

# **The Iran Tribunal**

**On the Abuse and Mass  
Killings of Political Prisoners  
in Iran, 1981-1988**

**Findings of the Truth  
Commission,**

**Held 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2012**

**Iran Tribunal Publication  
2013**

## **The Iran Tribunal**

On the Abuse and Mass Killings of Political

Prisoners in Iran, 1981-1988

Findings of the Truth Commission,

Held 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2012

**ISBN 978-91-637-1749-7**

Cover design: by Jamshid Golmkani

First edition 2012

**Second edition 2013**

**Iran Tribunal Publication**

P.O.Box 95

123 22 Farsta

Sweden

[info@irantribunal.com](mailto:info@irantribunal.com)

[www.irantribunal.com](http://www.irantribunal.com)

**Iran Tribunal**  
**International People's Tribunal**  
**Finding of the Truth Commission**



# **Preface**

## **to the Report on the Findings of the Truth Commission of the Iran Tribunal**

In the 1980s the Islamic Republic of Iran went about arresting, imprisoning, torturing and executing thousands upon thousands of Iranian citizens because their beliefs and political engagements conflicted with that of the regime. The religious fervour of these crimes makes them ever more shocking: for instance, a woman's rape was frequently the last act that preceded her execution in Iran, as under the "Sharia" law guidelines, the execution of a virgin female is non-permissible.

This process culminated with Khomeini's "Fatwa" (Islamic Decree), in July 1988, whereupon the mass execution of Iran's political prisoners was implemented and within two months, between August and September of that year, thousands of political prisoners were executed. They were asked a few questions by what became infamously known as the "Death Commission" and were later sentenced to death.

There are no exact figures of the number of victims due to the suppressive political climate and severe censorship in Iran. Nevertheless, to this day, there are around 5,000 known names of victims which have been documented by the families, political parties and human rights organizations. A large number of executed political prisoners had already served their sentences. It is believed that

around 20,000 dissidents executed and disappeared between 1981 and 1988.

The victims' bodies were buried in undisclosed mass graves. To this day, many families do not know where their loved ones are buried. The Islamic Republic of Iran refuses to give any information about where the graves are located, but a number of graves have been discovered by the families. This difficulty is symptomatic of the effects this atrocity had on the families of those directly victimised by the massacre. Wives, mothers, sisters, husbands, brothers, daughters and sons of victims have suffered extended psychological and emotional damage.

The Islamic Republic of Iran had prepared itself to carry out the mass executions of summer of 1988 earlier in December 1987. In the early days of December 1987 the political prisoners had gone through a new phase of interrogations and had been "categorized" by their ideology, belief and their stance with regards to the Islamic Republic rule. The prisoners were asked a few questions; such as if they were still devoted to their political organization, whether they would be prepared to be interviewed and renounce their ideology, or as decreed by Khomeini, if they would "repent". According to the answers, the prisoners were "categorized" upon their prison sentences and segregated by either "leftist" or "religious" ideologies in January 1988.

The Iran Tribunal Campaign is a social movement which was initiated by a group of individuals composed of the families of the victims of Iran's political prisoners, former Iranian political prisoners, the survivors of mass executions in the 1980s, political and labour activists, women's rights activists, lawyers, students, children's rights activists, writers, artists and human right activists, who have been holding regular meetings since October 2007 in order to assess the possibility of setting up a "Truth Commission" and a "People's Court".

The aim of this campaign is to investigate the mass executions and massacre of Iran's political prisoners during the 1980s and to hold the Islamic Republic of Iran accountable for its crimes against

humanity.

The proceeding has a clear historical precedent and has been inspired by the tribunal set up by Bertrand Russell and Jean Paul Sartre in their 1965-1967 world campaign against the American atrocities in the Vietnam War. However, although “Iran Tribunal” maintains the same responsibilities, it faces a more difficult and challenging task in comparison to “Russell Tribunal”. How can such atrocities be prevented? The procedures of a trial for the outcome of “Truth Commission” hearings are impossible to implement. We do not represent any state power, nor can we compel the perpetrators responsible for crimes against the people of Iran to stand accused before us. We believe that these apparent limitations are, in fact, virtues. We are free to conduct a solemn and historic investigation, unrestricted by the confines of any state or other such obligations.

Towards the end of 2010, campaigners succeeded in establishing a steering committee in order to form a “People’s Court” to “adjudicate” the Islamic Republic of Iran for the crimes it had committed during the 1980s. After months of deliberations, the steering committee decided to organise the proceedings in two parts. The first part, i.e. the “Truth Commission” session has already taken place. The second part, i.e. the “Tribunal” which is composed of international judges, will be holding its sessions between 25 and 27 October in The Hague.

The proceedings of the “Truth Commission” took place in London at Amnesty International’s Human Rights Action Centre between 18 and 22 June 2012.

A report has been produced on the findings of the Truth Commission, documenting the statements from the witnesses and thematically describing the captivity of the prisoners and their executions, as well as the effects on the broader victims of the massacre and compiling a list of the perpetrators.

The report explains how civilians were violently taken from their homes or from the streets on vague or non-existent charges, and imprisoned for extended periods without any pretence of a trial.

Prisoners were held under inhuman conditions. They were beaten, physically tortured in a number of gruesome ways to within an inch of their lives, and psychologically tortured. None of them were given a fair or conventional trial.

According to international penal laws, a crime against humanity is defined as part of a systematic or widespread onslaught against civilians. Widespread means that the violation is of “massive”, frequent and large scale nature carried out collectively with considerable violence and directed against a multitude of people. A systematic attack is also a qualitative term, pointing to the organized nature of the act of violence and the improbability of its random occurrence.

The 1988 killings were certainly widespread and part of a comprehensive organized crime that began in June 1981 with the mass executions and lasted until September 1988; when the infamous massacre took place. They were geographically spread across the country and the number of victims is estimated to be 20,000, although the exact figure is open to debate. And the killings were carried out in a systematic manner.

Whether or not this campaign manages to put the perpetrators to justice in anyway, the Iran Tribunal is achieving something momentous. It has provided families of the victims and survivors of these atrocities a chance to speak out about their suffering, to find some fragment of justice seeking and peace from the pain that is still with them.



# **The Iran Tribunal**

On the Abuse and Mass Killings of  
Political Prisoners in Iran, 1981-1988

Findings of the Truth Commission  
Held 18th-22nd June, 2012

30th July 2012



# CONTENTS

## PART A: INTRODUCTION

A.	Introduction	2
B.	The Proceedings	3
C.	The Mandate of the Truth Commission	4
D.	Background	5
E.	The Commission's Findings	9
	<i>i. General Observations</i>	
	<i>ii. Procedure</i>	
	<i>iii. Structure of this Report</i>	

## PART B: FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION

### **CHAPTER I: CAPTIVITY** **13**

1.1	<b>Arrests</b>	13
1.1.1	Sudden Disappearances	13
1.1.2	House Raids	13
1.1.3	Set-ups	14
1.1.4	Warrants and Formal Documents	14
	Evidencing Authority to Arrest	
1.1.5	Dates of the Arrests	15
1.2	<b>Detention</b>	15
1.2.1	Length of Detention	15
1.2.2	Location of Detention	15
1.2.3	Interrogations	16
1.2.4	Physical Torture	17
1.2.5	Psychological Torture	21
1.2.6	Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment	23

1.3	<b>Trial</b>	26
1.3.1	Location of Courtroom	26
1.3.2	Description of Proceedings	26
1.4	<b>Imprisonment</b>	29
1.4.1	Continuation of Torture	29
1.4.2	Sexual Abuse	29
1.4.3	Repenters and Collaborators	30
1.5	<b>Release</b>	31
1.5.1	Conditions of Release	31
	<b>CHAPTER II: EXECUTIONS</b>	<b>32</b>
2.1	Pre-1988 Executions	32
2.2	The 1988 Massacres	30
2.2.4	The Death Commissions	30
2.3	<b>Other Killings</b>	34
2.3.1	The Jahrom Massacre	34
2.3.2	The Rasht Prison Fire	35
2.3.3	Massacres in Kurdistan	35
	<b>CHAPTER III: PRISONS</b>	<b>36</b>
3.1	Overview	36
3.2	<b>Major Prisons</b>	37
3.2.1	Adel Abad Prison	37
3.2.2	Evin Prison	38
3.2.3	Ghezelhesar Prison	38
3.2.4	Gohardasht Prison	38
3.2.5	Tabriz Prison	38
3.2.6	Urumiyyeh Prison	38
3.2.7	Vakilabad Prison	39
3.2.8	Other Major Prisons	39
3.3	Lesser Prisons	39
3.4	Detention Centres	40
3.5	Unofficial and Overflow Facilities	41
3.6	Corruption in Prisons	35
	<b>CHAPTER IV: VICTIMS</b>	<b>43</b>
4.1	Women	43
4.2	Minors	43

4.2.1	Minors Imprisoned with Their Parents	43
4.2.2	Minors as Political Prisoners	44
4.2.3	Execution of Minors	44
4.3	Legacies of Abuse	45
4.3.1	Physical Suffering	45
4.3.2	Psychological Suffering	45
4.4	Suicides	46
4.5	Political Groupings	46
	<b>CHAPTER V: FAMILIES</b>	<b>48</b>
5.1	Brutality Towards Families	48
5.2	Visitation Rights in Prison	48
5.3	Notification of Death	49
5.4	Burial and Mourning Rights	50
5.5	Suffering of Families	51
	<b>CHAPTER VI: THE PERPETRATORS</b>	<b>53</b>
6.1	Judges	53
6.2	Prison Officials	55
6.3	Prosecutors	58
6.4	Torturers and Interrogators	59
6.5	Other Death Commission Members	59
6.6	Miscellaneous Figures	60
	<b>PART C: CONCLUSIONS</b>	
I.	The Legal Qualification of the Facts	62
II.	The Attribution of the Facts	64
	<b>PART D: APPENDICES</b>	
Appendix A:	Khomeini's fatwa	67
Appendix B:	Map of Iranian Prisons	69
	<b>PART E: REFERENCES</b>	
References for Chapter I (Captivity)		72
References for Chapter II (Executions)		78
References for Chapter III (Prisons)		79
References for Chapter IV (Victims)		81

References for Chapter V (Families)	83
References for Chapter VI (Perpetrators)	84
<b>Witness Statements and Summaries of Oral Testimonies</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Additional Submission on the Perpetrators</b>	<b>407</b>

# **Part A:**

# **Introduction**

## A. INTRODUCTION

1. The campaign for the Iran Tribunal (Karzar) is a grassroots organisation set up by the families of the victims and survivors of the massacre of political prisoners in Iran in the 1980s.

2. The campaign set up a steering committee chaired by Professor John Cooper QC, in order to organise the establishment of the Iran Tribunal.<sup>1</sup>

3. The Steering Committee decided that the process would take place in two stages.

Stage One: Truth Commission, hearing the evidence on the massacre of political prisoners in Iran; and,

Stage Two: the Tribunal process, where the evidence and arguments for Iran's responsibility will be heard by a panel of international judges.

4. The Steering Committee invited Louise Asmal, Anne Burley, Eric David, William Schabas and Daniel Turp to act as Truth Commissioners for these proceedings, with Maurice Copithorne as chairman.

5. The Truth Commission held its sessions between the 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> June 2012 at Amnesty International's Human Rights Action Centre in London. This Report reflects the results of these hearings. The present Report would not

---

<sup>1</sup> *The members of the Steering Committee are: Prof. John Cooper QC, Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, Prof. Éric David, Prof. Richard Falk, Prof. Payam Akhavan, Prof. Kader Asmal (d. 2011), Dr Nancy Hormachea, Dr Hedayat Matine Daftary and Mr Hamid Sabi.*



have seen the light of day without the remarkable input of Eylon Aslan-Levy and Nafisah Hussain in the drafting and editing stages. The members of the Commission wish to express their utmost gratitude. It goes without saying that any errors in this report remain those of the Commission.

## **B. THE PROCEEDINGS**

6. The Commission heard over the period of five days testimonies of 75 witnesses, of whom 58 appeared personally before the Commission and 17 appeared via Skype. Five witnesses wish to remain anonymous; their written statements are partially redacted to protect their anonymity.

7. Each of the witnesses had produced in advance a witness statement, which assisted greatly to expedite the proceedings. The oral testimonies were given in the Persian language by the witnesses and simultaneously interpreted into English by two professional interpreters whom we commend for their accuracy and attention to detail.

8. The witnesses were not sworn in but were asked to confirm the veracity of their written statements. The witnesses were extremely co-operative with the Commission and responded positively to questions put to them by the Commission.

9. The Commission believes that the statements of the witnesses were a correct and true reflection of the events that occurred in Iran between 1981 and 1988. Not only on some occasions did the witness statements directly corroborate each other, but they also confirmed the general trend of abuse of human rights in the legal system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The statements showed similar approaches to brutality at the time of the arrest, the nature of the torture that was inflicted upon the prisoners after arrest, the period of confinement and ultimately the way each one of the direct witnesses faced the so-called “trial”.

Further, the statements given by family members of the victims also generally showed how the Islamic Republic of Iran had executed their loved ones without any proper process or documentation. Invariably the families of witnesses were called to come and collect the belongings of their executed loved ones. On some occasions the bodies of the executed victims were delivered, against which the Islamic Republic of Iran demanded payment for the bullets that were fired at the victim. At a later stage (after the massacres of 1988), the bodies were not delivered to the families and the whereabouts of their burial was not disclosed.

10. The statements also uncovered the consistent trend of the subsidiary punishments imposed against the survivors and the families of the victims. Generally, these victims were persecuted by the Islamic Republic of Iran. They were barred from serving government institutions. Children of the victims were not admitted to schools. Families were barred from holding mourning and memorial services; the gravestones of the victims were broken and gatherings at graveyards were brutally dispersed.

11. Witness statements are appended to this Report (Exhibit A). Each statement contains the original written statement (in English translation) submitted to the Commission, a summary of the witness's oral testimony, and information submitted on the Commissioners' request. A transcript of oral proceedings (Exhibit B) will be submitted at a later stage.

### **C. THE MANDATE OF THE TRUTH COMMISSION**

12. The Commission's task is to carry out a factual investigation into the breaches of human rights in Iran. The Steering Committee decided that in view of the prolonged abuse of human rights and the fact that the atrocities of the 1980s represents the worst period in the history of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Commission's focus should be on this period.

13. The Commission examined the witnesses who were introduced to it. The witnesses were either direct witnesses, who had suffered in prison in Iran, or family members of the victims, who had knowledge of the circumstances of the execution of their loved ones. No representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran was present during the hearings.

#### **D. BACKGROUND**

14. Iran's "constitutional" monarchy was brought to an end by the Revolution of 1978-79, which succeeded in toppling the Shah's regime on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 1979. A Revolutionary Council headed by Ayatollah Khomeini took charge of the country and a provisional government was appointed by Ayatollah Khomeini and headed by Mr Mehdi Bazargan.

15. From February 1979, until the approval of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1979 by a referendum, the legal system of Iran was in turmoil and was somewhat chaotic. Breaches of human rights were committed from the early days of the establishment of the Provisional Government (see Amnesty International Report: Law and Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, AI Index 13/03/80, February 1980). The Commission's focus is on the atrocities that were committed between 1981 and 1988.

16. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran established a religious state where the supreme leader is given unlimited and unchecked powers: he is the sole interpreter of God's given laws and his commands effectively override other institutions in the country, including the written laws.

17. Articles 19-42 of the Constitution guarantee certain rights of the Iranian nation. Although these fall short of international standards for equal treatment of all citizens irrespective of race, gender, religion or political belief, even

these limited guarantees were ignored from the early days of the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

18. Iran is a founding member of the United Nations and is party to the *Charter of the United Nations*, through which it has pledged to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organisation in order to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. It voted in favour of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1948, which affirms that the “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”. It also states that “everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. Iran is bound by several provisions of the *Universal Declaration*, which have acquired the status of norms of customary international law. Iran is also bound by the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which it signed on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 1968 and ratified on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1975. It did not make any reservations when it signed and ratified this covenant.

18.1. Moreover, Iran is bound by the rules of customary international law governing the rights of children that were codified in the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* adopted by the UN General Assembly on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 1959 and later included in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which Iran signed on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 1991 and ratified on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 1994. The reservation made by Iran upon ratification of the convention to the effect that “[t]he Islamic Republic of Iran reserves the right not to apply any provisions or articles of the Convention that are incompatible with Islamic Laws and the international legislation in effect” is considered by the Commission as incompatible with the object and purpose of the

treaty and is of no force and effect. The rules contained in the *Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance* adopted on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 1992 by the same UN General Assembly are also applicable to Iran as customary rules of international law. Those rules have been crystallised in the *International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance* of the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2006, which Iran has neither signed nor ratified. Nevertheless, these rules are binding on Iran through international custom.

18.2. Furthermore, Iran is bound by the rules of customary international law governing the international responsibility of States as well as the individual responsibility of perpetrators of acts illegal under international law. These illegal acts can incur the responsibility of the Iranian State itself as well as that of individuals for acts recognised as criminal according to international law.

19. Immediately after taking power in February 1979, the Provisional Government arrested a large number of the members of the previous regime. Some of the members of the previous regime were brought before Islamic judges in the first weeks following the change of regime and some were executed without any due process. The Islamic regime also reacted violently to the uprising in the west of Iran (by Kurds), in the south of Iran (by Arabs), in the east (by Turkmens) and in the north-west (by Azerbaijanis). Summary executions and unchecked powers of the Islamic judges brought a reign of terror to Iran, which was compounded by the restrictions imposed as a result of the war efforts by the Islamic regime: from September 1980, the Islamic Republic of Iran had been engaged in a major war with neighbouring Iraq.

20. Political organisations and parties that had been actively involved in the Revolution at the beginning lost their confidence in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Almost all Iranian political organisations openly challenged the Islamic

regime soon after the Revolution and were violently suppressed throughout Iran. Tens of thousands of their members were arrested and tortured and imprisoned; over 15,000 were summarily executed between 1981 and 1988.

21. At the conclusion of hostilities with Iraq in July 1988, the military wing of the People’s Mujahideen of Iran (MKO) made a military incursion into the country from Iraq. After a short battle, the incursion was defeated, leaving a large number of MKO members dead on the battlefield.

22. This incident was utilised by the regime as a pretext for issuing a *fatwa* by Ayatollah Khomeini (Annex A), effectively condemning to death members of the MKO who had not repented their “past sins” or political beliefs and had not accepted or embraced the Islamic Republic of Iran. Commissions (later known as “death commissions”) were established in all prisons across Iran to investigate whether the political prisoners had (as ordered by Ayatollah Khomeini) repented their “sins” or were to be condemned to death. The issuance of the fatwa had been planned for some time and preparations for carrying it out (including the lockdown of the prisons) were put in effect before the MKO attack.

23. Death Commissions first dealt with MKO members in the summer of 1988. Later in the summer they focused on leftist groups, including communists, and liquidated them as well. Thousands were executed throughout Iran during a period of three months, from July to September 1988.<sup>2</sup>

This is the background to the testimonies that the Commission has heard.

---

<sup>2</sup> *The political affiliations of the victims stretched from Muslim groupings to leftist and communist organisations. See paragraph 4.5.1 of this Report for further information.*

## **E. THE COMMISSION'S FINDINGS**

### **i. General Observations**

24. The Commission's findings on factual evidence that it has heard appear in the following sections. Thirty-eight witnesses were direct witnesses, in the sense that they were imprisoned during the relevant period and had first-hand experience of the treatment of the political prisoners. Thirty-seven witnesses testified as only indirect witnesses and gave testimony as to the execution of their family members during the relevant period.

All of the direct witnesses testified as to the execution or mistreatment of cellmates, friends and associates; as such, in this capacity they are also indirect witnesses.

### **ii. Procedure**

25. The Commission developed its own procedure. Each of the witnesses had submitted a written statement, which was distributed to the members of the Commission in advance. The statements were originally written in Persian and were translated for the benefit of the Commission. The translations sometimes misquoted the dates due to the fact that the conversion of the Iranian calendar to the Gregorian calendar had been difficult for some of the translators. However, the witnesses later provided the correct dates in their oral testimony.

26. The witnesses were called by the Commission's counsel, Mr Hamid Sabi. Each witness was required to verify the correctness and accuracy of the written statement submitted to the Commission. The witness was led through his or her statement and the Commissioners asked further questions to clarify any outstanding points.

27. Due to the fact that the Commission had allocated limited time for each witness, the witnesses were requested to abridge their statements and focus on the points that were raised by the

Commission. Generally the witnesses were very co-operative and responded positively with clear statements to the questions raised by the Commission. Due to the simultaneous interpretation of the proceedings, none of the witnesses had any difficulty in understanding the Commissioners' questions, nor the Commissioners the witnesses' answers.

28. Exhibit C is a document providing further information on members of the Iranian government, judiciary and prisons administration services in the 1980s, submitted by Mr Babak Emad.

### **iii. Structure of this Report**

29. The Findings of the Commission are divided into six sections as follows:

1. Captivity; dealing with circumstances of arrest; conditions of detention; trials and court hearings; imprisonment; and release from prison.
2. Executions; dealing with executions before the 1988 *fatwa* and the executions that followed it; reference is also made to extra-judicial executions.
3. Prisons; dealing with the structure of prisons, overflow facilities and detention centres; corruption in the prisons.
4. Victims; dealing with women and minors, legacies of abuse, suicides in the prisons and the political affiliation of victims.
5. Families; dealing with the nature of treatment of the families by the regime; visitation rights and access to the prisoners; notification of death; delivery of the bodies; effects on the families and the legacy of pain.
6. Perpetrators; providing the details of those named by the witnesses as the culprits or those responsible for the atrocities committed against the witnesses or their family member(s).

30. The Report reflects the factual statements made by the witnesses either in their written statement or made during the hearing. Each factual statement is fully referenced in Section E, which lists the witnesses who attested to each fact.



**Part B:**  
**Findings of the  
Commission**



## **CHAPTER I: CAPTIVITY**

### **1.1**

### **ARRESTS**

#### **1.1.1 Sudden Disappearances**

1.1.1.1 Witnesses confirmed that relatives were kept in total ignorance of the arrest of loved ones. Those who were arrested were rarely allowed to inform relatives as to their whereabouts and the circumstances of their arrest. Family members, after finding out that their loved one had not returned home and had disappeared, had to enquire of the authorities as to the whereabouts of the arrested individuals. They were referred to local prisons and various authorities without receiving any proper answers. Even when the arrested individual was detained in the prison to which they made their enquiries, the authorities refused to give them information and in some cases gave them misinformation.

#### **1.1.2 House Raids**

1.1.2.1 Those who had witnessed arrests or had themselves been arrested gave descriptions of the brutality of the arrests. On many occasions, security forces surrounded the house where the suspect was living, cut off the telephone lines and electricity, and then raided the residence. These raids were normally carried out in the middle of the night with overwhelming force, while everybody was in bed, by large numbers of armed guards.

1.1.2.2 The witnesses gave detailed evidence of how other family members who were not suspects were also beaten up and arrested together with the suspect. In a number of cases, the parents, brothers, sisters and other close relatives of the suspect were also arrested and detained for periods of time. The house raids were followed by the deliberate destruction of the household on the pretext of finding evidence against the suspect. On occasion, arresting officers confiscated material goods and cash as well.

1.1.2.3 Arrests were also carried out at people's places of work.

### **1.1.3 Set-ups**

1.1.3.1 On occasion, arrests were conducted with the assistance of prisoners who had agreed to collaborate with prison authorities under torture. People were arrested after being set up by former associates, who called them from inside prison requesting to arrange a meeting in a public place, where arresting officers were to abduct them.

1.1.3.2 In one instance, a political dissident was arrested after Revolutionary Guards used her mother as a hostage in order to track her down and force her to give herself up.

### **1.1.4 Warrants and Formal Documents Evidencing Authority to Arrest**

1.1.4.1 The majority of witnesses testified that no formal documentation was produced and no arrest warrant was given, either to the suspect or the family members. On a few occasions the arresting officers provided a document showing the authority to arrest but gave no explanation for the arrest. On these occasions, no copy was given to the suspect or family members. The arresting officers were uniformed but on no occasion introduced themselves

or presented identification documents. In most cases they did not inform the suspect or members of the family as to the place of detention.

1.1.4.2 A number of witnesses testified that they or their family members were arrested on suspicion, for no particular offence. In one case, Revolutionary Guards planted incriminating material on site as a pretext for the arrest. One woman testified that her brother had been held in prison for months before he was identified; he was tried only once a repentor recognised him. (See §1.4.3 for the specific meaning of “repentor” in this context.)

1.1.4.3 On several occasions, Revolutionary Guards asked people to come with them for questioning but proceeded to abduct, blindfold and detain them.

## **1.1.5 Dates of the Arrests**

1.1.5.1 The overwhelming majority of dated arrests reported to the Commission took place in the years 1981-1983, of which 1981 was the year with the greatest number of arrests. No witnesses testified about arrests clearly dated as after 1985.

## **1.2 DETENTION**

### **1.2.1 Length of Detention**

1.2.1.1 Survivors and family members of victims attested to long periods of detention without trial. In some cases the detention lasted eighteen months, during which detainees had no access to any lawyer or legal representation; a number were denied family visits until after their sentencing.

## **1.2.2 Location of Detention**

1.2.2.1 After arrest, suspects were taken straight to prisons or detention centres, of which Komiteh Moshtarak in Tehran was used most heavily. Temporary detention centres and overflow facilities included schools, apartment blocks opposite prisons, large gardens and residential properties (see §3.2-4 for more information).

## **1.2.3 Interrogations**

1.2.3.1 Survivors testified that they were blindfolded during interrogations. Questioning was not conducted in a transparent manner: one witness was insulted and beaten when he asked why he had been arrested. Detainees were tortured throughout their interrogations. The interrogations mostly took place at late hours and on occasion every night in order to add to the prisoners' torment (see §1.2.4.6).

1.2.3.2 Survivors testified to having been tortured during their prison sentences. It was difficult to ascertain the precise timing of these abuses since witnesses did not clearly distinguish between pre- and post-trial captivity in their statements; the Commission understood, however, that most torture took place before trial, since it was most widely reported as a stage of interrogation, which occurred mostly before prosecution.

1.2.3.3 Physical torture was widely reported as being used to pressure detainees to inform on others, to force confessions, to extract information, or to compel recantations of political beliefs; on one occasion, it was deployed in order to force a woman to change her "idolatrous" name.

1.2.3.4 One witness reported hearing the cries of children who were being tortured for confessions.

1.2.3.5 Physical torture was most prevalent before the trial and psychological torture after it; the following forms of torture were employed during at least one of the detention or imprisonment stages.

## **1.2.4 Physical Torture**

### 1.2.4.1 Bastinado

1.2.4.1.1 Bastinado is an excruciatingly painful form of torture in which the soles of a victim's feet are whipped; the victim is first tied to a bed, either on his back or front, with a blanket thrown over his head or a dirty sock or rag stuffed in his mouth. This was the most common form of torture used in interrogation and was inflicted on virtually everybody. Survivors said without exception that bastinado was performed with whips made of electric cables, up to half an inch thick.

1.2.4.1.2 Members of the torture teams sometimes sat on detainees' heads, backs or chests during the flogging. Variations included the tying of detainees' ankles in order to swell a sensitive nerve in their feet. In one case, a woman four months pregnant was bastinadoed after her legs were hauled in the air until only part of her back was on the floor. In another, the witness was subjected to bastinado while suspended upside-down in the air. One witness reported being flogged on his head every time he cried.

1.2.4.1.3 Detainees were whipped scores of times on both feet until they went numb. At this point, the torture was briefly suspended so that sensation could be restored. Interrogators cooled down the feet by dousing them with cold water; they restored blood flow by piercing the skin on the soles, either by making an incision with a nail or by making detainees walk on sharp stones or stamp on the floor. One survivor reported having been

delivered blows to the head during this interval.

1.2.4.1.4 This invariably caused feet to swell enormously; in Komiteh Moshtarak, detainees were given deliberately oversized slippers in anticipation of this. Witnesses reported being unable to walk after this torture; feet were left bloody and often became severely infected or gangrenous.

#### 1.2.4.2 Flagellation

1.2.4.2.1 Detainees were flogged as a part of their interrogation. Witnesses used the terms “flogging”, “lashing” and “beating with cables” interchangeably and sometimes as synonyms for “bastinado”. It was explicitly clear, however, that detainees were flogged all over their bodies, including their heads, faces and backs. One witness saw a man being flogged as guards ran after him with their whips, having poured cold water all over him. This was reported as unbearably painful and left visible scars on those on whom it was inflicted.

1.2.4.2.2 During the imprisonment stage, flogging was used to punish prisoners for failing to perform their daily prayers. Judge Nayyeri ordered political prisoners brought to the Evin Death Commission to be flogged five times for every session of missed prayers, which meant that some were given 25 lashes a day.

#### 1.2.4.3 Beatings

1.2.4.3.1 Beatings were inflicted universally. They punctuated questions during interrogations, were used to punish prisoners for misdemeanours and were at times entirely arbitrary. Beatings included punching, hitting, blows with books and rubber slippers, strangulation and kicking: one torturer was famous for his sharp shoes; a boy was seen being kicked down the stairs. One witness referred to a “football room”, in which he was blindfolded



and kicked by guards standing in a circle around him.

1.2.4.3.2 Prisoners were beaten all over their bodies, including on their faces, for long periods of time, until they fell unconscious or sustained serious injuries.

#### 1.2.4.4 Ghapani

1.2.4.4.1 Many witnesses underwent or witnessed Ghapani during their interrogation. Ghapani involves the suspension of a victim in the air by his arms, one of which is twisted behind his shoulder and the other wrenched behind his back; the victim's hands are bound together with sharp handcuffs and tied to a chain or rope from the ceiling. The handcuffs were tightened with every move the prisoner made, thus increasing the pain. The torture on occasion began with making the victim lie down on the floor on his chest, before yanking the chain so that he was raised from behind; victims were left in this position for hours.

1.2.4.4.2 Ghapani occasionally involved the attachment of weights to victims' feet; sometimes, victims were suspended so that only their toes touched the floor. Witnesses reported being flogged, beaten, bastinadoed and poked with pens while they were hanging, although torturers took short breaks lest their subjects experience heart attacks.

1.2.4.4.3 Ghapani was reported as being debilitatingly painful and having the effect of dislocating or breaking people's shoulders, leaving some with permanent injuries.

#### 1.2.4.5 Standing Still

1.2.4.5.1 Prisoners were sometimes forced to stand still for long periods of time: reportedly anywhere up to 72 hours. Variations included standing on one leg or standing barefoot on ice. This was at times combined with psychological torture: on

one reported occasion, prisoners were left standing blindfolded in front of a wall and every once in a while one was taken away, with no further news about him.

#### 1.2.4.6 Sleep Deprivation

1.2.4.6.1 Sleep deprivation was employed when prisoners were taken to trials or interrogations in the dead of the night.

#### 1.2.4.7 The Grave

1.2.4.7.1 Prisoners were forced to squat for hours in boxes in the form of coffins (“the Grave”, also known as “Resurrection”), with Quranic incantations sometimes blared loudly at them, during which they were intermittently beaten and whipped on their heads and faces.

#### 1.2.4.8 Joojeh Morghi

1.2.4.8.1 Joojeh Morghi was inflicted on inmates of Urumiyyeh and Mahabad. This involved forcing prisoners to squat with their legs shackled and hands tied behind their backs or heads, and then to hop; this was sometimes accompanied by flogging for failure to continue jumping up and down.

#### 1.2.4.9 Kalagh Par

1.2.4.9.1 Kalagh Par was also inflicted on inmates of Urumiyyeh and Mahabad. This involved cuffing prisoners’ hands behind their heads and then making them jump forwards whilst in the squat position.

#### 1.2.4.10 Other Forms of Physical Torture

1.2.4.10.1 Other forms of torture included: the squeez-

ing of testicles; the infliction of burns with lighters, cigarettes or hot irons; deliberate mutilation; the tying of prisoners to gallows for long durations in winter and summer; and the violent thrusting of a ballpoint pen up a prisoner's nose.

1.2.4.10.2 Witnesses reported many instances of torture in which the method was unspecified.

## **1.2.5 Psychological Torture**

### **1.2.5.1 Solitary Confinement**

1.2.5.1.1 Prisoners were routinely and ubiquitously consigned to solitary confinement for minor disobedience or for no reason at all; in some cases this lasted a matter of years. Prisoners were kept in tiny (two-square-metre) cells and were rarely if ever let out. Solitary confinement was often used as a penalty for displeasing prison authorities; it was combined on occasion with physical punishment.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.2.5.2 Mock Executions**

1.2.5.2.1 Prisoners were sometimes subjected to mock executions. They were made to prepare for their deaths beforehand by saying their goodbyes and writing their wills; one witness was repeatedly told that his execution was impending but came to learn that his interrogators were only tormenting him. Prisoners were blindfolded and lined or tied up; guards then opened live fire. On some occasions, real executions were carried out: the experience

---

<sup>3</sup> *Some witnesses (cf. W23, W28, W40, W56) used the term "solitary confinement" to refer to extremely small cells that they shared with one or more prisoners. It was not clear precisely what these witnesses meant by "solitary confinement" but the Commission heard cases in which it was evident that the confinement was most certainly solitary.*

was a mock execution only for those who had been deliberately spared, with (on one reported occasion) signs purposely placed around their necks to mark them out.

1.2.5.2.2 The use of blank rounds for mock executions was also reported.

### 1.2.5.3 Witnessing Torture

1.2.5.3.1 Prisoners were frequently made to listen to or directly witness other prisoners being tortured; two brothers, for example, were tortured in each other's presence. In Salmaz, the sound of women being tortured was broadcast over loudspeakers. Several survivors testified that this experience was more painful than physical torture itself.

1.2.5.3.2 On one reported occasion, prisoners were paraded and executed in front of others.

### 1.2.5.4 Detention of Children

1.2.5.4.1 When infants were detained with their mothers, they were sometimes present at their mothers' interrogations or in the next room. While they were being tortured, therefore, mothers were forced to listen to the sound of their children's crying.

### 1.2.5.5 Threats and Intimidations

1.2.5.5.1 Prison guards and interrogators repeatedly threatened prisoners in a graphic manner that they would be tortured and executed unless they cooperated, including in the execution of other prisoners. One pregnant woman was threatened with being beaten until she miscarried; a survivor reported having been forced to stand on a stool with a noose around his neck as the interrogator threatened to kick the stool over. Inmates of Urumiyyeh

were shown the bloodied clothes of executed prisoners in order to break them down.

1.2.5.5.2 Prisoners were frequently verbally abused, including about their religious status, political beliefs and sex. They were often told that they were unclean.

1.2.5.5.3 Prisoners in Tabriz were told during Eid that the meat they were eating was in fact the flesh of executed prisoners.

## **1.2.6 Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment**

### 1.2.6.1 Prison Overcrowding

1.2.6.1.1 Many prisoners were left in extremely tight confinement with other prisoners. Cells were so small that prisoners had to take turns sleeping, which they had to do by lying down “like packed sardines”; in one cell with a toilet, prisoners had to spread their legs over a cellmate’s head in order to relieve themselves. As a punishment for misdemeanours, such overcrowding was sometimes accompanied by floggings and the withdrawal of other minor comforts. On one occasion, overcrowding was explicitly the result of prisons’ having been filled beyond capacity.

### 1.2.6.2 Poor Sanitary Conditions

1.2.6.2.1 Very short lavatory breaks were allocated for large numbers of prisoners together, three times a day; one survivor recalled missing this slot because he was being beaten at the time, and subsequently having to hold it in until morning. Certain witnesses reported having been allowed to use the toilet even less frequently, such that prisoners were forced to relieve themselves in jam jars and court waiting rooms. Guards told prisoners to urinate

on their friends or in their drinking cups.

1.2.6.2.2 Prisoners were kept in grossly unhygienic conditions. They were denied soap and the right to showers, leading to cases of skin disease; showers were cold, where provided, even when families offered to pay for water heaters. Cells were teeming with rats; clothes, with lice. One survivor reported that a clergyman came to inspect her cell but would not enter because the smell was so ghastly.

### 1.2.6.3 Denial of Medical Assistance

1.2.6.3.1 Survivors attested to having been denied medical attention for the injuries they incurred through torture (see §4.3.1). Prisoners, including children, were denied treatment and medication even when doctors had seen them. One witness testified to having her medication confiscated as a means of applying pressure on her to cooperate. On occasion, prisoners in urgent need of medical attention were beaten up by guards. Two witnesses attested to having been refused treatment for bullet wounds.

1.2.6.3.2 Some medical treatment was given. Evin had an infirmary, although one woman given a skin graft there for her feet after bastinado was taken back for further flogging. One family had to pay two million toumans in cash and land for permission for a prisoner to go to hospital.

### 1.2.6.4 Televised Interviews

1.2.6.4.1 Prisoners were commonly pressured to participate in “televised interviews”, in which they were asked to confess or recant their views; one witness clarified that this was for screening to other prisoners, in order to shatter their morale.

### 1.2.6.5 Denial of Food

1.2.6.5.1 Survivors attested to having been fed meagre diets of dire quality, sufficient only for them not to starve to death. The quantity was reduced on occasion as punishment. Food and water were withheld for hours when prisoners were left waiting in corridors.

#### 1.2.6.6 Exposure to the Elements

1.2.6.6.1 Prisoners were deliberately exposed to the heat or cold outside for long periods; they were sometimes stripped in freezing weather. Cells were cold and prisoners slept on concrete floors with very thin blankets.

#### 1.2.6.7 Religious Indoctrination

1.2.6.7.1 Survivors testified that prisoners were forced to attend religious indoctrination (or “brainwashing”) classes, also known as “Islamic Guidance”. Prisoners were punished for refusing to attend these sessions, which dealt with Khomeini’s treatises and the principles of Islam. Quranic recitations were broadcast over loudspeakers, including to drown out the sound of torture and as part of the “Grave” experience. One witness testified that only religious texts were available for prisoners to read in a Tehran prison after 1986. Prisoners were forced or pressured to perform their prayers and, after the arrival of the Death Commissions in 1988, were flogged for refusing to do so.

#### 1.2.6.8 Forced Labour

1.2.6.8.1 Prisoners in Mahabad and Urumiyyeh were forced to work in chain gangs without pay. Women were forced to work in a sewing sweatshop established by Lajevardi in Evin Prison, in which they used confiscated materials and machines to produce garments; these were sold later in government-owned department stores in Iran and the Arab world. Labourers were paid

between a half to one rial per piece, all of which was recouped by guards as a charge for the women's use of prison facilities.

#### 1.2.6.9 Miscellaneous

1.2.6.9.1 Other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment included: being blindfolded for prolonged periods, particularly during transfers and interrogation; being confined in humid and dark cells; being forced to give blood for soldiers on the warfront, just before execution; being left lying between dead bodies after being flogged; being forcibly stripped naked; being forbidden from speaking to anybody or being spoken to; being prohibited from holding study sessions in prison; being disallowed visits from their spouses because their marriages were not recognised as Islamic; being left with dangerous criminals in the same cells; being force-fed; being forced to pick up the bodies of executed prisoners; being made to measure a 300 metre-long corridor with matchsticks; and being forbidden permission to attend their children's funerals. Some prisoners were made to write their names or their mothers' names on their feet in marker, which in Islam means that one is a bastard.

### **1.3**

### **TRIAL**

#### **1.3.1 Location of Courtroom**

1.3.1.1 Virtually all prosecutions took place in courtrooms located within prison walls; one witness was tried in a makeshift court in an office across the road, to which he was taken blindfolded; another was tried in a residential house. One trial was held publicly in a mosque.

#### **1.3.2 Description of Proceedings**



1.3.2.1 From the evidence presented to the Commission, with one exception, no defendants were ever provided with or allowed legal representation. A defence lawyer was provided for the one witness who was tried in a military court, but this lawyer told the defendant to shut up whenever he tried to speak and at no point addressed the court. Many witnesses confirmed that they were also given no right to defend themselves during their trials.

1.3.2.2 Some witnesses confirmed that they were blindfolded during their trials.

1.3.2.3 The overwhelming majority of trials lasted for under five minutes. The longest trial of which the Commission heard direct evidence lasted for under ten minutes.

1.3.2.4 Three witnesses reported that no prosecutor was present during their trials.

1.3.2.5 Proceedings were conducted orally and with one exception, no defendant was ever presented with a written indictment. Sentences were likewise announced verbally; one witness was given a written sentence to sign, but this was taken away and she was not given a copy. On a number of occasions, trials concluded with judges telling defendants that they would or should be executed, although this was not ultimately their sentence. One witness was told by inmates of UNESCO Prison<sup>4</sup> that some of those condemned to death only learnt of their sentences as they were led to execution.

1.3.2.6 One judge issued death sentences after being requested to do so by his five-year-old son, who was sitting on his lap.

---

<sup>4</sup> *The UNESCO Prison was so named because it operated in a building formerly used by UNESCO: it was not run by UNESCO.*

1.3.2.7 Most charges pertained to political dissent, including: supporting, managing, assisting, sympathising with and belonging to political opposition groups; possessing, publishing or distributing their literature; and attending anti-regime demonstrations. Some people were charged with security offences, including being combatants for the MKO and possessing arms. Sentences ranged from short periods of imprisonment to execution and some included flogging in the interim.

1.3.2.8 Judges proceeded by reading defendants their charges and sometimes posed defendants two or three questions, limited to confirming their identity, how they pleaded and whether they were prepared to recant their views and embrace Islam. With the exception of one judge who was known for sentencing to death those who accepted the charges and to life imprisonment those who denied them, no judges were reported to have taken into consideration how the witness pleaded at any point in the minutes-long proceedings. One judge told a defendant who denied the charges that he might still be guilty of them in future; another told prisoners that he had a quota of 230 executions to fill and did not care whether or not they were guilty.

1.3.2.9 Witnesses reported that trials constituted but one stage in the interrogation process. One defendant was executed after being pressured to inform on his friends in exchange for a reduction in the sentence; the attorney general told the mother of another defendant that her son's case would not be reviewed unless he confessed and turned others in.

1.3.2.10 Defendants were at times been beaten viciously in the courtroom, either on the judge's orders or by the judge himself. One judge ordered defendants to be lashed 100 times in order to render them more submissive.

1.3.2.11 Some judges relied on evidence that witnesses had

strong reason to believe was obtained under torture or as a result of it.

1.3.2.12 The Commission heard of only one instance in which a defendant was cleared of his charges; however, the prison guard overruled the judge on this occasion and the defendant was subsequently retried.

## **1.4 IMPRISONMENT**

### **1.4.1 Continuation of Torture**

1.4.1.1 Prisoners experienced many of the tortures and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatments detailed in (§1.2.4-6) during their prison terms, following sentencing.

### **1.4.2 Sexual Abuse**

#### **1.4.2.1 Sexual abuse of women**

1.4.2.1.1 The rape of women in prisons was reported as widespread and systematic. One witness reported that the clerics held orgies in Evin, that women disappeared for up to a week and that women were beaten when they tried to discuss the abuse. On one occasion, prisoners complained that their mothers and sisters had been raped during house raids in which they (the suspects) were not found.

1.4.2.1.2 Azar Alekenan described how she was violently raped by her interrogator, who first promised to break her down and humiliate her. Her interrogator handcuffed her to a radiator and then stuffed her mouth with a scarf, before raping her. After the rape, she tried to commit suicide. She also reported the

case of a woman rendered mentally disturbed by her torture and rape, who was then taken away to a mental asylum.

#### 1.4.2.2 Sexual abuse of men

1.4.2.2.1 A boy aged approximately sixteen was raped every night by prison guards, according to a former cellmate of his. The rape of men in prisons and warzones is always vastly underreported, however, and the Commission acknowledges that the practice may have been more prevalent than this one instance suggests.

### 1.4.3 Repenters and Collaborators

1.4.3.1 One widely reported purpose of torture and maltreatment was to convert detainees into tavnabeen (repenters): acolytes of the prison authorities.

1.4.3.2 As informers, tavnabeen were used to identify political dissidents; they were on occasion transported from prison to prison for this purpose. Evidence obtained from them after they were pressured under torture to collaborate was later used to convict political prisoners and at times execute them. Tavnabeen helped security services arrest dissidents by luring former associates into traps on the pretext of wanting to arrange a meeting.

1.4.3.3 Tavnabeen were co-opted into torturing and abusing fellow political prisoners, whom they beat and flogged. There were reported cases in which Tavnabeen, some of whom were minors, delivered the coups de grâce in the execution of fellow prisoners.

1.4.3.4 Tavnabeen reportedly received better treatment in prison than others, such as being held in cells with open doors. However, one witness testified that after a tavnab was made to tell

her story to inmates in the prison library, she was executed.

## **1.5**

## **RELEASE**

### **1.5.1 Conditions of Release**

1.5.1.1 A substantial proportion of survivors reported that when they had served their sentences, they were asked to comply with a range of ad hoc conditions in order to qualify as eligible for release; where they refused or were unable to meet the terms, their sentences were arbitrarily extended. In one case, a victim's mother was detained for demonstrating against her son's treatment and was released only on condition that she promised to have no further involvement in demonstrations.

1.5.1.2 Prisoners were asked to denounce dissident groups, confess or recant their beliefs in writing or in televised interviews. The Commission also heard evidence of prisoners being required to promise as a condition of their release that they would not return to political activity.

1.5.1.3 The release of some prisoners was made conditional on the submission of property collaterals as securities for good behaviour and on the provision of third-party guarantors.

1.5.1.4 Upon their release, a number of persons were required to report to state authorities for a matter of years on a regular basis for questioning about their lives and activities.

## **CHAPTER II: EXECUTIONS**

### **2.1 PRE-1988 EXECUTIONS**

2.1.1 Witnesses reported countless numbers of political prisoners executed during the years 1980-88. Evidence came from families who were formally notified of their loved ones' executions and on occasion saw the body; prisoners who saw cellmates being summoned for execution; prisoners who heard gun shots and counted the coups de grâce; and prisoners who were subjected to mock executions in which they witnessed others being shot.

2.1.2 These executions took place all over Iran, including at: Evin, Tabriz, Ghezelhesar, Gohardasht, Amol, Vakilabad, Adel Abad, UNESCO, Mahabad, Urumiyyeh, Khoi, Saghez, Sanandaj and Bandar Abbas. (See Appendix B).

2.1.3 Witnesses presented the Commission with hundreds of names of executed prisoners; they reported many more executions of prisoners whose names were unknown to them or not provided. Executions before 1988 generally followed a court order for execution. In June and July of 1981, following the massive uprising against the regime, most prisoners condemned to death were merely charged with being a member of MKO or participating in anti-government demonstrations. The length of detention (before execution) in a number of cases was so short that there could not possibly have been a meaningful trial. Some were executed with

the space of two or three days from their arrest. The families were rarely informed of the process leading to the execution of their loved ones. There is no evidence of due process. None of the witnesses referred to any of the prisoners as having had access to any legal representation. The families were unable to hire lawyers to represent the prisoners. In most cases they were not informed of the whereabouts of their loved ones until they were notified of their execution. No formal paperwork was handed over to the family of the victim.

2.1.4 Many prisoners were executed by firing squad. Many were also hanged to death; some were hanged from low ceilings, which meant they slowly suffocated to death, or from cranes. Witnesses reported a large number of executions by unspecified means. One of the witnesses produced a death certificate where the “Cause of Death/Illness” is stated as “hail of bullets”; the “Doctor/Hospital” is referred to as “Prosecutor’s Office – Tehran”.

2.1.5 Some prisoners were killed under torture; one autopsy report confirmed that torture was so severe that it was capable of causing death.

## **2.2**

### **THE 1988 MASSACRES**

2.2.1 Vast numbers of prisoners were taken to their deaths in 1988. Virtually all of them were still serving their prison terms at the time and some were due for release. After the Islamic Republic of Iran halted the July 1988 incursion into its territory by Mujahideen forces from Iraq, Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa (Appendix A), in which he established committees (“Death Commissions”, §2.2.4) that were to sentence to death those MKO members whom they considered mohareb [waging war on God]. The subsequent executions encompassed members of other political

opposition groups too.

2.2.2 Executions in 1988 were performed predominantly (if not exclusively) by hanging, although for many reported executions the method was not stated to the Truth Commission.

2.2.3 Before the executions, prisons went into lockdown and all visits were prohibited (see §5.2.4).

#### 2.2.4 The Death Commissions

2.2.4.1 Prisoners were hauled in front of what became known as “Death Commissions”; the regime called them “Pardon Commissions”, which deceived those prisoners who thought that the purpose of the panel was to release them.

2.2.4.2 Each Death Commission comprised a religious judge, the local prosecutor and a representative of the Ministry of Intelligence, along with other state officials. Prisoners in both Gohardasht and Evin were tried by the same Death Commission. (For evidence on specific perpetrators, see Chapter VI).

2.2.4.3 Prisoners were asked two or three questions over the space of a few minutes, regarding whether they believed in Islam, were willing to recant their views and would accept the Islamic Republic. Those whose answers displeased the Commission were taken out and executed. One witness testified that “public heretics” (those who were not born to a Muslim father) were spared execution so that they might convert to Islam, on pain of death; those who refused were flogged five times for every session of prayers they refused to perform (§1.2.4.2.2). “Innate heretics” (those born Muslims, who had left the faith) were executed, including those who agreed to return to Islam.

### 2.3

### OTHER KILLINGS



### **2.3.1 The Jahrom Massacre**

2.3.1.1 Esmat Vatanparast testified about a gruesome massacre in Jahrom in 1981. After Mahmoud Vatanparast, the Governor of Fars Province, refused to rig the province's parliamentary election results in 1980 in favour of Mohammed Besharati, a losing candidate, the shari'ah leader of Jahrom ordered the murder of Vatanparast's entire family from the pulpit of the mosque.

2.3.1.2 Several family members were then summarily executed, including by crucifixion, defenestration, skinning alive, being cut into pieces with shears, and being dragged along the asphalt behind a moving van.

2.3.1.3 Children as young as nine were arrested; others were incarcerated and then killed under torture or in the massacres of 1988.

2.3.1.4 After inhabitants of Jahrom smelt a foul odour coming out of a canal, seventeen dead children were shortly found in the water.

### **2.3.2 The Rasht Prison Fire**

2.3.2.1 Seven prisoners were killed after a fire broke out in a prison in Rasht. The inmates burned to death one hour after the outbreak of the fire, during which time the guards took no action to release the prisoners from their cells.

### **2.3.3 Massacres in Kurdistan**

2.3.3.1 Hundreds of Kurds were killed by Sadegh Khalkhali in 1979 during mass executions in an airport in Sanandaj. Children were killed in front of their schools in 1981. One witness reported that his grandmother was decapitated during the attack on Kurdistan.

## **CHAPTER III: PRISONS**

### **3.1**

### **OVERVIEW**

3.1.1 The Commission heard evidence of 32 prisons in which political prisoners were incarcerated in Iran in the 1980s; the scale of Iran's prison operations was impressed on the Commission by the fact that half of these prisons received unique references, in the sense that each was attested to by precisely one of 75 witnesses. Torture and/or executions were reported in virtually all of these institutions.

3.1.1 Arrestees were sometimes taken to temporary detention facilities before transfer to prisons but were frequently taken directly to prisons after their arrest. Thereafter, it was extremely common for prisoners to be moved around the country from prison to prison, rarely for any clear reason. The regime further used a number of unofficial or overflow facilities.

3.1.2 The map in Appendix B illustrates the distribution of prisons in Iran: they are found in all of Iran's major cities and around the country, mostly in the north, along the Iraqi and Turkish

borders and the coast of the Caspian Sea, with a few outliers.

## **3.2**

## **MAJOR PRISONS**

### **3.2.1 Adel Abad Prison**

3.2.1.1 Adel Abad Prison in Shiraz was the site of various tortures throughout the 1980s, as well as executions by firing squad and hanging. Large numbers of Mujahideen and leftists were executed in here as part of the 1988 massacres.

### **3.2.2 Evin Prison**

3.2.2.1 Evin Prison in Tehran was one of the largest prisons in Iran in the 1980s; 47 witnesses (over 60 per cent of the total) testified about it. Prisoners in Evin were subjected to a variety of tortures, including bastinado, and cruel treatment, including solitary confinement and overcrowding. Executions throughout the decade were performed mostly by firings squad, sometimes on the hills behind the prison; Evin also hosted Death Commission visits in 1988, after which countless prisoners were massacred.

3.2.2.2 Ward 1 of Evin Prison was known as “Melikesh” and used for the detention of prisoners past the expiry of their sentences if they refused to comply with certain ad hoc conditions for their release.

3.2.2.3 Ward 3 was reported as having been reserved for political prisoners. Cell 2 of this ward was Evin’s dedicated “underage ward”, for the incarceration of under-eighteens.

3.2.2.4 Ward 209 was described as being “[like] doomsday”: it was used for torture, interrogation and solitary confinement; on one occasion, prisoners were consigned there specifically as a punishment. One witness reported that the ward contained

four rooms: for communists, Mujahideen, economic criminals and royalists, and regular criminals. It was run by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran Corps).

### **3.2.3 Ghezelhesar Prison**

3.2.3.1 Ghezelhesar Prison in Karaj was used for the incarceration of large numbers of political prisoners, who were subjected to violent torture and widespread mistreatment. Executions were not reported in Ghezelhesar, although there were deaths under torture and reported suicides: the practice seems to have been that prisoners were transferred to Evin for execution. Section 8 was known as the “Infidels’ Section” and was used for the imprisonment of communists; Cell 6 in Ward 3 was used for packing leftists into overcrowded cells. Ghezelhesar was closed in 1985 and its inmates moved to other prisons.

### **3.2.4 Gohardasht Prison**

3.2.4.1 Gohardasht Prison in Karaj was an exceptionally brutal prison in terms of the torture and cruel treatment inflicted on prisoners, which was reported to have led to some going insane; solitary confinement was commonly mentioned. Large numbers of prisoners were executed by hanging in Gohardasht’s “amphitheatre” in 1988 after brief questioning by a Death Commission; so many were killed that it was possible to fit all the survivors from six wards into a single ward.

### **3.2.5 Tabriz Prison**

3.2.5.1 Tabriz Prison was reported for the torture to which prisoners were subjected within its walls; many inmates were executed in the earlier part of the decade, either by hanging or by firing squad.

### **3.2.6 Urumiyyeh Prison**

3.2.6.1 Urumiyyeh Prison was known for the physical and psychological torture and cruel treatments inflicted on prisoners there, as well as mass executions in the earlier part of the 1980s. At one point, it was overcrowded at nearly three times its capacity.

### **3.2.7 Vakilabad Prison**

3.2.7.1 Vakilabad Prison in Mashhad was the site of countless hangings of supporters of the MKO in both the early 1980s and the massacres of 1988. Torture and extreme cruelty were also reported as prevalent there. On the eve of the 1988 massacres, Vakilabad had three sections: Ward 1 contained new detainees, repenters and miscellaneous prisoners; Ward 2 contained those Marxists, Bahá'ís and Mujahideen for whom prison authorities “saw no hope for change”; and the quarantine ward contained Mujahideen and Marxists, isolated in two closed rooms from the rest of the prison. The latter two were “emptied of members of the MKO” in the 1988 massacres.

### **3.2.8 Other Major Prisons**

3.2.8.1 Other large prisons in which the torture and execution of political prisoners were reported include Dastgerd Prison in Isfahan, Dizel Abad Prison in Kermanshah and Karoon Prison in Ahwaz.

## **3.3**

### **LESSER PRISONS**

3.3.1 Executions were reported in Amol, Malek Ashter Prison (Lahijan), Sanandaj, UNESCO Prison, Bandar Abbas, Rasht Navy Prison, Sepah Prison (Masjed Soleiman) and Malek Abad (Mashhad).

3.3.2 Torture was used in Eshratyab, Saghez, Bandar Anzali, Chalooos and Khoi; the Commission heard evidence of torture in most of the prisons in §3.3.1. Rape was reported at a number of prisons, including Marivan (cf. §1.4.2); prisoners faced cruel treatment in Semnan. Prisoners were tortured in Mahabad and transferred to Tabriz (§3.2.5) for execution.

3.3.3 Political prisoners were also incarcerated in Fajr Prison (Dezful), Kamiaran, Ghasr Prison (Tehran), Heshmatiyeh Prison (Tehran) and Sardasht.

## **3.4**

### **DETENTION CENTRES**

3.4.1 Many arrestees were first held in temporary detention facilities known as “komitehs” [“committees”] before they were transferred to prisons. The most frequently reported komiteh was Komiteh Moshtarak, an appendage of Evin Prison; it was also known as “Ward 3000”, “Tohid Prison” and “the Joint/Shared Committee”. Bastinado appears to have been used universally in Komiteh Moshtarak during detainees’ interrogations, as one of a number of types of torture. Other komitehs included Komiteh Ferdowsi and Vozara Komiteh, where detainees were held because no room could be found in Evin in the autumn of 1981.

3.4.2 Arrested persons were frequently held in detention centres run by the Revolutionary Guards, which were found all over the country in city centres, including in formerly civilian buildings converted for use by internal security forces; torture was employed in these facilities, which proved lethal on one reported occasion.

3.4.3 Military bases were used as temporary holding facilities for political prisoners. The Commission heard of two military personnel detained in such facilities on charges of anti-regime

political activism during their active service; it also heard of one civilian political activist detained at a military base in Urumiyeh.

3.4.4 The Kuhsangi detention centre was used for executions by hanging.

### **3.5 UNOFFICIAL OR OVERFLOW FACILITIES**

3.5.1 Witnesses attested to the widespread of use of clandestine or overflow facilities used to incarcerate or detain political prisoners who for various reasons state authorities did not want to hold in the regular, official prisons.

3.5.2 Mohammad Reza Shah High School in Rasht was converted into an “underground prison” and was the site of recorded executions of members of the MKO in 1984 and 1988.

3.5.3 One survivor attested to having been detained for a night in “Naser Khan Ghashghaee’s big garden”, which was being used as a makeshift prison.

3.5.4 Evin Prison used blocks of flats across the street as overflow facilities when the main site exceeded capacity in the winter of 1981. Detainees were held here for several months before they were transferred to Evin-proper and eventually tried.

3.5.5 One witness was detained and tortured in a “group home” run by an Islamic Revolution Committee. He testified that the reason for this was that regime agents were not required to register the deaths of those who died under torture if this took place off the official premises.

3.5.6 Political activists were detained in a stable in Saleh Abad in the summer of 1981 for just over a week before they were transferred to Evin Prison.

### **3.6**

### **CORRUPTION IN PRISONS**

3.6.1 On one occasion, prison guards embezzled from a prisoner's family by pretending that he was still alive in order to accept money that they promised to pass on. In the Evin sweatshop (§1.2.6.8.1), guards demanded all the money that prisoners had been given for their work back as rent for use of prison facilities. A witness reported that the authorities promised to commute his brother's sentence from death to life in exchange for three million toumans and then proceeded to execute him anyway.



## **Chapter IV: Victims**

### **4.1**

### **WOMEN**

4.1.1 Sexual abuse of women was widespread (cf. §1.4.2). Women were forced to wear black chadors in prison and punished when they protested against this practice. Men and women were broadly subjected to the same forms of torture and held in the same conditions; cells were segregated by sex. Certain interrogators considered women “unclean” and refused to touch them: some women were beaten in sacks; one was ordered to touch only one side of a confession sheet so her interrogator could touch the other.

### **4.2**

### **MINORS**

#### 4.2.1 Minors Imprisoned with Their Parents

4.2.1.1 Young children and babies were imprisoned with their mothers in the same cells and conditions as other political prisoners. The Commission heard no evidence to suggest that any children were tried when detained with their parents; in certain cases, they remained in prison after their mothers pleaded for their release. On occasion, prison wardens told women that they regarded their children as political prisoners in their own right.

4.2.1.2 There is evidence of malnutrition among imprisoned children and of the deliberate denial of urgent medical attention for them; on one occasion, prison guards refused to open the cell door after a four-year-old girl fell off the top level of a bunk bed and was concussed.

4.2.1.3 Some children witnessed the torture of their mothers. As one woman was being tortured, her interrogator held her 11-month-old child by her in the torture chamber. In a number of cases, children were left in the care of women who had just been tortured and were still covered in blood.

4.2.1.4 In two reported cases, children improvised games based on what they witnessed in prison life due to lack of exposure to the outside world. One such game included donning chadors and acting out a prison visit.

#### 4.2.2 Minors as Political Prisoners

4.2.2.1 Minors were imprisoned for political offences; some were aged fourteen to sixteen and there is one reported instance of an eleven-year-old arrested for carrying a bulletin of an opposition party. At least three witnesses confirmed that they themselves were tortured in prison as minors; one other personally witnessed the torture of children. One witness reported that children as young as twelve were converted into repenters and made to execute their fellow prisoners. Evin Prison had a dedicated “underage ward”.

4.2.2.2 One witness testified that Ayatollah Gilani sentenced to death a group of people arrested on the 30th Khordad after saying: “I don’t need your names or your ages.”

#### 4.2.3 Execution of Minors

4.2.3.1 Minors were not exempt from the executions of the 1980s, since at least the demonstrations of the 30th Khordad: they were hanged, lined in front of firing squads, or even killed under torture just like other political prisoners. The youngest reported prisoner to have been executed was an eleven-year-old boy hanged in Tabriz.

## **4.3 LEGACIES OF ABUSE**

### **4.3.1 Physical Suffering**

4.3.1.1 Torture left all prisoners with horrific injuries. Bastinado left prisoners unable to walk, with swollen and infected feet; some urinated blood. Beatings left some prisoners wheelchair-bound or with broken bones; spinal injury was a common complaint. Kidney malfunction was widely reported as a consequence of torture. Some cases of partial blindness and loss of hearing were also reported. A number of prisoners attested to widespread skin diseases. Other health problems incurred in the course of imprisonment included: loss of teeth (or their enamel), bleeding ulcers, arthritis, herniated discs, major heart problems, a collapsed lung and paralysis, all reported as suffered by one prisoner. Some witnesses attested to extreme malnourishment, to the point that prisoners were unrecognisable by their own families. One woman ultimately lost her thyroid gland as a result of the confiscation of her medication.

### **4.3.2 Psychological Suffering**

4.3.2.1 Traumatic abuse left many survivors with deep psychological scars. Sleeping disorders were widely reported, including night terrors and nightmares. Witnesses attested to fear of the dark, depression, paranoia and insanity as psychological

consequences of long-term mistreatment.

#### **4.4**

#### **SUICIDES**

4.4.1 The Commission heard several cases of suicide by prisoners, some of whom killed themselves after being flogged for failing to perform their daily prayers (Namaz). Methods included: using broken glass to slit their wrists or intestines, drowning by tying a rock to a leg, drinking sanitary disinfectant and hanging with the use of chadors. One witness testified that she was driven to attempt suicide by her experience of rape.

4.4.2 Two persons committed suicide by biting cyanide capsules in order to evade arrest, with one forcing her four-year-old daughter to do the same lest she be imprisoned.

#### **4.5**

#### **POLITICAL GROUPINGS**

4.5.1 Witnesses from a wide range of political affiliations reported that they, their family members and their acquaintances were persecuted primarily for their political beliefs and opposition to the new Islamic regime. Political groups persecuted by the regime included: the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO); the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (OIPFG) and its offshoots, the OIPFG (Minority [Aghaliat]) and the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaian (Majority [Askariat]); the Union of Iranian Communists; the Union of Combatant Communists; the Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah); the Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar); the Iranian Organisation of Sahand; the Tudeh Party of Iran; the Ranjbaran Party of Iran; the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI); the Forghan Organisation; the Organization of Razmandegan for the Freedom of the Working Class; and the Organisation of Paykar for the Emancipation of the Working Class. The Commission duly notes that this is by no

means an exhaustive list of political groups that were targeted.

4.5.2 Many witnesses reported religious or ethnic discrimination in addition, particularly against Kurds and Bahá'ís, who felt that they faced especial persecution for these factors.

