

PUBLIC

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UA 166/08 Fear of torture and ill-treatment/ Fear of death penalty

IRAN Fathollah Manouchehri Fouladvand (aka Foroud Fouladvand) (m)
Alexander Valizadeh (aka Kourosh Lor) (m)
Nazem Schmidtt (aka Simorgh) (m)

Foroud Fouladvand, the leader of the group *Anjoman-e Padeshahi-e Iran* (API), which advocates the restoration of the Iranian monarchy, may be held by the Ministry of Intelligence in Tehran. Two other members of the same group, Kourosh Lor and Simorgh, may also be held in Tehran. If so they are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment, and may even be sentenced to death.

The three men were apparently abducted on 17 January 2007 in Yüksekova, a district of Hakkari Province in Turkey, near the border with Iran. Amnesty International has learnt that Foroud Fouladvand may currently be held in Tehran, in a detention centre run by the Ministry of Intelligence. He is said to have been charged with *Efsad fil Arz* (corruption on earth) and *moharebeh* (being at enmity with God), which can carry the death penalty.

Foroud Fouladvand is an Iranian national who was granted refugee status in the United Kingdom. He travelled with his two supporters Alexander Valizadeh, an Iranian/ US citizen, and Nazem Schmidtt, an Iranian/ German citizen, to Turkey, where they met with people pretending to support API but who may have been Iranian Intelligence officers. The hire car used by the three men was later found abandoned, its windows broken, its wiring cut and without its number plates.

There is no further information relating to the whereabouts of Alexander Valizadeh (aka Kourosh Lor) and Nazem Schmidtt (aka Simorgh) or any trial proceedings relating to their cases.

API advocates restoration of the constitutional monarchy in Iran, which was abolished by the Islamic Republic. It broadcasts on the satellite channel "Your TV" that has been operating in London, UK, since 2002.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The practice of abduction of Iranian nationals outside Iran by Iranian security forces has previously been documented by Amnesty International. Ali Tavassoli, a former political opposition leader, disappeared in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan in September 1995. The Iranian authorities denied reports that Iranian security forces had been responsible for his abduction. Ali Tavassoli had been taken to Iran, where he had been held for several years apparently without charge or trial, in a secret detention centre (see: *Iran: Amnesty International concerned about possible government involvement in deaths of Iranian nationals*, AI Index MDE 13/07/96, 28 February 1996).

In another case, Amnesty International received information in 2000 that Mohammad Maliki, a recognized refugee, was abducted in February 1999 in Baku. He was said to have been taken back to Iran and sentenced to six years' imprisonment by a Revolutionary Court in Tabriz, north western Iran.

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

- calling on the authorities to clarify the whereabouts of Foroud Fouladvand, Alexander Valizadeh and Nazem Schmidtt;

- should they be held in Iran, calling on the authorities to ensure that they are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, and to allow them immediate access to a lawyer of their own choosing, and any medical treatment they may require;
- asking for clarification of the circumstances surrounding their apparent arrest; what charges, if any, have been brought against them; and when any trial will begin;
- calling on the authorities to release them unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and given a prompt and fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh

Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhouri, Tehran 1316814737

Islamic Republic of Iran

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

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street

Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran

Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

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

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 25 July 2008.