

URGENT ACTION

MAN AT RISK OF PROTEST-RELATED EXECUTION

Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri is at grave risk of execution in relation to nationwide protests. In early April 2023, Iran's judiciary announced that a Revolutionary Court in Ahvaz sentenced Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri to death for "enmity against God" (*moharebeh*), "corruption on earth" (*efsad-e fel arz*) and "armed rebellion against the state" (*baghi*). His grossly unfair sham trial was marred by torture-tainted "confessions" obtained while he was subjected to enforced disappearance.

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,

*Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri is at grave risk of execution after being sentenced to death in a grossly unfair trial before a Revolutionary Court in Ahvaz. In early April 2023, the judiciary spokesperson announced that, he was convicted of "enmity against God" (*moharebeh*) and "corruption on earth" (*efsad-e fel arz*) and "armed rebellion against the state" (*baghi*) and sentenced to death. The authorities accused him of involvement in the killing of a child during protests in Izeh, Khuzestan province, on 16 November 2022. However, according to Amnesty International's investigations, plainclothes security officials used unlawful lethal force during protests in Izeh and fatally fired live ammunition at the child. Authorities immediately blamed "terrorists", but the boy's family repeatedly refuted these claims publicly and attributed the responsibility to the authorities. Mojahed Kourkouri was arrested on 20 December 2022 near Ghalehtol, Khuzestan province, by agents from the Ministry of Intelligence, Revolutionary Guards and the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym Faraja) during what state media reported as an "armed clash". Mojahed Kourkouri sustained injuries to his knee from live ammunition and his arm from grenade shrapnel during his arrest.*

From his arrest to early April 2023, authorities subjected Mojahed Kourkouri to enforced disappearance, denying his family and independently chosen lawyer information about his whereabouts. During this time, he told his family during infrequent brief phone calls that "they [authorities] will kill me", and said he was in a great deal of pain, including in his injured knee, and in need of healthcare. He also said he believed authorities were forcibly administering chemical substances on him. His trial was grossly unfair. The authorities denied him access to his independently chosen lawyer. His torture-tainted "confessions" were aired by Iranian state media, first days after his arrest, in late December 2022. In one propaganda video, he was filmed in bed with his arm visibly bloody and bandaged. His appeal remains pending before the Supreme Court. On 22 June, Mojahed Kourkouri's family public revealed security forces came to their home, and that they had no information about Negar Kourkouri, Mojahed Kourkouri's sister, raising concerns she was arbitrarily arrested following months of threats for advocating on his behalf.

I urge you to immediately quash the conviction and death sentence against Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri. If charged with a recognizable criminal offence, proceedings must meet international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty and exclude coerced "confessions". I urge you to immediately grant Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri access to his family, independently chosen lawyer, and adequate medical care. I urge you to protect him from further torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials. His sister, Negar Kourkouri, if arbitrarily detained for campaigning on his behalf, must be released immediately. 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

According to information received by Amnesty International, Mojahed Kourkouri was not at the protests taking place in Izeh on 16 November 2022. Relatives of Kian Pirfalak, the nine-year-old child fatally shot by security officials that day, have also repeatedly stated publicly that Mojahed Kourkouri was not involved in the killing of their loved-one; and have repeatedly and publicly attributed responsibility to Iran's security forces.

Amnesty International previously [documented](#) how plainclothes security officials fatally shot Kian Pirfalak with live ammunition during protests in Izeh, Khuzestan province, on 16 November 2022. Security forces fired toward the car in which Kian Pirfalak was travelling with his family. During Kian Pirfalak's funeral service on 18 November 2022, his mother, Mahmonir (Zeinab) Molaierad, publicly described the details of the fatal incident and said: "Hear it from me about how the shooting happened so they [the authorities] can't say it was by 'terrorists', because they are lying." Mahmonir Molaierad described that they were on their way to their house in Izeh when they reached an intersection where a large numbers of riot police and plainclothes officials were stationed. She said an official ordered them to stop and turn around after they passed the security forces. Kian Pirfalak's father, who was driving, heeded the order, but suddenly several plainclothes officials opened fire at the car. As a result, Kian Pirfalak sustained fatal gunshot wounds and his father was severely injured. Mahmonir Molaierad said that amid the shootings, she opened the front passenger's car door, loudly alerted the officials that her children were in the car and asked them to stop. Three of the plainclothes officials responsible for the shootings then walked to the family, removed Kian Pirfalak's wounded body from the car and took him into a nearby building. Mahmonir Molaierad said, "I don't know why [the officials shot at us] ... They bombarded the car with bullets... I told the kids to hide under the seats. My younger child hid under the car's dashboard, but Kian was chubby and didn't go under the seat." The death of Kian Pirfalak sparked an outpouring of rage and solidarity both in Iran and globally, particularly after a video went viral that showed him opening a school presentation with the words "in name of a God of Rainbow" and then testing a boat made up of ice cream sticks. The same evening Kian Pirfalak was fatally shot, state officials including Valiollah Hayati, the Deputy Governor of Khuzestan Province for Law Enforcement and Security Affairs, claimed that "terrorist agents" were responsible for the incident. After Mojahed Kourkouri was named in Iranian state media as having been arrested in relation to Kian Pirfalak's killing in late December 2022, the family of Kian Pirfalak publicly denied his involvement. Amnesty International has [documented](#) a pattern of the Iranian authorities systematically covering-up and concealing their crimes and denying responsibility for the unlawful killings of children perpetrated by its security forces. They instead propagated narratives claiming that children were killed by "terrorists" or "rioters" or that their deaths were not connected to protests, but rather a result of suicides or accidents.

According to Amnesty International's [investigations](#), on 16 November 2022, in addition to Kian Pirfalak, security forces also fatally shot and killed with live ammunition at least three other children: Sepehr Maghsoudi and Artin Rahmani in Izeh, and Danial Pabandi in Saqqez, Kurdistan province.

In late April 2023, Mojahed Kourkouri's independently chosen lawyer learned that he was being held in Sheiban prison in Ahvaz, Khuzestan province, and was permitted to very briefly visit him. According to information received by Amnesty International, Mojahed Kourkouri has not been permitted family visits since his arrest.

Since late April 2023, the Iranian authorities have embarked on an alarming [execution spree](#) of scores of people, intensifying their use the death penalty as a tool of repression in an attempt to instil fear into the population and crush ongoing acts of resistance against the authorities and establishment. To date, Iranian authorities have arbitrarily executed seven people in relation to the popular uprising, including five individuals in 2023.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Persian, English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 29 August 2023

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri (he, his)