

# URGENT ACTION

## MASS TRIAL OF PROTESTORS UNDERMINING JUSTICE

**A mass trial of more than 100 people accused of organizing protests against the widely-disputed official result of the 12 June presidential election began before the Revolutionary Court in Tehran on 1 August. Trials before this court are unfair and if convicted the defendants face harsh penalties. Many are believed to be prisoners of conscience and reports suggest some may have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated in pre-trial detention.**

Those on trial include former senior officials under President Mohammad Khatami, journalists, academics and others. Amnesty International does not yet have a full list of the accused but they include former Vice-President **Mohammad Ali Abtahi**; **Mohsen Aminzadeh**, formerly Deputy Foreign Minister; former members of parliament **Mohsen Mirdamadi** and **Behzad Nabavi**; and **Abdollah Ramazanzadeh**, formerly government spokesperson under President Khatami. Other defendants include **Kian Tajbakhsh**, an academic and former prisoner of conscience who has dual Iranian-US nationality; **Maziar Bahari**, a journalist who is a dual national of Canada and Iran; **Hossein Rassam**, an Iranian employee of the British Embassy in Tehran; and **Mohammad Atrianfar**, a journalist and former Deputy Interior Minister.

Excerpts from the trial proceedings have been broadcast on state-controlled TV in Iran but foreign and independent media are barred from the court, as are lawyers representing the defendants. At least four of the accused, all prominent reformists, have been shown "confessing" and apologizing to the court, possibly under duress after being held incommunicado in pre-trial detention for lengthy periods. Many of those detained in connection with the protests are reported to have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated and some, women and men, are alleged to have been raped whilst in detention.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, Arabic, English, French or your own language:**

- √ Calling on the authorities to ensure that all those detained or on trial for peacefully protesting the disputed official result of the presidential election are freed immediately and unconditionally as prisoners of conscience;
- √ urging the authorities to ensure all others receive fair trials in accordance with recognized international fair trial standards and without recourse to the death penalty;
- √ calling for an immediate, independent investigation into allegations of rape, torture and other ill-treatment of detainees, and for the perpetrators to be brought to justice;
- √ calling for all those detained to be given immediate access to their families, lawyers and medical treatment.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 September 2009 TO:**

#### Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Islamic Republic Street – End of  
Shahid Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran,  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Email: via website: <http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter> (English)**  
**<http://www.leader.ir/langs/fa/index.php?p=letter> (Persian)**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### 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: [shahroudi@dadgostary-tehran.ir](mailto:shahroudi@dadgostary-tehran.ir)**  
**(In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Minister of the Interior

Sadegh Mahsouli  
Ministry of the Interior  
Dr Fatemi Avenue  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Fax: +98 21 8 896 203/ +98 21 8 899 547/ +98 21 6 650 203**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the days following the 13 June announcement that President Ahmadinejad had won the previous day's presidential election, which hundreds of thousands of Iranians dispute, the authorities imposed draconian restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly. The security forces, including the paramilitary Basij, have been widely deployed in the streets and communications have been significantly disrupted. Iranian publications have been banned from publishing information about the nationwide unrest since the result was declared. Foreign journalists have been banned from the streets, their visas not renewed and some foreign reporters have been arrested or expelled from the country.

According to statements by Iranian officials recorded by Amnesty International, about 4,000 people have been arrested since 12 June by police and Basij forces across the country during demonstrations or their aftermath. These include prominent political figures close to either presidential candidates Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, or former President Khatami, who supported Mir Hossein Mousavi's campaign. Some human rights defenders and journalists have also been detained.

Iranian intelligence services have repeatedly had high-profile detainees filmed "confessing" to vaguely-worded charges, which are often not recognizably criminal offences. Some of these "confessions" have been aired on TV, often before their trials have taken place, compromising their right not to incriminate themselves.

Amnesty International has consistently criticized Iran's Revolutionary Courts for their failure to adhere to international standards for fair trials. Confessions extracted under torture or duress are routinely admitted as evidence in the proceedings in these courts. If convicted, Mohammad Abtahi and the other defendants could face prison sentences or, if found guilty of "Moharebeh" (enmity against God), they could be sentenced to death.

Iranian officials have confirmed the allegations of torture and mistreatment of those detained after the post-election protests. Brigadier General Ismail Ahmadi Moghaddam said that abuses took place in at least one detention centre and the Chief Prosecutor of Iran, Ghorban Ali Dorri Najafabadi stated that jailed protesters had been tortured. The head of the facility and three guards have reportedly been dismissed. On 29 July, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordered the closure of Kahrizak detention centre outside Tehran acknowledging that detainees had been abused there, and the authorities say the head of the prison and three guards have been imprisoned as a result.

A lawyer representing Mohammad Ali Abtahi and other defendants, complained on 1 August: "I have not had access to the prosecution case files at any point since the arrest of my clients. I was not aware of the trial until 11am today. And I did not get permission to enter the court room." He also questioned the legal validity of the trial: "According to article 135 of the Iranian constitution, trials held without lawyers being present are illegal."

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