4.5.3 Political persecutees were on some occasions fired from their employment with state agencies in the very early years of the 1980s.

## **Chapter V: Families**

### **5.1 BRUTALITY TOWARDS FAMILIES**

5.1.1 Family members of political prisoners attested to brutal treatment at the hands of agents of the regime. Relatives were physically assaulted during house raids, detained and interrogated; a mother was physically thrown off a bus for protesting her treatment. One witness testified that when his sister came to visit, her head was crushed between the prison's iron gates; when she had become stuck, guards refused to release her. Another witness recalled seeing her elderly grandmother pushed down on the floor in front of her by Revolutionary Guards.

5.1.2 See §2.3.1 for evidence of revenge killings against the families of political enemies of the regime.

### **5.2 VISITATION RIGHTS IN PRISON**

5.2.1 Families were pressured to urge their incarcerated relatives to confess or inform on their friends; one witness recalled that direct visits were permitted only for those prisoners who coop-

erated with prison authorities.

5.2.2 Visits were reported as taking place behind a glass screen with use of a handset receiver. Relatives noted that guards stood nearby listening in on conversations and violently disrupted visits if prisoners tried to communicate information about their treatment.

5.2.3 When visits were scheduled regularly, they took place weekly or fortnightly. However, families were forbidden from visiting their incarcerated relatives for long periods; some had to wait until after sentencing and others were refused visits altogether. For some, the only visit was a “goodbye visit” prior to the prisoner’s execution (reportedly the norm in Vakilabad). Some families were allowed visits only after persistently pleading for them. These visits were very short, with the longest reported visit lasting ten minutes. Prisoners were transported around the country, which greatly inconvenienced their families: one family reported having had to travel up to 1,000 kilometres to visit; another, that families who had travelled for up to four hours were turned away for being just a few minutes late for the appointed time.

5.2.4 In the summer of 1988, prisons went into lockdown before the massacres. First, political prisoners were separated according to their affiliation. Then, all visits were stopped without explanation; trips to the infirmary were ended; daily exits from cells for fresh air were interrupted; televisions were confiscated; and all communication with the outside world was suspended.

## **5.3**

### **NOTIFICATION OF DEATH**

5.3.1 Families were informed of executions with great insensitivity. Some were given the news only after turning up at the prison for a visit; a number of these found out by being handed a bag of clothes. Often, families were informed by telephone; other

times, they discovered what had happened through the media; one witness reported that a list of executed prisoners was posted outside the prison. Certain families did not know that their loved ones had been sentenced to death until after the execution; for some, this was the first news they received about their relatives since the arrest.

5.3.2 Families also reported having been denied essential information about the executions, or even deliberately fed misinformation; on one reported occasion, the family was only told of the execution two months later. Some prison guards continued to accept money that they were meant to pass on to a prisoner, long after his death. Mothers were turned away and ordered to send male relatives in their stead to receive the news. Sometimes families were given bags of the possessions of the deceased, but not always belonging to the right person.

## **5.4 BURIAL AND MOURNING RIGHTS**

5.4.1 In many cases, the release of the bodies of executed prisoners was made conditional on “bullet money” (a charge based on the number of bullets used for execution), written promises not to hold mourning ceremonies or a signature that the relative had died of natural causes.

5.4.2 Significant numbers of families were never returned their loved ones’ bodies at all. Many of these bodies were buried in mass graves, such as Khavaran and Behesht Zahra. Some families were not even informed of the place of burial. The practice of burial in mass graves became more prevalent towards the end of the decade as demands for “bullet money” stopped.

5.4.3 The Commission heard widespread evidence of the denial of proper Islamic or dignified burials. Bodies were not re-



leased for days; mass graves were sometimes shallow, to the point that bodies were still visible above surface; burial spots were often unidentifiable; the deceased were buried fully clothed; bodies were not washed, and one family reported being denied the right to use the local mortuary to wash the body of the deceased. One body was left on the hills around the prison and was partly eaten by wild dogs by the time the family had discovered it.

5.4.4 Families reported that after being returned the bodies of the deceased, they were still not left in peace. A large number were denied the right to hold mourning ceremonies; many such ceremonies were violently disrupted by armed guards, occasionally arriving in busloads. In one reported case, armed guards turned up to disrupt a mourning ceremony and proceeded to abduct the victim's teenage brother at gunpoint; the boy was then kept in prison for a month, during which time he was tortured.

5.4.5 One family reported that they were forbidden from marking their loved ones' graves; others, that gravestones were repeatedly smashed. Bodies were buried in plots named "Land of the Damned" and "Hypocrites section"; others had to be buried on the hills or in Bahá'í graveyards because they were not allowed to be buried in local cemeteries.

## **5.5 SUFFERING OF FAMILIES**

5.5.1 The children of political prisoners suffered enormously from their parents' captivity. Three testified to having been questioned by head teachers about their relationships to dissidents or even having been disallowed from enrolling at school. One reported that she had effectively become an adult by the age of six because she was privy from a young age to all her family's discussion about executions.

5.5.2 It was reported that the trauma of the arrest and execution of their loved ones had grave and often fatal implications for family members' health: six close relatives suffered heart attacks as a consequence.

5.5.3 Witnesses testified that their experiences left them and their kin "psychologically unhealthy"; depression was reported in a number of families.

5.5.4 Family members reported that they still experience sleeping disorders, including insomnia and constant nightmares. Sahar Mohammadi was five years old when she lost her mother and consequently suffers from recurring nightmares. In one, she cannot find anywhere to hide her mother when the house comes under attack; she then wishes to be arrested too, so that she might plead with the Revolutionary Guards not to execute her mother. In another nightmare, Sahar's loved ones are tied up in front of a firing squad and she is forced to choose one whom she wants to save from death.

## CHAPTER VI: THE PERPETRATORS

6 When asked to name the persons responsible for the mistreatment and execution of political prisoners in Iranian prisons, witnesses held the entire Islamic Republic responsible. They specifically charged its highest-ranking leaders with direct responsibility, most notably Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, President Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, Prime Minister Mir Hossein Mousavi and Parliament Speaker Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The Truth Commission was presented with a great deal of detailed information about those officials of the Islamic Republic about whom witnesses had direct evidence of personal responsibility.

### 6.1

### JUDGES

6.1.1 Ayatollah Mohammad Mehdi Gilani was a shari'ah judge in Evin Prison, where he sentenced political prisoners to death. He was the Revolutionary Court's chief judge between 1981 and 1984. In the aftermath of the 30th Khordad demonstrations, Gilani sent prisoners to their deaths before even confirming their names, saying: "I don't need your names or your ages. You are rebels and spreading corruption on Earth".

6.1.2 Hossein Ali Nayyeri was one of the most notorious judges in the 1980s. As a judge of the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Evin (and the court's chief judge, 1984-89), Nayyeri sentenced countless prisoners. He was specifically charged with responsibility in Khomeini's 1988 fatwa for the Death Commissions in Tehran: as chairman of the Death Commission at Evin and Gohardasht Prisons, he condemned many to their deaths. Those whom he spared were ordered to embrace Islam, on pain of death or flogging. Nayyeri is currently the Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

6.1.3 Mohammad Mohammadi Rayshahri was a shari'ah judge in the Islamic Courts and Chief Justice of the Army Islamic Revolutionary Courts in the early 1980s; he was later Attorney General and then Minister of Intelligence during the 1988 massacres. He is currently the representative of the Supreme Leader to the hajj in Mecca.

6.1.4 Mullah Ghateelzadeh was the head of the Justice Department in Mazandaran, where he sentenced political prisoners to death. He is presently an executive official in the Iranian Supreme Court.

6.1.5 Ali Mobasheri was a shari'ah judge in Evin Prison. He sentenced prisoners to death and on one reported occasion told a defendant that she would be executed, although this was not eventually her sentence. Mobasheri sat on the Death Commission at Evin Prison. He is currently the President of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts in Tehran.

6.1.6 Haaj Agha Alavi was the head of Isfahan Islamic Revolutionary Court when Kobra Ghiasi was sentenced to death in 1982. Her case file noted that she was executed for refusing to recant her Marxist beliefs and embrace Islam.

6.1.7 Andalib was known in Shiraz for his binary decision-making: with rare exceptions, prisoners who denied their charges were given life imprisonment; those who accepted their charges, the death penalty.

6.1.8 Kermani Moghadam was a shari'ah judge in Mahabad Prison, where he sentenced prisoners to death. On one occasion, he informed the defendant that he had a quota of 230 people to execute in Mahabad and was not concerned with whether or not the defendant was guilty. During the trial, his five-year-old son sat on his lap and asked for certain prisoners to be executed, to which his father acquiesced.

6.1.9 Hojatoleslam Seyed Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi was a shari'ah judge in Tabriz, where he sentenced prisoners to death. He served as the General Revolutionary Prosecutor in 1981-85.

6.1.10 Ali Razini was a shari'ah judge in Mashhad, where he sentenced prisoners to death. He served as head of the Tehran Islamic Revolutionary Court in the years 1984-86, whereupon he became the first head of the Armed Forces' Judiciary Organisation.

6.1.11 Other shari'ah judges included: Jawoheri (Urumiyyeh); Haji Agha Ramandi (Saghez); Nasserian Salavati (Ghez-elhesar); and Hojatoleslam Ahmadi (Karoon). Judges explicitly mentioned as having delivered death sentences included: Salimi (Mashhad); Hojateslam Emani; Ghadyani (Arak Islamic Revolutionary Court); Nourbakhsh (Adel Abad); Hamid Rashidfar (deputy judge, Adel Abad); Deghan; Hojatollah Islam Hafezi.

## **6.2 PRISON OFFICIALS**

6.2.1 Asadolah Lajevardi was the governor of Evin Prison during the early years 1980s, where he threatened prisoners,

personally beat them and ordered them to be punished for showing him disrespect. Between 1980 and 1984, he was also head of the Tehran Islamic Revolutionary Court. Lajevardi established a sweatshop in Evin, which employed forced labour. He also acted as prosecutor in a number of cases. He gained such notoriety that his name came to be used as shorthand for abuse. He later became head of the State Prison Organisation. Lajevardi was assassinated by members of the MKO in 1998.

6.2.2 Mohammad Moghissei (“Nasserian”) was the deputy governor of Ghezelhesar Prison in 1981-85 and later governor of Gohardasht Prison, on whose Death Commission he sat. According to one witness, he used to override decisions made by Judge Nayyeri to release individual prisoners. He was also identified as the Assistant Prosecutor of Gohardasht at one point, where he sat on the Death Commission. Today, Moghissei is a senior official in Iranian judiciary.

6.2.3 Saeed Hossein Mortazavi was the governor of Evin Prison during the 1988 massacres, having earlier run Gohardasht Prison. One witness reported that he was known for raping prisoners.

6.2.4 Esmail Shushtari was a member of a Death Commission. He was the head of the State Prisons Organisation and served as Iran’s Minister of Justice under President Rafsanjani.

6.2.5 Mojtaba Halvaei Asgar was the head of security in Evin Prison, where he led prisoners to the Death Commission in 1988. He personally tortured prisoners and physically attacked them, including in the courtroom, where he threatened to kill them all.

6.2.6 Ayatollah Abdul Karim Mousavi Ardebili was the head of the judicial section of a prison ward and was reported as

permitting guards to do as they pleased with women prisoners. At the time of the 1988 massacres, he was the Chief Justice of the Islamic Republic and head of its Supreme Judicial Council.

6.2.7 Haj Davood Rahmani was the governor of Ghezel-hesar Prison, where he tortured prisoners and murdered one with a blow to the head with an iron lock. He was later moved to an administrative position in the “Freedom Section” of Evin Prison in 1984.

6.2.8 Taghi Adeli (“Davood Lashkari”) was the deputy head of the disciplinary section of Gohardasht Prison from 1986 and head of security during the 1988 massacres, having served at points as the head of the prison. He participated in Death Commission hearings, where he personally testified against prisoners; he also held an executive position during the 1988 massacres. Adeli was a member of the Death Commission of Gohardasht.

6.2.9 Valipour was the head of Vakilabad Prison during the 1988 massacres, sitting on that prison’s Death Commission. He had previously been an assistant judge in Mashhad.

6.2.10 Haj Amin was the head of Komiteh Moshtarak.

6.2.11 Sanali Shafiei was the governor of Fajr Prison.

6.2.12 Zaman Mahmoudi was the head of Masjed Soleiman’s Sepah Prison.

6.2.13 Haj Karbalai used to accompany parents on their visits to Evin Prison. After the mother of one witness complained to him about his treatment of prisoners’ parents, he physically threw her off a bus.

6.2.14 Akbar Kabiri Arani (“Fakoor”) was the head of

Evin Prison, 1985-86.

6.2.15 Davood Bayat (“Meysam”) was the head of Ghez-elhesar Prison from 1984 until 1986, when he took over Evin Prison for one year.

6.2.16 Khalil Torabpour was the warden of the prison in Shiraz.

## **6.3 PROSECUTORS**

6.3.1 Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi acted as prosecutor in a number of mock trials. He was among the most infamous members of the Death Commission at Evin and Gohardasht Prisons, acting as the representative of the Ministry of Intelligence, of which he was the deputy minister. Pour-Mohammadi served as Iran’s Minister of the Interior in President Ahmadinejad’s first cabinet. He is currently National Security Advisor to the Supreme Leader.

6.3.2 Morteza Eshraghi was a notorious member of the Death Commission at Evin and Gohardasht Prisons, acting in the capacity of Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Tehran as the representative of the Ministry of Justice. He was specifically appointed by Ayatollah Khomeini in his 1988 fatwa to sit on the Tehran Death Commission. He is presently head of a branch of the Supreme Court of the Islamic Republic.

6.3.3 Ebrahim Raissi sat on the Death Commissions at Evin and Gohardasht Prison as Prosecutor of Tehran for political groups. He took over as head of Tehran’s Islamic Revolutionary Court in 1989 and is currently Deputy Head of the Judiciary. Before this he was an Assistant Prosecutor, Prosecutor of the Karaj Court and the head of the State Inspectorate Office.

6.3.4 Hamid (“Abbasi”) Noori was an assistant prosecu-



tor and member of the Death Commission at Gohardasht Prison.

6.3.5 Other prosecutors included: Gerami (Arak Islamic Revolutionary Court), Khayyeri (Mahabad); Ganbari (Adel Abad); Hojatoleslam Movahed (Karoon); Ziaoddin Miramad (Shiraz, Tehran, Bandar Abbas); Mirfendereski (Khorasan).

## **6.4 TORTURERS AND INTERROGATORS**

6.4.1 Hadi Ghaffari was an interrogator and torturer in Evin Prison, noted as the “most horrifying”. One witness testified that Ghaffari had whipped him 100 times for refusing to change his allegedly idolatrous name. At one point, Ghaffari also presided as a judge in Branch 6 of Evin Prison.

6.4.2 Seyyed Abbas Abtahi was one of Lajevardi’s bodyguards in Evin Prison and a member of the prison’s Task Force. He executed a group of political prisoners by firing squad, subjecting those who were spared to a mock execution.

6.4.3 Tehrani was an interrogator from the Intelligence Services, who also sat on the Death Commission at Vakilabad.

6.4.4 Other named torturers included: Haji Bahram; Nasser Yarhamadi; Haj Ebrahim (Tabriz); Karim Kalehpaz (Tabriz); Mohamad Hadi Yarahmad; Haj Aziz; Haj Habib Rashti; Sarwaz Nourizi; Behzad Nezami (Ghezelhesar); Hassan Batouli (Saghez); Haji Esmaili (Saghez); Hadi Esmaeli (Mahabad). Witnesses also mentioned further torturers, who went under single-name pseudonyms.

## **6.5 OTHER DEATH COMMISSION MEMBERS**

6.5.1 Majid Torabpoor sat on the Death Commission in Fars and Kohkiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad provinces.

6.5.2 Mostabak Mohammadi was as a member of the

Death Commission at Gohardasht Prison.

## 6.6

## MISCELLANEOUS FIGURES

6.6.1 Brigadier General Ahmad Zolghader was responsible for the massacre of over 100 political prisoners in Shiraz in 1981 as the commander of the Pasdaran Corp ground forces and Basic Operations. He is currently the deputy commander of the Mohammad Rasolullah Pasdaran Corp in Tehran.

6.6.2 Sadegh Khalkhali was known as the “butcher of Kurdistan” and responsible for countless executions, including the massacre of hundreds of Kurds in an airport in Sanandaj in 1979. In response to a demand for a justification, he told one witness’s wife, in a manner reminiscent of the old witch trials: “If your husband is innocent, he will go to heaven; if he is guilty, then he has received his just punishment.” Khalkhali ordered the gravediggers in Shiraz to dig as many graves as they could; 60 bodies were delivered shortly thereafter.

6.6.3 Mohammad Ali Besharati ordered the Jahrom Massacre (cf. §2.3.1). He later became a member of Parliament, Deputy Foreign Minister and Minister of the Interior.

6.6.4 Ayatollahi issued the execution order for the Jahrom Massacre. He announced from the pulpit of the local mosque that members of the Vatanparast family were to be captured and did not require a trial (cf. §2.3.1).

# **Part C:**

# **Conclusions**

The terms of reference of the Truth Commission set out by the Steering Committee of the Iran Tribunal request that the Commission act as an investigating judge by drawing some legal conclusions from the foregoing factual findings. These conclusions are solely those of the Commission and bind neither the prosecutors nor the Tribunal itself as to their final legal findings. The present conclusions remain a mere legal summary of the factual findings. They will, therefore, be short and without deepening or development. They are structured as follows:

- I. The legal qualification of the facts;
- II. The attribution of the facts.

## **I. The Legal Qualification of the Facts**

Thousands of Iranians have been deprived of their liberty (A.), detained in very harsh conditions (B.), whipped and gravely mistreated (C.), subjected to mock trials (D.), and executed (E.); a number of them had long disappeared before their close relatives heard any news (F.). In a number of cases, children have also been arrested and imprisoned (A.).

### **A. Deprivation of liberty**

No deprivation of liberty reported to the Commission (*supra* 1.1) took place “on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR, Art. 3] and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR, Art. 9, §1]). In other words, as no deprivation of liberty was based on Iranian laws, every such deprivation violated “the right to liberty and security” (*ibid.*) of the victims of these arrests.

Furthermore, children having been deprived of their liberty without any legal ground, their deprivation of liberty violated the rules of customary international law relating to the rights of the child (supra § 18.1).

### **B. Detentions in harsh conditions**

The very harsh conditions of the detentions (supra 1.2) lead the Commission to conclude that the victims of such imprisonment were subject to “cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment” in violation of Art. 5 of the UDHR and Art. 7 of the ICCPR.

### **C. Flogging and grave mistreatment**

Flogging and grave mistreatment as reported by the 75 witnesses (supra 1.2.4/5) heard by the Commission amount to torture prohibited by Art. 5 of the UDHR and Art. 7 of the ICCPR.

### **D. Mock trials**

Mock trials (supra 1.3) amounted not only to “cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment” in violation of Art. 7 of the ICCPR but also to a violation of the right “to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law” (UDHR, art. 10 and ICCPR, Art. 14, §1).

### **E. Executions**

Executions were extrajudicial executions (supra 2.1-2.3), which violated the right to life (UDHR, Art. 3 and ICCPR, Art. 6, §1).

### **F. Forced disappearances**

When the relatives of an arrested person were kept in total ignorance as to the fate of their loved one (supra 1.1.1), those arrests amounted to a forced disappearance as long as the relatives were not informed of the arrested person’s destiny. Under the circumstances, such arrests amounted to a “cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment” in violation of Art. 5 of the UDHR and Art. 7 of the ICCPR, inflicted not only on the disappeared person but also on his/

her relatives. They were also in violation of the rules of customary international law relating to the protection of all persons from enforced disappearance (supra §18.1).

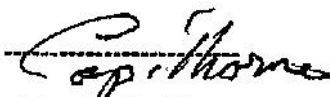
## **II. The Attribution of the Facts**

The arrests, disappearances, methods of torture, “trials” and executions as attested to by witnesses had the same characteristics in all the prisons and detention centres in Iran, whether in Mashhad, Shiraz, Tehran or Mahabad. The witnesses’ testimonies disclosed similar and widespread patterns of brutality and disregard for basic human rights as well as extra-judicial executions throughout the country.

The Commission concludes that these violations of human rights were devised, instigated and executed (or caused to be executed) by a single central authority, and as such the Government of Islamic Republic of Iran is the only authority responsible for these acts. The facts reported by the Commission have been committed by State officials: “judges”, “prosecutors”, prison officials, torturers and interrogators (supra Ch. VI). Because they are State agents, it follows that Iran itself bears international responsibility (2001 Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, Art. 1, which have acquired the status of norms of customary international law).

However, Iran’s responsibility does not exclude individual responsibility of the perpetrators themselves (ibid., Art. 58).

This Report was unanimously adopted by the Commissioners on the 30th day of July 2012.

  
Maurice Copithorne

**Chairman**

# **Part D:**

# **Appendices**





## Appendix A: Khomeini's Fatwa

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

در اینجا که منافقین فاسق میسرید، بسم مستعد بزد و بزد میگویند، لغز و فتنای آنهاست و در آن زمان آنها  
در بسم در تار پدید آمدند و با تعبیر صواب بسم آن و گفتار صواب آن در تالی و تفسیر مجرب کردند  
و با تعبیر صواب بسم آن را در صلوات علیه حضرت سلیمان و با تعبیر در تالی و تالی آنها  
بگفتار صواب و رضایت با جوار دانند، آن که در بسم بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
سراسر گویند بر موضع فتنای خود با فتنای صواب و بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
ندان با ما از کبریت آید و بسم بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
در هر جیب و در هر جیب است. و این حمد و ستایش را در کبریت آن که در کبریت آن است و این فتنای صواب  
و در آن است و بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
سان از فتنای صواب است. و طاعت بسم در برابر دشمن خداوند همی تعدیه پذیرند نام بسم  
است. بیدار بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
آیند که تفسیر موضع بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب  
شماره بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب بگفتار صواب

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

In the name of God, the benevolent and the merciful.

Since the treacherous munafiqin [Mujahideen] do not believe in Islam, and whatever they say is stemmed from their deception and hypocrisy; and since, according to the claims of their leaders, they

have become apostates of Islam; and since they wage war on God and are engaging in classical warfare in the western, northern and southern parts of the country with the collaboration of the Baathist party of Iraq, and are spying for Saddam against our Muslim nation; and since they are tied to the World Arrogance and have inflicted treacherous blows to the Islamic Republic since its inception, it follows that those who remain steadfast in their position of hypocrisy in prisons throughout the country are considered to be mohareb [waging war on God] and are thus condemned to a sentence of death, and determination of this issue in Tehran shall be with a majority decision of Messrs Hojat-ol-Islam, Nayyeri (may his life be prolonged), and his excellency Mr Eshraghi, and a representative of the Ministry of Information. The preference, however, is unanimity. And in the same manner, in the prisons in the centre of provinces, the majority decision of the religious judge, the revolutionary prosecutor or his assistant, and the representative of the ministry of information shall be binding. It is naïve to show mercy to moharebs. The decisiveness of Islam before the enemies of God is among the unquestionable tenets of the Islamic regime. I hope that you satisfy the almighty God with your revolutionary rage and rancour against the enemies of Islam. The gentlemen who are responsible for making the decisions must not hesitate, nor show any doubt or concern with details. They must try to be most ferocious against infidels. To hesitate in the judicial process of revolutionary Islam is to ignore the pure and holy blood of the martyrs.

Greetings, Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini

## Appendix B: Map of Prisons in Iran



1. Adel Abad	12. Ghezelhesar	23. Rasht
2. Amol	13. Gohardasht	24. Rasht Navy
3. Bandar Abbas	14. Heshmatiyeh	25. Saghez
4. Bandar Anzali	15. Kamiaran	26. Sanandaj
5. Chaloos	16. Karoon	27. Sardasht
6. Dastgerd	17. Khoi	28. Semnan
7. Dizel Abad	18. Mahabad	29. Tabriz
8. Eshratatabad	19. Malek Abad	30. “UNESCO”
9. Evin	20. Malek Ashter	31. Urumiyyeh
10. Fajr	21. Marivan	32. Vakilabad
11. Ghasr	22. MasjedSoleiman	



# **Part E:**

# **References**

## **References for Chapter I (Captivity)**

### **1.1 ARRESTS**

#### **1.1.1 Sudden Disappearances**

1.1.1.1 W73, W15, W36, W57, W17, W18, W19, W33, W36, W41, W44, W11

#### **1.1.2 House Raids**

1.1.2.1-2 W62, W74, W75, W2, W5, W72, W51, W17, W20, W49, W24, W28, W35, W29, W19, W68, W65, W70, W7, W38, W57

1.1.2.3 W67, W10

#### **1.1.3 Set-ups**

1.1.3.1 W52, W32, W16, W21, W10

1.1.3.2 W69

#### **1.1.4 Warrants and Formal Documents Evidencing Authority to Arrest**

1.1.4.1 W19, W65

1.1.4.2 W33, W52, W32, W29, W14, W10

1.1.4.3 W28, W25, W58, W62, W70

#### **1.1.5 Dates of Arrests**

1.1.5.1

1979: W74

1980: W52, W14, W23  
1981: W73, W12, W62, W74, W75, W2, W81, W17, W20,  
W28, W81, W74, W10, W32, W10, W62, W1, W32, W61,  
W60, W31, W46, W64, W68, W71, W56, W57  
1982: W36, W24, W35, W19, W67, W21, W25, W11  
1983: W6, W5, W29, W10, W52, W16, W72, W47, W54,  
1984: W49, W58  
1985: W9, W18, W66

## **1.2 DETENTION**

### **1.2.1 Length of Detention**

1.2.1.1 W62, W23, W38, W46, W56, W57, W58, W67, W69, W16; W49  
(18 months); W54, W57 (no visits)

### **1.2.2 Location of Detention**

1.2.2.1 W13, W70; W7, W20, W49, W54, W65, W67, W16 (Moshtarak);  
W20, W28, W74 (overflow)

### **1.2.3 Interrogation**

1.2.3.1 W9, W43, W11, W61, W70; W58

1.2.3.2 N/A

1.2.3.3 W62, W24, W70 (to turn people in); W72, W7, W67, W49  
(confession); W25, W38, W43, W57, W33, W58, W70, W16,  
W13 (information); W28, W7, W58, W16 (recantation); W57  
(change name)

1.2.3.4 W27

1.2.3.5 N/A

### **1.2.4 Physical Torture**

1.2.4.1 Bastinado

1.2.4.1.1 W62, W11, W57, W74, W31, W66

1.2.4.1.2 W7, W72, W13, W42, W16

1.2.4.1.3 W62, W11, W13, (W42), W72

1.2.4.1.4 W20, W33, W72

- 1.2.4.2            Flagellation
  - 1.2.4.2.1        W5, W52, W20, W7, W52, W57, W25, W38, W43, W21, W67, W12, W49, W20, W44
  - 1.2.4.2.2        W23, W31, W49, W52
  
- 1.2.4.3            Beatings
  - 1.2.4.3.1        W57, W58 (interrogation); W40, W70, W62, W59, W61 (punishment); W70, W57 (arbitrary); W60 (“football room”)
  - 1.2.4.3.2        W27, W63, W70, W52, W58, W5, W67, W24, W62, W42, W25, W5, W7, W59, W31, W51; W31, W61, W72, W39, W11, W61 (unconscious); W34, W40, W42, W13, W4 (injuries); W56 (kicked down stairs)
  
- 1.2.4.4            Ghapani
  - 1.2.4.4.1-3      W62, W47, W7, W11, W57, W20, W31, W39, W16, W51, W12, W51, W56
  
- 1.2.4.5            Standing Still
  - 1.2.4.5.1        W62, W12, W22, W70
  
- 1.2.4.6            Sleep Deprivation
  - 1.2.4.6.1        W52, W56, W72, W61
  
- 1.2.4.7            The “Grave”
  - 1.2.4.7.1        W62, W20, W22, W31, W38
  
- 1.2.4.8            Joojeh Morghi
  - 1.2.4.8.1        W12
  
- 1.2.4.9            Kalagh Par
  - 1.2.4.9.1        W12
  
- 1.2.4.10          Other Forms of Physical Torture
  - 1.2.4.10.1      W7 (testicles); W7, W17, W72 (burns); W36 (mutilation); W12 (gallows); W11 (ballpoint pen)
  - 1.2.4.10.2      W7, W1, W2, W5, W8, W42

## **1.2.5 Psychological Torture**



- 1.2.5.1 Solitary Confinement
  - 1.2.5.1.1 W27, W16, W10; W5, W4, W12, W72, W47, W48, W52, W40, W50, W57, W58, W59, W61, W18, W20, W23, W33, W25, W29, W31, W28, W35, W38, W41, W43, W46, W69
  
- 1.2.5.2 Mock Executions
  - 1.2.5.2.1 W12, W48, W56, W59, W24, W28, W63, W11, W50, W70
  - 1.2.5.2.2 W11
  
- 1.2.5.3 Witnessing Torture
  - 1.2.5.3.1 W16, W27, W12, W72, W47, W52, W49, W56, W22, W31, W70
  - 1.2.5.3.1 W61
  
- 1.2.5.4 Detention of Children
  - 1.2.5.4 W49, W27
  
- 1.2.5.5 Threats and Intimidation
  - 1.2.5.5.1 W6, W12, W48, W52, W58, W59, W20, W31, W38, W70, W63, W13, W16, W67; W61; W12
  - 1.2.5.5.2 W57, W61, W62, W28, W67, W20, W58
  - 1.2.5.5.3 W5

## **1.2.6 Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment**

- 1.2.6.1 Prison Overcrowding
  - 1.2.6.1.1 W11, W52, W56, W57, W24, W38, W39, W40, W70
  
- 1.2.6.2 Poor Sanitary Conditions
  - 1.2.6.2.1 W11, W24, W21, W23, W31, W28, W38, W43, W44, W16, W62, W25
  - 1.2.6.2.2 W74, W12, W49, W54, W56, W43, W44, W21
  
- 1.2.6.3 Denial of Medical Assistance
  - 1.2.6.3.1 W12, W27, W5, W56, W20, W39, W40, W13, W47
  - 1.2.6.3.2 W54, W27
  
- 1.2.6.4 Televised Interviews

- 1.2.6.4.1 W62, W74, W5, W32, W57, W20, W42, W74, W13
- 1.2.6.5 Denial of Food
  - 1.2.6.5.1 W20, W25, W38, W62; W11; W25
- 1.2.6.6 Exposure to the Elements
  - 1.2.6.6.1 W23, W56, W57, W24
- 1.2.6.7 Religious Indoctrination
  - 1.2.6.7.1 W12, W16, W43, W56, W61; W23, W31, W49, W52
- 1.2.6.8 Forced Labour
  - 1.2.6.8.1 W12, W40
- 1.2.6.9 Miscellaneous
  - 1.2.6.9.1 W5, W7, W11, W13, W16, W20, W23, W25, W27, W28, W39, W48, W49, W52, W58, W60, W61, W62, W70, W72 (blindfolding); W12, W7 (dark and humid); W2 (blood); W5 (between bodies); W5 (naked); W58 (silence); W61 (study); W20 (unrecognised marriages); W43 (criminals); W67 (force-fed); W24, W59 (pick up bodies); W13 (funerals); W39, W59 (names); W20, passim (names)

## **1.3 TRIAL**

### **1.3.1 Location of Courtroom**

- 1.3.1.1 W12, W5, W75

### **1.3.2 Description of Proceedings**

- 1.3.2.1 W62, W74, W2, W70, W69, W59, W18, W23, W32, W49, W54 (no lawyers); W61 (military court); W15, W67, W58, W12, W20, W22, W28, W31, W44, W52, W56, W5 (no right of defence)
- 1.3.2.2 W3, W16, W31, W38, W43, W52, W56, W67
- 1.3.2.3 W74, W15, W12, W20, W22, W24, W31, W39, W43, W52,

- W56, W57, W70, W46
- 1.3.2.4 W70, W12, W43
- 1.3.2.5 W5, W12, W20, W31, W45, W49, W56; W28 (exception); W31 (sentence to sign; W31, W65, W43, W16 (false sentence); W45 (not informed)
- 1.3.2.6 W5
- 1.3.2.7 Political offences:
  - Asylum: W2
  - Supporting: W3, W4, W7, W10, W15, W21, W23, W24, W29, W34, W36, W42, W46, W52, W54, W60, W62, W67, W57, W72, W75, W74
  - Literature: W21, W23, W31, W39, W59, W62, W67, W70
  - Management: W5, W40, W58
- Security charges: W11, W30, W38, W54
- Sentences: W1, W12, W18, W20, W35, W36
- 1.3.2.8 W1, W62, W74, W5, W58, W43, W20, W55
- 1.3.2.9 W1, W28
- 1.3.2.10 W11, W12, W70, W24, W22, W43
- 1.3.2.11 W5, W23, W46
- 1.3.2.12 W23

## **1.4 IMPRISONMENT**

### **1.4.1 Continuation of Torture**

- 1.4.1.1 N/A

### **1.4.2 Sexual Abuse**

- 1.4.2.1 Sexual Abuse of Women
  - 1.4.2.1.1 W11, W28, W51, W57
  - 1.4.2.1.2 W27
- 1.4.2.2 Sexual Abuse of Men
  - 1.4.2.2.1 W5

### **1.4.3 Repenters and Collaborators**

- 1.4.3.1 W11
- 1.4.3.2 W47, W52, W56, W28, W38, W34, W43, W16
- 1.4.3.3 W62, W31
- 1.4.3.4 W62, W13

## **1.5 RELEASE**

### **1.5.1 Conditions of Release**

- 1.5.1.1 W16, W23, W38, W58, W61
- 1.5.1.2 W62, W74, W31, W49; W16
- 1.5.1.3 W16, W70, W24, W49
- 1.5.1.4 W56, W74

## **References for Chapter II (Executions)**

### **2.1 PRE-1988 EXECUTIONS**

- 2.1.1 See information listed under 2.1.4-5
- 2.1.2 See information listed under 2.1.4-5
- 2.1.3 See information listed under 2.1.4-5
- 2.1.4 Firing squad: W62, W74, W1, W11, W12, W55, W52, W59, W17, W18, W24, W25, W31, W28, W38, W39, W40, W43, W64, W71, W13, W3
- Hanging: W6, W47, W32, W60, W23, W35, W34, W41, W42
- Unspecified: W62, W73, W74, W75, W2, W12, W47, W51, W48, W52, W50, W56, W59, W61, W20, W22, W23, W25, W8, W39, W43, W46, W68, W70, W63, W13, W10
- “Hail of bullets”: W17 (additional evidence)
- 2.1.5 W50, W59, W53, W33, W25, W38, W19, W40, W45, W6

## **2.2 THE 1988 MASSACRES**

2.2.1 See below

2.2.2 Hanging: W15, W16, W9, W52, W50, W58, W21, W29, W38, W39,  
W34, W66, W65, W13, W10, W3

Unspecified: W16, W7, W8, W52, W49, W54, W56, W59, W23, W38,  
W42, W44, W67, W68, W69

2.2.3 The Death Commissions

W4, W49, W54, W58, W60, W18, W21, W23, W29, W31,  
W46, W66, W3, W52

## **2.3 OTHER KILLINGS**

2.3.1 The Jahrom Massacre

2.3.1.1-4 W37

2.3.2 The Rasht Prison Fire

2.3.2.1 W33

2.3.3 Massacres in Kurdistan

2.3.3.1 W22, W26

## **References for Chapter III (Prisons)**

### **3.1 OVERVIEW**

### **3.2 MAJOR PRISONS**

3.2.1 Adel Abad Prison

3.2.1.1 W10, W28, W35, W43, W53

### 3.2.2 Evin Prison

- 3.2.2.1 W3, W9, W10, W11, W14, W15, W16, W17, W18, W20, W21, W22, W23, W25, W26, W27, W29, W31, W32, W33, W34, W36, W38, W39, W40, W41, W46, W47, W48, W49, W51, W52, W54, W56, W57, W59, W61, W62, W64, W65, W66, W67, W68, W70, W71, W73, W74
- 3.2.2.2 W38, W49
- 3.2.2.3 W23, W62
- 3.2.2.4 W3, W25, W27, W31, W39, W49, W52, W57

### 3.2.3 Ghezelhesar Prison

- 3.2.3.1 W3, W11, W14, W16, W20, W22, W23, W31, W48, W49, W52, W54, W56, W57, W59, W60, W62

### 3.2.4 Gohardasht Prison

- 3.2.4.1 W3, W11, W14, W15, W21, W22, W23, W29, W31, W33, W34, W38, W39, W46, W60, W66, W68

### 3.2.5 Tabriz Prison

- 3.2.5.1 W5, W6, W22, W24, W38, W66, W70

### 3.2.6 Urumiyyeh Prison

- 3.2.6.1 W5, W6, W8, W12, W21, W70

### 3.2.7 Vakilabad Prison

- 3.2.7.1 W4, W13, W16, W32, W42, W58, W61

### 3.2.8 Other Major Prisons

- 3.2.8.1 W44, W45 (Dastgerd); W66, W72 (Dizel Abad); W45 (Ka-roon)

## 3.3 LESSER PRISONS

- 3.3.1 W25, W40 (Amol); W7 (Malek Ashter Prison); W8, W22, W27, W72 (Sanandaj); W45 (UNESCO Prison); W23 (Bandar Abbas); W7, W33 (Rasht Navy Prison); W30 (Sepah Prison, Masjed Soleiman); W13, W42 (Malek Abad)
- 3.3.2 W3 (Eshratabad); W24 (Saghez); W27 (Bandar Anzali); W7 (Chaloos); W70 (Khoi); W27 (Marivan); W49 (Semnan);

- 3.3.3 W5, W6, W11 (Mahabad)  
W69 (Fajr Prison); W22 (Kamiaran); W27, W61, W68  
(Ghasr); W61 (Heshmatiyeh); W24 (Sardasht)

### **3.4 DETENTION CENTRES**

- 3.4.1 W7, W10, W11, W16, W20, W26, W49, W54, W65, W67  
(Komiteh Moshtarak); W38 (Komiteh Ferdowsi); W56 (Vo-  
zara Komiteh)
- 3.4.2 W13, W15, W16, W18, W35, W55, W58, W70
- 3.4.3 W54, W62, W12
- 3.4.4 W13, W16, W58

### **3.5 UNOFFICIAL OR OVERFLOW FACILITIES**

- 3.5.1 N/A
- 3.5.2 W7
- 3.5.3 W28
- 3.5.4 W75
- 3.5.5 W43
- 3.5.6 W17

### **3.6 CORRUPTION IN PRISONS**

- 3.6.1 W71; W40; W70

## **References for Chapter IV (Victims)**

### **4.1 WOMEN**

- 4.1.1 W52, W31 (chadors); W39, W20 (unclean)

## **4.2 MINORS**

### **4.2.1 Minors Imprisoned with Their Parents**

- 4.2.1.1 W67, W56, W42. See W72 for a discussion of sleeping conditions. W20 (pleading); W72, W27, W40 (considered political prisoners)
- 4.2.1.2 W27 (malnutrition); W27, W72 (medical)
- 4.2.1.3 W27, W68; W62, W20, W27, W67
- 4.2.1.4 W13, W27, W42

### **4.2.2 Minors as Political Prisoners**

- 4.2.2.1 W24, W23, W31, W60, W62, W37, W27, W62
- 4.2.2.2 W39. For more evidence about the consideration of the ages of prisoners in sentencing, see: W60, W24

### **4.2.3 Execution of Minors**

- 4.2.3.1 W23, W60, W56, W52, W12, W2, W31, W6, W42, W13, W38

## **4.3 LEGACIES OF ABUSE**

### **4.3.1 Physical Suffering**

- 4.3.1.1 W13, W16, W72, W65 (unable to walk); W56, W38, W48, W27 (infections); W13, W16 (urinating blood); W20, W54 (wheelchair); W22, W60 (broken jaw); W33 (broken toes); W71 (broken legs); W26, W11 (broken ribs); W49, W56, W61 (spinal injury); W20, W21, W38, W25, W40 (kidney malfunction); W43, W54, W38 (blindness/deafness); W54, W56, W20 (skin diseases); W20 (teeth); W54 (misc.); W56, W54, W36, W47, W20 (malnourishment); W20 (thyroid).

### **4.3.2 Psychological Suffering**

- 4.3.2.1 W29, W31; W4, W11, W56, W24, W52 (sleeping disorders); W43 (dark); W66 (depression); W66, W67 (paranoia); W31, W22 (insanity)

## **4.4 SUICIDES**

- 4.4.1 W67, W52/W49 (same case), W31, W23, W70, W31, W27



4.4.2 W43, W66

## **References for Chapter V (Families)**

### **5.1 BRUTALITY TOWARDS FAMILIES**

5.1.1 W28 (assault); W10 (detention); W21 (interrogation); W18 (bus); W57 (gate); W48 (grandmother)

5.1.2 N/A

### **5.2 VISITATION RIGHTS IN PRISON**

5.2.1 W18, W30, W73

5.2.2 W55, W18; W55, W11, W26

5.2.3 W46, W65, W49, W11 W55 (frequency); W48, W12, W47, W56, W60, W17, W24, W75, W41, W26, W57 (no or curtailed visits); W32, W1, W2, W75, W44 (“goodbye visit”); W36, W73 (pleading); W30, W44, W11, W2 (length); W55, W26 (long distance)

5.2.4 W9, W11, W21, W16, W49, W52, W54, passim

### **5.3 NOTIFICATION OF DEATH**

5.3.1 W55, W21 (insensitivity); W34, W64, W16 (turned up for visit); W2, W6, W9, W36 (bag of clothes); W55, W54, W33, W41, W46, W64, W71, W21 (telephone); W12, W52, W17, W30 (local media); W1 (poster); W9, W55 (till after); W24, W12 (first news);

5.3.2 W6, W33, W1, W52 (denied essential information); W46

(misinformation); W41 (delay); W54, W34, W21 (mothers);  
W21 (wrong possessions)

## **5.4 BURIAL AND MOURNING RIGHTS**

- 5.4.1 W30, W73, W75, W43, W8, W17, W37, W28 (“bullet money”); W26, W54, W10 (sign documents)
- 5.4.2 W1, W2, W6, W72, W53, W29, W42, W73 (not returned bodies); W9, W18, W36, W45, W64, W65, W66, W47, W6, W48, W51 W52, W17, W20, W36 (mass graves); W41, W54, W21 (not told where)
- 5.4.3 W32, W41 (not released for days); W10, W20, W47 (shallow); W52, W48, W47 (unidentifiable); W20, W53 (clothed); W53, W32 (no washing); W1 (dogs)
- 5.4.4 W21, W38, W32, W41 (no mourning); W1, W47, W48, W17 (violently disrupted);
- 5.4.5 W13, W17, W8, W73 (graves); W17, W13, W63 (derogatory sections); W32, W30 (local)

## **5.5 SUFFERING OF FAMILIES**

- 5.5.1 W28, W48, W41
- 5.5.2 W5, W35, W75, W57, W51, W44
- 5.5.3 W38, W41, W34, W33, W66, W75, W41, W38, W34 W48
- 5.5.4 W37, W75, W29, W48

## **References for Chapter VI (Perpetrators)**

### **6.1 JUDGES**

- 6.1.1 Ayatollah Mohammad Mehdi Gilani

W14, W25, W38, W39, W40, W60, W68

6.1.2 Hossein Ali Nayyeri

W3, W14, W15, W18, W31, W34, W35, W38, W39, W49, W56, W57

6.1.3 Mohammad Mohammadi Rayshahri

W39, W54

6.1.4 Mullah Ghateelzadeh

W18

6.1.5 Ali Mobasheri

W14, W15, W20, W47

6.1.6 Haaj Agha Alavi

W55

6.1.7 Andalib

W43

6.1.8 Kermani Moghadam

W5, W6

6.1.9 Hojatol Islam Seyed Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi

W39, W70

6.1.10 Ali Razini

W13, W16, W58

6.1.11 Jawoheri: W5

Haji Agha Ramandi: W24

Nasserian Salavati: W11

Hojatoleslam Ahmadi: W69

Salimi: W13

Hojat Islam Emani: W70

Ghadyani: W2

Nourbakhsh: W35

Hamid Rashidfar: W35

85

Deghan: W30

Hojatollah Islam Hafezi: W61

## **6.2 PRISON OFFICIALS**

6.2.1 Asadolah Lajevardi

W2, W10, W11, W21, W25, W31, W38, W40, W48, W50, W59, W60, W61,  
W62, W67, W68, W73

6.2.2 Mohammad Moghissei

W3, W23, W35

6.2.3 Saeed Hossein Mortazavi

W11, W49, W66

6.2.4 Esmail Shustari

W47

6.2.5 Mojtaba Halvaei Asghar

W49, W52

6.2.6 Ayatollah Abdul Karim Mousavi Ardebili

W12, W38

6.2.7 Haj Davood Rahmani

W11, W36, W56, W57, W62

6.2.8 Taghi Adeli

W47

6.2.9 Valipour

W13, W16, W58, W61

6.2.10 Haj Amin

W20, W67

6.2.11 Sanali Shafiei

W69

6.2.12 Zaman Mahmoudi  
W30

6.2.13 Haj Karbalai  
W18

6.2.14 Akbar Kabiri Arani  
W52

6.2.15 Davood Bayat  
W35

6.2.16 Meysam  
W35

### **6.3 PROSECUTORS**

6.3.1 Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi  
W3, W18, W34, W35, W42, W58

6.3.2 Morteza Eshraghi  
W3, W15, W23, W34, W35, W49

6.3.3 Ebrahim Raissi  
W3, W34, W35

6.3.4 Hamid (“Abbasi”) Noori  
W47

6.3.5 Gerami: W2  
Khayeri: W5, W6  
Ganbari: W28  
Hojatoleslam Movahed: W69  
Ziaoddin Miramad: W35  
Mirfendereski: W32

### **6.4 TORTURERS AND INTERROGATORS**

6.4.1 Hadi Ghaffari  
W11, W39, W57

6.4.2 Seyyed Abbas Abtahi  
W8, W59

6.4.3 Bazjoo Tehrani: W4

6.4.4 Nasser Yarhamadi: W68  
Haj Ebrahim: W24  
Karim Kalehpaz: W24  
Mohamad Hadi Yarahmad: W69  
Haj Aziz: W69  
Haj Habib Rashti: W69  
Sarwaz Nourizi: W13  
Behzad Nezami: W38  
Hassan Batouli: W24  
Haji Esmaili: W24  
Hai Esmaili: W24

## **6.5 OTHER DEATH COMMISSION MEMBERS**

6.5.1 Majid Torabpoor: W50  
6.5.2 Mostabak Mohammadi: W3

## **6.6 MISCELLANEOUS FIGURES**

6.6.1 Ahmed Zolghadr: W50  
6.6.2 Sadegh Khalkhali: W4, W22, W35, W72  
6.6.3 Mohammad Ali Besharati: W37  
6.6.4 Ayatollahi: W37

Further evidence is supplied in Exhibit C.

**Iran Tribunal  
Truth Commission**

Witness Statements and  
Summaries of Oral Testimonies  
(Exhibit A)

## **Contents**

<b>Witness 1: Bahram Mohseni Tabrizi</b>	<b>99</b>
W1 Summary of Oral Testimony	101
<b>Witness 2: Zahra Tasorian</b>	<b>102</b>
W2 Summary of Oral Testimony	103
<b>Witness 3: Masoud Ashraf Semnani</b>	<b>105</b>
W3 Summary of Oral Testimony	108
<b>Witness 4: Hassan Seyed Hosseinzadeh</b>	<b>110</b>
W4 Summary of Oral Testimony	112
<b>Witness 5: Salah Bakhtiar</b>	<b>114</b>
W5 Summary of Oral Testimony	116
<b>Witness 6: Nashmeel Handoush</b>	<b>118</b>
W6 Summary of Oral Testimony	119
<b>Witness 7: Mohammad Khoshzough</b>	<b>120</b>
W7 Summary of Oral Testimony	127
<b>Witness 8: Moheb Lotfolahi</b>	<b>130</b>
W8 Summary of Oral Testimony	132



Witness 9: Vida Rostamalipour	133
W9 Summary of Oral Testimony	133
Witness 10: Roya Rezai Jahromi	135
W10 Summary of Oral Testimony	136
Witness 11: Manoochehr Safarali	139
W11 Summary of Oral Testimony	142
Witness 12: Saleh Sharafi	144
W12 Summary of Oral Testimony	147
Witness 13: Fatemeh Jokar Chouchani	149
W13 Summary of Oral Testimony	153
Witness 14: Hossein Maleki	155
W14 Summary of Oral Testimony	155
Witness 15: Ozra Yahyaei	157
W15 Summary of Oral Testimony	159
Witness 16: Bijan Bahadori	160
W16 Summary of Oral Testimony	168
Witness 17: [W17: NAME REDACTED]	169
W17 Summary of Oral Testimony	171
Witness 18: Sima Rostamalipour	172
W18 Summary of Oral Testimony	173
Witness 19: [W19: NAME REDACTED]	174
W19 Summary of Oral Testimony	174
Witness 20: Mersedeh Ghayedi	175
W20 Summary of Oral Testimony	179
Witness 21: Lawdan Bazargan	181
W21 Summary of Oral Testimony	184
Witness 22: Siavash Daneshvar	187
W22 Summary of Oral Testimony	188

Witness 23: Rahman Darkeshideh	190
W23 Summary of Oral Testimony	195
Witness 24: Nabaz Alidoost	198
W24 Summary of Oral Testimony	198
Witness 25: Sousan Golemohammadi	202
W25 Summary of Oral Testimony	205
Witness 26: Kamal Ahmadi	207
W26 Summary of Oral Testimony	208
Witness 27: Azar Alekanan	210
W27 Summary of Oral Testimony	210
Witness 28: Roya Sadeghi	215
W28 Summary of Oral Testimony	217
Witness 29: [W29: NAME REDACTED]	220
W29 Summary of Oral Testimony	222
Witness 30: Mohammadreza Haybatollahpour	223
W30 Summary of Oral Testimony	225
Witness 31: Mansoureh Ghanbarpour Bashkandi	226
W31 Summary of Oral Testimony	228
Witness 32: Leila Ghalabani	231
W32 Summary of Oral Testimony	234
Witness 33: Hossein Hosseinjani Moghadam	236
W33 Summary of Oral Testimony	237
Witness 34: Mokhtar Shalalvand	239
W34 Summary of Oral Testimony	241
Witness 35: Nima Servastani	243
W35 Summary of Oral Testimony	244
Witness 36: Gita Rostamalipour	246
W36 Summary of Oral Testimony	247

Witness 37: Esmat Vatanparast	248
W37 Summary of Oral Testimony	249
Witness 38: Ebrahim Mohammad Rahimi	252
W38 Summary of Oral Testimony	256
Witness 39: Hamid Ashtari	259
W39 Summary of Oral Testimony	260
Witness 40: Ashrafalmoluk Ghiasi	263
W40 Summary of Oral Testimony	265
Witness 41: Parand Meysami	267
W41 Summary of Oral Testimony	271
Witness 42: Saeedeh Jabani	273
W42 Summary of Oral Testimony	274
Witness 43: Hedayat Gholami	275
W43 Summary of Oral Testimony	278
Witness 44: [W44: NAME REDACTED]	279
W44 Summary of Oral Testimony	280
Witness 45: Mahmoodreza Khademi	281
W45 Summary of Oral Testimony	283
Witness 46: Nina Toobaei	285
W46 Summary of Oral Testimony	288
Witness 47: Khatereh Moini-Chaghavand	290
W47 Summary of Oral Testimony	291
Witness 48: Sahar Mohammadi	293
W48 Summary of Oral Testimony	294
Witness 49: Azizeh Shahmoradi	297
W49 Summary of Oral Testimony	304
Witness 50: Esmail Haghshenas	306
W50 Summary of Oral Testimony	307

Witness 51: Zahra Erfani	309
W51 Summary of Oral Testimony	310
Witness 52: Akram Biram Vand	312
W52 Summary of Oral Testimony	316
Witness 53: [W53: NAME REDACTED]	318
W53 Summary of Oral Testimony	320
Witness 54: Hadieh Shamsi	321
W54 Summary of Oral Testimony	324
Witness 55: Soghra Ghiasi	327
W55 Summary of Oral Testimony	329
Witness 56: Razieh Matinizadeh	330
W56 Summary of Oral Testimony	334
Witness 57: Shahnam Sharghi	336
W57 Summary of Oral Testimony	339
Witness 58: Pirooz Zoorchang	341
W58 Summary of Oral Testimony	342
Witness 59: Kamran Geraminejad	345
W59 Summary of Oral Testimony	347
Witness 60: Homayoun Kaviani	349
W60 Summary of Oral Testimony	350
Witness 61: Reza Poor Karimi Darya Kenari	352
W61 Summary of Oral Testimony	355
Witness 62: [W62: NAME REDACTED]	358
W62 Summary of Oral Testimony	360
Witness 63: Mohammadali Zandkarimi	362
W63 Summary of Oral Testimony	363
Witness 64: Sirous Dastaran	364
W64 Summary of Oral Testimony	365

Witness 65: Saeed Montazeri	366
W65 Summary of Oral Testimony	367
Witness 66: Mohammad Jafar Jaberi	368
W66 Summary of Oral Testimony	370
Witness 67: Tahmineh Geshtasebi	372
W67 Summary of Oral Testimony	373
Witness 68: Ali Ebrahimzadeh	375
W68 Summary of Oral Testimony	377
Witness 69: Siamak Kaikavoosi	379
W69 Summary of Oral Testimony	381
Witness 70: Amir Poorzeynel	382
W70 Summary of Oral Testimony	388
Witness 71: Hedayatollah Soltanzadeh	389
W71 Summary of Oral Testimony	390
Witness 72: Galavezh Heidari	391
W72 Summary of Oral Testimony	395
Witness 73: Mehdi Dadash Zadeh Tashkand	397
W73 Summary of Oral Testimony	399
Witness 74: Jamileh Bahrami (Pantea)	400
W74 Summary of Oral Testimony	402
Witness 75: Zargham Assadi	403
W75 Summary of Oral Testimony	405



## **Witness 1: Bahram Mohseni Tabrizi**

D.O.B.: 1956

Age at time of incident: 27

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Bahman Mohseni Tabrizi**

Date of arrest: 11th September 1981

Date of execution: 22nd December 1981

Political affiliation: Organisation of Paykar for Emancipation of Working Class

My brother Bahman was concerned about his society and the unjust living conditions of people. In first years of high school he was discussing the regime of the Shah, society and the system. He was intelligent, aware of his surroundings and interesting to listen to with his interesting facts, logic and stories.

He studied Geography for four years at Isfahan University and was sent to Shooshtar Province to work there as a teacher in elementary schools and pay back his student loan. By then he had become a matured political activist and joined the Fedai Organisation, campaigning for workers and people's rights for a better society. He was no criminal, he was not aggressive and destructive, and absolutely not a combatant and no violent activities fit him. He was a critic of the new regime, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and joined all kinds of non-violent activities in opposition as it is described and stated in the newspapers.

The crimes he had committed were activities such as distribution of newspapers; even the authorities couldn't and didn't accuse him of any violent activity.

Bahman was arrested on the 11th September 1981 [20th Shahrivar 1360], in Shooshtar Province and after three and a half months'

imprisonment together with three others was executed on the 22nd December 1981 [1st Dey 1360]. According to villagers, all of them were executed at midnight by firing squad and left there on the hills between two cemeteries. Later the villagers put some poisons around them so the wild dogs that had partly eaten the bodies would leave them alone.

According to what was stated in newspapers and the execution statement, which was put up on the walls around the Shooshtar Province, the execution verdict was issued by the Islamic Revolution courts of Gachsaran and Masjed Soleiman Provinces. But nobody knows how the trial went and if there was any defence and if it was a fair trial. So we think not even the basic human rights were considered here and they were just executed by the prison guards. Our brother Bahman and the others had gone through so much torture that we are not sure if he was killed during torture or executed. The execution announcement in the newspapers might just have been a lie and prepared after he was killed under massive torture, and was just to cover up their crimes of torturing people to death. We haven't seen any information about the court sessions or anything about the court of justice. He was executed without any real and fair trial in any court of justice, but as is usual for the Islamic Republic of Iran, a court session was certainly held but only once and secretly, and that didn't take more than a few minutes, and in such court sessions the respective judge acted as a torturer himself with warnings and questions such as: "If you don't regret everything, don't reveal your associates and don't come back to Islam, you will be executed, so it is your choice. Otherwise, here is your execution verdict that I'm going to sign."

During the bloody decade of the 1980s, our brother Bahman and tens of thousands of other people were executed for no reason but simply because of their political beliefs, having different ideas, and thinking differently from the state.

The least I want today is an explanation by the authorities that says why and on what basis they tortured and killed a teacher, our oldest brother, for nothing but the distribution of books and newspapers



and for helping unemployed people to be organised.

### ***W1 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The declaration posted on the walls outside the prison after the execution said that Bahnam had been killed along with three others. Its header read: “Until the sedition is eradicated, until God’s rule will prevail”. There was no mention of the charges or reasons for the execution.
- No official authority ever gave the family information about the fate of the victim’s body; the family discovered the body only with the help of local civilians.
- Family members dug a shallow grave on the hill on which they found the body.
- Officials interrupted the mourning ceremony with a jeep full of soldiers and proceeded to arrest his younger brother (16-17 years of age) at gunpoint. When the mother protested, they threatened to shoot him there and then. The witness believes the objective of this arrest was to stop them from following up the issue of Bahnam’s arrest and execution, and to instil fear in the hearts of all the families.
- The arrested younger brother was kept in prison and tortured for a month; to this day has not spoken of the tortures he endured during his detention. He was released in the middle of a desert and left to find his own way home.

## **Witness 2: Zahra Tasorian**

D.O.B.: 1950

Age at time of incident: 31

Status of witness: Wife of the victim

**Name of victim: Ismail Bornak**

D.O.B.: 1944

Age at time of arrest: 37

Date of execution: 7th January 1982 (Arak)

Ismail taught at Tarbiyat Moalem University and was a student of a master program in Education Management. The security forces raided our house in Arak in the morning of the 3rd Shahrivar 1360 [25th August 1981] and after ransacking our home, they arrested my husband. We had no information about where they took my husband until we heard through someone that he was in a hospital clinic surrounded by security forces. Later, we learned that he was tortured severely and was transferred from the jail of Intelligence to the clinic to get treatment. The intelligence and judiciary system of the Islamic Republic of Iran sentenced my husband to death solely because he allowed a member of the People's Mujahedeen Organisation (MKO) to live in our house and allowed him to use his car.

On Thursday night, 16th Dey 1360 [6th January 1982], he along with fourteen other political prisoners, some of whom were fifteen-year-old young men, were taken from the jail of the security police to outside of the city. The next day, on the morning of the 17th Dey 1360 [7th January 1982], first they drew the blood of the prisoners in order to use it for the people who were injured in the war, and then they executed them.

Before executing him, they allow his father and mother and me and

our son, who was four years old at the time, and our daughter, nine at the time, to meet up with him for ten minutes in the presence of a pasdar [Islamic guard]. At that point, neither my husband nor us knew that he was going to be executed. On Friday 16th Dey [6th January], as they did every Friday, my mother-in-law along with other prisoners' family members went to the security forces' jail to get any news about him. When she asked about her son, the guard told her, "Tell his wife to come here." When I went there, they threw his clothes at me. I asked them where my husband was. They answered that they didn't know. We don't know anything about his prosecution, trial, and the execution. But, we know that much that he didn't have any lawyer, and his trial was not according the law and regulations of judiciary system. He, just like thousands of other political prisoners, probably, without having the right of defending himself, in show trials that lasted only a few minutes, was sentenced to execution. After finishing the trial, he was transferred from the detention of the intelligence to the Security Service [also known as] "Seh Peleh prison".

The Islamic Republic of Iran and their political and judiciary system, and their intelligence service are accountable for my husband's death. This cruel crime, which turned our life into misery, was caused by the regime's forces like interrogators and torturers and Mr Ghadyani, the judge and Mr Gerami, the prosecutor of Arak Inghelab court, and a man with a pseudonym "Haaj Etehad", a character behind the curtain of this massacre of dissidents in Arak, who was named by people the "Lajevardi of Arak City". The Islamic Republic of Iran massacred its dissidents with a long-term plan in order to stabilise its power and survive.

## *W2 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Ismail Bornak was executed with 15 other prisoners, one of whom was fourteen-year-old Amir Avoezi, who died in Ismail's

arms, calling for his mother.

- The MKO member to whom the victim gave asylum was due to be executed.
- The victim's body was never returned to the family.
- During the "goodbye visit", the presence of the pasdar prevented the victim from revealing what was happening to him in prison.

### **Witness 3: Masoud Ashraf Semnani**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of incident: 21

Status of witness: Survivor and family member of a victim

**Name of victim: Sohrab Ali Zarei**

D.O.B.: 1950

Occupation at time of arrest: Manger of Satcap Company (affiliated with Iranian Ministry of Energy)

Age at time of execution: 33

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Sohrab was one of the supporters of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) and we both were active together. He, after June 1981, like many other political activists had to go underground.

In September or October 1983 he was arrested while jumping from the second floor of the building in which he was staying. After he jumped, he injured his leg and therefore couldn't escape. They took him to Evin Prison and in there he was taken to Ward 209. Then he was interrogated and tortured by Sepah; after passing that period he then was taken to Ward 329 (at that time I was imprisoned in Ghezelhesar prison in Karaj). While they were transferring him to Ward 329 (to wait for his court), he was wearing a suit, because he was educated and had managing experience.

They asked him to cooperate with them but he didn't accept and defended his ideas and political stance.

After a court that took only a few minutes and was a sham, he was sentenced to death. They executed him at dawn in March 1982 (six months after his arrest) with some other political prisoners.

The interrogation and torture was done by Sepah, which at that time controlled Ward 209. It seems that one of the branches of the prosecutor's office in Evin Prison, based on the file produced by Sepah and behaviour of Sohrab in answering the questions during the interrogation, made the writ of indictment for Sohrab.

Sohrab was executed by firing squad. At that time the execution of political prisoners was done in a hall, which was located on top of a hill in Evin Prison.

It is not hard to say why he was executed, because the Islamic Republic considered the opposing political parties and organisations a threat to its existence and therefore wanted to get rid of them. Naturally the MKO and its supporters at that time constituted a serious threat to the regime and Sohrab was one of them. They had a special programme and time for the executions.

A daughter is left from Sohrab; she has grown up now. Every year, she and her family, would have a memorial for Sohrab.

I was arrested in July 1983. The guard [pasdar] who had arrested me had known me from before the Revolution. He took me to Eshratyab Prison. Once there, Sepah started to interrogate and torture me; after that they transferred me to Evin Prison. In Evin I was tried by a public prosecutor in a court that was just a sham. In the court they read some of my charges and asked me few questions and at the end they sentenced me to seven years in jail; my main charge was supporting the MKO. I was freed in July 1990.

I spent my jail term in Eshratyab, Evin, Ghezelhesar and Gohardasht Prisons. During my jail term, I witnessed a lot of atrocities and executions. It is not possible in such a short statement to name all of them but as a sample I could explain one: in the summer of 1988 in Gohardasht Prison, I witnessed the taking of political prisoners to the amphitheatre of the jail and their hanging there. At that time I was at the secondary ward in Gohardasht Prison.

During the massacre of political prisoners (summer of 1988), I witnessed, in different occasions, they took my fellow political prisoners from our ward and they never came back and also there was no trace of them in any of the two cemeteries Khavaran or Behesht

Zahra.

In Gohardasht Prison they started the executions on the 20th July 1988. A board which was later called by the prisoners a “Death Commission”, comprising Hossein Nayyeri (religious judge), Morteza Eshraghi (prosecutor), representatives of the Ministry of Information and Ministry of Justice, Ebrahim Raissi and Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi, and few other people in the room whom I didn’t recognise, was ordered by Khomeini to again interrogate the political prisoners and with a few questions, decide on them.

