

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/128/2007

2 November 2007

UA 286/07 Fear of ill-treatment/possible prisoner of conscience

IRAN **Ali Sarami (m)**
Mohammad Ali Mansouri (m), aged 47
Iran, or Masoumeh, Mansouri (f), aged 22, his daughter
Nasser Sodargari (m), aged 46
Tahereh Pour-Rostam (f), aged 44, his wife
Farshid Sodargari, relative of Nasser Sodargari
Misaq Yazdanejad (m), aged 21

The seven people named above were detained by Ministry of Intelligence officials in late August and early September because they had taken part in a ceremony marking the 19th anniversary of the 1988 "prison massacres" in which thousands of political prisoners were executed. On 29 August relatives of those killed gathered at Khavaran in south Tehran, near a mass grave where some of the prisoners were buried.

They were taken to Section 209 of Tehran's Evin Prison, which is under the control of the Ministry of Intelligence and off-limits to Evin Prison officials. All are reportedly being interrogated by a man from the office of public prosecutions in Tehran.

Ali Sarami was detained by four plainclothes officials while shopping near his home in south Tehran. They took him to his home, searched his possessions and confiscated many items, including photograph albums and his laptop computer. His family made inquiries, but were told to stop or face unspecified consequences.

Mohammad Ali Mansouri was reportedly arrested on 2 September at his house, which had just been searched. His family asked about him at a branch of the Revolutionary Court and were threatened with imprisonment. On 27 October, his daughter Iran, or Masoumeh, Mansouri was called and told to collect her father's belongings. Her brother and an uncle went but were sent back with a demand that she come in person. She went, and has been detained incommunicado since then. She had not taken part in the commemoration ceremony in Khavaran, and appears to have been detained for asking about her father, and possibly for discussing his detention in a 10 October interview with the Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*. The interrogator has reportedly told the family not to speak about the case to any journalists. They have appointed human rights defender Abdolfattah Soltani to represent Mohammad Ali Mansouri, but have been told to get a different lawyer.

Nasser Sodargari and his wife Tahereh Pour-Rostam both took part in the commemorations in Khavaran. Nasser Sodargari was detained at his place of work and taken to his home, which was subjected to a thorough search: possessions including photo albums and a laptop computer were taken. The couple has two teenage boys who now do not appear to have a guardian as one of them is 18, and considered to be an adult. A relative of Nasser Sodargari, Farshid Sodargari, was detained at his place of work on 9 or 10 September. He too was taken to his home which was thoroughly searched, and a variety of his possessions were removed.

Misaq Yazdanejad was arrested at home on 10 September. He reportedly needs medicine, which his mother took to Evin Prison for him, but the guards refused to accept it. Officials have sent a text message from his mobile phone to all the contacts in the phone's memory.

Footage from this year's commemorations at Khavaran can be viewed at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfinvzW4mxw> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf8FD0ZymwE>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Between 27 July 1988 and the end of that year, thousands of political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, were executed in prisons nationwide. The vast majority were sentenced to death after summary trials or brief interviews. The executions were authorized at the highest level of the Iranian leadership and were supposed to tackle the perceived threat from armed opposition groups, in particular the People's Mojahedin of Iran and the *Fedayan-e Khalq*. Amnesty International believes these executions amount to a crime against humanity. Under international law, valid in 1988, crimes against humanity consist of widespread or systematic attacks against civilians on discriminatory, including political, grounds. Amnesty International believes that there should be no impunity for human rights violations, no matter where or when they took place. The 1988 executions should be subject to an independent impartial investigation, and all those responsible should be brought to justice, and receive appropriate penalties. Amnesty International's report, *Iran: Violations of human rights 1987-1990* (December 1990) detailed the magnitude of the 1988 prison massacres and was the basis for Amnesty International's subsequent campaigning on this issue.

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

- urging the authorities to ensure that those detained in connection with the 29 August Khavaran commemoration of the 1988 "prison massacres" are treated humanely, and not tortured;
- asking why they were detained, and calling on the authorities to give them immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers and any medical treatment they may require;
- expressing concern at reports that some were beaten during arrest, and urging the authorities to investigate those reports fully, and bring those responsible to justice;
- expressing concern that in almost 20 years no one has been brought to justice for the 1988 prison massacres, and urging the authorities to take action to address this.

APPEALS 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

Salutation: Your Excellency

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

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

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir

via website: www.president.ir/email

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

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

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

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

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 14 December 2007.