

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers

Ref.: UA IRN 11/2026

(Please use this reference in your reply)

16 July 2026

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 58/21, 60/8, 54/14, 53/4 and 62/12.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning Mr. **Hadi Nikbakht**, Mr. **Fazlollah Nikbakht**, Mr. **Hassan Amiri**, Mr. **Hossein Amiri**, Mr. **Farhad Baranzehi**, and Ms. **Arghavan Fallahi** who are at imminent risk of execution following judicial proceedings that raise serious concerns regarding arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and violations of fair-trial guarantees.

According to the information received:

On 24 October 2025, Mr. **Hadi Nikbakht** and Mr. **Fazlollah Nikbakht** were arrested at their homes, after they attempted to stop authorities from seizing their farmland in Golpayegan. The two brothers were held incommunicado for two months, during which their family, counsel or other persons with a legitimate interest were not informed of their fate and whereabouts before contacting their families from Isfahan (Dastgerd) Central Prison.

The Golpayegan Revolutionary Court conducted a virtual hearing for the two brothers; however, due to a poor internet connection within the prison, they were unable to hear and meaningfully participate in their own proceedings. In June 2026, the two brothers were sentenced to death on charges of *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth) by the Golpayegan Revolutionary Court. After the issuance of the death sentence, a lawyer was hired by their family to appeal the decision, though it is not clear whether the lawyer has been granted access to their case files. In March 2026, their third brother, Mr. Mohammad Nikbakht, a Christian convert, was also arrested at his home, and was held in incommunicado for two months. During this period, his family, counsel or other persons with a legitimate interest were unable to obtain any information regarding his fate and whereabouts. Such deprivation of liberty, combined with the refusal to disclose information concerning his fate or whereabouts, amounts to an enforced disappearance. His case has been raised in UA IRN 7/2026.

On 19 March 2026, Mr. **Hassan Amiri** was arrested by security officers at a checkpoint, after a photo of a bombed site was found on his phone. Four days later, his twin brother Mr. **Hossein Amiri** was also arrested by security officers, and the two brothers were taken for interrogation in Ghezelhesar Prison. The two brothers have reportedly been tortured to make a false confession, to make a statement that they have further footage of the bombed sites on their laptop, despite the fact that neither of them owns a laptop. On 5 May 2026, the two brothers were tried by the Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on charges of collaboration with Israel; and sentenced to death a few days later. They remain in Ghezelhesar Prison, Karaj.

On 28 July 2025, Mr. **Farhad Baranzehi**, a Baloch man from Sistan and Balochistan Province who was arrested on 12 March 2025 during a raid by Iranian security forces on the village of Kopiza, was sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court in Zahedan. The hearing leading to his death sentence was held without prior notification to either Mr. Baranzehi or his legal counsel. Following this verdict, his lawyer appealed the conviction and sentence, and the case was referred to the Supreme Court of Iran. Mr. Baranzehi recently informed his family during a telephone call from prison that the Supreme Court had upheld his death sentence, sentencing him to 12 years' imprisonment on charges of alleged membership in an armed opposition group and to death for "*baghi*" (armed rebellion against the foundation of Islamic Republic) based on his alleged armed activities. The confirmation of his death sentence has significantly increased concerns that the execution may be carried out at any time. Mr. Baranzehi has consistently denied all allegations against him. He has also alleged that he was subjected to severe torture and other forms of ill-treatment by Iranian security forces in order to extract forced confessions.

On 1 July 2026, Ms. **Arghavan Fallahi** was sentenced to death by Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran. Ms. Fallahi was charged with "*baghi*" based on alleged "propaganda activities against the system" and "supporting a group opposed to the system". The sentence was communicated to her through her lawyer. Ms. Fallahi was arrested by security forces on 25 January 2025 in the city of Parand and transferred to Ward 241 of Evin Prison. She was held in solitary confinement for approximately five months, during which she was subjected to lengthy interrogations as well as physical and psychological torture. Following the bombardment and evacuation of Evin Prison in June 2025, she was transferred to solitary confinement in Fashafuyeh Prison. During her detention there, she was denied family visits and access to her lawyer. She is currently being held in the Women's Ward of Evin Prison.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of information made available to us, we express grave concern about the fact that Mr. Hadi Nikhbakht, Mr. Fazlollah Nikbakht, Mr. Hassan Amiri, Mr. Hossein Amiri, Mr. Farhad Baranzehi and Ms. Arghavan Fallahi are at imminent risk of execution. Moreover, we are seriously concerned at the reported confirmation of a death sentence by the Supreme Court in a case where there are serious allegations of torture, coerced confession, denial of access to a lawyer of choice, and where the evidence presented appears insufficient to establish the elements of the offence. We are particularly concerned that imposing and upholding

the death penalty in these circumstances would amount to an arbitrary deprivation of life.