Most of these political prisoners were serving their time and some had even served their time but were not freed yet.

The Death Commission would ask a few questions and by considering the prisoners’ answers, would sentence them to death. I was one of those who were questioned by the committee. I answered smartly and acted as though I had no problem with the regime and by using my sickness as an excuse I could escape from answering some of the questions: in this way I was able to survive, but there were those who at first pretended but later they rejected their answers and eventually were executed. There were some political prisoners who went to the verge of cooperating with the regime but later on were executed anyway.

This commission was ordered by Khomeini to kill all the Mujahed prisoners; this decision was taken at very top of the regime and was announced by Khomeini.

A lot of the prisoners at first were not aware of the real mission of the committee, which introduced itself as the “Pardon Committee”. Everybody thought that the duty of this committee was to pardon and free political prisoners. This understanding caused a lot of Mujahed prisoners to be executed.

During the massacre of political prisoners, many of my cellmates and prisoners from other cells in my ward were executed and here I can name a few: Ebrahim Akbarisefat, Shamsaldeen Aminaltolieh, Jamshid Shariat, Davar Esfandiari, Hadi Saberi and Dariush Hanifeh. I also remember the names and the faces of many who were executed.

The days that they seated us in the death corridor (the corridor that the room of the Death Commission was situated) we could see the guards passing by with plastic bags full of personal belongings of the executed prisoners.

Before the execution they would take the prisoners to a room at the end of the corridor and would take away their personal belongings like watches, rings, money, and would tell them that they could write a will if they wanted to.

We could also see that after a series of executions, the guards with trays full of different kinds of food would happily pass by as if they were going to a party.

At that time the role of Mullah Moghissei, known as “Nasserian”, assistant to prosecutor in Gohardasht Prison was quite outstanding, he would do his best to execute as many as political prisoners possible.

The responsibility for the death of all political prisoners is on Khomeini and all the formal and informal members of the Islamic Republic of Iran. None of them can say that they didn't know or are not responsible for it.

### ***W3 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was kept in solitary confinement when he was in Eshrat abad. He was held in detention for six months, during which time he was tortured for information, before he appeared in front of a judge.
- The interrogator informed the witness that he had a fatwa from Khomeini that effectively gave him a carte blanche for torture and even permitted for prisoners to be killed under torture.
- The witness was never presented with a written charge, had no access to any legal representation and was blindfolded during his five-minute proceedings; he was told orally that he had been charged with being a sympathiser of the MKO, participating in



the 30th Khordad demonstrations, providing the mujahideen with financial support and contributing to the sale of their newspapers. The witness objected that selling newspapers was not a crime; the judge replied that even thinking of cooperating with an opposition group was a crime.

- Guards stripped prisoners down to their underpants in Gohardasht in 1987 in order to break their hunger strike. When the executions of the summer of 1988 began, televisions were removed from the peripheral sections. All communication with the outside world was stopped and prisoners communicated in Morse code; this is how the witness learnt of the mass executions that were being carried out and also of the arrival of the Death Commission.

- The witness was brought before the Death Commission (which comprised Nayyeri, Mostabak Mohammadi, Raissi and Moghissei) on the 15th Khordad [5th June]; Nayyeri asked the witness whether he wanted to request a pardon, which he declined as there was only one year remaining of his sentence. He was told to denounce the MKO in writing, which he then did in two or three lines. The Death Commission laughed at him and he was then taken back to solitary confinement for two months.

- The victims of the massacres of 1988 included a boy aged 13-14.

- Prisoners lived in fear that if they were not to be killed today, then it would be tomorrow. Some were told by their interrogators that they were waiting for a fatwa: they threatened the prisoners that what they were experiencing was nothing in comparison with what would be done to them shortly.

#### **Witness 4: Hassan Seyed Hosseinzadeh**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 22

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Status of witness: Survivor

In 1983 I was convicted of supporting the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) and was sentenced to eight years in Vakilabad Prison in Mashhad. While serving my sentence, I saw many of my fellow prisoners being taken for execution.

Some of those who were executed in the summer of 1988 include:

- Behnam Ghahremani. Accused of cooperation with the MKO. He was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without due process and any right to defend himself. He was only 24 years old.
- Homayoun Shayanfar, convicted of cooperation with the MKO, was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without due process. He was only 25.
- Hadi Gharachei, accused of supporting the MKO, was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without due process. He was sentenced to death by execution after being asked a few questions. He was only 28.
- Mohammad Agah, accused of supporting the MKO, was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without any right to defend himself. He was sentenced to death by execution after being asked a few questions. He was only 24.
- Hamid Ahmadi, accused of supporting the MKO, was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without any right to defend himself. He was sentenced to death after being

asked a few questions. He was only 24.

- Mohammad Ahmadi, accused of supporting the MKO, was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without any right to defend himself. He was sentenced to death by execution after being asked a few questions. He was only 23 years old.

- Ali Asghar Keshmiri, accused of supporting the MKO, was serving his sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without any right to defend himself. He was sentenced to death after being asked a few questions. He was only 28.

Others to name include: Alireza and Mohammad Reza Saeidi, Ali and Bahram Parandeh, Hossien and Mohammad Heidarieh, Ebrahim and Esmail Khalili, Ali Agah, Reza Ravangar, Fazlolah Afshar, Hamid Riazi, Yqoub Soleimani, Majid Naderi Nia, Mhdi Zareh daran, Mohammad Faany, Hamid Shahpar toosi, Majid Nejati, Amin Nejati, Rasoul Barari, Javad Nasiri, Hamid Tavakoli, Siamak Ramezani, Hassan Safdari, Hamid Ahmadi, Jalal Asadpour, Jafar Bahremand, Mohammad Ataroodyan, all accused of supporting the MKO, were serving their sentence when executed in the summer of 1988 without any right to defend themselves. They were sentenced to death after being asked a few questions.

They were all executed in the in the months of August and September 1988. The political prisoners in the Vakilabad Prison would be taken in an ambulance in groups of 20-30 people for execution.

Out of 350 people who were transferred to Vakilabad Prison, more than 300 of them were executed in the months of August and September.

The Islamic Republic of Iran committed this atrocious crime. The government leaders of the time from the Leader and his son, Prime Minister, President, Minister of Justice, Minister of Intelligence were all the behind the political massacre. People such as Moghisei, Prosecutor of Mashhad Court, shari'ah judge, and an Intelligence Services officer named Bazjoo Tehrani, were all sent to Mashhad from Tehran to carry out the executions.

The Islamic Republic of Iran had planned the execution from the early 1980s but they used the MKO attack on Iran as a pretext to

perform the executions. They knew that after the end of the Iran-Iraq war, the huge number of prisoners would be problematic. They were terrified of having these people back in the society; therefore, they had plans to eradicate them for a long time.

#### *W4 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, of which he served eight years and four months. His release after five years was conditional upon good behaviour; the latter half of the sentence was for the detention of those prisoners who did not change their behaviour in accordance with the authorities' wishes.
- The witness was brought before the Death Commission twice. On the first occasion, he was told he would be executed, to which he objected. On the second, the Death Commission told him to denounce the MKO; the witness refused to do so and the judge sent him away, saying that he would be executed. The witness was taken to a video room for a taped confession but refused to cooperate.
- The witness spent four months in solitary confinement, during which time he was beaten so severely that his whole face became disfigured, such that his own family could not recognise him.
- Upon his return to the quarantine ward, some of the witness's friends were not there anymore; prosecutors told the witness that they had executed them all.
- The witness was charged with being a supporter of the MKO; he had no access to any legal representation.
- The witness relives the experience of fleeing from the Revolutionary Guards several times a week. His psychological problems persist: for the last 25-30 years, he has jumped out of sleep every night in a sweat. Most people who underwent these experiences suffer similar problems. He fears that these psychological

problems, unlike the physical, will never heal.

- The witness argued that the Islamic Republic of Iran and its leaders were responsible for the atrocities of the 1980s because they were systematic and planned in advance: the scale was too large for it not to have been planned and Khomeini's fatwa attests to this premeditation.

## **Witness 5: Salah Bakhtiar**

D.O.B.: 1957

Age at time of arrest: 27

Occupation at time of arrest: Teacher

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah)

I was arrested on the 16th May 1983 in the city of Mahabad (Iranian Kurdistan). My family residence was attacked at 23.00 while my family was asleep. I was beaten severely in front of my wife, parents, sisters, and brothers. Because of this atmosphere of terror created in our household, my elderly grandfather had a heart attack and died shortly after my arrest.

I was taken to the Mahabad Prison and put under physical and psychological torture until August 1983. Torture was so intense that I came close to death a number of times. Once, while I was being lashed on my back, the cable twisted around my neck and caused me to pass out. When I woke up, I found myself between two corpses. The torturer must have thought that I had died and had left me among the dead. A little while later, I heard the voice of a guard telling others that I was alive and that I should be taken away.

On an autumn day, around 02.00, I was taken to a prison office that was being used as a makeshift court. There were five people present in this room, three of whom were sitting behind a table. The religious judge was a person by the last name of Kermani, the prosecutor was a person last named Khayeri, next to him was my chief torturer and interrogator, a cleric by the first name of Qassem. The last name of one of the other two present in the room was

Kateb. My “trial” lasted less than five minutes. The judge asked me how many people I had killed, to which I answered that I had not hurt anyone in my life let alone killed someone. He then mocked me a little and said, “Do you think you can fool us? We do not care if you killed anyone or not: we have been ordered to execute 230 persons in Mahabad.” He then added a few more accusations and said: “It has been reported to us that you are the commander of six military-political cells in the city of Mahabad.” I was prevented from responding to these charges and did not have a lawyer, so I was not able to defend myself.

During the “trial”, the judge had his underage son sit on his lap. Apparently this boy had been to many such sessions because on a number of occasions he would interrupt his father and say, “Dear dad, execute him too,” to which his father responded, “Alright dear, we’ll execute him as well.” When I was taken out of the room, my interrogator/torturer told me that he would be the one who would fire the final shot at my execution.

In August 1983, after enduring two years of interrogation and torture in Mahabad Prison, I was transferred to the main prison of the city of Urumiyeh (West Azerbaijan). In early September 1983 in this prison I witnessed a truckload of prisoners being taken to the Tabriz Prison (East Azerbaijan). Later that month in Tabriz, I realised that these were political prisoners condemned to death in Mahabad and were being transferred to Tabriz for execution. I heard that 36 of them were executed in one day. On an occasion during the celebration of Eid-e Qurban (sacrifice festivities), the guard who was serving us food told a group of us that the meat in our food belonged to the flesh of our friends from Mahabad Prison who were executed in Tabriz in 1983.

In 1985, after two years of prison, I was finally told that I had been condemned to death because of association with Komolah. But also in the same year, after popular protests in Mahabad against the execution of a group of 59 and a second group of 34 political prisoners, the regime nullified the death sentence of a number of political prisoners. My sentence was reduced to life in prison, then

to ten years in prison, which included six years of suspended sentence. I was released in April 1988.

### *W5 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- All street lamps were turned off prior to the raid of the witness's house. The witness was dragged out of bed, blindfolded, handcuffed and dragged to the arresting officers' car, which took him to the intelligence services.
- The witness was beaten for full days with such severity that the flesh on his back became mangled; his family only became aware of his treatment when he was able to persuade a guard to deliver his bloodstained clothes home for washing. He was charged with being a Komolah activist, although he was in fact only a sympathiser.
- The witness was subjected to torture in Mahabad for three months and was shot in the back when he tried to escape. The bullet became caught in his chest; guards beat him, including around the bullet wound, before he was taken to hospital, where the guards refused him permission to undergo an operation. The witness was taken to the Foundation for Martyrs in Urumiyyeh and placed in a solitary cell. In Tabriz, the witness was given an electric shock to his head.
- At 02.30, the witness was dragged by his arms to a mock trial. The files were fabricated: people had never seen had been forced under torture to identify him as responsible for the whole of Komolah's Mahabad operations. The witness was made to write a confession; prisoners were customarily forced to participate in televised interviews after torture.
- Sadeh Khalkhali entered the courtroom with ammunition around his waist and said, "In Islam, if we arrest an anti-revolutionary the first time we release him, the second time guide him and then release, but the third time we guide him then release him."



Within five minutes of this declaration, half of the prisoners in the cell were executed.

- The courtroom was across the streets from the prison; prisoners were unaware of this at the time, as they were blindfolded. The clergyman had told him on request that he had been charged with absconding from prison.

- On the last occasion that the witness was severely beaten, he was taken out into the yard and made to walk on broken glass, after which he was forced to take a cold shower. The witness was flogged and a cable struck his neck; before he fell unconscious, the witness heard one guard say, "Leave him, he's a dirty apostate," and then an argument over whether Allah would approve. A guard placed the witness against the wall, thinking he was dead; behind the blindfold, the witness could see that he had been left lying among two dead bodies.

- The interrogator, Ghosem, told the witness that he would deliver him a coup de grâce himself.

- The witness was kicked in the chest during his interrogation and tortured so badly in Tabriz that he could not sit or lie down. There was no medical care in prison.

- A boy aged approximately 16-17 was taken out of Ward 13 every night and raped by prison guards.

- The witness explained that most of the perpetrators used pseudonyms. He provided the names of: Kermani Moghadam (judge), Mehdi (chief interrogator) and Jawoheri (judge).

## **Witness 6: Nashmeel Handoush**

D.O.B.: 1962

Age at time of arrest: 21

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Nasser Handoush**

D.O.B.: 1969

Age at time of execution: 14

Date of arrest: May 1983

Date of execution: September 1983

My teenage brother Nasser was arrested in May 1983 in the city of Mahabad (Iranian Kurdistan), accused of being a supporter of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI), and while returning from school. He was executed alongside six other political prisoners in the city of Tabriz (province of East Azerbaijan) in September 1983. My father was given the news when he went to prison for a visit. My brother's body was not delivered to his family and we were not told exactly when he was executed. We were told that he was buried in the Rahmat Abad cemetery of Tabriz, but neither us, nor the families of those who were killed with him can be sure of this.

According to information leaked from prison, my brother was convicted and executed alongside 36 others, without access to lawyer or the right to defend himself. He was condemned to death ten days after his original arrest and was moved, alongside 36 other prisoners, to the prison of Urumiyyeh (province of West Azerbaijan) and then to Tabriz (province of East Azerbaijan), where they were all executed. An eleven-year-old boy named Sayyed Anvar Shokri from the city of Mahabad was among those executed with my brother. My mother managed to visit him once in the Mahabad

Prison. Nasser told my mother about his conviction and that he would soon be moved out of Mahabad to be executed. My brother also told my mother that the religious judge of his trial had told him that the authorities were actually after his two brothers and that if they turn themselves in, his execution will be nullified. Nasser then told my mother that he believed this was a false promise and that they would surely kill him and his brothers together.

The leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran are responsible for the death of my teenage brother. The killing of members of the opposition is decided by high state officials and only its implementation is given to the judiciary and the security apparatus. The last name of the religious judge of Nasser's trial was Kermani, and his prosecutor's last name was Khayyeri, none of whom had any qualifications in judicial matters.

### *W6 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness's husband was sleeping when his house was raided and he was arrested. The witness was allowed to meet him twice, but not for a few months.
- Nasser Handoush was accused of association with the PDKI. He was taken from Urumiyyeh to Tabriz, where guards denied knowing in which cell he was located; his mother had been able to visit him once. The next day, Nasser's father was informed that his son had been hanged after arriving in Tabriz Prison for a visit; he was also handed his late son's clothes, covered in blood and bits of flesh. Nasser was sixteen years old and had spent seven months in prison; he was executed alongside about 30 others. The family was not given access to his body after his execution.

## **Witness 7: Mohammad Khoshzough**

D.O.B.: 1948

Date of arrest: 30th July 1983 (Tehran)

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (OIPFG)

By the beginning of the 1979 revolution, political groups had started their activities. I supported of Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas. After toppling of Shah's regime, I started my activities in defending workers' rights and forming workers' councils where I was working at the Anzali's Office of Port and Shipping. In the election for the first National Assembly (February 1980), I was nominated from the supporters of Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas in Gilan. But from the beginning of my activities in forming a workers' council, I was threatened with death by people who were related to Islamic Republic. And finally in July to August of 1980 I was fired from my work.

In September and October of the same year, I was twice arrested by the guards, who were sent from Ghom (which was called "Grouh Zarat"). The first time I spent 48 hours and the second time about two months in jail.

When the brutal suppression began, my house, too, was attacked by armed guards in Khordad 1360 [1981] so I had to escape to Tehran. For two years in Tehran, I lived in hiding with a dire financial situation and was scared of being arrested and killed all this time. On the 30th of July 1983, I was arrested in one of the streets of Tehran by the guards who were sent to Tehran from my hometown city of Anzali.

After they transferred me to Bandar Anzali, they took me to an in-

terrogation room and tortured me for a week. The different ways of torture were: whipping with the electrical cables in different sizes (cables from 6mm to 18mm), burning of face with lighter, squeezing of testicles, tying of hands and legs with rope (in a pulling position) for a long time, slapping and kicking, hitting with the palm of the hands to top of the head, squeezing the neck to the point of suffocation, putting me under pressure for confessing, recanting my political past, giving up my Marxist beliefs and accepting Islam as my ideology, also to give an interview and participating in the Friday prayer, which mostly was held in Bandar Anzali's sport stadium. After a week, they moved me back to Tehran to Komiteh Moshtarak for more torture and again trying to get a confession from me. They started torturing me again in this jail.

They tied me to a bed and started whipping me with a cable using different methods: one person, two persons, and hitting like a blacksmith. The next day they did other kinds of torture to me. One day did they "Ghapani" (a kind of torture where they tie your hands on the back of your body by a rope and then they hang you by that rope and leave you there for hours) on me for about sixteen hours and when they finally put me down and untied me, my hands and shoulders were completely numb. After a round of torture in Tehran they took me back to Bandar Anzali. After a few days, they took me to the central jail of Gilan for a getting confession from me one more time; here the tortures were more psychological. After eleven months, they took me to the frightening torture chamber of Chaloos in Mazandaran province and they tortured me again. In Chaloos the tortures were mostly whipping with cable and other punishing acts.

After seventeen months of mistreatment and brutal torture and being put in a humid cell with no living amenities, they took me to "court". In the court chamber there were only four guards, who were guarding Mullah Ghateelzadeh, who was the head of the Justice Department in Mazandaran, and no other persons were present. There was no lawyer or legal observer to control the behaviours and actions of the judge, who had no legal education. I hadn't

been made aware of the “prosecution complaint” and the reasons for my arrest. Mullah Ghateelzadeh, who had no competence in legal matters, read the “Prosecution’s Complaint” fast and didn’t even allow me to say a word. The atmosphere in court was really heavy and it took only four minutes and then I was sentenced to death for: cooperation with the Organisation of Iranian People’s Fedai Guerrillas, representing this organisation for the national assembly, sedition and provocation of workers to protest and strike in their working place, and toppling of this “god-blessed” regime (this expression was used by Ghateelzadeh). At the end he orally sentenced me to death. After a few months of waiting for my execution, they revised my sentence and without taking into consideration the times that I was under interrogation and torture, which was about 17 months, I was sentenced to twenty years in jail. In fact I wasn’t the only one who, in few minutes was sentenced to death or jail, this behaviour was used for all political prisoners. There were thousands of political prisoners who were sent to their execution in this way. The “turban-headed” judges, none of whom had any judicial expertise and never in their lives had worked in judiciary, in few minutes, were sentencing the political prisoners to death and sent them to them to their deaths.

In my eleven years in jail, I not only was tortured but also witnessed a lot of torture and the executions of other political prisoners. In the months of July and August 1988, by a direct decree of Khomeini, just from Unit, where I was held (Navy Prison in Pol-e Aragh in Rasht), 96 political prisoners were executed. Based on information from other units in my jail and from Malek Ashter Jail in Rasht, altogether more than 300 men and women were executed. After spending eleven years in jail (from July 1983), I was finally released from Rasht’s jail on the 27th July 1994.

These are some names of those who were executed while I was prison:

- Jahangir Banafsheh. Age: about 31 years old. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: One of the days of month of November/December 1988. Place of execution: Mohammad Reza Shah High

School in Rasht (underground prison).

They took him from one of the cells of our quarter for execution.

- Ali Koohi. Age: about 35 years old. Accusation: MKO. Date of execution: 16th November 1988. Place of execution: public execution in Roudbar.

- Shahryar Ghorbani. Age: 27 Accusation: MKO. Date of execution: 16th November 1988. Place of execution: public execution in Roudbar.

- Ahmad Karimi. Age: 26 Accusation: MKO. Date of execution: 16th November 1988. Place of execution: public execution in Roudbar.

The above three were at the same quarter as I was.

- Abdollah Deghani. Age: 29. Accusation: MKO. Date of execution: 1984. Place of execution: Mohammad Reza Shah High School in Rasht (underground prison). Before his execution, he was in the same quarter as I was.

- Mostafa Ghorbani. Age: ? Accusation: Representative of the MKO in the first assembly from Roudbar. Date of execution: 1984. Place of execution: Mohammad Reza Shah High School in Rasht (underground prison). Before his execution, he was in the same quarter as I was.

- Armaees Darooyans. Age: about 36. Charge: cooperating with the MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Actual tendency: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority). Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Ali Bagheri. Age: 25-26. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: 1367 [1988]. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Abdollah Leechae. Age: about 39. Charge: OIPFG. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Saeid Babri. Age: about 27. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy

in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Iraj Babri. Age: about 33. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: Summer of 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Farhad Soleimoni. Age: about 27. Charge: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority) but for cooperation with the MKO. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Date of execution: summer of 1988.

- Javad Mashoof. Age: about 30. Charge: cooperation with the MKO (actual tendency: Rah-e Kargar). Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Mehdi Mahjoob. Age: about 29. Charge: cooperation with the MKO (actual tendency: Rah-e Kargar). Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Moosa Ghavami. Age: about 28. Charge: cooperation with Moj. Kal. Org.(actual tendency:Kargaran Enghelobi Org.(Rah Kargar)). Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Ali Ghorbonnejad. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: Summer of 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Massoud Babri. Age: about 30. Charge: Arman Mostazafin, cooperation with the MKO. Date of execution: Summer of 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Farzan Babri. Age: about 26. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: 7th of July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. He was the first to be executed in Rasht Prison. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Reza Shahr bani. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as



I was.

- Mahmood Asgharzadeh. Age: about 25. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Esmael Senjedian. Age: about 27. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Shahbaz Shahbazi (father). Age: about 60. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. He was a candidate from the MKO in the first assembly from Roudsar. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Ali Shahbazi (son). Age: about 27. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Fareed Hendijani. Age: about 28. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Hassan Moharrami. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was in the same quarter as I was.

- Mohammad Eghbali. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was in the same quarter as I was.

- Rasheed Mottaghitalab. Age: 28. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was in the same quarter as I was.

- Reza Mottaghitalab. Age: about 24. Charge: MKO. Date of

execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was in the same quarter as I was.

- Iraj Fadaee. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Mansoor Abbasi. Age: about 28. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Hassan Nezam. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Hossein Taravat. Age: about 30. Charge: MKO. Date of execution July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Mazaher Azad. Age: about 26. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Hadi Giahzadeh. Age: about 26. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Hojat Hooshmand. Age: about 26. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Moosa Mahboobi. Age: about 23. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Bijan Ghorbani. Age: about 23. Charge: MKO. Date of

execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

- Abbas Sefatipoor. Age: about 25. Charge: MKO. Date of execution: July/August 1988. Place of execution: Sepah Prison at Navy in Rasht. Before his execution, he was at the same quarter as I was.

### ***W7 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness had stood for parliament in the election of 1980 but failed to make the run-off; he was a supporter, not a member, of the FKO.
- After the first arrest, the witness was detained in a converted villa in Anzali port and made to sign that he approved of the Islamic Republic.
- The house raid was carried out by 50 armed guards at 01.00; the witness fled to Tehran, where he was arrested two months later after regime agents tortured workers in order to track him down at his place of work.
- He was verbally abused, blindfolded and led to the Revolutionary Court in the navy barracks. The judge ordered that the witness be flogged after he refused to confess to association with the OIPFG; the witness was told by the judge that he would not be executed if he cooperated and confessed to his charges. At the time, sentences were written on a board, quoting the Prophet; the punishment explicitly against atheists. The witness was told by the judge that he would be tortured and executed, whereupon his head was covered with a black cloth and he was taken for interrogation.
- After being beaten, the witness was forcefully handcuffed to a bed; these handcuffs were tightened at every blow. The guards pulled his legs down and tied his knees and ankles to the bed. The purpose of this was to cause a nerve in his feet swell up, thereby

causing him even more intense pain when he was subjected to bastinado; he felt that his blood had stopped circulating and pressure was building up in his head. The purpose of bastinado was to force a false confession, to the effect that he was responsible for the death of four guards and political activists in Anzali. The witness refused to cooperate.

- Before one session of bastinado, the witness was forcefully fed two carafes of water; his feet were lashed alternately.
- The witness was in prison for over eleven years (including the detention period). He was interrogated and tortured for seventeen months: he was held in a solitary cell of 1.6m<sup>2</sup>; he was spat on hundreds of times.
- The witness was shot when he tried to escape from Tehran.
- Ghapani was so painful that the witness's shoulders went numb, such that he felt that they were no longer a part of his body. This torture was worse than bastinado.
- The witness was held in a ward of 120 people in Rasht Prison in 1988. Sympathisers were taken to solitary confinement. The witness suspected that he would be executed. Nobody knew what was happening when a guard came to take a list of names, starting from Room 10 of Corridor 1, and then took prisoners away with their belongings. Approximately 96 prisoners (all but two) were taken from Corridor 3. The interrogator said he would carry out the executions as soon the order was given. The witness and another prisoner were taken separately; he still does not know why he was not executed.
- The witness remembers all the names that he mentions in his written statement because he knew these people personally, since he lived with them in prison.
- The witness was beaten in 1988 by a clergyman by the name of "Akhavan", who subjected him to 40 lashes after taking the cable from the interrogator and saying, "I have to beat this infidel until he becomes a Muslim." As the witness was being flogged, Akhavan demanded that he get up and say his prayers. The clergyman and interrogator argued over whether it was more important

to force a conversion or extract information. The witness subsequently lost consciousness.

- The witness was then taken to Chaloos, where again he was beaten and asked to denounce Marxism. The purpose of the beatings was to obtain information and break the witness's resolve but he still refused to renounce his faith.

- Four guards, a clergyman and a religious judge were present at the witness's kangaroo court. The witness was not given a written indictment; the judge inquired as to the witness's profession and demanded that he repent. The witness accepted the allegation that he was associated with the FKO, arguing that it was not illegal to be a member of a legitimate and legal political grouping – the Islamic Republic should be prosecuted instead. The judge sentenced the witness to death and told him to write a will. The execution was postponed twice; on the third occasion, four months after sentencing, the witness snapped at the guards who came to take him away, "I have no time to be executed, I want to sleep."

- For more information, see the witness's prison memoirs: Mohammad Khoshzough (2012). Mala. Stockholm: Arzan Publishing House.

## **Witness 8: Moheb Lotfolahi**

D.O.B.: 1955

Age at time of incident: 27 years

Occupation at time of incident: Teacher

Status of victim: Survivor and relative of victims

**Name of victim: Habibollah Lotfolahi**

D.O.B.: 1954

Occupation at time of arrest: Teacher

Age at time of execution: 27

My brother, Habibollah Lotfolahi, was arrested on the 14th of September 1981 in the city of Banah. Eight days after his arrest, on the 12th September, he was executed, along with four other political prisoners, without a trial, and without having an attorney or any right of defending themselves.

They were accused of being a supporter of the Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah). Habibollah, at the time of his execution, was 27 years old. He is buried in the cemetery of the city of Sanandaj.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, in the decade of 1360 [1981] also executed two of my uncles and one of my nephews.

## **Yadolah Lotfolah Nejdian**

Mother's name: Khaleh

Father's name: Abdolah

Profession: Teacher in the city of Sanandaj

[He] was arrested in Khordad 1360 [May/June 1981]. Without trial and without an attorney, after four months on the 16th Mehr in the year 1360 [8th October 1981], being accused of supporting the Kurdish people's movement for freedom in the Revolutionary

Court of the Islamic Republic in Sanandaj, he was executed along with twelve other political prisoners. At the time he was single, and he is also buried in Sanandaj. The government demanded to be paid by his family for the bullets in his execution.

### **Dr Fatalah Lotfolah Nejadian**

Mother's name: Khaleh

Father's name: Abdolah

[He] was a leftist political intellectual. He was accused of being a supporter of the freedom movement of the people of Kurdistan. In the first month of 1360 [1981], he was arrested and very shortly afterwards, without a trial and without the services of an attorney and the right of defending himself, he was executed. At the time of his death, he was single and 32 years old. He was buried in the Behesht Mohammadi Cemetery.

In Khordad of the year 1361 [May/June 1982], I was arrested and accused of supporting the defensive struggle of the Kurdish people. One year later, I was released from the Islamic Revolutionary Prison in Sanandaj. During the time of my imprisonment, I was witness to many prisoners being taken to their execution without trial and the right of defence, only on the basis of being politically active. I was a teacher and on the basis of the same accusation that I was imprisoned; I was also fired from my job. And after being fired, I was immediately arrested again.

The Islamic Republic from the very first day of its reign has been the enemy of the Kurdish people, who are after their rights. On several occasions they have militarily attacked Kurdistan. They have killed thousands of individuals with bombs and missiles and have arrested thousands. The majority of people arrested were not members of any organisations or political parties. The reason for their arrest was only being Kurdish and wanting their freedom. The ones that they were not able to kill in the beginning years of the 1360s [1980s] or before that, they killed in the massive executions of political prisoners later. The Islamic Republic, in order to establish their power from the very beginning, has had a programme to

kill its political opponents.

### ***W8 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Habibollah Lotfolahi was killed under torture. The witness's pregnant wife was tortured and gave birth in prison. His mother was also sent to Urumiyyeh. The witness spent two years in prison, during which time he was tortured by Seyyed for 40 days.



## **Witness 9: Vida Rostamalipour**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of incident: 27

Status of witness: Wife of the victim

**Name of victim: Majid Ivani**

D.O.B.: 1965

Age at time of arrest: 31

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

Majid was a member of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority). He was arrested along with one of his friends in the month of Aban 1364 [November 1985]. He was arrested due to his beliefs about freedom and equal rights, which were in fundamental opposition with the basis and interests of Islamic Republic. After suffering from many tortures, he was executed along with a group of other political prisoners in Evin Prison, and without any notice to his family he was buried in mass graves in Khavaran.

### ***W9 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Majid Ivani was arrested on the street for being a supporter of the OIPFG (Minority).
- Majid's parents were not aware of his whereabouts for a long time; when they finally discovered where he was being held, they visited him and saw that he had lost so much weight that he could no longer stand straight.
- In 1986 Majid was sentenced to fifteen years' imprison-

ment.

- All visits were terminated in 1988; when the Majid's parents tried to visit him, they were told that he would be receiving a new verdict. Majid's parents were later informed of his execution when they arrived for a visit, thinking he was alive; they were also given his clothes. The family was never provided with any details regarding Majid's burial; it did not find out about Khavaran until later.

- The witness contended that her husband was killed for having different beliefs from those of the Islamic Republic.

- A cellmate informed the witness that her husband had been kept in solitary confinement for months and beaten with cables while suspended upside down; he was hanged after a two-minute trial, in which he was challenged on whether he believed in Marxism or the regime.

## **Witness 10: Roya Rezai Jahromi**

D.O.B.: 1965

Age at time of incident: 17

Status of witness: Brother of four victims

**Name of victim: Behnam Rezai Jahromi**

D.O.B.: 1953

Age at time of arrest: 28

Political affiliation: Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah)

Behnam was a teacher of literature at junior high. On the 13th November 1983, Behnam and Saeed Yazdian were arrested in their house. Behnam was in charge of the Komolah Party in Tehran and other cities. Behnam was sentenced to death because of membership of the Komolah Organisation. After being tortured for months, Behnam was executed in Evin Prison on the 13th August 1983. May he be remembered.

**Name of victim: Bijhan Rezai Jahromi**

D.O.B.: 1963

Age at time of arrest: 18

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Bijhan was arrested in mid-November 1981 on suspicion; he was not identified but detained in Evin Prison and endured solitary confinement for three months and was to be released until a tavvab [repenter] recognise him. He was executed on the 13th May 1983. May he be remembered.

**Name of victim: Manouchehr Rezai Jahromi**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 18

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Manouchehr was arrested twice. Once in the front line (Iran-Iraq war) a Hezbollahi got into a fight with him. The second time he was on his way to the city of Bandar Abbas with our father and a pasdar from Abadan identified him. He was arrested in the parking lot of the bus station in Shiraz. He was detained for a long time in the Adel Abad Prison of Shiraz and was transferred to Tehran after my mother's tireless efforts. He was sentenced to six years imprisonment. He was a sympathiser of the MKO.

Manouchehr was executed (hanged) in 1988 in Gohardasht Prison for defending the Mujahideen (MKO) and his beliefs. The prison authorities said they would release his body on condition that my mother sign a paper stating that he died of natural causes in prison but she refused so they did not release his body and we do not know where they buried him. May he be remembered.

**Name of victim: Kavooos Rezai Jahromi**

D.O.B.: 1951

Age at time of arrest: 30

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Kavooos was employed at Jam-e-Jam TV station and put out the internal newsletter for Jam-e-Jam. He was arrested in his office at work on the 17th October 1981; the authorities accused him of having drugs so they could easily arrest him. He was a sympathiser of the MKO and was active with the student union in the university. He was executed in Evin Prison on the 16th April 1986. He was tortured many times but refused to repent and give names. The last time my mother had a visit with him, he could not walk for all the injuries and weak state he was in. May he be remembered.

***W10 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Kavoos was arrested on the steps of his workplace (Voice and Vision); Revolutionary Guards planted narcotics in his pockets when others objected to the arrest. By his execution, he had been tortured so much that he could no longer walk.
- Behnam's friend resisted torture for two or three days before turning over Behnam's name. The guards took Behnam, with his wife and eight-month-old daughter to Komiteh Moshtarak; Behnam had not fled, believing that this friend was already dead.
- Bijan (18) was arrested at a street clash, where he had turned up out of curiosity, after his stammer prevented him from answering the guards' questions promptly. He was held in solitary confinement for a year and denied being associated with any political organisation; he was about to be released when a repentant accused him of association with the MKO.
- Bijan and Behnam were executed within one week of each other; in both cases the family was informed of the victims' burial in Behesht Zahra but not returned the bodies. The graves were so shallow that Behnam's hand was poking out of the soil; his mother picked it up, thinking it was a glove.
- Manouchehr was arrested when Revolutionary Guards saw him wearing the MKO logo on his clothes (he had been helping Arabs in flood-stricken areas). He was sentenced to eight years in prison. His mother refused to sign that he had died of natural causes, as she was told, because her son had been a healthy young man. When she demanded an explanation for her sons' execution, she was told that they were "forbidden fruit".
- None of the victims named in the statement had any access to legal representation.
- The witness has lived in Europe for 20 years but still thinks of her brothers every night when she goes to sleep; she cannot stop crying when she recalls her brothers.
- Eight years in prison and the loss of four brothers have left Hamid, the witness's surviving brother, "psychologically destroyed" and "not a normal person".

- After the execution of her sons, the witness's mother bitterly regretted having voted in favour of the Islamic Republic in the 1979 referendum. She had met with Lajevardi several times; he insulted her on every occasion and ordered her to be detained after she answered him back, saying that she was proud to have such sons. She was wounded in a car accident on the way back from the graveyard in the dark, leaving her with internal haemorrhaging.

## **Witness 11: Manoochehr Safarali**

D.O.B.: 1948

Age at time of arrest: 32

Education: High school diploma

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

Status of the witness: Survivor

I, Manoochehr Safarali (Peyvand), was born on the 1st December 1948 in Tehran. I was born in a working (labourer) family. Due to our family's poverty, I learned from early age that in order to survive, I had to work. I finished high school but most of the time I worked during the day and studied at night. Therefore, I was familiar with the working people's misery. I was looking for ways to escape from life's miserable situations, which, initially, I did not know the reason for their existence. I have worked in many factories and through this I have come to know the exploitation of humans by other humans. I was looking for a solution when I became familiar with the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (OIPFG). Throughout the years that I was a labourer, I was more a worker's activist than a Marxist.

I participated in many demonstrations and had a lot of arrests (short term). After 1978, I became more familiar with Marxism and became a supporter of OIPFG. But their points of view did not convince me until 1980 when there was a division in this organisation and the left wing was separated from the right wing. I became a supporter of the left wing, called "Minority". Gradually, I became interested in activities to accomplish the goals.

Before becoming a member of this organisation, I was identified and detained. This coincided with the 14th March 1982, which

meant a week before Persian New Year (Nowruz). From then on, for my family of ten people, my life turned into a nightmare. For several months, my family had no knowledge about my arrest and did not know what had happened to me. Initially, they took me to “Anti-Sabotage Committee”, which belonged to the Shah’s period but in Islamic Republic it was called Ward 3000 or Tohid Prison. Throughout the interrogation, I was blindfolded and would be on the floor of the hallway. The first week of my arrest, I was tortured day and night. During this week, sometimes three and sometimes four people would torture me. For two years, my feet were still wounded. My hands and shoulders did have and still have problems: my hands due to the steelyard handcuffs that were used and my shoulders due to severe pressure that were put on them. Having had to stand up for long periods of time, I have chronic backache.

This was physical pressure, but psychological pressure was no less than the physical one. A few loudspeakers in a room two metres wide and fifteen metres long caused additional problems. The sound of these loudspeakers was both deafening and would not allow one to concentrate. All these caused me complications that I am still suffering from. In Ward 3000, in a so-called court, I was beaten so hard that my head broke and I left the court bleeding. In that court, they accused me of charges such as living in a group home, having arms and participating in terrorism; I was sentenced to execution.

About a year, I was kept under the death sentence so that the charges were proven. The reason was that there were so many prisoners who were executed without any proven crime. And this resulted in that from then on the regime would send all the judgments from the courts that were longer than ten years to High Judicial Council in order to approve the legality of the verdicts. This helped me and saved my life from death. In the summer of 1982, I was transferred from “Anti-Sabotage Committee” to Evin Prison.

I thought that the torture was over and I had to wait for court and the issued verdict. However, with total surprise I realise that this



was just the beginning and as long as I remained in prison, torture would be an inseparable part of prison. In rooms that were six metres by six metres (about 36 square metres) there were about 70 to 100 prisoners, to the point that in July/August 1982 we slept in shifts. We did not have any means of communication with our families and friends. Only every fifteen days we had visitation for ten minutes behind the glass, where the pasdars were present and heard our conversations.

We underwent a lot of torture for different excuses. One day a person while dusting the TV wrote something on it. They said that it was written “death to the regime”. Therefore, our food ration was reduced to a third. The complication was so severe that still I have not overcome it. Several times, I was taken to the prosecutor’s office in Evin to be identified by others and interrogated. On those exact days that the prisoners were executed, they would call me to the prosecutor’s for different excuses. Each time, I said my final goodbye to my friends in the room and again, I was brought back to the room at night. These intimidations and humiliations continued until the end of 1982.

The last time that I was taken to the prosecutor’s, I was given my ten-year sentence. After a short while, I was taken to Ghezelhesar Prison. When interrogations were over, I thought to myself that systematic torture was to identify my political background better. Again, I realised that, it has started from the beginning. Again, interrogation, quarantine, and beating; and this time there were those who had repented acting on behalf of the prison wardens.

I was in closed-door rooms until summer of 1985 and during the day they would take us to the bathroom for fifteen minutes for the whole room with 40 or 50 people in it. It was rumoured that Lajevardi has 6,000 execution cases without interrogation and sometimes without a name or identification. Therefore, the “Hawk” wing had left and the “Dove” wings came. The result for us was a general ward and the door to our cell was opened after nearly four years. But this break was short-lived.

Due to a lot of whistle-blowing about the crimes in Ghezelhesar

Prison, the regime transferred the political prisoners to Gohardasht, or as the regime calls it “Rajae Shahr”. With regards the prisoners from other cities that were in Ghezelhesar.

In Gohardasht Prison, whatever belongings I had, from books to personal items, were confiscated for the benefit of the prison wardens. In 1987, torture started with the excuse of group exercise. These tortures continued and ranged from gas chamber and beatings to mutilations. Well, 1987 came to an end and we entered a year that was all calamity.

Every time I review the prison in 1988, at least for a week I am psychologically upset. I am a survivor of that atrocious massacre. I am like a walking dead man, who carries this nightmare with himself. I went to a psychologist for a long time and I still have nightmares at night; I scream so hard at night that all the people who are close by are awakened full of fear.

In short, at the end of 1988, I was released by posting a bond. But they did not allow me to take my personal belongings. Several days after the 21st March 1988 (Nowruz), when I had gone back to get my belongings, I was held and was released after a week. This disturbing the peace continued until I left Iran and it continued to Turkey, where the regime had influence.

### ***W11 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was beaten so much in Komiteh Moshtarak that the interrogator ordered the torturers to cease, lest the witness be accidentally killed.
- The witness was held with 120 people others in a cell of 36m<sup>2</sup>; prisoners slept in shifts because there was not enough room for everybody to sleep at the same time. Mondays and Wednesdays were execution days in Evin; prisoners were killed by firing squad.
- All sentences greater than ten years' imprisonment required referral to a judicial council for approval; the witness was not ex-

ecuted because this council had no evidence that he should be on its list. The witness was beaten up in the courtroom.

- In Ghezelhesar, the witness saw a form of torture being inflicted by which a ballpoint pen was shoved up a prisoner's nose and then hit hard so that it smashed into his head.

- All prisoners were taken to Gohardasht in 1986-87. Groups were taken out daily for sport and then beaten in a windowless room, after which they were brought back unconscious, some with broken ribs. The prison went into lockdown in Mordad of 1988, when visitations and trips to the infirmary were suspended; televisions were confiscated and guards stopped passing on things to prisoners from their families.

- People were taken to Komiteh Moshtarak after their arrest, where they were photographed and stripped naked. The witness was taken to a room of approximately 1.75m<sup>2</sup>; he was then subjected to bastinado on a bed to which he was tied face down, with guards sitting on his head (covered in a blanket), feet and chest. The purpose of this was to extract information. Repeated lashing caused prisoners' feet to go numb; guards restored sensation by making holes in the soles of prisoners' feet with a nail and then making them walk on sharp stones, in order to get the blood flowing. The witness was not left out of this "Punishment Room" for a week. This treatment left him with wounds on his feet for two or three years.

- The witness still suffers nightmares; he shouts in his sleep, so has to sleep away from others lest he wake the household up.

- The bodies of executed prisoners were taken away in trucks.

- Ghaffari was the judge in Branch 6 of Evin Prison; Nasseirian Salavati, in Ghezelhesar. Mortazavi used to rape people. Aya-tollah Mousavi Ardebili was head of the judicial section of Ward 8 and he permitted guards to do as they pleased with women.

## **Witness 12: Saleh Sharafi**

D.O.B.: 1949

Occupation at time of arrest: High school teacher in Mahabad  
Status of witness: Survivor

Date of arrest: 1981 (Mahabad)

Political affiliation: Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI)

I, Saleh Sharafi, born in 1949, son of Mohammad Amin and Zahra, currently residing in Sweden, was arrested in the spring of 1981 by the Iranian security forces in Mahabad, Kurdistan province of Iran. My arrest was made as the security forces had mistaken me for my brother, Hassan Sharafi, who was an active member of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI). Our whole family was under government surveillance because of my brother's political activism. After my arrest, I was transferred from Mahabad to a military base in Urumiyyeh along with two other political prisoners. We were kept in this military base, called Hamzeh Station, for two weeks, after which we were taken to a building called the "court" building. I was taken there a second time in 1984 and was kept in solitary confinement for eleven months.

I was arrested regardless of the fact that there was no evidence of any illegal act on my part. I was mistakenly arrested for my brother and his political involvement was used as the indictment in my case.

As with the process of the trial, I have to say that I was taken to another building outside of the prison to go on a so-called trial. The building resembled more of a residential one. They kept me and two other political prisoners confined in the basement. After two or three hours, I was taken to another room with a clergyman in it. There were not any prosecutors or an official bill of indictment.

The clergyman asked whether my name was Hassan Sharafi, to which I replied, "No." He then asked me, "Have you been involved in political activities? Were you a pishmargh [Kurdish rebel] or have you taken up arms against the Islamic Republic? Were you a member of the Kurdish Democratic Party? Were you involved in organising rebel activities for the party? Have you taken part in military actions against Islamic Republic of Iran?" I replied, "No!" The clergyman, whose name was unknown to me, started shouting obscenities at me and accusing me of lying. He got up from his chair and came to hit me. As I tried to pull away, the guards stopped me and the clergyman started beating and shouting more obscenities at me. Then in an angry gesture, he said, "Take him and execute him." The guards took me out of the room. This entire exchange with the clergyman, which was referred to as the court trial, did not last more than two to three minutes. After a while, the prison guards discovered that they truly had mistaken me for my brother and at that point they reduced my sentence from death to a life sentence. During this entire process, both before and during the trial, there was no explanation of accusations nor was there any legal counsel or aid. I did not have a lawyer and was not allowed to defend myself. In two minutes, my destiny was decided for me. I was issued a death sentence and then it was reduced to life in prison. I was imprisoned for five and half years for having been mistaken for my brother. Many other political prisoners were executed through this same process.

During my imprisonment, I witnessed many executions. In those days, most of the political prisoners were under the age of eighteen. It was at the Urumiyeh base that I first witnessed a group taken away for execution. Seven people were executed there and afterwards the rest of us political prisoners were shown their bloody clothes in order to break us down. To torture me, they would constantly remind me that I was to be executed soon just like those executed earlier. In 1984 a group of 57 political prisoners were executed in Mahabad. The identities of most of the executed prisoners were unknown and their families were unaware of their arrest.

The families were to find out about the arrests after the names of the executed were announced in the state radio and television channels. None of the executed had lawyers and they were not permitted to defend themselves in a just court of law. Their trial had also lasted a couple of minutes just like mine and many were mistakenly arrested and executed for others.

In 1986, amid heavy criticism of unjust arrests and executions of innocent people, the Islamic Republic of Iran either reduced and/or suspended many of the sentences mistakenly given to many prisoners such as myself. However, I still had to check in with the Urumiyyeh authorities twice a week.

The following list is the types of torture used on me and other political prisoners while we were in Urumiyyeh and Mahabad Prisons:

1. Being held in cells with high humidity and moisture condition;
2. Being severely hit by electrical cable;
3. Being held in a cell in total darkness;
4. Being held in a cell with very strong lights;
5. Being tied to gallows for a long duration of time during cold winter and hot summer months;
6. Being deprived of all hygiene products and showering;
7. Being deprived of using the toilet more than twice in 24 hours while in solitary confinement;
8. Being forced to listen or see while other prisoners were being tortured (by being kept in the torture room or one adjacent to it).
9. Deprived of any communication or visitation with family;
10. Subjected to Ghapani style torture. (Ghapani is a method of handcuffing where one hand over the shoulder to the back is cuffed with the other hand. For more effects, the body is hanged from somewhere. The pressure usually breaks the shoulder);
11. Subjected to Joojeh Morghi torture;
12. Subjected to Kalagh Par style torture. (In Kalagh Par torture, hands are cuffed behind the head and the subject has to jump

forward while in squat position);

13. Being forced to stand on one leg for a long period of time;
14. Being deprived of access to any medical care and facility;
15. Being forced to participate in classes on religious studies;
16. Treated with total disdain and disrespect because of our national and religious identity, specially for being a Sunni Kurd or for belonging to Bahá'í religion;
17. Was forced to work long hours without pay in both Mahabad and Urumiyeh prisons.
18. Prevented from getting the prescribed medications in cases where a doctor's visit was allowed.

### ***W12 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- It was common for people to be arrested at random and only then taken for identification: the witness was arrested because he looked similar to his brother, a famous Kurdish leader. After his arrest, Tehran radio and the BBC announced that the leader had been arrested! It was demanded that the witness prove that he was not his brother.
- The witness was subjected to a mock execution with live fire and shouting, to create the most realistic experience that this was a real execution. On another occasion, he was subjected to a mock execution, blindfolded, with blank rounds.
- Guards used to pour cold water over the witness's feet after 10-15 blows in order to cool them down.
- On the way to Urumiyeh, guards threatened to fire bullets into two canisters of gasoline in the car if they came into any trouble in the opposition-controlled area through which they were traveling, thereby blowing the prisoners up.
- The prisoner was left in pitch darkness for weeks, with only mice for company: he once picked up a mouse he mistakenly thought was his bread or cheese.

- Torture continued after guards discovered the case of mistaken identity: they tried to get the witness to pressure his brother to stop his activities or else turn over information about him. The regime authorities must have given a free rein to prison guards to use torture: if they didn't know, they were negligent; if they did know, they were complicit.



### **Witness 13: Fatemeh Jokar Chouchani**

D.O.B.: 1958

Age at time of incident: 23

Status of the witness: Survivor and wife the victim (her two brothers-in-law were also executed)

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

**Name of victim: Saeed Jabani**

D.O.B.: 1957

Age at time of arrest: 25

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

**Names of victims: Kourosch Jabani and Hamid Jabani (brothers-in-law); 70 others named**

This testimony is primarily about my husband and two brothers-in-law. However, I have also recalled the names and some of the stories of the people who were imprisoned alongside me and executed. (List of 41 people follows, including husband and brothers-in-law.)

My name is Fatemeh Jokar Chouchani and I was a sympathiser of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO). From 1360 to 1364 [1981 to 1985] I was imprisoned in Vakilabad Prison in Mashhad.

At the time of my arrest I was four months pregnant. I was tortured and I am one of the few who survived the mass executions in the 1360s [1980s]. I witnessed many executions.

When I was first arrested, I was taken to a temporary detention centre called Sepah-e Malek Abad, located on Malek Abad Boule-

ward. It was there that I was first interrogated and tortured. Gradually I began to acquaint myself with other female prisoners.

One evening a 21-year-old woman called Zahra Nasirian was brought to our ward. She was very anxious and upset. Later on the same evening, at around midnight, a male guard called out her name and ordered her to go with him. She begged the guard to wait until morning but he threatened to return with the female religious police to drag her out of the ward. Zahra bade us farewell and left with the guard. She was executed at about 01.00.

My brothers-in-law, Hamid and Kourosh, were executed on the 8th or 9th of Dey 1360 [28th or 29th December 1981].

My husband's family were constantly looking for any news about their sons either at the prison's gates or the courthouse. One day they were told to visit the Behesht Reza mortuary. My father-in-law and his brother visited the mortuary. They found Kourosh and Hamid's bodies there. Hamid was only fifteen years old when he was executed. They collected Kourosh and Hamid's bodies but they were not allowed to bury them in Behesht Reza Cemetery. They were forced to bury them in a section of the cemetery called "Laanat-abad" [place for the damned]. They were not allowed to place headstones or in any way mark their graves.

I was in Malek Abad and Kuhsangi Prisons for five months and during this time, a lot of prisoners from Wakilabad and Komiteh detention centres were brought to Wakilabad and Kuhsangi for execution. Here are some of the names that I can recall: Soghra Davary, Ahmadreza Shayesteh, Zahra Sharif Bokharaei, Maryam Sadrolashrafi, Bahman Moghaddasi, Roya Vaziri, Shahram Bahrami, Hassan Tafaghodi, Saeid Jaban, Koroush Jabani, Hamid Jabani, Mohammad Ali Jivar, Maryam Jivar, Abbas Rastegar, Zahra Nasirian, Noushin Behrouz, Noushin Alavi, Mandana Mojaverian, Mitra Mojaverian, Sima Matlabi.

My husband, Saeed Jabani, was also arrested and we were in various courts at least three times. The religious judges were Razi-ni and Salimi; the prison assistants to the judges were Hosseini and Valipour. They tried very hard to get my husband to give in-

terviews and publically repent but he refused. At this point they changed their tack. The day before the Persian New Year (1361), they moved my cellmate and brought Saeed to my cell. By then I was six months pregnant. He was amazed that I had managed to keep the baby. We both thought that he was here to bid us farewell and that he would be executed imminently. But this did not happen, and the following day Saeed and I met our families, who had come to visit us. Again they brought Saeed to my cell. Saeed and I were in the same prison cell for fifteen days. Every time we heard the guard's footsteps, we thought it would be the end!

After fifteen days I was moved to a general cell for a further 25 days and then I was moved to Vakilabad Prison. In the religious courts in Mashhad, Saeed and I met for the last time for five minutes to say goodbye to each other. That same evening (10th Ordibehesht 1361 [30th April 1982]), he was hanged in Vakilabad Prison with many prisoners. I can only recall some of the prisoners' names here: Fatemeh Sharestani, Fereshteh Senobari, Reza BahrAbadi, Shiva Shirvani, Fatemeh Shayesteh, Zahra Mohammadzadeh, Shirin Eslami, Heidar Elahi, Shamsi Barari, Leila Khosraftar, Marayam Kazemi, Mohatram Akbari, Fatemeh Mehdiyazadeh, Seyfi Hesar, Azizullah Golshani, Nasser Haj Aghajani,

At this stage neither me nor Saeed's family had been informed. One of the prisoners had a relative who was an employee of the Mashhad Civic Council and this is how the news reached my family. Saeed's father and my brother went to the mortuary to collect Saeed's body. He was buried in the same evening in Behesht Reza Cemetry. The only location that he was permitted to be buried was in a section called "Laanat-abad" [place for the damned].

I was also supposed to be hanged a few months after the birth of my baby. My family was very worried but eventually my death sentence was reduced to 30 years' imprisonment, and my release date was set to Tir 1390 [July 2011].

At the beginning of 1362 [1983], four women were brought to my ward. In the summer of the same year they and a man called Bahman Moghadasi were executed. They were: Homa Mozafari,

Jamileh Rozeh Khovanbashi, Nayereh Shirvani( was executed in the winter of the same year).

Roya Vasiri's husband was also in the same prison, and when she bade us farewell she asked me to return her glasses case to her husband, who had originally bought it for her as a birthday present. However, eleven days later, her husband Bahman Moghadasi was also executed.

A few days later we were ordered to go to the prison library and listen to a prisoner (Nireh Shiravani), who had repented. After she had finished her story, she was executed.

During the winter of 1361 [1982], Zahra Sharif-Bokharai was brought in: she had been arrested in the streets where her husband Hadi Edalatian had been killed in armed action against the authorities. Zahra was executed in the winter of 1361 [1982] in Vakilabad Prison.

In 1367 [1988] Shirin Eslami and Shamsi Barrari, along with Shamsi's husband Mehdi Mir-mostafai and her brother Rasool Barrari and a man called Ali Tafaghodi, were executed. When Shamsi was first arrested in 1360 [1981], her children were being brought up with her relatives in Zanjan (north-east of Iran). Her family, including her children, would come and visit Shamsi in Mashhad. During one of those journeys, there was a car accident and her seventeen-year-old son (Gholamreza) was killed in the accident. Shamsi begged the prison authorities to be allowed to bury her son and attend the funeral. She was refused.

Shamsi also had two sisters who were also in prison: Afsar Barrari and Badri Barrari. Afsar also had a husband in prison and a child. They were all released later on.

In reference to the death of my husband, Saeed, and my brothers-in-law, Kourosh and Hamid Jabani, the perpetrator of these murders was the Islamic Republic of Iran. They took place at Vakilabad Prison (Mashhad), and the religious judges were Razini and Salimi. There were also two prison assistants to the judges: their names were Hosseini and Valipour.

My husband, Saeed, was hanged, while his two brothers (my

brothers-in-law) were executed by firing squad.

### ***W13 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was arrested together with her husband, who immediately swallowed a cyanide capsule; the witness tried to jump in front of the arresting officers' car so they would not be able to take him alive but she was grabbed from behind and arrested. Saeed was taken to hospital, blindfolded and transported to an unknown location in Mashhad.
- The witness hauled up by her feet to a metal rod and then subjected to bastinado; she was let down to wash her feet in cold water and rub them against the stairs, in order to restore sensation, and then beaten again. A guard stuffed a dirty woollen hat in her mouth and punched her in the jaw. She was threatened that unless she cooperated, she would be beaten so badly that she would "sing like a nightingale"; indeed, the beatings were so severe that she had to crawl up the stairs on all fours and her feet had swollen so much they could not fit in her shoes. The interrogator was called "Sarwaz Nourizi". The witness was given hot water from a thermos when she asked for water; she was then left to sleep on the floor of the interrogation room.
- Hoji Bahram told the witness that he would "peel off her skin" if she did not talk (this is a Farsi idiom, meaning that he would deal with her). Her wounds were so extensive that the blood on her feet had congealed, gluing them to the socks; she passed out from the pain of peeling them off. When she regained consciousness, she could not open her mouth for 48 hours because the blows to her jaws had loosened her teeth. She was urinating blood for two to three days, during which time she continued to be interrogated; the beatings stopped and she was transferred to a detention centre within a month.
- After her interrogation, the witness was sent to a room where the guards were repenters.
- The witness's husband was tortured so badly that he be-

came confused and “no longer there”.

- After 20-30 days, the witness was transferred to a detention centre with 18 solitary cells; these were dark and so humid that there was mildew halfway up the walls and across all the blankets. The witness suffered terrible back pain, for which she was denied permission to seek medical attention.
- The witness was tried together with her husband and another defendant in a basement; the judges, were unaware that two of the defendants were husband and wife. They asked Saeed to denounce his political organisation on television; he declined and everyone was returned to their cells.
- The two brothers-in-law were aged 15 and 19 at the time of their execution.
- The witness was given one last meeting with her husband prior to his execution; she was taken aside after prisoners disembarked from the minibus on the way to the Revolutionary Prosecutor’s Office in Mashhad and told that this was the last time she was going to see her husband. Saeed implored her to stop crying and wished her a good life with their unborn child, if indeed he was going to be executed.
- The witness was tortured when she was pregnant; this stopped once her tummy had really begun to bulge.
- Children were raised in unhygienic conditions in the prison. For some prison was the “whole world”: one game involved donning chadors and acting out a prison visit.
- The witness spent four years and two months in prison; she was released as part of an amnesty on an anniversary of the Revolution.

## **Witness 14: Hossein Maleki**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 19

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Forghan Organisation

Status of victim: Survivor

In 1980 I was arrested, acc

used of being a sympathiser of the Forghan Organisation. With clemency I was dropped one degree and I was first given a life sentence. After serving eight years, I was given a fifteen-year sentence instead. After fifteen years, I was released in 1991. I spent my prison term in Evin, Gohardasht and Ghezelhesar Prisons. I was witness to a number of extractions of my prison-mates for execution while I was at Evin and Gohardasht.

The Islamic Republic regime is in its totality responsible for the murder of political prisoners in the 1980s. The execution orders were issued by Mohammad Gilani, Nayyeri and Mobasher and the other organs of the regime that executed these orders in the prisons.

### ***W14 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was arrested on suspicion for carrying books in the streets; he was sent straight to Evin Prison. He was subjected to bastinado there because guards were dissatisfied with his answers in interrogation; he spent seven months in solitary confinement. The courtroom was a “two-by-three cell with a bookshelf”. The witness was never given a written indictment or access to any legal

representation; he was brought in front of Nayyeri, who asked him two questions – and promptly sentenced him without even referring to his file.

- The witness was released in 1991, having served eleven years of a fifteen-year sentence.

- In Building 201 of Evin, the upper storeys were solitary cells; the lower floors were interrogation rooms. All prisoners were first sent to confinement and interrogation before they were subjected to bastinado.



## **Witness 15: Ozra Yahyaei**

D.O.B.: 1960

Age at time of incident: 28

Occupation at time of incident: Housewife

Status of witness: Wife of the victim

**Name of victim: Mohammad Reza Bikhmohammadi Hezave**

D.O.B.: 1336 [1957]

Education: Diploma in Electrics

Occupation: Aircraft technician

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

On the m

orning of the 13th October 1983 [21st Mehr 1362], my husband went to work as usual. He did not return that night. We got worried and from the next day, started looking everywhere to find him, but could not find a trace of him. He had said if any time he did not return home, we should know that they had detained him. We were certain that he had been arrested but did not know where he had been taken. Two of his friends, who had come from another town to Tehran, were in hiding in our house. Our house was not safe for them anymore, and in spite of not knowing of any other place to go, they were forced to leave our house. But before they were able to run away, the Pasdaran forced their way into our house, made a mess of all our belonging and the house, detained those two guests and took them away.

It seems our house was under surveillance and they were keeping a close watch on whoever was in and out. The day that my sister and her husband, who was my husband's brother, had gone to a phone booth next to our house to pursue my husband's situation, they

were arrested. They were also taken to the same detention centre to which my husband had been taken. This detention centre is on Amirabad Street. For more than four months I went from one detention centre to another, from one judicial organisation to another, until I found him in Evin Prison.

On 8th October 1981, when Mohammad Reza was going to work from home, he along with his fifteen-year-old nephew was arrested on Jomhuri Street. A person named Jamshid, who was under my husband's supervision in the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), started cooperating with the interrogators after being arrested and gave away my husband's information. Jamshid became a collaborator and later on was freed from prison.

My husband was a technician in the army, and probably in 1959 joined the MKO. Later on, along with his brother Ahmed Reza, who was a textile worker, my husband started a textile shop and quit the army.

My husband underwent severe tortures, and then in 1984 in a very short mock trial lasting a few minutes, without having a lawyer, without being allowed to defend himself, due to his political activities and work with the MKO, was sentenced to seventeen years in prison.

On the 9th Mordad 1988, during the mass murder of political prisoners of summer 1988, for the reason of defending his beliefs and being steadfast on his political viewpoints, under the direct order of Khomeini, and via a committee consisting of Tehran's prosecutor, Eshraghi, Nayyeri, and Mobasheri, the Ministry of Information representative at Evin Prison, Mohammad Reza was hanged.

With regards to the reasons behind the summer of 1988 events and the background, there are various viewpoints. Some attribute this mass murder to the continuation of the Islamic Republic's conflict with the MKO and its reaction to Forough Javeedan operation [Operation Eternal Light]. Others believe it is the continuation of mass murder of political prisoners which had started in 1981 and for some reason was put on hold in 1984-85. What is clear is that the Islamic Republic with a premeditated plan carried out the mass

murder of political prisoners who had escaped the killings of the early part of 1360s [1980s]. The Islamic Republic had not succeeded in its objective in the war and had been defeated. It had to accept the peace but was fearful of its own future. For this reason it had to create another fear in the public and stop the return of all those political prisoners back into the populace, where mass protests and upheaval might pursue.

I hold responsible the Islamic Republic of Iran and all of its leaders for the murder of my husband in prison. And therefore I request all of them be prosecuted for crimes against humanity.

My husband's brother, Ahmad Reza Bikmohammadi, who was three years younger than Mohammad Reza, was arrested for the second time on (date)..... in front of a theatre on Valiasr Street in Tehran. After enduring countless tortures, with a short mock trial, without being allowed to have a lawyer or to defend himself, charged with political activism and working with the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority), he was sentenced to ten years in prison. During the mass murder of political prisoners in summer of 1988, for the reason of defending his beliefs and being steadfast on his political viewpoints, he also was hanged in Gohardasht prison in city of Karaj.

### *W15 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Mohammad Reza was five years into a 17-year prison sentence when he was executed.

## **Witness 16: Bijan Bahadori**

D.O.B.: 1960

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

I was arrested on the 5th Shahrivar 1362 [27th August 1983] in connection with the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority) in Tehran, at a revealed meeting point by the agents of regime's Intelligence Service, and they took me to the Komiteh Moshtarak prison.

