

NEW CONCERN: Fear of possible ill treatment or torture of Siamak Pourzand

PUBLIC AI Index: MDE 13/001/2002

1 February 2002

Further information on UA 298/01 (MDE 13/046/2002, 27 November 2001) and follow-up (MDE 13/014/2001, 12 December 2001 details of follow up) - NEW CONCERN: Fear of possible ill treatment or torture

IRAN Siamak Pourzand (m) aged 70, intellectual and manager of *Majmue-ye Farhangi-ye Honari-ye Tehran* (The Tehran Cultural Centre)

Amnesty International is concerned that Siamak Pourzand is being ill treated and possibly tortured in custody, possibly with the aim of obtaining a "confession" in advance of a trial. No charges have been made against him and he has been denied the right to legal representation.

There has been no official acknowledgment that Siamak Pourzand is in custody. It is not known where and under what conditions he is being held. It is also not known who is holding him, though some reports indicate that those detaining him are possibly linked to elements in the judiciary.

Siamak Pourzand's sister Mahin Pourzand, from whose house he was arrested on 24 November 2001, was requested on 7 December to take him a change of clothes. He was then possibly held at the Ostad Motahhari Street office of the Committee for Propagation of Virtue and Prohibition of Vice, which is reportedly also called the *Edare-ye Amaken*, or Bureau of Premises. This office is reportedly responsible for the enforcement of accepted moral codes in companies and other offices.

Amnesty International has now learned that Mahin Pourzand was permitted to meet with Siamak Pourzand at the *Edare-ye Amaken* on 12 or 13 January 2002. The meeting reportedly lasted 10 minutes and Siamak Pourzand, who arrived by car from an unknown location, reportedly appeared afraid and weak.

On 10 December Amnesty International wrote to the Head of the Judiciary seeking urgent clarification of the fate of Siamak Pourzand. There has been no reply to this letter. Enquiries reportedly undertaken by the Islamic Human Rights Commission have not been able to establish where Siamak Pourzand is being held.

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

SP00020

02/04/2002

- seeking urgent clarification from the Head of the Judiciary and the Ministry of Intelligence to make public where and when Siamak Pourzand was arrested, and where he is detained;
- expressing concern that he appears to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested solely for the peaceful expression of his beliefs;
- seeking assurances from the Head of the Judiciary and the Ministry of Intelligence that Siamak Pourzand is not being ill treated or tortured while in detention;
- urging the authorities that, unless he is to be charged with an internationally recognized criminal offence, Siamak Pourzand should be released immediately and unconditionally;
- expressing concern that he has been denied the right to legal representation and regular family visits.

