

# URGENT ACTION

## KURDISH POLITICAL PRISONERS FACE EXECUTION

**The death sentence against Habibollah Latifi, a member of Iran's Kurdish minority, has been upheld. He could now be executed at any time. Sherko Moarefi, another Kurdish political prisoner, is also at risk of imminent execution.**

The death sentence against Kurdish political prisoner, Habibollah Latifi, was upheld for a second time. His file has now been sent for implementation, the final stage of the legal process. Habibollah Latifi, an industrial engineering student at Ilam University, was arrested on 23 October 2007 in Sanandaj and sentenced to death on 3 July 2008 following trial by the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court. He was convicted of *moharebeh* (enmity against God), a vaguely-worded charge which can carry the death penalty, in connection with his membership of and alleged activities on behalf of the Kurdish Independent Life Party (PJAK), a proscribed armed group. Habibollah Latifi's trial was held behind closed doors and his lawyer was not allowed to be present to defend him, nor was his family allowed to attend the trial. He could now be executed at any time.

Another Kurdish political prisoner, Sherko Moarefi, remains at risk of execution. On 27 April 2011 his file was sent to the Office for the Implementation of Sentences in Saqqez, in the north-western province of Kordestan, after Branch 27 of the Supreme Court had upheld his death sentence for a second time. His sentence could be implemented at any time.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, English or your own language:

- Urging the Iranian authorities not to carry out the executions of Habibollah Latifi and Sherko Moarefi;
- Calling on them to commute the death sentences of Sherko Moarefi, Habibollah Latifi and anyone else on death row, including other Kurdish political prisoners;
- Stating that Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice, in conformity with international standards for fair trial, those suspected of criminal offences, but opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 JUNE 2011 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](mailto:info_leader@leader.ir)  
Twitter: "Call on #Iran leader  
@khamenei\_ir to call off execution and  
commute death sentence of Sherko  
Moarefi and Habibollah Latifi, Kurdish  
political prisoners "

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary  
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani  
[care of] Public relations Office  
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street  
Vali Asr Ave., above Pasteur Street  
intersection  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: [bia.judi@yahoo.com](mailto:bia.judi@yahoo.com) (In subject  
line: FAO Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani)

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

### And copies to:

Secretary General, High Council for  
Human Rights  
Mohammad Javad Larijani  
High Council for Human Rights  
[Care of] Office of the Head of the  
Judiciary, Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave.  
south of Serah-e Jomhouri, Tehran  
1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran  
(subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad  
Larijani)

**Salutation: Dear Sir**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the 2nd update of UA 95/11. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/035/2011/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Habibollah Latifi's death sentence was upheld by the Appeal Court in Sanandaj on 18 February 2009. At the end of December 2010, Habibollah Latifi's lawyer was informed by the Iranian authorities, in accordance with Iranian law, that his execution was scheduled to take place on 26 December, at Sanandaj Prison, Kordestan, in western Iran; but this was not carried out due to international pressure, including from Amnesty International. His file was then sent for review.

Kurds, who are one of Iran's many minority groups, live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in the province of Kordestan and neighbouring provinces bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. They experience discrimination in the enjoyment of their religious, economic and cultural rights (see: *Iran: Human rights abuses against the Kurdish minority*, (Index: MDE 13/088/2008), 30 July 2008 available at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/088/2008/en>). For many years, Kurdish organizations such as the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and the Marxist group Komala conducted armed struggle against the Islamic Republic of Iran, although neither currently does so. An alleged member of the KDPI, Farhad Tarom, was reported by Kurdish sources to have been executed in February 2011. The Party For Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK), was formed in 2004, and carried out armed attacks against Iranian security forces, but declared a unilateral ceasefire in 2009, although it still engages in armed clashes with security forces in what it terms "self-defence". Hossein Khezri, a member of Iran's Kurdish minority, is feared to have been executed on 15 January 2011 after being convicted of *moharebeh* due to his membership of PJAK. The authorities announced that an unnamed PJAK member was executed on 15 January 2011. On 16 January 2011, PJAK issued a statement pledging an "appropriate response" to what they clearly believe to have been Hossein Khezri's execution and calling for a week of "resistance" to Iran.

Amnesty International condemns without reservation attacks on civilians, which includes judges, clerics, and locally or nationally-elected officials, as attacking civilians violates fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. These principles prohibit absolutely attacks on civilians as well as indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. Such attacks cannot be justified under any circumstances.

The scope of capital crimes in Iran is broad. The death penalty is one of four possible punishments for those convicted of *moharebeh*, a charge often brought against those accused of armed opposition to the state. Other capital crimes include other national security offences such as espionage. At least 13 other Kurdish men and one Kurdish woman are believed to be on death row in connection with their alleged membership of and activities for proscribed Kurdish organizations. They are Sami Hosseini, Jamal Mohammadi, Rashid Akhkandi, Rostam Arkia, Anvar Rostami, Mostafa Salimi, Mohammad Amin Abdollahi, Ghader (or Aziz) Mohammadzadeh, Hassan Talai, Habibollah Golparipour, Abdollah Sorouri, Loghman (or Loqman) Moradi, Zaniar Moradi (who was only 17 when arrested) and Zeynab Jalalian. Some have had initial prison sentences increased to death sentences. Ehsan Fattahian, a member of Komala, was executed on 11 November 2009 in Sanandaj.

December 2010 and January 2011 saw an alarming rise in the rate of executions, although the rate has since declined. So far in 2011, up to 21 men have been hanged in public, compared to 14 such executions recorded by Amnesty International in 2010. Sixteen of those have taken place since 16 April 2011. On 20 April 2011, two juvenile offenders – identified only as "A.N" and "H.B" – were among three individuals hanged in public in southern Iran, after being convicted over a rape and murder committed when they were only 17. A fourth man was hanged at the same time for rape. A 16-year-old member of the Ahwazi Arab minority was reportedly hanged in Khuzestan province between 5 and 7 May 2011 in the wake of clashes between Arabs and security forces on 15 April 2011.

Further Information on UA: 95/11 Index: MDE 13/050/2011 Issue Date: 19 May 2011

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