

PUBLIC

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Fear of imminent execution / Fear of possible
ill-treatment or torture

8 December 1998

**IRANKarim Tuzhali, former member of the Kurdistan Democratic party of Iran
(KDPI)**

Amnesty International has just received news that, on 16 September 1998, Karim Tuzhali was tried and sentenced to death by a Revolutionary Court in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province. Executions in Iran may be carried out at any time, without prior warning, and the organization is therefore concerned that he could be at risk of imminent execution. Reports have also been received that Karim Tuzhali has been severely tortured whilst in detention.

Although details of the exact charges against Karim Tuzhali are not clear, they may relate to his previous membership of the banned armed opposition group, the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI).

Karim Tuzhali was tried by the Iranian authorities and sentenced to death after being forcibly returned to Iran from Turkey on 20 June. He had previously resided in Turkey for a number of years but was forcibly returned to Iran by the Turkish authorities after he left the country for a brief period and then returned using false papers. He had reportedly fled to Turkey in fear of his life some years earlier after leaving the KDPI.

Karim Tuzhali is currently held in Orumiyeh Prison, West Azerbaijan Province.

Although he has reportedly sought a review of the death sentence passed against him, it is unclear whether this will be accepted by the Iranian authorities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The KDPI are an armed opposition group opposed to the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran which seeks autonomy for Iranian Kurdistan.

The widespread application of the death sentence continues to be an area of concern to Amnesty International in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Last year at least 144 executions were reported in the country.

Revolutionary courts often fail to conform to international minimum standards for fair trial.

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

- urging the Iranian authorities to commute the death sentence imposed on Karim Tuzhali on 16 September 1998.
- expressing your opposition to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and pointing out the worldwide trend towards abolition of the death penalty;
- seeking assurances that Karim Tuzhali will be treated humanely whilst in detention;
- expressing concern that Karim Tuzhali may not have been tried in accordance with international standards for a fair trial;
- reminding the government of Iran of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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

President

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

Head of Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of Judiciary, Tehran, 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 5 January 1998.

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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