

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 13/33/96

EXTRA 136/96

Death Penalty

23 August 1996

IRAN

Eslam Kordlor

A court in Tehran is reported to have sentenced to death Eslam Kordlor, head of an investment firm, after convicting him of being "corrupt on earth" (*mofsed fil-arz*), in connection with defrauding 11,000 depositors of \$4 million by running a pyramid scheme during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war and "jeopardising sound investment in the country". Eslam Kordlor is reported to have appealed against the sentence.

While recognizing the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring those accused of criminal offences to justice, Amnesty International opposes the use of the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned at Eslam Kordlor's sentence in light of the dramatic increase in the number of executions reported in Iran in recent months. The organization has recorded more than 70 executions so far in 1996 compared to about 50 recorded throughout 1995. The true figure could be much higher, as the organization believes many executions which are carried out are never reported.

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

- expressing concern at the reported death sentence passed on Eslam Kordlor and urging that the sentence be commuted if upheld on appeal;
- drawing attention to world trends to abolish or reduce the use of the death penalty, the desirability of which was reaffirmed in Resolution 32/61 of 8 December 1977 of the United Nations General Assembly;
- drawing attention to Article 1 of the UN Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, which states that "capital punishment may be imposed only for the most serious crimes, it being understood that their scope should not go beyond intentional crimes with lethal or other extremely grave consequences".

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, Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) The President

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

Telegrams: President Rafsanjani, Tehran, Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

3) Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Ministry of Justice

Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

4) Minister of the Interior

His Excellency Mohammad Ali Besharati Jahromi
Ministry of the Interior
Dr Fatemi Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: +98 21 655 426
Telegrams: Minister of the Interior, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

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

Chairman of the Islamic Consultative Assembly's Human Rights Committee
Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr Hussain Farahi, Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Commission
PO Box 13165-137, 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 20 September 1996.