



amnesty international news release

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
1 Easton Street London WC1X 8DJ
United Kingdom

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NEW AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MOVE ON EXECUTIONS IN IRAN

Amnesty International today (Monday 30 January) appealed to the international community to bring pressure on Iran to end the wave of political executions there.

The worldwide human rights organization's call for a halt to the killings came in a statement submitted for the 45th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva today.

Amnesty International says it now has the names of over 1,000 political prisoners reported shot dead or hanged throughout Iran as the country moved towards the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Islamic Republic.

The wave of executions began last August and has been the biggest in Iran since thousands of political prisoners were put to death in the early 1980s. Most of those executed have been members or supporters of Iranian opposition groups. Some were prisoners who had already completed prison sentences, some were former prisoners who had been re-arrested.

Amnesty International also informed the UN commission that while the latest wave of political executions had overshadowed other human rights concerns in Iran in recent months, violations in other areas have continued.

These include torture, detention without trial, unfair trials and "cruel, inhuman or degrading" punishments such as the cutting off of thieves' fingers - Amnesty International says it recorded 21 cases of

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☎ 01-833 1771 Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1 Telex: 28502 Fax: 01-833 5100

Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working impartially for the release of all prisoners of conscience, fair and prompt trials for political prisoners and an end to torture and executions. It is funded by donations from its members and supporters throughout the world. It has formal relations with the United Nations, Unesco, the Council of Europe, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of American States.

amputation as a judicial punishment in Iran in 1988, including, for the first time, that of a woman. Floggings also continue to be widely used as a punishment.

Detention without charge or trial of people suspected of connections with opposition groups is reported to have increased in the latter part of 1988.

Amnesty International says it is also concerned that a new clampdown on drug trafficking in Iran has led to the execution of at least 75 people convicted of trafficking so far this year. A number of them were hanged in public after trials by Islamic Revolutionary Courts with no provision for appeal or review of cases. Hundreds of people have been hanged in Iran for drugs offences since 1979.

The organization says it has continued to be denied access to Iran to have talks with the authorities about its human rights concerns. It has reiterated to the Iranian authorities its proposal for discussions following public statements by Iranian officials that human rights groups could visit Iran provided they are, in the words of Chief Justice Ardebili last month, "honest and not politically motivated".

Amnesty International says it welcomes announcements by the authorities of an amnesty to mark the Islamic Republic's 10th anniversary. But the organization says it is concerned that, in political cases, the amnesty appears to apply only to prisoners who have adequately demonstrated their "repentance" of their political views or activities. It also points out that the amnesty comes too late to save the many political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, who have been executed in the past six months.

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