We also wish to recall that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly raised concerns regarding the broad and vague formulation of security-related offences under Iran's Islamic Penal Code (IPC), including those carrying the death penalty, particularly the crimes of *baghi* (armed rebellion against the foundation of Islamic Republic) and *efsad-fel-arz* (corruption on earth), and espionage under the 'Law on Intensifying the Punishment for Espionage and Cooperation with the Zionist Regime and Hostile States against National Security and Interests' enacted in 2025. These concerns have been highlighted in successive reports of the mandate holders (see, *inter alia*, A/80/349, A/79/371, A/HRC/58/62, A/HRC/55/62, A/HRC/49/75 and A/72/322).

The mandate has further noted that procedural safeguards are significantly weakened in cases involving security-related charges. As outlined in the most recent report of the Special Rapporteur, the note to article 48 of Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure severely restricts defendants' ability to choose legal counsel freely, leading to serious violations of fair-trial standards (see A/80/349). The use of confessions obtained under torture has also been consistently reported (see, *inter alia*, A/HRC/19/66, A/HRC/37/68, A/HRC/55/62, A/HRC/58/62 and A/80/349).

In light of these persistent concerns, we wish to reiterate the relevant obligations of your Excellency's Government under international human rights law. We would like to remind your Excellency's Government of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by Iran on 24 June 1975. Article 6(1) of the ICCPR protects the right to life and prohibits the arbitrary deprivation of life. Article 6(2) provides that in countries that have not abolished the death penalty, it may be imposed only for the "most serious crimes" and subject to strict conditions. In general comment No. 36 (para. 35), the Human Rights Committee has clarified that 'most serious crimes' must be read restrictively to mean crimes of extreme gravity involving intentional killing, consistent with the United Nations Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty (ECOSOC resolution 1984/50). The death sentences of the Nikbakht brothers and the Amiri brothers respectively for *efsad-fil-arz* and *espionage*, and Mr. Baranzehi and Ms Fallahi for *baghi* as outlined here do not appear to meet this threshold.

The Committee has further clarified (general comment No. 36, para. 41) that where a death sentence is imposed following proceedings that do not comply with article 14 of the ICCPR, such a sentence is arbitrary and contrary to article 6. This includes, *inter alia*, the use of confessions extracted under torture or ill-treatment, lack of access to effective legal representation, restrictions on the ability to prepare a defence and closed or summary proceedings.

We also recall that the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is absolute and non-derogable under international law. This prohibition is enshrined in article 7 of the ICCPR, which forbids torture and ill-treatment and requires the exclusion of statements obtained through such practices and their use as evidence. Article 10 of the ICCPR further requires that all persons

deprived of liberty be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

We remind that the right not to be arbitrarily deprived of life and the prohibition of torture are *jus cogens* norms, also enshrined in international customary law, from which no derogation is permitted, regardless of contexts of internal political instability or any other public emergency (Human Rights Committee, general comment No. 36, para. 2). The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the ICCPR, is required to undertake all necessary measures to prevent arbitrary deprivation of life by law enforcement officials.

According to general comment No. 36 on article 6 of the ICCPR, the Human Rights Committee emphasized that, “[i]n States parties which have not yet abolished the death penalty, it must not be applied except for the most serious crimes, and then only in the most exceptional cases and under the strictest limits,” and in full compliance with legal and procedural safeguards guaranteeing a fair trial. The Committee further clarified that violations of article 7 of the ICCPR, prohibiting torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, in the context of the imposition or implementation of the death penalty, may render an execution arbitrary and therefore contrary to article 6(1) of the Covenant.

We also wish to refer to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, i.e., the Nelson Mandela Rules (A/RES/70/175), which set out minimum standards for the treatment of all prisoners, including requirements relating to accommodation and contact with the outside world. The Rules also strictly regulate the use of solitary confinement and prohibit its prolonged use (rule 43), which has not been complied with in the case of Ms. Fallahi.

We further recall that article 9 of the ICCPR protects the right to liberty and security of person, including protection from arbitrary arrest and detention, and article 14 guarantees the right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. These provisions require, among other elements, that defendants have prompt and regular access to legal counsel of their choice, sufficient time and facilities to prepare their defence, the right to be present at trial, and the right to examine or have examined the witnesses against them.