After a preliminary interrogation by interrogators, they took me to the torture chamber and a mullah, who was called shari'ah hakem [religious judge], ordered 300 blows in order to obtain the organisation's information from me. I've heard and read flogging before, but my own experience was unbelievable. They tied me to a bed and started beating me with a half-inch-thick electrical cable on my soles. I was just crying and with each cry they beat me one blow on my head with the same cable.

The pain was such that it penetrated into my brain. After 50 or 60 blows, they untied me from the bed and said I should get up and jump up and down on my feet right there next to the wall. I saw my feet became like a pillow. It was difficult to stand and they were beating on my head, on my back, slapping and punching. After a few minutes, they tied me back to the torture bed and started beating again. Gradually, I felt that I had lost the ability of thinking and assessing the situation. Then they stopped and went out of the room.

After a few minutes, they returned and hanged me from the ceiling.

First they handcuffed my right hand from over my shoulder to my left hand on my back, pushed up with force. I felt my chest was going to explode any second. Then they passed a rope through a hook that was attached to the ceiling and through the handcuff, and hoisted me up while my feet still were tied to the bed. My whole body was suspended between earth and air. They were beating on my feet while I was hanged. I felt a direct pain from my feet to the head, and at the same time I felt thirst and burning in my throat. They left room for a few minutes and came back and started beating me again. Later I realise that this short-term interruption of flogging saves the victim from the risk of heart attack. I was going to die few times because of the intolerable pain. After about one hour (I could not exactly feel passing time) they untied me from Ghapani (pendulum). I couldn't stand on my feet. That day, they stopped torturing me in the afternoon.

The next day in the morning, they started again the same cycle of torture and continued for a few days. Then I began to give away the expired information, hoping they would stop the torture. I couldn't walk on my feet; I had to crawl.

I finally named a few comrades who had already been arrested in Mashhad, and then they left me alone. I was still urinating blood on the fourth day. Every time I heard the interrogator's footsteps or his voice, I would shivering.

During all interrogation sessions, they persisted on the question of the time and place of my meeting point with my contact. Finally I decided to give up for once and all. Going under torture again frightened me horribly. I was 80% sure that the comrade had cyanide with him. But I gave them the meeting point in a way hoping that my comrade would see them and would have the opportunity to escape.

On the 25th Shahrivar at 15.00, my interrogator came and took me to the interrogation room with rage and insulting words. He asked me orally again the time and place of the meeting point and beat me on the head with the cable and threatened me if I made any suspicious move. They took me to another room, in which were

piles of clothes. I took a pair of trousers and a shirt. My feet were bandaged; I could not wear shoes so I picked slippers. In a car with four agents, we went to the meeting point. They asked me go to the pharmacy while one of them accompanied me from behind. I did not tell them whether my comrade was armed or carrying cyanide. I was hoping that he could see my bandaged feet. I was almost in ten metres from the pharmacy, when I saw my comrade seating behind the wheel of a car; a young woman with a baby in her arms sat in passenger seat. He saw me and waved his hand. I didn't respond but the agent behind me saw him and ran to the car. I was paralysed and couldn't move forward. Two or four other agents ran to the car, all of them armed. My comrade locked the door on his side and bit his cyanide. In a moment, the area was filled with plain-clothes agents. They took the woman and baby out of the car into a shop with me. The woman was panicking and crying; the baby was shocked. They dragged my comrade out from the car and tried to make him drink Rica by force. From 1362 [1983], all squads had anti-cyanide injections with them, but this squad didn't have any because I didn't tell them that my comrade had cyanide with him. After two to three minutes of unsuccessful attempts, two agents took me and my comrade, who was unconscious now, to a car and drove us to a nearby hospital (Farabi, I guess). The hospital didn't have the anti-poison injections. Again, the car drove with maximum speed, using the siren, towards the east of Tehran. After about ten minutes, we arrived at the Eshratabad garrison, a section of Revolutionary Guards. They delivered me to the sentry and I dropped dead right there. After about a quarter to half an hour, the same car returned and they dragged me to the car. The severity of shock and trauma was quite unbearable. They couldn't save my comrade. His corpse was in the back seat. His face was now completely white.

We returned to Komiteh Moshtarak. I was totally drained. They took me back to the interrogation room again. My interrogator was so upset. I sensed that he was still suspicious of my political relationships so he tied me to torture bed and continued interrogation.

This time he was trying to find out about my responsibility in the organisation, and why I didn't say that he was armed and had cyanide. He beat me on my back and thighs and finally left me after about one hour. I was crushed. I was thinking all the time about what would happen to the woman and her baby, which again made me think of suicide. For two to three days I was thinking of ways to commit suicide. A few days later, I went back to the clinic to change dressing.

After two months, they transferred me blindfolded to another cell, in which were three other prisoners. After two months, in Azar, as my wounds were getting better, they took me to the bathroom. At the end of month of Azar, they transferred me to Evin Prison, Cell 63, Ward 3 for leftists. We had to sleep on one side like books in Cell 63, and had half an hour for walking outside and three breaks to use the restroom, only fifteen minutes for 40 prisoners every 24 hours. They interrogated me two or three times in Evin in writing. They took me blindfolded to a room to be identified by repentant prisoners.

In January 1984, I was transferred from Tehran to Mashhad. I was not tortured over there in interrogations, but the interrogations were lengthy: from 08.00 to noon prayer, and after lunch to sunset. I was kept in solitary confinement. In Mashhad, the pressure during interrogations was mostly psychological for breaking prisoners down, turning them to repenters and collaborators. The interrogators were always telling me that my sentence would be death unless I became repentant. For days and days they were working over me. Finally, in Ordibehesht 1363 [April/May 1984], I was transferred to Vakilabad Prison. They took me two or three times to the Revolutionary Court to finalise the case and then the trial. My trial took only five minutes [presided over] by the religious judge, Razini, who then he verbally announced, "You will be hanged, get out." A few months passed; finally, they handed me the sentence of 20 years in prison.

The summer of 1988

I was in second floor of Ward 2 in Vakilabad Prison on the 5th or

6th Mordad 1367 [27th or 28th July 1988] when the news of Mujahideen's attack and defeat was announced by Iranian television. All prisoners were discussing the news. At the time, Mashhad's political prison was divided in three sections: Ward 1, composed of 150 prisoners of new detainees, repenters and those with whom prison officials didn't have any problems; Ward 2 consisted of about 40 old and non-repentant Marxists, six or seven Bahá'ís and approximately 120 to 130 mujahideen for whom the prison officials saw no hope for change; and the quarantine, which was made up of two large closed rooms with a small yard, entirely separated from the other two wards. In those two rooms there were about twenty mujahideen and four or five Marxist prisoners.

After blackout, everyone was still awake. Suddenly a prisoner, who was on the third level of the bunk bed in which I was sleeping, said, "Hey guys, wake up! Wake up!" All the prisoners got up and were asking each other, "What's happening?" He said, "There are armed guards on the roof of the women's prison." We all were up with fear and saw the guards holding machine guns, standing every five or six metres next to each other. The door to the first floor was locked and prisoners down there couldn't see women's prison roof, so some prisoners let them know what was happening there. The first guess came to mind was that there was a plot to massacre prisoners, like the one they did in Peru few years back. Everybody was engaged in discussing the matter. After about half an hour, they called about fifteen mujahideen by loudspeaker to go to the prison office. Those were mostly prisoners from the quarantine. All prisoners were now out of the rooms, walking and talking. The main prediction was that the regime decided to exact revenge by killing a number of prisoners. The mujahideen were optimistic and did not believe that the MKO had been defeated.

From the 5th to 8th Mordad, about 180 mujahideen were transferred in separate groups. During those days, the mullah Valipour, the head of the prison, come into the ward with his guards, poking into the rooms and memorising names. About 80% of MKO members were taken. One morning Ali-reza Aminian, a former mujahid



and now a Marxist (which he had not announced), came to my room. We were talking together on first level of bunk bed when prison-mates told us that Valipour was in the ward. Ali-reza didn't want be seen in my room; he withdrew himself back and tried hide himself behind me. Valipour poked his nose into the room, looked at me, then bent his head and saw Ali-reza. He asked, "What are you doing here, Mr Aminian?" Ali-reza said, "I had something to do with Bijan for a few seconds." Valipour shook his head and left. About half an hour later, they called another list of prisoners, including Ali-reza.

Ward 2 and quarantine were emptied of members of the MKO on the 8th Mordad. The family visits and daily fresh air were interrupted. There were only leftists in Ward 2 and five or six Bahá'ís. They transferred us all into one room in quarantine, which was isolated from the other parts of prison. We were cut off completely. No one could imagine what a disaster was happening. In the meanwhile the speculation on exchanging mujahid prisoners with prisoners of war was strengthened, and the prediction of the execution of a number of prisoners was also strong.

Toward the end of Mordad [August], we found out that many prisoners had been executed. The information came from the head of the prison, Valipour, and his assistant. In mid-Shahrivar, they called about ten to twelve leftists, including me. We were frightened. We said goodbye and left. They took us out of the prison. By the respectful behaviour of police in the police station, we found out that they knew what had happened to other prisoners, and they were now looking at us with empathy.

They blindfolded us and took all to the detention centre of the Intelligence Corps on Kuhsangi Street, in Mashhad. We were all in a room. Fear and heavy silence were hanging on the space. For the first 24 hours, nobody showed up. The guards' behaviour was relatively good.

The next day, interrogation began. Anyone who was summoned, didn't come back.

I was the fifth person who was called for interrogation. I was afraid

and trembled.

The interrogator approach was calm and respectful. He asked whether I was a Muslim. "I'm examining and studying," I said. He asked, "Do you agree with the line of organisation?" I replied, "No." He said, "Will you write a repulsion statement?" I said, "No." "In case you are released," [he said], "will you submit a commitment not get involved in political activity? Otherwise, the penalty for contact with Mohareb [at-war-with-God] organisations is execution."

I said, "Yes," and signed the commitment text.

I was transferred to another room, in which other prisoners were. After about a week, we were transferred back to Vakilabad Prison. Here I found that about 160 to 180 prisoners had been executed. They were hanged in the detention centre yard of the Intelligence Corps, in Kuhsanghi Street, in Mashhad, by crane. They faced their destiny with courage and unshakeable.

After about three months, the family visits were reinstated. Most families found out of their loved ones' executions in these visits, but they had no information about where they were buried.

Apparently, they were buried in mass graves in a section of Behesht Reza of Mashhad that was specifically for political prisoners. Some of mujahideen survivors of 1988 massacre, such as Morteza Alian, Mahmoud Meidani, Amir Ghafouri, Javad Assad Zadeh and Zahra Eftekhari, were kidnapped and murdered in the chain murders in 1372 [1993] and 1373 [1994] by teams of assassins, and no information is available.

After returning to Vakilabad Prison, all prisoners were placed in Ward 2.

The ward atmosphere was so sad. The mujahideen's room was cluttered and left in the same situation. Its door was closed. In all we were about 40 prisoners. We had no books, newspapers or television.

It was early winter when they called up the names of leftists from the loudspeaker. When we entered into the corridor, we stood in a line at the prosecutor's door. Anyone who was to enter had to be

blindfolded. When I entered the room, four or five people were in there. An anonymous voice asked my name and other specifications, with no other questions, and let me leave the room. It seemed to me they were the final panel to decide for prisoners' freedom. Until the 1368 [1989] Iranian New Year, all prisoners except for two or were gradually released. They had to submit a property collateral and a commitment letter to not get involved in political activity after their release.

I signed a blank form. In my first visit to the prison, in response to the question of the person behind the desk, who asked me why I hadn't answered the questions on the form, I said, "I haven't been released based on any commitment to collaborate with you. I have only promised not to return to political activities. That is all I should do." He said, "It will cost you gravely: you will possibly be taken back to Vakilabad Prison." I said, "OK, I am ready whenever you summon me." He shook his head as a threatening sign and said, "Go now, and wait for us."

I had been summoned for a year like this and I had to go every time and sign and come back. I tried hard to go back to university but to no avail. After two years going back and forth, the disciplinary committee of the university sent me a letter stating the lack of possibility for me to continue my education.

In the '80s and after, there was not any due process or something that can be called the court for political prisoners.

My own trial in 1363 [1984] lasted only five minutes. The judge, Razini, was sitting behind a desk and I was sitting on the other side, in front of him. He had just read the indictment within two minutes and sentenced me with maximum punishment for waging war against God and collaborating with Mohareb groups ([OIPFG] Minority) and the Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar). I was only able to ask, "What does it mean the maximum punishment?" He said, "It means execution. Defend yourself."

The verdict was already made and now he asked me to defend myself. I replied that I did not think I had done any kind of act that

was punishable by death.

That was all: the trial concluded!

All trials of the '80s (1980-1970) were the same.

### ***W16 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- During bastinado, the witness was beaten on the head with the same cable used on his feet; it felt as hard as a stick. He screamed after 20 or 30 lashes; he was let down after 50 or 60 blows in order that sensation be restored to his feet (which would intensify the pain) and lest he have a heart attack (which many prisoners had suffered previously). He was then subjected to Ghapani with his feet still tied to the punishment bed; he was pushed so that he swung back and forth like a pendulum.

- The witness saw a Dr Balooch, a survivor of the 1979 revolution, who removed the skin from the witness's feet with a razor, dressed the wounds with bandages up to the knees and injected him. The witness was picked up under the arms and dragged back to the ward because he could no longer walk. He was left in an octagonal room next to the torture chambers, together with the Secretary General of the Tudeh Party. The sound of torture was drowned out with tapes of religious incantations.

- Interrogation in Mashhad was conducted with the purpose of making the witness repent and collaborate with prison authorities; interrogation sessions lasted whole days.

- The witness's mock trial was held in Vakilabad nine months after his arrest. Razini announced that the sentence was death.

**Witness 17: [W17: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1959

Age at time of incident: 22

Status of witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: [W17/1: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 20

Date of arrest: 16th June 1981

Date of execution: 5th July 1981

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

How was my brother, [W17/1: NAME REDACTED] executed by firing squad on the 5th July 1981?

A few days prior to the big street demonstration of the 20th June 1981 [30th Khordad], my brother, [W17/1: NAME REDACTED], and some of his friends who were in opposition against the regime, were gathering to prepare for the participation in this demonstration.

On the 17th June 1981 [27th Khordad], the house in which they had gathered was surrounded by the regime's agents and they were all arrested and savagely beaten and hurt.

Most of them were members of the Payam association, which was connected to People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO). They had an office in Nazi Abad. On the day and place of arrest there were 90 people, with the youngest among them being thirteen or fourteen years old. Some were sixteen years old; my brother was twenty years old.

After their arrest, my parents' attempts to find out their wherea-

bouts were unsuccessful. We were completely clueless for a few days until, after a week passed, we were informed that they were detained in a place on the way to the city of Ray, called “Saleh Abad” and kept in a stable.

My mother, along with other mothers, went there to visit them. The head of the detention centre assured them that they were a bunch of young kids and had not done anything significant, but until further notice they had to stay there and most likely would be free in a few days. They agreed to allow the mothers to bring clothes and medicine for their children.

The next day that my mother went there to visit them, they were not there and she was told that they had all been transferred to Evin Prison.

No visit was allowed at Evin Prison. At 14.00 on the 6th July 1981, we heard the news that those who were arrested on the 17th June had all received their justice by being executed by firing squad. Then they began reading the list and this was how we learned about the execution of my brother, [W17/1: NAME REDACTED]. That means it took even less than twenty days from the time of his arrest until his execution.

After that, my father went to collect his corpse; where the families were asked for money in order to release their corpses, the money was for the bullets that riddled their bodies. The charge was based on the number of bullet holes in their corpses. I cannot exactly remember how much my father paid for my brother’s bullet holes. We buried him in Section 41 of Behesht Zahra cemetery. But the story didn’t end there: the authorities were extremely frightened of the funerals. They repeatedly harassed us during the funerals and it’s worth noting that this all happened during the month of Ramadan.

Every time that our family went to visit his grave, we noticed that they had broken his gravestone. My father had to have the gravestones rebuilt several times, but finally we realise that this was useless. All the gravestones of Section 41 (which was called the “Hypocrites” section) were being broken all the time.

On many occasions, we witnessed that they were dropping off bus-loads of people, who were savagely attacking and beating the family members who had come to visit their children's graves.

The Islamic regime of Iran did not just kill a member of our family, they made us all painfully suffer from it.

In the name of my family, particularly my parents, who lost their health forever after this sad event, in the name of those who are no longer with us, I'm presenting my case to Iran's International Tribunal and I hope that this can expose a small portion of thousands and thousands of crimes that have been committed by the Islamic Regime, and I also hope that this can lead to the prosecution of the agents of this anti-human tragedy.

May this horrible crime be registered in history.

Long live Iran,

Respectfully,

[W17: NAME REDACTED]

### ***W17 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Approximately eighteen days elapsed between the arrest and execution of [W17/1: NAME REDACTED]. The witness heard on the radio that 110 people were executed at the same time; their names were printed in the Kayhan newspaper.
- The demonstrations of the 30th Khordad provoked "mass executions".
- There were signs of cigarette burns on the body.
- A fifteen-year-old neighbour was executed for having a publication in his pocket.

## **Witness 18: Sima Rostamalipour**

D.O.B.: 1963

Age at time of incident: 25

Status of witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: Parvis Rostamalipour**

D.O.B.: 1958

Date of arrest: November 1985

Date of execution: Summer 1988 (Evin Prison)

Occupation at time of arrest: High school graduate

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

Parvis was a member of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority), who was arrested in Aban 1364 [November 1985] in Tehran during a visit to one of his friends. Parvis was committed to the idea of human equality and freedom of thought. He held the belief that people should be able to think freely, live freely, and have the basic necessities of life.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, only because of his humanist and pro-equality ideology and for raising public awareness of these ideas, arrested him and put him in prison.

The Islamic Republic, after placing Parvis under unbearable torture, sentenced him to life in prison in a doctored trial that lasted only a few minutes, without giving him the right to a lawyer. But the Islamic Republic didn't even follow their own sentence and in the summer of 1367 [summer of 1988], executed Parvis along with his other friends who were also in prison, and without informing his family, buried him in the mass graves in Khavaran.



## *W18 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was in hiding at the time of her brother's arrest. It took the family several months to find Parvis in Evin; after his trial, he was put in Ward 2 because he was older than fifteen and serving a life sentence.
- The witness's mother visited Parvis in prison and found his back had been damaged by torture. She was only able to meet him through a glass separator; he requested that she not request a direct meeting as only those who participated a televised interview or turned in their friends were allowed this. Cellmates confirmed that Parvis was kept in solitary confinement. The witness has since been told by others in the prison that the victim had been kept in solitary confinement for months, as he was resisting torture.
- Parvis was sentenced to life imprisonment; he had no access to legal representation.
- The witness's mother was insulted by Haji Karbalai on the bus en route for a prison visit; when she protested about this treatment, she was physically thrown off the bus, which left her wounded for a week.
- Visits were stopped in the summer of 1988.
- After Khomeini's fatwa, all political prisoners from Ward 2 were taken to solitary confinement and then taken to a room, where they were asked only whether they accepted Islamic government and would recant their beliefs; there was no charge and only beliefs were discussed. No legal representation was present. Prisoners who refused to denounce their non-Islamic beliefs were sentenced to death. Nayeri and Pour-Mohammadi were members of this Death Commission; prisoners appeared before them individually, having been brought from solitary. Cellmates reported that Parvis was killed by firing squad.
- The witness went into hiding after she realised that anyone with a "freedom-seeking view" was in danger; she feared that the whole family would be targeted after one member had been identified as an anti-regime activist.

**Witness 19: (W19 NAME REDACTED)**  
(Redacted based on request of the witness)

## **Witness 20: Mersedeh Ghayedi**

D.O.B.: 1955

Age at time of incident: 26

Status of witness: Survivor and sister of two victims (her brother was also executed)

Political affiliation: Iranian Organisation of Sahand

**Names of victims: Sadegh, Javad, Monir**

I was arrested on the 9th June at 15.00 in one of the secluded streets near our home by Sepah Pasdaran [Security Guards of the Islamic Republic of Iran]. Three people attacked me from behind and put me in car by force. From the first moment, they started to swear at me and beat me and immediately they took me to a school that was close by and they blindfolded me with a piece of cloth and kept repeating that I did not have any right to talk. After a few hours, they took me to another place.

The reason I was in the school for a few hours was that they had arrested two other of my family members and they were waiting for car and at the same time they stormed our home and arrested one of my family members there. When they stormed our home, my brother (Sadegh) was home. Right there, in front of my mother, they beat him up so much that he soiled himself and our home was surrounded by Sepah Pasdaran for a month.

After a few hours, we were taken to Komiteh Moshtarak (shared/joint committee) in a hooded car. "Komiteh Moshtarak" is a name that was used for this prison during the Shah. During the Islamic Republic, the name "Komiteh 3000" was used. Upon entering Komiteh 3000, we were savagely body-searched and after that they threw a number around our neck and we were photographed;

then, the interrogation would start.

The types of torture that were used in Komiteh 3000: The first question that a person was asked was about his/her shoe size. This meant that you would be lashed so much that your shoe size would increase from 38 to 42 or 43. Lashing feet was done in turns. First they whipped one foot and then the other foot. Another form of torture was called “Ghapani”, weighing by a steelyard: making one stand up, tying up hands and feet to small metal boards and with every small movement the knots were tighter. One of the tortures that I witnessed was in the middle of the Komiteh 3000 yard, where a guy was being tortured. They would throw cold water over him and then would start lashing him. They would make him run and as he was running, they would run after him and lash him. All the people who were there and had a whip would lash him. Those were terrifying moments. In the present situation, repeating it is fatal.

Another case of torture was my own brother. He was tortured so much that in a short period of time, his kidneys did not function well and all his body was covered with fungus. His teeth had lost all the enamel and it was very difficult for him to eat food. The one year that he spent in Komiteh, he was always in solitary confinement. All the people who were in Komiteh were always in the solitary confinement with closed doors and could use the bathroom only four times a day.

Another case of torture was the keeping of small children in prison. Small children were arrested along with their parents. In order to put pressure on the parents, the children were not sent out. One case in Komiteh 3000 is about a girl called Zari and her small daughter, Solmaz (who is living in Europe now); they were arrested. When they took Zari to be tortured, the female warden would take care of Solmaz. And every day after being tortured for hours, she had to take care of her child. As much as she pleaded for her child to be sent out, they would not agree. They had taken Zari's child as a hostage to get information from her. After a few months, Solmaz was sent out and they had to give Zari tranquiliser pills for a long time. She was executed in June 1982.

Now, about myself, in addition to all the torture that all the prisoners went through including myself, there was an additional torture: I was not given medication.

When I was arrested, my medication box was in my purse. The first question that they asked was what kind of medication it was and why I had to use it. After my explanation, they immediately took my medication and by not giving it to me, used it as a type of torture and prevented my treatment for a few years. Due to this, I lost a body part (due to lack of treatment, I lost my thyroid gland that resulted in its becoming cancerous and had to go through chemotherapy). Right now I have to take medication all the time.

What I wrote was a small portion of the tortures of the Islamic Republic. If I wanted to write about the eight years that I spent in Iranian prisons, I would have to write thousands of pages, which is not appropriate for this statement.

After one year that I was in Komiteh Moshtarak, one day they told me to pack all my belongings, since I was being transferred to another prison. While getting on the [bus], I heard something interesting from the wardens. They would tell us that, in here (they meant the torture house 3000), “You had a good time: we are sending you to another zoo. There, either you are sentenced to be executed or you will be in prison for life.” A few days after going to Evin, one early morning they called a few of us, who had been sent to Evin together, to be interrogated. When we got the interrogation rooms, we were told that we were going to be tried today. They called my name and I entered a large room. There a clergy and a regular man were sitting. I was sat across from the clergy (later on I found out that the person who tried me was Mobasheri). He started by reading a statement and at the end he told me that it was my indictment: “Do you accept it or not?” I replied, “No. I neither accept this court nor the indictment that you wrote for me.” Mobasheri started swearing at me and my family: “All of you are anti- revolution – and all of you will be executed!” Very violently, he told me to get lost. All of this took no more than five minutes. All the prisoners at that time were tried more or less the same as I

stated above. None of us had attorneys and did not have the right to defend ourselves. Only our charges were read to us.

After a week, we were taken to the room for sentencing and they gave us the notice of the sentences that had been issued for us. Most of us did not sign the paper. I was sentenced to eight years in prison. I spent my prison time in Komiteh 3000, Evin and in June 1990 I was released. Three of my family members who were arrested with me were executed.

Sadegh Ghayedi – My last meeting with Sadegh was in November/December before his transfer to Evin Prison. While an interrogator from Komiteh 3000 was present, our meeting was very short. We only have a will from Sadegh that was sent out by one of the prisoners.

Javad Ghayedi – Javad started his political activity in 1972 as a student activist and was arrested by SAVAK and was in prison for a year during the Shah's regime and after being released, he continued his political activity. I visited Javad in prison twice. He told me that his court had lasted for one hour. All the interrogators and chief of Evin Prison, Haj Amin and Mobasherri were present as the magistrate of the court.

Javad defended his communist ideology in court. One week before his execution, he was taken to solitary confinement and until the day of his execution was given rations of lashes since he had defended communism and Marxism. He said that he knew he was going to be executed. They had pressured him to do the interview but he had refused. Javad insisted that all through the time in Komiteh 3000, he was in solitary confinement and was tortured savagely.

Monir, along with her husband Javad, was executed on the same day. When she was taken to the room to write her will, she was told that she would be executed on the same day as her husband. On the day of her execution, I was with her down in Section 240 when they called her name for execution. A great number of prisoners were executed on that day along with her and her husband. Monir had been taken to the court twice; both times had lasted no more than a few minutes. The last time, she had been told that in order

not to be executed, she had to participate in the interview, which she had rejected.

## *W20 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness addressed the Commission on the anniversary of the 30th Khordad demonstrations, when many of her friends and family members were arrested. The names of people executed in the immediate aftermath of this event used to be published in the regime newspapers.

- The witness was arrested in 1982. The house remained under siege for one month as Revolutionary Guard agents searched for hiding places.

- The witness believes that she and her family members were arrested because they were Marxists and believed in freedom.

- The witness saw her brother Javad being dragged into the torture room as she was leaving it; he had been beaten so badly that his feet were hugely swollen. Sadegh had lost so much weight during six months of solitary confinement that she could not recognise him, nor he her. Sadegh said that Mobasheri had sentenced him to death in a two- or three-minute-long trial.

- Hojtamin was the head of Komiteh Moshtarak at this time.

- Javad was buried in Khavaran; the grave was so shallow that his clothes were visible through the soil, so his parents dug a new grave with their own hands.

- Executions were announced over the loudspeaker on Mondays and Wednesdays. A woman by the name of “Zohreh” gave the witness her ring as a keepsake when she was called for execution.

- Javad was denied permission to meet with his brothers before his execution. He was forbidden from seeing his wife as their marriage was not recognised as Islamic; he was told that he would have to re-marry her if he wanted visits in future.

- Men and women underwent the same forms of torture and

wore the same uniforms; the prison demographic was disproportionately male. The witness noted the irony that whilst the Islamic Republic of Iran insisted that women were fundamentally different from men, they treated them equally in prison.

- During interrogation, the witness was given a piece of paper with the heading “Accused”; her interrogator told her to touch only one side of the sheet as he regarded her as unclean and did not want to touch anything that she had touched.

- The witness heard that many women were seated in the “Grave” for hours.

- The witness was blindfolded for whole days; this was only removed briefly during her lavatory breaks.

- Zari was arrested together with her daughter for having a newspaper and books in her car. She was beaten so much that she became wheelchair-bound; she was tortured in the morning and then, bloodstained, given her one-year-old daughter to look after in the evening. The baby was given tranquiliser pills to calm her down.

- One pregnant prisoner was tied to a chair and threatened that she would be made to miscarry unless she cooperated with her interrogators. The child survived but is “not normal”.

- When the witness was arrested, she saw her brother in Komiteh Moshtarak; until then, the interrogators had been unable to identify him.

- The witness saw hundreds of women, whom she can name, taken for execution and recalls the dates on which this happened.



**Witness 21: Lawdan Bazargan**

Status of the witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: Bijan Bazargan**

Political affiliation: Union of Iranian Communists (UIC)

Bijan was a student in England. He came back to Iran on the 7th July 1979, four months after Iran's revolution. He entered the University of Pirapezeshki. After the "Cultural Revolution" in the universities, and their closures, he was forced to spend his time at home, reading books and hanging out with us. He was a member of a party called Union of Iranian Communists (UIC). Since his return to Iran and until this group had the permit to operate, he was active in it. He would sell their newspaper, distribute their declarations, participate in their gatherings and help them financially.

After the spring of 1981, his party, and other political groups, lost their permit to operate. Since then, he mostly stayed home, read books and spent time with us. In the middle of July of 1982, one of his friends called our house and asked to meet him in a square near our house. (Later on we discovered that his friend had been arrested earlier and had called him from the prison.) He left the house and never came back. My parents looked for him for more than four months. They visited Evin Prison several times but each time they would say his name is not in their list. Finally at the end of November of 1982, Evin Prison told my mother that he was there. For two years his fate was undecided. During this time, he was beaten, whipped, tortured, kept in solidarity confinement, was denied a lawyer, and could have a visit with my parents only once a month from behind glass and with phone.

The indictment against him was: supporting his group, selling their newspaper, participating in their gatherings and giving them his

pocket money. We were sure that once they took him to the court, he would be freed, but instead, after two years of torture and uncertainty, they gave him ten years' prison time. His court was held behind closed doors, without lawyer, or family members. The court was only for a few minutes and during this time his eyes were closed and they just read to him his indictment and then gave him his ten-year sentence. Before and after his court, my mother made several trips to the attorney general's office and the courthouse and complained about his situation, but each time the judge and attorney general told her that they would not review his case until he confess to his crimes and point out his friends, and tattletale.

He was kept in Evin and Gohardasht Prisons for more than six years. During this time, the prisoners, including him, were complaining about the quality and quantity of food, the short period they had to use the fresh air and exercise, not having access to good books, not having access to TV or radio, the poor quality of the visitation and its short period, not having access to the bathroom, and not having warm water showers. My mother along with other mothers went to visit Ayatollah Montazeri several times and they gave him a report of the situations in the prisons. Each time, one of his sons or his family members would visit with the prisoners' families and would give promises that they would look in to the situation but they never did.

In July 1988 all the visitations stopped and the prison guards told the families that they were repairing the visitation rooms. We found out months later that during July and August of 1988 they were actually hanging the prisoners. According to the testimony of Bijan's friends, he was called in front of the "Death Commission" on the 27th August 1988. He was asked, "Do you believe in God? Do you pray? Do you believe in Imam Khomeini?" He answered, "I will not answer to an inquisition and the inspection of my beliefs." He then left the room and told his friends outside that room waiting for their turn, "I hit the target". A few minutes later, he was taken to the room called "the Amphitheatre" and was hanged from the ceiling. He was 29 years old at that time and already had served more

than six years of his sentence. We were preparing ourselves for his freedom but instead, a few months later they told us that they had killed him.

During the five months that he had no visitations and they did not give us any information, my mother kept going in front of Gohardasht and Evin prison to see what's going on. On the 3rd December 1988 she went to Evin Prison and they told her, "Tell his father to come here tomorrow." Since the regime was telling a few families every day that they had killed their children, my mother asked, "Did you kill him?" They said, "Just tell his father to come." They refused to give information to the mothers because they did not want to deal with their crying and mourning.

The next day, on the 4th December 1988, my father went to Evin Prison and they gave him a small bag and told him, "Your son was an apostate and we have killed him. He did not have any space in this world and he will not have any in the other world either. Go pray for him: may God have mercy on him." My dad said, "Give me his body or show me his grave so we can have proper mourning ceremony for him." They said, "We told you that he was an apostate, so he cannot have any mourning ceremony and we will not reveal his grave. You cannot have any ceremony for him." My dad came back home looking twenty years older. He was devastated by the news. We opened the small bag, hoping to see some clues or find his will. But the small bag had only a couple of shirts, a watch, a pair of glasses and a pair of pants. None of them actually belonged to Bijan.

Years later, from the books of survivors of this massacre we found out that everything had happened very fast. The prisoners did not know that the five members of the judicial system, meeting with them were actually there to decide their fate. They thought that since the war had ended, the regime had to give amnesty to political prisoners. They were unaware of the price they had to pay if they did not answer the inquisition's questions or did not ask for forgiveness. After the massacre, the few who stayed alive had to pack every one's bag and give them to the prison officials. That's

why what we received as Bijan's belongings actually belonged to other victims. Not only did the regime deny all Bijan's rights to freedom and justice, they denied us from having his grave, his will or at least his belongings. All we know about this massacre is from the mouth and writings of the few survivors of this massacre. They officials of the regime of Iran have been silent about this crime against humanity or even denied it. We, as the family of these victims, want to know exactly what happened, why it happened, who took part in this massacre, and want justice for the victims and for us.

### *W21 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The friend who betrayed Bijan had done so under torture.
- Bijan had opposed armed struggle against the regime and was not even in contact with those who took this path. He was charged with supporting the communists, having helped them financially and distributed their newspaper. Lajevardi read the charges to prisoners' parents; one mother protested that her son could not give financial aid because he had no money, to which she received the reply that the donation of even one rial constituted help.
- The witness's cousin had been executed prior to Bijan's arrest.
- Bijan's mother met with the prosecutors and protested against her son's treatment; the response was that unless he cooperated, there would be no change. Prisoners' parents delivered petitions to Montazeri (whose son came out of the house to receive the petitions).
- Three hundred prisoners were forced to share one toilet when the other toilets broke and guards refused to have them fixed; many prisoners needed to relieve themselves often as a result of the kidney problems they incurred from torture.

- Prisoners were forced to take cold showers; the guards insisted that there was no money to purchase a water heater in Gohardasht and refused to buy one when the prisoners' parents offered to foot the bill. Bijan reported that prisoners shook in the shower in order to keep warm.
- The poor conditions in prison greatly upset the witness's mother. Mothers were interrogated for information when they tried to protest at Evin; the guards succeeded in thereby frightening the mothers, such that fewer and fewer turned up each time to protest.
- When Bijan's family insisted on a visit in Gohardasht, they were told that Bijan would grow old in prison. When they protested that his sentence was only for ten years and that he had already served six of those, the guard replied that Bijan's conduct had to change if he ever wanted to be released: he was not accepting Iran's "victory" in the war (the witness has no idea what the guard was talking about, as the ceasefire with Iraq followed months later).
- When Bijan's mother tried to visit, the guard told her to send the victim's father. When Bijan's father arrived, he was informed of his son's execution and sent home without having received a body, as "atheists and apostates have no bodies".
- Prisoners were hanged from low ceilings, so they would slowly suffocate to death; some dangled for fifteen minutes before they expired. Bijan was hanged minutes after refusing to answer whether he believed in God. Others were killed by firing squad. The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Massoud Malekzadeh – Born 1955

Student

Affiliation: Razmandeghan

Executed: 1982

Heshmatollah Arian – Born 1957

Arrested: 1982

Executed: 9th Shahrivar 1367 [31st August 1988]

Pirouz Davani – Born 1961

Arrested: 1990

Released: 1994

In September/August 1998 he was disappeared and murdered. He was a writer and among those killed in the chain murders.

Behkish Family

Siamak Asadian – son-in-law – executed 1981

Zahra Behkish – executed September/August 1983

Mohsen Behkish – arrested 19883 – executed 1985

Ali Behkish – arrested (1983) – executed 1988

Mohammad Behkish – executed 1981

Mahmoud Behkish – arrested 1983 – executed 1988

Behnad Gugushvilli – born 1960

Killed at Amol in stadium – 6th Bahman 1360 [26th January 1982]

Sasan Ghandi

Arrested – 1983

Executed – 1988

Mehrdad Panahi Shabestani

Arrested – 1983

Executed – 1988

Jafar Riahi

Arrested – 1981

Executed – 1988

Sadeqh Riahi

Arrested – 1981

Executed – 1988

Ali Riahi

Arrested – 1981

Executed – 1988

Vahid Ayeen Pariest born 1965 (16)

Arrested – 30th Khordad 1360 [20th June 1981]

Executed – one day later

Mohammad Bagher (Faiborz) Daneshmard – Born 1343 [1964]  
(17)

Arrested 5th Mehr 1360 [27th September 1981]

Executed 7th Mehr 1369 [29th September 1981]

## **Witness 22: Siavash Daneshvar**

D.O.B.: 1962

Age at time of arrest: 20

Status of the witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah)

I was imprisoned for six years from 1982 to 1988 (ages 20 to 26) for working with the Komolah Organisation. I was in Sanandaj, Kamiaran, Evin, Ghezelhesar, Gohardasht and Tabriz Central Prisons and witnessed many cellmates and ward-mates being taken to execution.

After the 20th June mass demonstration, the regime had a major clampdown on demonstrators and the opposition. People were rounded up and executed the same day. The papers of the time would print the names of the executed every day. Many people learnt of their loved ones' execution through the paper. These executions were done after severe torture, summarily, without trial. My trial was in the winter of 1982 in such an atmosphere. This was a sham trial without any semblance to pursuit of justice. It was a means to get rid of the IRI's opponents. It took all of five minutes, and the judge ordered me out of the room and then I was given a five-year sentence and served six years.

In 1982 in the central prison of the city of Sanandaj I saw 47 people being taken away to be executed. I can attempt to make a list but I don't have a clear memory of their names. In 1983 I was in Ghezelhesar and Evin Prisons: Mohammadjavad Ghaedi, a member of the Union of Combatant Communists [Etehad e Morarezan Kommunist] executed on the 10th July 1983 and Ahmad Arani, a

member of the Union of Combatant Communists was executed in Evin Prison in 1983. In 1984 in Ghezelhesar, Nader Hosseini, a member of the “Union of Combatant Communists, who had a one-year sentence, was executed in Evin in springtime after transfer from Ghezelhesar. Alireza Hosseini, Nader’s younger brother, who was in our ward, lost his mind and I heard was never recovered when he heard of his brother’s execution.

In 1985 in Ghezelhesar, Jamil Shariati, a sympathiser of the “Kommolah”, was killed by Haji Davood (the head of Ghezelhesar Prison), who hit him over the head with a big iron lock. He was 24 years old.

I once was also arrested again while Khalkhali did a raid of Sanandaj and Sadegh. Khalkhali took over the airport of the city and executed people after sham trials he arranged right there. He killed hundreds of young Kurds this way. I was sentenced to prison but witnessed my ward mates be executed on the 28th August 1979. The news and photos of these fifteen executed were broadcast in Iran and all over the world.

## ***W22 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was first arrested in 1358 [1979] in the bombardment of Kurdistan, which Ayatollah Khomeini ordered on the 19th August 1979. Khalkhali was his judge and executed eleven people at Sanandaj airport; the witness can name 300 people who were also killed. In 1981, children were executed in front of their schools.

- When asked by the Commissioners whether he was tortured in prison, the witness replied: “Nobody was cuddled in prison – everyone was tortured.” During his mock trial, he had no legal representation and was not allowed to say anything; he was kicked and punched inside the courtroom and some of his friends were flogged. The clergyman used to order that defendants this beatings



as a means of making the defendants more submissive in the courtroom.

- Prisoners in Ghezelhesar were made to stand for 72 hours on end. Others were left in coffins (“Resurrection”) for months at a time, where they were forced to listen to Quranic verses; many finally succumbed and converted to Islam.
- Some prisoners were killed whilst serving their prison sentences. One person had been given a one-year sentence but was turned in by a repentor and subsequently executed.
- Some people went mad in prison; everybody suffered either physical or psychological damage. In Evin and Ghezelhesar it was possible to hear people being tortured and their bones broken at night; the witness’s jaw was broken during torture.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

The majority of these people were executed in 1983 but a few may have been executed in the last months of 1981.

- Abbas Entezam Hojat
- Massoud Niazmand
- Mehdi Mirshahzadeh
- Mohammad Chitmontaz
- Javad Ghahedi
- Sadegh Ghahedi
- Monir Hashemi
- Behnam Razaee Jahromi
- Ahmad Hosseini Arani
- Ali Razavai
- Mohammad Yazdaniyan
- Reza Esmati – executed 1983/1984
- Nader Hosseini – executed 1983/1984
- Jamileh Shariati – had cancer – died in prison from an injection
- Nemati Nodiayan – executed 1983
- Amjad Ghoti – executed 1983

The witness says that he has the names of 300 individuals who

were executed or killed by the regime.

### **Witness 23: Rahman Darkeshideh**

D.O.B.: 1964

Age at time of arrest: 24

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

I was arrested on the 17th December 1980 – at the age of sixteen – in one of Tehran's southern localities, called Baroot Koobi, on the charge of supporting the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority) and spreading propaganda against the war . During my eight years and two months in prison, I was repeatedly persecuted and tortured. For example, from September 1982 to September 1984, I was in solitary confinement in Gohardasht Prison. During this time, eighteen months of which I spent with a cellmate named Fazlollah Hosseini, who was executed in September of 1988, we were allowed to go outside only during the last three months, and only once per week for fifteen minutes. During one and half years of the above-mentioned two years, we were not allowed to use books, newspapers, paper and pens, were forbidden to exercise or stretch and were punished by the guards in case of transgression. Punishment meant being lashed or thrown in a dark, one-by-two-metres cell. During these years, I was tortured several times for transgressions. In the above-mentioned dark cell, I was not aware of the time of day or night and was allowed to use the toilet only three times every 24 hours. In order to torment me, sometimes my guards denied me the use of the toilet, when I was forced to use the only (plastic) cup in my cell. While it was cold in the cell, the guards sent me there wearing only an undershirt and

trousers. The cell's floor was bare, and they did not even give me a blanket. In order to survive the cold, I was forced to continue moving night and day. As such, there were no opportunities for sleep. I once spent one week in this cell.

I initially wrote this memoir and short biography to present myself to you as one of the Islamic Republic's thousands of victims. This memoir is only a drop in an ocean of memories that never leave me in peace as a victim of the criminal regime. I was taken to mock trials on several occasions. In the first trial, I was ordered free, but I was not released at the prison guard's discretion. A few months later, there was another trial, and this time, I was sentenced to three years in prison. But once again, I was not released at the end of my sentence based on the decision of my prison guard. I was finally released after eight years and two months, carrying loads of pain, suffering and memories.

I know of many political prisoners during those years who were denied a lawyer and the right to defend themselves, tried in courts whose decisions were known in advance and were condemned and executed. The execution of Mohammad Firouzi Javan from Bandar Abbas was my first bitter experience. Mohammad Firouzi was arrested and sentenced to life in prison in the early 1980s, when he was still a student, due to his participation in anti-government demonstrations, which resulted in the police attacking the demonstrators and clashing with them. They transferred him from Bandar Abbas Prison to Ghezelhesar Prison. In the autumn of 1981, while his life sentence was still in effect, they transferred him back to Bandar Abbas Prison without giving a reason or allowing a trial and executed him.

In the next few years, I witnessed the execution of other prison mates and comrades. Ghodrat Arjmandi, Massoud Sedigh, Karim Haj Ali Mohammadi, Mahmoud Mahmoudi, Siavosh Hadaddi Moghaddam, Mansour Ghomashi, Khalifeh Mardani, Hajiat Mohammadpour, Amir Saed Nematollahi, Esmail Hosseini, Mansour Nour Mohammadi, Reza Ranjbar and Hamid Reza Zamani Kandovani were some of these prisoners who never had the right to de-

fend themselves at trials that were held without defence counsels, and who were executed for their thoughts and political activities. In the summer of 1988, just when the Islamic Republic accepted the United Nations Security Council Resolution 598, declaring a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq, the massacre of political prisoners in Iranian prisons began. Thousands of prisoners were executed during this massacre. In Gohardasht Prison, prisoners from six different prison wards who had been spared execution could be fitted in a single ward. This will give you an idea of the scale of the massacre.

On the morning of the 28th August 1988, I was taken blindfolded from my solitary cell to a place where supposedly trials were being held. We were never told why we were taken there. We were all seated blindfolded in a hall and were taken to a room one at a time. When I was taken to this room, I was allowed to remove my blindfold. Among those present in the room, I recognised Nayyeri and Eshraghi. The former was the so-called judge of the Islamic Revolutionary Court, and the other was the prosecutor of the Islamic Revolution. There were several other mullahs present, who, as I heard from other prisoners afterwards, were representatives of the Intelligence Agency and the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Karaj. I was questioned in this room, which was supposedly the court, although we who were questioned there were not aware of this. He asked my name, age, place of birth and similar questions and then asked me what my religion was. I told him that I had no religion. He said, "Does this mean that you are not a Muslim?" And I answered, "No, I am not!" He asked, "Since when you have not been a Muslim?" I answered that I had never been one. He said, "In all your life, have you not once said 'Bessm Allah' or 'Allah o Akbar'?" I answered, "No, I have not!" He asked, "What about your father – has he too never performed Muslim prayers?" I answered, "My father has never done it either."

In Islamic canon, there are two types of heretics. An innate heretic is someone who was a Muslim or born a Muslim and turned his back on the faith. The sentence for such a person is death. But a

public heretic is someone who has never been a Muslim, which includes those who lost their father at an early age. Since I testified that my father was like me and I was very young when I started my activities with the organisation, I was declared a public heretic. At the end, Nayeri told me that he was giving me the opportunity to convert to Islam; otherwise, he was going to carry God's sentence on me. Mostafa Farhadi, who lost his life in the summer of 1988, is an example of an execution carried out based on this Islamic canon. He, who was arrested during the Shah's reign in connection with the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas, which was a religious organisation, changed his belief in prison and became a Marxist. In the summer of 1988, they executed him based on this canon, even though he had declared that he was a Muslim to avoid execution. That is, if a person had been a Muslim and became a Marxist, his sentence was death even if he returned to Islam.

My trial did not last more than five minutes and I was taken out afterwards. I was handed to a prison guard while blindfolded. He asked me, "Where are you supposed to go?" I said, "I do not know." He said, "What did you reply when they asked you if you are a Muslim or not?" I replied, "I said that I was not". The guard then took me to the left side of the hall and sat me down. The left-hand side was where they seated those who were to be executed. I sat there until seven or eight in the evening. On that day, they lined up two groups of approximately 30 prisoners, lined them up and took them for execution. Among those executed that day I can name Mahmoud Ghazi, Nabiollah Abbasi and Kayvan Mostafavi. At the end, they took the approximately seven of us who had not been executed to a ward and imprisoned us in a room.

In those days, one of the prisoners, named Jalil Shahbazi, who had been in prison since 1979, committed suicide in the toilet by cutting his intestines open with a piece of glass. We also heard through the ventilator the voice of one prisoner sentenced to death while he was talking to Nasserian, the executioner of Gohardasht Prison. This prisoner was asking, "But why should I write a will?" and Nasserian snapped at him to write faster and not talk. While

these executions were taking place, at least one hundred prisoners who had served their sentences, and even some whose sentence had ended more than seven years before, were executed. Among them was my cellmate in Gohardasht solitary (Fazlollah Hosseini). Many of my prison mates and comrades were executed during this summer. Mohsen Rajabzadeh, Kiomars Mansouri (Ahmadi), Hossein Molla Taleghani, Mohammed Reza Hajikhani, Hashem Adel Mashhadi Sari, Asadollah Panjeh Shahi, Bijan Eslami, Gholam Khoshnam, Alireza Samadzadeh, Massoud Bakhtari, Majid Eyvani, Heidar Zaaghi, Abbas Raiisi, Manouchehr Rezaii, Nader Lassani, Homayoun Nikpoor Farrokh and many others were prisoners who lost their lives during this historical massacre.

In the 1988 massacre, like the years prior, the prisoners were executed without ceremony and due legal process. That is, they neither received a verdict nor had the right to contest their sentences. They had no lawyers to defend them and did not even know that they were answering questions in a court. To a question posed by Sadegh Riahi, one of those who lost their lives in the summer of 1988, who asked “Why are you asking us these questions?” they answered, “We want to reorganise the wards. Do you want to be in the Muslims’ ward or the non-Muslim one?” He replied, “The non-Muslim ward.” So they executed him. His brother, father and two sons were also executed on the same day. His younger brother, named Ali Riahi, who was student, had also been executed in the early 1980s.

In the summer of 1988 massacre, prisoners were executed solely for their opinions. They had been in prison for years due to their political activities and were sentenced to prison terms based on the laws of the Islamic Republic. They were then tried without any new charges at an inquisition. They never faced new charges. They were executed solely because of their political or religious beliefs. A committee appointed by Khomeini passed death sentences in only a few minutes. The mass murder of 1988 was not an accident. It was a decision taken in advance to destroy a generation, a generation that searched for freedom and justice in its homeland.

## *W23 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was a minor when he was arrested; Savan Sol-tani was but one of the witness's many classmates (all minors) who were executed in 1979.
- The witness was a sympathiser of MKO at the time of his arrest; he was charged with writing anti-war slogans. He was tortured every day in prison and first taken to court six months after his arrest. He was due for release around the 30th Khordad but was detained further at this point: those who had finished their sentences were led out of Ward 3 of Evin (the political prisoners' ward) and were beaten by Mohsen, a four-fingered guard, who asked them whether they had killed Ayatollah Beheshti. [Note: Beheshti, the head of the Iranian revolutionary judiciary, was assassinated in the "Hafta Tir bombing" of 1981.] He was then transferred to Ghezel-hesar and was sentenced for to a further three years in prison on the basis of information conveyed by repenters.
- The witness had no access to legal representation at any point.
- When the witness had completed this extended sentence in Gohardasht, his sentence was extended indefinitely and without any reason. He was transferred to solitary (for three months) within two years for refusing to denounce the MKO; he was soon transferred to a cell above mujahideen who had completed their sentences, all but one of whom were later executed.
- He was brought in front of a religious judge, who ordered that he sign a condemnation of dissident groups; for refusing, he was told that his release would be conditional on denouncing others on video.
- Minors were subjected to the same treatment as adults; some were executed. The youngest person in the witness's cell was fifteen-years-old; the oldest was 30.

- Prisoners in solitary confinement communicated through Morse code; guards installed bars on the windows when they realised this was happening, so that prisoners could only see the sky. Sports were banned in Gohardasht and anyone seen exercising was placed in solitary: a 1x2m cell in which it was dark 24 hours a day. The witness was left in such a cell twice for a few days at a time, dressed only in underwear, at the end of autumn. It was so cold that the witness slept in a foetus position and woke up every hour to exercise in order to keep warm. He was expected to urinate in the same cup from which he drank his tea; he had no access to books or newspapers during his time in solitary.
- Finally, he was brought in front of the Death Commission; in addition to those mentioned in the written statement, Eshraghi and Pour-Mohammadi were present. He was questioned only on his religion this time, rather than his politics; prisoners were asked to sign that they were Muslims. Defendants had no legal representation or the right to defend themselves. Many were sent for their executions; over two days, half of those who had finished their sentences were executed. Nayyeri said that the executions were on Khomeini's orders.
- Approximately seven or eight prisoners were spared execution because they were declared "public heretics"; they were, however, threatened with death for not reciting their prayers, which the witness ultimately agreed to do.
- Prison authorities stopped the delivery of newspapers in order to keep prisoners in the dark about what was going on. Some were taken for execution by mistake and had no idea they were about to be killed when they were suddenly told to write their wills. Prisoners were hanged in Ward 8 of Gohardasht.
- Those who explicitly refused to become Muslims received a penalty of five lashes for every prayer session they missed. Jalil Shahbazi committed suicide with a broken window after he was subjected to this.
- He ultimately served eight years and two months behind bars.



- In 1985, a woman who was about to be arrested swallowed a cyanide capsule and fed one to her four-year-old daughter too, lest they both be imprisoned and tortured.
- The witness clarified that at one point he was held in “solitary” confinement with one other person.
- A cellmate confided in the witness that the experience of one month of prison in the Shah’s time was equivalent to one day under the Islamic Republic.

## **Witness 24: Nabaz Alidoost**

D.O.B.: 1966

Occupation at time of arrest: High school student

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI)

I was arrested and tortured severely on the 26th January, 1982, when I was only fifteen, for being a member of the Youth Organisation of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) in Sardasht. After primary interrogation in Sardasht Prison, I was transferred by helicopter, along with six other political prisoners, to Saghez Prison. They lifted us by helicopter because all the roads to Saghez were controlled by Kurdish forces. When I was interrogated and tortured in Saghez Prison, I witnessed the torture and execution of several Kurdish rebels who were members of the PDKI and the Komolah Organisation. I was taken for staged executions several times, in spite of my age. They went all the way through the execution process and fired shots but not at me.

I was transferred to Tabriz Prison, where they detained me for nineteen months, and I witnessed how several political prisoners were taken for execution, after being condemned to death in trials that lasted just a few minutes. After a 36-month imprisonment, I was taken to Sardasht and released. I joined the PDKI two months after my release. I will elaborate the details in the court of law.

To prove the brutality of the Islamic Republic, it's sufficient to say that my mother, my three brothers, and I were detained and tortured for political activities in the Islamic regime's prisons for over fifteen years.

## ***W24 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness clarified that he was aged fourteen years and a half when he was arrested with a friend. The boys were hit and kicked during their interrogation; they were stripped in what was one of the coldest winters in memory in Kurdistan. The purpose was to extract information from them about other members of the party.

- He was arrested with a friend. They were first taken to the bases of the intelligence forces where the guards were screaming at them and hitting and kicking them. They took their clothes from the boys, despite it being one of the harshest winters in Kurdistan. The guards wanted information about other members of the party.

- The witness had no visits from family members during the first eleven months of his detention, as nobody knew where he was. He was later able to send news that he was alive and in Saghez, with the help of benevolent people; his family was only able to visit him after first being turned away on many attempts.

- When asked by the Commission to describe his trial, the witness replied, "When you say 'trial', you have something European in mind." The witness was beaten in the presence of the judge and the trial was over within minutes. It must have been obvious to the judge that the witness was a minor, since he had no facial hair: he was sentenced to 39 months in prison, which he believes was a reduction in virtue of his young age.

- The witness was subjected to two mock executions in Saghez. In the first, he and six cell mates were asked to gather their belongings and write their wills. They were then tied to popular trees in the yard and live shots were fired. The witness thought he had been shot but was told, "It's not your turn, we'll execute you tomorrow." Kholid Kharemi, Zarin (Kurdish girl) and Omar Fayezi (Komolah fighter) were killed on this occasion: it was a mock execution only for the witness.

- 70 people were killed by firing squad in Tabriz after their clandestine organisation was betrayed; the witness was forced to

carry the dead bodies into an ambulance. He still suffers nightmares about this moment; the enduring trauma means that he cannot watch violent or prison films.

- The witness contended that he was discriminated against on multiple fronts: for being a Sunni, a Kurd and a Communist. He believed that this meant that he was treated more harshly than Shi'is who committed comparable offences. He is sure that the bombardment of Kurdistan constitutes genocide in virtue of the deliberate targeting of Kurds.

- The witness was required to provide a property collateral as a condition of his release, after which he suffered “social deprivation” for nine years: a directive was issued to all state bodies to the effect that he was not allowed to study or engage in any social activity.

- The witness was forced to measure the length of 300m corridor with a matchstick; when he reported the answer as “1,500 matchsticks”, he was told that he was lying as the real answer was “1,350”, so he should return and measure the corridor again.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Names of perpetrators in Sardasht Prison – note that torturers and interrogators were generally from outside of Kurdistan

- Rasould Mostafavi from Tehran – a.k.a. “Rasouli”
- Haj Mousa Shahabi from Tehran – a.k.a. “Shahab”
- Hassan Batouli from Mashhad – torturer in Saghez
- Haji Esmaeli from Nashabour – torturer in Saghez
- Hadi Esmaeli – interrogator of Komolah members in Mahabad
- Asghar Atah – Saghez
- Nasser Afshin – dead
- Haj Ebrahim – torturer in Tabriz Prison but probably dead because he was already 60 years old at the time that the witness was in jail.
- Karim Kalehpaz – torturer in Tabriz Prison
- Haji Agha Ramandi – Islamic Judge in Saghez — he was

both a cleric and law student

Names of those witness knew were executed while he was in prison:

- Omar Fazi – Komolah
- Khalet Karimi – PDKI
- Nabi Pirri – PDKI
- Zari – Khalet’s girlfriend

## **Witness 25: Sousan Golemohammadi**

D.O.B.: 1956

Age at time of incident: 25

Status of witness: Survivor and wife of the victim

**Name of victim: Iraj Shirali**

D.O.B.: 1953

Age at time of arrest: 31

Organisation affiliation: Union of Iranian Communists (UIC)

**Names of victims: Jamshid Ghiyasi (cousin), Parviz Nik Talaan (cousin), other family members**

I was a supporter of Union of Iranian Communists (UIC). I was arrested in September 1982 in Tehran. After an armed altercation between the military branch of the organisation, Sarbedaran, and Basij and Sepah forces, the members and supporters of the organisation were arrested in Tehran and Amol. Then they got busy arresting the rest of the members in other places. They arrested my father in his home in Tehran and my husband also was arrested in Tehran when he was supposed to meet with someone. About two months later, they came for me and my sister-in-law and took us to the Evin with the excuse of asking us some questions. At the time, I had a four-months-old baby boy and my daughter was about two and a half years old. I wasn't active because as a mother I didn't have time but to look after my kids, either being pregnant or taking care of them. Obviously, I couldn't be very active.

Anyway, with no clear reason, with the excuse of completing my file, they took me to cell number 209 in Evin Prison and every day they took me out to the hallway blindfolded and made me sit there with no food and water or the right to use the washroom for

hours and they did this to threaten me or terrify me. They didn't do much to me except the casual beating, keeping me hungry and thirsty, and swearing at me. The reason was because I was among one of the last ones to be arrested and I had no fresh information for them. But in the very same place that was well known for religious punishment and torture, they passed tens of people with bloody feet and broken skins before my eyes every day. I was blindfolded, but I could still see their tortured bodies through it. They kept me for a longer period of time than the others in the solitary confinement because I had told them that I was not religious. They kept me there for eight months before they move me to the prison ward. In the public ward there were more than 60 people in each room. Death was everywhere. Every day at eating time they use to call some of us who didn't yet know their sentences. It was obvious that they were taking them for execution. Most of them were young girls who hadn't had the chance to live their lives. They were young and proud of their beliefs. They use to leave us with a bitter smile on their faces. Because of the terrifying atmosphere covering the whole prison we couldn't freely react to their departure and offer our sympathy to them. We use to just hug them and hold their hands to express our gratitude. After their departure, the whole ward became quiet and sad.

During the captivity and because all my immediate family members were arrested, I couldn't visit my children for a year. I could only see my husband once for five minutes to say goodbye to him before his execution. My husband, Iraj Shirali, was sentenced to death along with his other comrades in one of those sham trials of the revolutionary courts.

We were sentenced to death or imprisonment in the Islamic Republic courts without a fair trial or a lawyer. My political activities even from the Shah's time were taken into consideration for a heavier sentence. I was an active member of the Confederation of Iranian Students outside Iran before the revolution and a passive member of the UIC from 1980 to 1983 because of my condition: being pregnant and looking after my kids. They didn't care about

these facts. They wanted to destroy the opposition regardless of their level of involvement.

In late 1985, while I was sentenced to ten years of incarceration without any clear reasons, they reviewed my file and with the interference of a supervisory group assigned by Montazeri, they let me free. In fact this was only applicable to those who had unreasonable sentences issued in early '80s. They wanted to ease the level of discontent among people because of a high number of executions and other unreasonable sentences, as well as reducing the prison population. This had nothing to do with being merciful. Anyway, my responsibilities toward my children after the execution of my husband and some other family member made me leave Evin. They had made us suffer so badly physically and mentally that it took us a long time to heal. The blows and the wounds on our souls and bodies are not going to go away. The news of the executions of my husband, father, cousins, and so many others became a trauma, which caused so many illnesses in me. Damages done to the society by the Islamic Republic during the '80s cannot be forgotten or forgiven.

My husband, Iraj Shirali, the son of Nori Shirali and Ghamartaj Barghi Shirazi, born in August 2nd 1953, was arrested in July 1982 in Tehran and five months later in January 1983 was executed by firing squad in Amol for being a member of the UIC.

His so-called judge was Ayatollah Gilani and the Attorney General was Asadolah Lajevardi. Another 21 members of the same organisation were executed with him for being the members of the UIC. The Islamic Republic did not comply with any international human rights laws and did not give the political prisoners the right to defend themselves. They had no access to lawyers or any other legal support.

The Islamic Republic murdered many other members of my family, including my cousin, Jamshid Ghiyasi, who was killed under torture in Evin in 1982 and my other cousin, Parviz Nik Talaan, who was executed in 1983.



## *W25 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- When Iraj Shirali was arrested, he disappeared without trace: the family had no news of him and could only assume that he had been arrested. The witness herself was arrested when Revolutionary Guard agents took her to Evin on the pretence of needing her for half an hour to clarify some points in her file; after being blindfolded, she was sent to a general ward and then solitary confinement for failing to say her prayers.

- The witness reported that “the atmosphere in prison was awful for women... [because] Islam looks at women [as if] they are worth half of men, equated with animals”.

- The witness added that she saw many people who had been beaten with cables on the soles of their feet; their legs had become infected up to their knees, so some people had skin grafts. Some suffered kidney malfunction and were in need of dialysis; they could not stand straight for more than ten minutes.

- The witness’s father had been whipped because he was old and therefore suspected of being an experienced communist with a potentially valuable confession; he suffered severe kidney problems as a result and did not survive a subsequent heart attack.

- The witness testified that while she was in solitary confinement for eight months, her children were given to her mother-in-law to look after. They were only allowed to visit their mother once she had been transferred to the general ward; she found it impossible to deceive them with nursery rhymes that all was well. After her release, the witness reported that it was “like [she] had leprosy” as she was “discarded by society”: she could not get work and her mother-in-law refused to return the children, the eldest of whom did not establish contact until he was seventeen years old.

- The witness was held in solitary confinement in Ward 209 of Evin. The witness was called for interrogation at 08.00 and left sitting in the corridor until evening and deprived of basic amenities.

ties; she was hit on the head if she removed her blindfold. She was deprived of food when forced to sit in the corridors, and served soup once a day; prisoners in wards were given meagre amounts of bread and cheese, which they tried to save for harder times, in the cells. In the post-interrogation phase, lunch was provided but it gave everyone diarrhoea. Prisoners were fed just enough to keep them alive in order to serve out their sentences.

- Interrogation was conducted with the purpose of “breaking” the prisoners. The witness was kicked, hit and insulted with such words as “Infidels, you are dirt.” Interrogators used to come up from behind and pull the chairs from under prisoners.

- The witness was released after it was discovered in a review of her case that she did not belong to the organisational structure of a political organisation after all.

- The witness testified in reference to her family: “none of us are normal people anymore”. The witness added that her children have suffered a lot psychologically after visiting the prisons and losing their father. Her son was depressed and remains so.

## **Witness 26: Kamal Ahmadi**

D.O.B.: 1962

Age at time of incident: 20

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Saleh Ahmadi**

D.O.B.: 1956

Age at time of arrest: 23

Occupation at time of arrest: Officer in communications

Political affiliation: Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah)

In 1361 [1982] to cure his sickness, [Saleh] went to Tehran; after some time, the organisation of Komolah in Tehran was discovered by the security police, so he was arrested. After having no news from him for seven months, his family became aware of his arrest and so went to Evin Prison to visit him.

After repeated requests and going back and forth the 1,000-kilometre distance between his hometown (Baneh) and Evin Prison for so many times, his first degree relatives (family) were able to visit him once and for a short time. Although a long time had passed, they could easily see the traces of tortures and beatings on his face and body.

Saleh, after this short visit, disappeared, and after six months, because of the wounds from a long time of tortures and also wounds in his chest, he had internal bleeding and they had to take him to the hospital in Urumiyyeh. Saleh's family had found out about it through one of the guards in the hospital, and also found out that they transferred him back to jail in Urumiyyeh.

