

URGENT ACTION

FIVE ARAB MEN AT IMMINENT RISK OF EXECUTION

Five members of Iran’s Ahwazi Arab minority, including three brothers, their cousin and another man are at imminent risk of execution in public, after their death sentences were upheld by the Supreme Court. The sentences may be intended to deter Ahwazi Arabs in Iran from demonstrating on the 15 April anniversary of protests held in 2005.

The three brothers, **Abd al-Rahman Heidari, Taha Heidari and Jamshid Heidari**, their cousin **Mansour Heidari** and **Amir Muawi (or Mo’avi)** were arrested in April 2011 in Ahvaz, during unrest taking place across Iran’s south-western Khuzestan province. Since their arrest, their whereabouts have not been disclosed to their families. On or around 5 March 2012, Ministry of Intelligence officials informed their families that the Supreme Court had upheld death sentences against the five men, after they were convicted of the killing of at least one individual, said to be a law enforcement official, on 15 April 2011. The Ministry of Intelligence also told the men’s relatives that they would be executed in public “in the next few days”. It is not known when their initial trials took place or if they had any legal representation. “Confessions” extracted under duress are frequently accepted as evidence before courts in Iran.

Please write immediately in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the Iranian authorities not to carry out the executions and to commute the death sentences of Abd al-Rahman Heidari, Taha Heidari, Jamshid Heidari, Mansour Heidari and Amir Mo’avi and anyone else on death row;
- Seeking information about the trial of all five, including whether they had access to a lawyer of their choice;
- Calling on them to ensure that all five men are protected from torture or other ill-treatment, and are granted immediate and regular access to their families, their lawyers and adequate medical care.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 APRIL 2012 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
 Twitter: “#Iran leader @khamenei_ir: halt
 execution of Abd al-Rahman Heidari,
 Taha Heidari, Jamshid Heidari, Mansour
 Heidari and Amir Mo’avi”
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 (Subject line:
 FAO Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani) or
info_leader@leader.ir
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
 Email: info@humanrights-iran.ir
 (subject line: FAO Mohammad Javad
 Larijani)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.



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FIVE ARABS AT IMMINENT RISK OF EXECUTION IN IRAN

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Ahwazi Arab minority is one of many minorities in Iran. Much of Iran's Arab community lives in the south-western province of Khuzestan. Most are Shi'a Muslims but some are reported to have converted to Sunni Islam, heightening government suspicion about Ahwazi Arabs. They often complain that they are marginalized and subject to discrimination in access to education, employment, adequate housing, political participation and cultural rights.

There were mass demonstrations in Khuzestan province in April 2005, after it was alleged that the government planned to disperse the country's Arab population or to force them to relinquish their Arab identity. Following bomb explosions in Ahvaz City in June and October 2005, which killed at least 14 people, and explosions at oil installations in September and October 2005, the cycle of violence intensified, with hundreds of people reportedly arrested. Further bombings on 24 January 2006, in which at least six people were killed, were followed by further mass arbitrary arrests. At least 15 men were later executed as a result of their alleged involvement in the bombings.

Scores, if not hundreds, of members of the Ahwazi Arab minority were reportedly arrested before, during and after demonstrations on 15 April 2011. The demonstrations had been called a "Day of Rage" to mark the sixth anniversary of the 2005 mass demonstrations. At least three (according to the authorities) - and possibly many more - people were killed in the April 2011 demonstrations during clashes with the security forces, including some in the Malashiya neighbourhood in Ahvaz. Amnesty International received the names of 27 individuals allegedly killed. Ahwazi Arab sources have claimed the casualty figures were even higher. Amnesty International has been unable to confirm the reports as the Iranian authorities do not allow the organization to visit the country. The authorities maintain a tight control on the flow of information in and out of the province, including by preventing foreign journalists from visiting Khuzestan. At least four Ahwazi Arab men reportedly died in custody between 23 March 2011 and mid May 2011, possibly as a result of torture or other ill-treatment. Others were hospitalized around the same time, apparently as a result of injuries sustained from torture or other ill-treatment.

At least eight Ahwazi Arabs in Iran, including Hashem Hamidi, said to have been aged only 16, were executed between 5 and 7 May 2011, three reportedly in public, for their alleged involvement in the killing of three individuals including a law enforcement official (see *Iran: Arbitrary arrests, torture and executions continue*, Index: MDE 13/051/2011, 20 May 2011, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/051/2011/en>).

Between 10 January 2012 and the beginning of February 2012, in the lead-up to parliamentary elections held on 2 March 2012, between 50 to 65 individuals were reportedly arrested in at least three separate locations in the province; at least two deaths in custody have also been reported. Some Ahwazi Arabs, mostly in Shoush, called for a boycott of the elections and arrests in Shoush, north-central Khuzestan, reportedly followed the appearance of anti-election slogans painted on walls. Others may have been pre-emptive arrests aimed at preventing any gathering of Ahwazi Arabs either on the anniversary of country-wide demonstrations held on 14 February 2011 in support of the people of Tunisia and Egypt which were violently repressed, or on the 15 April anniversary of the "Day of Rage".

The United Nations Human Rights Committee, the authoritative body which interprets the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iran is a state party, has found that public executions are "incompatible with human dignity" and in November 2011 called on Iran to prohibit their use.

Names: Abdulrahman Heidari, Taha Heidari, Jamshid Heidari, Mansour Heidari and Amir Mo'avi
Gender m/f: m

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