**Iran: Executions of child offenders must stop, say UN experts**

GENEVA (9 May 2019) – UN human rights experts\* called on Iran to immediately halt the practice of executing child offenders, citing serious concerns for up to 90 individuals who were all under the age of 18 at the time of their alleged offences and are on death row.

“The executions of two 17-year-old boys last week underlines our concerns that the Iranian authorities continue to give scant regard to international law which forbids executions of minors,” said the experts. “These executions must stop.”

“The Iranian judiciary should ensure that the circular requiring judges not to sentence children to death is implemented, and order retrials for all child offenders on death row without recourse to the death penalty in line with international law.”

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Javaid Rehman published a [report](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/40/67)\*\* in March that presented in-depth research on the execution of child offenders in Iran, including a number of targeted and detailed recommendations addressed to the Iranian Parliament, judiciary and other key stakeholders, outlining the steps to bring this practice to an end.

On 25 April 2019, Mehdi Sohrabifar and Amin Sedaghat were executed for the alleged crimes of rape and robbery in Adelabad Prison in Shiraz, Fars Province. The two were reportedly forced to confess under torture and were also flogged prior to their executions in clear violation of international law.

The offences allegedly occurred when they were 15 years old. Neither the children nor their families were reportedly even aware of the death sentence. Held at a Shiraz child correction centre from 2017, the two boys were transferred to Adelabad Prison on 24 April 2019 and received a visit from their families. The next day, Iran’s Legal Medicine Organization reportedly informed the families that the two boys had been executed, and asked them to collect their bodies.

“We are particularly disturbed by reports that one of the alleged child offenders, Mehdi Sohrabifar, had an intellectual disability and had spent nearly 10 years in a special education centre,” said the UN experts.

 “Although evidence of the child’s disability was presented during his trial, the Courts failed to use their discretion to request an assessment of the maturity of the child, in line with article 91 of Iran’s amended Penal Code, in clear breach of his right to a fair trial,” said the experts.

ENDS

*(\*) The UN experts:* The UN experts: ***Ms Agnes Callamard (France),*** Special Rapporteur on [*extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Executions/Pages/SRExecutionsIndex.aspx); ***Ms Catalina Devandas-Aguilar*** (Costa Rica), [*Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities*](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Disability/SRDisabilities/Pages/SRDisabilitiesIndex.aspx), ***Mr. Dainius Pῡras***, [*Special Rapporteur on the right to health*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Health/Pages/SRRightHealthIndex.aspx), ***Mr. Nils Melzer***, [*Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/torture/srtorture/pages/srtortureindex.aspx), ***Ms Renate Winter (Austria),***Chairperson of the [*Committee on the Rights of the Child*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/CRCIndex.aspx); ***Mr. Javaid Rehman***(Pakistan), Special Rapporteur on the [*situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran.*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/sp/countriesmandates/ir/pages/sriran.aspx)

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*\*\* See the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran to the 40th session of the Human Rights Council in March 2019 (A/HRC/40/67 paras.72 to 76), available at* [*https://undocs.org/A/HRC/40/67*](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/40/67)

*UN Human Rights, Country Page:*[*Iran*](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/IRIndex.aspx)

*For more information and****media requests****, please contact: Mr. Kiyohiko Hasegawa (+41 22 92 89211/**sr-iran@ohchr.org**)*

*For****media inquiries****related to other UN independent experts please contact Mr. Jeremy Laurence, UN Human Rights – Media Unit (+41 22 917 9383 /**jlaurence@ohchr.org**)*

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