

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 265/06 (MDE 13/116/2006, 03 October 2006) Arbitrary arrest/fear for safety/possible prisoner of conscience

IRAN **Keyvan Rafi'i (m), human rights defender**
 Kheyrollah Derakhshandi (m), member of the Alumni Association of Iran and former student activist
 Abolfazl Jahandar (m), journalist and former student activist
 Dr Keyvan Ansari (m), Central Council member of the Alumni Association of Iran

Lawyers representing three of the four men named above, all held in Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, reportedly lodged appeals against their prison sentences during April, in Branch 32 of the Appeals Courts. The case of the fourth man, Keyvan Rafi'i, has reportedly been sent back for review.

Dr Keyvan Ansari was sentenced to four-and-a-half years by Branch 6 of the Revolutionary Court for "acting against state security, meeting and colluding with the intention of carrying out propaganda activities against the government and insulting officials". Dr Keyvan Ansari, a member of the Alumni Association of Iran (*Sazman-e Danesh Amukhtegan-e Iran-e Eslami [Advar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat]*), was reportedly arrested on 18 September outside his house and held in solitary confinement in Section 209 of Evin Prison. His appeal was scheduled to be heard on around 17 April before Branch 32 of the Appeals Court in Tehran.

Kheyrollah Derakhshandi and Abdolfazl Jahandar were sentenced to three and two-and-a-half years' imprisonment respectively for "acting against state security, meeting and colluding with those intending to disturb state security". The lawyers for the three men have reportedly launched an appeal against the sentences before Branch 32 of the Appeals Court. Kheyrollah Derakhshandi, a graduate in industrial management, and journalist Abolfazl Jahandar, who was a member of the general council of the student organisation Office for Fostering Unity (*Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat*) while he was a student, were both reportedly arrested on 19 August.

In mid-January Keyvan Rafi'i's case reportedly went before a judge of Branch 14 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran. The judge reportedly said that, due to deficiencies in the case, including the matter of his failing health, brought about by conditions he faced in section 209 of Evin Prison, and an earlier lack of access to legal representation, he could not issue a verdict and has sent the case for review. Keyvan Rafi'i, who had undertaken several hunger strikes in protest against the conditions he was held in, was transferred on 20 April to Section 7 of Evin Prison, where drug addicts are reportedly held. He was arrested on 9 July 2006 and the exact reasons for his arrest are not known, but it is feared it may have been in connection with his activities to publicize human rights violations in Iran: He is the spokesman in Iran for an organization called Human Rights Activists in Iran

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 5 September President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad gave a speech to a selected group of students, saying, "Our education system has been under the influence of secular and arrogant thinking for 150 years in **such** a way that self-belief and identity were ignored and efforts were made to promote a secular system and secular thoughts in society... I tell young people that changing the secular teaching regime that has dominated for 150 years is a difficult thing ... We need to do it together. Measures have been taken before, but it is not sufficient". A number of students have been denied permission to return to university for the new academic year, apparently because of their political activities.

Sayed Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini, the Head of the Alumni Association of Iran, was detained on 12 June 2006 and released on bail on 21 October. He had reportedly been tortured and ill-treated (see UA 181/06, MDE 13/075/2006, 30 June 2006, and follow-up). He is now believed to be facing charges of "acting against state security by participating in the demonstration for women's rights"; "disturbing public order"; "propaganda against the system"; and "insulting the Leadership". No date is known to have been set for his trial before Branch 14 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran.

The Alumni Association, whose membership is open to graduates of Iranian universities, has been active in promoting democracy and human rights in Iran. The office of the Alumni Association was raided by the security forces on 18 September, and computers and other office equipment was seized. The association's website, www.advarnews.com, which posted news about the student movement and human rights, was forced to close, but has since reopened on www.advarnews.us.

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

- asking what charges Keyvan Rafi'i, Kheyrollah Derakhshandi, Abolfazi Jahandar and Dr Keyvan Ansari are facing and what evidence there is against them;
- urging the authorities to drop any charges which relate solely to the peaceful exercise of their internationally recognized right to freedom of expression and association;
- stating that if they were to be convicted and imprisoned solely on the basis of such charges, Amnesty International would consider them to be prisoners of conscience, who should be released immediately and unconditionally;
- urging the authorities to end any harassment of student or human rights organizations carried out solely in connection with their peaceful defence of human rights or other peaceful political activities.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir

istiftaa@wilayah.org

Fax: +98 251 7774 2228 (mark FAO Office of His Excellency Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir

via website: www.president.ir/email

Salutation: Your Excellency

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 22 June 2007.