



**für Menschenrechte**  
Im Geiste Carl von Ossietzkys

## Press Release

8 March 2017

**The International League for Human Rights:**

### **German federal government should take action to end practice of executing juveniles in Iran**

**Zeinab Sekaanvand Lokran**, a 22-year-old Iranian woman, is at the risk of imminent execution. She was arrested at the age of 17 and accused of murdering her husband. She “confessed” after being tortured by police agents. Although she later retracted her “confession”, it formed the basis for the court’s death sentence. The Supreme Court has reportedly rejected her application for a retrial and the head of the Judiciary has given the required authorisation for her execution. Up to now, the authorities in Iran have not commented on the said reports.

On the other hand, the Iranian authorities postponed for the fifth time the execution of the 26-year-old **Hamid Ahmadi**, which had been scheduled for Saturday 18 February, but he is still at the risk of execution and is living under ongoing severe mental pressure that may amount to psychological torture. Hamid Ahmadi was sentenced to death for allegedly committing a murder at the age of 17 after a flawed trial that failed to uphold the international standards of fair trial and to investigate his claim that he had “confessed” under torture.

In January and February 2017, several UN human rights experts intervened twice to call on the Iranian authorities to halt plans to execute Ahmadi and another juvenile offender **Sajjad Sanjari**.

Since the beginning of 2017, the Iranian authorities have executed two men, who had been convicted for offences allegedly committed when they were under the age of 18. **Arman Bahr-Asemani** was executed in the southern city of Kerman on 15 January. He was 20 years old at the time of execution and had been sentenced to death for a murder he allegedly committed at the age of 16. **Hassan Hassanzadeh** was hanged in the north-western city of Tabriz on 18 January. He was 18 years old at the time of execution and had been 15 at the time of the alleged commission of the murder.

A large number of juvenile offenders are on death row in Iran. Iran is one of the leading executioners of juveniles in the world. International human rights organisations have recorded at least 88 executions of juvenile offenders from 1999 to the end of 2016. Five juveniles were executed in 2016.

The Iranian laws regarding minors are deeply flawed and in clear contradiction to international law. The Islamic Penal Code 2013 provides that “minor persons do not have criminal responsibility,” but it defines the age of majority as 15 lunar years for boys and 9 lunar years for girls.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the

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<sup>1</sup> In practice, this means, boys at the age of 14 years and 7 months and girls at the age of 8 years and 9 months have criminal responsibility. The lunar year is 11 days shorter than the solar year.



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same Islamic Penal Code authorises judges to impose death sentence on persons under the age of 18 if they comprehend the nature and/or prohibition of their crime, or if they are mentally developed.<sup>†</sup>

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has called on Iran several times, the last time in January 2016, to put an end to execution of children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – both of which Iran has ratified – prohibit in absolute terms the use of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons below 18 years of age.

The International League for Human Rights is committed to the abolition of the death penalty worldwide and wherever it is still legally rooted and frequently practised.

#### **More Information on this topic:**

##### **In English:**

UN human rights experts:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21138&LangID=E>

FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) and its member organisation LDDHI (League for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran):

<https://www.fidh.org/20345>

<https://www.fidh.org/article18147>

##### **In German:**

Amnesty International: <http://www.n-tv.de/politik/Amnesty-Iran-laesst-Minderjaehrige-hinrichten-article16854791.html>

<https://www.amnesty.de/2016/1/26/iran-weiterhin-hinrichtungen-jugendlicher-straftaeter>

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<sup>†</sup> For more information on the death penalty and the related laws in Iran, see the following reports (in English) by FIDH and its Iranian member organisation, League for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran (LDDHI): "[Iran: Death Penalty – A State terror policy](http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/Rapport_Iran_final.pdf)" ([http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/Rapport\\_Iran\\_final.pdf](http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/Rapport_Iran_final.pdf)); "[Death penalty in Iran – A State terror policy](http://www.fidh.org/article14075)- update 2013" (<http://www.fidh.org/article14075>)