We are seriously concerned by the reported enforced disappearances of Mr. Hassan Amiri and Mr. Hossein Amiri, if confirmed they would amount to violations of articles 6, 7, 9 and 16 of the ICCPR, read alone and in conjunction with article 2(3). Moreover, it would entail a violation of article 7, read alone and in conjunction with article 2(3) of the ICCPR with regard to the relatives of the disappeared person. In this respect, we also make reference to general comment No. 36 (2018) on article 6 of the ICCPR, which states, *inter alia*, that extreme forms of arbitrary detention that are themselves life-threatening, in particular enforced disappearances, violate the right to personal liberty and personal security and are incompatible with the right to life (para. 57), and that enforced disappearance constitutes a unique and integrated series of acts and omissions representing a grave threat to life, and States parties must take adequate measures to prevent the enforced disappearance of individuals, and conduct an effective and speedy inquiry to establish the fate and whereabouts of persons who may have been subject to enforced disappearance.

(Para. 58). We are further drawing your Excellency's Government's attention to the absolute and non-derogable prohibition of enforced disappearances (articles 2 and 7) which has attained the status of jus cogens.

We further draw your Excellency's Government's attention to the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, which establishes that no State shall practice, permit or tolerate enforced disappearances. The Declaration also proclaims that each State shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent and terminate acts of enforced disappearance in any territory under its jurisdiction. We further recall that the Declaration sets out the necessary guarantees to be offered by the State. In particular, articles 9, 10, 11 and 12 relate to the rights to a prompt and effective judicial remedy to determine the whereabouts of persons deprived of their liberty; to access of competent national authorities to all places of detention; to be held in an officially recognized place of detention, and to be brought before a judicial authority promptly after detention; to accurate information on the detention of persons and their place of detention being made available to their family, counsel or other persons with a legitimate interest; and to the maintenance in every place of detention of official up-to-date registers of all detained persons.

The full texts of the human rights instruments and standards recalled above are available on www.ohchr.org or can be provided upon request.

In view of the urgency of the matter, we would appreciate a response as soon as possible on the initial steps taken by your Excellency's Government to safeguard the rights of the Nikbakht brothers, the Amiri brothers, Mr. Baranzehi and Ms. Fallahi in compliance with the abovementioned international standards and, in particular, to prevent any irreparable damage to their life or personal integrity.

In addition, considering the increased number of individuals facing death sentences or charges that might lead to a death sentence based on the Islamic Penal Code following repeated reporting on the imposition of the death penalty, we once again call on Iran to reconsider its longstanding position on the death penalty and urge your Excellency's Government to impose a moratorium on all death sentences (see inter alia: UA IRN 1/2024).

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would also be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and any comment you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide information on the legal and factual basis for the arrest, detention, prosecution, conviction and sentencing of Mr. Hadi Nikbakht, Mr. Fazlollah Nikbakht, Mr. Hassan Amiri, Mr. Hossein Amiri, Mr. Farhad Baranzehi and Ms. Arghavan Fallahi including the acts alleged to constitute security charges, and explain how the death penalty in these cases are compatible with article 6 of the ICCPR and the

requirement that capital punishment be limited to the “most serious crimes.”

3. Please explain what steps were taken to ensure respect for due process and fair-trial guarantees, including adequate time and facilities to prepare a defence, the right to a public hearing, and the exclusion of any statements or confessions obtained under torture or coercion.
4. Please provide information on the measures taken by your Excellency’s Government to carry out an inquiry or investigation into the abovementioned allegations regarding enforced disappearances of Mr. Hassan Amiri and Mr. Hossein Amiri. If no inquiry has taken place, please explain why. Please indicate the measures taken to ensure this investigation is prompt, impartial and exhaustive and guarantee accountability and reparations for the victims, if found substantiated.
5. Please indicate the current status of cases mentioned above, and clarify what legal or administrative remedies remain available to them, including avenues for review, retrial, commutation or pardon.
6. Please clarify the circumstances in which the above-mentioned individuals were denied access to legal representation of their own choosing, or in which the legal representation did not have access to their files, and how this aligns with fair-trial obligations. In addition, please provide an update on the legislative process concerning the proposed removal of the note to article 48 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and indicate what provisions are foreseen for individuals adversely affected by this restriction, including those currently on death row.

This communication, and any response received from your Excellency’s Government, will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) at the 60 days mark. Should Your Excellency’s Government respond within 60 days, both the communication and the response, may be published before the 60 days mark. The communications and responses will also be made available in the subsequent periodic report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

We would like to inform your Excellency’s Government that, after having transmitted the new information contained in the present communication to the Government, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention may also transmit the cases through its regular procedure in order to render an opinion on whether the deprivation of liberty was arbitrary or not. The present communication in no way prejudices any opinion the Working Group may render. The Government is required to respond separately to the allegation letter and the regular procedure.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person(s) responsible for the alleged violations.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information upon which the press release will be based is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the above-mentioned allegations. The press release will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government's to clarify the issue/s in question.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

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