

Justice For Iran  
عدالت برای ایران



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***UNODC and Donor Countries Should Cease Funding to Iran for Anti-Drug Trafficking Purposes Until Iran Renounces Use of Death Penalty for Drug-Related Offenses***

(10 October 2012) – Today, on International Day against the Death Penalty, groups dedicated to human rights issues inside Iran and the cessation of the death penalty have called for a moratorium on international funding to Iran’s anti-drug trafficking programs until such time Iran renounces its policy of execution for those convicted of drug-related offenses. The full text of the letter calling for the moratorium can be read [here](#). The Farsi version of the letter can be read [here](#).

According to reports from human rights groups that document executions in Iran from both official and unofficial sources, roughly 650 executions were carried out in 2010 and 670 in 2011. So far, in 2012, at least [330 individuals](#) have been executed. Of these executions, it is estimated that more than 70% are of individuals sentenced to death under Iran’s Anti-Narcotics Law, which mandates the death penalty for a wide range of drug-related offenses.

The letter—which is jointly signed by Justice for Iran, Iran Human Rights, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, Arseh Sevom and *Ensemble contre la peine de mort* (ECPM)—addresses its concerns to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and country donors including Norway, Canada, the UK, France, Germany, Poland, Belgium, Ireland and Japan which provide funding to Iran’s anti-drug trafficking programs.

Shadi Sadr, Executive Director of London-based Justice for Iran, says “Our research shows how thousands of people, including women who are the single-income providers for their children, have been sentenced to death without minimum standards of due process whilst Iranian judges and other authorities that bear responsibility in these severe violations of human rights violation enjoy absolute impunity.”

Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, spokesperson for Iran Human Rights—a Norwegian-based group that focuses on documenting executions in Iran—maintains that “the fact that Iranian authorities execute several hundred people every year on drug-related charges, and then proudly announce these executions, shows that the nature of international collaboration in combating the trafficking of illegal

drugs through Iran may be sending the wrong signals to the Iranian authorities. Any aid provided to Iran to fight drug trafficking must be contingent on whether the Iranian authorities are willing to abolish the death penalty for drug-related charges.”

Gissou Nia, Executive Director of the US-based Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, further notes that “though largely cosmetic, the Islamic Republic of Iran’s recent amendments to its Islamic Penal Code that purport to abolish stoning for adultery and juvenile executions demonstrate that the IRI does care about international perceptions of its execution laws. In contrast, the IRI has only made mandatory execution laws for drug-related offenses even harsher in recent years. The international community must send a strong message, not only through words but through a cut-off of funding to Iran’s anti-drug trafficking programs, that the high numbers of executions in Iran is unacceptable.”

While human rights groups have raised concerns to the Iranian government about the mandatory death sentencing for drug-related offenses, the Iranian authorities have failed to respond to this criticism in any meaningful fashion. The letter calls on UNODC and donor countries to stop funding Iran’s anti-drug trafficking programs until Iran ceases its application of the death penalty to those convicted of drug-related offenses.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Shadi Sadr**

Executive Director of Justice for Iran

Email: [shadi.sadr@justiceforiran.org](mailto:shadi.sadr@justiceforiran.org)

**Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam**

Spokesperson of Iran Human Rights

Email: [mail@iranhr.net](mailto:mail@iranhr.net)

Phone: +47 91742177

**Gissou Nia**

Executive Director

Iran Human Rights Documentation Center

Email: [gnia@iranhrdc.org](mailto:gnia@iranhrdc.org)

Phone: +1 203 654 9342

**Please also visit:**

Arseh Sevom – [www.arsehsevom.net](http://www.arsehsevom.net)

Together against the Death Penalty/*Ensemble contre la peine de mort* – [www.abolition.fr](http://www.abolition.fr)