conviction of politically-motivated charges, including the overly broad and vaguely defined charges of “enmity against God” (*moharebeh*), “corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel-arz*), and “armed rebellion against the state” (*baghi*).

Amongst them are at least three women: **Pakhshan Azizi**, **Sharifeh Mohammadi** and **Verisheh Moradi** and at least 49 men: **Abbas Deris**, **Abolhassan Montazer**, **Abdolghani Shahbakhsh**, **Abdolrahim Ghanbarzehi**, **Adnan Ghobeishavi**, **Afshin Ghorbani Meyshani**, **Ahmadreza Djalali**, **Ali (Soran) Ghassemi**, **Ali Mojadam**, **Ali Obeidavi**, **Alireza Bamerzpournak**, **Alireza Kafei**, **Alireza Merdasi**, **Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar**, **Amir Hossein Maghsoudloo (Amir Tataloo)**, **Amir Mohammad Khosheghbal**, **Babak Alipour**, **Babak Shahbazi**, **Ehsan Faridi**, **Eidou Shahbakhsh**, **Farshad Etemadi Far**, **Fazel Bahramian**, **Habib Deris**, Turkish national **Hatem Özdemir**, **Hossein Nemati**, **Issa Eidmohammadi**, **Kaveh Salehi**, **Manouchehr Fallah**, **Masoud Jamei**, **Mehrab (Mehran) Abdullahzadeh**, **Milad Armoun**, **Moein Khanfari**, **Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi**, **Mohammad Javad Vafaei Sani**, **Mohammadreza Moghaddam**, **Navid Najaran**, **Omid Tabari Moghaddam**, **Peyman (Amin) Farhahvar**, **Pezhman Soltani**, **Pouya Ghobadi**, **Rezgar Beigzadeh Babamiri**, **Salem Mousavi**, **Samam Mohammadi Khiareh**, **Shahin Basami**, **Soleiman Shahbakhsh**, **Tayfour Salimi Babamiri**, **Vahid Bani Amerian**, **Yaghoub Derakhshan** and **Yousef Ahmadi**. Based on statements from officials, it is feared that thousands of others are also at risk of either execution after having been sentenced to death or are facing investigations or prosecutions on capital offences, including for drug-related offences or overly broad and vaguely worded charges that do not meet the principle of legality, as well as internationally recognizable criminal offenses (also referred to as ordinary crimes), including for murder.

In the aftermath of the Woman Life Freedom uprising in 2022, the Iranian authorities weaponized the death penalty to instil fear among the population and tighten their grip on power. In 2023, authorities [carried out](#) at least 853 executions, marking a 48% increase from 2022. In 2024, Amnesty International [recorded](#) 972 executions, marking the highest number of executions since 2015, with at least 52% (505) people executed in connection to drug-related offenses, continuing a disturbing upward trend since the authorities' return in 2021 to a heavily punitive drug policy and in violation of international law which strictly prohibits the use of the death penalty for drug-related offenses. Iranian authorities' use of the death penalty also further disproportionately impacts Iran's oppressed minorities, particularly those belonging to the Afghan, Baluchi, and Kurdish communities. In 2024, the number of Afghans executed rose significantly compared to 2023, from 25 to 80, with around half executed for drug-related offences. This rise coincided with the escalation of hateful and dehumanizing language and treatment of Afghans, which has continued in 2025. After the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran in June 2025, Iranian officials, who have historically referred to Afghans as “foreigners” or “unauthorized nationals”, [intensified](#) their use of racist, xenophobic and dehumanizing rhetoric against this community. Authorities have also made unsubstantiated accusations against Afghans alleging “espionage” for Israel. At least five individuals identified as Afghans have been arrested since 14 June 2025 on such accusations, and state media has aired the forced “confessions” of at least four of these men.

Senior officials, including Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, the head of judiciary, have called for expedited trials and executions for “supporting” or “collaborating” with hostile states, including Israel. State-affiliated media outlets have advocated for the repetition of [1988 prison massacres](#), including in a Fars News article, claiming that “the mercenary elements...deserve 1988-style executions”. Since 13 June 2025, at least nine men have been executed on politically-motivated charges and/or accusations of espionage for Israel.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. The death penalty is a violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and it is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. Amnesty International has consistently called on all states that retain the death penalty, including Iran, to establish an official moratorium on executions, with a view to completely abolishing the death penalty.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Persian, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 31 December 2025

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

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: he/him; she/her; they/them

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7895/2024/en/>