

Network of Concerned Historians				NCH
Campaigns				
Year original	Year follow-up	Circular	Country	Names
2002		28	Iran	Hashem Aghajari, historian
	2004			<i>follow-up 5</i>
	2004			<i>follow-up 4</i>
	2003			<i>follow-up 3</i>
	2002			<i>follow-up 2</i>
	2002			<i>follow-up 1</i>

Announcement

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) reports that the death sentence against historian Hashem Aghajari (see NCH#28, #28ii, #28iii, #28iv, #28v) was not reimposed. Please see the AAAS update. We hope that you can send the recommended urgent appeals. Please remember to write in your professional capacity. Thank you.

ACADEMIC'S DEATH SENTENCE DROPPED

30 June 2004 -- Case number: ir0219_agh

ISSUES:

Academic and scientific freedom; Freedom of opinion and expression

PREVIOUS ALERTS:

12 November 2002 ; 20 February 2003 ; 6 May 2004

FACTS OF THE CASE:

On 28 June 2004, Iran's judiciary decided not to impose a death sentence against Dr. Hashem Aghajari, a professor of history and a prominent human rights dissident. Dr. Aghajari was sentenced to death in November 2002 for apostasy in connection with a university lecture he gave in which he rejected demands to "blindly follow" clerical rule and called for reform within the Islamic clerical establishment. According to his lawyer, Dr. Aghajari refused to appeal his guilty verdict because he rejected the legitimacy of the charges and the process; the trial was to be held behind closed doors. His lawyer believes the reversal of the court is evidence of strong international pressure on the government to be

more lenient. Around the world and within Iran, there have been strong protests in support of Dr. Aghajari and the peaceful exercise of his right to free expression. The court may free Dr. Aghajari on bail as early as next month. He has been in prison since 2002.

Sources of information for this case: *The New York Times* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

RELEVANT HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS:

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Article 19(1): Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.

Article 19(2): Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his [her] choice.

Article 6: Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his [or her] life.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Please send faxes, letters, or emails:

Urging the government to immediately and unconditionally release Dr. Hashem Aghajari as it appears that he is being persecuted for exercising his right to freedom of expression as guaranteed under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party; and
Calling on the government authorities to implement a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, which as cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment is prohibited under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

APPEAL AND INQUIRY MESSAGES SHOULD BE SENT TO:

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi
Minister of Justice

Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: 011 98 21 879 6671(put "ATTN: Director of Internat)
Email: irjpr@iranjudiciary.com (ATTN: HE Ayatollah Shahr)
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami
President of Iran
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: khatami@president.ir
Salutation: Your Excellency:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: webmaster@wilayah.org (Re line: ATTN: office of HE)
Salutation: Your Excellency:

COPIES SENT TO:

His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Av
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: 011 98 21 390 1999 (ATTN: Human Rights Dept.)
Salutation: Dear Mr. Minister

Please send copies of your appeals, and any responses you may receive, or direct any questions you may have to Victoria Baxter, AAAS Science and Human Rights Program, 1200 New York Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20005; tel. 202-326-6797; email vbaxter@aaas.org; or fax 202-289-4950.

The keys to effective appeals are to be courteous and respectful, accurate and precise, impartial in approach, and as specific as possible regarding the alleged violation and the international human rights standards and instruments that apply to the situation. Reference to your scientific organization and professional affiliation is always helpful. To ensure that appeals are current and credible, please do not continue to write appeals on this case after 90 days from the date of the posting unless an update has been issued.