

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Penalty

18 January 1993

IRAN:

Ahmad GHOFRANI, aged 31

Amnesty International has received information that Ahmad Ghofrani was sentenced to death in Iran last week, reportedly because of his alleged political opposition to the government. According to reports he was arrested in Mashhad approximately one month ago. No information about his trial, the charges of which he was convicted or his current place of detention is available.

Amnesty International fears that Ahmad Ghofrani is at risk of imminent execution.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International opposes the use of the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. An added concern in Iran is that the death penalty is frequently imposed on political opposition suspects and others whose trial procedures by Islamic Revolutionary Courts fail to meet international standards for fair trial.

In political cases, trials are almost always held in secret, often lasting only a few minutes and the detainee has no access to legal counsel at any stage and is denied the right to appeal both against the conviction and the sentence. If a death sentence is passed, execution may be carried out within days of conviction.

In Iran political executions are seldom officially announced: during 1992 Amnesty International recorded over 140 political executions reported by unofficial sources.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing regret at the reported death sentence passed on Ahmad Ghofrani, and urging that it be commuted;
- seeking information about the offence(s) he was convicted of;
- seeking information about his trial procedures, including whether he has been given access to legal counsel and the opportunity to appeal against his conviction and sentence to a higher tribunal.

APPEALS TO

1) His Excellency Hojatoleslam
Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

Telegrams: President Rafsanjani, Tehran, Iran
Telexes: 214231 MITI IR; 213113 PRIM IR
(marked for the attention of President Rafsanjani)

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2) His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Head of the Judiciary
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Tehran, Iran

Telexes: 214231 MITI IR; 213113 PRIM IR
(marked for the attention of the Interior Minister)

Salutation: Your Excellency

3) His Excellency
Hojatoleslam Abdollah Noori
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
Dr Fatemi Avenue
Tehran

Telegrams: Interior Minister Noori, Tehran, Iran

Telexes: 214231 MITI IR, 213113 PRIM IR
(marked for the attention of the Interior Minister)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
Dr Ali Akbar Velayati
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

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 1 March 1993.