



AI Group 48 January 2025 Newsletter

Next Meeting January 9th On Zoom

Amnesty International Responds to the Transfer of Eleven men from the Guantanamo Detention Center

In response to news reports that the U.S. Government transferred 11 men out of the Guantanamo Bay detention center and to Oman, Daphne Eviatar, director of the Security with Human Rights program at Amnesty International USA, made the following statement:

"We welcome the transfer of these 11 men to Oman by the Biden administration, as it was long overdue. The U.S. government now has an obligation to ensure that the government of Oman will respect and protect their human rights.

"We commend President Biden for taking this step before he leaves office and urge him to finally end the abhorrent U.S. practice of indefinite detention without charge or trial at Guantanamo by transferring the remaining detainees who have never been charged with crimes. This would be a tremendous achievement of his presidency."

As one of its five asks to President Biden before he leaves office, Amnesty International USA has urged him to transfer all the detainees cleared for release out of Guantanamo, an important step toward closing the detention facility.



23 Years of Guantanamo: Close the "Detention Center" Now! No More Forever Prisoners

Friday, January 10, 2025
4:30-6:00 PM Pioneer Courthouse Square,
SW Yamhill and Broadway

One day before the 23rd anniversary of the notorious prison's opening, people in Portland will gather for a rally and march calling to close down United States' Guantanamo Bay "detention center" in Cuba. Twenty-seven people remain there. Most of the active military aspects of the "war on terror" have subsided, and for years, over 16 people have been cleared for release but remain incarcerated. Over 700 prisoners have been released, and like those cleared for release, were never charged with a crime. Around the world, Guantanamo is a symbol of the US' hypocrisy of telling others to respect human rights. In the name of the "war on terror," prisoners were subjected to torture and inhumane conditions.

Efforts to shut down Guantanamo have been hampered for years by Congress passing legislation to prohibit funds being used to do so, including transferring prisoners to the US where they might access proper legal processes. Instead, America spends hundreds of millions of dollars a year to maintain this site of injustice.

Cosponsored by Portland Peace and Justice Works

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Urgent Action: Iran Risks of Further Protest-Related Executions

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Fazel Bahramian, Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mehran Bahramian, Mohammad Ghobadlou, Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri, Reza (Gholamreza) Rasaei, Saeed Shirazi, Abolfazl Mehri Hossein Hajilou, Milad Armoun, Alireza Kafaee, Amir Mohammad Khosheghbal, Navid Najaran, Hossein Nemati, Alireza Bamerzpournak, Mehrab (Mehran) Abdullahzadeh (all he/him).

At least 10 individuals in Iran are under sentence of death in connection with the “Woman Life Freedom” nationwide protests of September-December 2022. Iranian authorities have arbitrarily executed 10 others following grossly unfair sham trials and subjected many to torture and other ill-treatment, including beatings, electric shocks, and sexual violence. Concerns of further executions are mounting amid an ongoing execution spree.

Amnesty International has documented how the trials of individuals for capital offenses in connection with the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising have borne no resemblance to meaningful judicial proceedings. Authorities have barred individuals from accessing any lawyers during the investigation phase and have also prevented independently appointed lawyers from attending all court hearings and accessing their clients’ casefiles.

The latest known death sentences in connection to the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising were im-

posed in mid-November 2024 against six individuals in the “Ekbatan” case. They were convicted of murder by Branch 13 of Criminal Court One in Tehran. The six are: Alireza Bamerzpournak, Alireza Kafaee, Amir Mohammad Khosheghbal, Hossein Nemati, Milad Armoun and Navid Najaran. According to a report by BBC Persian, some of the six men were

subjected to torture and other ill-treatment to obtain forced “confessions”. Their appeal is pending before the Supreme Court. The same BBC Persian report stated that Milad Armoun, Navid Najaran, and two others who were acquitted of murder charges in the criminal court case, namely Mohammad Mehdi and Hosseini Mehdi Imani, are also facing trial on capital charges before a Revolutionary Court for the same underlying allegations.

To date, the authorities have arbitrarily executed at least 10 people in connection with the uprising after grossly unfair trials marred by allegations of the use of torture and other ill-treatment to obtain “evidence”. Reza (Gholamreza) Rasaei, a 34-year-old member of the

oppressed Kurdish and Yaresan ethnic and religious minorities in Iran was arbitrarily executed in secret on August 6, 2024. According to information provided to Amnesty International by an informed source, the authorities did not give prior notice to Reza Rasaei, his family, or lawyer.

In the aftermath of the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising, the Iranian authorities have intensified



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their use of the death penalty to instill fear among the population and tighten their grip on power. In 2023, authorities carried out at least 853 executions, marking a 48% increase from 2022. Of these, seven were protest-related: Mohammad Mehdi Karami and Seyed Mohammad Hosseini in January; Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi, and Saeed Yaghoubi in May; Milad Zohrevand in November– all in relation to the 2022 uprising; and Kamran Rezaei in November in relation to the November 2019 nationwide protests. The use of the death penalty has disproportionately impacted Iran’s oppressed Baluchi ethnic minority, who constitute about 5% of Iran’s population, yet accounted for 20% of all executions in 2023. In 2024, the Iranian authorities have continued their execution spree, including against ethnic minorities and dissidents.

