

For publication 09/02/05

Text in red and comments for translators – please do not translate these, but leave (in English) in the translated document so we can easily identify parts of the document.

Iran: No more empty promises – no more child executions

The Government of Iran has a history of stating that it does not execute child offenders, but the facts tell a different story.

[Photo caption]



An execution in Tehran, Iran.
© AP GraphicsBank

On 19 January 2005, Iranian authorities executed Iman Farokhi for allegedly committing a crime when he was 17 years old. The same day, an Iranian governmental delegation in Geneva stated that Iran does not execute children under the age of 18.

The Government of Iran has a history of stating that it does not execute child offenders, but the facts tell a different story.

Since 1990 eleven child offenders have been executed. Currently there are at least 30 others awaiting execution. Among them are Ali, Sattar, Vihad and Mohammad T, all children under the age of 18. (Read more about these cases.) [link to background](#)

Iran is already a party to international conventions that prohibit child executions, and for the last three years Iranian authorities have been considering legislation that would prohibit the use of the death penalty for offences committed by persons under the age of 18. It is time for Iran to make good on its international promises and stop child executions.

Join Amnesty International and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in calling on Iran to immediately suspend the execution of all death penalties currently imposed on child offenders, and to permanently abolish the death penalty for persons having committed crimes before the age of 18.

Call to action

Write to the Iranian authorities and urge them immediately to halt the executions of child offenders.

Sample letter

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you to express my concern about the continuing execution of child offenders in Iran.

I urge your government, as a State party to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to:

- ensure that the Iranian government implements its commitment to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which states that “sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age”;
- to abolish the death penalty as a sentence imposed on persons for having committed crimes before the age of 18, as required by article 37 (a) of the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) which states that “No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age”.
- immediately commute the death sentences imposed on Ali, Vahid, Sattar, Mohammad T. and all those who were sentenced to death for acts that may have been committed below the age of 18, including at least 30 who are reported to be detained in a juvenile detention centre (*Kanoun-e Eslah va Tarbiyat*) in Tehran and Raja’i Shahr;

Yours sincerely,

Addresses

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed ‘Ali Khamenei
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 649 5880 (please mark ‘For the attention of the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei, Qom)

Email: info@wilayah.org

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: irjpr@iranjudiciary.org (mark 'Please forward to HE Ayatollah Shahroudi')

Salutation: Your Excellency

Thank you for taking action. Please also send copies of your appeal to the President of Iran and the Human Rights Department:

President of Iran

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami

The Presidency

Palestine Avenue

Azerbaijan Intersection

Tehran

Islamic Republic of Iran

E-mail: khatami@president.ir (please resend your message if it does not get through the first time)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Human Rights Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Chairperson

Human Rights Office

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue

Tehran

Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: matbuat@mfa.gov.ir (please ask for the message to be forwarded to the Human Rights Department)

Fax: + 98 21 390 1999

Do more!

More actions on the death penalty

Find out more about child executions

Background

Child executions in Iran

As a State party to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Iran has undertaken not to execute anyone for an offence committed when they were under the age of 18.

Article 6 of the ICCPR states: "Sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age".

Article 37(a) of the CRC states: "No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age".

Nevertheless, Iran executed at least 159 people last year, including three child offenders. Amnesty International has recorded ten executions of child offenders in Iran since 1990, including Atefeh Rajabi, reportedly aged 16, who was hanged after a grossly unfair trial where doubts regarding her mental state appeared to have been ignored.

Death sentences are required to be upheld by the Supreme Court before executions can take place. Very few details of death sentences imposed within Iran are available, but here are some examples of cases which have come to the attention of Amnesty International:

- Ali, a 16-year-old student, may be at risk of imminent execution for the murder of another student in his high school, which took place between mid-January and mid-February 2003. Ali was sentenced to death in June 2004, and his sentence has already been confirmed by the Supreme Court.
- According to reports in November 2004, Vahid, aged 16, was sentenced to death for the murder of his friend, who allegedly tried to sexually abuse him.
- Further press articles on 26 January 2005 reported that two other young men, Sattar (surname unknown), aged 17 and Mohammad T., a teenager whose sentence has been upheld by the Supreme Court, are both currently awaiting execution.
- According to a 15 January 2005 report on the internet news site ILNA, at least 30 other individuals under the age of 18, who have been sentenced to death, are currently detained in a juvenile detention centre (*Kanoun-e Eslah va Tarbiyat*) in Tehran and Raja'i Shahr, a town close to Tehran.
- Further reports from within Iran indicate that three youths, sentenced to death for murders committed at the ages of 15 and 16, will reportedly be executed when they reach the age of 18. Five further juveniles, also unnamed, are held in a 'Correctional Facility' in Tehran (the "Association for Reform and Education") and are said to be waiting to hear if their death sentences are to be upheld by the Supreme Court.

In January 2005, following its consideration of Iran's second periodic report on its implementation of the provisions of the Convention, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, the body of independent experts established under the Convention to monitor states parties' compliance with the treaty, urged Iran to immediately suspend the execution of all death penalties imposed on persons for having committed a crime before the age of 18, and to abolish the death penalty as a sentence imposed on persons for having committed crimes before the age of 18, as required by article 37 of the Convention.

Furthermore it deplored the fact that such executions have continued including one such execution on the day of the examination of the current report.

Amnesty International calls for Iran to stop executing child offenders and abide by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to which it is a state party; and urges the Iranian authorities to take immediate steps to halt and abolish the imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons under 18.