

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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IRAN: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNS SUICIDE BOMB ATTACKS ON MOSQUE

Amnesty International unreservedly condemns the double suicide bombing in the evening of 15 July 2010 in front of a prominent Shi'a mosque in the city of Zahedan, capital of Sistan-Baluchistan province. The attack killed at least 27 people and injured at least 270 others, including worshippers and people who sought to help those injured in the first blast.

The attack on the Grand Mosque in Zahedan has been claimed by the People's Resistance Movement of Iran (PRMI) a Baluch armed group. In a statement on its website, the PRMI said it was aimed at Revolutionary Guards officers worshipping at the mosque on Revolutionary Guards Day, to avenge the execution of two of its senior figures.

Amnesty International is calling on the PRMI to put an end to indiscriminate attacks and commit to uphold fundamental principles of humanity derived from international humanitarian law and human rights standards. These principles prohibit absolutely attacks on civilians as well as indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. Such attacks cannot be justified under any circumstances.

Amnesty International is also calling on the Iranian authorities to bring to justice those responsible for the Zahedan bombings, but to do so in full conformity with international human rights law. Amnesty International recognizes that Iran has a responsibility to protect everyone in its jurisdiction and to bring those responsible for gross human rights abuses to justice. However, the Iranian authorities must act in accordance with their obligations under international human rights law, including by treating detainees humanely, refraining from torture or other ill-treatment, and trying suspects in proceedings which fully meet international standards for fair trial. Amnesty International also opposes the use of the death penalty in all cases, irrespective of the magnitude of the crime.

Background

The PRMI is a Baluch armed group opposed to the Iranian government, which claims to be fighting on behalf of the Baluch and Sunni minorities. It is also known as Jondallah.

Abolmalek Rigi, then the leader of the PRMI, was executed by the Iranian authorities in June 2010. Abolmalek Rigi's brother, Abdolhamid, who had been captured in Pakistan and extradited to Iran in 2008, was executed the previous month. Neither man received a fair trial. Other alleged members of Jondallah have also been executed in previous years, also after unfair trials.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all circumstances as a violation of the right to life and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

In recent years, the PRMI has carried out several attacks on Iranian governmental forces and civilian targets such as mosques in Sistan-Baluchistan province, carrying out bombings, including suicide attacks, and killing captured officials. Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned such abuses.

Iran's Baluch minority suffer discrimination by the state authorities leading to gross violations of their economic, social and cultural rights. They live mainly in the provinces of Sistan-Baluchistan and Kerman, and are believed to constitute between one to three per cent of the country's total population of around 70 million. They are mostly Sunni Muslims, whereas the majority of Iran's population are Shi'a Muslims.

For further information, see **Iran: Fear of reprisal against Baluch population following suicide attack in Pishin by armed group**, Index Number: MDE 13/112/2009, 20 October 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/112/2009/en>

Iran's presidential election amid unrest and ongoing human rights violations, 5 June 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/iran-presidential-election-amid-unrest-and-ongoing-human-rights-violations-20090605>

Iran: Government must stop executions of 14 men, 13 July 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/iran-government-must-stop-executions-14-men-20090713>

and **Iran: Human Rights Abuses against the Baluchi minority**, Index Number MDE 13/104/2007, September 2007, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/104/2007>

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