

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/048/2008

12 March 2008

Further Information on UA 38/08 (MDE 13/038/2008, 12 February 2008) – Death sentence/Unfair trial/ Torture

**IRAN** Ya'qoub Mehrnahad (m), aged 28, member of Iran's Baluchi minority

---

A Judiciary spokesman confirmed at a press conference on 19 February that Ya'qoub Mehrnehad had been sentenced to death.

Judiciary spokesman Ali Reza Jamshidi told the press conference that Ya'qoub Mehrnehad had been sentenced to death for "contacts with the *Jondallah* group", but also said that the sentence was open to appeal before the Supreme Court. Ya'qoub Mehrnehad was sentenced to death after an unfair trial and may have been tortured. He may have been arrested solely for his peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association during his journalism and his activities as head of a legally registered NGO, The Voice of Justice Young People's Society (VJYPS), which organises events such as concerts and educational courses for young Baluchi people and raises funds to help the poor.

On the day of the press conference, Ya'qoub Mehrnehad was permitted a visit by his family, the first for about two months. His family were summoned at short notice. During that meeting, they were told to speak only in Persian, not Baluchi. According to a Baluchi source, Ya'qoub Mehrnehad told his family, "I am not guilty and this has happened unjustly and if I am executed, people will know that I have been executed without [having committed] a crime."

Ya'qoub's 16-year-old brother Ebrahim, Ebrahim's 16-year-old friend, and two other Baluchi men who are members of VJYPS have been arrested, according to local Baluchi sources, and are in grave danger of torture. Their whereabouts are unknown. See UA 68/08, MDE 13/048/2008, 12 March 2008.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Baluchi armed group, the People's Resistance of Movement of Iran (PRMI), formerly known as *Jondallah* has carried out a number of attacks on Iranian officials and has sometimes taken hostages and killed them. It reportedly seeks to defend the rights of the Baluchi people, though government officials have claimed that it is involved in drug smuggling and terrorist activities and has ties to foreign governments.

Attacks by the PRMI have been followed by widespread arrests of members of the Baluchi minority, many of whom Baluchi sources claim are not connected to the attacks. In 2007, at least 312 people, and perhaps many more, were executed in Iran. There was a marked rise in the number of Baluchis executed.

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

- calling on the authorities not to execute Ya'qoub Mehrnehad, and to commute his death sentence immediately;
- asking for details of the charges against Ya'qoub Mehrnehad, by which court he was tried, whether he had a lawyer of his own choice, whether he has been able to exercise his right to appeal against his conviction and sentence;
- expressing concern at reports that he has been tortured, and reminding the authorities that the use of confessions extracted under duress is prohibited by Article 38 of the Constitution of Iran;

- urging that he be released if he has been detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association.

**APPEALS TO:**

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh / Office of the Head of the Judiciary

Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhuri, Tehran 1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran

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

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei

The Office of the Supreme Leader, Islamic Republic Street - Shahid Keshvar Doust Street

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [info@leader.ir](mailto:info@leader.ir)

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Governor of Sistan - Baluchistan province

Mr Dahmarde, Governor

**Fax:** +98 541 3231990

**E-mail:** [info@sb-ostan.ir](mailto:info@sb-ostan.ir)

**Salutation:** Dear Sir

**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, Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** +98 21 3355 6408

**Email:** [hadadadel@majlis.ir](mailto:hadadadel@majlis.ir) (Ask for your message to be passed to the Article 90 Commission)

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 April 2008.