



**amnesty
international**

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
1 Easton Street London WC1X 8DJ
United Kingdom

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**URGENT
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 235/88 (MDE 13/14/88, 2 September) - Death
Penalty

IRAN: Political executions

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Amnesty International has on previous occasions expressed its serious concern about reports of political executions taking place in Iran. Further confirmation that a wave of political executions has taken place in recent months emerged in a statement by Ayatollah Montazeri, Ayatollah Khomeini's designated successor, to the annual meeting of the Association of Muslim Students held earlier this month and reported in the British newspaper The Independent on 15 October 1988. In this statement Ayatollah Montazeri is reported to have said,

"People have complained to me that their relatives, while serving short prison sentences for political offences, have been executed without any explanation. This is not how our Islamic justice should operate."

Ayatollah Montazeri has often made public appeals for a fairer judicial system, and for the proper treatment of prisoners. One of the ideas he is particularly associated with is the granting of amnesties to political prisoners who are considered to be "repentant" of their former beliefs and activities. This idea has recently come under public criticism. It has been alleged that such repentant prisoners have returned to armed opposition to the government, and there have been calls for the policy of granting amnesties to be discontinued in favour of decisive action against political opponents. Some authorities, including Chief Justice Ayatollah Ardebili and former Director of Evin Prison, Assadollah Lajevardi, have apparently called for their summary execution. Ayatollah Montazeri's statement would appear to indicate opposition to the widespread execution of political opponents.

This month, Amnesty International has received reports of further political executions in Orumieh and Tabriz in north western Iran, and elsewhere. The ban on family visits to political prisoners is believed to be continuing, which makes specific information about the extent of the executions impossible to obtain. In the context of government statements and reports from a wide range of opposition sources indicating that political executions are continuing, Amnesty International is persuaded that there have been very substantial numbers of political executions in Iran in the last ten weeks.

Telephone 01-833 1771 Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1 Telex: 28502

Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the *release* of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed *prisoners of conscience*. It works for *fair and prompt trials* for all *political prisoners* and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the *death penalty* and *torture* or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of *all prisoners*.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the case of Iran it is particularly concerned by the lack of provisions for a fair trial in political cases, and the lack of any procedure for prisoners sentenced to death to appeal against conviction or sentence.

Further recommended action: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters

- expressing deep regret at continuing reports that political executions have taken place; and asking for details of the procedures by which the death sentences were passed and approved. Please refer to any previous letters you have written in this connection;
- calling for an end to political executions;
- calling for the recommencement of family visits to political prisoners.

APPEALS TO:

H.E. Ayatollah Abdulkarim
Musavi Ardebili
Chief Justice and President of
the Supreme Judicial Council
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegrams: Chief Justice,
Justice Ministry, Tehran, Iran**

**Telexes: 214231 miti ir;
213113 prim ir;**

marked for the attention of the Chief Justice

H.E. Dr Hassan Ebrahim Habibi
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

**Telegrams: Justice Minister,
Tehran Iran**

**Telexes as for Chief Justice,
marked for attention of the
Minister of Justice**

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Iran in your country.

Note: some appeals should be sent in a personal or professional capacity.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 November 1988.

— Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended action. If possible, send a telegram or express letter immediately to one or more of the addresses given. Other letters can be sent afterwards.

— Telegrams and letters should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to relevant provisions in international law, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3 — "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Article 5 — "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 9 — "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

— The name of Amnesty International may be used, although letters written in a private or personal capacity may be more effective.

— Copies of appeals should be sent to relevant diplomatic representatives in your country.

— In Urgent Action cases, Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the ill-treatment of prisoners. An appeal is issued when Amnesty International believes it has received reliable and accurate information in such cases. It is not always possible to verify all details independently and in some instances the situation outlined in the appeal may change. Urgent Action participants are always notified of any significant new facts.

— Copies of any replies received from government authorities should be sent immediately to your section's Urgent Action coordinator or direct to the Campaign and Membership Department of the International Secretariat. If appropriate, thank the official who has replied and ask to be kept informed about the case.