

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 171/06 (MDE 13/067/2006, 16 June 2006) and follow-up (MDE 13/071/2006, 23 June 2006) - Fear for safety / Health concern / Possible prisoner of conscience

IRAN Saleh Kamrani (m), lawyer and human rights defender, aged about 35

Iranian Azerbaijani lawyer and human rights defender, Saleh Kamrani was released on 18 September 2006. He had been held at Section 209 of Evin prison since 14 June 2006 and was subjected to psychological torture as well as denied access to his medication for a heart condition. Five days earlier, on 13 September 2006, he had been sentenced to one year's imprisonment, suspended for five years, under Article 500 of the Islamic Penal Code of Iran which relates to 'propaganda against the system'.

Saleh Kamrani was held in solitary confinement and reportedly subjected to psychological torture, which included threats to arrest his wife. He was also prevented from sleeping as he was repeatedly summoned for lengthy interrogation sessions in the middle of the night. He spent a total of 97 days in solitary confinement, but said that occasionally other prisoners were brought to his cell so that he could not complain to the court that he had never been held with others. In July 2006, Saleh Kamrani's case was sent for investigation by Branch 14 of the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office in Tehran. He also reportedly went on hunger strike for seven days, demanding an end to threats against his wife and the release of one of his lawyers, Ramin Mohammadkhani, who had been arrested during the interrogation before Branch 14 of the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office and had been brought to Evin Prison handcuffed to Saleh Kamrani.

Saleh Kamrani was questioned about all aspects of his life and was threatened. The evidence against him reportedly included speeches, interviews, and correspondence from the previous 15 years, recorded telephone conversations, SMS messages, statements of other people about him, including from his brothers, which had been extracted under torture and even included a picture of Saleh Kamrani wearing a tie. He was also accused of contacting human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and of having contacts with foreigners, including Israelis.

Amnesty International believes that he was detained solely in connection with his activities as a lawyer defending Iranian Azerbaijanis and others and for the peaceful exercise of his internationally recognized rights to freedom of expression and association in support of greater rights for the Iranian Azerbaijani community.

Since Saleh Kamrani's release, he and his family have continued to be harassed by the Iranian authorities, and the charges brought against him have been used to prevent him from practising his profession.

For further information, please see Iran: Human rights defender and lawyer - Appeal Case: Saleh Kamrani AI Index: MDE 13/139/2006, 20 December 2006,
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE131392006?open&of=ENG-IRN>

No further action is required at present. Many thanks to all those who sent appeals.