Sample Letter

Dear Mr. Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

I am gravely concerned that at least 10 people are at risk of executions in connection with the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising that started in September 2022. Among them are Fazel Bahramian, Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, Mehran Bahramian, Milad Armoun, Alireza Kafaei, Amir Mohammad Khosheghbal, Navid Najaran, Hossein Nemati, Alireza Bamerzpournak, and Mehrab (Mehran) Abdollahzadeh – currently under sentence of death and at risk of execution following grossly unfair trials.

The aforementioned individuals have faced grossly unfair trials before Revolutionary Courts and/or Criminal Courts in different parts of the country. The courts have used torture-tainted “confessions”, some of which were broadcast on state media prior to their trials, to convict them. Methods of torture and other ill-treatment documented by Amnesty International against some of the individuals include beatings, electric shocks, suffocation, sexual violence, and deliberate denial of healthcare.

I urge you to immediately quash all convictions and death sentences stemming from the protests, refrain from further death sentences, and ensure that anyone charged with a recognizable criminal offense is tried in proceedings meeting international fair trial standards without resort to the death penalty. I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release all those convicted and sentenced to death, indicted, or undergoing investigations solely for the exercise of their rights

Take Action

Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.

Click [here](#) to let us know the actions you took on Urgent Action 103.22. It’s important to re-port because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

Head of judiciary,
Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei
c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union,
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050
Bruxelles, Belgium

CC: Supreme Leader ‘Ali Khamenei
c/o Permanent Mission of the Islamic
Republic of Iran to the United Nations
622 3rd Ave, 34th floor,
New York, NY 10017
Email: iranunny@mfa.gov.ir

Please take action as soon as possible until
April 19, 2025

to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. I further urge you to provide those detained access to their families and lawyers of their choosing, protect them from further torture and other ill-treatment, and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials. I urge you to grant independent observers access to capital trials and individuals on death row connected to protests.

Yours sincerely,

Israel: Hezbollah's Use of Inherently Inaccurate Weapons to Launch Unlawful Attacks Violates International Law

DECEMBER 20, 2024 Over the last three months, Amnesty International has investigated crimes under international law committed in the context of Israel's Operation Northern Arrows, which began on September 23, 2024. During the first day alone, Israeli forces carried out at least 1,600 strikes in areas across Lebanon which struck villages and towns across Lebanon, and killed more than 500 people. Hezbollah launched more than 200 rockets towards Israel.

This investigation focuses on Hezbollah's repeated unguided rocket salvos fired into populated civilian areas of Israel for months in attacks that violate international humanitarian law. Amnesty International has previously documented how Israel has carried out unlawful air strikes that killed 49 civilians which must be investigated as war crimes, and issued inadequate evacuation warnings for civilians in violation of their obligations under international law.

Amnesty International documented three Hezbollah rocket attacks on civilian areas of Israel in October 2024 that killed eight civilians and injured at least 16 more that must be investigated as war crimes.

Two Amnesty International weapons experts analysed 12 videos produced by Hezbollah that show examples of such rockets being fired, as well as hundreds of Hezbollah statements posted to their Telegram channel explaining the targets of the strikes. In the weeks prior to the ceasefire agreed between Israel and Lebanon, Hezbollah had announced they were firing rockets at cities and towns including Haifa, Tiberias, Acre, Safed, Karmiel, Kfar Giladi and the Krayot area, among others. In some cases, they insisted they were aiming at military targets, but in others said they were attacking the civilian city or town generally.

In the videos, Amnesty International identified unguided 122mm, 220mm, 240mm and 302mm multiple launch rocket systems. Such rockets are inherently inaccurate, as it is not possible to aim them with any degree of confidence or determine exactly where they will strike. Their use in areas with concentrations of civilians therefore violates the bedrock principle of distinction under international humanitarian law.

"The use of these inherently inaccurate weapons in or near populated civilian areas amount to prima

facie violations of international humanitarian law. Civilians and civilian objects are not targets and must be protected. Direct attacks on civilians and civilian objects and indiscriminate attacks that kill and injure civilians must be investigated as war crimes."

Hezbollah began firing salvos into the occupied Shebaa Farms territory on October 8, 2023 "in solidarity" with Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups following their attack on Israel and atrocity crimes on October 7, 2023. In response, Israel launched attacks on south Lebanon. Since then, Israel and Hezbollah have been engaged in cross-border attacks.