After hearing about this news, his parents went to Urumiyyeh and

were able to visit him in secret.

It is needed to mention that during their two short visits in Tehran and Urumiyyeh, they weren't able to talk to their son because they only spoke Kurdish, so they just saw their son from a distance and were convinced of his being alive but also of his really bad physical and psychological situation.

Finally in May/June 1363 [1984], Saleh called one of his relatives from Evin Prison and said, "I have gone the same road as Baset has gone."

Baset was his cousin and had been executed before.

After repeated requests by his family to find out whether he was alive or being executed, finally they received some personal belongings and a code and plaque of some unknown tombs; they were told that they are not allowed to go there and they had to sign a paper that they were not to have any memorial services in their hometown, Baneh.

## *W26 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Saleh Ahmadi's family did not know to which prison he had been taken after his arrest in Tehran; it was five or six months before they learnt from a neighbour that he was in Evin, The family had watched the television to see whether he would be one of the people who gave interviews but to no avail.
- It was clear from Saleh's appearance that he had been tortured: he was pale and could not stand, so had to be helped into the meeting room by guards. Since these guards stood sentry over the family, the conversation was limited to a brief inquiry about Saleh's health. Saleh lifted his shirt to reveal signs of internal haemorrhaging and broken ribs; the mother fainted (which guards claimed was on purpose) and Saleh was kicked. Saleh's father tried to persuade him to cooperate and say his prayers but Saleh refused. His parents were ordered to leave what was their first and last meeting with

Saleh in prison.

- The witness clarified that relatives in Tehran were told of the victim's execution because the distance they lived from the prison rendered it difficult for the authorities to get in contact with them directly. The family was informed of a gravesite but forbidden from visiting it or even holding a mourning ceremony; it was given the victim's clothes and a bag of his possessions.
- The witness testified that this is the first time that he has spoken about his brother.
- The witness's parents were returned a sleeping suit, untouched, that they had sent to the prison for the victim.
- The witness stated that he has lost around sixteen family members under torture or in related events. His maternal grandmother was decapitated during the bombardment of Kurdistan; two cousins were executed.

## **Witness 27: Azar Alekanan**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 19

The status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar)

From 1980 until 1988, I was arrested several times, during which I was subjected to serious physical, mental and sexual abuses. The first long-term imprisonment started in the summer of 1982, which lasted for three and half years. Then I was rearrested a few months later and I was held for another one and half years. In the first occasion, I was moved around various prisons (Sanandaj, Komiteh Moshtarak, Evin), and all along I was tortured and mistreated. Eventually, due to severe injuries resulting from torture, I was sent to Ghasr Prison to receive medical treatment. In the second occasion, while I was ill-treated, I was also subjected to serious sexual assault. Subsequently, under unbearable psychological pressure, I made two unsuccessful attempts to kill myself.

During these periods and in the subsequent years, my family and my in-laws have been subject to harassment, intimidation and discrimination. A large number of them have been assaulted and detained; some of them were executed or received long-term sentences.

### ***W27 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was arrested for the first time in 1982: her car was stopped at a roadblock and she was recognised. Under the pretence of retrieving some change, the witness then swallowed a letter she had in her wallet. Her baby's nappy was emptied as the guards searched for contraband. She was strip-searched and blindfolded.
- In Sanandaj, the witness was flogged as her interrogator held her baby girl, who was crying, "No, mum! No, mum!" She fell unconscious and woke up in a pool of her own blood, in which her little girl was sitting; the girl tried to hide the blood from the guards. Nobody took the witness to the doctor, although she was bleeding heavily; eventually she was transferred briefly to the Evin infirmary, which was "like a slaughterhouse". The witness saw a woman there who had been severely tortured; they had performed a skin graft for the soles of her feet but she was then tortured again.
- The baby had just learnt to walk but was the witness's eyes and ears; she used to guide her mother up the stairs. The witness was tortured in Ward 209 of Evin Prison: "If there is a doomsday, it was Ward 209".
- The witness was given 25-30 lashes for allegedly having burnt bridges, which she denied.
- In prison, the witness saw people with gangrened feet and children with dirty bandages on their legs. She heard children screaming from the basement, where they were taken.
- The witness's daughter was present during her interrogations. The guards were nice towards the infant girl, whom they took to buy crisps when the witness refused to feed her the prison food because she believed it was laced with camphor (a drug). The girl used to share her crisps with the prisoners, having learnt to distinguish that blindfolded people were friends and those without were enemies.
- The witness made a doll out of a sponge for her daughter. The girl played with it by recreating her mother's torture: she made a blindfold for it and beat it as she shouted, "You are malicious! Speak, speak!" The witness then hugged her daughter and told her

to stop.

- The girl had no milk at any point in her detention; when the witness begged the guard to allow the family to send money for milk, the guard replied, “Your daughter is like you and soon we’ll have the same problems with her as you.” The girl was refused medical attention for her pre-existing heart condition; she was taken to the infirmary only when her lips turned blue and was then released to the family.

- The witness was released from prison on bail in Nowruz 1985 but re-arrested six months later for sending betrayed children out, she had made it possible for them to flee. The torture hereon was all psychological, which was worse than the physical torture. The witness was kept in a corridor where children were being tortured; she could hear them being flogged behind a curtain. She heard a torturer shouting at a girl to confess that she was a Palestinian guerrilla.

- The witness’s interrogator said, “I won’t beat you this time. You’ve been beaten so much that you won’t even react – like a donkey.” He promised to break her down and humiliate her by doing something that would mean she could never again walk with her head held high; the witness expected that he merely wanted her to participate in a televised interview. During the interrogation in Sanandaj, the interrogator did not let her sleep: he used to wake her up in the middle of the night for interrogations, where he used to come close to her and touch her knees, which she slapped away. The witness had been kept in the corridor for two weeks and slept with her hands tied to the radiator. One night he threatened her that was giving her an “ultimatum”: he said that this was the last time he was talking to her and that the humiliation of which he spoke would begin in 24 hours.

- The following day the interrogator woke the witness from her sleep; she assumed he wanted to interrogate her again. He explained that the ultimatum had expired. He pulled away her chador, unbuttoned her shirt and untied her Kurdish trousers. At first the witness thought that her interrogator was trying to scare her as



he had done previously, but inferred the gravity of the situation from his deep breathing. She started screaming when she realised what he was about to do; the interrogator stuffed a Kurdish scarf, which he had been wearing around his neck, in her mouth. He then raped her, with her hands still tied to the radiator; after finishing, he dressed her and left. The rapist was a twenty-four-year-old, Turkish speaking Iranian by the name of “Behrooz”, a “low-class, low-life thug”.

- After her rape, the witness felt that her life was meaningless; she tried to commit suicide by slitting her wrists with broken glass but could not find the vein. On the second attempt, she swallowed pills and was hospitalised. As soon as the poison was flushed out of her system, she was sent back to prison and put on an IV drip in her cell. Her father heard of her attempted suicide and visited her in prison. She told her father about the rape; he looked at her understandingly and promised to take good care of her daughter from that point on.

- “So many” women were raped. When the witness was first imprisoned, she met Foziyeh, who had sores all over her body, was mentally disturbed and refused to shower because she feared that the judge would look at her naked. Foziyeh came to trust the witness and was allowed to leave prison for treatment for vaginal infection; the doctor noted during her gynaecological examination that she was not a virgin, which is when the witness realised that Foziyeh, who was unmarried, had been raped. She was then taken by the main interrogator at Sanandaj (“Katkhoda”) to a mental asylum. Before Foziyeh was taken away, the witness helped her to bathe; she removed her old clothes and, because they smelled, so bad put them in a disposal bag. The witness reluctantly returned Foziyeh her coat after she insisted it; Foziyeh removed a letter from her coat pocket and asked the witness to read it after she was gone. In it, Foziyeh had written: “In Marivan Prison there were no lights in the cells so they would bring a lantern with the food. At night the interrogator, with his flashlight, came in to my cell and raped me.”

- The witness does not know who the interrogator was and was not able to bring the letter out of prison because she was moved around so much. Upon her release the witness went to visit Foziyeh's father, who denied that he had a daughter.

## **Witness 28: Roya Sadeghi**

D.O.B.: 1963

Occupation at time of arrest: High school graduate and pharmacist

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

In one summer day of 1360 [1981], when the revolutionaries were being arrested in the streets and detained, two of my sisters were also arrested. My mother and I decided to find them. We knew what could have happened. The news of the arrest and execution of leftist political activists and Mujahideen were all over town. My mum and I went to Adel Abad Prison. In front of the jail were crowds. Shocked mothers and fathers with sad faces gathered in front of the jail. They were crying and screaming and asking the guards to just tell them that their children are alive.

A mother was crying and yelling and saying, "My daughter is only sixteen years old, why should she be in jail?" I asked myself what a fifteen- or sixteen-year-old could possibly do to be jailed.

When I was in Aghazi High School in Firooz Abad in Fars Province, Khomeini and his gangs had already had their bloody hands firmly in place in Iran and had started the arrest [for the purpose of] the quelling the opposition. We went on strike to protest these suppressions. As protests continued, my younger sister and I were expelled from school. Our family decided to send us to continue our education. My sister and I went to Shiraz and looked for spaces to attend different school to continue to graduate from high school. No school we went to accepted us. Finally we were able to finish second year in Nezam Vafa High School but at the end of the year,

the principal told me that he was sorry that he could not let us enrol next year and that he was not supposed to have allowed us to enrol in the first place.

Finally we could enrol in Allameh Eghbal High School and in spite of all the pressure to expel and arrest me, I did graduate from high school. At the time I was active with the Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas organisation.

In an autumn day, Tuesday 23rd Azar 1361 [14th December 1982] at 11.30, my father came home in hurry and with a lot of anxiety mumbled some nonsensical words. My younger sister and I were playing badminton and my mother was preparing the lunch table when we heard the sounds of the steps at the door: the sound of the steps of the four guards who rushed into our house. My father angrily went forward and asked why they were invading our house. My mother screamed from the other side of the house, "The Shah's regime killed my brother and now you want to kill my children!" The guards invaded the rooms and emptied the bookshelves and threw everything all over the house. They hit my father in the chest with their rifles and shouted, "Get lost old man! If you were a human being, your children would not have become prostitutes!" My father, while his throat choked in a protest voice, said, "You talk about my daughters like this?" The guards took away my sister and me in their car.

They took us to Naser Khan Ghashghae's big garden, which was turned into a jail at the time. My sister and I spent the night in two different rooms. The next day they took us to a bigger jail in Shiraz and then Adel Abad Prison along with other arrestees. We reached the jail at 19.00. They brutally threw us in the jail with our eyes still blindfolded. I did not know where I was then. They kept me standing on my feet until midnight. I had to go the bathroom. A guard passed by. I said, "I have to go to bathroom." The guard said, "In a minute," and then disappeared. I stood standing for another hour until 01.00. They then took me to the solitary confinement. They brutally dragged me to solitary confinement. The noise of the sounds of the guards' sandals was breaking the jail silence. I start

to panic a little. For the first time I was afraid.

They opened the door of a solitary confinement cell and pushed me inside. The solitary confinement had a big grey, tall and heavy door. I went inside the solitary confinement. I removed my eye cover in a hurry with curiosity. In that small solitary confinement [sic] there four other people: Shahrzad Hajiati (a member of the Mujahideen organisation), Zahra Rahmani, Azam Alishahi and Soghra Chah Talkhi, all of whom were active members of the Mujahideen organisation. The presence of these four people made the terrible environment of the solitary confinement a bit tolerable. I still have not forgotten the face of Shahrzad Hajiati, the beautiful and elegant face of Zahra Rahmani and the serious and friendly face of Soghra, which have kept the spirit of resistance in me. Shahrzad started talking to me: "What is your name? Why are you so disturbed? Never be afraid of them." I replied, "I am not afraid of them. I am surprised to see your healthy and lovely faces in this tight solitary confinement." Shahrzad said, "You did not say what your name was." I said, "Roya." She said she always wanted to be called Roya. I asked, "How long have you been here?" Azam Alishai said, "One year." I asked, "You were in the solitary confinement for the whole year?" Shahrzad said, "Yes." Soghra Chah Talkhi asked, "When were you arrested?" I said, "Last night. By the way how should one go to the bathroom?" Shahrzad showed me a half-full jam jar located next to the wall and said, "We urinate in that". I asked Shahrzad, "What is your situation and what are you arrested for? Shahrzad answered, "Mujahideen Organisation. How about you?" Even though Shahrzad established confidence in me to trust her, I answered cautiously. Shahrzad said, "Before they brought you here, they took away Maryam Haghighi. Maryam had been arrested for same reasons. Tomorrow morning she will be executed."

## *W28 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- When the Revolutionary Guards arrested the witness and her sister, her father ran after the car, shouting, “Where are you taking my daughters?” The arresting officers said they had only a few questions to ask them and would return them shortly. When the mother, however, asked whether they could expect the girls back for lunch, the officers said, “You can wait till you die.” The father was hit with the butt of a gun several times. The officers then said called his daughters “bitches” and said that they were taking them to prison to bring them up properly.

- The witness was flogged on her back and feet; the guards said as they beat her that whenever she was to finish her Marxist resistance, she should let them know. Bastinado caused her to lose bladder control; whenever she wanted to go to the toilets, guards told her to urinate on her friends. The prosecutor at Adel Abad was Ganbari; there was no lawyer and no right to object. She was charged with 199 offences, including taking weapons to school. She was sentenced to ten years of imprisonment and a further ten suspended; she was then sent to solitary for two months for refusing to sign her file. Earlier, she was tortured when somebody else had pointed the finger at her. The witness was also subject to mock executions.

- In Ward 4 of Adel Abad, the witness came across Azam Sayadi, who said that she had been raped; fellow prisoners could also see dark stripes on her back as a legacy of flogging. Faredah Takband was asked by interrogators why she was not a virgin; she replied that she had fallen off a horse, whereupon prisoners understood that she had been raped. A sixteen-year-old girl was raped and killed after she was arrested for possession of a publication, which regime agents claimed was a blueprint for Revolutionary Guard offices in which she was allegedly intent on assassinating personnel. The rape of women was systematic. A mother reported that her daughter’s rapist had boasted to her about his deeds.

- The witness also attested to the arrest of a nine-year-old child. The witness was told by her interrogator that she and female

prisoners were mere prostitutes, who had slept with the men but were not politically active themselves. Another interrogator asked why she was thinking qua woman, adding that the shortest man is (figuratively speaking) taller than the tallest woman; he said that women should not be in politics owing to their alleged susceptibility to mood-swings.

- After confinement with other prisoners, the witness was taken to a solitary cell, where she was very cold because the blanket was thin.
- From her cell, the witness could hear the gunshots of the firing squad; one day, three people were taken from her cell for execution.
- Zahra and Esmail were two of the witness's relatives, for whom 20,000 and 40,000 toumans were demanded in bullet money.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Name	Dates	Place
Sharazad Hajiati	Executed 1982	Sepah Shiraz
Soghra Chah Talkhi	Executed 1982	Sepah Shiraz
Zahra Rahmani	Raped before executed in 1982	Sepah Shiraz
Azam Sayadi (17)	1981/82, raped before executed	Sepah Shiraz
Roya Hajrani	Executed 1980/81,	
Zahra Hajirani	Executed 1980/81	
Farzaneh Kashkouli	Executed 1983	
Farisa Kashkouli	Executed 1983	
Elahe Daknama	Executed 1981/82	
Fariba Bedishahri	Sentenced to 10 years but later executed in 1984	
Zahra Bedishari (21)	Executed 1981	Shiraz
Esmaeli Bedishari (17)	Executed 1981	Shiraz
Azam Alishahii	Executed 198/82	
Masoumeh Hassanpour (16)	Executed 1982	

**Witness 29: [W29: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1970

Occupation at time of incident: Student

Status of witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: [W29/1: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1957

Occupation at time of arrest: Electrical engineering student at Sharif University

Date of arrest: 1983 (Tehran)

Date of execution: Summer 1988

Political affiliation: Tudeh Party of Iran

The victim is my brother, [W29/1: NAME REDACTED], who was born in Tehran in 1957, son of [NAME REDACTED], and an electrical engineering student at Sharif University.

[W29/1: NAME REDACTED], along with his friend, was arrested in a street in Tehran in 1983. The court condemned him to seven years' imprisonment for sympathising with the Tudeh Party of Iran and membership of the Youth Organisation of this party. He was transferred from Evin Prison to Gohardasht Prison to complete his sentence. Four years later, in 1988, [W29/1: NAME REDACTED] was taken to another court to answer three questions. A simple "yes" or "no" answer to these questions decided the prisoner's fate: "Do you believe in God?", "Are you a Moslem and do you believe in Islam?" and "Do you believe in the Islamic Republic regime?" Just one negative reply to any of these questions was sufficient to condemn the prisoner to death, and prisoners were not aware of this fact. Thus, so many honest young prisoners, including [W29/1: NAME REDACTED], with various beliefs, fell into the regime's death-trap. Following these court-martial-type trials,



a massacre of the political prisoners began and took the lives of about 5,000 individuals in 1988.

[W29/1: NAME REDACTED] was an honest, motivated, and thoughtful young man. His adolescent years began with his working as a newspaper-seller, a factory worker, and a bricklayer, resulting in his strong personality. He loved people and worked hard for their cause. During his student years in Sharif University, he joined the Student Play Group and was active until the universities were shut down. He participated in the revolution enthusiastically and avoided extremism. He became a sympathiser of the Tudeh Party and joined the Youth Organisation of this party. After attacks against the party began and some of its leaders were arrested, [W29/1: NAME REDACTED] and his friend were arrested by Revolutionary Guards in 1983.

After the revolution, [W29/1: NAME REDACTED] joined the Tudeh Party and was active in the student movement and in organising workers in the southern districts of Tehran. His great personality made him a role model for other young sympathisers of the Tudeh Party. He especially loved young people and believed that the future of the nation depended on their revolutionary growth. He was selected to be in charge of the Youth Organisation in Shahr-e Rey. During his five-year effort, he taught valuable lessons to youngsters, who continued his inspiration.

The Revolutionary Guards searched the residence of [W29/1: NAME REDACTED]'s family in the summer of 1980. They took political, social and cultural books, newspapers and magazines. They also took [W29/1: NAME REDACTED]'s older brother to their base in Pole-Siman District to tell them who had bought these publications. Two days later, when [W29/1: NAME REDACTED]'s younger brother went to visit the older brother and brought him some tea, a guard, who had been his classmate, recognise him and told him sarcastically, "You'd better drink this tea with your brother," and they arrested him as well. Both of [W29/1: NAME REDACTED]'s brothers were transferred to Evin Prison after a week. They were detained and interrogated for ten months.

## *W29 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- When [W29/1: NAME REDACTED] was arrested during a house raid at 02.00, all his books were confiscated; he was asked to account for why he had these in his possession. Both brothers were tortured in Evin but released after ten months. In the second arrest, Revolutionary Guard agents confiscated family photographs.
- [W29/1: NAME REDACTED]'s family managed to visit him after one year; it was not told anything about his arrest or his whereabouts for two months and needed to chase the matter up in order to obtain any information.
- One of the witness's surviving brothers is "not a normal person".
- The witness heard from a cellmate of her brother's that prisoners could hear the sound of others being tortured. When there were executions, people were left to die on gallows and some were still alive when they were thrown onto the trucks.
- The witness still suffers nightmares every night.
- After [W29/1: NAME REDACTED] was executed, the prison guards refused to inform the witness of her brother's execution unless she brought a man with her. The family never received a body.
- Representatives of Amnesty International paid a visit in 1986 but were sent only to regular criminal prisons; families tried to arrange a demonstration to tell Amnesty about the imprisonment of political prisoners too, but the roads were blocked. The witness's mother was kept in prison for a fortnight and forced to sign a promise that she would neither demonstrate nor write against the Republic.

### **Witness 30: Mohammadreza Haybatullahpour**

D.O.B.: 1967

Age at time of incident: 14

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Ebrahim Haybatullahpour**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of execution: 20

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Organisation affiliation: Sympathiser of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO).

Charge: Combatant.

It is necessary to mention that at no time did a court or any other organisation specifically charge him with a specific crime but in Etelaat newspaper his charge and that of some other people, who were executed by the firing squad simultaneously, was written as "combatant".

My brother, Ebrahim, was arrested in the summer of 1981 in Masjed Soleiman; my family and I do not have specific information regarding his arrest since we heard about this through some family members and acquaintances that we had in Masjed Soleiman. However, later through the people who were in touch with him, we found out that the time in between his arrest and his execution was about a month. This is what happened: one day around 04.00 or 05.00 in the morning, while my brother had some Mujahideen flyers with him, he left home and within a short distance from his residence was ambushed and arrested by the pasdars and then he was transferred to Sepah Prison in Masjed Soleiman and he was

kept there until the time of his execution.

Zaman Mahmoudi, who was the Chief of Masjed Soleiman's Sepah, and was acquainted with our family, gave us the news of my brother's arrest through some family members. Later on, he was killed in the war and our family could never see him and get the details of my brother's arrest. But according to the mother of this Sepah Chief, he had tried to encourage my brother in prison to cooperate but he did not succeed. This mother would say openly that Zaman had asked Ebrahim in prison to identify his friends but he had refused.

My father tried very hard to visit him and get information about the case and his charge. During his efforts, my father was able to meet the judge for his case, which it is said was a clergyman. This clergyman told my father that he would let my father see his son on the condition that he encouraged my brother to cooperate with them. My father told him that he did not know what his son's charge was and what to ask from him. That clergyman told my father to ask him to identify his friends, cooperate with them and write a recantation letter. My father told him that he would talk to my brother but they had to let him see his son first. My father said that the next day he went to Masjed Soleiman courthouse and, as agreed, waited there. After several hours of waiting, he was taken inside the prison and had seen my brother from a few metres distance while he was handcuffed and his legs were in shackles. The same clergyman, who was present, again pressured my father to encourage my brother to cooperate with them. My father wanted to embrace my brother but he was not permitted to even get close to him. My father said that he was extremely pressured to ask my brother to write a recantation letter. When my father refused to do this, they would not allow him to get close to my brother. My brother, while being pulled from that place, told my father not to plead with them at all. This was the only visit that my family had with Ebrahim. The next day when my father went to the courthouse, he was given the news of my brother's execution. Our family, in addition to paying for the bullets, did not have the right to bury their child in the cem-

etery of the small city of Eizeh, but with the support of our fellow Bahá'í citizens, who have their own cemetery in this city, we could bury our brother next to our Bahá'í fellow countrymen. Later on, this became the burial place for other political prisoners who were executed in the city of Masjed Soleiman. What we received from our brother was the clothes that he had on when he was executed and a will in which he had said goodbye to his family.

### ***W30 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Ebrahim Haybatullahpoor's father was able to see him only for five minutes. The victim was executed about ten days after his arrest. The family is not aware of there having been a trial; no verdict was ever communicated to it. Judge Deghan was responsible; he used to act as torturer and interrogator himself, then issue verdicts.

## **Witness 31: Mansoureh Ghanbarpour Bashkandi**

D.O.B.: 1952

Occupation at time of arrest: Journalist

Status of witness: Survivor

Date of arrest: April 1981 (Tehran)

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

The example below is one of many that bear witness to the prison conditions and the execution of political prisoners in the 1980s.

In April of 1981, I was arrested on the street for possession of OIPFG (Minority) publications. After a long period of indecision in Evin Prison, I was finally taken to a room, which I later realise served as a court. Three people were present in that room. I discerned this from their different voices, as my eyes were closed and I could not see. For ten minutes I was intimidated with threats of execution, without permission to respond, ask a question or defend myself against the accusations. From that day until the day I was released, I expected to be taken to be executed. After a week I was transferred to Ghezelhesar Prison. During my time in Evin Prison, every morning we heard gunshots and used them to keep track of the number of people executed. Fourteen-year-old children who were arrested for carrying pepper on June 20th were executed the same day. No one knows when and in what manner their trial took place.

In Ghezelhesar we were greeted with threats and profanity and were transferred to Section 8 (labelled as the "Infidels' Section" by the prison's warden).

In April of 1982, I was taken to Zir e Hasht and received a rul-

ing, according to which I should have been released two months earlier. My sentence had not been execution but eleven months of imprisonment. I was transferred to the Evin Prison to finalise my release but was sent directly to the torture chamber. After enduring 24 hours of torture, I was transferred to the general ward. A year and half later, I was tried again and was made to understand that if I confessed to having been deceived by the OIPFG (Minority), I would be released; otherwise, I would be executed. The only question posed to me was whether I would confess, and with my negative answer I was again threatened with execution and returned to the general ward. Two more months passed; once again without a court order, I was transferred to the solitary ward of Gohardasht Prison.

I will not discuss the physical and spiritual torture that I was subjected to, as others have written and said much about this. But I have to mention the despicable treatment I received during the entire time I was at Gohardasht solitary by Lajevardi (the chief of prisons at the time) and Nayyeri, who served as either judge or prosecutor (which I am not sure). Every morning at breakfast time they arrived chanting, “Ya Allah!” Both wore a vile smile. Lajevardi would ask if I was ready to confess so that I could be released, and upon hearing my negative answer, his smile would grow wider and he would say, “I know that you will confess.” This horrifying game was repeated each day without exception and made the long days spent in solitary confinement even longer. One year passed in solitary confinement. In each meeting with my family they became more worried. They had heard that only prisoners destined for execution were kept in solitary confinement. In addition, they had been told that no one left the Gohardasht solitary in one piece – he or she would either become insane, commit suicide or be executed. After each visit of my family, I thought about the three options and prepared myself for execution.

After a year in solitary confinement, I was taken to a two-man cell. A week after, the inquiry committee, known as the Montazeri Committee, came to Gohardasht. On that day they took us to the

secondary ward where there were about ten of us. At that time, they gave me yet another ruling that had been issued six months prior. It decreed a one-year sentence in Gohardasht. I had already served one year of solitary in Gohardasht, which satisfied this verdict. The above depicts the courts and their verdicts at normal times. One can only imagine the scale of execution orders, their basis and time frames. My two court cases represent only the tip of the iceberg.

### ***W31 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- After her arrest, the witness was taken to the Revolutionary Committee for 24 hours before being transferred to Evin, where she was kicked, beaten and threatened with execution. She was in Ward 209, which had four rooms: for communists (40 people), mu-jahideen (35 people), economic criminals and royalists, and regular criminals. At one point she was held in a cell directly above the prison bakery, with a floor so hot that it was “like walking on fire”.
- The witness was permitted only three fifteen-minute lavatory breaks a day, during which she was shoved and beaten. A clergyman who went by the name “Mousavi” wanted to inspect the cell but could not enter the cell because the stench was so awful.
- After a fatwa of Khomeini’s forbidding chess, guards confiscated all chess pieces.
- The witness was blindfolded and taken to a room, where she was told she was a communist and a “corrupter on earth”, who had to be executed. That was the whole of the trial; the witness later learnt that Nayyeri was the responsible judge.
- When the witness was transferred to Ghezelhesar, the guard threatened to “skin them alive” and bury them without anyone’s knowledge; he boasted of having the latest torture techniques. The witness was kept in Ward 8, which was for communists; her family was not informed of this transfer. She was then given a written



sentence for eleven months' imprisonment; after she signed this, it was taken away and she was not given a copy.

- The witness was made to lie on a bed with her feet and hands tied and someone sitting on her ankles; a dirty blanket was thrown on her face and then she was given 120 lashes, by which point her feet lost sensation. The guards deliberated about whether she was unconscious or only pretending; they tested the sensitivity of her feet, untied her and left her at 04.00.

- From June 1981, prisoners of all affiliations, including thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds, were imprisoned together. A girl reported that her fourteen-year-old brother was arrested with her; the newspapers said that he was executed the next day.

- Lajevardi used to threaten prisoners: "If they gave me to you, I'd would shred you to pieces – but Islamic clemency forbids me from doing that."

- Prisoners in Ghezelhesar were subjected to the "Grave". This was a tight box in which prisoners were forced to squat and were hit on the head if they even moved a hand, as this was taken as an attempt at communication. Some people withstood this for six days before giving up and announcing into the loudspeaker that they were denouncing Marxism and confessing everything. They were made to turn in their friends in writing; some even beat their friends up in order to prove that they had really changed their ways. Other prisoners were forced to deliver the coup de grâce to their friends; one man was made to beat up his own wife.

- Prisoners in Ward 209 went on hunger strike in 1984 in protest against being forced to wear black chadors; they were beaten with cables in reprisal, such that they bled from their heads.

- Haji Davood Rahmani told prisoners in Ghezelhesar that they would never be released.

- Prisoners were asked by the Death Commission whether they believed in God and were prepared to say their prayers; those who said no were taken to be flogged. Some killed themselves with their chadors; one drank sanitary disinfectant in order to take her life.

- None of the prisoners transferred to Evin from Gohardasht were “normal”: all were somehow insane and many talked to themselves. Najila Basemlu, a Kurdish girl, went insane; the witness believes that she was killed in an “accident” on her way home after her release.
- The witness was abandoned in the interrogation room after being tortured; the interrogator asked her in the morning why she had not been transferred to the ward and then beat her until she lost consciousness; she was then subjected to Ghapani, lifted until her big toe could only just touch the floor.
- The witness named Haji Davood as the decision maker in Ghezalhesar and Mojtaba as her interrogator, who enjoyed beating people up without reason. Nayyeri issued all the verdicts.

## **Witness 32: Leila Ghalabani**

D.O.B.: 1969

Age at time of incident: 12

Status of witness: Sister of the two victims

**Name of victim: Mohammad Ghalebani**

D.O.B.: 1955

Age at time of arrest: 26

Date of arrest: August 1981

Date of execution: 22nd September 1981

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

My brother Mohammad was arrested by the agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the city of Mashhad in late August of 1981 and was convicted of being an enemy of the Islamic Republic [Mohareb-e Jomhory-e Islami], a corrupter-on-Earth [Mofsaid-e Fel Arz], and sentenced to death, and was executed on the 22nd September 1981.

Mohammad's name, along with those of some other people, was announced in Khorasan's daily newspaper in connection with assassination of Abdolkarim Hasheminejad and Mohammad Kaamyab. Mohammad was in prison while these two were assassinated.

A copy of Khorasan's daily newspaper was delivered to the court as evidence.

Mohammad was a political activist with a long history of activism from 1974-1975 until 1981, and was well known to different leftist and religious political forces.

Organisationally, Mohammad was connected with the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), but later the organisation

named the other individuals in connection with the assassination of Hasheminejad.

I hold the entire regime of Islamic Republic and Khomeini as its leader to be responsible for this crime, which was caused by Iran's chaotic political situation in the summer of 1981 due to the rulers' great fear of losing power and their free hand for any criminal activities.

Mohammad, who was well known and respected among political activists in the province of Khorasan and particularly in Mashhad, was under special surveillance of the regime's forces that had to be dealt with.

The details of his arrest and charges are not clear to us. Considering Mohammad's short imprisonment, possibility his sentence was based on religious rulings and merely for his connection to the MKO and other political opposition groups, and there was not sufficient time to study and investigate his case.

The death sentence was issued by a mullah (clergyman) named Mirfenderski, the general attorney of the Khorasan province at the time.

Mohammad was hanged at dawn on the 22nd September 1981 in Mashhad's Vakilabad Prison.

Mohammad did not have any attorneys and was not allowed to defend himself.

Mohammad was executed because of his belief in freedom, justice and humanism, which were in contrast with the ruling religious dictatorship at the time, and was executed solely for his beliefs and for his membership of an organisation that could realise his ideals. There has not been any evidence of his being armed or using violence.

Mohammad was a healthy, smart and successful young man and had not broken any Iranian laws.

His only goal was freedom and social justice.

**Name of victim: Reza Ghalebani (brother of Mohammad Ghalebani)**

D.O.B.: 1958

Age at time of arrest: 23

Date of arrest: August—September 1981

Date of execution: 4th September 1981

Political affiliation: People's Mujahedin Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Because of a dangerous political climate at the time, my brother Reza had been living underground in early September of 1981 in Mashhad. During the first week of September, he was seen on the street by a close family member and had a short conversation with him. There is no exact information about the date of his arrest, but what is known is that he had been arrested in late August or early September and was executed on the 4th September 1981.

Based on the information we received from the prison and from some of his friends, he was executed the day after his arrest. Reza fell into a trap of government agents on a street meeting and swallowed the paper (information) he had with him before his arrest. However, before he was overpowered, he managed to swallow a piece of paper that he had with him. This infuriated the arresting agents and they began to beat and insult him. We believe that he was put through a phony trial on the same evening of his arrest and executed at dawn of 4th September 1981 [13th Shahrivar 1360] in Mashhad.

As I have stated in my statement for my brother Mohammad, I hold the entire regime of the Islamic Republic and specifically its leader Khomeini to be responsible for this crime. Reza's execution was based on Khomeini's fatwa (religious ruling) for all opposing political groups in the name of corruption on earth [Mofsaied-e Fel Arz]. His death sentence came directly from the Attorney General of the province of Khorasan, a Mullah (clergyman) named Mirfendereski. My complaint is not based on an individual or from a certain district attorney who has issued the death sentences for my two brothers. The rulings were based on a general fatwa issued by the supreme leader of the regime, and I call this execution a pre-meditated act of the government in order to rid itself of those who believed in freedom and opposed the religious dictatorship. The

period between Reza's arrest and his execution may have taken shorter than twenty-four hours with no due process, no opportunity for retaining an attorney, and no right to defend himself. He was accused of waging war against the establishment of the Islamic Republic and sedition on earth.

Reza was executed by hanging at dawn on 4th September 1981 [13th Shahrivar 1360].

Reza committed absolutely no unlawful action. He was executed only because of his humanitarian ideas, free thoughts, struggle for freedom, and his sympathy to an opposition political group. He was put through a phony and brief trial without due process of law, with no visit with family for the last time, and was hanged. I see no excuse for this crime, which has been committed by the rulers of Iran's dictatorship. I hope that these crimes will be disclosed one day in a people's court.

### *W32 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Mohammed Ghalebani was allowed only one visit: it was the norm that families were able to see prisoners only once, a day before their execution. His body was handed over to the family; the family was forbidden from washing his body in the mortuary so had to do so in the canal; the body was buried on a hill.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Name	Dates	Place
<b>Dakhoda Khodad</b>	(under 18)	Executed 1981-Unknown
<b>Akbar Zolfagarian</b>	Executed 1988	
All from Semnan	– buried mass grave in Sangesar	
<b>Nasrin Khanjani</b>	Executed 1988	
<b>Hossein Moakei</b>	Executed 1988	
<b>Parvin Hemati</b>	Executed 1988	

**Jahangir Zaimalian** Executed 1981 - Bijrand

**Nasser Tofgian** Disappeared from Evin Prison in 1981. Last seen alive in Evin Prison.

**Witness 33: Hossein Hosseinjani Moghadam**

D.O.B.: 1950

Age at time of incident: 25

Status of witness: Survivor and brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Farzaneh Hosseinjani Moghadam**

D.O.B.: 1956

Age at time of arrest: 31

Political affiliation: Ranjbaran Party of Iran

Farzaneh was one of the underground cadres of the Toilers Party of Iran (Ranjbaran Party), in Gilan Province in the city of Rasht. She had spent almost a year in hiding in the city of Ramsar away from her family residence in Rasht before leaving to Tehran to meet with the party's central committee members. On her way to Tehran, she was arrested for looking suspicious. At the time of her arrest, she was carrying a copy of the banned underground Ranjbaran Party flyer and news publication, Guileh Ukhan. She was detained and brutalised by the security forces. Since they did not know who was behind this publication, they were willing to use whatever means possible to extract information from her. She was subjected to physical torture as a result. She underwent physical torture three times unsuccessfully in Evin. She resisted the tortures bravely without revealing any information. It was before the third time that she confided with a cellmate that she might not survive the tortures this time. Unfortunately, as she had predicted, she did not survive and died under torture the third time.

Farzaneh's family was kept in the dark for the most part. They had no information of her whereabouts. One day Parvaneh, Farzaneh's sister, received a phone call from Evin Prison revealing the death



of Farzaneh in their hands. To this date Parvaneh has been suffering the ill effects of the fateful phone call.

Farzaneh was one of the martyrs who had dedicated her life to socialism and freedom. She was one among the thousands whose exemplary and relentless opposition to oppression during the 1360s [1980s] will be remembered for the years to come.

The capitalist regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran has to be held responsible for the death of this comrade, who fought all her life for socialism and freedom.

Historically, torture has been the tool of choice for repressive regimes to extract information and to intimidate the masses. Sure enough, the cronies of the regime, who unsuccessfully tried to extract information from Farzaneh, chose torture and eventually caused her death.

I gratefully shake the tireless hands of my comrades who have initiated this historic tribunal on behalf of Farzaneh Hosseinjani Moghadam.

### ***W33 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness himself was held in Rasht's Navy Prison in a basement with low ceilings and narrow corridors with over 200 people. During his time there and in Evin and Gohardasht, he witnessed a lot of torture and many executions. He was sentenced to two years but was kept in prison for four years, eighteen months of this was in solitary confinement in Gohardasht, where his toes were broken. The purpose of interrogation was to extract information from prisoners about their organisations and the names of fellow activists.
- Farzaneh was killed under torture within fifteen days of her arrest. After two sessions of torture, her legs had gone black up to the knee; on the third occasion, she had said that she would not come back alive, and indeed did not.

- The witness warned his family not to try to find Farzaneh because there was a chance that if she were not identified, then she would be released. Her body was not released; the family was informed that she had already been buried in Behesht Zahra. Parvaneh has had a “mental problem” since learning of her sister’s death over the phone.
- Seven prisoners lost their lives in a fire in a prison in Gilan; the witness believes the fire was intentional. The victims burned to death even though there was an hour to save them; the guards refused to call for help.
- Families have suffered severe social problems; oppression engendered a mutual suspicion in the community and meant that people refused to give asylum to each other.

### **Witness 34: Mokhtar Shalalvand**

D.O.B.: 1949

Age at time of incident: 39

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Hamzeh Shalalvand**

D.O.B.: 1950

Age at time of arrest: 30

Political Affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

[Hamzeh] read the publications of the organisation. The regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the time it gained power was against the opposition. It started to use its violent groups against others. The regime used force to arrest dissidents and jail them. It started using torture against those who were arrested. During that time, it was unusual for people to be killed upon being arrested. Andimeshk was no different. In 1980 on a Friday after the Friday Prayer a group of armed Basiji and Hesbollah began shouting anti-Mujahideen slogans and attacked the Mujahideen Library called "Talehghani Library". This library, which had been built with the help of the people, became the site of the arrest and beatings of many that day. That night my brother, Hamzeh, wasn't arrested but a warrant for his arrest was issued and he was forced to leave our home. Hamzeh was charged with being a supporter of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO).

Description of arrest and imprisonment:

In the autumn of 1980, Khomeini, planning to eliminate the first president, Bani Sadr, started a campaign against the political opposition and in particular against the MKO. The regime suppressed

all forms of freedom. It imposed a police state. The Iraq-Iran War began: a good excuse of the regime to attack the opposition. With the departure of Bani Sadr, the dictatorship of the regime was openly clear. The Mujahideen supported Bani Sadr and prior to 30th Khordad, with the help of a protest with the Muslim Mothers, gave the regime a shock. With the historic 30th Khordad protest, a new and serious era began. At the same time, there was an explosion in the president's office. This incident created a situation where my brother, Hamzeh, was never able to return to our home. He was forced to move from town to town and house to house and friends and family provided him with safety. The '60s [1980s] ushered in a decade of execution, torture and long-term imprisonment. In this period, my brother was identified in the railroad station in Tehran and was arrested. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison upon the charge of being a member of the Mujahideen. During that time, he was detained in Evin, Gohardasht and other prisons.

How he was executed:

In the summer of 1988 the Islamic Republic accepted the UN Ceasefire Resolution 598 – and the useless war between Iran and Iraq ceased. When the war stopped, Mujahideen forces, which were waiting on the border, moved into Iran. The regime used this excuse to implement a plan that it had created many months earlier. This plan was to conduct very summarily proceedings that would lead to the execution of thousands of political prisoners. My brother was one of them. Even though he had served seven years in prison, he was given a new hearing that lasted only a few minutes and he was sentenced to death. After the war, Khomeini established a squad to conduct these summary proceedings and issued a death fatwa to announce new punishments. This squad, which became known as the Death Commission, was composed of:

Hossein Ali Nayyeri – Head of the Death Commission and from the Prosecutor's Office; he was the Islamic Judge of Evin Prison in 1988;

Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi – Representative of the Ministry of Intelligence and member of the Death Commission;

Mostafa Eshraghi – Prosecutor of the Revolutionary Court and member of the Death Commission;

Ebrahim Raissi – Member of the Death Commission;

These persons were primarily responsible for the executions and they executed my brother. They were responsible for that horrible summer of violence.

News of Execution:

Before the bloody months of July and August, all visits to the political prisoners were stopped. They took away all the televisions from the prison units. Based on information from survivors of that period, the prisoners were totally without any information for a period of time. The prisoners did not have any information from the outside and their families had no information about them. They were totally without any information about the situation. None of them anticipated that they were going to be killed. Those who survived say that the killings took place during a two-week period of time. No one gave us information about the death of my brother. My mother's efforts to secure information were unsuccessful. When the period finished, they started notifying the families. A few families were told that their loved ones had been executed when they were for a visit. Sometime after the executions, my mother went to the prison for a visit and was told to have a man of the family come to the prison. My mother told them that she didn't have any other men except one sick son and they lived far away from the prison. They told my mother to send a male friend or relative. My mother's reasoning was rejected and she was told to leave and send a man. My sick brother along with a distant relative went to the prison and was given the news of my brother's execution. Along with the news of my brother's death, we were given a bag containing his undershirt and a white piece of cloth on which he had embroidered a verse from the Quran. It was in this way that after seven years my brother was executed for being a supporter of the MKO.

### *W34 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Hamzeh Shalalvand was identified by a repent; his jaw was broken and his leg nearly paralysed from beatings and torture. He was executed seven years into a ten-year sentence. The witness was sentenced to death in absentia and forced to go on the run, leaving his wife behind.
- The Death Commission was officially called the “Pardon Commission”.
- Mohammad Reza Chaki was an illiterate athlete accused of provoking demonstrations in Andimeshk and being a US spy; he was executed by being strangled with a rope and shot against a eucalyptus tree.

## **Witness 35: Nima Servastani**

D.O.B.: 1958

Age at time of incident: 18

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Mohammad-Rahim Akbar-pour Sarvestani**

D.O.B.: 1964

His nickname was Rostam.

Occupation at time of arrest: He finished high school in Shiraz before he was arrested

Political affiliation: Union of Iranian Communists (UIC)

The victim, Mohammad-Rahim Akbar-pour Sarvestani, was my brother. Mohammad-Rahim, like many other youngsters and adolescents who were joining to political organisations, joined the Union of Iranian Communists (UIC) along with his brother, Javad Akbar-pour Sarvestani. He had just finished high school in Shiraz before he was arrested.

He was arrested on 23rd Tir 1361 [14th July 1982] with his father, Akbar Akbar-pour and younger brother Javad Akbar-pour. At midnight of the 23rd Tir [14th July 1982], our house was surrounded by a group of guards when everybody was asleep. They entered the house and woke up Mohammad-Rahim and Javad by the blows of their boots and took them to the detention centre of the Guard Corps. It should be noted that after arresting my father and brothers, three armed guards stayed in our home to arrest my brother's friends in case anybody came over.

(My father, mother and the other brother, Mehdi, gave testimony in front of a video camera, which can be submitted if needed.)

The name of the religious judge who issued the verdict of death by

hanging was Nourbakhsh, whose address is unknown, but his assistant still lives in Shiraz and has a pickling store on Bridgestone Street.

Mohammad-Rahim was hanged in Adel Abad prison in Shiraz, at dawn on the 26th December 1982.

### *W35 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness's house had been under surveillance for some time before the arrest; the family noticed suspicious goings-on close to the house (they were followed by a motorcycle at one point) and decided that nobody should stay home that night. The two brothers postponed leaving home until the following day but were then arrested in the midnight house raid.

- Javad Akbar-pour (16) was sentenced to death but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He was held in solitary confinement for three months.

- The family was present during the sentencing; the mother begged for clemency but Mohammad-Rahim told her to stop. The guards pushed the victim's mother away when she tried to embrace him. She later had a heart attack. The deputy judge was Hamid Rashidfar; the prosecutor was Miremad.

- The authorities offered the Sarvestani family the opportunity to have Mohammad-Rahim's sentence commuted from death to life in exchange for three million toumans; the family managed to raise the money by selling the house but on the morning that it turned up with cash in hand, it discovered that Mohammad-Rahim had already been executed.

- The father's hair went white over the space of one week.

- The witness explained that the night Khalkhali came to Shiraz, he told the gravediggers to dig as many graves as they could; 60 people were buried in one day, none of whom were older than 20 years of age.



- The gravedigger at Shiraz reported to the family that Khalkhali had ordered him to dig as many graves as he could; 60 people were buried in one day.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Names of perpetrators:

Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi

Hossein Ali Nayyeri – Deputy of Supreme Court

Morteza Eshraghi – Lawyer

“Nasserian”: real name “Mohammad Moghissei”, religious judge

Ebrahim Raissi – First Deputy of Judiciary

Ziaoddin Miramad – previously Prosecutor of Shiraz, Tehran and Bandar Abbas (over 60 years old)

Khalil Torabpour – Warden of Shiraz Prison (current occupation unknown)

**Witness 36: Gita Rostamalipour**

D.O.B.: 1957

Age at time of arrest: 25

Status of witness: Wife of the victim

**Name of victim: Mohammad Nabi Jadidi**

D.O.B.: 1928

Occupation at time of arrest: PhD in Agriculture

Date of arrest: 2nd October 1982

Date of execution: March 1983 (Evin Prison)

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

My husband, Mohammad Nabi Jadidi, was a Marxist and a member of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority). He was arrested in Isfahan on the 2nd October 1982 on the street while attending an important organisational appointment for which he had travelled to Isfahan. He was transferred to Evin Prison and for some months we didn't know where he had been taken. After months of search, we eventually found out that he was at Evin Prison. For some time, they didn't let him to visit his family but after three months his mother managed to visit him in prison. His mother was deeply disturbed after the meeting, as she had hardly recognised him because he had been severely tortured and lost considerable weight.

Nabi's mother managed to visit him twice at Evin Prison. In one of the cold days of March 1983, she went to Evin Prison for the third time. He was no longer there. The prison guards delivered his clothes and with extreme cruelty and ruthlessness informed her that her son had been executed. They never delivered the body to his family. All they did was to tell his family that he had been bur-

ied in Khavaran cemetery.

They executed my husband with no access to a court of law or lawyer and no right of defence while being tortured severely before the execution.

My hope is that this Tribunal could reach an undisputed verdict to condemn the state-organised mass atrocities and violence of the Islamic regime so that the never-ending suffering of all surviving families could be alleviated.

### ***W36 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness's brother and sister-in-law were also arrested.
- Mohammad Nabi Jadidi was so weak by the time his family saw him three months after his arrest that he could not walk and had to be carried by the guards. A cellmate confirmed that Mohammad had been tortured and that his toes had been cut off.
- The family never heard anything about a trial and has had no proof of death.

## **Witness 37: Esmat Vatanparast**

Age at time of incident: 44

Status of witness: Mother and brother of 3 victims.

### **Name of victim: multiple family members**

This is a statement for a large number of relatives: children, A'zam Sayadi and Jalileh Sayadi, both of Shiraz; brothers, Mahmood Vatanparast of Shiraz and Ali and Manoochehr Vatanparast, both of Jahrom; nephew, Javad Rahmani (Jahrom), and son-in-law Gholam Khoshbui (Shiraz).

A'zam was executed. Jalileh was thrown from high-storey building by pasdars. Mahmood, they attacked his house and he died under torture a few weeks later. Ali was crucified in Kordestan and Manoochehr was executed. Javad Rahmani (my nephew) was executed. Gholamhossein Khosbui was killed in a street battle.

Besharati was high up in the regime and had it in for our family and relatives because he failed to get elected in the general election for the Parliament in 1980 and asked for the signature of my brother, Mahmoud Vatanparast, and he refused so he took revenge on all of us.

The atmosphere in Jahrom and Shiraz in those days was intolerable: everyone for no good reason would get arrested, tortured and killed. Anybody arrested for any offence was killed. Our whole family was eliminated for having flyers and books. On the 7th of Tir, Ayatollahi, the shari'ah ruler of Jahrom, issued the order to murder the entire family and the house came under attack. The regime itself announced the number of attackers at 25,000. It was announced in newspapers and radio that Parnian and Ashti families were participants in attacks and executions. Alireza, Abdolreza,

Gholamreza, Farideh Abollahi were members of a family who also took part in the attacks and executions. Parnian house address: close to Ayatollahi house. There were six boys who took part in the Jahrom crimes.

Besharati who holds a high position in the regime (friend of Mahmood's uncle) is the main culprit in the murders of our family members. Besharati ran in the parliamentary election in 1360 [1981] but was not elected. He asked my brother Mahmood, who was at the time governor of Fars Province, to endorse him for Parliament. But my brother didn't share Besharati's beliefs and opinions and so refused to endorse him. Besharati resented my brother for this. For this reason Besharati and his supporters (Hezbollahis) plotted to murder our family members.

Our family members were all known and since the shari'ah ruler had issued the execution order, all family members were arrested, tortured and executed. Parnian, Ayatollahi, Atashi and Abdollahi had a hand in the murders as families.

Our family members were killed because of books, publications and announcements.

All family members were born in Jahrom and everybody was well-known. During the attacks, all took refuge in Shiraz but one after another they were identified and murdered. Their offence was the same: seeking freedom and defending humane thoughts. Everybody was scattered and living in different safe houses – that is why they were not all arrested at the same time together. I do not know the date of executions since everybody was in hiding and communication was not possible. Monoochehr Vatanparast (my brother) and Javad Rahmani (my nephew) were executed in 1988 [1367].

### *W37 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The reason for the revenge killings was that Mahmoud Vatanparast, as Governor of Fars Province, refused to falsify the

results of the local ballot for the 1980 parliamentary election in favour of the regime candidate.

- In 1981, the witness's house was confiscated and looted; her elder brother's house was set on fire and razed to the ground; the houses of her three married sisters were raided and their belongings were burnt on a bonfire in their gardens. The whole family became displaced and homeless.

- Zahra (9), Sadigeh (11) and another brother (14) were taken to prison; the youngest child was soon released but the middle one was incarcerated for seven and a half years. Javad Rahmani was eleven when he was arrested for having a bulletin in his pocket; he was later killed.

- Ali was tied up to a cross and then shot by a firing squad.

- Jalileh was thrown off the second floor of her house after it was raided. Her father was called; the guards had left the body on the ground and told the father that the victim was a monafeq and had no right to a grave. The surviving sisters still will not speak about where their father buried the executed sisters.

- Prison authorities demanded 60,000 toumans for the return of Mahmoud's body. His 84-year-old father demanded that the bodies of nine of Mahmoud's executed friends be released; for four days and nights, he struggled to bury them in the desert near Shiraz.

- Ayatollahi announced from the pulpit that Azam and Mahmoud should be arrested and had no need for a trial before being killed. This was an enormous operation: the regime newspaper reported 25,000 involved; the Mujahideen put the figure at 8,000.

- The witness has not been able to sleep more than three hours a night since.

- Many people in Jahrom were killed by being tied to the backs of vans and pulled along the asphalt. Moghaddassi was cut into pieces with a cutter; a neighbour succeeded in recovering five parts of his bones and hiding them in the bathroom for 15 days, until it was safe to bury them. Manoouchehr Onari was arrested and released before he was killed in the streets and thrown in a canal;

the family searched for a fortnight before finding him, together with seventeen dead children in a foul-smelling canal.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Arrested in Azar 1360 [November 1981]

Mahmoud Vatanparat – 24 arrested with two sisters: Sedeghigh (14 years old) and Zahra (9 years). Manoucher (15 years) & Farkhondeh Hakpanah wife of Mahmoud, along with their 5 month old son.

Farkonnseh Yasser was released after 4 years in Shiraz Prison.

Segeghigeh – 7 years and 6 months in prison

Zahra – released after 4 years' imprisonment.

Manoucher – was released after 4 years, arrested again in 1988 and executed.

Javad Rahmani – 11 years old when arrested in 1981, executed in July in 198. Esmat says this information was published in the newspaper.

Ahmad Hakkimnyat – 15 /16 years old

Mehbood Moghadaessi – 19 – he was tied to the back of the truck and dragged to death – the skin was ripped off his body on the 24th Tir 1360 [15th July 1981]

Hamideh Ghaffouri – 1st Tir 1360 [28th June 1981], Jahrom

They killed him by ripping off his skin; the neighbours collected his bones after it was dark. Nine days later, the neighbours were able to bury him.

## **Witness 38: Ebrahim Mohammad Rahimi**

D.O.B.: 1952

Status of witness: Survivor and family member who has lost five members of his family

Date of arrest: June 1981 (Tehran)

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

I was an activist in the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) and I was arrested in June 1981 in Tehran. I was taken to the Komiteh Ferdowsi. There I learned that four other members of my family had been arrested and were detained there (two sisters, one brother and my father) but we were not allowed to see each other. I was taken for interrogation. Because I wasn't ready to cooperate, I was constantly threatened with being sent to Evin Prison. They told me that at Evin under the cable they would find out if I had anything to say. Two days later they did that to me. They took me to Evin and directly strapped me to a torture table. My interrogation lasted two weeks. At night they would take me to Block 3, Cell 4. During the day they would drag me to interrogation and any form of torture such as hanging with my hands tied behind my back and they beat me using a cable on my wounds and body. Once I was paralysed from having my arms tied behind my back for so long. I told them that if they would lower me down I would talk. When they brought me down, I noticed feeling in my arms and I said I didn't have anything to say. They beat me almost to death and threatened to execute me.

They didn't have any exact information about my political activities. Thus, they said that they would keep me until they found



someone to recognise me. A few weeks later, they took me to court. I was blindfolded during the entire time I was in court. I was charged with cooperating with the MKO and associating with Mohammad Saadati.

Saadati was a Mujahideen activist who had been arrested at the beginning of the revolution and sentenced to ten years in prison. They had charged him with spying for the Soviet Union. He was executed in 1981 because of that charge. During that time I had been in Evin Prison for one year without being recognised. I had been arrested twice: once for one year from 1980 until 1981 and again from 1981 until 1991. During my first imprisonment, I was held in a cell across from Saadati. Later, the judge found this closeness to Mr Saadati to be a crime. They charged me with possession of twenty guns and they wanted to know where the guns were. I didn't understand what they meant and had no idea where any guns were. They told me that I would be executed.

For more than four months I was jailed in Evin Prison. The number of political prisoners executed during that period was shocking. Every day they would come several times a day and each time take away twenty people. Those people were taken to the hills behind Evin Prison and shot by firing squad. We did not know how many had been executed in the cell next to us. On some days they would execute by firing squad on those hills more than 400 people. We would count the final shots [tir-e-khalas]. Many of the people taken for execution were ordinary people who had either simply given financial support to a political group or read some political publications. But during that period, the regime did not give any reprieves. Two weeks after my court, I was moved to Ghezelhesar, another prison. The people transferred to Ghezelhesar filled two minibuses. We were directly taken to the cell called Mojarat (Single). That cell was 2 x 1 metres and at least 30 people were kept in each cell. There was no place to sit. We took turns standing. In order for some to sleep we had to squeeze together to make room for people to sleep. Then we would switch places. Every few nights a Ghezelhesar torturer by the name of Behzad Nezami

would come and give us lashes. Once along with twelve others we were so badly beaten that we almost died. They kept us in those conditions for two months.

After two months of living in the Mojarat cell, they moved me to an open block. Each block had thirteen cells. In every cell there were at least 20 prisoners. Every day three times a day for five minutes they would allow us to use the restroom or take a shower. Frequently, one of the prisoners who under torture had become a collaborator would come and identify those whose political identities had not yet been discovered by the interrogators. Zabi, one of the prisoners in our block, was identified by a collaborator during that period. Zabi's political affiliations had been totally unknown to the authorities. They had already tortured him so much that he had tried to commit suicide unsuccessfully. One day when Lajevardi came to our block with a collaborator to identify prisoners, Zabi hid under the bed in order not be identified. Unfortunately, they pulled Zabi from under the bed, identified him and took him for execution. Many had been identified in this same manner. And after again being interrogated and tortured they had been executed without a court or investigation.

At the end of 1981, I was sentenced to ten years. Even after being sentenced they continued to torture me. They put me into a box where there was only room for me to curl up into a ball. They called this form of torture "resurrection." I was placed in this horrific box several times for long periods of time. During this entire period when my bones and body ached with pain a pasdar stood over me and beat me on my head and face with a cable. They put me again in the Mojarat cell. The situation in the Mojarat was so bad that some went mad while confined.

In 1986 I was taken to Gohardasht and put in Block 3.

In 1988 the numbers killed significantly increased. From our block, which had approximately 200 prisoners (140 MKO and 60 leftists), more than 180 were executed during the summer of 1988. With a list containing the names of twenty people they would come to the block and take away the prisoners. Many of those were due to be

released very soon and should have been released. We could see the yard from our block. We had bent one of the bars on the window of our block and from there we could see what they were doing with the corpses. At night the trucks would come and take put the piled up bodies in plastic bags and take them away. Because we could see that scene from our block and knew that those who were being taken away were being executed, there was an atmosphere of death and fear in our block.

When I was released, only a few members of my family remained alive. They had executed five members of my family—two brothers, two sisters and my nephew. They buried them in a mass grave. Not only did they not tell our families were they had been buried but they also refused to allow the family to have hold funerals.

My brother, Aziz Mohammad Rahimi, born on the 30th Farvadin 1330 [19th April 1981], was arrested on the 6th Mordad 1360 [28th July 1981]. One and half months later, he was executed on the 25th Shahrivar 1360 [12th September 1981]. He had been so tortured that both of his kidneys failed. One of his legs had been amputated because it had got infected from being beaten with the cable. Even after the amputation, he was tortured. He was taken to the prison hospital when he was almost dead. Several days later, after he was able to move, they took him on a stretcher to be executed.

My sister, Soheila Mohammad Rahimi, born in 1342 [1963], was arrested on the 7th Mordad 1360 [29th July 1981] along with my father and brother, Houshang, when the pasdars raided our home. During that time, my sister was a high school student. She was sentenced to ten years in prison on a charge of being a supporter of the MKO. She was released in 1986 because she had gone blind in one eye because of torture. But after a short period, she and my mother were arrested in Salmaz. My mother was sentenced to two years in prison and Soheila to four years. In the summer of 1988, Soheila was hanged to death. Prior to being executed, she was held in solitary confinement for a lengthy period of time.

My sister, Mehrangiz Mohammad Rahimi, born in 1337 [1958] was arrested on the 20th Khordad 1360 [10th June 1981] and sen-

tenced to seven years in prison. After she completed her sentence, she was not released. They sent her to the Melikesh Block – the block where people were detained even after they had served their sentences. In the summer of 1988 she was also hanged.

My brother, Houshang Mohammad Rahimi, born in 1339 [1960] was arrested on the 7th Mordad 1360 [29th July 1981] and sentenced to ten years in prison. In 1991 he was released. One year later, the prosecutor arrested him and had him hanged in Evin Prison. My nephew, Hossein Majidi, born in 1344 [1965], was arrested in Shahrivar 1360 [August/September 1981] and a few weeks later died under torture. He was still a high school student.

During my entire incarceration, I was never allowed to visit my brothers and sisters. Before they were executed, they did not allow me to see them or read their wills or have their mementos. They only brought me Mehrangiz's will. I don't even know in which mass grave they were buried. I don't even know what happened to them in the last moments of their lives.

### *W38 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was arrested on two occasions. The first was on the order of Judge Gilani, who ordered the capture of the participants in a rebellion that prevented the public flogging of a neighbour in the presence of his family. He was shot in the leg and then held in Evin for a year and told that he would be executed if he were arrested again. The witness statement concerns the second arrest.
- The witness's father was sentenced to one year in prison for having a tattoo of Satar Khan (a fighter).
- The witness was subjected to Ghapani (with weights suspended off him) in order to extract information from him about a gun store to which he was alleged to have had access; he was beaten till his body was numb. The witness was fed bread and cu-

cumber lest he starve to death. The witness's father was threatened that unless he told the truth about his son, his son would be killed. He was tied to a column in the bathroom along with other prisoners and beaten unconscious with cables until morning. On another occasion, he was dragged off the toilet to be beaten.

- The witness faced two charges in his trial: for possession of arms and for association with Saadati. The "so-called court" lasted approximately a minute, after which the witness was sent out, told that he would be executed; the sentence was revealed two weeks later to be ten years in prison.

- Hossein Majidi's family was only informed of his death after he had already been buried. He was 14 when he was arrested and killed under torture.

- Houshang Mohammad Rahimi was hanged in 1992 in Ward 209.

- Lajevardi personally beat Aziz Mohammad Rahimi, according to cellmates, and the witness himself (until he lost consciousness).

- The witness's family is psychologically "not normal"; all are depressed.

- Nasserian was the head of Gohardasht; whenever Nayyeri ruled that prisoners could be released, Nasserian overruled him.

- Prisoners were taken for execution in groups of 10-20; those who remained in their cells were beaten when guards discovered that they had witnessed executions outside through window bars that prisoners had twisted.

- Gilani was the judge.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

His brother had special information about the Kurdish communication, particularly radio communication – Sedayeh Shores Komaleh. Because of this, he was transferred from Evin to Rezaiyeh. He was confronted by the Tehran leader of the group, who told him that everything was known: someone had informed on them. Kamal's brother said he did not recognise the man even though

he knew him. The brother was able to send a secret message to his family; he told them he had hope and he had not confessed to anything.

The sister was also arrested: she was taken from her school, aged only fourteen, and was held in prison for four years. She was released only because she was detained in Tabriz, where she was not known as being connected through her family to Komolah.

## **Witness 39: Hamid Ashtari**

D.O.B.: 1960

Age at time of arrest: 22

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Status of witness: Survivor

On the 23rd April 1981, I was arrested as a supporter of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) and was imprisoned until late/mid-February 1988.

When the first series of mass arrests happened on the evening of 30th Khordad 1360 [20th June 1981], many were sent to death squads without trial or even identification. I was in Evin Prison at the time. The day after the executions, I asked a revolutionary guard (pasdar) named Iraqi, who was in charge of our ward, about the sound of barrage the night before. He said, "Last night those who were arrested during the 30th Khordad demonstration were executed." According to him, all those arrested had been taken to Ayatollah Gilani, who was the shari'ah judge of Evin at the time. Gilani had asked them their names. They had not answered him. Iraqi continued: Gilani had told them, "I don't need your names, nor your ages. You are rebels and spreading corruption on Earth [mofsed fel-arz]." Then he ordered, "Take them and throw them away." This is how the first series of the executions in the 1360s [1980s] started and continued during the entire time that I was in prison. The trials were more or less similar to the case, with the reasoning that since all the political prisoners had stood up to the "Islamic Republic" that they were spreading corruption on Earth and that their sentence was well-known. Even those who were

sentenced to prison terms and had specific demands as prisoners, were told by the prison guards that they were all on death row and that their lives were a charity given to them by the Islamic Republic, and yet they dared having demands. Based on this theory, the executions that started on 30th Khordad 1360 [20th June 1981] reached their height in the summer of 1367 [1988] with the massacre of political prisoners whose lives were spared from the first series of executions.

With regards to Khomeini's leadership and his shari'ah order about those spreading corruption on Earth, all those who believed in his leadership participated in the torture and execution of political prisoners. For example, one can name Hadi Ghaffari, who used to conduct interrogations and torture in Evin. Others were more or less in similar situations and if they did not participate in torturing, they considered killing the dissidents righteous. Many of the Islamic Parliament representatives who believed that torturing and killing the dissidents was an oblation would try to participate. Therefore, all those who were involved in the government at the time were agents of the crime, from Khamenei and Rafsanjani and Mousavi Ardebili and Nayyeri and Gilani and Mousavi Tabrizi, Velayat and Mir Hossein Moussavi and Rayshahri to the others.

