

PUBLIC

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05 September 2005

UA 227/05 Death Penalty/ Fear of Imminent Execution

IRAN Sattar Sh (m)

Sattar Sh is at risk of imminent execution for a murder which took place in the town of Islamshahr, south of the capital, Tehran. His death sentence has been upheld by Branch 27 of the Supreme Court in Tehran and could be carried out at any time.

Sattar Sh was sentenced to death after stabbing a man known as Mohammed J in a fight on 11 February 2004. Mohammed J later died of his wounds. Sattar Sh was tried in the local criminal court, Branch 71. The court sentenced him to death as retribution (*qesas*) for the killing. Three others who were accused of involvement in the fight were each sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Officials from the Criminal Prosecutor's office in Tehran are expected to carry out the execution imminently.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

After being confirmed by the Supreme Court, death sentences imposed for murder can be commuted if the victim's heirs forgo their right to retribution and ask instead for the payment of blood money (*diyeh*), or if the heirs pardon the culprit.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party. Article 6 of the ICCPR states that in countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian, English, French or your own language:

- stating that Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- urging the authorities to commute the death sentence imposed on Sattar Sh immediately;
- asking for details of his trial, including his legal representation and the appeals against his conviction;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the victim's family is made aware of its right, under Islamic law, to pardon the condemned.

APPEALS TO: (Fax numbers and e-mail addresses for Iran are unreliable so please send letters if you cannot get through)

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)

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

COPIES 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 17 October 2005.