

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/005/2008

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Further Information on UA 220/05 (MDE 13/047/2005, 24 August 2005) and follow-ups (MDE 13/122/2006, 26 October 2006; MDE 13/008/2007, 26 January 2007 and MDE 13/094/2007, 19 July 2007) – Fear of imminent execution

IRAN

Sina Paymard (m), aged 18, musician

Sina Paymard was released on 24 December 2007 after payment of over 1.5 million Iranian Rials (US\$160,000) in *diyeh* (blood money), which was demanded by the family of the murder victim in order to pardon him.

Following the payment of the *diyeh* at the end of July, Sina Paymard remained in custody pending the decision by Branch 71 of the Criminal Court of Tehran Province on the length of time in prison he would still have to serve. The Court ruled that he should be released, as he had already spent three and half years in prison.

Sina Paymard, a musician, was sentenced to *qesas* (retribution) for the 2004 murder of a drug dealer during a fight. His death sentence was upheld by Branch 33 of the Supreme Court. He was due to be executed on two occasions. The first scheduled execution date, 20 September 2006, was two weeks after his 18th birthday. That day, he was taken to the gallows to be hanged. His last request was to play the *ney*, a Middle Eastern flute. Relatives of the murder victim, who were there to witness the hanging, were so moved by his playing that they granted him a last-minute reprieve, and agreed to accept payment of *diyeh* instead of retribution by death. His execution was postponed for two months, while it was referred to conciliation in order to allow both families to negotiate over the payment of *diyeh*.

In January 2007, the Head of the Judiciary granted Sina Paymard a stay of execution while negotiations continued between his and the victim's families. The victim's family demanded *diyeh* of more than US\$160,000. However, Sina Paymard's family managed to raise US\$70,000, which they offered to the victim's family in April 2007, but the victim's family reportedly refused to accept it as insufficient. Sina Paymard was again scheduled to be executed, this time on 18 July 2007. At the last minute, he was granted a stay of execution, to allow time for his family and the family of the murder victim to reach a financial settlement. Following donations from human rights activists and others inside Iran, notably a substantial donation from a university lecturer, the remaining US\$90,000 was raised.

Many thanks to all who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.