



OMCT STATEMENT

IRAN: Concern over the growing wave of executions

Geneva, 26 January 2011. The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) condemns the execution of Mr. Jafar Kazemi and Mr. Mohammad Ali Haj Aghaii, both convicted of *Moharebeh* “enmity against God”, which carries the death penalty, for their participation in post-election protests and membership in the banned opposition group, the People’s Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI). OMCT is also gravely concerned about the risk of imminent execution of Mr. Abdolreza Ghanbari, Mr. Ahmad Daneshpour Moghaddam and his son, Mr. Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam, Mr. Javad Lari and Ms. Farah Vazehan, who were as well found guilty of *Moharebeh* for alleged links to the PMOI. OMCT calls upon the Iranian Judiciary to immediately suspend the execution sentence of the abovementioned individuals as well as halt all executions in Iran.

According to the information received, Mr. Jafar Kazemi, 47 years old, and Mr. Mohammad Ali Haj Aghaii, 52 years old, were hanged, on 24 January 2011, in Evin prison, Tehran, without their family or lawyers being notified. They had been arrested in September and December 2009 respectively based on visits they had made to Camp Ashraf¹ in Iraq, where approximately 3’400 members of the PMOI live in exile, including Mr. Jafar Kazemi’s son.

Mr. Jafar Kazemi and Mr. Mohammad Ali Haj Aghaii were reportedly held more than a year in solitary confinement before their execution. Mr. Jafar Kazemi is also reported to have suffered torture with the purpose of extracting a confession but he consistently denied any illegal activity. Neither of these men received a fair trial. They were sentenced to death in April 2010 and their appeals were later rejected by the Supreme Court.

Given these executions, OMCT is gravely concerned that Mr. Abdolreza Ghanbari, Mr. Ahmad Daneshpour Moghaddam, Mr. Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam, Mr. Javad Lari and Ms. Farah Vazehan will be executed imminently.

Since the beginning of the year, it is reported that at least 70 executions were carried out in Iran. OMCT reaffirms its strong opposition to the death penalty as an extreme form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and a violation of the right to life, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. OMCT calls upon the Iranian judicial authorities to immediately halt the execution of Mr. Abdolreza Ghanbari, Mr. Ahmad Daneshpour Moghaddam, Mr. Mohsen Daneshpour Moghaddam, Mr. Javad Lari and Ms. Farah Vazehan. More generally, OMCT calls on the Iranian authorities to stop all executions.

At a time when momentum is gathering across the world to end capital punishment, the Islamic Republic of Iran defies international human rights law by increasing the number of executions under conditions that blatantly violate international human rights standards.

OMCT also recalls that Iran is legally bound to effectively ensure the physical and psychological integrity of all persons deprived of liberty in accordance with international human rights law, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by Iran.

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¹ See OMCT previous communications on Camp Ashraf.