

PUBLIC

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UA 181/06 Arbitrary arrest/prisoner of conscience/ fear of torture and ill-treatment

IRAN Sayed Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini (m), Human rights defender

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Sayed Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini was reportedly arrested during a peaceful demonstration in the capital, Tehran, which called for legal reforms to end discrimination against women in Iran. At least 69 other people were arrested, but all except Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini have since been released. Amnesty International believes him to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely on account of the peaceful exercise of his internationally recognized right to freedom of expression and association, and he is at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini, a former student leader and former member of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the *Majles* (Iran's parliament), is also the Head of the Alumni Association of Iran (*Sazman-e Danesh Amukhtegan-e Iran-e Eslami [Advar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat]*), which he helped found in 2000. This organization, whose membership is open to graduates of Iranian universities, has been active in promoting democracy and human rights in Iran. During his term in parliament he was an active advocate of human rights, and highlighted the cases of imprisoned students and political prisoners, including by inspecting prisons and illegal detention centres.

Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini is reportedly held in section 209 of Tehran's Evin Prison, run by the Ministry of Intelligence. Security officials were alleged to have beaten him when he was arrested, and further reports have suggested that he has been beaten while held in detention.

Fourteen days after his arrest he was reportedly allowed visits from his family and one of his lawyers. The lawyer reportedly said that the charges against his client included making a statement to the *Mehr* news agency based in Tehran, the details of which were not specified. Other reports have suggested that he is accused of "spreading lies". According to reports, prior to his participation in the women's rights demonstration, security officers had contacted Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini by telephone and warned him against supporting and participating in the protest.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On 12 June 2006 the Iranian security forces forcibly broke up a peaceful demonstration by women and men advocating an end to legal discrimination against women in Iran. The demonstrators had gathered in the "Seventh of Tir" Square in Tehran to call, among other things, for changes in the law to give a woman's testimony in court equal value to that of a man; and for married women to be allowed to choose their employment and to travel freely without obtaining the prior permission of their husband.

Police officers, including a large unit of policewomen, reportedly moved in as soon as the demonstration began and forced the protesters to disperse, including by beating some with batons. Scores of protesters were detained; on 13 June 2006, Minister of Justice and Spokesman for the Judiciary Jamal Karimi-Rad stated that 42 women and 28 men had been arrested for participating in what he alleged was an illegal demonstration. When questioned about the reports of beatings by police, he said, "If there was any beating, it will be reviewed".

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

- expressing concern at the detention of Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini following his participation in a demonstration in Tehran on 12 June;
- stating that you believe him to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely on account of the peaceful exercise of his internationally recognized right to freedom of expression and association and calling for his immediate and unconditional release;
- calling for him to be granted immediate and unconditional access to his lawyer, family members, and any medical treatment he may require;
- urging that the allegations that Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini has been beaten be investigated and that anyone found responsible for abuses be brought to justice promptly and fairly.

**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](mailto:info@leader.ir)  
[istiftaa@wilayah.org](mailto:istiftaa@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:** Please send emails via the feedback form on the Persian site of the website:  
<http://www.iranjudiciary.org/contactus-feedback-fa.html>

*(The text of the feedback form translates as:*

*1st line: name, 2nd line: email address, 3rd line: subject heading, then enter your email into the text box)*

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**Minister of the Interior**

Hojatoleslam Mustafa Purmohammadi  
Ministry of the Interior, Dr Fatemi Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** + 98 21 8 896 203 / + 98 21 8 899 547 / + 98 21 6 650 203

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:**

**President**

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad  
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** Via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: +98 21 6 674 790 (ask for your message to be forwarded to H.E. Ahmadinejad)

**Email:** [dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir](mailto:dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir)

via website: [www.president.ir/email](http://www.president.ir/email)

**Speaker of Parliament**

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel  
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** + 98 21 6 646 1746

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 11 August 2006.