

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 13/29/96

UA 195/96

Amputation

6 August 1996

IRAN Six people (names unknown)

Amnesty International is gravely concerned at Iranian newspaper reports that six people convicted more than once of theft have had their fingers amputated. There are fears that others may be at imminent risk of this judicial punishment. The amputations were reportedly carried out in Tehran, and other convicted thieves were said to have been brought from prison to witness the amputations. Four were due to be released later, and the other two were to remain in prison.

The amputations follow a statement by the State Prosecutor, Ayatollah Moghtadai, reported on 25 July 1996, that amputations for theft were to resume in order to halt rising crime. He said that a thief would have four fingers amputated on his right hand for his first offence, and for a second offence, the toes of the left foot would be amputated. Three offences are punished by life imprisonment, and a fourth (committed after the person has been pardoned or escapes from prison), by hanging. Conviction for theft can also lead to up to 74 lashes.

Amnesty International opposes judicial punishments such as amputations and floggings, as it considers them to constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, which is forbidden under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party.

To Amnesty International's knowledge, these are the first amputations in Iran since March 1994.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, French or your own language:

- expressing deep concern over the reported decision to resume amputations in Iran and the subsequent use of this punishment against six people in Tehran;
- explaining that you consider judicial punishments such as amputation and flogging to violate the ICCPR, to which Iran is a state party;
- urging that all sentences of amputation and flogging in Iran be commuted.

APPEALS TO:

1) The President
His Excellency Hojjatoleslam
Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, The Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: President Rafsanjani, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Head of the Judiciary
His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of Judiciary, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

3) Minister of the Interior
His Excellency Mohammad Ali Besharati Jahromi
Ministry of the Interior

Dr Fatemi Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Minister of the Interior, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

4) Minister of Justice
Hojjatoleslam Ali Shushtari
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Minister of Justice, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
His Excellency Dr Ali Akbar Velayati
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Chairman of the Islamic Consultative Assembly's Human Rights Committee
Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr Hussain Farahi, Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Commission
PO Box 13165-137, Tehran Islamic Republic of Iran

and to diplomatic representatives of IRAN accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 September 1996.