



British Committee for Iran Freedom

Press Release: UK must act urgently to prevent mass executions and save political prisoners in Iran

The British Committee for Iran Freedom (BCFIF) warns that the death sentence against political prisoner Behrouz Ehsani, 70, could be implemented at any time as Iran's judiciary rejected his final appeal earlier this week.

In our statement on 27 January, we highlighted his case along with another political prisoner, Mehdi Hassani, 48, at risk of imminent execution following their transfer to Qezelhessar Prison.

Both of them were sentenced to death on charges of membership in the democratic opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI).

Earlier this month, Iranian authorities reportedly attempted to transfer five other political prisoners from Evin prison to Qezelhessar Prison, a prison notorious for its frequent executions.

Vahid Bani Amerian, Seyed Mohammad Taghavi, Babak Alipour, Pouya Ghobadi, and Shahrokh Daneshvarkar were sentenced to death on similar charges as Behrouz Ehsani and Mehdi Hassani. Amnesty International described their trials as grossly unfair and based on forced confessions obtained under torture.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Iran has expressed concerns over their imminent executions and the regime's alarming use of the death penalty, stressing that "The international community must not remain silent."

The surge in executions since the 2022 uprising and the growing number of political prisoners now on death row, particularly those affiliated with the PMOI and Iran's minorities, suggest the regime may be preparing for mass executions reminiscent of the 1988 massacre. This appears to be part of a broader effort to suppress dissent and eliminate both the protest movement and organised resistance, led by the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and its principal constituent member, the PMOI, which are united in seeking to establish a democratic republic.

The British Committee for Iran Freedom (BCFIF) reiterates its previous call and urges the UK Government to take immediate, concrete action alongside allies to save the lives of political prisoners on death row and secure their release.

The UK Government must intensify efforts to hold the regime to account for the surge in executions and the use of the death penalty, imposing targeted human rights sanctions on the judges and officials responsible, including Supreme Leader Khamenei. Iran's judiciary plays a central role in facilitating this state crackdown, underscoring the need for a long-term, principled response to the worsening human rights crisis, as we stressed in January.

In this regard, we call on the UK Government to join us, and hundreds of cross-party members from both Houses of Parliament, endorsing NCRI President-elect Maryam Rajavi's Ten-Point Plan for Iran's future, which ensures the abolition of the death penalty and robust guarantees for human rights.

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