

International Committee in Search of Justice (ISJ) Statement on the Death Sentences of Two Political Prisoners

The International Committee in Search of Justice (ISJ) is deeply concerned by the recent imposition of death sentences upon Behrouz Ehsani and Mehdi Hassani, both of whom are known supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). These sentences, issued by Branch 26 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court, are based on the bogus charges of “rebellion, waging war against God, corruption on earth, membership in the PMOI,” and “gathering classified information, and conspiracy against national security.”

Behrouz Ehsani, aged 69, was arrested on 6 December 2022, in Tehran and was subjected to torture at the Ministry of Intelligence's detention center (Ward 209 of Evin Prison). He is currently held in Ward 4 of Evin Prison. Mehdi Hassani, aged 48, arrested on 11 September 2022, in Zanjan, has endured both physical and psychological torture and is now imprisoned in Ward 8 of Evin.

The ISJ views these death sentences as part of an ongoing campaign by the Iranian regime to suppress dissent and intimidate those who advocate for change, particularly during significant periods such as the anniversary of the 2022 uprising. The lack of a strong international response to these and other human rights abuses is perceived by the regime as implicit consent to continue such practices.

We, therefore, urgently call upon the United Nations, human rights organizations, the European Union, and its member states to take immediate and decisive action to ensure the release of political prisoners and to prevent the execution of Behrouz Ehsani, Mehdi Hassani, and others facing similar predicaments.

The ISJ also advocates for the Independent Impartial Fact-finding mission (FMII) to visit Iranian prisons, interact directly with prisoners, and particularly meet with political prisoners to accurately report on and address the human rights abuses occurring within the prisons.

In addition, considering Amnesty International's report that Iran accounted for 74% of all executions worldwide last year, it is imperative for the European Union and its member states, which are staunchly opposed to the death penalty, to reconsider their policy of engagement with the Iranian regime. All relations with Iran should be predicated on a verifiable halt to executions, aligning diplomatic actions with international human rights standards.

Immediate international intervention is crucial to saving lives and demonstrating a global commitment to upholding human rights standards. We urge all relevant entities to join us in this vital call for justice and accountability.

18 September 2024

About ISJ:

International Committee In Search of Justice (ISJ) was initially formed in 2008 as an informal group of EU parliamentarians to seek justice for the Iranian democratic opposition. In 2014 it was registered as a non-profit NGO in Brussels expanding its membership beyond elected parliamentarians to former officials and other dignitaries with an interest to promote human rights, freedom, democracy, peace, and stability.