### ***W39 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was imprisoned for carrying a Labour Day poster. From at least the 30th Khordad, torture was systematic and performed for the purpose of extracting information. The witness saw Ghapani inflicted on a girl; she was weighted down and beaten with cables; only her toe could reach the floor.
- The witness did not hear directly the quote he attributes to Ayatollah Gilani in the written statement; this was reported through a guard who was present at the time.
- The witness's trial took two minutes. He was asked by



Judge Nayyeri whether he accepted his accusations and was sent out of the court before he had time to answer.

- Before their executions [presumably in order to identify the bodies later], people were made to write their names on their legs in marker. The interrogator, Hosseini, was begging to be able to execute people (thinking it was a religious duty), but others held him back because they wanted to perform the executions themselves. They were dispatched in groups of 10-15.

- Many people were arrested on suspicion; one man was brought into Ward 7, badly beaten, who was only the apprentice at a restaurant. When the guards were told that he needed medical attention for his broken rib, they tied him to a radiator and beat him unconscious; he developed a fever and began speaking nonsense; he was practically dead when the guards took him out to execute him.

- The witness was interrogated in Gohardasht in 1982 by a team from Evin. Ghapani was performed with the aid of weights. He was sentenced to ten years in prison for reading dissident literature. The witness was the oldest person in his cell, at 22; at least ten cellmates had been arrested aged 14-15. The cell was so small that prisoners had to crouch to sit and lie down “like sausages”.

- A thirteen-year-old girl was executed for refusing to denounce her parents.

- Two friends were taken to the “Resurrection”, in which they were made to stand for hours on end blindfolded; they were allowed three lavatory breaks a day. Some were made to stand for six days.

- After the Montazeri Committee came in 1984 to investigate the condition of the prisons, conditions improved somewhat (cell doors were opened) but later degenerated during the rest of the decade.

- Girls were beaten in sacks: their interrogators regarded them as dirty and did not want to touch them.

- In 1988 the loudspeakers were turned off and 150 prisoners were brought into the witness’s cell; half of these were hanged.

Everybody was kept indoors on the first day of massacres in Gohardasht; when prisoners got wind of the ongoing executions, they tried to communicate this to those taken out to the yard with hand gestures but the messages were not understood.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Names of MPs during 1981 (as mentioned in oral testimony):

Hadi Ghaffari – Interrogator in Department 7

Hadi Khameini – Supreme Leader's brother

## **Witness 40: Ashrafalmoluk Ghiasi**

D.O.B.: 1940

Age at time of incident: 43

Occupation at time of arrest: Tailor

Status of witness: Survivor and relative of victims

I, Ashrafalmoluk Ghiasi, a member of the Union of Iranian Communists (UIC) was arrested in Shahrivar 1361 [September 1982].

My husband, Mr Hassan Golmohamadi, and my daughter, Susan Golmohamadi, were also arrested the same year. My son-in-law, Iraj Shirali, who was arrested in Tir 1361 [June 1982], was taken to court and eight months later, on the 5th Bahman 1361 [25th January 1983] was executed. The judge of his court was Ayatollah Gilani and the prosecutor was Asadollah Lajevardi.

Along with him, 21 members of the UIC, on the charge of opposing the Islamic Republic of Iran and establishing a group called "Sarbedaran", were executed by firing squad. Sarbedaran was engaged in an armed struggle with Sepah's forces and Basij in the city of Amol.

During the process of trial and announcing the verdicts of the members of this organisation, the Islamic Republic of Iran did not follow international legal or judiciary standards, which are mandatory during court trials for political prisoners or war hostages. Furthermore, these prisoners had no access to legal representation and other civil rights.

I also testify that during the time I spent at Evin Prison, the prisoners of all political groups were systematically tortured, their rights were violated and they were kept in solitary in the worst inhumane situations.

I, as a survivor of the 1360s [1980s], whose close relatives and family members are arrested or killed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, affirm that this regime treated me and my relatives with brutality, torture, and insults in some of the worst inhumane conditions. They lied to us when they told us we were brought in for answering only some short questions: it didn't take long until we were thrown into a solitary cell or rooms with other 60 people instead.

My son-in-law, Iraj Shirali, the son of Nouri Shirali and Gamartaj Barghi-shirazi, born on the 12th Mordad 1332 [3rd August 1953], was arrested and executed by firing squad on the 5th Bahman 1361 [25th January 1983] only with the charge of being a member of the UIC.

Here are the lists of all my family members and relatives who have been executed or sentenced to prison by the IRI:

The list of victims:

Name	Relationship to witness	Details
Iraj Shirali	Son-in-law	5th Bahman 1361 [25th January 1983] in Amol; executed by firing squad
Jamshid Ghiasy	Nephew (brother's son)	1361 [1982] in Evin Prison. Killed under torture
Khosrou Nicktalean	Nephew (sister's son)	1367 [1988] – Operation Forough Javeedan [Operation Eternal Light]: killed during the fight with Sepah
Parviz Niktalean	Nephew (sister's son)	1362 [1983] in Evin Prison. Executed by firing squad.
Hamid Niktalean	Second cousin	1362 [1983]. Killed during a fight with Sepah.
Abas Abkar	Cousin of spouse	1363 [1984]. Killed during arrest on his property in Karaj.

List of political prisoners and survivors:

Name	Relationship	Date of arrest	Length of captivity
Susan Golmohamadi	My daughter	1361 [1982]	2 years
Ashraf Ghiasi	Myself	1361 [1982]	3 years
Hassan Golmohamadi	My husband	1361 [1982]	4 years

Ahmad Golmohamadi	My husband's brother	1361 [1982]	5
	years		
Hamid Golmohamadi	My husband's nephew	1362 [1983]	
	6 months		
Shiva Golmohamadi	My husband's niece	1360 [1981]	3
	years		
Yousef Ghiasy	My brother's son	1360 [1981]	6 years
Mehrbod Kanani	My son-in-law	1362 [1983]	3 years
Jamileh Shirali	My daughter's sister-in-law	1361 [1982]	
	2 years		

### ***W40 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Hassan Golmohamadi was tortured so much that he was forced onto kidney dialysis.
- The witness was kicked and punched for calling out to a young girl she thought was her granddaughter; this caused her left eye to bleed and she passed out.
- The witness was confined in a cell with six or seven other people. Whoever wanted to use the toilet had to spread her legs over somebody's head; everybody took turns sleeping next to the toilet.
- Solitary confinement was for one person but sometimes six or seven.
- The witness was asked by Lajevardi to set up a sewing workshop, using machines and half-rolls of material confiscated from elsewhere (including the witness's own workshop); she taught repenters how to sew. She did not want to work there but was threatened.
- Evin Prison was inspected in 1983 by a Canadian delegation; the interpreter said that everybody in the workshop was a terrorist who had been arrested armed. This was especially absurd as there was a seven-year-old girl in the sweatshop (although she

herself did not work). The Canadian commissioner asked to speak privately to the prisoners; the witness begged Lajevardi for permission to tell the Canadian that he (Lajevardi) was nice, and then used the opportunity to tell the Canadian that Lajevardi was lying and that the prisoners were arrested for merely carrying pamphlets. The witness worked in this sweatshop for approximately three years, from one and a half months into her detention.

- The witness was given no medical attention for her infected and bleeding ear.
- The witness provided additional written evidence to the Truth Commission in which she explained that the clothes that prisoners sewed were worn by guards and also sold to “Quds” (a government-owned chain of department stores) as well as other stores in Arab countries. The witness was paid approximately a half to one rial per piece but at the end of the month, prison officials demanded this money back from her as compensation for their (the prison officials’) efforts.

## **Witness 41: Parand Meysami**

D.O.B.: 1973

Age at time of incident: 12

Status of witness: Daughter of the victim

**Name of victim: Seyed Murteza Meysami**

D.O.B.: 1952

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority)

My father, Seyed Murteza Meysami was born on the 22nd April 1952 in Ghazvin, Iran. He was the first-born child of Seyed Mehdi Meysami and Fakhr-al-Sadat Meysami. Mr Murteza Meysami was born in a large family and endured a financially difficult childhood. Despite the family difficulties, he completed high school with honours and was admitted to Isfahan University.

Mr Meysami's great talents were in literature and art. During high school, Mr Meysami became drawn to poetry and through teachings of his friend and teacher, Manouchehr Atashi, he began writing and publishing poetry. His poetry was published in Ferdosi magazine, a progressive magazine of the 1960s. Even during his high school years, Murteza was highly aware of the social injustice in Iranian society and wished for equality and social justice. He used his poetry as an outlet to express his view of the social injustices.

In 1968, Mr Meysami was admitted to the University of Isfahan, department of Geology. During university years, his passion for social justice and equality attracted him to progressive groups and events. While engaged in his studies at the university, he took part in groups such as "Jong-eh Isfahan" and became involved in

playwriting, acting and directing theatre performances. He acted and directed plays from Bahram Beyzai and Houshang Golshiri. During his activities with Jong-eh Esphahan, he worked with and befriended Houshang Golshiri, Fereydoun Houghoughi, Mansour Koushan, Naser Koushan and Yousef Tarakameh. While at the university, he founded the Student Poetry Society of University of Isfahan.

Mr Meysami's passion for social justice and political activism grew during his university years. He became connected with Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (OIPFG) and started his activism with the hope of achieving an ideal society for Iran. The OIPFG political party was dissolved through Shah's crackdown in 1972 and thus he lost his contacts with the group members. He continued his art and cultural activities while finishing his degree as a geologist.

After completing his degree in 1973, Mr Meysami was hired by the Ministry of Education to work as a high school teacher in Ghazvin. Mr Meysami deeply believed that by working as a teacher, he could impact society and influence young minds to help move the society towards freedom, social justice and equality. During this period, he started a theatre company at the Ghazvin Arts and Culture Centre. Through this artistic work, he and his friends provided strong reminders of the need to seek freedom and justice and influenced others to seek freedom and justice. The theatre company staged a number of plays between years 1976 to 1978. In 1978, Shah's secret services told Mr and Mrs Meysami via a letter to stop their cultural activities and demanded that the theatre company be dissolved. The letter stated that should they continue their activities, they would lose their jobs and would be arrested.

From the start of his professional career as a teacher in 1976, until the beginning of the revolutionary movement of 1978, Mr Meysami actively worked towards creating a better and more socially just society. In 1978 he organised a teachers' movement and a strike in the city of Ghazvin with the support of a network of activists that he had formed through the years. The teachers' strike, which



was in support of the revolution, resulted in the closure of all the schools. During those months of protest, Mr Meysami established the Independent Teachers' Society of the city of Ghazvin.

In winter of 1979, a number of political prisoners who had been released by the Shah re-established the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority). Mr Meysami officially joined the re-established political party and deepened his involvement in political activities.

After the 1979 revolution, Mr Meysami was nominated by his party as their candidate from the city of Ghazvin for the first parliamentary election. During the election he received substantial support through a high number of votes but was not elected to sit the parliament.

It was shortly after this period, in the fall of 1980 that Mr and Mrs Meysami were fired from their employment with the Ministry of Education due to their political affiliations and non-religious beliefs. In that same year, Mr Meysami was arrested based on the same accusations. During this period of imprisonment, he did not have any access to legal assistance, information or a lawyer. He was also not offered due process and his case was not taken before a judge or a court of law. He was released after four months.

In 1980, the Islamic Republic of Iran began to increase its pressure on political parties in several ways, such as mass arrests of activists and party members. For the next three years, Mr Meysami was under constant surveillance by the secret services resulting in tremendous hardship and trauma for his family and himself. During this time Mr Meysami and his family had to constantly move and live an underground life. In October 1983, Mr Meysami had to leave his wife, children and his home to protect the safety of his family.

In May 1984, Mr Meysami was arrested in Tehran and was taken to Evin Prison. At this point all contact with his family was cut off and they were unaware of his wellbeing or whereabouts. Through other former prisoners, his family later discovered that immediately after his arrest, Mr Meysami had been subjected to torture and kept in solitary confinement. The interrogators' purpose had been

to extract information about other party members as well as details regarding his political party. Mr Meysami had also been tortured as an attempt to coerce him to participate in a staged television interview that would have him confess to being anti-Islam and anti-revolution. Despite the immense pressure put on Mr Meysami and the torture he endured from his interrogators, he refused to provide any information, confess to any wrongdoing or participate in any form of contrived interview.

After three months of excruciating torture, on the 16th August 1984, Mr Meysami lost his life as a direct result of the torture and the injuries that he sustained. For the full duration of his imprisonment until the time that he was murdered by his interrogators, Mr Meysami never had access to any form of legal assistance or counsel and did not have a proper hearing, trial or legal process. He was not informed (nor was aware) that he would be killed, and did not have any opportunity to defend himself.

In addition to the brutal victimisation of Mr Meysami, he was not allowed any family visits or any form of contact with his family. To this date, his family is still not aware of exact details of his death. In response to the numerous inquiries made by Mr Meysami's family with regards to his whereabouts and his wellbeing, the authorities at Evin prison and other arms of the government intelligence services, denied any knowledge of Mr Meysami's whereabouts.

On the 8th October 1984, Mr Meysami's family received a phone call from Evin Prison indicating that Mr Meysami had passed away in prison. His family was asked to visit the prison to collect his clothes and other possessions. The Evin prison authorities denied any responsibility for Mr Meysami's murder. They also did not give any indication of his burial location. In addition, his family was refused the right to have any memorial services. The death certificate issued by the government indicates place of death to be Evin Prison and cause of death to be heart failure. At the time of his arrest, six months earlier, Mr Meysami was 33 years old and in good health.

For three years following Mr Meysami's death, Mrs Meysami contacted the office of the justice minister and other authorities on numerous occasions and received no answers regarding Mr Meysami's death, nor the location where his body was buried. In the summer of 1988, after three years of attempting to learn the truth of what happened to her husband, Mrs Meysami was contacted by the Evin prison authorities and was called in for interrogations. After hours of interrogations, she was told not to contact the authorities again for information regarding her husband. She was also told that since she wanted to know what had happened to her husband, she was informed the cause of his death was due to hanging with a plastic garbage bag.

### *W41 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The biggest impact on families was "extreme exclusion", with very limited contact with anyone outside the nuclear family. They led "dual lives". Outside the home they were unable to talk about their experiences: the witness was summoned at the age of seven by her headmistress at school for questioning about her father. The whole family is psychologically unhealthy. After her father was killed, her grandfather never spoke again; her grandmother suffered deep depression. Her mother was suicidal for some time and used to say, "If it weren't for you, I'd have killed myself long ago and spared myself from this misery." The witness did not know whether to feel guilty or special for having effectively saved her mother's life.
- The witness is still unable to talk about her childhood, even with her husband. Once or twice a week, her seven-year-old son asks her when she tucks him into bed whether his father will be killed just as hers was.
- In her childhood, family outings consisted of going to the cemetery and washing a grave that may or may not have been her

father's; that seemed normal back then.

- The witness's mother pestered the authorities for an answer on how her son had died; she received the answer that he had been hanged with a plastic bag over his head.
- Two of the witness's uncles, aged fifteen and twenty, were executed too.

## **Witness 42: Saeedeh Jabani**

D.O.B.: 1982

Status of witness: Daughter of the victim. The witness's mother was four months pregnant with her when her father was executed.

**Name of victim: Saeed Jabani**

D.O.B.: 1957

Occupation at time of arrest: Teacher

Date of arrest: 23rd December 1981

Date and place of execution: 1982 (Vakilabad Prison, Mashhad)

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Education: AA Degree (Fogh-e-diploma = two years college)

I, Saeedeh Jabani, am the daughter of Saeed Jabani, who was executed in 1361 [1982]. My father was charged as a sympathiser of People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) and was executed 40 days before I was born. My mother was also charged and sentenced to 30 years in prison. Until I was four, I was with my mother in Vakilabad Prison.

**Arrest and torture:**

My father and mother were arrested on the 2nd Dey 1360 [23rd December 1981] on the charge of being sympathisers of the MKO. My mother was four-months pregnant with me at the time. My mother told me that she was subjected to physical and psychological torture. She said, "When I was arrested, I was taken to Malek Abad, the Sepah's jail in Mashhad. The interrogation began immediately. They told me if I didn't cooperate with them, they would lash me. They then took me to a basement. They fastened my legs with rope and pulled me up in a way that only some parts of my

back were on the ground. The torturer lashed the soles of my feet with a wire. My interrogators and torturer kept asking me about some names and wanted me to expose their whereabouts. I didn't know anything about where they were. After a few hours, they untied my feet and forced me to walk in a place that was wet with water. They ordered me to walk and jump up and down. They then tied my feet and lashed me again. While torturing me, they cursed at me and punched my mouth with their fists and stuffed a cap into my mouth to muffle my voice and one of my teeth became loose. The torture continued from 17.00 to 02.00." My mother was held in solitary for several months.

My father was tortured for four months. They tortured him to extract information and forced him to do a TV interview to confess.

### ***W42 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was born to a prisoner, whose husband was executed 40 days before the birth, for which the prisoner was let out of Vakilabad to give birth in a hospital and was returned within hours. Pour-Mohammadi was the prosecutor in her parents' trial. The witness's mother was permitted to leave prison four years into her thirty-year sentence but made to report to intelligence services once a week after her release.

- There were no special facilities in prison for children; they shared facilities with adult prisoners. The prison was the "whole world" for such children: her memories are limited to images of the cell. The witness remained in prison from birth until the age of four, at which point she realised the need to keep her identity hidden to the outside world.

### **Witness 43: Hedayat Gholami**

D.O.B.: 1962

Age at time of arrest: 19

Occupation: Household appliance technician

Education: Third year high school

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

Status of witness: Survivor

I was arrested in January/February 1982 by Sepah Pasdaran and I spent one month in solitary confinement; from there I was transferred to Adel Abad Prison and for twelve more months, which would be a total of fourteen months, I was tortured and harmed psychologically and mentally. All of this happened because of my political ideology since I was after freedom and democracy for the people of my country. Torture was usually of different kinds: from not providing the prisoners with their basic hygienic needs to forcing them to say their prayers and physical torture, and putting prisoners in line with those who were going to be executed to tortures that involved cables and whipping and putting political prisoners with dangerous prisoners in the same place.

I should remind you that I was a student at that time; due to this arrest, I could not continue my studies. I was released in April/May 1983 and again four months later while studying, I was arrested by Islamic Revolution Committee (Komiteh) and was taken to a group home, which was provided by Committee to keep the prisoners there. They were interrogated and tortured there so that if a prisoner died under these barbaric tortures, there would be no trace. The person who ran this Revolution Committee group home

was a person called Jamil from Khorramshahr. I should remind you that since all the interrogations were done blindfolded, most of the interrogators are not identifiable. In this group home, I was tortured several times with electric cables on my heels and accused of being part of the prison organisation. Then, after a lot of torture, I was transferred to Sepah Prison and there I was interrogated again; after a month, I was transferred to Adel Abad Prison. Then I was released after four months.

I write to you about my experience in the years of 1981 and 1983 in the unjust courts of the Islamic Republic. Basically, there was no judicial system and judging took place in the courts by persons called “religious law judges”. There were no prosecutors, no attorneys and no jury. These judges would make decisions based on the orders that they got from the officials of the Islamic Republic. On both occasions that I was taken to court, I was put in a room to wait for my turn. This room was known by the prisoners as the “helicopter room”: the reason was that there was a very large ventilator on the wall that made a noise like a helicopter. Since the prisoners could not use the restroom while they were waiting, some of the prisoners had to relieve themselves there and the foul smell would cause problems for you for hours.

Then you would be taken to a room blindfolded where two pasdars were guarding you. A cleric would make decisions as a judge. In general, no more than two or three questions were asked of the defendant and rarely the time allotted would be more than ten minutes. The questions were about the first name, last name and whether he/she accepts his/her charges. Then the decision was made. In fact, there was no court.

In the city of Shiraz, there was one so-called judge whose name was Andalib, who was some twenty years old and who would make no more than two types of decisions: if you accepted your charges, execution; if you denied your charges, life imprisonment. On rare occasions, he would make a decision for fifteen years of imprisonment. Many of the prisoners were innocent and the young people who were not familiar with politics were in solitary confinement.



By putting these young people next to those who had repented or next to pasdars, they were set up, sent to these unjust courts and then sent to the firing squad. Those who were killed by the firing squad had to pay for their own bullets so that their bodies would be given to the survivors.

When I was arrested and was sent to prison, the prisoners would tell me to pray so that your court would not be with Andalib.

There are many names: Mehrdad Ardebili, from the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority), considering the fact that his father was a cleric, he was executed. Mahmoud Hasani, from OIPFG (Minority), who was in solitary confinement for nine months and then was executed; his personal items at his home were confiscated; Jamal Zaerzadeh, from the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), Nasser Kazemi, Nasser Gholami and many more.

The number of arrests and executions were so high that is difficult to remember all the names. Every night at 23.00 onwards, usually the names were read by "Torabpoor brothers" and then prisoners were sent to the firing squad.

When I was arrested and sent to prison, due to my young age, after I was interrogated and until the time of my "court" appearance, in order to weaken my morale, I was placed in a cell with several people from the Shah's Intelligence Service and two other people who had committed adultery. I would sleep at night in fear; however, I was only thinking about Andalib. When I went to "court" and Andalib was not there, I felt very happy. The "judge" asked me my name and asked, "Are you from Abadan?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Look, do not lie to us. You are not a Muslim. You are either a communist or a womaniser - both of which are crimes. I will punish you. All of you should be executed." I was shocked. This nightmare is still with me after 30 years that I could have lost my life so easily.

On the second occasion when I went to "court" in 1983, the "judge" asked my name and when I answered, he said, "First take him to be punished (flogged) so that he talks." I told the cleric who was

the judge, “Judge, you did not ask anything so that I can answer.” He said, “There is no need, all of you are infidels! Unless you are flogged you won’t become upright.” After all the interrogations, I went to court and if it were not for the advice of old prisoners, I would not be here now.

### *W43 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was arrested for the first time after being chased for distributing OIPFG (Minority) pamphlets; he was arrested the second time for allegedly bothering women in the street. On this occasion, a bag was dropped over his head and he was taken to a house, where he was flogged from 19.00 until morning; the reason for this location was that guards were not required to register the deaths of prisoners who died under torture if this was not inside the official prisons.
- The words attributed to Judge Andalib are quoted verbatim. The judge also ordered the witness to be beaten until he “became a human being”; the witness was escorted out of the court when he objected. The second time the witness appeared before this judge, cellmates had warned him that denial was the safest strategy – confessions would cause greater problems.
- Some people were killed without any trial at all.
- On the day of the witness’s release, he was beaten by guards, who said that he would be killed if he returned to prison and ordered him to leave his town of residence. He had lost half of his hearing capacity and had gone partially blind.
- The witness is still afraid of the dark due to his experiences in solitary.

**Witness 44: [W44: NAME REDACTED]**

Age at time of incident: 15

Status of witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: [W44/1: NAME REDACTED]**

Date of arrest: Early summer 1981

Date of execution: September 1981

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

The victim was executed at dawn in September 1981 in Isfahan's Dastgerd Prison complex.

The conviction and execution were decided and implemented by the Islamic Revolutionary Court and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The victim was arrested in early summer in 1981 and transferred to a section of the prison complex known as the "Quarantine Section".

During this time, the victim's family had no knowledge of his whereabouts until a letter was received by mail, in the victim's own handwriting. Afterwards, no more information was provided to the family, with all visitation rights denied.

If my memory serves me well, three or four days prior to the execution, a mass trial of approximately 35 prisoners, with my brother included in the group, was aired on Isfahan's local TV station. This mass trial was conducted without the presence of a single lawyer and the prisoners were denied the right to defend themselves.

Subsequently, two days before the execution, we were notified to pay a visit to the victim the next day, one day before the planned execution. Our parents and I went to visit my brother. During the

short visit, healing scars of blows to the head were visible on my brother's head. This was our last and only visit; it lasted just about ten minutes.

### ***W44 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The family is not sure of the exact date of [W44/1: NAME REDACTED]'s arrest; they had not been in contact for some time and first heard of the arrest through a letter that he sent from prison. The family was then called to visit [W44/1: NAME REDACTED] the day before his execution. The father had a heart attack the night of the execution, so two other relatives collected the body; the father had a heart attack the same night. The victim was fifteen years old at the time of his arrest and execution.
- The witness knows that her brother was in the Quarantine Section because this was written as the sender's address on the letter; the family does not know how the victim managed to send the letter, the gist of which was that he was well.
- Shortly after the arrival of this letter, unidentified people came to the door of the house (with the brother in the van) and confiscated the brother's motorcycle.

## **Witness 45: Mahmoodreza Khademi**

D.O.B.: 1953

Status of witness: Survivor and brother of two victims

**Name of victims: Hamidreza and Bahman Khademi**

I, Mahmoud Khademi, was a political prisoner for nine months under the dictatorial monarchy in 1972, for three and a half years from the beginning of 1975 till November 1978, and then for nine months in September 1980 after the victory of the revolution (I was sentenced to death but escaped from the prison). I was in charge of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) in northern Khuzestan (i.e., cities of Andimeshk, Dezful, Shush Danial and Haft Tappeh) after the revolution until the date of my arrest in 1980. Also I was declared as a candidate in the parliamentary election of 1979 by the MKO.

Escape: When I was arrested September 1980 and imprisoned in the infamous UNESCO Prison of Dezful, the wave of torture and executions had not started yet. However, during my nine months in prison, I was constantly kicked, slapped and punched. After two mock executions and constant threats of execution, I was sentenced to five years after a trial that took a few minutes. After a month they transferred me to Karoon Prison of Ahwaz. From March 1981, the Ahwaz organisation [of Mujahideen] put my escape plan on their agenda. In Ahwaz Prison I was in charge of the organisation of Mujahideen supporters in prison. On the 12th June 1360 [1981], I was taken to the court again and this time I was sentenced to death for "leading incitement and unrest in prison". In other words, I was on death row after the 12th June. This prompted the Mujahideen organisation in Ahwaz to expedite my escape plan. On the

13th June, when I had a face-to-face visit in prison (with my family), my mother and my aunt, both rest in peace, came to visit me. As she was hugging and kissing me, my mother put a folded skin paper [very thin papers that Mujahideen used for writing reports] in my hand. My aunt's mission was to stand between us and the guard (who was present during our visit) in order to hide the paper transfer from his eyes. That paper, which I opened and read later in my cell, contained my escape plan. Based on the plan, I would escape from the prison hospital with the help of two escape teams and some of the hospital personnel. The plan was carried out successfully. After escaping from the prison and living underground for a year in Tehran and other cities, I went into exile, then to Iraq, and then again was returned to Europe.

This explanation was necessary because my activities in the northern cities of Khuzestan, my election candidature and my escape from prison doubled the anger and hatred of the prison authorities against my brother Hamid and my cousins during their imprisonment and interrogation. In a phone contact that I had with my mother after Hamid's execution, she said that when she received the corpse from the Dezful morgue, bruises and wounds of extensive torture were visible all over Hamid's body. In addition, when he was executed by the firing squad, a complete magazine of twenty bullets had been fired at him instead of one into his head or heart. She said that there were traces of bullets from his ankle to his head, meaning that they tortured him to death. My mother believed that this was their way of seeking revenge for my escape from the prison.

In addition to the execution of my brothers, Hamidreza and Bahman, my two cousins were executed by firing squads: Mohammad Kayedi in 1982 and Ghodratollah Kayedi in 1996. Mohammad Kayedi was arrested in Bandar Abbas and transferred to UNESCO Prison in Dezful and tortured extensively.

After the execution of Hamid and a lack of awareness about Bahman's fate, my parents died of grief. Being subjected to frequent harassment and summonses every few days to the prison, constant

pressure and humiliation and even having their grocery quota cut off, etc. forced two of my sisters to emigrate from the city of Andimeshk and reside in Khoramabad with their families. Such pressures continue to this day to the point that my telephone contact with them prompts their being summoned and interrogated.

Hamid was identified and captured in the summer of 1982 on the Khoramabad-Andimeshk highway and after much torture was executed in October 1982 in UNESCO Prison in the city of Dezful. At the time I spoke to his mother, who told me the authorities were so angry with him that they had fired at him twenty times; they did not allow the family to retrieve his body and gave only the address of a grave in the central cemetery of the city of Dezful. He was twenty years old when he was executed.

Bahman was captured while crossing the border to Iraq to join the Mujahideen (MKO) and even though 22 years have passed, we still have no news of him from prison. Just here and there we hear that the Islamic Republic executed him that same year, but never put his family in contact. Bahman was 26 years old when he was arrested.

The man in charge of the Dezful court was a mullah named Hajiatolleslam Eslami and the prosecutor was Alireza Ava'i.

We have no information regarding his trial, his alleged offences, the verdict or an official order of execution.

According to other prisoners who were at the time in UNESCO Prison and were released later, none of the prisoners in UNESCO, either the ones who were executed or the ones who were released, were ever given legal notice of any of their proceedings; trials were a few minutes long and consisted of insults and accusations and there were even a few prisoners who were not given their execution orders and did not know that they were going to be executed until their actual execution.

### *W45 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Hamid Khademi's mother took delivery of his body and buried him in Andimeshk.
- The witness clarified that Hamid and Bahman were 31 and 27 years old, respectively.
- Bahman was arrested with a group of four others in 1989.



## **Witness 46: Nina Toobaei**

D.O.B.: 1961, Tehran

Age at time of incident: 18-25

Status of witness: Sister of the victim (Two of her nephews were also executed: Mohsen and Ahmad Nayeri)

**Name of victim: Siamak Toobaei**

D.O.B.: 1963, Tehran

Age at time of arrest: 18

Date of execution: 1989

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Siamak Toobaei was the third child of his family of four kids. He was a twelfth grade, bright student at Kharazmi High School when he was arrested. He was arrested at the age of eighteen on the 5th May 1981 [14th Shahrivar 1360] in the street while on his way home, and sent to Evin Prison. Three weeks after his arrest, his death was announced on the news and printed in daily papers. Later on, his family was informed that he was still alive and that the death announcement had been a mistake.

One month after his arrest, he was tried for being one of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) sympathisers and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment; he was transferred to Ghezelhesar Prison. At the end of January 1982, following the arrest of some of his classmates, he was returned to Evin Prison for a "retrial". Following this show trial, his sentence was increased to twelve years without any explanation. From the date of his arrest to December 1989, Siamak spent his prison term in various prisons: Evin, Gohardasht and Ghezelhesar Prisons. He spent over two and

a half years in solitary confinement.

Before December 1989, he requested a home pass (temporary short-term release to visit family) just for a few hours so that he could see his family. On the 24th September 1989, he went to his family's house accompanied by two Revolutionary Guards. He took advantage of being out of prison and ran away from the guards.

With a calculated plan, the authorities had set Siamak up for the escape. The opportunity for their plan presented itself when his mother needed salt for a meal that she was preparing; one of the guards suggested that Siamak could purchase it and permitted Siamak to leave the house on his own without being accompanied. The authorities were confident that Siamak would fall in their trap. They waited a few hours and then reported his escape to the Evin prison officials. They took his parents to Evin Prison and accused them of being accomplices and collaborators with Siamak. His ill father, who was heavily dependent on his daily medicine, was released 24 hours later and his mother was released two weeks later. Sometime later, Siamak, under surveillance of the Department of Information, was abducted by one of the Department of Information's Operation teams and transferred to one of the prisons or their safe houses and murdered.

Based on memories of Iraj Mesdaghi's book, *Na zistan Na marg* ["Prison Memoirs in Four Volumes"], the authorities would try to demoralize all prisoners by showing them new arrested political prisoners and broadcasting the news of Siamak Tobaei and a number of other prisoners and the presence of wide information traps; they wanted to have a power showdown to weaken the spirit of the prisoners.

We, Siamak's family, are unaware of the details of Siamak's re-arrest and being taken to a safe house or prison, and we have no detailed information about his murder. Siamak does not even have a grave.

The regime was trying to get rid of active political prisoners, and it was their plan to destroy and kill the prisoners in a way that they (the regime) wouldn't be responsible for their death.

**Name of victim: Mohsen (Bijan) Nayeri**

D.O.B.: 1963

Education: High school student

Date of execution: 29th September 1982

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

The victim was Mohsen (Bijan) Nayeri, who was executed on the 29th September 1982.

Bijan was studying for his last year of high school and was an active member of the student union of the MKO in Shiraz. He moved to Tehran on the 20th June 1981 [30th Khordad 1360] and started a new round of political activities in the city.

Following the arrest of his nephew, Siamak Toobaei, and his brother, Bahman Nayeri, Bijan left his place of residence. No one knows when and where Bijan was arrested, but we definitely know that it was after the 9th January 1982 because he went to see one of his sisters for a short period of time on the 9th January 1982. This was the last time that he was seen. In April 1982, he contacted his family from Evin Prison.

Bijan's oldest brother visited him in prison for the last time on the 29th September 1982 [7th Mehr 1361], the same day that he was executed. Bijan told his brother that he had been brought before what later became known as the "Death Commission", where he was informed of his charges without having the right to defend himself or to have access to a lawyer.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is responsible for Bijan's death. Each and every one of the leaders of the regime must be held accountable for the killing of Bijan and many thousands of other political prisoners.

There is a will left behind from him, which can be presented if needed.

**Name of victim: Ahmad (Bahman) Nayeri**

D.O.B.: 1962

Education: University student

Date of execution: 9th January 1982

Political affiliation: Sahand Organisation

Bahman was the seventh child of the family. Bahman was one of the sympathisers of the Sahand Organisation. He lived in Shiraz until he was eighteen years old, graduated from Shahpour High School in Shiraz and then moved to Tehran.

In Azar of 1360 [November/December 1981], Bahman was planning to go to Shiraz to visit his mother for a few days. At 14.30, in the afternoon on the 26th November 1981 [5th Azar 1360], he took a bus from Tehran to Shiraz. He was arrested on the morning of the 27th November 1981 [6th Azar] in the bus terminal of Shiraz. He was first taken to Shiraz Prison and then transferred to Tehran's Evin Prison. He was accused of harbouring Fariba Elahi Panah, a sympathiser of the Peykar organisation. Bahman had learned about the arrests of Fariba and the arrest of her landlord and was very worried for them. Exactly a month after his arrest, on the 26th December 1981 [6th Dey 1360], Bahman was executed. His grave is number 66 in section 92, row 36 of the Behesht Zahra Cemetery of Tehran. His family was informed of his execution by phone on the 9th January 1982 [19th Dey 1360]. There is a will left behind from him, which can be presented if needed.

### ***W46 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Siamak Toobaei's name was published in the Kayhan newspaper along with 56 others who had been executed; the family went to Evin to collect his possessions and was sent to Behesht Zahra, where it discovered that only 54 bodies had been transferred to the cemetery. The family returned to Evin three times before they were told that Siamak was still alive. It was common for people to be listed as dead in the newspapers when they were still alive: this trick was used in order to get other prisoners to turn these people in under torture, since they felt safe pointing the finger at friends whom they thought were already dead.

- Siamak's sentence was extended precisely because somebody turned him in, thinking that he was already dead. The family was informed of the extension over the phone.
- Siamak's family was able to visit him once a fortnight.
- Solitary confinement for Siamak was a punishment for complaining about prison conditions.

## **Witness 47: Khatereh Moini-Chaghavand**

D.O.B.: 1965

Age at time of incident: 21

Status of the witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: Heybatollah Moini-Chaghavand**

D.O.B.: 1950

Age at time of arrest: 33

Date of execution: Summer 1988

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority)

My brother Haybat was identified in the street in 1983 by Nasser Yarahmadi, who had been his cellmate in the Shah's time when he had been incarcerated back then.

Haybat was led to the firing squad along with thousands of political prisoners in the summer of 1988.

We don't have any information other than that he had been seen by a friend a day before his execution in Evin Prison. He was accused of being a member of the "16th of Azar" [a splinter group of the OIPF (Majority)]. He was sentenced to death first and then, after a court review, to life imprisonment.

We were suddenly and unexpectedly given his personal belongings and a receipt and the news of his execution from Evin after four months of trying to get a visit or any news of him. We were already familiar with Khavaran and we went there and found the incredible site of all these loved ones in mass shallow graves.

Another family member who was led to the firing squad was my sister's husband.

Kasra Akbari-Kordestani, born 1955 in Kermanshah, was a stu-

dent at the technical institute of Tehran. He was arrested on the 13th January 1983 and was a Tudeh Party sympathiser. He was executed on the 1st September 1987.

### *W47 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- When the victim was arrested, the family knew nothing of it for 72 hours.
- As a result of torture, the victim's shoulders were dislocated by the weights suspended off them; his legs were broken twice; he suffered from kidney malfunction.
- The family was not allowed to visit the victim until after nine months of solitary (which continued for a further five years). The victim was so thin that his mother could only recognise him through his eyes.
- The witness's mother was beaten up for demonstrating in front of the prosecutor's office.
- After the burial in Khavaran, the victim's relatives had to dig up graves at night in order to identify who was who (they were told by the guards that the brother-in-law was one of the five who were buried). The graves were so shallow that black plastic bags and clothes soon poked out of the soil; the bodies had all been dumped on each other. Somebody's mother said: "They have spent so long together, let them remain that way – cover them up and don't let the crows come near". Revolutionary Guards turned up and physically kicked everyone out of Khavaran. When the families returned with a truck full of soil in order to cover the bodies more fully, they found that the soil had been covered with lime to toughen it.
- The victim was serving a life sentence at the time that he was convicted by the Death Commission; he was hanged to death from a low ceiling.
- Families were left "not normal" by the experience.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

New members of Death Commission

- Esmail Shustari
- Davood Lashkari
- Hamid Noori – “Abbasi”
- Ebrahim Mobasheri



## **Witness 48: Sahar Mohammadi**

D.O.B.: 1978

Age at time of incident: 6

Status of witness: Daughter of the victim (her two uncles were also executed)

**Name of victim: Sousan Amiri**

D.O.B.: 1958

Date of arrest: 1983

Date of execution: 1984 (Evin Prison)

Political affiliation: Union of Iranian Communists (UIC)

**Name of victim: Asghar Amiri**

D.O.B.: 1950

Date of arrest: 1983

Date of execution: 1984 (Evin Prison)

Political affiliation: Union of Iranian Communists (UIC)

**Name of victim: Hassan Amiri**

D.O.B.: 1956

Date of arrest: 1983

Date of execution: May 1985 (Evin Prison)

Political affiliation: Union of Iranian Communists (UIC)

My mother (Sousan Amiri), my father (Piroot Mohammadi), my paternal uncle (Rasool Mohammadi) and my maternal uncles (Asghar and Hassan Amiri) were all political activists who supported the Union of Iranian Communists (Sarbedaran). My father and paternal uncle were killed during the Sarbedaran uprising of 1981.

My mother and two uncles (Asghar and Hassan), along with another member of the Sarbedaran organisation, Fereydoon Seraj, were arrested in Tehran in 1983. They were taken to Evin Prison.

We were only allowed to visit my uncles and Fereydoon from behind a glass screen after so many attempts. Our attempts after nine months to visit my mother were futile. Although my uncles and Fereydoon kept in good spirits, the physical signs of suffering were pretty evident.

We visited Uncle Asghar and took his wife with us; he used to reach out as if he could touch his new bride's hand from behind the glass, and at the end of the visit he never got up to walk; he always used to say, "You go ahead, I want to watch you a little longer." Later we found out that he had a severe limp as a result of being tortured in prison and did not want to upset us, so he avoided walking in our presence.

Uncle Asghar was executed in the autumn of 1984. Uncle Hassan was kept in solitary confinement for weeks before he was executed in May 1985. For nine months I used to accompany relatives to Evin to try to see my mother; for nine months I kept hope alive.

We never managed to get permission to visit my mother. She was executed in August 1984. A few years after her execution, according to an inmate who had survived Evin, my mother had been brutally tortured. Both her legs were in plaster and signs of infection in her legs were evident. According to inmates, she faced mock executions many times in order to break her down before she was actually executed in 1984.

Fereydoon Seraj, a close friend of my mother and my uncles, was executed in the autumn of 1984.

### ***W48 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Sousan Amiri was arrested in a violent house raid; it took the family approximately one month to discover where she was being held.
- Mrs Amiri was threatened that she would have to cooperate if she ever wanted to see her daughter again.

- Mrs Amiri was buried with other executed relatives in Khavaran. The witness used to see a woman sitting at her (the witness's) mother's grave, which she thought was natural because it was normal for families to show sympathy with each other; it turned out that the woman thought that her daughter had been buried there, because both families had been told that their relatives were buried at the same spot. The woman dug up the grave and indeed found her daughter. Subsequently the witness does not know where her own mother was buried.
- The witness's two uncles were tortured in each other's presence.
- The witness's grandmother could not stay alone without crying; she used to look at photos searching for bullet wounds and used to beat herself.
- Revolutionary Guards used to attack mourning ceremonies and attack everyone; as such, it was impossible to hold such services.
- The witness was effectively an adult by the age of six; her childhood had been stolen from her when she was five. Her family members were so distressed by their experiences that they used to speak in her presence, leaving her privy to discussions on executions and torture.
- The witness's grandmother was pushed to the ground and insulted by Revolutionary Guards in her presence.
- The witness's pain intensifies as she gets older and understands more acutely the pain her family suffered.
- The witness was expelled from school as soon as the headmaster discovered who she was. By first grade, the witness had to lie about her identity and pretend that her parents were living out of town for her father's work, in order to justify the presence of her grandmother.
- The witness's mother left her a will, in which she wrote, "I have been deprived of seeing you before you go to school." (The witness has submitted a copy of this to the tribunal.)
- The witness still has two recurring nightmares. In the first,

the house is being attacked and she is trying to find her mother but cannot; she wishes in her dreams that she might be arrested along with her mother, because then she could plead with the guards that she loves and needs her mother, so they must not arrest her. In the second, her dear ones are tied up to a pole and are to be killed by firing squad; she has to choose who will live.

- Mrs Amiri once spat in Lajevardi's face; nobody knows what happened, but when she was brought back to the cell, she was unable to move her hands.

## **Witness 49: Azizeh Shahmoradi**

D.O.B.: 1959

Date of arrest: May 1984 (Tehran)

Occupation at time of arrest: Teacher/student

Status of witness: Survivor

1. My name is Azizeh Shahmoradi; I live in Berkeley, California. I was teacher and student of Biology at the National University of Iran (Shaheed Beheshti University).

My personal experience, like that many other political prisoners during IRI regime, cannot be summarise in a twenty- or thirty-minute presentation: it can fill thousands of pages of a book. But due to the limits on my time, I briefly present and share this painful experience of my political activities, arrest, imprisonment and life after Evin. I am one of the twenty leftist female survivors who were tried by the “Death Commission” in the summer of 1988 when the political genocide happened pursuant to Khomeini’s fatwa. Thus, I would like specifically to share my experience of this human tragic incident more in detail.

2. I was a supporter of the Fadaian Movement [OIPFG] and a member of the executive committee of the Teachers’ Independent Association of Iran [Kanoon Mostaghele Moaleman], and I also supported the activities of National Union of Women. I was one of the organisers of the first independent left demonstration on the 17th December 1977 in Tehran (before Khomeini took over). My affiliation and activities with these organisations led to my arrest and imprisonment a few years later.

3. On the 17th Ordibehest 1363 [7th May 1984], one night armed members of the Komiteh Moshtarak, located on Naser

Khosro Street, kicked our door open and arrested us. My husband and I told them to let our several-months-old son stay with our neighbour but they refused. They took us to Komiteh Moshtarak, also known as the “3000 Ward” of Evin Prison. We were blind-folded on the way to Komiteh.

4. Interrogations began the next morning and continued for six months. I was asked to confess to my political activities, about which I could figure they had already gathered a lot of information. My refusal to confess was followed by physical and mental torture. But what hurt the most was to hear my baby screaming non-stop, as if I did not feel any pain except his voice. Several months later, I was transferred to Evin.

5. In Evin, I was kept in solitary confinement and gradually transferred to a communal ward. Rahimi, the head female guard of Ward 4, asked me whether or not I accepted Islam and would pray. I said, “No.”

She asked: “Do you believe in the Islamic Republic of Iran?”

I said: “No.”

She told a guard-prisoner, “Sister, send her to Room 4 upstairs.”

We were all leftists. Fatemeh Modaresi (known as “Fardin”), a high-ranking member of the Tudeh Party, was in this room. She was executed in 1989.

6. Approximately eighteen months after my arrest, my trial finally began in the fall of 1985. The whole trial lasted less than ten minutes! With no lawyers, no jury, a clergy judge convicted me of being an “enemy of the Islamic state” because I had refused to cooperate and support the Islamic regime. In protest at the unfairness of the trial, I refused to speak at my trial. I received my sentence a month after my so called “trial” by Akbari, a female guard in the punitive basement of 209, where I was detained this time.

7. Upon my parents’ request, I was transferred to the prison of my hometown, Semnan. They had a permit to visit me every fifteen days and also to bring our son to visit his father. They were unable to do so because of the distance. In Semnan Prison, in order to protest the guards’ inhuman and abusive behaviour, I had to go

on hunger strike several times with no water either; as a result, I developed intestinal (stomach) problems.

8. After completing my two-year sentence in the fall of 1987 [1366], I was asked to sign a repentance letter in order to be released. Because I refused to do so, I was once again transferred to Evin and put in solitary confinement. I was again subjected to a round of interrogation. Thereafter, I was put in the Melikesh ward (Ward 1) with many other prisoners whose sentences had ended. This was again a locked ten square metres cell with 25-30 prisoners.

Before lockdown of prison

9. The interrogation of prisoners took a different leap and became more ideological in late 1987 [1366].

In late spring of 1988 [1367] one day, Fatemi, a female guard, opened the door and said, "Retain your hijabs: the brothers [ruling ideological leaders] are coming."

All the prisoners put their chadors on and sat around the room. Prison officials and security officials of a high rank entered the room. I knew some of them, including Mortazavi (governor of Evin), Mojtaba Halvaei (the head of security in Evin Prison), and Sarlak (the assistant of the prosecutor) and there were others that I did not recognise. They all sat down in the room. Mojtaba Halvaei, with his Pasdaran uniform, entered the room with his boots on.

10. The lack of sanitation and hygiene in a tight, closed room and the lack of fresh air had resulted in many inmates' developing skin disease and other complications. So I told Mojtaba Halvaei, "Do not enter the room with your boots on – we're living here." He asked invectively, "Who was that?" Ghamar Azkya of the Mujahideen said, "It was not important."

11. Mojtaba Halvaei asked again who that person was. I immediately said, "I was," and I said, "Do not enter the room with your boots on – we are living here." He said, "Get up, come out, and bring your blindfold too."

I was sitting on one side of the room facing officials of the committee, who were sitting on the other end of the room. I got up to walk

towards the door but Mojtaba Halvaei kicked me from behind and threw me against the wall and hit my head with his fist. He said to stay there and not move. Later on, I heard from my cellmates that they were questioned about their charges, the length of their sentences and why they had not been released.

12. They separated some of leftists of different organisations and sent them to solitary confinement. They did not send any of the Mujahideen to the punitive section in Asayeshgah with us that day. This was a sign that they had some other plans for them. Two other leftists and I were sent to solitary confinement; we had no resources and an absolute lack of any news. Shortly after, all visits were cancelled. As I remember, we were six prisoners who were transferred to the punitive section that day and later they transferred two more prisoners.

Evin goes lockdown

13. We were in this situation for two months. In late July, Mojtaba Halvaei took us to Ward 209 of Evin, the old building. The narrow hallway of 209 was full of prisoners, blindfolded men sitting on the floor facing the wall. There was a heavy silence in command. Slightly further, Halvaei pushed a jade-colour curtain aside. The “Death Commission” was stationed there.

14. Hossein Ali Nayyeri, the judge of the Islamic Revolution Court (Section 1), was sitting behind a grey metal desk. I knew him because they took me there by mistake, once during my trial. He was the religious judge of the committee. On his left there were three others with ordinary clothing, no uniforms. I did not know them.

15. When I entered, Nayyeri asked: “What is your crime?” “I am not guilty,” I responded.

One of those three men, Eshraghi (though I did not know it was his name till later), a heavy man with puffed-up, red eyes, looked at me and said, “Haji Agha means: in relation to what organisation were you arrested?” I mentioned the group’s name.

Nayyeri, upon hearing the name, told Halvaei: “She is an apostate [mortad] – take her away!”



The person intervened again and said, “Haji Agha she says she is Muslim.”

I stared straight into his red eyes and said, “No. I did not say such thing. You asked me what organisation I was arrested in connection with and I told you, ‘Organisation of Iranian People’s Fedai Guerrillas (Minority), of revolutionary socialist orientation’.”

This time, Nayyeri shouted, “Take her away – she is an apostate [mortad] and give her five lashes at each prayer till her death.”

16. When we got out of there, Halvaei was in the front with my two cellmates behind him and I was the last walking in the hallway. I pretended to talk to my cellmates as loud as I could but my main purpose was to notify other inmates in the hallways about what awaited them. I said loudly that it was an apostasy court [dadgah ertedad]. That day all of us who were in the punitive section were taken to the “Death Commission” and were sentenced to death for being mortads (against Islam).

17. They took us out of our cells and brought us to the ward for the noon prayers. There was a bench at the entrance of the Asayeshgah ward. A few uniformed guards, men and women guards, circled one side of the bench. One by one we lay down on the bench on our stomachs, this time with no shackles or cuffs but we had our veils and were blindfolded. I pressed my feet against the bench and pushed my chest against it as hard as I could. I wrapped my arms around the bench as if hugging it in order to keep myself from falling during the floggings. Mojtaba Halvaei took charge, flogging with the cable as hard as he could: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The cable was howling as it cracked through the heavy leadish air, cutting through my body. Pain and burning sensations pulsed through me, running through my bone marrows. I was holding my breath and pushing my teeth against each other to prevent myself from screaming. Screaming under the torture is considered as your weakness. That afternoon and evening, they took us to be flogged, as they do for each time of prayer. Male and female guards took turns beating us with their cables or water hoses.

18. Apart from Halvaei, the other male guard named Javad was

sharing the burden of flogging, but all of the women guards did too, including Akbari, Taleghani, Sobhani, Yousefi, Sadat, Fatimi and another woman guard whose name I do not remember name but whose daughter's name was Melyka. They all took turns beating us with cables or water hoses. Days were passing heavily and the conditions were not endurable. They held us with our tortured bodies in the ward to witness the whipping of our cellmates, which itself was a harder punishment. I am not sure how many days later it was when Sobhani, a woman guard, came to take us for our flogging (we were flogged five times a day, each time five to 25 lashes), when she passed our cell and opened another cell below us, she started screaming and shut the door immediately. A few moments later, we heard that they brought the food cart to take a body away. Later on, we found out that a prisoner had committed suicide inside that cell. Her name was Soheila Darwish Kohan. We were told that she was suffering from depression after her interrogations.

19. Days went on and on one noontime prayer, Mojtaba Halvaei himself took charge of the flogging. It was my turn to lie on my stomach; my body was bloody and full of bruises. I locked my feet on one end of the bench and hugged the bench, my neck hanging from the other end. He was using his outmost power: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

20. Suddenly, I felt an intense burning sensation throughout my body. It was like an electric shock. The tip of the cable had hit my cervical vertebrae. For few moments, I could not move any part of my body. I felt that I had become paralysed and because of that, I was horrified. A female guard came to take my hand to pull me up from the bench. I pushed her away and dragged myself towards the wall, where we were supposed to stand and watch others' flogging.

21. After us, who were the first group convicted of apostasy, there were others who followed in our footsteps. There were some prisoners from Melikesh and others from the third ward who were brought to the "Death Commission" and were convicted of apostasy and sentenced accordingly. From the first day of sentencing

us to flogging to the day that the flogging stopped, it was approximately 40 days in which different groups or individuals had different portions of their share of floggings. Afterwards, I was transferred to the Melikesh ward. It was then that I learned about the massacre of thousands of political prisoners, many of whom had been my former inmates.

22. I got conditionally released in 1989 by a deed of my parents' house as a bond and a third party as guarantor.

23. Even though I was horrified about being arrested and tortured again, I did not consider escaping the country after I was released from prison for several reasons: I was blacklisted for travel and I also felt obligated to my guarantors, whose property and liberty would be jeopardised if I fled the country. Besides, despite the physical and psychological harms that I had endured, I deeply believed that by staying in Iran I could be influential in fighting the injustices and human rights violations that had been going on in my country.

24. Thus as I gradually recovered from the consequence of the physical and psychological torture I was subjected to in prison, including spinal injury to my neck and stomach, digestive disorders and anxiety, I began to openly express my political beliefs by becoming an independent freelance journalist. Since 1996, I have written more than a dozen articles criticising the government on issues such as violence against women in Iran.

25. Eventually, I got involved with journalism, and on one occasion, in March 2000, when I was preparing a report on workers' protests for the independent magazine Farhang va Tose'eh, three un-uniformed men accosted me near Parliament at the site of a workers' rally. I asked to see their identification but the only thing I could read from the card they let me have a glance at was "security force". The men confiscated my notes and my driver's licence. Fearing disappearance and murder, I resisted and fortunately due to the protesting workers' intervention, they released me and gave me a number which they ordered my editor to call later.

26. After participation in several seminars, I was invited in De-

cember 2001 to another conference on children's rights in Sweden to speak about domestic violence against children. Foreign radios have broadcasted some of these events and have subsequently conducted interviews with me. On the 1st June 2002, I came to United States to participate in the Iranian Women's Studies Foundation's yearly conference held in Denver and to visit my sister in California. With increasing repression in Iran, I decided to stay in the United States.

### ***W49 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The day following her arrest, the witness was taken to Komiteh Moshtarak for interrogation in a round building. Prison guards held her "several-months-old" child during her interrogation; she could hear him crying. She and her husband insisted that the child be transferred out; after two days, she was taken blindfolded with the child and armed soldiers to hand the child to his uncle.
- The witness clarifies that the judge wore a clerical cloak.
- The verbal indictment during her "so called court" made the following charges against the witness: (1) Taking action against the security of the state; (2) Non-cooperation; (3) Lying in interrogation; (4) Taking part in a study course. It was further asserted that she was active in the executive of the independent union of teachers, a charge which she took as spurious since the association was open and legitimate.
- There was no indictment or verdict in writing. The judge read the charges and then asked her whether she had anything to say. Since she refused to recognise the court, she kept silent and was subsequently sentenced to two years in prison.
- In describing her disciplinary treatment after her sentence had ended, the witness recalls an instance where a cellmate being tortured in the prison yard and the guards ordered the prisoners to

go and watch. Some, including the witness, refused and were sent to solitary confinement as punishment.

- The witness's parents had to take care of her child, which was difficult for them.

- The witness clarified that after her sentence had ended, she was held in Melikesh for refusing to denounce all political groups in writing; this was a dedicated ward in Evin or those who refused to submit to the stipulated conditions for their release.

- The witness believes that the government asked for collateral in exchange for the release of prisoners in order to make it as difficult as possible for those in captivity to be released by creating deliberate obstacles to their freedom. Guarantors could not be related to the prisoners; many years after the witness left Iran, her guarantor had problems leaving the country.

- The deed of ownership to her parents' house had to be taken to the prosecutor's office and held there until the time that the authorities decided that they needed it no longer. That deed has since been returned.

- There were no explicit conditions as to when the property could be taken over by the government, although one clear implicit condition was that the released prisoner must remain in the country. Other prisoners who had been released with a similar bond found that the property for which they had submitted the deeds was confiscated when they had left the country.

- The witness confirmed that she was beaten by both men and women.

## **Witness 50: Esmail Haghshenas**

D.O.B.: 1962

Age at time of arrest: 26

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

I spent a prison term in Adel Abad Prison in Shiraz from September 1980 to March 1981 and from June 1981 to March 1988 due to my involvement with the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO). During those times, I witnessed the executions of so many of my friends and cellmates. I recall so many of them who were executed from June to December 1988 in Adel Abad prison in Shiraz: Gholamabbas Haghshenas, high school graduate; Mohsen Izadi, engineer and teacher; Hamid Samani, student; Mohamad Reza Mortazavi, locksmith; Mostafa Dashtian, student; Mohammad Bijanzadeh, National Oil Company worker; Gholamali Rahiri, teacher; Ghodratoolah Yousefnejad, driver; Hassan Attaii, high school graduate.

All these individuals were charged with being supporters of the MKO and all were executed on the same charge. Oddly enough, they all had been sentenced to imprisonment and were spending their terms when executed.

Though in the early years of the Islamic Republic, the high-ranking officials and judges, and sometimes even the interrogators, ordered the executions, the executions in the summer of 1988 were carried out under the direct order of Khomeini and under the supervision of Ahmad Khomeini and Lajevardi. The chief decision-maker as to who should be executed was a group known as the

“Death Commission”. Rafsanjani, Khamenei, Mousavi, the head of the judiciary, ministers and high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Information and Security were all as guilty as members of the Death Commission. They were involved in the executions and in full support of them.

Among the people who were involved in the Death Commission of Fars and Kohkiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad Provinces, I know only Majid Torabpoor with certainty.

The innocent political prisoners were all executed without being given a chance to defend themselves and with no fair trial or due process. The answer to one or two questions was enough to cost them their lives. The trials took only one or two minutes each, and they were either executed on the spot or were hanged in groups or, worse, gassed in groups.

Among the motives for these executions one can think of the elimination of the regime’s opponents, which started in the early eighties and ended in the summer of 1988.

### *W50 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was first arrested in 1980 for possession of certain books and pamphlets; he was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment. On his release, he went into hiding. He was arrested on the 21st June 1981 (31st Khordad) and imprisoned in Shiraz until March 1989.

- During the time the witness was in detention centres in Shiraz, he had experience of two rounds of massacres of prisoners:

- (1) The massacre of 105 prisoners on the 9th-10th Mehr 1360 [1st-2nd October 1981], all executed over two nights after being gravely injured by torture. The witness clarified that he did not personally witness the executions themselves: he was in the cell with 106 prisoners awaiting their execution, of whom only one returned, who had only been subjected to a mock execution and saw

the others gunned down. This man was spared because a relative of his was in the high command of the Revolutionary Guards; he named General Zolghader as the responsible executioner.

(2) In 1367 [1988] there was another round of executions of around 150 men and 50 women, this time in groups of five to fifteen: the witness saw piles of slippers being swept away from empty cells.

- Executions continued in the autumn of 1988 but the witness could not remember exact numbers.

- The witness spent eight months in solitary confinement.

- The witness recalled the horrific effects of torture. He saw faces “cut up” by electric cables. Behnam Mehrpour died from flogging one particular night when he was in a corridor for five minutes. He saw individuals left in the corridor who had been injured; their bodies were “smashed” and one was dead from beating. He knew some of their names.

- The witness clarified that the references in his written testimony to “gassing” were inferred from a conversation between two guards, in which he overheard that bodies smelled of smoke. The witness guesses that they might have been killed by smoke from the gasoline engine of a truck. Nobody directly saw or heard that truck; the statement was based wholly on this hearsay evidence.



## **Witness 51: Zahra Erfani**

Status of witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: Hossein Mohammad Erfani**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 20

Date of execution: May 1982

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

My brother, Hossein Mohammad Erfani, son of Azizollah and Asi-yeh, born in Tehran in 1961, with a high school diploma, was arrested while serving his compulsory military duty. He was a member of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO). One night in the autumn of 1981 while he was on leave from his duties, he came home to watch the movie Naft. He had parked his motorcycle in the yard and was watching the movie alone in the living room. While the rest of the family were asleep on the second floor, my brother was suddenly grabbed by a number of strangers, who started squeezing his throat to prevent him from possibly swallowing a cyanide pill. I wasn't there myself that night but I was told that seven pasdars [Revolutionary Guards, an armed force of the Islamic Republic of Iran], after having severed the telephone line and scaled the yard wall, entered the house and continued silently into the hall and living room. My parents were awakened at this point by the intruders, who then went into my other brother Jafar's room and dragged him out of his bed and took both brothers with them. At this time they also took Hossein's motorcycle and 25,000 toumans of his cash along with them.

They took both of my brothers to Evin Prison and on the first day

of Ordibehesht 1361 [21st April 1982], Hossein was executed. His body was not returned to us, but they called us and told us that they had killed him and had interred his body at Behesht Zahra cemetery at Section... Row.... Unfortunately, we were not able to see his body to observe what they had done to him. Hossein had spent six months in prison and Jafar, who was released after a year and a half, told us (while in Evin) that one day he had seen Hossein in the Evin hosseiniyeh [prayer area] and Hossein, using hand gestures, had indicated that he had been tortured and hanged from the ceiling. We never saw a document pertaining to his sentence, nor were we informed that he was about to be executed, nor did we see his body and we even don't know how he was killed! Did he die under torture, was he executed or was he shot? We have no information. Hossein was killed because he was a mujahjd.

Noteworthy is the fact that a few months after the arrest of my two brothers, one day from dusk to 04.00 my sister Laili, my brother Hossein and his wife Shahnaz were arrested in another attack and taken to Evin Prison. Shanaz's brother, Massoud Jamshidi, whom they had arrested earlier after serving his seven-year sentence, was executed in 1367 [1988]. Also, his body was not returned. Laili and Shahnaz each spent four years in prison, Hassan spent two and a half years in prison and Saeed spent two years in prison. All of them were either imprisoned or executed for their beliefs and their political ideology.

### *W51 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The victim was subjected to Ghapani, in which cold water was thrown at him and he was whipped.
- Massoud's father had a heart attack after three of his sons were imprisoned, one tortured.
- The women from the women's ward said that the attractive women were raped. The witness explained that clergymen held or-

gies at night; women disappeared for up to a week and were beaten when they tried to tell visitors what had happened to them. The rape of women was systematic. Many women were immediately divorced by their husbands after telling them of their experiences.

- Laili was arrested at work; her colleagues were ordered not to tell her family.

## **Witness 52: Akram Biram Vand**

D.O.B.: 1960

Place of arrest: Tehran

Status of the witness: Survivor and family member of two victims

Political affiliation: Organisation of Paykar For Emancipation of Working Class

I was an active member of the Paykar Organisation. From 1982 my activities and communication with the organisation were stopped since the normal activities of the organisation had been disrupted because of repression by the regime. When I was first arrested, I was only twenty years old. I was arrested accidentally, on a routine daily street search patrol. At that time I was not identified as an active member of the organisation, so after spending one week in the prison, I was released. But in that period I witnessed such horrific scenes that I will never forget.

After my arrest, they took me to the Section 246 of Evin Prison in a room in which more than 100 people were placed in a horrific situation. There were all kinds of women, from 60 years old to baby girls, a few months old! Everybody except kids were all tortured and with torn and wounded bodies, they were thrown into that room.

When they took me for interrogation and Q&A, I observed a few prisoners in the hallway with wounded and bloody bodies who were taken and dragged out of the prosecution room, which was actually the torture room! They were taken to the prison cells, to be brought back the following day to be fastened to the torture room. In the hallway in which I was sitting and waiting to be taken to the room for the interrogation, I could hear the crying and shouting of

the prisoners under the torture... and I was frozen by the fear of these cries and moans.

When they were taking me for the interrogation, my fear was increase to a higher level. There, they had hanged a few prisoners from their hands, like the bodies of cows or sheep ready to be butchered. They had bloody and wounded bodies from slashes and torture. I could not recognise whether they were dead or alive. They kept me for six hours along with those bloody hanging bodies. Meanwhile, they were hitting me with whip or fist on my head, face and feet and they were threatening me: "We will execute you after six hours of fear and horror of death!" They took me to the cell.

