

URGENT ACTION

IRANIAN KURDISH MAN EXECUTED

Ehsan (Esma'il) Fattahian, a male member of Iran's Kurdish minority, was executed in the province of Kordestan, northwestern Iran, early on 11 November.

Ehsan Fattahian was executed despite domestic and international pressure for the suspension of his execution and commutation of his death sentence. He had been convicted of "enmity against God" for his membership of a Kurdish opposition group, now known to be *Komala*, a left-wing Kurdish organization that seeks self-determination for Iran's Kurdish minority. He was initially sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment to be served in internal exile, but this was increased on appeal to the death penalty. It is now known that he was not given an opportunity to appeal against the death penalty, in contravention of Article 6(4) of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party. Ehsan Fattahian said in a letter from prison that this was because he had refused to agree to a televised "confession" in which he would have to express remorse for his beliefs. His execution raises fears that other political prisoners on death row may also be at imminent risk of execution as the authorities seek to further repress dissent in Iran. His body was transferred to the nearby city of Kermanshah in secret and buried in the city cemetery on 11 November. His father was reportedly told on 12 November where he could find his son's grave.

At least 12 other Kurds are known to be on death row for political offences. They include two other men, **Habibollah Latifi** and **Sherko Moarefi**, both of whom were detained in October 2008 and convicted of "enmity against God" in connection with their alleged membership of proscribed Kurdish organizations. They are feared to be at imminent risk of execution, possibly in reprisal for a spate of attacks on officials in Kordestan in September 2009 – long after they were arrested - which left three people dead and two wounded.

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

- ✓ Expressing deep regret at the execution of Ehsan Fattahian and expressing concern that he was not given an opportunity to appeal against his sentence as is required by international law;
- ✓ Calling for the commutation of all death sentences imposed for political offences;
- ✓ Urging the authorities to impose an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty, as a first step towards abolition.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 DECEMBER 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 Sadeq Larijani, Office of the
Head of the Judiciary, Pasteur St., Vali
Asr Ave. south of Serah-e Jomhuri,
Tehran 1316814737, Islamic Republic
of Iran

Email: larijani@dadgostary-tehran.ir

Or Via website:

<http://www.dadiran.ir/tabid/75/Default.aspx>
1st starred box: your given name; 2nd starred box: your family name; 3rd: your email address

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Governor of Kordestan Province

Esmail Najjar

Email: In Persian and Kurdish, send via feedback form on the website:

http://www.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?tabId=150&cv=4@0_1 In English,

French or other languages, use the feedback form on the website:

<http://en.ostan-kd.ir/Default.aspx?TabID=59>

TabID=59

Salutation: Dear Governor

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 271/09 (MDE 13/102/2009). Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/102/2009/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/119/2009/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kurds, who are one of Iran's many minority groups, live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in the province of Kordestan and neighbouring provinces bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. They experience religious, economic and cultural discrimination. For many years, Kurdish organizations such as the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and the Marxist group *Komala*, conducted armed opposition against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Another armed group, the Kurdistan Independent Life Party (PJAK), formed in 2004, continues to carry out armed attacks against Iranian security forces.

No group has claimed responsibility for the spate of assassinations and attempted assassinations in Kordestan, which targeted mainly religious figures and judges between 9 and 19 September 2009. Those killed included the head of Sanandaj city council, a Sunni cleric who had supported President Ahmadinejad's re-election campaign, and the Kordestan representative to the Assembly of Experts (the body which appoints the Supreme Leader). Two judges were also injured in the attacks. The authorities have variously blamed PJAK, and "hard-line Sunni fundamentalists" linked to foreign intelligence services. According to various Iranian media sources on 28 September 2009, several of those believed to have been responsible for the attacks were arrested at the scene of another attack in which two others were killed.

Amnesty International condemns without reservation attacks on civilians, which includes judges, clerics, and locally or nationally-elected officials, as attacking civilians violates fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. These principles prohibit absolutely attacks on civilians as well as indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. Such attacks cannot be justified under any circumstances.

The scope of capital crimes in Iran is broad, and includes "enmity against God", often imposed for armed opposition to the state, but can include other national security offences such as espionage. At least 10 other Kurdish men and one woman are believed to be on death row in connection with their alleged membership of and activities for proscribed Kurdish organizations. They include Farzad Kamangar, Farhad Vakili, Ali Haydarian, Farhad Chalesh (Turkish national), Rostam Arkia, Ramazan Ahmad (Syrian national), Fasih (Fateh) Yasmini, Hossein Khezri, Anvar Rostami, Shaker Baghi and Zeynab Jalalian. For further information on some of the Kurds on death row for political offences, including those named in this UA, please see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/012/2009/en>.

In May 2009, three members of Iran's Baluch minority were executed in public in Zahedan less than 48 hours after an attack on worshippers in a mosque in which up to 25 people were killed. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by the People's Resistance Movement of Iran (PRMI - formerly known as Jondollah), an armed political group opposed to the Iranian government. The three men had already been sentenced to death, but their executions were linked to the mosque attack. Officials claimed that following renewed interrogations after the bombing, they had "confessed" to involvement into bringing the explosives into the country. Following a suicide bomb attack on 18 October which killed at least 43 people, including 15 Revolutionary Guards officials, and which was claimed by the PRMI, a PRMI member was executed in Zahedan on 2 November, after conviction of armed kidnapping, "enmity against God" and "corruption on earth". The date of his arrest is not known.

In 1988, thousands of political prisoners, mostly members of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) or leftist organizations, were executed in what has become commonly known as the "prison massacres". The executions took place following the ceasefire agreement between Iran and Iraq and an armed incursion a few days later by PMOI members based in Iraq which was repulsed by the Iranian army. Most of those executed were already detained or imprisoned at the time of the incursion and could not have been involved in spying or terrorist activities as the government claimed. No one has ever been brought to account for these mass killings.

Further information on UA: 271/09 Index: MDE 13/121/2009 Issue Date: 12 November 2009

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