

## **THE IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION CENTER CALLS ON IRAN TO HALT ALL EXECUTIONS**

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NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT – The Islamic Republic of Iran has announced the execution of 79 individuals since January. For many years, Iran has been a world leader in the number of individuals it executes, second only to China. It executed at least 400 individuals in 2009, and is reported to have executed between 179 and 190 individuals in 2010. However, even by those standards, the recent rate of executions is alarming.

Although the exact numbers are not known, as the government does not announce all executions or the names of those killed, it has announced that at least 60 people were executed for alleged drug offenses, one for apostasy, and four who were charged with Moharebeh (“enmity against God”) for their alleged political activities.

In late January, Iran suddenly executed Zahra Bahrami, a citizen of the Netherlands and Iran, for alleged drug possession and trafficking. Her daughter vehemently claims that security agents planted the drugs. However, regardless of whether Ms. Bahrami and others convicted of drug-related crimes were drug traffickers, such a crime does not warrant the death penalty, particularly as there are serious doubts that they were afforded due process protections by the Iranian Judiciary.

IHRDC condemns all the executions and calls for Iran to stop further executions as they violate international human rights law. The executions violate Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which provides that “[i]n countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes . . . pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court.” The U.N. Human Rights Committee has repeatedly concluded that drug-related offenses, apostasy, and “crimes that do not result in the loss of life” are not “serious crimes” warranting the death penalty.

IHRDC is a nonprofit organization based in New Haven, Connecticut that was founded in 2004 by a group of human rights scholars, activists, and historians. Its staff of human rights lawyers and researchers produce comprehensive and detailed reports on the human rights situation in Iran since the 1979 revolution. The Center’s goal is to encourage an informed dialogue among scholars and the general public in both Iran and abroad. The human rights reports and a database of documents relating to human rights in Iran are available to the public for research and educational purposes on the Center’s website. [www.iranhrdc.org](http://www.iranhrdc.org).