In the cell, I got to know a woman called Fakhri Lak-kamari. She was 24 years old and was arrested a month before me, along with her husband. They had been married for just a few weeks when they were arrested; they had tortured her husband and then executed him. When they called Fakhri for execution, she had been exhibiting pregnancy symptoms for some time; they announced her name along with eleven others to be executed. Among these was a sixteen-year-old girl, who was tortured very badly. On the day of her execution, she was burning in fever and was sick. On that day, they executed 100 men and women from different cells. We were in the cell when the sound of ragabr golloleh [volley of bullets], which was like earthquake and kept us in a silence and fear. And then we head 100 death blows (blows of mercy or coups de grâce): they executed them all together.

After a week – one week of torture, humiliation, and insults – even though they did not have the slightest information about me since they had arrested me accidentally and did not know that I even had any political activities, I was released!

In 1362 [1983], one of the members of the organisation contacted me and made an appointment to meet in town. After a few minutes of starting a conversation, the agents of Sepah (Islamic guards), came and arrested both of us. They said that this was done since we were talking to each other, a man and a woman, in a public place

without being married (this is haram in Islam). But we were taken to Evin. Once inside, I found out that they all knew all the information about me. The information had been given to the prison authorities by the person with whom I had an appointment. He had been arrested previously and, under the pressure of torture and fear of execution, was now working and spying for the prison (IR) authorities.

As soon as I entered the prison, the torture started. As if what they were doing through the day was not enough, they would wake me up at 02.00-03.00 and kick me and hit me and take me to interrogation. For two days they hit me with a cable, kicking and hitting and used to tell me all the time, "You will be executed".

I was feeling very weak and they would hit me all the time on the head and would curse me and my family with dirtiest words. Then they sent me to solitary and every few days they would come and take me for interrogation. Until they found out that I had no information to produce for them, they took me to the solitary cell and after three months, they took me to court. The court was located in Evin Prison. We were more than twenty people. They took each of us individually to the court. While in court, which was only three or four minutes long, while blindfolded, they asked my name and the name of the organisation I belonged to. They told me that I was accused of being a follower of the "American organisation, called Paykar". They gave me no time to defend myself. In the court, they said that I was condemned to death and execution. Then they returned me to the cell.

In the first three months, I could have no visitors. Eight months after arrest, without any lawyer or even an official court, I was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. After announcing the verdict, they sent me to the Ghezelhesar Prison. It was not even a week from being transferred to the prison in Ghezelhesar that the women prisoners protested wearing black chadors in prison. I took part in this protest too.

In response to this protest, the prison guards took us to Section 209, which was known to be the torture room. This section con-

sisted of two rooms of three-by-four metres. In each room they kept up to 30 women prisoners. The place was tight and in horrible conditions. They gave 30 minutes' time three times every day for going to the toilet, taking a bath and washing dishes. So all 30 of us had to use this time for these purposes. We were also forbidden from having any visitors until further notice. I was imprisoned for nine months in that prison in those conditions. Sometimes the head of the prison (Fakoor) would come with whip and would curse and slash and whip every prisoner. All this was because we wanted to wear coloured chadors instead of black chadors!

In the summer of 1367 [1988], suddenly the prisoners' communication with outside world was disrupted. We knew that abuse and torture would increase. But we did not know what a horrible thing was going to happen.

One day, the prison guard came to our section with the list of people to be executed. There were twenty people on the list. Out of this list, nineteen had prison terms and were supposed to be released. Only one had execution sentence but they were all executed by hanging: Forouzan Abdi, Mahin Ghorbani, Moiré Rajavi, Shourangiz and Mehrangiz (who were two sisters) and many other beautiful flowers who are not amongst us anymore.

In the summer of 1367 [1988], we were forbidden any visitors for three months. Once we got the normal visitations, we found out what atrocity had been committed. Thousands of prisoners had been executed in three months. In our cell, 25 women were executed. After the normal visitations and meetings with relatives were resumed, we found out that twelve of the relatives (husbands and brothers) were executed.

After this massacre, the abuse and torture of the prisoners continued in a different way. They were taking prisoners in groups of five out of the section and were sending them to solitary cells. There they would force them to do Namaz and if they did not follow orders, they got five lashes of the whip for each missed prayer: so for a day's missed Namaz, they would get five sets of five, so 25 lashes! One of these prisoners was Sohaila. She was only 18. She

could not stand it and she committed suicide.

Sohaila was not the only one who could not stand it and escaped into the arms of death. Another prisoner in our section, Mahin Badooii, who was serving a life sentence, committed suicide. We found her with slit veins under the shower! Prisoners took her to the dispensary and then to the solitary cell. But there she committed suicide again and the second time she was successful!

I spent my last year of prison in solitude. I spent six months in a solitary cell and for six months shared the cell with another prisoner. I was freed in the last days of 1369 [1990].

Unfortunately, I was not the only member of my family who suffered the blunt, cruel atrocities of the Islamic Republic.

My nephew, Nosratollah Biram Vand, was arrested in 1360 [1981]. He was only twenty at that time; for a month my sister and a few other family members tried to contact the prison authorities to find a trace of him. They were told, "Instead of coming here, go listen to the radio."

On the 21st Mordad 1360 [12th August 1981] (that is, about a month and half after the arrest of Nosrat), my sister accidentally heard Nosrat's name on the radio! The news of his execution and eleven other members of Paykar were announced in a horrible afternoon. We found out about this crime in this horrible way. My sister was in shock for years.

Another nephew of mine was arrested in 1362 [1983], when he was 32 years old. He was imprisoned for nine months. He was executed on the 11th Ordibehesht 1963. When he was executed, his daughter was only ten years old.

They neither gave us the body or any remains. My family could never get over the wounds created from this crime.

Now it's more than two decades that we have mourned the horrific loss of members of our family. I am a survivor of this hell; I am not free of nightmares of those horrible moments.

## ***W52 Summary of Oral Testimony***



The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was tortured in Ward 209 of Evin.
- The witness's interrogator threatened to subject her to Ghapani. He told her, "I will make you like those," pointing at the people suspended from the ceiling or on the floor with their arms twisted.
- The courtroom was Office 216 of Evin Prison; the witness had no lawyer and was told she could not defend herself. There was no writ of indictment. The witness was blindfolded during her trial.
- Mojtaba Halvaei beat up prisoners, saying: "Don't think that I'm going to keep you alive. I smashed the brains of the 30th Khordad demonstrators."
- In 1988, the Revolutionary Guards began executing boys in another ward. They called three groups of ten women to individual cells and asked them whether they were Muslims and performed their prayers; whoever answered in the negative was flogged. Three successfully committed suicide.
- Mahin Badooii was given stitches after her first, failed suicide attempt; she then removed these stitches and succeeded in taking her own life on the second attempt.
- The early executions were reported in the government press, e.g. by Kayhan newspaper.
- The family was never given proof of Nosratollah Biram Vand's death; it was not told in which plot in Khavaran he was buried. The witness's mother picked a random spot and said, "Let's treat this as my son's grave."

**Witness 53: [W53: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1953

Age at time of incident: 29

Status of witness: Sister of victim

**Name of victim: [W53/1: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1950

Age at time of arrest: 31

Date of execution: Not identified, but was arrested and executed in Shiraz

My brother, [W53/1: NAME REDACTED] was executed under torture on the 9th July 1981. He was born in 1950 in Tehran. He had BA in Agriculture from Jondi Shahpour University in Ahwaz. He lived apart from the rest of the family and I'm not aware of his profession. He didn't tell us many things for security reasons. He was a leftist and associated with the Paykar Organisation. We are not aware of his role in the political organisation. In an article in the Kayhan newspaper, published in Tehran in Tir 1360 [June/ July 1981], his organisational name of "Parviz Abbassi" was published and it was stated that he had been shot in the south of Iran. We learned of his death from a friend of our mother's, who visited us in Tehran. He told us that [W53/1: NAME REDACTED]'s organisational name was "Parviz Abbassi". We went and found the newspaper and saw his name. The friend knew that my brother had been buried in the Bahá'í cemetery in Shiraz with his clothes on. My mother and older brother went to Shiraz to locate my brother's body. Since there was only one Bahá'í cemetery in Shiraz, they went to it. They found the person in charge of the cemetery and my mother showed the person my brother's photograph. The man

told my family that they had brought someone to the cemetery who resembled my brother with clothes but who appeared much older than my brother. The man said that the body he'd seen was that of a young person who had aged. The man showed my family where he'd been buried and said that the prison guards who brought the body said he wasn't a Muslim and did not need to be washed. My brother found someone, who put him in contact with the doctor responsible for issuing the death certificates. My brother spoke to the doctor, who told him that there were no bullet wounds on my brother's body. Therefore, we concluded that that he had been killed under torture. We didn't have any will from my brother and we never saw my brother's body.

My mother contacted the mother of Morteza, who was the only person we knew as being my brother's friend. My mother wanted to know how Morteza was. My mother found out that Morteza had also been executed but that his family had received his body and had been given his last will and testament. My mother asked Morteza's mother why they had got their son's body and will whereas we hadn't got anything. Morteza's mother said she that didn't know, but had been told by the prison guard that they were fortunate that Morteza had confirmed that he was a Muslim and he had been able to write his will. We concluded that [W53/1: NAME REDACTED] had not had the opportunity to make that choice. After three years, the cemetery was closed and we could never visit it again.

We don't know who tortured and executed my brother. We didn't research the situation or follow up on the execution of my brother because we were very afraid that the regime would take revenge on others in our family.

When my younger brother and I escaped from Iran and fled to Sweden, we found my brother's name in one of the book published by Mujahideen. His name and details are published on page 261. We have a copy of that page of the publication.

## *W53 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Because the witness's brother was active in another city, the family was informed of his arrest and execution only through a friend, who was a member of an anti-regime communist party. The family was never officially informed of the arrest.
- The witness refrained from going into detail about her family's political activities, as she did not want to expose other family members to danger.
- The friend of the witness's brother reported that the brother had been arrested from a safe house under a pseudonym. He did not reveal his real name and subsequently died under torture. He did not get to write his will because of this refusal. The regime used to print the names of executed prisoners in 1981-82 in local and national newspapers; the victim was listed under his pseudonym.
- When the witness's mother went to get the victim's body with her younger son, she was told that the guards had thrown the victim in a Bahá'í cemetery because he was not a Muslim and thus did not matter.
- The witness's brother was 31 years old at his arrest and 25 when the photograph referred to in the written statement was taken.
- The friend said that that victim had tried to protect the other members of the organisation.
- The witness's mother travelled twice to the cemetery, despite the dangers resulting from their political activism, because she insisted: "It doesn't matter. They can kill me. I just want to know where my son is." The third time she went, the cemetery was closed and nobody could gain entry.

## **Witness 54: Hadieh Shamsi**

D.O.B.: 1965

Age at time of incident: 17-23

Status of witness: Daughter of the victim

**Name of victim: Rahim Shamsi**

D.O.B.: 1939

Occupation at time of arrest: Officer in the Iranian Army (he studied Economics and Management in the army's university in Tehran).

Political affiliation: Tudeh Party of Iran

[Rahim] was a member of the underground section of the Tudeh Party, which was for military officers. In Iran at that time it was not allowed for officers to be a part of any political organisation other than the governing one. Shortly after the government arrested the central leading committee of the Tudeh Party, it began arresting members of the underground military organisation of the Tudeh Party. My father was arrested at home in Tehran on the 20th April 1983.

For the first ten months, he was kept in the Komiteh Moshtarak (a prison). During this period, we were not allowed to visit him.

After ten months, all the officers under arrest were transferred to the Jamshidiyeh Garrison Military Police.

We were not allowed to visit until they had received their sentences. We were not told their sentences; rather, we learnt about them in the newspapers. My father was sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole.

He was kept there in the Jamshidiyeh Garrison Military Police for a few months and was then transferred to the Evin Prison, where he

was kept for another few months until he was relocated once more to Ghezelhesar Prison, where he was kept until the year 1985.

Due to the bad conditions and the torture he received whilst in prison, he was sent to hospital, escorted by five guards, all of which my family had to pay for.

Before my father was arrested, he weighed 63 kg; when he arrived at the hospital, his weight was only 32 kg; when leaving, he had reached 43 kg.

During his 97-day stay at the hospital, he received surgery and medical care, after which he was imprisoned again.

Between 1985-1988, he was kept again in Evin Prison in Tehran. His health deteriorated severely: he suffered from bleeding ulcers, arthritis, herniated discs and finally he became paralysed; his eyesight deteriorated remarkably and he was left with only a few teeth; he developed major heart problems; one of his lungs collapsed and as a result he had breathing difficulties and asthma. The lack of sunshine and fresh air resulted in further skin ailments.

As of the 23rd July 1988, we were no longer allowed to visit him. We were not told why or for how long we were not to be allowed to visit or where he was being kept. Everyone used to still visit the prison in hope of being allowed to visit their loved ones. During that time, the families of the prisoners would visit different national and international authorities to complain and ask for help, without any success.

On the 21st November 1988, my mother received a phone-call from Evin Prison, where she was asked to visit Saadabad Komiteh on the 24th November 1988, to provide identification and proof that she was married to Rahim Shamsi and to collect his clothes.

When my mother, Fatemah Sadravi, visited Saadabad Komiteh on the 24th November 1988, she was questioned for two and a half hours about various topics, including her and her children's private lives and political views. She was then told to sign a document without being allowed to read it. After arguing with the guards and begging them, they read it for her. The documents stated that we are not allowed to mourn or have a memorial ceremony for my

father, Rahim Shamsi.

They then gave her my father's clothes, along with a death certificate stating that he had died of natural causes at home. We did not receive any will or last letter. They did not give us his body or tell us where he was buried.

We do not know exactly where his body is buried but suspect that he is buried in one of the mass graves dug by the Islamic regime in Khavaran Cemetery, Bahá'ís' cemetery. All who were communist and belonged to the leftist parties were said to be God's enemy by the regime; therefore, they were not worthy of being buried in a Muslim graveyard and to have traditional rites, as is customary in the country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has murdered my father.

They arrested and sentenced my father, Rahim Shamsi, without a proper trial and he was not given the right to an attorney.

He was not afforded human rights during his stay in prison.

He was tortured during his stay in prison.

Almost six years after his initial sentence (life imprisonment with no chance of parole), they changed his sentence to a death sentence, even though he had not committed any violent crimes, without any proper trial.

After his execution, the Islamic regime did not grant his family his corpse, nor did they tell them where he was buried. They did not allow the family to mourn him or have any memorial for him.

His family was also denied some basic human rights, such as education and work.

The Islamic regime did not allow his family to go to university or apply for work at any government workplace.

They forced his family to place large sums of money and land as deposits when he went to hospital, in case he should escape.

We never received any information and have never had the right to hire an attorney for my father. When he had his trial in 1362 [1983], we, his family, just like the rest of the population of Iran, read his charges and a part of his defence, where he defended himself, in the newspapers. His charges included: being a member of

the Tudeh Party, being an enemy of God [mofsede felarz], being a danger to national security and having recruited new members into the Tudeh Party, such as his daughter, Hadiéh Shamsi.

We are still not certain as to why my father was executed but we believe that it is because of his opposition to the Islamic regime. Part of the reason we believe this is because of the information we have received regarding the occurrences during this period of time from other prisoners. Their accounts include statements that the questions asked during the trials (in 1367 [1988]) were mainly about Islam and the defendants' faith, and whether they feel regret and remorse as to what they had been accused of.

This led us to believe that the prisoners, including my father, were executed because of their personal beliefs and for opposing the Islamic regime.

### *W54 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Rahim Shamsi's mock trial was televised without sound (with the voiceover of the news correspondent) and was covered in the newspapers. He was charged with being a "corrupter-on-Earth", a combatant against God and a member of an oppositional political organisation; he was also accused of insulting the clergy and being a national security threat. He was sentenced to death; this sentence was commuted to life imprisonment but he was executed anyway during his sentence.
- The witness stated that she had three telephone conversations with her father in the ten-month period after he was first arrested. During those ten months, Revolutionary Guard agents searched the witness's family home. Rahim was only allowed to go to hospital after his wife petitioned Ayatollah Montazeri; the family had to pay twenty million toumans and ten million in cash as bail. Rahim's wife had wondered why he never stood during their visits and later discovered that he was wheelchair-bound. Ra-



him was in such a poor state of health and the lack of treatment, his ulcer opened and one third of his abdomen had to be removed.

- Prisoners had no soap for washing.
- Hospital visits were uncommon but the victim's wife was persistent in nagging Montazeri. She was first allowed only to bring a doctor into prison, though none accepted this task until a colleague of hers agreed to do so. He confirmed to the victim's wife in private that Rahim had been tortured in prison but did not say so publicly.

- Only when a medical commission said that Rahim would die unless he were allowed out of prison was the transfer to the hospital allowed. The family had found a way to get Rahim out of the country but he chose to return to prison so as to prevent his family from suffering the consequences of his disappearance.

- Visits were stopped quite suddenly. Meysam was the head of Evin Prison, having previously worked in Ghezelhesar. He told the witness's mother that prisoners were to be retried for their involvement in Operation Eternal Light; families continued trying to visit. The witness's mother went to Parliament with 30 others to petition the Speaker of the Parliament, Rafsanjani; he denied knowledge of the lockdown of the prison and said that he would order that visits be reinstated.

- When the victim's wife was called to collect her husband's clothes, she was only told to come two days later. When she arrived, she was sent away and told to bring a man, to which she replied, "You've killed my man! I have no other to bring with me." She was interviewed for hours and made to sign a document declaring that she abdicated all rights to mourn or commemorate her husband's death and that if anyone came to the family home, she must betray them and send them to the Revolutionary Guards. The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

- Belongings returned to mother on 3rd Azar 1367
- Father executed in 1988; he was still alive on 2nd Shahri-var 1967

- Father's court conducted by Rayshahri
- Name of father's doctor: Dr Khosrow Nasr, previously prison's internal medical specialist. Dr Nasr had previously been in prison in Shiraz – he was working at Arad hospital (private hospital) and also had a private practice. Dr Nasr had been the witness's mother's classmate; they were co-workers at Daviagesh Pahlavi in Shiraz.

Evin Prison:

Mr Meysam : Warden. Worked both at Ghezelhesar and Evin.

Ali Hadad Adel: Prison Official.

Haj Abbas: Manager of Records at Evin.

## **Witness 55: Soghra Ghiasi**

D.O.B.: 1956

Age at time of incident: 26

Status of witness: Sister of the victim

**Name of victim: Kobra Ghiasi**

D.O.B.: 1959

Age at time of arrest: 23

Date of execution: 18th September 1982

Political affiliation: Organisation of Paykar For Emancipation of Working Class

This was done by the Islamic Republic's Court and the Guardians of the Revolution. The court order for execution by firing squad was performed in Isfahan. We don't know the name of the judge who pronounced the sentence. Later, I heard that a clergyman by the name of Haaj Agha Alavi was the head of the court at the time.

The deceased was transported to the Revolutionary Guards' centre called "Seyed Ali Khan" from Dastgerd Prison a day before her execution, and she was executed on the 28th December 1982.

Kobra Ghiasi was a member of the unemployed graduates of the Paykar organisation (high school/university); this organisation was a political organisation and did not have a militant or pro-violence bent or any armed wing. According to what information the courts gave Kobra's mother after she was executed, Kobra was put before the firing squad because of her belief in Marxism and because she refused to come back to Islam.

Kobra was arrested by the Revolutionary Guards while she was with her friends in a home in the city of Isfahan in 1982. One of

her friends told us that she had been arrested. She was detained in the Revolutionary Guards' information centre for three months before she was transferred to Dastgerd Prison in Isfahan. While she was there, she was allowed to have weekly visits (behind a glass-windowed stall with a telephone) like all the other (non-political) prisoners. Her mother visited her once a week there.

We were never informed of her court dates or whether she had legal representation or anything. All her mother's efforts to find information about her proceedings were futile. The heedlessness of the authorities in the court and related officials towards my family's requests for information regarding my sister as well as a lack of information, put my family in a very confused situation, unable to take the necessary action.

She was there for nine months and had her visitations every week until the week of her execution. The day before Kobra's execution, three Revolutionary Guards came to our home and said that Kobra was allowed to have a visitor till the end of the business day. Her mother took that as a bad sign and went to see Kobra, worried sick. Neither the guards nor Kobra told her why this irregular visit had been arranged despite her many direct questions. The visit was uneventful and her mother tried to cling onto the idea that if Kobra knew that there was something bad coming up, she would have indicated somehow. But the next day the Revolutionary Guards notified Kobra's mother of Kobra's execution and she was told to collect Kobra's corpse from the Isfahan coroner's office.

Kobra's corpse had nine bullet holes in it: one in her leg, the rest in her chest area. After a while, when her mother went to the court to ask why she had been executed, this is what was read to her as a summary in Kobra's file:

“What do you believe in?”

“I am a Marxist-Leninist and I believe in it with all my being.”

“Will you repent and return to Islam?”

“No.”

That is why she was executed. They told her weeping mother, “Don't cry – you should be glad we rid the earth of this profane

creature.”

### ***W55 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The victim’s family had no knowledge of her whereabouts for two months after her arrest, which is when the first visit was secured.
- The family’s journeys to the prison took three to four hours; the family was denied a visit if it was even five minutes late.
- The Revolutionary Guards disrupted all meetings in which the victim tried to convey information to her family about her treatment by pressing a written message on her palm against the glass separation screen; the victim was dragged out by her hair.

## **Witness 56: Razieh Matinizadeh**

D.O.B.: 1963

Age at time of arrest: 18

Occupation at time of arrest: Student

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

I am Razieh Matinizadeh, born in 1963 in Tehran, mother's name Zahra Madani and father's name Nasser Matinizadeh; I have a diploma and had been an architect in Tehran. At the present time I am web master.

In September of 1981, I was arrested by Pasdaran on the charge of having participated in a street demonstration. My family found out that I was being held in Vozara Komiteh but they were not allowed to visit me. The number of people arrested that day was so great that they could not find space for us in Evin Prison. They would keep transporting us to Evin and other prisons but due to a lack of space at all of them, they would keep bringing us back to Vozara again. In that week they were able to only find room for one prisoner in Evin. Her name was Shirin Ghahremani. It was very important for them to take her for questioning.

In Vozara Komiteh, I witnessed the first kind of torture. An interrogator named Hossein, better known as "Hossein the executioner", while interrogating a boy, kicked him down the stairs.

In the autumn of 1981, we were transferred to Evin Prison. The first week there, they used to keep us every day for hours in the halls, outside of the interrogation and torture rooms. They used to do this to scare us and weaken our spirit. The first day there, they

took us to the halls to find an empty interrogation room. Throughout this ordeal, I witnessed prisoners' bloody and tortured feet. Among those whom they had brought out of the torture room, I saw Shirin Ghahremani, who had been badly tortured. Her legs were bandaged up to her thighs. Her feet no longer looked like feet. One night they took us to the large hall, supposedly for religious services. But in reality it was for newly arrived prisoners to be identified by the persons who had been unable to endure the tortures and were cooperating with interrogators to identify the other prisoners. The same night before taking us to the hall, they took some of us to the Evin hills for a mock execution. Zohreh Chavoshi was one of the women with us that night. She was murdered some years later.

Our cell was an L-shape room no bigger than 33 square metres. With 80 prisoners stuffed in the room, we could only sleep in turns, sardined together. We had no warm water and only five minutes to take a cold shower.

Tortures included: waiting outside of torture chambers, mock execution, sleep deprivation, beating the bottoms of our feet with a cable, and hanging by our arms. Zarifeh was one of the women who was tortured twice by such a method.

In those days when they took someone out of the cell at night, it was for execution, but some of the interrogations also took place in the middle of the night. Shahla and Mahnaz were among those who were often taken out at night. They used to come back badly tortured. In the autumn of 1981, Shahla and Mahnaz were executed. Our cell and clothes were teeming with lice and for months we couldn't receive any clothes from outside. The food was terrible and most people had digestive problems. There was nothing in our cell to enable us to take care of the wounds of people who had come back from interrogation.

It was in those same days that 60-year-old Ms Sakineh Mohammadi-Zakeri was brought into the cell with her thirteen-year-old daughter. Every morning when the cell door was open, a pasdar (Fateme) could come in and started cursing and degrading the

60-year-old woman.

The sister-in-law of Farkhondeh, my schoolmate, who was seven months pregnant, was executed. Afsaneh Shamsabadi was executed in that same September. She was from my neighbourhood and school; at that time she was sixteen years old.

After five minutes of trial, I was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment! The few weeks after arriving at Evin, one early morning they took me for interrogation, made me to sit outside the door and told me, "Sit here and see that we are not joking with anybody." And then, every few minutes, a guard or a pasdar came and hit me on the head and laughingly said "Are you still awake? Can you hear what's going on in there?" This used to last for several hours. In the afternoon of that day, they finally took me into an interrogation room.

Two months after my arrest, they took me to court along with several others. Altogether, our trial lasted four to five minutes. Just like all other prisoners and cellmates, we had no right to defend ourselves. In fact, the prisoners had no right to speak at all. My sentence was announced verbally. I was sentenced to fifteen years.

#### Ghezelhesar Prison

After the trial, I was transferred to Ghezelhesar. I thought that now that we had been given a sentence, they would not have much to do with us and we would serve our sentences and then would be free. But this was very naïve and wishful thinking. The troubles and torments never ended. In the year 1981-1982, they used to bring prisoners from Evin for the purpose of identifying those whose information had not been exposed yet. They were people who for months and years, after having received their sentences, were still taken to Evin for interrogation and were still being tortured. Their goal was to keep us always under pressure and uncertainty and to make sure that we did not have one minute of peace.

The prisoners were constantly being watched and controlled by the orderlies. They would not let you be yourself for one minute (to be passive or not in their support). Haji Davood-Rahmani was in charge of Ghezelhesar and thought that those people would be the



biggest danger to the regime.

In our section, there were prisoners who for a variety of reasons didn't have any visitors: either their families were in the provinces or they were all in prison. We were not allowed to help our cellmates in any way. They were always trying to crush any feeling of solidarity among the prisoners.

Everywhere in our clothes there were rats and in our food we often found dirty bandages. In Ghezelhesar, children were suffering the ordeal of prison with their mothers without any sanitation, hygiene or medicine. The people who had endured much beating and torture were not sent to clinics or hospitals and other prisoners did their best to take care of them.

At the beginning of year of 1982, tens of us were transferred to solitary confinement (accused of having an organisation in prison). We were allowed out of our cell only three times a day for the use of bathrooms. Sometimes they took us out of the cell from morning to night, keeping us outdoors in very hot or very cold weather. Meanwhile, they used to go through all our belongings. Large numbers of prisoners were sick for long periods due to excessive cold or heat.

The numbers of prisoners were many times over the capacity of the prison and there were no medical or sanitary materials. There were many cases of skin diseases among prisoners. A very prevalent mental torture in prison was forced attendance in religious ceremonies and indoctrination classes.

One of my cellmates, Ms Sadigheh Samandari, had her child delivered in Evin prison. She named him Mohsen, which was his father's name: Mohsen Shanechi had been executed. After five years and only two weeks before Ghezelhesar Prison was closed, I was released. After being released, for six years I had to go to a revolutionary committee. At the beginning it was once a week but after a while, it became once a month.

My testimony as to the people whom I knew closely: my cousin, Morteza Madani, born in 1960, son of Hassan Madani and Zahra Madani, was arrested in September of 1980 and was executed in

the mass executions of political prisoners in the summer of 1988 in Evin.

My friend and neighbour, Jalal Gozazi, was executed in the same mass execution of political prisoners in the summer of 1988. His sister, my very close friend, Fatmeh Gozazi, was also executed in July 1984. Fatmeh was severely tortured before being executed.

### ***W56 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- When the witness was arrested on the street, she was beaten with the butt of a gun on her back and the back of her head; this gravely injured her spine, for which she later required surgery. The witness reported that she was comparatively lucky: many were executed the same night and their names published in the newspapers.
- When parents objected to the execution of their children, they were told that if their children were innocent, then they would go to paradise anyway.
- The witness clarified that she only heard about the woman (the wife of a brother of her friend) who was executed when seven months pregnant.
- Prisoners in Evin were asked to get ready for a religious ceremony in the prison hosseiniyeh: guards wanted newly arrested prisoners to be identified by repenters, who had been tortured. The witness was previously subjected to a mock execution on the Evin hills.
- Judge Nayyeri presided over the witness's mock trial in a courtroom inside the prison; she was blindfolded the whole time and had no access to legal representation. She was sentenced to fifteen years in prison after a five-minute trial.
- 80 people were detained in a cell of 30m<sup>2</sup>; there was only room for prisoners to sleep on their sides "like books" and in shifts. Conditions were unhygienic and skin diseases spread between

prisoners. One cellmate, Shahla, asked the witness to remove her lice so that she would not shake during her execution, which would suggest that she was scared.

- Prisoners were taken from their cell for interrogation after 23.00.
- The witness was released after one third of her sentence because she suffered from “female problems” as a result of beatings; she had dropped to 36kg. She had been supposed to be released after only three years of imprisonment due to her sickness, but was kept behind bars for two years further because a fellow prisoner had given evidence against her.
- One woman was interrogated by her own brother.
- When attending the revolutionary committee, the witness had to identify herself and say what she was doing, where she had been working and who her friends at school were. She also had to let the Committee know if she was leaving town. After some time, and as the frequency of her visits was reduced, the witness decided that she would not return to the Committee; her family feared for her safety and she fled Iran.
- The witness still suffers constant nightmares.

## **Witness 57: Shahnam Sharghi**

D.O.B.: 1970

Age at time of arrest: 31

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas

Status of witness: Survivor

I was an active member of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas in Iran. In 1981, a few members of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) set up a hiding place for themselves in my workplace. On the 24th September 1981, following the arrest of one of them, the hiding place was raided by police and I was detained by the Revolutionary Guards along with the MKO team. They took us to the Komiteh and I was transferred to Evin Prison after a brief interrogation.

In Evin Prison the series of serious interrogation started. Hadi Ghaffari, the most horrifying interrogator, first asked my name. As soon as I said "K. Shahnam", he said that I should change my name or I would receive a hundred lashes. Since I refused to say anything, I received the hundred lashes, after which they transferred my half-dead body to solitary confinement in Ward 209.

The interrogation took almost two weeks. The interrogators assumed that I was a member of the MKO and called me a "hypocrite dog", while in reality I had no political or organisational connection with them. I was a leftist, but fearful of revealing my true political identity, I never brought it up. But the more I denied the accusation, the less the interrogators believed me. They simply thought I was resisting. They tortured me brutally for two weeks. They hanged me by handcuffs for hours; they lay me over my belly

on a bed, placing a sock in my mouth – heaven knows how many other prisoners had that in their mouths before it got to me – and then beat me with a cable until I passed out. Towards morning they used to bring me back to solitary confinement.

After two weeks, they left me alone in cell, but whenever they arrested a member of the MKO, they used to start torturing me again to learn something about the newcomer and get some information through me. They most probably did the same thing to him/her to learn more about me. All this time I was barred from having any visitors.

After nine months in solitary confinement, they took me to the court for a trial that took only one minute, during which they informed me that I had been convicted of being a member of the MKO and was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. They sent me out of the courtroom with a heavy load of obscenity and curses.

After being thrown out of the court, along with some others charged with being MKO members, I was taken back to the prison. The Revolutionary Guard who was taking me to my cell told me, "You can call your family and inform them about your location and the sentence you have received." One of the convicts who heard our conversation asked him that whether he was allowed to do the same. The guard told him no, since he was condemned to death.

They returned me to me solitary confinement and two weeks later I was sent to Ghezelhesar Prison. I had spent two years there when in 1982 news spread through the prison that a woman who had come to visit a loved one in prison had been killed in a horrendous and tragic fashion. Apparently, walking through the prison entrance's iron gate, her head got caught between the doors and the guards did not open the door until her head cracked, and she died. This news aroused a wave of horror among the prisoners, everybody asking whether he or she had seen his sister or mother among the visitors, and if they all were well. We didn't know who she was who had died so tragically, until in mid-1984 I learned that it was my sister. My mother, under the threat of the Revolutionary Guards, had kept me uninformed for two years.

My sister, Behnaz Sharqi Namin, was 41 years old then, and her daughter Nima was only five when she witnessed her mother's catastrophic death.

I heard about this horror not through my family but through my torturer, Haj Davood, in Ghezelhesar Prison. He told me about it while he was taking me from the ward I was in to another one. He told me that if in a television interview I said all they wanted me to say, they would release me, otherwise I would rot in jail. His aim was to break me to confess. But I did not believe him. I thought that this was another form of torture. And this time I could resist this torture. But unfortunately, a little later I realised that it was true.

The new ward that I was transferred to housed the leftist prisons. I had so far been kept in the MKO prison since they thought that I was a member of that organisation, but now, since they wanted me to appear on TV, they transferred me to the leftists' ward. They thought that I would not know any of them there and, being a stranger, I would feel lonely and isolated. They did not know, on the contrary, that I knew many of them: we had long been comrades. When they brought me to the ward, they told everybody that I was "banned from conversation" and that no one could talk to me nor could I could say a word to anyone else.

This situation continued for a year until one night, around midnight, I saw that they were bringing them all to the mosque as prisoners. They said that Sarheddizadeh (the Minister of Labour at that time) was addressing the prisoners there.

In his speech, Sarheddizadeh claimed that the regime was "democratic" and that, should the prisoners cooperate with the regime, their situation would improve. This incensed me.

Several years of physical and psychological torture, persecution, humiliation, my sister's head being crushed by the prison's iron gate and my year of enforced silence put me under such psychological pressure that I lost control over my nerves and, although I knew what horrifying results would ensue, I opened my mouth and told Sarheddizadeh, "What kind of democrats are you who crush

the head of a woman in an iron gate right in front of her daughter's eyes – and don't even allow her imprisoned brother to know about it?" This act encouraged several other prisoners to open their mouths in protest. Several prisoners said that when the Revolutionary Guards raided their family homes and did not find them there, they raped their sisters and even their mothers.

And so Sarhaddizadeh's speech was disrupted and they violently removed me, who had fomented this incident. The next day, they returned me to Evin Prison and savagely tortured me for a week, starting immediately. They beat me so much with a cable whip that I was half-conscious. They then threw my half-dead body into the passage in front of the torture station and each Revolutionary Guard who passed by me there first kicked me in the head and face a few times. This went on for a week and I did not imagine I would escape with my life. After that, they brought me to solitary and kept me there for eight months. There, too, I was denied visitors.

In 1987, they said that an amnesty included me and so I was released. They had kept me in prison for six years for the crime of collaborating with the MKO and tortured me physically and psychologically to the point of death, although I had absolutely no connection with this organisation. They killed my sister who had come to the prison to meet me and threatened my family, saying that they had no right to say anything to anyone. My mother had a heart attack as a result of all this pressure and was afflicted with Alzheimer's disease and died a few years ago in Sweden, her heart full of pain. The flint-hard grief which she bore on her shoulders like a mountain was published in a book of poems titled "Zahhak", a book of horrifying stories about the disasters which the Islamic Republic regime unleashed on our family.

### *W57 Summary of Oral Testimony*

- The witness was arrested because he was working at a restaurant where some MKO members were dining; the only charge

was that he was a member of this organisation too. Because he was older, they thought he was the leader.

- The witness was flogged because his interrogator alleged that “Shahnam” was an idolatrous name since it contained the morpheme “Shah”.

- Haji Davood offered to release the witness if he testified in a televised interview that his late sister (whose head had been crushed between the gates) had been killed by monafeqin. The witness refused to collaborate because he knew that he would not be released anyway. The witness’s five-year-old niece was not allowed to testify about her mother’s death.

- When the witness was subjected to Ghapani, he was poked all over with a pen. It felt as if his “whole body was being needled”. There were one to three interrogators at any interrogation session, which always took place at night; they all beat him simultaneously between questions.

- Prisoners slept on the concrete floor.



## **Witness 58: Pirooz Zoorchang**

D.O.B.: 1958

Age at time of arrest: 27

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar)

I the undersigned, Pirooz Zoorchang, started my political activities during the 1357 [1978] revolution and began my activities with the Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar) from late 1359 [1980]. I was pursued and arrested on night of the 10th Shahrivar 1363 [1st September 1984] in a house that belonged to family friends unrelated to the organisation.

The house was surrounded by armed men belonging to the Intelligence Department of the Revolutionary Guards of the Islamic Revolution [Sepah Pasdaran]. They infiltrated the building and arrested me. The reason for the surveillance and my arrest was my political activities and the regime discovering that I was a member of Rah-e Kargar. I was driven blindfolded to the Intelligence centre of the Pasdaran, situated in what was formerly the Amir Alam's High School on Kuhsangi Street in Mashhad.

My interrogation, which lasted over the next three months, consisted of repeated beatings with cables on the soles of my feet, punches and kicks to every part of my head and body and constant psychological pressures. In particular they applied additional pressure on me using my wife's pregnancy. My wife and six other comrades from our organisation had been arrested on the same charges of belonging to Rah-e Kargar. Some had been arrested before and some after my arrest.

I was accused of being in charge of the Khorasan province in a period prior to my arrest, being involved in activities that, according to them, were aimed overthrowing the regime, membership in a communist organisation and having different organisational responsibilities. I was hauled in front of a so-called court in front of religious judge [hakem shar'] Razani and prosecutor Pour-Mohammadi, who was later the Minister of Interior, and accused of the charges mentioned above.

In no sense can this charade be called a trial: eight accused, not informed of what they were being accused of prior to appearing at court, without any defence lawyers or the right to speak in their own defence, were given long-term prison sentences after a mere few minutes by a fascist hakem shar' whose verdicts had sent hundreds of people to their deaths. I received a prison sentence of eight years, and was in Vakilabad Prison of Mashhad until late 1367 [1988]. This means that during the fascist executions of that year I had served over half of my sentence.

In less than three months in that year of 1367 [1988], while I was in Vakilabad Prison of Mashhad, about 140 people were executed, like all other prisons of our country, on the direct order of Imam Khomeini, Supreme Leader of Islamic Republic. The prisoners were transferred to the Intelligence Centre of the Revolutionary Guards (former Alam's High School), hauled one by one in front of the Death Commission consisting of a representative from Tehran, the current religious judge [hakem shar'], the current prosecutor, and the assistant prosecutor Valipour. After just a few questions, they received death sentences, were strung up in batches in the same parking place by ropes attached to the roof of the garage at one end and the back of a car at the other, and hanged.

### *W58 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- On the witness's arrest, the Revolutionary Guards asked

him to go with them for question. The guards had come armed looking for him in a friend's house and insisted on taking him despite his friends' protestation. He was taken to a car, where two Revolutionary Guard agents violently pushed his head down to the floor and blindfolded him.

- The witness later discovered that the guards had not touched him or his comrades in prison because they felt that communists were untouchable. One guard told him not to make sudden movements next to him so that they would not accidentally come into contact.

- Interrogations included beating. When the witness protested that he did not know on what charges he had been arrested, he was insulted and hit on the head with a book. Despite his persistent attempts to get an answer, he was told that he would never "become a human being".

- The witness was taken to solitary confinement in a room that was so small (1x2m) that he had to take tiny steps to be able to walk. The witness was kept in this room every day for three months before he was taken to his mock trial. During proceedings, the clergyman denied that the authorities had ever arrested innocents.

- In court there was a maximum of ten minutes of court-time allotted to the eight people with whom the witness was imprisoned. The judge briefly read through file and issued sentences. The witness was sentenced to eight years in prison. Four people, including the witness's wife, were sentenced to one year (although one of those women ended up staying for three). The four others were sentenced to between three and twenty years. The wife was released after a total of seventeen months in prison.

- The witness served five years of an eight-year sentence: in response to protests against the mass executions of 1988 surviving prisoners were gradually released.

- The guards found out the witness's wife was pregnant when her period was delayed and they ran some tests on her. They threatened the witness that his child would grow up as an orphan if I did

not cooperate. This was the first he had heard of the pregnancy, which his wife later confirmed. This revelation exerted great psychological pressure on the witness.

- A survivor from a mass execution of 170 people reported to the witness that all the victims had been hanged with a noose attached to a rope tied to a car, which then moved and tightened the noose around prisoners' necks. The guards had kept that survivor there in order that he could see these executions and report it back to the other prisoners as a form of psychological pressure.

## **Witness 59: Kamran Geraminejad**

Age at time of arrest: 23

Date of arrest: 1981 (Tehran)

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

**The victims were Reza Majdabadi, Behnam Majdabadi, Mohsen Mehrabi, Hossein Amir-panahi, Reza Vashghouli and Houman Sokhanvar Mahani.**

Reza Majdabadi was my group-mate and was sentenced to fifteen years in prison, but nevertheless he was executed in the 1367 [1988] massacre.

Behnam Majdabadi, Reza's brother, was also my group-mate and had spent five years in prison when he was released. He had tried to join Ashraf Base through a connection but was trapped by the Ministry of Intelligence and was executed in the 1988 massacre without a trial.

Mohsen Mehrabi was a medical school student and my prison-mate in Ghezelhesar Prison, who was executed in the 1988 massacre.

Hossein Amir-panahi was my prison-mate and room-mate (99) in Evin Prison, correctional ward, and was executed in 1362 [1983].

Reza Vashghouli was also my room-mate in Evin Prison, correctional ward, and was executed in the 1988 massacre. He was in prison under the Shah, released during the 1979 revolution and was arrested in 1359 [1980]. He experienced freedom only for two years.

Houman Sokhanvar Mahani was in charge of a non-military cell of Martyr Ghasem Sadeghian, of which I was a member. He was

arrested in 1361 [1982] and executed in 1362 [1983].

I was in solitary confinement when they transferred me to Ward 2. After seven months, I could hear and see other prisoners. Houman was in the same ward and we talked every day to figure out what mistakes had led to our arrest. A week after being transferred to Ward 2, one night when Houman and I were having our dinner, our names were called and we were directed to collect all our belongings and prepare for being moved. Everyone knew what these kinds of calls at night meant. We bade farewell to everybody in the room and kissed them while our comrades cried in silence.

They took us out of the room, ordered us to return any prison supplies, like blankets, cups, spoons etc. that we'd been issued and ordered us to strip down to our sleeping shorts. They wrote our names and the names of our mothers on our feet.

They led us into a room where a guard inside watched to make sure we didn't speak to each other. I was exhausted and finally fell sleep. I was awakened by the shouting of guards. Houman was on my side. We all taken out of the room, put into a prison minibus and driven toward the Evin hills. After few minutes the minibus stopped. We were turned over to the guards there.

The prisoners starting to sing the Mujahideen chant. The guards tied us to poles that were erected like triangles. When everybody was tied, Seyed, Lajevardi's bodyguard, ordered the guards to form a line. I heard the clicking sound of J3 rifles. The chant still continued. The order of fire was given and the chanting was interrupted. I heard a growling-like sound next to me. The smell of gunpowder and blood was mixed in the air. I thought that I had been shot, because the warm blood splashed on my toes. Then Seyed ordered the guards to untie our hands. Seyed told me take off my blindfold and to help move the body of my comrade. I unconsciously followed his order. I saw a horrible scene: my dear Houman lying there with holes in his chest and a hole in forehead and his gentle eyes open. I fainted.

## *W59 Summary of Oral Testimony*

- The witness was released in 1985 after three years of imprisonment. He was 21 at the time of his arrest in his shop, after which he was subjected to a body search. As he was led, blindfolded and handcuffed, past his neighbours, his guards announced that he was a thief. The witness was taken to Evin, where he was tied to a chair and beaten up. When he did not speak, he was taken to the adjacent room and shown a motionless girl whose toes were bleeding; he was threatened that he would be made to be like her. He was tied to a bed and a guard sat on his back and put a blanket on his face, while another pulled each of his legs. They told him to open his hand when he was ready to talk. He passed out after *bastinado* when he could no longer breathe.
- The witness was taken back to the interrogation room weeks later, where he wrote down the wrong date on a confession sheet because he had lost all sense of time and thought that this was only the day after his arrest. He was then transferred to solitary confinement for seven months.
- The witness was one of twelve prisoners taken to Ward 8 together and stripped to their underpants. The guards wrote the prisoners' names and their mothers' names on their feet with a marker, which in Islam meant that they were bastards. These twelve men were put on a red minibus, like one used to carry meat. They were taken to the hills and asked to write their wills, before they were tied up. The guards were chanting a song and laughing as the prisoners were blindfolded against the wall with their legs bound. A sign was put on the chests of the witness and five others; the six who had nothing on their chests were executed in front of the others. Seyyed, Lajevardi's bodyguard, then called the survivors "hypocrites" and ordered them to pick up the dead bodies, saying: "Help us gather the rubbish."
- The witness confirmed that this incident was a mock execution, which was common in Evin. He asserted that the technique

is still used. The witness considers it a form of torture intended to extract information. In most cases this did not succeed, but when people did say things from fear, action was taken against them later. The witness made clear that he still feels tortured by that event now and feels great guilt for having survived. He was later told that he had been spared because the authorities thought that he still might repent or turn over information.

- Seven months after the incident, he was taken to the court, where Lajevardi was present. He was read six charges and told to defend himself; he rejected them all and was then kicked in the face for objecting. He was given a piece of paper to sign, which he did, and was sent out; he was sentenced to three years in prison and sent to Ghezelhesar.

- Hossein refused to stand for Lajevardi and was beaten daily as punishment.



## **Witness 60: Homayoun Kaviani**

D.O.B.: 1964

Age at time of arrest: 17

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

My political activity goes back to the end of 1979, the year of the revolution; I went to demonstrations and distributed leaflets and flyers. After the revolution, I joined the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) and was involved in the student activities till 1980. On the 20th June 1981, I was arrested by the Basij forces near Ferdowsi Square and was transferred to a centre. There were a lot of wounded there and after being interrogated by Gilani, we were blindfolded and taken to Evin Prison; we were asked our names and after a long while, the vans went to the courthouse building. At the same time some were transported to be executed by firing squad. I was tortured for three months in the courthouse jail and then transferred to Evin Prison. I was put in the "underage" ward, and after interrogation there I was sent to a fifteen-minute court in November of 1981. I was accused of participating in the 20th June demonstration, sympathizing with the MKO and being untruthful in interrogations: up to that point I had given a false name. I was transferred to Ghezelhesar Prison and in March of 1982 I was given my verdict.

In those days the courts were run by the religious judge and as a citizen one had no power at all. The court and verdict and interrogators under Lajevardi (head of Evin Prison) were the official face of the brutal terror that reigned at the time. Lajevardi used to

say, “If I could keep you all in solitary cells every night, I would.” One’s life was in the hands of those who quite possibly didn’t even know one’s name. In 1988 I was in Gohardasht and saw first-hand how this manifested. My friends were taken to the noose without any cause. After many years of serving one’s sentence, all of a sudden an internal committee called the “Death Commission” started making decisions to execute my friends. We didn’t even have the chance to say goodbye to each other: this was like the first wave of executions in 1980, very sudden and without any cause.

### *W60 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- On his arrest, the witness was taken in a van without seats to the Justice Palace, which is a prison for regular prisoners, after a brief stay at a committee with wounded detainees, where he heard the sound of the firing squad. Three charges were laid against the witness in his mock trial: cooperation with the mujahideen, non-cooperation with the interrogator and use of a pseudonym. He was not permitted to speak during proceedings but was allowed to make a two-minute call to his family to notify them of his whereabouts. The witness was sentenced to life imprisonment; when Ayatollah Montazeri became Deputy Supreme Leader, however, minors received reductions on their sentences. The witness believes that no attention was paid to his age in treatment or sentencing; he had some friends the same age who were executed.
- The witness saw prisoners being taken group by group in 1988 to the Death Commission, which called itself the “Pardon Commission” and said that the worthy would be released.
- The witness had used a false name when arrested because he knew that the record of his political activity as a student would have made the situation worse for him. He also used a false name to protect his family. Though they found out his name was false, he did not know whether this led to more punishment than he would

have otherwise had.

- On one incident the witness was taken to a “football room”, where he was blindfolded and kicked by guards with their boots. His jaw was dislocated, from which he still suffers problems.
- In 1981, the guards admitted to having a “quota for cable beating”.
- The witness had no visits for a year; his family could not admit that he was in prison because they knew that people would make life difficult for them.

## **Witness 61: Reza Poor Karimi Darya Kenari**

D.O.B.: 1960

Status of witness: Survivor

Date of arrest: October 1981

My name is Reza Poor Karimi Darya Kenari. I began my military service in October 1979. After 22 months of service, I was arrested in October 1981. I was arrested for having possession of several political newspapers published by the Fedaiyan Minority and Majority organisations, Rah-e Kargar and United Revolutionary Army Personnel. I also had possession of some novels and history books. I was taken from my place of service located at the Air Force based in Bojnoord (Shahr Abad) to the Army Judicial Centre located at the 77th Army Division, where I was interrogated very harshly by Colonel Bagheri, the Chief Prosecutor for the Army. During the interrogation I was accused of participating in an anti-government minority organisation, spying for such anti-government organisations, spreading blasphemy and anti-religious thoughts among the soldiers and being a Marxist. The next round of interrogations took place at the court presided over by Hojatollah Islam Hafezi, who was a religious judge. Hafezi accused me of engaging in the same anti-government conduct. I strongly denied the allegations but to no avail. I only confessed to having read the newspapers and books mentioned above. I denied that I was a Marxist. In response to whether or not I believed in Islam, I responded that I did not believe in Islam. I expressly stated that when I was nineteen years old, I began to study religions to determine what was right or wrong and what I would or would not believe. After six months in prison and interrogation, I was informed that because of my direct

response, I had been given the maximum sentence of execution but with one degree of reduction in the punishment. Thus, I was given a sentence of life imprisonment. While waiting six months for my sentence to be announced, I thought that I would be executed and lived my life in fear and agony.

After sentencing, I was moved to Vakilabad Prison in Mashhad. While in that prison, I witnessed the horrific and inhuman treatment of many prisoners by the agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the cold winter days of 1981 many of my friends were executed. Now, I can only remember the names of: (1) Bahman Rahbar, (2) Behnam Rahbar, (3) Behrooz Salahi and (4) Asghar Gholami but there were others. During those days, the prisoners were paraded in front of the other prisoners and then executed in front of us. Other friends from Chaloos, where I was born, were executed and included: (1) Keyvan Kia, (2) Hossein Tehrani, (3) Kumars Alian (4) Mahmood Haydariand (5) Hamid Hossaini from People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), Alefts Group. I witnessed the summary executions of my fellow prisoners and friends from 1981-1982. In 1983 there were far fewer executions in our prison.

In 1984 some of the prisoners at Vakilabad Prison in Mashhad decided not to attend the compulsory brainwashing, religious indoctrination classes. I was in the group. We participated in a sit-down strike and refused to attend the religion class. On account of this disobedience, the prison authorities separated us from the rest of the prisoners and put us in one of the four quarantined sections of the prison used for political prisoners. We were not outside for exercise in the fresh air, were denied visitation rights, and the amount and quality of our food was reduced. We were also crammed into a small cell where there were no sleeping facilities and the prisoners had to sleep on the floor like packed sardines.

Since this treatment did not break the resolve of the prisoners, the prison authorities decided to apply other methods of mental torture by installing a large loudspeaker in the area, from which they broadcasted the Quranic recitations of two persons, Ahagaran and

Kuwaitipoor. This method was also not successful in breaking the resolve of the prisoners because when the prison guards left to attend group prayers, we disconnected the loudspeaker. From that point on, at 01.00 in the morning they called several prisoners out and took them outside the building, where they were beaten and wounded. They were then put into an unfinished building, which did not have a roof. To make sure that those prisoners were not blamed for the disconnecting the loudspeaker, we disconnected the loudspeaker once again. Again, they took some of us out for beating, torture and confinement in the unfinished building. It was winter and the night was extremely cold in the unfinished building. Consequently, two other accused prisoners and I, who were from the army, were interrogated again for orchestrating the uprising of the prisoners.

One of those nights when the loudspeaker was disconnected, I was summoned and taken directly to the office of the justice at Vakilabad Prison. There a blindfold was put on my eyes and I was insulted in the most disgusting way and beaten until I lost consciousness. A man named Valipour and another person, Baradar Hamid, told me that I should take this opportunity and participate in the Islamic Guidance (brainwashing classes). I told them that I had already given my answers and explained my reasoning when interrogated by the Army Prosecutor and that I did not have to make a decision again. After my response, Valipour said that it was the night of the “Ehame Omat” (Khomeini) and that the followers of Islam would be free from infidels like me.

I was returned to my cell, where I saw two other friends who had also been interrogated like me. The three of us were then taken to Army’s Judicial Department of the 77th Army Division. There they had prepared a prison cell for us. The next morning they blindfolded us and drove us away to an unknown location. In order to fill us with fear, the driver and another person in the vehicle repeatedly said that it would be best to just stop and finish us off. The vehicle, however, didn’t stop. The three of us were living between life and death and constantly thinking that they would kill

us. Finally, I asked where we were being taken. The driver said, “We are taking you to Tehran to Haji Lajevardi so you can appreciate the time you spent in the Mashhad prison.” I asked whether we had to be blindfolded all the way to Tehran. One of them said that he would open the blindfold after we asked for forgiveness and did our morning prayers. Upon arriving in Tehran, we were first taken to Ghasr Prison and then Heshmatiyeh Prison, which belonged to the Military Police.

My interrogations by the Khorasan’s Army Judiciary were conducted without regard to any military judicial procedures. I was occasionally given an appointed defence attorney, who did not have my interest in mind. During the court session, I never heard a word spoken by my defence attorney. When I would object or deny an allegation, my attorney would scold me. At the Revolutionary Justice Department, where I was interrogated, I was given an attorney for a very short time and mostly had to defend myself. The religious appointee to the court served as the prosecutor and judge and handed down the sentences. Most of the accused sentenced by religious judges received sentences for being infidels or for being persons who had committed acts against the teachings of Islam. The sentences were mostly executions and were carried out shortly after being announced.

Footnote: Lajevardi was the head of Evin Prison in Tehran and was one of the most notorious torturers during the 1980s.

### *W61 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness had never seen his court-appointed defence lawyer before proceedings. Whenever the witness tried to speak, he was told, “Shut up! Don’t talk!”
- The judge told the witness that since his parents were Muslim he must have left Islam, thus he was an apostate: “You are a corrupter on earth and I am going to condemn you.” His lawyer

pled for the sentence to be commuted from death to life because the witness was “young and ignorant”.

- Religious indoctrination classes were compulsory; they dealt mostly with Khomeini’s treatises and the principles of Islam. There was no opportunity for discussion; prisoners were expected to listen and imbibe all that they were taught. Because some members skipped these classes, their group was separated, visits were stopped and the prisoners were given half of the regular quantities of food, which were already insufficient. Eventually the classes were stopped because of the prisoners’ resistance to them.

- Once he was moved to Tehran, the witness was told that his experiences would be much worse. He was asked to stand on a stool when blindfolded, after which his interrogator put a noose around his neck and threatened him: “You’re only one step away from death, I can kick you now.” The witness replied, “All I’ve done is read some books, but do whatever you want.” He was let down and subjected to bastinado with a cable that the interrogator boasted that he had used on more important people, namely admirals.

- Prisoners were refused permission to hold classes in their cells because prison authorities feared the formation of independent political organisations.

- The witness was put in a cell where he heard tortured people being dragged back to adjacent cells every night.

- The witness’s family approached Montazeri, after which the guards said he would be released. They gave him a paper to denounce groups, but he was never part of groups so did not see how he could denounce them. He was later transferred to his own city so he could see his family, although he only ever had one visit.

- After this, the guards treated the witness as if he had just been detained, so interrogated him, beat him and threw him in an insect-infested cell. He was retried and again denied being a Marxist but said that he was not a Muslim.

- He once again denied being a Marxist or a Muslim. The witness was told that he was supposed to get the death sentence but



his file was in another city and they wouldn't let the guards execute him. When asked whether he accepted the Islamic Republic, the witness snapped back that he had spent too long in prison to be able to give an opinion about it! He was then sent to Mashhad, where he was incarcerated with twenty people, all of whom were later killed.

- The witness' father put pressure on various bodies to find out what was happening. Eventually the witness was released in 1991.
- The witness clarified that he had not personally seen the executions of the people mentioned in his written testimony, but knew that their names were read and said goodbye to them. Their belongings were given to their families.
- After 1986, the prisoners were given access to some books, although these were mainly religious texts.

**Witness 62: [W62: NAME REDACTED]**

D.O.B.: 1965

Occupation at time of arrest: Student

Status of witness: Survivor

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

I was in prison from 1981 to 1985. During my imprisonment in Evin Prison, I witnessed almost 100 of my co-prisoners taken for executions. The majority of them were under nineteen years old and MKO sympathisers. I only recall the following three names, who were in the same cell as I was and in a neighbouring cell.

1) Moustafa Eizadi, nineteen years old, from Tehran, sympathiser of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), had completed high school studies. He was a friend of mine. He was executed in summer 1982.

2) Shaheed Jafari, nineteen years old, sympathiser of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), from Tehran, had completed high school studies. He was executed in spring 1982. I shall never forget a cellmate who cried for him.

3) Taymour Dawar, nineteen years old, sympathiser of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO), from Tehran, had completed his high school studies. He was executed in February 1983.

On the 16th November 1981, I was arrested at my home and my accusation was being a sympathiser of Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority). I was tortured, interrogated and then was taken to Ward 3, Room 2, which was named as the "underage" room (under-18). I was sixteen and a half years old when I was arrested.

I was transferred to Ward 6 of Amozeshgah (training centre) in the end of September 1981, where they were holding people between ages twelve and twenty. I was in Room 78, which was about fifteen sqm and more than 40 people were staying in that room. All the rooms in that ward were the same size and 80% of those who were kept in these rooms were accused of being sympathisers of the MKO. For about four months, our food was bread, cheese, butter and dates. All rooms' doors were open, apart from rooms 1 to 5. From the 27th January to the 1st February 1982, I was interrogated again and witnessed other prisoners were tortured on a daily basis. On the last day, I had lashes to my soles; my feet were swollen and they were about to burst.

In January 1982 I had my last interrogation and I was taken to a room, which they called a "courtroom", where I was told that I was sentenced to three years in prison, without being allowed to defend myself or having access to a lawyer. I was convicted for supporting OIPFG (Minority), distributing leaflets and attending political meetings. In mid-February I was transferred to Ward 6 of Unit 1 of Ghezelhesar Prison, then to Wards 6 and 1 of the same unit.

When I finished the third year of my imprisonment, I was transferred to Evin Prison and then I could be freed. I was requested to give confession as a condition of freedom. I refused to do so. I was returned to the Ward 1 of Unit 1 of Ghezelhesar Prison. My jail term was extended for another six months. I was taken to Evin Prison in May 1985 and after two weeks I was freed subject to acceptance of confession.

In the middle of 1983, two of my co-prisoners, Nader Hosseini (sympathiser of the Iranian Organisation of Sahand) and Nader Mehnati Sarkhabi (sympathiser of the Rah-e Kargar organisation), who were less than 30 years of age and were serving their prison terms, were returned to Evin and executed.

The executions in Evin Prison took place behind Ward 4 twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays. The prisoners were lined up in a group and executed. Prisoners in Ward 4 could hear gunshots and by the number of gunshots they could say how many prisoners

were executed. Up to 400 prisoners were executed weekly during my imprisonment in Evin Prison from November 1981 to February 1982.

When I was in Ward 6 of Amozeshgah, I witnessed repentant prisoners aged twelve to eighteen cooperating with jailors, thinking that by doing so they could reduce their sentences, avoid being executed or could be freed from prison. The prison guards (pas-dars) headed by Lajevardi, the chief staff of Evin Prison, turned these innocent teenagers into murderers by forcing them to fire the last bullet of firing squad. I was really shocked and never thought I would witness such a cruel crime. They made these teenagers to kill other prisoners to save their lives.

### ***W62 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was arrested when Revolutionary Guards turned up at his home and asked to take him for questioning; he was then blindfolded and abducted to Evin. By overhearing his interrogators' discussion, he learnt that they had already identified him.
- The witness was subjected to Ghapani. One arm was pulled behind his shoulder and the other wrenched behind his back; he was laid down on the floor on his chest, then yanked up by a chain tied to his hands. The pain made him "melt like a burning candle". He was beaten during this experience; the handcuffs bit into his wrists.
- Food in prison was mixed with blanket fluff; prisoners had to gargle with salt water after eating.
- The witness was tortured in order to inform on his friends in writing. He was subjected to over 100 lashes to his feet, which made him feel as if his "whole body was on fire"; he was then made to stamp on the floor so the skin on the soles of his feet would break and the blood would not clot.

- Ghapani often dislocated people's shoulders.
- The witness was taken to his trial after fifteen months. There was no lawyer. The witness was charged with being an FKO sympathiser; when he said that he was not, the judge replied, "But you might [in future]."
- Prison guards left repenters' cell doors open as an inducement for others to repent.
- Prisoners were forced to sit all day, with only three twenty-minute breaks for the toilet; prisoners had to wash dishes at the same time. Prisoners were also forced to watch videos of these televised interviews. Prisoners were made to stand still for 18-48 hours, which made prisoners lose their minds and left them limping; prisoners were beaten and verbally abused at the same time.
- Two female prisoners were forced to sit in the "Grave" and denounce their parties.
- The witness was beaten up as a punishment for telling his parents that he had only been given bread and cheese; this was on the order of Haji Davood.
- 30-40 prisoners volunteered to participate in the execution of other prisoners.
- The witness's sentence was extended by six months because he refused to participate in a televised interview condemning all dissidence and embracing the Islamic Republic. He was finally released when he agreed to sign a written denunciation of a dissident groups, since his own group did not feature on the list!

### **Witness 63: Mohammadali Zandkarimi**

D.O.B.: 1955

Age at time of incident: 25-26

**Name of victim: Rauf Zariee (brother)**

D.O.B.: 1938

Occupation at time of arrest: Lorry driver

Political affiliation: Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah)

My brother, Rauf Zariee, the son of Malak and Saltanat Zariee, was executed on the 29th May 1981 at the age of 42. He was a lorry driver with three little children. He was a labour activist. He was arrested together with some other Komolah sympathisers. There was no trace of him for a few months and then his execution was announced by the state media. “Challenging the rule of God” was given as the reason for his execution. It took a few more months for the family to find out that he had been buried along with other victims in a designated burial site for “infidels”, two hours away from our hometown. I do not know people involved in his case but I hold the Islamic regime responsible for his murder.

I was a member of the Regional Trade Union Council and both my brother and my brother-in-law were also labour activists. I was arrested twice in 1981-82, during which I experienced physical and mental tortures, a summary trial and mock execution. My brother-in-law Yadullah Alekanan, 22 years old, was executed on the 21st June 1981. While in prison, I witnessed summary trials (some lasting just few minutes) and executions. The names I recall are Shafiq Awihangi, Khosraw Mahi, Yadullah Lotfollanejad and Shahroch Tehrani. The judges and interrogators were operating under dif-

ferent names. My family members have been subjected to serious human rights abuses including murder, serious sexual assaults, imprisonment, torture, and even being denied access to higher education.

### ***W63 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Rauf Zariee was arrested along with 70-100 others in Sanandaj during the 1981-82 assault on Komolah.
- The witness's wife was four months pregnant when he was arrested. His interrogator, Toher, was famous for kicking prisoners with sharp-tipped shoes; he led the witness to believe that his pregnant wife was present during the interrogation (although she was not), and that he would kick her until she miscarried.
- The witness was subjected to a mock execution during his second arrest, when he was identified by a Komolah member who called to him, presumably unaware that he was being escorted by Revolutionary Guards.
- Twenty out of 26 prisoners in the witness's cell were executed.

## **Witness 64: Sirous Dastaran**

D.O.B.: 1950

Age at time of incident: 30

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Khosrou Dastaran**

D.O.B.: 1958

Age at time of arrest: 23

Date of arrest: 21st October 1981

Date of execution: 26th November 1981

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

I, Sirous Dastaran, am the brother of Khosrou Dastaran, who was born in 1958 [1337] in Tehran and resided in Tehran. Before his arrest, Khosrou was a student at the university and at the same time doing labour work for living expenses. On the 21st October 1981, on the Karaj highway and along with four other people, Khosrou was arrested for supporting the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (OIPFG) and on the 26th November 1981 [15th Azar 1360], he was executed in Evin Prison.

