

URGENT ACTION

FOUR YOUNG BALUCHI MEN AT RISK OF EXECUTION

Four young Baluchi men – Ebrahim Narouie, Kambiz Kharout, Mansour Dahmardeh and Shoeib Mirbaluchzehi Rigi – are at grave risk of execution in connection with protests in Sistan and Baluchestan province. They were sentenced to death based on torture-tainted “confessions” in grossly unfair trials. Two other Baluchi men – Mansour Hout and Nezamoddin Hout – are facing retrials on capital charges also in connection with protests.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei

c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union

Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium

Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

*Four young men from Iran’s oppressed Baluchi minority, are at grave risk of execution. **Shoeib Mirbaluchzehi Rigi**, 19, **Kambiz Kharout**, 21, **Ebrahim Narouie**, 25, and **Mansour Dahmardeh**, 21, who has a physical disability, were tried separately in December 2022 in relation to protests in Zahedan, the capital of Sistan and Baluchestan province. **Nezamoddin Hout**, 20, and **Mansour Hout**, 27, faced a joint trial before Criminal Court 2 in Zahedan in December 2022 in relation to protests in Chabahar, a small town in the south of the province. They were all sentenced to death in December 2022 and January 2023 on charges of “spreading corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel arz) and/or “enmity against God” (moharebeh) for arson, stone-throwing and other offences that do not meet the threshold of “most serious crimes”, which are crimes involving intentional killing, in violation of international law. The men’s trials were grossly unfair. The authorities denied them access to legal representation and torture-tainted “confessions” were used as evidence to convict them. In February 2023, Iran’s Supreme Court quashed the convictions and death sentences of Nezamoddin Hout and Mansour Hout on appeal on the grounds that Criminal Court 2 does not have jurisdiction over capital crimes and crimes related to national security. Their cases were sent for retrial before a Revolutionary Court, where it is feared they may be sentenced to death again. The appeals of the other four men remain pending before the Supreme Court.*

The men were arrested separately between 30 September and 5 October 2022 amid a wave of mass arrests that took place in Sistan and Baluchestan province during and in the aftermath of the deadliest day of the popular uprising in Iran, on 30 September 2022, when security forces unlawfully killed scores of protesters and bystanders in Zahedan. According to informed sources, interrogators subjected the men to torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual violence, to compel them to make forced “confessions”. For instance, interrogators beat Mansour Dahmardeh so severely that they broke his teeth and nose and stuck needles into Ebrahim Narouie’s genitals.

I urge you to quash the convictions and death sentences and drop all charges against Shoeib Mirbaluchzehi Rigi, Nezamoddin Hout, Kambiz Kharout, Ebrahim Narouie, Mansour Dahmardeh and Mansour Hout related to their peaceful participation in protests. If charged with a recognizable criminal offence, retrial proceedings must meet international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty and exclude coerced “confessions”. I urge you to provide the men access to their families and lawyers of their own choosing, as well as to adequate medical care. I urge you to protect them from further torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials. Finally, I urge you to grant independent observers access to capital trials connected to protests and immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view of abolishing the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Plainclothes agents arrested **Ebrahim Narouie** in Zahedan on 3 October 2022. The authorities refused to provide his family with any information about his fate and whereabouts for several weeks, despite their repeated requests, thereby subjecting him to enforced disappearance. He first called his family some three weeks after his arrest and told them he had been moved from an unknown location to Zahedan prison. While forcibly disappeared, his interrogators accused him of being a “leader” in the protests and of involvement in setting a bank on fire. According to informed sources, interrogators subjected him to torture and other ill-treatment, including through sticking needles into his genitals, to compel him to make forced “confessions” accepting their accusations by signing and fingerprinting pre-written documents and reading pre-written statements in front of a video camera. Following a grossly unfair trial before Branch 2 of the Revolutionary Court in Zahedan in which he was denied the right to legal representation and to even defend himself in court, he was convicted of “spreading corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*) and sentenced to death. He was informed of his sentence on 30 December 2022.

Revolutionary Guards agents arrested **Mansour Dahmardeh** in Zahedan on 30 September 2022, several hours after he attended Friday prayers in the Great Mosalla of Zahedan, a large prayer site near the city’s main mosque, and took part in a protest outside a nearby police station that was violently quashed by security forces. According to informed sources, while held in a Revolutionary Guards detention centre in circumstances amounting to enforced disappearance, he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment including sexual violence and beatings, resulting in him sustaining a broken nose and teeth and being hospitalised for several days. Based on information provided to Amnesty International by informed sources, it appears that he may have received two death sentences – one by a Revolutionary Court for “enmity against God” (*moharebeh*) and another by a criminal court for “spreading corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*), both based entirely on his torture-tainted “confessions” of having thrown three stones and set fire to a vehicle tyre during the protests. Amnesty International learned that he attempted suicide twice in prison using a fork, raising concerns about his mental health and further risks of self-harm.

Ministry of Intelligence agents arrested **Shoeib Mirbaluchzehi Rigi** in Zahedan on 5 October 2022 and took him to an unknown location. According to informed sources, while forcibly disappeared for eight days, interrogators subjected him to torture and other ill-treatment, including through beatings, electric shocks to his feet, hitting his chest with the back of a gun, and twisting his wrists until they felt like they were breaking. His first contact with his family was eight days after arrest when he was allowed to briefly call them. He was transferred to Zahedan prison 14 days after arrest. An informed source told Amnesty International that a witness saw bruises on his face and body several weeks after arrest. His trial, which was grossly unfair, took place in December 2022 before a court in Zahedan. On 19 December 2022, the court convicted him of “spreading corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*) and sentenced him to death. On 24 December 2022, agents forced him to stand in the cold in front of a cooler to punish him for news about his death sentence and torture being shared online.

Security forces arrested **Kambiz Kharout** in Zahedan on 1 October 2022. He was released on bail three weeks later but rearrested on 12 November 2022. According to Baluchi human rights activists, he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment in detention and denied the charges against him. Following a grossly unfair trial before Criminal Court 2 in Zahedan in which he was not allowed legal representation, on 3 January 2023, authorities informed him that he had been convicted of “spreading corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*) and “enmity against God” (*moharebeh*) and sentenced him to death.

Revolutionary Guards agents arrested **Mansour Hout** and **Nezamoddin Hout** on 30 September 2022 in Chabahar in connection with protests that day. Amnesty International learned that interrogators subjected both men to torture and other ill-treatment to force them to “confess” to involvement in acts of arson of public buildings during the protests. Informed sources have told the organization that Mansour Hout had not taken part in the protests. They were denied access to legal representation until about a month before their trial took place in December 2022. According to informed sources, around January 2023, Criminal Court 2 in Zahedan convicted them of “spreading corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel arz*) and “enmity against God” (*moharebeh*) and sentenced them to death. In February, Iran’s Supreme Court quashed their conviction and sentence on procedural grounds and sent their case to a Revolutionary Court for retrial on capital charges.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Persian, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 2 May 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Ebrahim Narouie, Kambiz Kharout, Mansour Dahmardeh, Shoeib Mirbaluchzehi Rigi, Nezamoddin Hout, Mansour Hout (he; him)