

UA 214/99

Flogging/**IRANGholamreza Qobeh**

Amnesty International is concerned at reports that Gholamreza Qobeh, a former deputy mayor of Tehran, has been sentenced to 50 lashes, and that an Iranian appeal court has upheld the sentence.

Gholamreza Qobeh, who was in charge of administrative and financial affairs, was arrested in April 1998, on charges of "embezzlement and diverting public funds". As well as 50 lashes, he has been sentenced to six years in prison and ordered to pay a fine. He was arrested together with a former mayor of Tehran, Gholamhossein Karbaschi, who is now serving a two year prison term (reduced from five years and 60 lashes on appeal).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gholamreza Qobeh was one of at least 16 Tehran district mayors arrested in April 1998 following a judicial investigation into acts of alleged corruption. A number are believed to have been sentenced to flogging in addition to prison terms.

Trial proceedings in the case fell far short of international standards for fair trial, with none of the defendants given access to a lawyer during their detention. Gholamreza Qobeh was among a number of those detained who alleged that they had been tortured or ill-treated in detention. The allegations led to the prosecution on charges of torture against a serving officer.

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

- expressing concern that the sentence of 50 lashes has been upheld by a court of appeal and calling for the sentence to be commuted immediately;
- pointing out that flogging constitutes a form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, in contravention of Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party;
- recognizing the right of the Iranian authorities to bring to justice anyone suspected of criminal wrongdoing, but expressing concern that trial proceedings in this case may have fallen short of international standards for fair 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

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
Faxes: + 98 21 204 0541

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 8 October 1999.