The conflict between Hezbollah and Israel has significantly impacted civilians, particularly in Lebanon. Israeli attacks across Lebanon have killed an estimated 4,047 people including entire families, injured 16,000 more, and displaced an estimated 1.2 million, including through the use of misleading and inadequate "evacuation" warnings. Amnesty International has documented how in recent months Israeli forces carried out four unlawful air strikes on residential buildings in southern Lebanon, in the Bekaa valley and northern Lebanon killing a total of 49 civilians, which must be investigated as war crimes.

Israel has also targeted branches of Qard al-Hasan, a financial institution affiliated with Hezbollah, with more than 30 branches across the country in densely packed residential neighbourhoods in violation of international humanitarian law, given this institution is not a legitimate military target.

Hezbollah attacks in Israel have killed more than 100 people, and an estimated 63,000 residents in northern Israel have been displaced. Hezbollah has fired thousands of inherently inaccurate rockets into Israel and the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. Military research institutes have estimated that more than 95% of the approximately 100,000 to 200,000 long-range weapons in Hezbollah's inventory are unguided. Israel has an Iron Dome air defense system capable of intercepting and destroying rockets.

Although some of the northern border areas struck by indiscriminate Hezbollah rocket fire had been largely evacuated of Israeli civilians, Amnesty International documented three Hezbollah rocket attacks on Israeli cities and towns that killed eight civilians, and injured at least 16 others following

the escalation of the conflict in late September 2024. Amnesty International's Evidence Lab verified a total of 13 videos and six photos related to these attacks.

On October 29, 2024, at approximately 10.40am, Hezbollah fired a salvo of rockets into northern Israel, killing Mohammed Naim, a 23-year-old Palestinian citizen of Israel, when one of the rockets munitions his house in Tarshiha. Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said 13 other people were injured in the strike.

Yasser Naim, Mohammed's father, told Amnesty International that his son was taking his two younger siblings to a shelter inside their home when the rocket hit. Mohammed Naim was only seconds from reaching the shelter safely when he was killed. Yasser Naim said dozens of rockets were directed at the town, and that Israel's Iron Dome missile defence system had failed to intercept some of the incoming projectiles. He added: "Not every home could be protected."

Initially, Hezbollah announced on their Telegram channel that the target was the village of Kfar Vadim. However, after news broke that a Palestinian citizen of Israel had been killed some hours later, Hezbollah revised their announcement and published a video claiming that they had targeted Israeli soldiers in Ma'alot-Tarshiha.

On October 31, 2024, Hezbollah fired 18 salvos of inherently inaccurate rockets at towns on both sides of the border, including the cities of Karmiel and Acre in Israel, and the Haifa suburbs of Krayot, according to their statement posted on Telegram. The Israeli military said a total of 90 rockets from those attacks struck inside Israel. In two of the attacks, a total of seven civilians were killed. Hezbollah said the intended targets of those strikes were Israeli military forces south of Khiam in Lebanon, and the area of Krayot in Israel.

The first strike hit an orchard in the Israeli town of Metula, rather than Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese side of the border some distance away in Khiam, and killed five civilians on a farm: Omer Weinstein, an Israeli man, and four Thai migrant workers, named as Akkapon Wannasai, Prayat Pilasram, Kaweesak Papanang, and Thana Tichantuek. A sixth person was injured.

In the second attack, Mina Shafiq Hassoun, 60,

and her son Karmi Raja Hassoun, 30, Palestinian citizens of Israel, were killed while picking olives in an orchard between Shefa-Amr and Kiryat Ata. Two others were injured.

Hezbollah published a video allegedly showing the weapons launch and stating the target was the civilian suburbs of Krayot along the Israeli coast. The attack was carried out using unguided 220mm Fadi-1 rockets. The inherent inaccuracy of these rockets, and unlawfulness of using them even against military targets in civilian areas, is demonstrated by the fact that the location actually struck was approximately seven kilometres from the announced target.

Under international humanitarian law, the parties to a conflict must at all times distinguish between civilians or civilian objects and combatants or military objectives. Attacks may only be directed against combatants and military objectives. Attacks must not be directed against civilians. Both direct attacks on civilians and civilian objects, and the use of inherently inaccurate munitions on areas containing civilians, which constitutes an indiscriminate attack, violate international humanitarian law. While in some cases Israel places military forces in or near civilian areas, this does not absolve Hezbollah of the responsibility to take feasible precautions at all times to avoid or, in any event, minimize harm to civilians and damage to civilian infrastructure.

Using explosive weapons with wide area effects, such as rocket salvos that contain explosive warheads and impact a large area, in the vicinity of densely populated residential areas is likely to violate the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks and can also lead to disproportionate attacks.

Making the civilian population or civilian objects the object of attacks and launching an indiscriminate attack resulting in death or injury to civilians, are war crimes.

Amnesty International recently released a major report that concluded Israel has committed and is continuing to commit genocide against Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip. Amnesty International has also found evidence of war crimes by Israeli forces, including direct attacks on civilians and civilian object or indiscriminate attacks, as well as other unlawful attacks and collective punishment of the civilian population in the occupied Gaza Strip.

