



IMPACT IRAN

URGENT APPEAL

Impact Iran Warns of Imminent Execution of 4 Kurdish Political Prisoners and Calls for International Action to End Arbitrary Deprivation of Life in Iran

12 January 2024

We, as Impact Iran, urge the international community to join us in **demanding an immediate halt to the imminent executions and overturn the death sentences of Kurdish political prisoners Mohsen Mazloun, Pejman Fatehi, Vafa Azarbar, and Hajir Faramarzi**. The international community must take robust action now to prevent these executions.

The four men were arrested in Urmia, West Azerbaijan, on 22 June 2022 and have been held incommunicado ever since. They reportedly were tortured into delivering forced confessions broadcasted by state media. Ultimately, the Tehran Revolutionary Court, following proceedings marred by serious violations of fair trial and due process standards, sentenced them all to death for *moharebeh* (enmity against god) and *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth) on alleged espionage charges for Israel. Alarmingly, the Supreme Court then upheld their death penalty within 24 hours, as reported by their relatives.¹

Given the rapid confirmation of the death sentences by Iranian courts amidst an escalating campaign to suppress dissent and instill fear among Iranians through

¹ <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/6470/>

widespread application of the death penalty, there exists a grave and immediate risk that these executions will be expediently carried out.

This urgency underscores the critical need for prompt international action. Impact Iran reaffirms that international condemnation of cases of individuals facing execution, when coupled with proactive diplomatic engagement and concrete actions to hold Iran accountable on the international stage, are not just mere symbolic acts. They are powerful tools in preventing executions and have saved lives in Iran.

Many more are at risk of execution.

We are deeply alarmed and appalled by the chilling surge in executions, including against those who have expressed dissent since the onset of the Woman Life Freedom movement in September 2022 following the death of Jina Amini in morality police custody. As a tool for intimidation, these executions are part of a broader campaign to spread fear among the Iranian population, quash any form of dissent, and force Iranians into self-censorship. So far, the authorities have executed at least eight individuals for alleged acts connected to the protests. More are at imminent risk of execution.²

Human rights monitors³ report that in 2023, the number of persons executed skyrocketed, with over 790 persons being executed. Ethnic minorities are often flagrantly over-represented among those executed. More than 20% of those executed in 2023 belong to the Baluch minority, while they represent between 2 to 5% of the population. Kurdish prisoners make up over 50% of those executed for political and security-related charges in the past 13 years.⁴ These numbers are even more alarming considering that Iran's legal and justice systems function in utter disregard of fair trial and due process to the point of "render[ing] most if not all executions in the State an arbitrary deprivation of life."⁵

Despite global condemnation, including a statement almost a year ago from over 50 states warning Iran against the instrumentalization of the death penalty "to punish individuals participating in protests and to strike fear into the population with the

² <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/6433/>

³ Impact Iran members data: Abdorrahman Boroumand Center, Human Rights Activists in Iran, Iran Human Rights NGO, Kurdistan Human Rights Association-Geneva (KMMK-G), Kurdpa. The Iranian Government does not publish official statistics of capital offenses carried out in various provinces of the country.

⁴ Based on data reported by Abdorrahman Boroumand Center, Kurdistan Human Rights Association-Geneva (KMMK-G) and Kurdpa

⁵ <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2F49%2F75&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

aim of chilling dissent,” Iran continues to have one of the highest execution rates in the world. The government's widespread and illegal use of the death penalty, even in the face of repeated calls from UN human rights experts, states, and civil society organizations, indicates that Iran will continue its relentless spree of executions unless the United Nations and the international community dramatically increase the political costs associated with these acts.

Therefore, we call upon Member States and the United Nations, including its human rights accountability mechanisms, to:

1. Urgently, publicly, and unequivocally urge Iranian authorities to halt the executions of Mohsen Mazloun, Pejman Fatehi, Vafa Azarbar, and Hajir Faramarzi and call for an overturn of their death sentences. We urge Member States to go beyond mere restatements of their traditional opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances, explicitly name the individuals at risk of executions, and acknowledge the arbitrary nature of their death sentences.
2. Invoke diplomatic channels, both through Embassies for countries with a presence in Iran and through countries' engagement with Iranian Permanent Missions in Geneva, Vienna, and New York. We call on States to inquire about and express grave concern regarding the imminent executions of the four men and others at risk, with a view to preventing their executions.
3. Systematically, publicly and bilaterally, reiterate an unequivocal call for a moratorium on all executions in view of abolishing the death penalty in Iran and highlight the pressing need to hold accountable those responsible for issuing and carrying out arbitrary deprivations of life.
4. Utilize all available avenues within the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, to highlight grave concerns about the use of the death penalty in Iran and mobilize international pressure for change.

SIGNATORIES

Abdorrahman Boroumand Center

ADAPP - Association for the Defence of Azerbaijani Political Prisoners in Iran

AHRAZ

Ahwaz Human Rights Organization

All Human Rights for All in Iran

Baloch Activists Campaign

Balochistan Human Rights Group

Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM)

Haalvsh

Hengaw Human Rights Organization

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Iran Human Rights

International Educational Development, Inc. (IED)

Kurdistan Human Rights Association-Geneva (KMMK-G)

Kurdpa

Rasank

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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)