

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,

I am gravely concerned that Iranian authorities are seeking the death penalty in grossly unfair sham trials against at least 28 people prosecuted in connection to the uprising sweeping the country since mid-September. Officials announced that six people were sentenced to death in November for “enmity against God” (moharebeh) and/or “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel arz). Their sentences are appealable to the Supreme Court. The authorities have not disclosed their names but, based on publicly available information, Amnesty International believes they include Sahand Nourmohammad-Zadeh, Mahan Sedarat Madani, Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, who were tried separately before Revolutionary Courts in Tehran, as well as Mohammad Boroughani, and Mohammad Ghobadlou. Mohammad Boroughani, and Mohammad Ghobadlou were tried with four others – Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou, Mohsen Rezazadeh Gharagholou, Saman Seydi (Yasin), Saeed Shirazi – before a special tribunal addressing “charges against recent rioters”.

Fifteen other people are on trial for “enmity against God” before a Revolutionary Court in Karaj, Alborz province. They include a married couple – Farzaneh Ghare-Hasanlou and Hamid Ghare-Hasanlou – and three 17-year-old boys – Amin Mohammad (Mehdi) Shokrollahi, Amir Mohammad (Mehdi) Jafari and Arian Farzamia. The other defendants in this case are Mohammad Mehdi Karami, Seyed Mohammad Hosseini, Reza Arya, Mehdi Mohammadi, Shayan Charani, Mohammad Amin Akhlaghi, Reza Shaker Zavardahi, Javad Zargaran, Behrad Ali Kenari and Ali Moazemi Goudarzi. The authorities are also seeking the death penalty against Akbar Ghafari and Majidreza Rahnavard, who are on trial in Tehran province and Khorasan Razavi province, respectively; Toomaj Salehi, a dissident rapper whose charges stem from his music and social media posts; and Ebrahim Rigi, from Iran’s oppressed Baluchi minority.

The 28 individuals have all been denied fair trials including the rights to access lawyers of their choosing; to be presumed innocent; to remain silent; and to receive a fair, public hearing. According to informed sources, several defendants were tortured and their torture-tainted “confessions” were used as evidence. State media broadcast forced “confessions” of at least nine defendants prior to trial. The three children are on trial in adult courts, in breach of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Iran has ratified.

I urge you to immediately quash all convictions and death sentences, refrain from seeking further death sentences, and ensure that anyone charged with a recognizable criminal offence is tried in proceedings meeting international fair trial standards without recourse to the death penalty and that principles of juvenile justice are observed for child defendants. I urge you to release all those detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. I urge you to provide detainees access to their families and lawyers of their own choosing, protect them from torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials. Finally, grant independent observers from embassies in Iran access to capital trials connected to protests.

Yours sincerely,