

**PUBLIC**

**AI Index: MDE 13/040/2007**

**30 March 2007**

**Further Information on UA 262/06 (MDE 13/114/2006, 29 September 2006) and follow-ups (MDE 13/120/2006, 13 October 2006; MDE 13/134/2006, 11 December 2006) - Arbitrary arrest / fear for safety/ possible prisoners of conscience/ medical concern New concern: Torture and ill-treatment**

**IRAN**            **Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi (m), Shi'a cleric,  
At least four others (note revised number)**

**New name:        Sayed Mahdi Kazemeyni Boroujerdi (m), son of above**

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Shi'a cleric Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi reportedly appeared before the Special Court for the Clergy (SCC) between 18 and 20 March. According to an eyewitness, he appeared to be bleeding from his mouth, and possibly occasionally coughing up blood. He was reportedly unable to walk upright.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi's health has deteriorated partially as a result of a hunger strike which he started on 19 February in Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, and was detained in a cold cell without a heater during the winter months. It is not known whether he is continuing with his hunger strike. In addition, he allegedly suffered torture and ill-treatment during interrogation. During his detention at Evin Prison he has been denied permission to seek treatment at the prison's medical facility.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi began his hunger strike in protest at the conditions of his detention, and at the authorities' refusal to grant him temporary leave from prison to visit his dying mother prior to her death on 14 February 2007 and to attend her funeral.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi's 80-year-old mother was amongst hundreds of followers and supporters of the cleric arrested in late September and early October 2006 and detained in Evin Prison. Amnesty International has now learnt that she was ill-treated in detention. To Amnesty International's knowledge, most or all of the detainees were later released. Four other followers of Ayatollah Kazemeyni Boroujerdi were reportedly also arrested around 18 February 2007. Their names are not known to Amnesty International and no further details are available to Amnesty International in connection with these reports.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi reportedly appeared at a hearing before the SCC on or around 14 February. According to reports, he may have been charged with "acting against state security." He had no access to legal representation and he has reportedly complained that he does not know "what they want from him". His bail was allegedly set at five billion Iranian Rials (about \$US 564,000). He is reportedly unable to pay this sum.

On 18 February, the cleric's eldest son, Sayed Mahdi Kazemeyni Boroujerdi, was arrested and was detained in Section 209 of Evin Prison, although Amnesty International is not aware of the reasons for his reported detention. Prior to this, since January 2007, both he and another son, Sayed Mohammad, had been summoned several times to appear before the SCC for questioning, allegedly in connection with the activities of their father. On 20 February, Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi's wife – whose name is not known to Amnesty International, was also summoned to appear before the SCC.

On 13 March, an 'interview' with Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi was reportedly shown on local television in Iran. Apparently filmed in Evin Prison, where there is a specially equipped room for such programmes, and entitled 'Lying Claims', he was wearing a prison uniform. Amnesty International was told that in the programme Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi referred to his 'lies' and how his poor followers believed these and how most of his followers were women. Amnesty International was also told that his behaviour and manner of speaking made it clear that he was under great stress.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi reportedly advocates the separation of religion from the political basis of the Iranian state.

The Special Court for the Clergy, which operates outside the framework of the judiciary and is under the direct control of the Supreme Leader, was established in 1987 by Ayatollah Khomeini to try members of the Shi'a religious establishment in Iran, or others whose cases are connected to those of clergymen. Its procedures fall short of international standards for fair trial. 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, French or your own language:**

- expressing concern that Ayatollah Kazemeyni Boroujerdi may have been tortured, and calling for a prompt and impartial investigation into these allegations, with its methods and findings made public;
- asking to be informed of the medical condition of the Ayatollah Kazemeyni Boroujerdi and his followers, and urging that they be granted access to all necessary medical treatment;
- asking for the reasons of the arrests on or around 18 February of four further followers of Ayatollah Kazemeyni Boroujerdi, and calling on the authorities to give you details of their names, any charges against the four, and any legal proceedings involving them;
- seeking assurances that all those detained are protected from torture or ill-treatment, and that they are permitted immediate and regular access to their families and to lawyers of their choice;
- calling on the authorities to 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, Shahid Keshvar Doust St., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax: +98 251 7774 2228 (mark "For the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah Khamenei")**

**Email: Via website, in English: <http://www.leader.ir/langs/EN/index.php?p=sendletter>**

**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:**

President:

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

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

**Email: [dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir](mailto:dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir) OR via website: [www.president.ir/email](http://www.president.ir/email)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

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**

**e-mail: [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 11 May 2007.