

URGENT ACTION

CLEMENCY DENIED FOR IRANIAN MAN ON DEATH ROW

An Iranian teacher who was convicted of *moharebeh* (enmity against God) and sentenced to death has had his request for pardon rejected. He is at risk of imminent execution.

The teacher, **Abdolreza Ghanbari**, was arrested at his workplace after anti-government demonstrations took place on 27 December 2009 to mark the Ashoura religious commemorations, at the end of six months of protests following the disputed presidential election of 2009. Held in Evin Prison since his arrest, where he was reportedly tortured or otherwise ill-treated and denied access to a lawyer. Abdolreza Ghanbari was tried unfairly before Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 30 January 2010 and sentenced to death for *moharebeh* (enmity against God) for alleged links with the banned opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI). The sentence was upheld on appeal, and his request for a pardon from the Amnesty and Clemency Commission was rejected at the end of February 2012. Once his death sentence has been approved by the Head of the Judiciary, it will be sent for implementation.

The death sentence of two other prisoners convicted of "enmity against God" for alleged links with the PMOI have been commuted to imprisonment. **Farah (also known as Elmira) Vazehan's** sentence was overturned on 19 January 2011 and her case was referred to Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court which commuted her death sentence to 17 years' imprisonment to be served in internal exile at Reja'i Shahr Prison. **Javad Lari's** sentence was overturned by Branch 32 of the Supreme Court. A lower court retried him and sentenced him to two years in prison. He has since been released. Amnesty International has no further information about **Ahmad** and **Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam**, who are believed to remain on death row. All were tried unfairly.

Please write immediately in Persian, English or your own language:

- Urge the Iranian authorities not to execute Abdolreza Ghanbari, Ahmad and Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam or anyone else under sentence of death;
- Express concern that all three men and Farah Vazehan were tried unfairly and may be prisoners of conscience, held solely on account of their imputed political opinions or on account of their family links to PMOI members, in which case they should be released immediately and unconditionally;
- Remind them that under international law, the death penalty can only be carried out for "the most serious crimes" which must be "intentional crimes with lethal or other extremely grave consequences."

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 MAY 2012 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: info_leader@leader.ir
Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
[Care of] Public Relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection
Tehran,
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: bia.judi@yahoo.com (Subject
Line: FAO Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani)
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:
Secretary General High Council for
Human Rights
Mohammed Jayad Larijani
[Care of] Office of the Head of the
Judiciary
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave
South of Serah-e Jomhouri
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@humanrights-iran.ir
(Subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad
Larijani)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fifth update of UA 102/10. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/010/2011/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdolreza Ghanbari, father of two, is a Persian literature teacher and a lecturer at Payam-e Nour University. In an interview in August 2011, his wife, Sakineh Habibi said that he was arrested from the secondary school where he was working at the time of his arrest. He was previously involved in trade union activities with the Teachers' Association for which he was arrested and detained for almost three months before being sentenced to a six-month suspension from teaching and exile from Sari in the north of Iran to Pakdasht in the Tehran province. His family has asserted that he has been a trade union activist and has never been involved in political activity. His conviction apparently relates to emails and a phone call he allegedly received which the authorities stated were from the PMOI. His wife has denied that he has links to the PMOI. The verdict was upheld by Branch 36 of the Appeal Court on 10 May 2011 while a subsequent request for a judicial review was rejected by the Supreme Court. He later requested a pardon from the Amnesty and Clemency Commission but on 28 February 2012 this request, too, was rejected.

Ja'far Kazemi and Mohammad Ali Haj Aghaei, also arrested during the six months of unrest following the disputed presidential election, were executed on 24 January 2011. They had also been convicted of "enmity against God" for links with the PMOI, and "spreading propaganda against the system". Another prisoner, Ali Saremi (or Sarami) was executed without warning on 28 December 2010. He had been sentenced to death in December 2009 for "enmity against God" because of his alleged membership of the PMOI.

In January 2012, Mohammad Javad Lari, another alleged PMOI supporter who was arrested in 2009, was sentenced to death for a second time, after his initial sentence had been overturned by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court overturned his death sentence once again, and returned his case to a lower court for a further retrial, after which he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and then reportedly released as he had completed his prison term. Ahmad Daneshpour Moghaddam and his father Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam were arrested along with Mottahareh Bahrami Haghighi, Rayhaneh Hajebrahim Dabbagh and Hadi Ghaemi after Ashoura and sentenced to death after an unfair "show trial" in January 2010 where they were convicted of "enmity against God" for their alleged links to the PMOI. Ahmad Daneshpour Moghaddam and his father Mohsen had their death sentences confirmed on appeal, although the sentences of the other three were later commuted.

Many of these individuals had family links to members of the PMOI resident in a PMOI camp in Iraq and had visited relatives or friends there during trips to Iraq.

The Iranian authorities resort extensively to the imposition of the death penalty, with over 600 executions reported in the country from official and unofficial sources in 2011. In November 2011, the UN Human Rights Committee, which oversees implementation of the ICCPR, expressed concern about the number of death sentences imposed and carried out in Iran in its Concluding Observations. The Committee stated that the Iranian authorities "should consider abolishing the death penalty or at least revise the Penal Code to restrict the imposition of the death penalty to only the 'most serious crimes'"

Others in Iran feared to be facing imminent execution are Habibollah Golparipour, Zaniar Moradi, Loghman Moradi (all members of Iran's Kurdish minority) Abd al-Rahman Heidari, Taha Heidari, Jamshid Heidari, Mansour Heidari, and Amir Muawi (or Mo'avi) (all members of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority), and Saeed Malekpour.

Name: Abdolreza Ghanbari (m), Farah Vazehan (f), Javad Lari (m), Ahmad Daneshpour Moghaddam (m), Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam (m)
Gender m/f: both