

Head of judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi
c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium

Dear Mr Raisi,

German-Iranian political dissident Jamshid Sharmahd, aged 66, has been arbitrarily detained for over eight months in connection with his involvement in the Kingdom Assembly of Iran, an Iranian opposition group that advocates for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic system. Since December 2020, the authorities have subjected him to circumstances akin to an enforced disappearance by holding him in unidentified locations, thereby placing him outside the protection of the law and at serious risk of torture and other ill-treatment, which is systematically used by interrogators during the investigation stage for extracting forced “confessions”. He is only able to call his family periodically and in the presence of intelligence agents, thus limiting his ability to speak freely. Amnesty International fears that he is also being held in solitary confinement and denied the ongoing specialized medical care and daily medications that he requires for his serious health conditions, including diabetes, heart disease and Parkinson’s disease. The authorities are refusing to provide his family with information about his access to health care.

Since his arbitrary detention in late July 2020, which involved, according to Iran’s minister of intelligence, bringing him back to Iran through a “complex operation”, the prosecution authorities have denied Jamshid Sharmahd his right to be represented by a lawyer of his own choosing. He has been forced to select his lawyer from a list approved by the head of the judiciary and has only been allowed to meet with this lawyer once. State TV has aired multiple propaganda videos which show Jamshid Sharmahd “confessing” to having a role in the April 2008 explosion in Shiraz, Fars province, where 14 people were killed, in violation of his right to the presumption of innocence as well as the right not to self-incriminate. They have further denied him the right to be brought before an independent, impartial public tribunal to challenge the lawfulness of his detention and assess whether sufficient legal reasons and evidence for detention exist or whether his release should be ordered.

As an older person with pre-existing conditions, Jamhid Sharmahd is at heightened risk of severe illness or death if he contracts COVID-19 while in pre-trial detention. In light of this and the fact that he is arbitrarily detained, I call on you to release him. Pending his release, ensure that he is provided with adequate medical care, a lawyer of his choosing, consular assistance from the German authorities and regular communication with his family. If charged with an internationally recognizable criminal offence, he must be tried in accordance with international fair trial standards in proceedings that exclude coerced “confessions” and without recourse to the death penalty.

Yours sincerely,