

PUBLIC

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**Further Information on UA 262/06 (MDE 13/114/2006, 29 September 2006) Arbitrary arrest/fear for safety/ possible prisoners of conscience**

**IRAN Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi, Shi'a cleric  
More than 418 people (note revised number)**

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Shi'a cleric Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi was arrested at his home in Tehran on 8 October, along with an unknown number, possibly around 300, of his followers. The arrests took place during violent clashes with security forces. It is believed that those arrested are detained in Evin Prison in Tehran.

At least 41 followers of Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi were reportedly arrested in the courtyard of his house in Tehran during the morning of 28 September. They are thought to have been taken to Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, which is run by the Ministry of Intelligence. The following day, up to 35 others were reportedly arrested, and by 2 October, at least 118 of his followers were said to have been detained. Their names are known to Amnesty International.

On the night of 4 and 5 October, security forces reportedly attacked the Ayatollah's house, but were forced back by his followers. A further attack was launched on 7 October, during which the Ayatollah's supporters are reported to have fought the security forces with swords, sticks and other implements. The Ayatollah's followers are said to have captured several members of the security forces but released them later, after photographing their identity cards.

Following the arrests, the Deputy Governor-General of Tehran for Political and Social Affairs told the Iranian Labour News Agency, "For some time, a number of sectarian elements had engaged in a series of operations in Tehran... disturbing citizens and causing traffic problems for the people ... On Wednesday night, a number of people who were crossing the road were seized by this group, only to be freed after being beaten up... Since Saturday, a number of thugs from Tehran and other towns, recruited by the group, had embarked on blocking the streets leading to the district. They then initiated an attack on the Law-Enforcement Force [LEF, Iran's police], throwing Molotov cocktails and using over a thousand cold weapons, knives, daggers and swords. At first, the LEF avoided violence, but the group embarked on taking LEF forces hostage and sought to wreak havoc by setting tyres ablaze and throwing acid at some people... The LEF was left with no option but to act, and in very little time arrested the armed men, seized their weapons and handed them over to the judicial authorities. They also discovered hundreds of cold weapons and several firearms and grenades". The Deputy Governor-General said there were no precise figures on the number of those arrested, and said "I should like to point out that the gentleman is not an ayatollah. Mr Boroujerdi, who had unfortunately caused the incident owing to his wilful actions, has also been arrested."

On 10 October, an unattributed article entitled "On the plot of Kazemeyni-Boroujerdi; Propagating Islam with the assistance of the BBC and CIA" appeared in the Iranian newspaper *Keyhan*. The article described the incident as part of a plot by Western intelligence services such as those of the USA, Israel and the UK to use ethnic and religious minorities to damage Iran, and referred to the fact that the Ayatollah had made telephone calls to foreign radio stations such as the Persian-language service of Radio Free Europe (Radio Farda) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) before his arrest.

On 11 October, another report in *Keyhan* quoted LEF Brigadier-General Esma'il Ahmadi Moghaddam as stating that nine people had been taken hostage, two officers were shot, and more than 300 people, including "this person" were arrested and taken to Evin Prison.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi reportedly advocates the separation of religion from the political basis of the state. Since 1994 he says he has been summoned repeatedly before the Special Court for the Clergy and has been detained in Towhid and Evin Prisons. He has reportedly developed heart and kidney problems as a result of torture. His father was a prominent cleric who refused to accept the principle of *velayat-e faqih* (rule of the [Islamic] jurisconsult, or of those who know Islamic law), on which the Islamic Republic of Iran is based. He died in 2002 and his grave in the Masjed-e Nour mosque in Tehran has reportedly been desecrated and the mosque taken over by the state.

The Special Court for the Clergy, which operates outside the framework of the judiciary, was established in 1987 by Ayatollah Khomeini to try members of the Shi'a religious establishment in Iran. Its procedures fall short of international standards for fair trial: among other things, defendants can only be represented by clergymen nominated by the court, who are not required to be legally qualified. In some cases the defendant has been unable to find any nominated cleric willing to undertake the defence and has been tried without any legal representation. The court can hand down sentences including flogging and the death penalty.

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

- noting that Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi and more than 418 of his followers have been arrested, at least some following violent clashes with the security forces;
- seeking assurances that all those detained are protected from torture or ill-treatment;
- seeking information about the reasons for the arrest of all those detained, including any charges and trial proceedings;
- urging that all those detained be allowed immediate and regular access to family visits and to lawyers of their choice;
- calling for the release of all those detained unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and tried promptly and fairly;
- reminding the authorities that Amnesty International would consider anyone detained solely on account of their religious beliefs or their support for Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi, who has not used or advocated violence, to be a prisoner of conscience; and would call for their immediate and unconditional release.

## **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) OR [istiftaa@wilayah.org](mailto:istiftaa@wilayah.org)

**Fax:** +98 251 774 2228 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

### Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [iranprobe@iranprobe.com](mailto:iranprobe@iranprobe.com)

**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](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

**Email:** [hadadadel@majlis.ir](mailto:hadadadel@majlis.ir)

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 24 November 2006.