

Polish Committee of Friends of a Free Iran: Urgent Appeal to Save Six Political Prisoners from Execution in Iran

03 December 2024

To:

Mr. **Volker Turk**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Ms. **Mai Sato**, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran

Dear Excellencies,

The Polish Committee of Friends of a Free Iran writes to you to express profound concern over the alarming surge in executions in Iran in 2024 and the death sentences handed down to six political prisoners for alleged membership in the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). These sentences are part of a wider campaign of persecution by the Iranian regime against political dissidents, which has been consistently documented in international reports, including the United Nations' "*Atrocity Crimes*" report published on 22 July 2024, available on the OHCHR website.

At least 818 executions have been carried out in Iran this year—an alarming figure that underscores the systematic use of capital punishment as a tool of political oppression. Among the condemned are Abolhassan Montazer, Pouya Ghobadi, Vahid Bani-Amrian, Babak Alipour, Ali Akbar Daneshvarkar, and Mohammad Taghavi. These individuals were sentenced to death following prolonged interrogations and alleged torture, with charges ranging from "membership in the PMOI/MEK" to "armed rebellion," "collusion against national security," and "destruction of public property using a launcher." The verdicts were issued by Judge Iman Afshari of Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran, infamous for targeting political prisoners.

The profiles of these individuals highlight not only the injustice they face but also the invaluable contributions they could make to society:

- **Abolhassan Montazer (65)**, an architecture graduate who has been a political prisoner since the 1980s, suffers from multiple severe health conditions, including heart, lung, and kidney diseases.
- **Pouya Ghobadi (32)**, an electrical engineer, has faced multiple arrests for his association with the PMOI.

- **Vahid Bani-Amrian (32)**, a management graduate, has endured four years of imprisonment across repeated arrests.
- **Babak Alipour (33)**, a law graduate, was first arrested in 2018 and has spent years in prison since.
- **Ali Akbar Daneshvarkar (57)**, a civil engineer, has been repeatedly targeted for his political affiliations.
- **Mohammad Taghavi (58)**, a long-time political prisoner from the 1980s, continues to face relentless persecution.

Their families have also faced persecution. Mohammad Taghavi's brothers, Mojtaba and Ali, have been sentenced to imprisonment and exile solely due to their relation to him.

The “*Atrocity Crimes*” report by the UN noted that members of the PMOI/MEK have been subject to crimes against humanity for over three decades. The continuity of such persecution underlines the urgency of international intervention to hold perpetrators accountable and to prevent further atrocities.

The Polish Committee of Friends of a Free Iran calls on the United Nations, the European Union, its member states, the UN Security Council, and other relevant UN bodies to:

1. Take immediate action to halt the executions of these six political prisoners.
2. Ensure the release of all political prisoners in Iran and hold Iranian officials accountable for human rights violations.
3. Renew efforts for a universal moratorium on capital punishment, as called for in the UN General Assembly resolution.
4. Launch independent investigations into the judicial conduct of figures like Judge Iman Afshari, whose rulings continue to violate international human rights law.

The lives of these six individuals symbolize the universal right to life and the aspirations of a society founded on freedom, justice, and human dignity. The international community must act decisively to end this grave injustice.

Yours sincerely,

Polish Committee of Friends of a Free Iran:

- **Marcin Świącicki** – Minister for Foreign Economic Relations (1989 - 1991) | City Mayor of Warsaw (1994 - 1999) | Deputy Minister of Economy (1989 - 1991) | Member of Parliament (1989 - 1991 | 1993 – 1996 | 2011 - 2019)
- **Izabela Konopacka** – Immediate Past President of Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe | Attorney at Law
- **Ryszard Kalisz** – Member of the National Electoral Commission of Poland | Minister of the Interior and Administration (2004 – 2005) | Member of Parliament (2001 – 2015) | Advocate

- **Bożena Kamińska** – Member of Parliament (2011–2019) | Senate Office Clerk, Chief specialist
- **Malgorzata Krzyzowska** – Vice-President of the Foreign Committee of the Polish Supreme Bar Council | Attorney at Law
- **Marzena Korzonek** – Judge | President of the District Court in Racibórz, Poland | Member of GEMME (the European Association of Judges for Mediation) | Singer