

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/085/2006

1 August 2006

Further Information on UA 57/06 (MDE 13/023/06, 10 March 2006) and follow-up (MDE 13/073/2006, 29 June 2006) - Death Penalty/ Fear of imminent execution

IRAN            Dr Awdeh Afrawi (m) aged 52  
                  Nazem Bureihi (m)  
                  Aliredha Salman Delfi (m)  
                  Ali Helfi (m)  
                  Jaafar Sawari (m)  
                  Risan Sawari (m), teacher  
                  Mohammad Ali Sawari (m), teacher  
                  Moslem al-Ha'i (m)  
                  Abdulredha Nawaseri (m), aged 31

New names:    Yahia Nasserri (m)  
                  Abdulzahra Helichi (m)  
                  Abdul-Imam Za'eri (m)

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At the end of July, the Supreme Court reportedly upheld the death sentences against Nazem Bureihi, Mohammad Ali Sawari, Yahia Nasserri, Abdulzahra Helichi and Abdul-Imam Za'eri. Amnesty International is concerned that they are at risk of imminent execution.

The men were reportedly sentenced to death at the beginning of June by a Revolutionary Court in the city of Ahvaz, Khuzestan province. They were charged with acting against national security, "waging war against God" ("*mohareb*") and carrying out bombings in Ahvaz, which took place between June and October 2005. No details of which bombings they were alleged to have participated in were made public nor was the exact date of their execution revealed.

Amnesty International currently has no further information about Yahia Nasserri, Abdulzahra Helichi and Abdul-Imam Za'eri. However, Mohammad Ali Sawari was reportedly arrested on or around 4 November 2005. Nazem Bureihi has reportedly been in custody since 2000 having been arrested on charges of "insurgency". Though he was serving a 35 year prison sentence, he was among nine men shown on Khuzestan Provincial TV on 1 March 2006, "confessing" to involvement in the October 2005 bombings.

Given the secretive nature of the trials in Iran, the current stage of the legal proceedings against the other men is unclear to Amnesty International.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Much of Iran's Arab community lives in the province of Khuzestan which borders Iraq. It is strategically important because it is the site of much of Iran's oil reserves, but the Arab population does not feel it has benefited as much from the oil revenue as the Persian population. Historically, the Arab community has been marginalised and discriminated against. Tension has mounted among the Arab population since 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. Hundreds have been arrested and there have been reports of torture. 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, the cycle of violence has 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 arrests. Two men, Mehdi Nawaseri and Ali Awdeh Afrawi, were executed in public on 2 March after they were convicted of involvement in the October bombings. Their executions

followed unfair trials before a Revolutionary Court during which they are believed to have been denied access to lawyers, and their confessions, along with those of seven other men, were broadcast on television.

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

- stating that Amnesty International recognizes the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but strongly opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violation of the right to life;
- urging that the death sentence imposed on Nazem Bureihi, Mohammad Ali Sawari, Yahia Nasser, Abdulzahra Helichi and Abdul-Imam Za'eri be commuted immediately;
- seeking full details of the status of all 12 men (naming them), including any details of any charges and evidence against them and any appeals they may have made;
- expressing concern at reports that they were not granted access to a lawyer during some or all sessions of their possible trials, which reportedly did not meet international standards for a fair trial, as laid down by Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iran is a State Party.
- calling for the 12 men to be given continuous access to lawyers, their families, interpreters and medical treatment if necessary;
- seeking assurances that they are not being tortured or ill-treated in detention.

**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

**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

**COPIES TO:**

**President**

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

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

**Fax: Via foreign affairs: +98 21 6 674 790 and ask to be forwarded to H.E Ahmadinejad**

**Email:** 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 12 September 2006.