On the 26th November 1981 [15th Azar of the same year], when my older brother went to Evin Prison to visit him, they told him that Khosrou had been executed. The only thing that they gave to our family was his will and a wristwatch. After brutal torture, without just investigation, without court and having the right to an attorney, my brother and 74 other political prisoners were executed by firing squad; without notifying their families, they were buried with their own clothes, like a bag, at the Behesht Zahra Cemetery. In late 1357 [1378], Khosrou had joined the OIPFG and had been



active in the workers' division. As a representative of workers, he defended their rights.

Because of his political activities, Khosrou was also detained in 1357 [1978] and 1358 [1979].

The Islamic Republic in its entirety – interrogators, torturer, warden, religious judges, prosecutors, chief of justice department, attorney general, minister of information, Khomeini, Khamenei, Rafsanjani, Mousavi and Karoubi – is responsible for killing my brother. All of them were in agreement with the policy to annihilate the opposition and either directly or indirectly were involved in killing my brother and thousands of other political prisoners. By being silent, they approved the executions.

My brother was only 23 years old and was executed for just having a political idea and being active.

### ***W64 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The gravedigger of Behesht Zahra Cemetery confirmed that the bodies were buried in bags; all 75 were mangled from torture.

## **Witness 65: Saeed Montazeri**

D.O.B.: 1960

Age at time of incident: 28

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Hamid Montazeri**

D.O.B.: 1952

Occupation at time of arrest: Law student at Tehran University

Date of execution: Summer 1988 (Tehran)

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority)

In 1973, Hamid Montazeri was arrested as a student in Tehran during the reign of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi by the SAVAK in connection with supporting the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas in its struggle against the dictatorship and was released from prison after four years in August of 1977. After his release, he remained politically active and continued his political activities with the Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar). Towards the end of 1980, he left this organisation and joined the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority). For a while, he was a member of Tehran's provincial committee in this organisation and was a consulting member of its central committee until his arrest. He led a semi-covert life after 1981.

In August 1986, Hamid Montazeri and his pregnant wife were arrested by the regime's intelligence agents after leaving his sister's house in Tehran. It became known later that by then, the Intelligence Ministry had been pursuing him for some time. They were arrested without a warrant and were immediately transferred to the Komiteh Moshtarak Prison. In a meeting that Mahin Fahimi, Ha-

mid's wife, had with him in this prison during his interrogation period, she realised that he had been severely tortured. He could not walk properly, and his hands and elbow were injured. He seemed very frail and all his hair had suddenly turned white. Upon his transfer to Evin Prison, Hamid was allowed to see his family twice per month through a glass separator. Shukufeh, his daughter, has spoken of her first visit with her father: the first visit was most likely in April 1987. By this time, her mother had been released. She took her with her for the visit.

There is no information on Hamid's trial. On a summer's day in 1988, Hamid Montazeri was hanged in Evin Prison as part of the murder spree of political prisoners. He is buried in the mass grave of Golzar Khavaran.

The prison notified the family by phone of the execution, instructing them to visit the locality's Revolutionary Committee office (the Tarasht branch in the West of Tehran). There, the agents gave the family Hamid's belongings, among which were a moist towel and his wristwatch. Hamid Montazeri's name is indicated in the list of Yaad Nameh Yaad Yaran Yaad Baad of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiian (Majority).

### ***W65 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Hamid Montazeri had been monitored by the police for weeks before his arrest.

## **Witness 66: Mohammad Jafar Jaberi**

D.O.B.: 1954

Status of witness: Brother-in-law of victim

**Name of victim: Ebrahim Najaran**

D.O.B.: 1958

Occupation at time of arrest: Student of Tarbiyat Mo'alem University; employee of Sherkat Ta'avoni Mahali (Neighbourhood Cooperative)

Date of arrest: April 1985

Political affiliation: Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar)

Ebrahim was one of the first in a group of leftist prisoners who was executed in the month of Shahrivar. He was hanged on the order of Khomeini in Gohardasht Prison during the political genocide of the summer of 1367 [1988]. Ebrahim was born in a working family in Coledje village in Taleghan in the west of Tehran on the 22nd Esfand 1336 [13th March 1958]. He spent his school years in Taleghan and Tehran. He became politically active at the end of Shah's era when he had just started his studies at Daneshsaraye Aali (Tarbiat Mo'alem University).

Ebrahim attended political activities during the revolution passionately and continued his activities after the 1979 revolution. He joined Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rah-e Kargar) in Tir 1358 [July 1979].

Ebrahim participated in organising the Council of Peasants [Shora haaye dehghaani] in Taleghan. He, along with some other people, established various libraries in Taleghan.

He was then transferred to the Karaj branch of Rah-e Kargar. He

and other activists managed to publish the Karaj-Taleghan-Zanjan newsletter in 1361 [1982].

Ebrahim married my sister, Khadijeh Jaberi, in the summer of 1361 [1982]. They moved to Sari in the north at the end of 1363 and were arrested in this city on the 18th Farvardin 1364 [7th April 1985]. After two months, they were transferred to Evin Prison.

Security forces tortured Ebrahim severely to try to change his beliefs, but he never changed his position.

Without a lawyer and other legal rights, Ebrahim was taken to a mock trial and sentenced to twelve years in prison. However, he was later sentenced to be executed and in the summer of 1367 [1988] was hanged during the genocide of political prisoners. The court hearing that only lasted several minutes didn't present any lawyers or judges and didn't follow legal process. Ebrahim was taken to the firing squad on the 6th or 7th Shahrivar (28th-29th August 1988). Ebrahim didn't know that his honest answers to some short questions on his beliefs would determine his destiny and lead him to his execution.

A while after this calamity, one of my sisters went to visit my sister Khadijeh (Ebrahim's wife) in the prison. Mortazavi, the warden of Gohardasht Prison, told her that Ebrahim had been executed. After more investigation by Ebrahim's family, the guard of the prison confirmed the news and gave them Ebrahim's clothes.

To break my sister's resistance in the prison, the guards had told her several times that Ebrahim had been executed. My sister, Khadijeh, was psychologically damaged in the prison. She couldn't believe that Ebrahim was dead for years after his death. Finally, through the tireless efforts of my family, Khadijeh accepted to leave the prison in her broken-down condition. The authorities wanted to release her after many years, but she did not trust them and did not want to leave the prison. Khadijeh kept waiting for her executed husband's return for years. It took many years for her to accept the fact that her husband has been executed.

Note: Mr Mohamad-Jafar Jaberi testified about the execution of his brother-in-law as his sister was not able to do so.

## *W66 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness's sister, Khadijeh, was tortured for five years in prison (including bastinado). She was not political and was arrested only because she was married to a political activist. She was paranoid and reluctant to leave prison; she remains paranoid, suspicious and fearful of innocuous actions, thinking her relatives are collaborating with the police. When she was told her husband had been executed, she refused to believe it.
- Ebrahim Najaran was tortured for information and to force him to recant his beliefs. He was later hanged in 1988; the witness was told by a survivor that a magistrate in Karaj was ordered to dispose of the prisoners as quickly as possible.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Name Dates Place

Saeed Aghighi Executed before 1981 Was tortured  
and his body was found in suburb of Kermanshah

Kermanshar, Dizel Abad

Kermanshar, Dizel Abad

Parichehr Kashani Executed 1981-1982

Kioumars kashani (MKO) Executed 1981-1982

Karim Jawidan Executed 1980s Tabriz

Tabriz

Tehran

Tehran

Reza Yaserbi Executed 1980s

Hassan Ajam Executed 1980s

Ali Ajam Executed 1980s

Very depressed and has gone to therapist several times during the last 30 years; therapist gave him medicines. He also has very serious colitis (stomach problems, ulcers) and was hospitalised for those problems. Suffers from severe back pain.

The prosecutor's assistant in the court at Karaj took his brother to the Death Commission.

Mehdi Nadarifard took the prisoner in Karaj to the Death Commission (he is dead now).

## **Witness 67: Tahmineh Geshtasebi**

D.O.B.: 1961

Occupation at time of arrest: Worker

Status of witness: Survivor

Date of arrest: 1982 (Tehran)

In 1982 I was arrested at my place of work at the pharmaceutical company and I was transferred to the prison of the Komiteh Moshtarak. In 1983 I was taken to Evin Prison for court and my court didn't last more than five minutes. I was charged with cooperating with the communist movement, agitating workers and making Marxist propaganda. I was sentenced to eight years in prison. However, I remained five months longer in prison than my sentence.

In 1991 [1370] I was released. I was a witness to the mass executions of the political prisoners in the early 1980s and of the murders of the political prisoners in 1988. My interrogation was at the Komiteh Moshtarak. The first day of my arrest, they held me in a room for several hours. Then the interrogator entered the room and for some time he beat me with his rubber slipper. He told me that since I was a communist, I was filthy and his hands should not touch me. The next day I was taken to another room and told that it was a court. In that room there was a man named Haj Agha Amin, who sentenced the prisoners to lashes. I was sentenced to 1,500 lashes. But, fortunately another prisoner recognised me and my sentence of lashes was suspended. After that, I was tortured twice. At my court only my interrogator was present. I didn't have a lawyer. As much as I tried to defend myself, my interrogator said I was lying.



When I was arrested, I was only 23 years old. I was 32 years old when I was released. In 1988 when I was in Evin Prison, in the room where I was imprisoned half of the prisoners were transferred to another area for execution. One of the prisoners who had been taken away for execution was returned after a short time. In a loud voice and while trembling she said, “A long line has been formed of the prisoners waiting to be executed.” The prisoners who had received sentences of execution were taken from our prison block. I asked the prisoner who had returned how she was. She said, “I have been sentenced to execution.” At that very moment, she was called over the PA system and taken away. I heard that she was executed.

One very shocking memory that I have involves two Mujahideen prisoners whom they had wanted to execute. They had told one of the Mujaheds that if she fired the final shot [tir-e-khalas], she would be released. They took both of these women from my cell. One of them was executed that very day. The other returned. But, after a few days, she was also executed. She had fired the final shot just like the interrogator had wanted her to do. They had kept her alive a few days but then executed her. The interrogator said that he had tried to get the woman released but the judge [hakim-e-shaare] had refused and said that she would definitely go to heaven.

### ***W67 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness had reported that she was kept in prison for five months longer than her sentence: this was the period before her trial, which was not considered to be a completion of part of the term.
- During the review of the witness’s case, Judge Nayyeri told her that he wished she had been raped by Iraqi soldiers.
- Nejjad Ghosemolu was force fed by repenters, on the instruction of Lajevardi; prisoners were unable to stop them. Ms

Ghosemolu was convinced that she was being followed when she left prison and committed suicide as a result.

- The witness was blindfolded during her trial.
- The witness saw a three-year-old child in Komiteh Moshtarak; she asked why her mother's feet were bloody and the mother replied that she had fallen down the stairs. There were seven or eight small children in Evin. The witness was once punished for giving them an empty fruit crate with which to play.
- A 60-year-old woman was flogged 15 times a day; she used to smile when summoned, saying, "If I go for interrogation, this means they haven't arrested my son yet." Her son, Daryoush Payedpour, was later killed in 1988.
- The purpose of the 1,500 lashes was to force the witness to accept the identity to which her interrogator was trying to get her to admit, so that she would accept somebody else's charges; the sentence was suspended when a fellow prisoner attested to her true identity.

## **Witness 68: Ali Ebrahimzadeh**

D.O.B.: 1960

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Gholam Ebrahim Zadeh**

Date of arrest: 27th June 1981

Date of execution: February 1983 (Evin Prison)

Political affiliation: Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran  
(Rah-e Kargar)

My brother, Dr Gholam Ebrahim Zadeh, was born in the city of Kangavar in December 1943. He attended Pahlavi University in Shiraz in 1962. Gholam was arrested in 1967 for organizing students' protests. He served thirteen months in prison. After his release, he continued his education and stayed active in student movement. He was arrested again in 1969; this time he served seven to eight months in prison. After his release, he went back to Shiraz and graduated from university. He opened a free clinic for the poor in the city of Bandar Lengeh and in parallel continued his activities. In 1971 he was arrested for organizing the Red Star Group and at the end of 1972 was sentenced to eleven years in prison. He was in Evin, Ghasr and Ghezel Ghaleh prisons until the end of 1978, when he was freed because of the people's revolution. His freedom was celebrated by the 100,000 people who forced the prison doors open. After a short time, he started working in Shafa Yahyaeian Hospital in Tehran. It didn't take long for the government to start the suppression of leftist groups and especially Kurdish people. They started arresting people, and ex-prisoners were easy targets. At the end of 1979, Gholam got married to Azadeh Ebrahimi, who worked in the same hospital. Their daughter, Niloo-

far, was born in October 1981.

Gholam was one of the founders of Rah-e Kargar and a member of their central committee. Since he was a physician, he knew lots of people. He opened a number of clinics for poor people. He also organized hiking groups in Tehran and other cities, which attracted a lot of young people to sports. His popularity among people was very upsetting to the heads of the Islamic Republic, such as Ayatollah Montazeri, Ayatollah Taleghani, Lahooti, Behzad Nabavi, Rafsanjani, Anvari, Lajevardi and Asgar Oladi, who knew Gholam. They had to show respect for such a character and yet they envied him.

With the start of suppression in Kurdistan in July 1979, our house was attacked and we had to go on the road. My younger brother and sister were expelled from middle school and soon after, my brother was arrested. We had to go underground. My parents worked very hard in getting my younger brother out of jail and sent him to Tehran. In 1981, he was arrested again and was imprisoned until 1985. The arrests and suppression created a very scary environment. Every day many were arrested and executed.

On the 20th June 1981, Shahla Balakhan Poor (alias Talat Rahnama) and I were around the Tehran University. Soon after we said goodbye, the security forces arrested Shahla in front of the Palestine Committee building. She was executed the day after, along with Saeed Soltanpoor and Mohsen Fazel and some other prisoners without anyone knowing even her name. Between March and June 1983, many of the members of Rah-e Kargar were arrested. On the 27th June, the security forces attacked Gholam's house. But, Gholam and Ali Shokuhi had left to go to another member's house. The Pasdaran arrested Azadeh (Gholam's wife), his daughter Niloofar and our sister, Shokufeh, instead of Gholam. Gholam and Ali Shokuhi were soon arrested, too. Ali, after months of torture, was sentenced to death by Ayatollah Gilani, the head of the "justice" department, in February 1983 and was executed. Gholam made an attempt to run away from the Pasdaran but was shot and arrested. He was taken to Evin and was killed under torture.

Niloofer, his daughter, was released from prison after seven months of witnessing her mother being tortured. Niloofer was given to Azadeh's mother. Niloofer, who was only a child, had to witness her mother's tortures many times. Her mother was released from prison after the massacre of political prisoners in the summer of 1988.

My younger brother was imprisoned from 1980 to 1985 in Evin and Gohardasht Prisons.

My other brother's wife was also imprisoned from September 1983 until the winter of 1988 in Evin and Gohardasht Prisons.

Lahrasb Salvati was born in the city of Eligodarz and from early age got familiar with the story of Dr Azami. He got interested in politics from his teenage years and became a political activist. He was in Shah's prisons from 1973 to 1978 and was released at the time of the revolution. After the revolution, he went to university and studied until he was expelled like many others at the time of the "cultural revolution". He opposed the government from the early days and joined the Rah-e Kargar organisation. He was a member of the Eastern Tehran committee and was one of the editors of papers such as Nazm Novin, Kargar be Peesh and Elkadeh Valharieh (in Arabic), which were published in Tehran, Karaj and the south of Iran, and were very influential. Lahrasb could speak several international languages fluently and was a professor of Physics and Mathematics and could artfully make anyone interested in reading and learning. After years of underground political activism, he was arrested with a few of his comrades: Rahim Hossein Poor, Hossein Haj Mohsen and a few others. He was in solitary confinement until the summer of 1988, when he was executed along with Rahim, Hossein and Massod.

### ***W68 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The family went into hiding after a Khomeini fatwa in the early 1980s.
- The witness's sister was expelled from school because of her relation to dissidents.
- At one point, Gholam Ebrahimzadeh pushed a Revolutionary Guard, took his gun, ran and climbed over a wall – but fell and hurt himself. He was then taken for interrogation and tortured.
- Nasserian Ahmadi became a repent in 1982 in order to save himself; he was “not himself anymore” after this.

The witness supplied the information below on the request of the Commissioners:

Nasser Yarhamadi tortured Gholam. The witness believes that Yarhamadi's wife lives in England and Yarhamadi is a businessman in Tehran.

The source of this information is the witness's sister-in-law who told him that Yarhamadi interrogated her and the witness's sister, Shokufeh Ebrahimzadeah.

## **Witness 69: Siamak Kaikavoosi**

D.O.B.: 1952

Age at time of incident: 35

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Nahid Kaikavoosnejad**

D.O.B.: 1963

Occupation at time of arrest: Student

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

The victim was my sister. Her name was Nahid Kaikavoosnejad but we used to call her "Farideh" and I like to use this name for the rest of the statement.

After the regime change in Iran, Farideh became a sympathiser and soon a member of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) in Izeh, which is a town in Khuzestan Province.

By 1983 she had become a fully-pledged Mujahed and her activities, which were mostly clandestine, were noticed by the regime's secret services in Izeh. Farideh was warned by her friends and she decided to leave Izeh for Masjed Soleiman with our father in the spring of 1983.

Three months after her departure from Izeh, the Revolutionary Guard agents went to our house to arrest Farideh. When they realised that she had already gone, they arrested my mother and kept her in prison over night.

They interrogated her and managed to get all our relatives' addresses in Khuzestan, where they thought Farideh was hidden.

The following day, they left Izeh for Masjed Soleiman as their first port of call with my mother as their guide and also as a hostage, to

force Farideh to give herself up. They called at our cousin's house, where Farideh was staying, and through the interrogation of my cousin and her husband they found out that Farideh had gone to our uncle's house in Ahwaz.

After a day in Masjed Soleiman, they headed for Ahwaz and by the time they reached my uncle's house, Farideh had already gone to another cousin's house in Aghajari, which is about a couple of hours' drive from Ahwaz.

They finally arrested Farideh in Aghajari and took her to a prison in Izeh, where she was kept in solitary cell without any visitors for nearly six months before transferring her to Karoon Prison in Ahwaz.

For nearly one year she was confined to a solitary cell, without any visitors, and tortured before she was judged in a Middle Ages style court behind closed doors and without any defence representation or juries!

Farideh told the family that during the first year in Karoon Prison she was subjected to the most barbaric methods of torture and most of the time she was confined in a solitary cell.

This so-called court was held in 1985, which was presided over by a mullah called Hojatoleslam Ahmadi and the prosecutor was another mullah by the name of Hojatoleslam Movahed.

The life sentence was passed in 1985, but when Khomeini decided to kill all those prisoners who were still standing by their beliefs and principles, Farideh was also one of those innocent and unfortunate young people who met their sad endings in the bloody summer of 1988!

A few weeks later, the authorities informed my family of Farideh's execution and they were told where the mass grave was in the outskirts of Ahwaz, where all the families of those buried have gathered a couple of times a year for the past 24 years!

I have managed to get some of the names of those who were involved in the torture and interrogation of the prisoners while Farideh was there. These may not be their true names, but they were known by them.



Sanali Shafiei: Fajr prison governor.

Mohammad Hadi Yarahmad: Interrogator and torturer.

Haj Habib Rasti: Interrogator and torturer.

Haj Aziz: Interrogator and torturer.

Ebrahimi: Interrogator and torturer.

### *W69 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Farideh Kaikavoosnejad was due for release when she was executed. She had no lawyer in her trial.
- The information on the identities of interrogators comes from family members; three were arrested and imprisoned, so all were familiar with the prison personnel.
- When the witness's father heard of his daughter's death, he warned that he would not survive 40 days; indeed, he passed away on the 40th day.
- The witness submitted a letter to the Commission after his oral testimony, in which he harshly criticised the “detrimental policies and totalitarian attitude of those leaders of factions in the opposition who made martyrdom an attraction for unfortunate youngsters [including his sister Farideh and brother Siavosh] who became the robotic believers of such leaders”.

## **Witness 70: Amir Poorzeynel**

D.O.B.: 1961

Age at time of arrest: 20

Date of arrest: September 1981

Political affiliation: Organisation of Paykar For Emancipation of Working Class

Status of witness: Survivor

In Shahrivar 1360 [September 1981] when I was twenty years old I was arrested in Koneh Shahr, now Taseh Shahr, and I was transferred to the Sepah Pasdaran detention centre in Salmaz. I was tortured during the 40 days I was in detention. After 40 days, I was transferred to the prison in the city of Khoi and was detained there for two months. I was taken to court there and sentenced to four years in prison. After two months in prison in Khoi, I was transferred to the larger prison in Urumiyyeh. After my sentence was served, they kept me six extra months in the prison because I didn't have any collateral for my bail. At the end of 1365 [1986], with the collateral of a distant relative, I was released.

At the time of my arrest, five pasdars raided our house and turned it upside down to find books and anything else. They weren't able to find anything but they took me anyway. In response to my mother's repeated questions about where I was being taken, the pasdars just said that they had a few questions to ask me.

I was put in a Land Rover and blindfolded. I was taken to the detention centre in Salmaz. They put me in a damp and dark cell. The walls of the cell were approximately four metres and newly built. The walls were still wet. This cell was separated from the hall with an iron door. There was no view to the outside from the cell.

The pasdars charged me with writing slogans on the wall of the town and distributing flyers for the Paykar Organisation. They kicked me with their boots from my back all the way down my legs. Even though my eyes were bound shut they would punch me in my face with their fists. They threw me like a ball among themselves. During the entire 40 days that I was held in the Salmaz, I was under physical and psychological torture. I had no peace during the entire time.

Because I was under torture and questioning during the entire period, I don't have any information about the other inmates. I don't know how many prisoners were detained in that detention centre. Whenever I was under physical torture, I was under psychological torture because I could hear the screams and beatings of the other inmates. My torture started every day from my cell and continued until midnight in the torture room. Any time we were not being physically tortured, we would be psychologically tortured by the broadcasting over the loudspeakers of the sounds of women being tortured. After that, they would broadcast the readings from the Quran. Whenever I wasn't being physically tortured, all the other prisoners and I were subjected to this form of psychological torture.

They would ask me how many people were in my group. They wanted the names of the others in my group. Every day they would put a piece of paper in front of me and want me to write the name of someone from my group. I told them that I wasn't a member of any group and didn't know the names of any individuals in any group. They would not accept this answer and tortured me. Four nights in a row at midnight, they came and took me barefooted and blindfolded and made me stand on ice against a wall. They told me, "You have not cooperated at all with us and haven't given us any information. So therefore tonight we will execute you." After keeping me for hours standing on the ice, they told me that it wasn't my turn and I would wait for the next time.

During the entire 40 days, I had no contact with the outside world and absolutely no news about anything.

The name of my torturer was Manof and he was between 30 and 35 years old.

After being in the detention centre (torture chamber) for 40 days, they transferred me to the Khoi Temporary Prison. In Khoi Prison my situation was different. They took me to the General Unit.

This is the story of my so-called “court”. Some inmates and I were taken to the Khoi court, where we appeared before Judge Hojat Islam Emani. In the court there were two very young pasdars who guarded Hojat Islam Emani with Kalashnikovs and two 60-round magazines. These young pasdars stood between Hojat Islam Emani and us and aimed their Kalashnikovs towards us. During this three-minute court there was neither a defence lawyer nor prosecutor. It was show trial at which everything had previously been decided by the torturers and interrogators. Just the sentence that had been reached for the inmate was announced. There it became clear that I had been sentenced to four years.

#### In Urumiyyeh Prison

The capacity of Urumiyyeh Prison was 300 inmates but they filled it with 800 political prisoners. Even though we had been formally sentenced in court, we did not have any peace in the prison. During the day they would blindfold us and take us into yard. For hours we would be kept standing facing the wall. They would take away a few prisoners from the line. After that we had no news about those prisoners.

One day in Ramadan my torturer from Salmaz Detention Centre came to Urumiyyeh Prison and took me from Unit 12. Because I hadn't changed and corrected my behaviour, he tortured me the entire day. He told me that I didn't pray, didn't fast, etc. He kicked and beat me the entire day and kept me without either food or water. When took me back to my unit, the time period for going to the bathroom was finished. I hadn't been to the toilet the entire day but they refused to give me permission to use the toilet. I suffered until the morning and felt like I was going to explode.

This was the usual daily practice inflicted by the pasdars on the

prisoners. It seems like the pasdars did not relax without torturing us. Whenever the prison warden wanted, he would command the pasdars to attack the political prisoners. They would swarm into the unit and collectively beat us and turn our belongings upside down. They would take away anything they didn't like. They also would select a few people to be taken away for torture.

In prison I met a person named Victor Kherson Abad. He had been detained in the same cell in which I had been held in the Salmaz Detention Centre. Victor told me that the pasdars had wanted information about weapons. Because of these they had flogged him 99 times on the bottom of his feet, which caused his soles to break open. He was a member of Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority). I didn't know what had happened to him.

Another prisoner, by the name of Ezat, who had been a political prisoner during the Shah's regime, was killed in a suspicious automobile accident a short time after he was released from prison.

Another political prisoner I knew, by the name of Ghanbar Agheli, who had been jailed for several years in Tabriz Prison, became mentally unbalanced as a result of the inhumane torture inflicted upon him. He was released for this reason. Ghanbar Agheli tried several times to commit suicide in gardens around the city but the people in the area found him half-alive and saved him. Finally, he tied a heavy rock to his leg and drowned himself in Lake Urumiyyeh.

I am giving a statement about having been tortured because I was against the regime and I am also giving a statement about the execution of the following by the Islamic Republic:

1. Name: Gholam Jalily (pseudonym – Jafar)

Gender: Male

Name of mother: Ghysar

Name of father: Hassan Jalily

Age: 35

Place of birth: Kuhneh Shahr (now Tazeh Shahr)

Political affiliation: Organisation of Paykar For Emancipation of Working Class

Education: In final year of education at Tehran Polytechnic University

Date of execution: 1983

Place of execution: Evin Prison

2. Name: Shahpour Jalily

Gender: Male

Name of father: Jalal Jalily

Age: 20-25

Place of birth: Salmaz

Education: Diploma

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

Date of execution: 1983

Place of execution: Tabriz Prison

Place of burial: Tazeh Shahr

Judge: Hojatol Islam Seyed Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi

3. Name: Asghar

Gender: Male

Age: 30-35

Education: Last year at Tehran University

Profession: Student

Political affiliation: Sazman-e-Razmandegan [Organisation of Razmandgan (Militants) for the Freedom of the Working Class]

Date of execution: 1981

Place of execution: Evin Prison

4. Name: Rashid Hassani

Gender: Male

Name of father: Mullah Hassani – Imam Jomeh (Friday prayer leader)

Age: 30-35

Education: Last year of Medical School – Tehran

Profession: Student

Political affiliation: Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority)

Date of execution: 1981

Place of execution: Tabriz Prison

Judge: Hojatol Islam Seyed Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi

Three people who were the brothers of Rashid Hassani, who were supporters of the OIPFG (Minority), were also imprisoned but fortunately after a while were released. Their names are listed here:

Vahid Hassani – approximately 28-30 years old when imprisoned;

Mohammad Hassani – 21-23 years old;

Nuriddin Hassani – 18-20 years old.

5. Name: Yaqoub Badri

Gender: Male

Age: 18 -19

Education: Third year of high school

Profession: High school student

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Date of execution: 1982

Place of execution: Urumiyyeh Prison

Judge: Hojatol Islam Emani

Yaqoub Badri's brother, Nasser Badri, who was also a Mujahideen activist, probably was executed in 1988.

6. Name: Abdullah

Gender: Male

Age: 20-25

Education: Diploma

Profession: Unemployed

Political affiliation: People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO)

Date of execution: 1981

Place of execution: Khoi Prison

Judge: Hojatol Islam Emani

7. Name: Khayam

Gender: Male

Age: 40-50

Profession: Unemployed

Political affiliation: Bahá'í religious minority

Date of execution: 1983-1984  
Place of execution: Urumiyyeh Prison  
Judge: Hojatol Islam Emani

### ***W70 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The witness was not allowed to shower for the 40 days in which he was detained in the Sepah Pasdaran centre in Salmaz.
- The witness was to be released on condition that he could provide collateral as a security for good behaviour; he was unable to provide this and his sentence was subsequently extended by six months.
- The witness was repeatedly told by Revolutionary Guards that he would be executed; by the fourth night, he concluded that they were just trying to torment him.
- The witness is sure of the exact length of his detention because there was nothing else to do but count the days; no visits were allowed and there was no television.



## **Witness 71: Hedayatollah Soltanzadeh**

Occupation at time of arrest: Student of Puna University of India

Date of execution: 8th Febraury 1982 (Evin Prison)

Status of witness: Brother of victim

**Name of victim: Enayat Soltanzadeh**

D.O.B.: 1949,

Political affiliation: Organisation of Revolutionary Workers of Iran  
(Rah-e Kargar)

My brother Enayat Soltanzadeh, born in Tabriz on the 11th November 1949, son of Ebrahim Soltanzadeh and Safiyyeh Salimi, was a student of Puna University of India at the time of his arrest. Within a short while of his return to Iran, he was arrested on the 23rd December 1981 around 14.00-15.00, nearby Seyyed Khandan Bridge (in Tehran) and after being tortured for a month, he was shot dead on the 8th February 1982 in Evin Prison, along with other prisoners.

Enayat was politically active in Puna University between the Iranian students and with his close friends, Rafik Noshadian and some others; they were adherents of the newly established political organisation of Rah-e Kargar, which was an opposition organisation with a leftist tendency.

According to eyewitnesses who were able see to him in prison, his legs were broken under the torture.

Even after his execution, Evin officials had received money and blanket from my mother, pretending that he was still alive.

It was only a few days after that event that we received a call from the Evin Prison, announcing unambiguously, "We have executed him and if you like, you can come and get his will".

We have his will in the Persian language, written at 16.00 of the 8th February 1982, indicating that “I am dying with pride and proud of being a sympathising to the Rah-e Kargar Organisation”, signed with his own name.

### ***W71 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The victim was arrested after he had gone to meet a friend; 40 days elapsed before his execution, of which the family was informed over the phone.

## **Witness 72: Galavezh Heidari**

D.O.B.: 1954

Age at time of incident: 25

Status of witness: Survivor and wife of the victim (her father was also executed)

Political affiliation: Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan (Komolah)

**Names of victims: Habibollah Cheraghi** (husband) and **Hadj Abdol-Rahman Heidari** (father)

The bruises on my body, which had been inflicted by the thugs of the former regime, had not quite healed yet when the Islamic Republic imposed an unwanted and unjust war on the people of Kurdistan. The war started in Paveh in 1979. Chamran, the commander of the invading force, ordered a brutal suppression of all who opposed the regime.

We were peacefully sitting at home one day, when we were suddenly shocked and frightened to find our house surrounded and under attack by live ammunition. My six-month-old daughter sleeping in her cradle was clearly endangered by the shooting. If anyone poked their head out of the basement, he or she could have been hit by the bullets. That perilous situation was finally interrupted when my husband and two of his friends came out of the house to announce that they had not committed anything against the law, but they were handcuffed, arrested and taken away. I was finally able to embrace my innocent child.

Four days later, my husband, Habibollah Cheraghi, a member of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI), along with eight others, was condemned to death in Khalkhali's show trials.

Sadegh Khalkhali, the Butcher of Kurdistan, was sent to the region following Khomeini's fatwa regarding an invasion of Kurdistan. A few days later, I visited Khalkhali and asked him why he had issued the execution order for my husband. He, who imagined himself as a god-figure, replied: "If your husband is innocent, he will go to heaven and if he is guilty, then he has received his just punishment." I had gone to see Khalkhali with another relative whose son had already been executed, and her other son was still in prison. She kissed Khalkhali's shoulder and said: "You killed one of my sons, please forgive my other son." The next day her son was released. At that time, there were no courts, no legal process, no need for witnesses or evidence; Khalkhali alone made decisions about young Kurds' life and death.

It was during those days that a death sentence was also issued for my father in absentia. My father, Hadj Abdol-Rahman Heidari, was killed in April of 1980. All his property was confiscated and as a family we were forced to leave our hometown of Paveh to resettle in Kermanshah. Shortly after, in December 1980, my mother suffered a stroke at the age of 40 and passed away. One of my sisters, who was a teacher, and my other sister, a university student, were expelled from their respective positions. My older brother, Mansour Heidari, was martyred as a Komolah pishmargheh [fighter]. In April 1983, my sister Shahala was arrested and I myself was arrested in June 1983. I was a member of the Komolah Organisation. My other brothers, Forough and Nasser Heidari, also lost their lives in the frontlines as Komolah pishmargehs, respectively in September 1983 and June 1984. Losing so many beloved family members is not some sort of dark fairy-tale: it is a painful reality. I have repeated these sentences so often, and I have heard their echo in my mind day and night that I often think of them as a distant and sometimes a fictional historical event. Maybe, I have not yet come to terms with losing every member of my family.

And yet, in spite of these losses, the Islamic Republic was not satisfied and demanded more: I was arrested and after a one-hour interrogation, the interrogator passed me on to a colleague and told

him: “Hadji, take this one away, but take care not to kill her.” In another room, they laid me down on a bed and put a blindfold on my eyes, but I knew how many of them were present. They spread a few blankets on me and put a pillow under my chin. A Revolutionary Guard was sitting on my head. They lashed the soles of my feet with a wire. I could not breathe; I was gasping for air. They were lashing me and demanding a confession from me, but I kept silent. I had resolved to resist them.

Never mind the wire, had they broken every bone in my body. I would not have confessed, since they were the enemies of me, my family and my whole motherland. Almost completely out of breath, I resolutely stood my ground and did not confess. I was at the point of death and they were still lashing me with the wire. I violently shook my head and threw the Revolutionary Guard away and took a breath. Another Revolutionary Guard kicked my head with his boot and I blacked out. When I came to, I was in a dark room and had a concussion. After I regained my consciousness a bit more, I was taken to that previous room and tortured again. I lost count, but maybe I was lashed 400 times. I had a splitting headache; my feet were extremely swollen and I was writhing in pain. I could not keep my head steady. I could not even swallow water and was constantly throwing up. I was thrown on the ground in the middle of the hallway.

Two days later, I was taken to the prison in Sanandaj. When they were taking me to my cell, I could not walk, so they dragged me on the floor to a cell with other prisoners. The Revolutionary Guard warned them that they were not allowed to talk to me, but as soon he locked the door behind me, I was surrounded by other cellmates, who asked what my charge was. I told them that I was a Komolah member. They helped me to my feet and gave me a bath. They dressed me and rubbed ointment on and bandaged the soles of my feet. I was almost revived and noticed that they were all members of different political organisations. We all had different political beliefs and ideologies but had a common enemy so we helped each other and thought of ourselves as comrades and companions. My

agonising new life started there. They usually knocked at our jail cells at three in the morning to take one of us away to be submitted to torture. We would wait in line for one inmate's torture to finish so ours would start.

Those who have spent time in a political prison know that sometimes it is more unbearable to listen to an inmate, a comrade, scream in agony from torture than going through the physical pain of torture oneself. I have witnessed and experienced this personally many times. After a while, I was taken to Kermanshah and thrown in the solitary confinement at Dizel Abad Prison. I could overhear in the room next to mine, an argument between a few people and the Revolutionary Guards and the "Internationale" anthem whistled in defiance. As much and as often as the Revolutionary Guards warned the inmates to stop that and stay quiet, the inmates remained defiant and kept on whistling. I could not go to sleep that night; I was thinking of my three children, who were being cared for by relatives. I was thinking of my beloved children when I heard the other cell's door open and the "Internationale"-singing inmates being taken away. The next day I was taken to the public section. I heard from the cellmates that the night before three prisoners, two Paykar members and one Mujahed, had been executed, most probably the people in the room next to mine who were taken away.

Women whose husbands had been executed were allowed to keep their children with them. The lower level of the bunk beds was allocated to the women with younger children and the upper level to the mothers with older children. My four-year-old daughter was with me in prison and the two of us slept on the top part, but the space was cramped and had no rail-guards. One night, she fell down from the bed and I woke up from the sound of her head hitting the floor. I took her unconscious body into my arms and screamed loudly. Everyone woke up. My cellmates started banging on the door to get the Revolutionary Guards' attention to open the doors and take my child to hospital, but the guards did not open the door and ignored the unconscious child.

A few minutes later, my daughter regained consciousness: she was pale and quiet. The next day, I sent her out and had her examined by a doctor, who diagnosed her with severe concussion. She was taken care of by our relatives for a long time, before she showed signs of improvement. Nourian, the warden, was a cruel and violent man. His encounter with my daughter was inhumane. When I protested, he replied that I was a political prisoner and so was my daughter. I was overcome with righteous anger and contempt: So I am a political prisoner and therefore my four-year-old daughter is also a prisoner and a detainee? Twenty years have passed since I was released from prison, but my bitter and lethal memories of that time still torture me. I cry and long to scream for justice. I resisted and I still do, but how will the deaths of my father, husband, brothers, and mother be avenged? I will survive to witness the day that these contemporary executioners will pay for their unforgivable bestiality. My heart tells me that that day will soon arrive.

### ***W72 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- During the house raid, the baby girl's cradle was in the middle of the garden; guards shot at whoever tried to save the child. Finally, the witness's husband emerged to protect the child, saying that he was innocent, and was then arrested.
- The family was not informed of Habibollah Cheraghi's execution for four days.
- When the witness was being tortured, she turned around and the guard fell off her; he then proceeded to beat her.
- The witness was flogged on her back.
- After torture, the witness was taken to a doctor; she told him that she had fallen down the stairs because the guard was present at the appointment. The doctor administered the witness a tranquiliser. She was diagnosed with epilepsy but given no medication.

- During the trial, the witness had no lawyer and was not given a written indictment. She was not asked any questions at any point in proceedings.
- After the child was given medical attention, she was not returned to the ward although she wanted to come back to her mother; the child was then imprisoned again after repenters had found a letter hidden in her shoe by the witness's sister.
- When the doctor wrote the prescription for the daughter, the Revolutionary Guard refused to give her the medicine present in the cabinet, although the doctor begged that the medicine be administered.
- The witness was taken for torture at 03.00.
- During a transfer to Kermanshah, the witness saw that the leg of another prisoner had been burnt with an iron and had deep cuts that were infected.
- The witness's two brothers were not engaged in armed combat at the time of their deaths.
- The Revolutionary Guards did not allow for the body of the witness's brother, Farouq, to be buried; sometimes, they used to leave the body in a vehicle and throw rocks or tomatoes at it.
- The body of the witness's husband was left in front of the sewage of the mortuary, covered in rocks.



## **Witness 73: Mehdi Dadash Zadeh Tashkand**

D.O.B.: 1980

Age at time of incident: 3

Status of witness: Brother of the victim

**Name of victim: Masoud Dadash Zadeh Tashkand**

D.O.B.: 1962

Date of execution: 12th September 1982

Education: Diploma in Economics

Occupation at time of arrest: Did not reach this step

Biography: In September 1979 as a People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO) proponent, he became a member of the organisation and like many other enthusiastic youths had an active role in the 1979 Revolution. In the beginning of the revolution he became a member of the students' association of the MKO and continued his activities in the cultural branch of the MKO. This led to his active participation in the distribution of Mujahid, the official publication of the MKO.

When Khomeini made his intentions to crack down on opposition and all the political parties public, and started the arrests and oppression and crack down on the critics, my brother Masoud was arrested and imprisoned in the horrific prisons of Khomeini. Masoud was arrested in July of 1980. Until September of the same year we did not know what had happened to Masoud. At that time, with the follow-up of one of our neighbours, Mr Rayhani, who knew some people in Komiteh (revolutionary committees), we found out what had happened to my brother. He was wounded in the demonstrations of the 20th June 1980 and was taken to an MKO team home, in Yousef Abad (Tehran). But he was identified in that house and

was arrested along with some other people.

Masoud was transferred to the open area of the prison for execution, without any court hearings and without anybody being informed. But they changed their mind and returned him to Section 6 of Evin Prison.

After my family was informed about Masoud's condition, they went to Evin Prison and inquired about visits and about Masoud's situation. They were faced with ugly treatment by the prison guards, up to the point that my mother was insulted and assaulted in front of my dad. After a few times, pleading and crying to see their son, in the winter of 1980, the prison guards took my parents to a room to meet my brother. In the ten minutes that they saw him then, the prison guards asked them to tell my brother to repent. In spite of that, visits continued until in the summer of 1982. Lajevardi, the executioner of the Islamic regime, met with my parents and told them, "Since your son has not committed an important crime, if you ask him to repent and work with us, we will release him sooner." (He meant for my brother to give away his friends, etc.). Of course my brother never gave away others until on the 12th May 1983, after a month of not having any visits, he was executed. A week before that, they told my mother that he would be released. But instead of releasing him, they gave my mother just a paper. I still have that piece of paper; I will send that to you.

Masoud was executed just for being a proponent of the MKO. He did not take part in any militant operations, had no organisational ranks and at the time of arrest was only eighteen years old. He was not tried in any court. Only because of personal will of Lajevardi, he was executed at twenty years old and was silenced forever. They did not even give his body to us. They just showed us the graveyard plot #94 as his gravesite. We were not even allowed to mourn for his loss. A few times his tombstone was broken by the pasdars. I am so distraught for my mother. She died out of sorrow: she got sick and died!

I, Mehdi Dadash Zadeh Tashkand, hereby request and plead with you to arrange for me to attend the court and present what I know

as a witness to the horrible crime and atrocity I have witnessed. I especially want to be a witness to the crime committed against my mother and my brother.

With many thanks.

### ***W73 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The family had no news of the victim's arrest or whereabouts for six months.
- The victim's mother was pressured to urge him to collaborate with prison authorities in exchange for his release; he refused.
- After the victim was executed, the guards demanded bullet money.

## **Witness 74: Jamileh Bahrami (Pantea)**

D.O.B.: 1959

Age at time of arrest: 22

Status of witness: Survivor

I was arrested in my office in December 1981. I was transferred to the Vozara Komiteh because I was in possession of several leftist publications. After a short time, I was transferred to Evin Prison. That was the time when there was a lot of resistance in Iran and demonstrations in the streets. On account of this, there was no room in Evin so we were transferred to apartments surrounding Evin Prison. These apartments were full of prisoners. Food was limited and there was hot water for showers only a few hours per week. This was a very difficult period. I remember very well the legs of the prisoners who had been tortured and were taken at night for execution. In particular, they took Mujahideen prisoners for execution but I don't remember any of their names.

After several months, all the prisoners in the apartments were transferred to Units 240 and 246 in Evin Prison. I was transferred along with other prisoners to Room 6 in Unit 246 in Upper Evin. This was the only leftist room in this unit. I hadn't admitted to being a student but after research, they learned I was a student. I was therefore tortured on the soles of my feet and also had weights attached to my feet. This was a very difficult period of my life. Twice a week, Wednesday and Friday, we witnessed the taking of our friends for execution. At night we would hear the sounds of firing squads and then the sounds of the final shots. 148, 149 and 150... We counted and thought that those were our friends who had been in the unit only a few minutes earlier. That was the darkest period

of my life. In the beginning when the regime still published the names of the executed in the newspaper, we would count the final shots. The next day we would look for the names in the newspapers that they would bring to the unit. Later, they stopped publishing the names in the newspaper and they moved the site of execution from behind the unit to another location.

Unfortunately, I witnessed the taking away for execution of many prisoners but I don't remember all their names. But, I can tell you the names of a few:

Jila Rajaei didn't know she was being taken for execution when they took her from the unit. We switched our jackets. She was a supporter of Paykar and a very ordinary supporter. She was in the beginning of the second decade of her life and was from Mosuleh in the north of Iran.

Fahimeh Taghadossi was another person I knew in the unit. She was a member of the Communist Party of Iran. In the prison they realised that she was one of the activists who was responsible for me. We only engaged in political activities and were not in agreement with armed struggle. My involvement in the group was not exposed yet. Fahimeh knew but she could have given that information to save herself. But she kept this information to herself and was instead taken for execution.

I witnessed the taking of many leftists and Mujahideen from our unit for execution.

At the end of 1981 I was taken for trial. My "court" didn't last more than a few minutes. None of us taken to court in the 1980s were provided defence lawyers. Our judge was a mullah. My indictment was read to me and I denied all the charges. I was charged with providing medical, financial and offices supplies to Kurdistan. I had travelled to Kurdistan twice while I was studying. I was also charged with being a supporter of the Organisation of Paykar For Emancipation of Working Class

During the time I did not have association with Paykar but I did work with Sahand. Fortunately, they didn't realise that connection during that period. Both of these organisations engaged in political

work.

At any rate, I was given a two-year sentence with flogging. After they announced my sentence, they wanted me to appear on TV in an interview. Because I refused to participate in the TV interview, they sentenced me to two more years in prison. Finally, after not giving the interview, I was released from prison after four years in 1985. After being released, I was again interrogated. I had to report once a month and explain my life and my relationships with my friends. This situation continued until 1987.

### ***W74 Summary of Oral Testimony***

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- Televised interviews were produced for internal use, to be broadcast to the prisoners. Participants were expected to condemn all political groups; many agreed because they had only been arrested for carrying newspapers, rather than on political charges.

## **Witness 75: Zargham Assadi**

Status of witness: Brother of the victim (his uncle was also executed)

**Name of victim: Ghazanfar Assadi**

D.O.B.: 1955 Occupation at time of arrest: High school teacher

Level of education: Bachelor's degree Date of arrest: Summer 1981

My brother, Ghazanfar, was arrested in the neighbourhood of our residence in the beginning of summer 1981. He was imprisoned for one month without any visitation rights.

During my brother's one-month imprisonment, the Revolutionary Guards forcefully entered our house and took many books and pictures with them. They did not concern themselves about damaging walls and the floor of our house. On one of those days that they came to our house, the state radio and television announced the news of the identification of a team house with arms and weapons for fighting in the Kurdistan war in addition to the arrest of one person. After one month of imprisonment, my father was given the right to visit my brother and the day after this visit, my brother was executed and his body was given back to us. They did not give us any information about his trial or his death sentence. On the day of his visit with our father, he had been depressed and crying the whole time. He was executed at the same time as our uncle Mas-soud Assadi and their bodies were given to us in Shahrreza's (Reza City) morgue and we were asked to pay for the price of the bullets used to shoot and kill them.

There were a lot of people standing outside of the morgue. Upon receiving the bodies we were given the permission to bury our

dead in our family cemetery. The appropriate ceremony and rituals were performed without any problems. However, the burial permission was given in order for the regime to avoid engaging in an armed fight with the local people and the fact that local people of Samiram belonged to local tribes made it a more difficult task for the regime. The government papers announced news of the arrest and execution of two mofsed-e fel arz [corrupt-on-Earth] in Samiram. In the newspapers my brother, Ghazanfar, was named as one of the leading members of the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas (Minority) and a participant in a war against the government and Islam; my uncle was named as one of the leading members of the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (MKO). It was the Islamic Republic of Iran's government and the Revolutionary Guards and the Revolutionary Court of the city of Samiram that committed these crimes. I do not know the names of the specific people involved.

**Name of victim: Massoud Assadi**

D.O.B.: 1953 Occupation at time of arrest: Engineer

My uncle was given a public trial to denounce him. The trial was held in a mosque in Samiram for the public to see the hatred directed towards him. However, Massoud had managed to put the regime on trial instead and the Revolutionary Guards were not able to accomplish their mission. Massoud's imprisonment was without visitation rights and he was executed on the same day as my brother Ghazanfar during summer 1981. Their execution place was in the canyons of Samiram Falls. My fifteen-year-old cousin with a heart problem screamed the word "Kaka" ["brother"] upon seeing the bodies and died right away. On that day, three members of my family were buried.

Our family was given permission for burial and the customary rituals but the whole city was in the state of martial law and there were guards everywhere.

The Revolutionary Guards and the court are directly responsible for the death of my brother and my uncle. My uncle was convicted for being a high-level member of the MKO, who had tried to influ-



ence people with his ideology. (He was no longer a member of the MKO.)

My brother-in-law was pressured about being married to a mofsed-e fel arz [corrupt-on-Earth] and my sister was forced to get a divorce from him. My sister was constantly under physical and emotional stress and after a while the stress caused her to die.

I myself lived a secret underground life for two years when I was 18 and 19 years old and ended up leaving the country at age 21 and have not been able to live a normal life ever since.

### *W75 Summary of Oral Testimony*

The witness confirmed the veracity of the written statement.

- The house raid for the arrest of Ghazanfar Assadi was conducted on the pretence that the building was a “team house”; security forces confiscated books but no arms. He was later held in Kamal Ismail (Isfahan).

- The victim’s mother suffered from depression as a result of his maltreatment.

- “Even if you believe life is beautiful, you cannot enjoy it.”

It is impossible for the witness to ever be at peace, given that nobody has taken responsibility for his dark memories. The witness suffers from insomnia and nightmares, in which he sees his brother about to be executed, his mother is being beaten up and he himself is being tortured (as he indeed was, as a minor). The witness goes to psychotherapy once a week and cannot work, which the psychotherapist attributes to trauma.

- The witness’s uncle, Massoud Assadi, was executed by firing squad.



**Iran Tribunal  
Truth Commission**

Additional Submission  
On the Pertrators

from mr Babak Emad  
(Exhibit C)



## **Members of Supreme Judicial Council between 1981 and 1989.**

- 1- Head of the Judiciary Committee (Supreme Court), Abdul-Karim Mousavi-Ardebili.
- 2- Attorney General, Mohammad Mehdi Abbani Amleshi, deceased.
- 3- Three clerical judges appointed by the Supreme Court judges: Mohammad Moamen, Abdollah Javadi Ameli, and Morteza Moqtadaii.

Ali Qoddousi, Rabbani Amlashi, and Javadi Ameli were the first three clerics appointed as judges in the Supreme Judicial Council by the supreme court judges. Mohammad Moamen and Morteza Moqtadaii were taking the seat of Qoddoussi, who was killed in 1981. Rabbani Amleshi first was appointed as Attorney General and then become a member of the Supreme Judicial Council. Moamen and Javadi Ameli were replaced by Abolfazl Mir Mohammadi and Mohammad Mousavi Bojnourdi in 1982.

On January 9, 1982 (Day 19, 1361) Yousef Sanei resigned from his position as a member of Guardian Council and became Attorney General, a position that formerly had been held by Javadi Rabbani Amleshi. On July 7, 1985 (Tir 16, 1364), he was replaced by Seyyed Mohammad Mousavi Khoeihiha. Sanei and Mousavi Khoeihiha found their way into the Supreme Judicial Council

through their experience as Attorney General. Morteza Moqtadaii was the spokesman of the Supreme Judicial Council.

### **The Islamic Revolutionary Court, Central Islamic Revolutionary Court (in Tehran)**

1- Ali Qoddoussi was the General Revolutionary Prosecutor who was appointed to this position when Hadavi resigned in the summer of 1979. After he was killed in July 1981, Seyyed Hussein Mousavi Tabrizi took his position.

After Mousavi Tabrizi was removed from his position in 1985, the position of Revolutionary Prosecutor was abolished and in its place, a prosecutor was appointed to each province's Revolutionary Court, so each provincial capital has its own Revolutionary Prosecutor.

2- Seyyed Assadollah Lajevardi was the head of the Tehran Revolutionary Court between 1980 and 1984. He was replaced by Ali Razini in 1984. In the spring of 1986, that position was given to Morteza Eshraghi, who remained there until July 1989, when Seyyed Ebrahim Raissi, who has been the advisor to Razini and Eshraghi, was appointed to this position.

3- Mohammad Mehdi Gilani was the Revolutionary Court's chief sharia judge between 1981 and 1984. His deputy, Hussein Ali Nayyeri, was appointed to hold that position between 1984 and 1989. Nayyeri is presently the Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mohammad Mehdi Gilani, Hussein Ali Nayyeri, Ali Mobasheri, Abolqassem Ramandi, Gholamhussein Rahbarpoor, Gholamhus-

sein Mohseni Aqehi, Ali Razini, and Ali Younessi were all famous judges of the Revolutionary Court. Mobasherhi is now the President of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts in Tehran.

### **The Army's Revolutionary Court/Armed Forces Judiciary Organization.**

Mohammad Mehdi Rayshahri was a member of the Army's Revolutionary Court between 1979 and 1983, where he served as Chief Justice. Ali Younessi, with the pseudonym Edrissi, was his deputy. During this period, Lotfollah Atabaki was the prosecutor.

The Armed Forces' Judiciary Organization was established in early 1986. This organization was formed when the Army's Judiciary Organization, the Army's Revolutionary Court, and the Revolutionary Guard's General Revolutionary Courts merged. Ali Razini was appointed as the organization's head.

The structure of the government's judiciary after the amendment to the constitution, 1989-1999:

After ratification of the amendment to the constitution by the Assembly of Experts in 1989 and the abolition of the Supreme Judicial Council, a Judiciary branch of government was established. Abdul Karim Mousavi Ardebili, the head of Supreme Judicial Council and Iran's Supreme Court, resigned. Mohammad Yazdi, who had lost the Parliamentary election in 1988 and was a member of the Guardian Council, was appointed by Khamenehi as head of the Judiciary.

**The judiciary system's structural hierarchy was as follows:**

- 1- Mohammad Yazdi, head of the Judiciary
- 2- Mohammad Mohammadi Rayshahri, Attorney General. After he resigned from his position, Abolfazl Mousavi Tabrizi (deceased) took his place. Prior to this position Mousavi had been head of the administrative justice tribunal.
- 3- Seyyed Ebrahim Raissi, the Islamic Revolutionary Prosecutor of Tehran for political groups. Later on, he was appointed as the head of the General Inspectorate, after serving as Assistant Prosecutor and Prosecutor of the Karaj Court. Finally in the latest changes which took place in the Judiciary, he became its deputy head.

### **The Heads of Evin prison:**

Following the murder of Mohammad Kochoui in June 29, 1981, Abolfazl Haj Heidari, (pseudonym: Hassani), one of the top figures in Moatalefe Party, took over that post as head of the Revolutionary Tribunal prisons (a position previously held by Kouchoui). One year later, in 1982, he was replaced by Haji Mohammad Johari Fard (pseudonym: Mahdavi.) Shortly before the removal of Lajevardi, Mohammad Amani, his deputy, was appointed as the head of Evin Prison.

Foroutan became the head of Evin prison between 1984 and 1985. He claimed to be a student studying abroad. Akbar Kabiri Arani (pseudonym: Fakour), who was previously the interrogator in the Seventh Branch, took that position between 1985 and 1986. In 1987, Meysam was appointed as head of Evin Prison but due to his managerial inability he was replaced by Seyyed Hussein Mortazavi, who had been the head of the Gohardasht prison prior to this new appointment. Mortazavi stayed in this post until 1988, the peak of the mass executions of the prisoners, and then left Evin. In the fall of 1988, Foroutan once again became the head of Evin



and Gohardasht prisons. However his term did not last long and he was soon replaced by Mousa Vaezi (pseudonym: Zamani), an officer from the Ministry of Intelligence. When Lajevardi became the head of all the prisons, "Pishva", the former supervisor of interrogations in Branch 1, was appointed by him as head of Evin prison.

During all these years, Hussein Husseinzadeh, brother-in-law of Kouchouii, held the position of administrative manager of Evin prison. His pseudonym was Mr. Non-guilty (Agh Bigonah) in the prisons during the Shah's reign.

Morteza Salehi (pseudonym: Sobhi) was the head of Gohardasht prison between 1982 and 1984, and Mohammadi was his deputy; he had previously been an assistant working in a pastry shop. After Lajevardi's removal in 1983, Saadat took his place and then in 1985 Mortasavi took it. He left Gohardasht prison in 1987 after he was appointed to head Evin prison, and for a while this office was under Davoud Laahgari and Naserian. After the period of mass executions, Foroutan was the head of both Gohardasht, and Evin prisons for a short time. From 1984 on, Davoud Lashgari held the position on and off as well as being in charge of security in that prison.

Ghezelhesar was run by its governor, Haj Davoud Rahmani. His deputy was Haj Ahmad. Ghezelhesar's First Unit was under Mohammad Khamoushi, who was working directly under Haj Davoud Rahmani. After Haj Davoud Rahmani's removal from Ghezelhesar (when he was relocated to the "Freedom Section" of Evin in 1984), Meysam became its head and stayed in that post until its dismantling in 1986. Ansari was his deputy and chief of Unit One at the same time.

From 1981 to 1984, all the prisons were managed under the Prisons' Supervisory Council. The chief supervisor was Abolghassem Sarhadizadeh. During this time, the political prisoners were under

the jurisdiction of the Office of Revolutionary Prosecutor, and the Prisons' Supervisory Council did not have much authority over them. In 1984, Majid Ansari, as representative of Supreme Judicial Council, visited the prisons and, through reorganizing the Prisons' Supervisory Council and turning it into the Prisons' Organization, and by taking some security measures and advising provisional arrangements for the prison and prisoners, he was appointed as the head of the new Prisons Organization in 1985. He stayed in that position until the third parliament, when he resigned from to register as a representative candidate. Esmail Shustari, a representative who had lost his seat in the parliament, replaced him a few months later. After the parliamentary election, Mohammad Yazdi was appointed as a head of the judiciary in 1989, during Rafsanjani's presidency, and Shustari was appointed as Minister of Justice by him and Asadollah Lajevardi became the head of the Prisons Organization. Lajevardi was assassinated by members of the MKO in 1998.

### **The officials of the Ministry of Intelligence and high ranking security officers**

Rayshahri, Minister of Intelligence, 1984-1989

Prior to this position, he was the Chief Justice of the Military Court and Sharia judge in Branch 1 of the Military Court. Rayshahri is presently the representative of the Supreme Leader to the hajj in Mecca.

Fallahian, Tehran representative in the office of Islamic Revolutionary Prosecutor since 1981, deputy in Tehran's committee, and deputy to the Minister of Intelligence, and finally the Minister of Information between 1989 and 1997.

Asghar Hejazi, advisor to the Minister of Intelligence, the Office

of Foreign Affairs between 1984 and 1989, when he was in charge of security intelligence in the office of the Valiye Faqih, Khamenei. Gholamhussein Golpayegani, one of the operators in the Military Revolutionary Court, an advisor to the Ministry of Security Intelligence, and Khamenei's Chief of Staff from 1989 to the present. Ruhollah Husseinian, Sharia judge, representative of the Attorney General in the Ministry of Information during the eighties.

Hussein Shariatmadari, interrogator for the Ministry of Information, director of the cultural unit of Ghezel-Hessar prison between 1984 and 1987, he also participated in interrogations and torture sessions of political prisoners. At present, he is editor in chief of Keyhan, a daily newspaper.

Ali Rabii, Interrogator, chief director of the ministry of information in West Azerbaijan, interrogator and torturer in Evin prison during the eighties.

Mohsen Armin, interrogator and torturer in Ward 209 in Evin prison during the eighties.

Said Hajjarian, officer in charge in the office of prime minister, information unit.

Mohsen Mirdamadi, in charge of information and security in Sepah Pasdaran.

Fereidon Verdinejad, in charge of information and security of Sepah Pasdaran during the 80s. He was directly involved in arrests and torturing of the political prisoners.

Khosrow Tehrani, in charge of security and information in the Office of Prime Minister.

Mohammad Mehr Aiin, interrogator, torturer in Branch 7, Evin

prison.

Ahmad Ghadirian, Lajevardi's executive deputy.

**The military officials who were directly  
involved in suppression**

Mohsen Rezai  
Ali Shamkhani  
Yahya Rahim Safavi  
Mohsen Rafiq Doust  
Morteza Rezai  
Mohammad Bagher Zolqadr

**Political figureheads**

Seyyed Ali Khamenei  
Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani  
Mir Hussein Mousavi  
Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri  
Ali Akbar Mohtashami  
Ali Valayati  
Behzad Navbavi  
Mohammad Yazdi  
Ahmad Jennati  
Mahdi Karoubi  
Abdollah Nouri

**Members of "Death Commission" in 1988**

**The board of execution in Gohardasht:**

1- Hossein Ali Nayyeri

2- Morteza Eshraghi, Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Tehran and representative of the Ministry of Justice. He is currently the head of a branch of the Iranian Supreme Court.

3- Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi, deputy minister of the Ministry of Intelligence. Pour-Mohammadi was later President Ahmadinejad's Minister of the Interior and is presently the Supreme Leader's National Security Advisor.

4- Seyyed Ebrahim Raiisi as security advisor to the Revolutionary Prosecutor of Tehran, regarding the grouplets, and Morteza Eshraghi were always present in the board.

**In addition:**

5- Esmail Shushtari, the head of the Prisons' Organizations, later the Minister of Justice under President Rafsanjani.

6- Mohammad Moghissei (pseudonym: Nasserian), governor of Gohardasht Prison and formerly the deputy governor of Ghezel-hesar Prison (1981-85). Moghissei is presently a senior official in the Iranian judiciary.

7- Taghi Adeli (pseudonym: Davoud Lashkari), head of security in Gohardasht (deputy head of the disciplinary section since 1986 and intermittently head of the prison), where he held an administrative position.

8- Hamid Nouri, (pseudonym: Abbassi) assistant to the prosecutor in prison, always accompanying them on the board. It had been said that Ali Mobasheri and Abolqassem Ramandi, Sh-aria judges in Evin prison, participated in some these courts.

Nasserian, Davoud Lashgari, and Hamid Abbassi were mostly appeared as complainants or witnesses. Their function was to pursue the Board of Execution to issue an execution order against the pris-

oner in question. Those who have the right to vote in this board and directly express their opinion were those who were appointed to this board by Khomaini's order. They were Nayyeri, Eshraghi and the Ministry of Intelligence's representative.

**In Karaj's court**, Mehdi Naderifard (deceased), and Fateh, as the prosecutor, and also in charge of intelligence and security, joined the board of execution and would help Nayyeri, the Sharia judge, and the rest of the time they just worked to make more trouble.

**In Evin prison**, Seyyed Hussein Mortazavi, Mojtaba Halvaei, Hussein Husseinzadeh, Hadad and Seyyed Majid Ziai would take the place of Nasserian and Lashkari, but Nasserian, knowing many of the prisoners in Evin prison would participate in some of the court sessions in Evin too.

**In Gohardasht prison**, Nasserian as a supervisor and assistant to the prosecutor and Lashkari as in charge of security and provisional affairs of prison would attend courts and supervise the transportation of prisoners in and out of prison.

In Evin, Mortazavi and Husseinzadeh appeared as head of the prison and the former as the governor. Mojtaba Halvaei Asghar, as chief of security and intelligence, would go after shuttling the prisoners from their unit in prison to the court.

Haddad and Seyyed Majid Ziai would also participate in the courts from their own standpoint of being the assistant to the prosecutor and those who had access to records and files of the prisoners.

Mousa Vaezi (pseudonym: Zamani), said to have been a university student from Tehran Polytech, would appear in court as an officer of Evin prison's intelligence and was very active in courts. He was in charge of most matters.

Majid Molla (pseudonym Qoddussi) would follow the execution of judgements. He has an actual active role in the execution of the prisoners.

### **Additional information**

Mullah Ghateelzadeh is currently an executive official in the Supreme Court of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Seyyed Abbas Abtahi was worked in Evin's Task Force and as Lajevardi's bodyguard.

Brigadier General Ahmad Zolghader was the commander of the Pasdaran Corp ground forces and Basic Operations in 1981 and is now the deputy commander of the Mohammad Rasolullah Pasdaran Corp in Tehran.

Mohammad Ali Besharati rose to become an MP, the Deputy Foreign Minister and Minister of the Interior.

