

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,