

URGENT ACTION

RISK OF PROTEST-RELATED EXECUTIONS AMID KILLING SPREE

At least five individuals in Iran are under sentence of death in connection with the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising of 2022, while at least 15 others are at risk of the death penalty and eight have been arbitrarily executed following grossly unfair sham trials. The authorities have severely violated their fair trial rights and subjected many to torture and other ill-treatment, including beatings, electric shocks and sexual violence. Concerns of further protest-related executions are mounting amid a sharp spike in the use of the death penalty with the authorities having executed at least 115 people in November alone.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei

c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union, Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium

Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

*I am gravely concerned that at least 20 people are at risk of the death penalty in connection with the “Woman Life Freedom” nationwide protests of September-December 2022. Among them are at least five individuals – **Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mansour Dahmardeh, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri** and **Reza (Gholamreza) Rasaei** - currently under the sentence of death and at grave risk of execution following grossly unfair trials involving charges of “enmity against God” (moharebeh), “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel arz) and “armed rebellion against the state” (baghi). At least one other – **Mahan Sadrat (Sedarat) Madani** – is facing a retrial on capital charges after his conviction and death sentence were quashed by the Supreme Court in December 2022 and his case returned to lower courts. Amnesty International is aware of at least two others – **Saeed Shirazi** and **Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou** who have undergone trial on charges that carry the death penalty. At least a dozen others are being investigated for capital crimes brought in relation to the protests, amid concerns about the imposition of the death penalty on more individuals as authorities arrested and indicted thousands in connection to the uprising.*

The aforementioned individuals have faced grossly unfair trials before Revolutionary Courts and/or Criminal Courts across the country including in the provinces of Alborz, Tehran, Kermanshah, Khuzestan, and Sistan and Baluchistan. The rights violated include the right to: adequate defence and access to lawyers of their choosing; the presumption of innocence; remain silent; meaningfully challenge the legality of their detentions and receive a fair, public hearing. The authorities have used torture-tainted “confessions”, some of which were broadcast on state media prior to trials, as evidence to issue convictions. Amnesty International has documented the torture and other ill-treatment of four out of the five people under sentence of death, through beatings, electric shocks, suffocation, sexual violence and deliberate denial of healthcare.

I urge you to immediately quash all convictions and death sentences stemming from the protests, refrain from seeking further death sentences, and ensure that anyone charged with a recognizable criminal offence is tried in proceedings meeting international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty. I call for the release of all those detained for peacefully exercising their human rights. I urge you to provide those detained access to their families and lawyers of their own choosing, protect them from further torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials. Finally, grant independent observers access to capital trials and those on death row connected to protests and, more broadly, immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view of abolishing the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The trials of individuals for capital offences in connection with the nationwide protests have borne no resemblance to meaningful judicial proceedings. Authorities have barred individuals from accessing any lawyers during the investigation phase and have also barred independently appointed lawyers from attending trial hearings and accessing their clients' casefiles. Authorities have fast-tracked capital cases, with courts relying on torture-tainted "confessions" to issue convictions.

Amnesty International has documented the torture and other ill-treatment of four out of the five individuals under sentence of death to extract forced "confessions". According to informed sources, during interrogations authorities subjected [Reza \(Gholamreza\) Rasaei](#) to electric shocks, suffocation by putting a plastic bag over his head and severe beatings. In October 2023, a criminal court in Kermanshah province convicted him of "murder" and sentenced him to death, admitting his torture-tainted forced "confessions" as "evidence". An informed source also told Amnesty International that the authorities repeatedly beat [Mohammad Ghobadlou](#) whose conviction for "corruption on earth" and death sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court in December 2022, and also withheld his bipolar medication. In April 2023, Iran's judiciary announced that a Revolutionary Court in Ahvaz, Khuzestan province, sentenced [Mojahed \(Abbas\) Kourkouri](#) to death for "enmity against God", "corruption on earth" and "armed rebellion against the state". His grossly unfair trial was marred by torture-tainted "confessions" obtained while he was subjected to enforced disappearance. According to informed sources, [Mansour Dahmardeh](#) was held in detention in circumstances amounting to enforced disappearance and was subjected to sexual violence and beatings, resulting in a broken nose and teeth and hospitalization. According to informed sources, his death sentences were based on his torture-tainted "confessions" of having thrown stones and set fire to a vehicle tyre during the protests.

Of the five individuals under sentence of death, Mansoureh Dahmardeh and Manouchehr Mehman Navaz were sentenced to death for offences such as stone-throwing and arson in violation of international law which prohibits the death penalty for offences that do not involve intentional killing. A Revolutionary Court in Tehran convicted and sentenced [Manouchehr Mehman Navaz](#) to death on allegations of setting fire to a state building during protests "with intent to confront the Islamic state." The court ruled this amounted to "enmity against God" after a grossly unfair trial; and his death sentence was issued just two weeks after his trial started on 29 October 2022.

In addition to the aforementioned individuals, Amnesty International has confirmed the names of at least 12 others – Farzad (Farzin) Tahazadeh, Farhad Tahazadeh, Karwan Shahiparvaneh, Reza Eslamdoost, Shahram Marouf-Moula, Pouria Javaheri, Mohsen Ahmadpour, Rasul Badaghi, Vahid Abbasi, Reza Arabpour, Sadegh Ghasemi and Ismail Mousavi Nazari – who are in detention and are accused of, charged with or indicted on capital offences.

To date, the authorities have arbitrarily executed eight people in connection with the protests after grossly unfair trials marred by torture allegations. On 23 November 2023, authorities [executed](#) Milad Zohrevand, ten days after the Supreme Court upheld his conviction and death sentence for "murder" in relation to the death of a Revolutionary Guards agent during the protests. According to human rights activists based outside Iran, after his arrest in connection to a protest in Malayer, Hamadan province, he was denied access to a lawyer. In August 2023, [Javad Rouhi](#), whose convictions and death sentences were overturned by the Supreme Court and sent to the lower court for retrial, died in custody under suspicious circumstances. Iranian authorities refused to conduct full, impartial and independent investigations into the causes and circumstances of his death in custody.

The Iranian authorities have recently embarked on another alarming execution spree, executing at least 115 people in November alone or almost double the number of executions carried out in November 2022. According to figures compiled by Abdorrahman Boroumand Center, on 15 November, the authorities carried out at least 14 executions in a single day. Those arbitrarily executed in November 2023 include: Hamidreza Azari who was a 17-year-old child at the time of execution; two Sunni Kurdish men [Ayoub Karimi](#) and [Ghassem Abasteh](#); and Kamran Rezaei, executed in connection to the November 2019 nationwide protests, according to human rights activists based abroad. This spike comes against the backdrop of the Iranian authorities intensifying their use of the death penalty as a tool of political repression to torment and terrorize people in Iran and impose silence and subservience through brute force. In 2023, the authorities have executed several individuals below the age of 18 at the time of the crime; while drug-related executions have almost doubled compared to 2022 and the oppressed Baluchi minority remain disproportionately targeted for executions.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Persian, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 14 February 2024

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mansour Dahmardeh, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri, Reza (Gholamreza) Rasaei, Mahan Sadrat (Sedarat) Madani, Saeed Shirazi, Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou (all he/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6817/2023/en/>