

4 November 1999

Further information on UA 160/99 (MDE 13/24/99, 13 September 1999) and follow-ups (MDE 13/15/99, 9 July 1999; MDE 13/16/99, 13 July 1999) - Death Penalty/Unfair Trial

IRANStudent demonstrators

Manuchehr Mohammadi, a leading member of the *Anjoman-e Daneshjuyan va Daneshamukhtegan Melli* (National Association of Students and Graduates), was reportedly sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment on 28 October 1999 for his alleged involvement in July student demonstrations. Amnesty International is concerned that he was tried at a Revolutionary Court whose practices fall far short of international standards for fair trial.

On 19 and 26 July Manuchehr Mohammadi was shown on Iranian State television in two video recordings, "confessing" to his involvement with "counter-revolutionary agents". Amnesty International is concerned that these "confessions" may have been extracted under duress. The broadcasts were followed by statements from the Ministry of Information that Manuchehr Mohammadi was "responsible for the recent unrest".

The Ministry of Information statements also named Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad and Maryam Shansi (f), also known as Malous Radnia, who were also arrested on 13 July, as leading associates of Manuchehr Mohammadi. They and others arrested in connection with the demonstrations are still held without charge or trial. Amnesty International fears that they may be tortured to force them to confess, and that they may face unfair trials which may result in mandatory death sentences.

In September, at least 12 people were sentenced to between three months and nine years in prison by a Revolutionary Court for involvement in student demonstrations in Tabriz in July.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Manuchehr Mohammadi, Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad (also a member of the National Association of Students and Graduates) and Maryam Shansi, a member of the *Jonbesh-e Demokratk-e Melli-ye Iran* (National Democratic Movement of Iran) were arrested in July for alleged involvement in the demonstrations in Tehran against new laws curbing press freedom and the closure of the daily newspaper *Salam*, and ensuing clashes with the *Ansar-e Hezbollah* (Helpers of Hezbollah). (See UA 160/99, MDE 13/15/99, and follow-up, MDE 13/16/99, 13 July 1999; and Public Statement, MDE 13/18/99, 14 July 1999)

Mohammadi and Mohajeri-Nezhad were previously detained in May at a student demonstration in Tehran and released a few days later. Maryam Shansi was attacked and beaten up in her home by unidentified assailants in June. (See UA 170/99, MDE 13/19/99, 20 July 1999).

On 12 September, Gholamhossein Rahbarpur, President of Tehran's Revolutionary Court, announced that four men had been sentenced to death in connection with the demonstrations. He did not give their names or details of their trials, which Amnesty International fears were conducted in secrecy with no opportunity for appeal. (See UA MDE 13/24/99, 13 September 1999, and Public Statement MDE 13/25/99, 16 September 1999).

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

- expressing grave concern that Manuchehr Mohammadi has been sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment after a secret trial, in contravention of minimum international standards for fair trial, and asking for a halt to any future secret trials as well as ensuring fair retrials for those already sentenced;
- expressing continued concern that four men have reportedly been sentenced to death, asking to be told their names and calling for their sentences to be commuted immediately;
- expressing concern that all those sentenced may have been tortured to extract confessions and that they may have had unfair trials;
- seeking clarification of the whereabouts and well-being of Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad and Maryam Shansi and the others detained in connection with the demonstrations, and seeking assurances that they will be granted access to their families, legal representation and any medical assistance they require;
- expressing concern that the "confessions" broadcast on State television violate Article 11 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a public trial"

APPEALS TO:

1)Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei,
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegrams: Ayatollah Khamenei, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

2)President

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegrams: President Khatami, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

3)Head of Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Hashemi Shahroudi
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Telegrams: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr Mohammad Hassan Zia'i-Far
Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Commission
PO Box 13165-137, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

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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 16 December 1999.

