

**RAN #42: November 16, 2007**

**IRAN: Death sentence against Iranian Kurdish journalist Adnan Hassanpour upheld by Supreme Court.**

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**BACKGROUND:** The death sentence handed down to Iranian Kurdish journalist, writer and human rights activist Adnan Hassanpour on July 16, 2007 has been upheld by the Supreme Court. International PEN considers Hassanpour to be detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to free expression, and calls for his immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a signatory.

Hassanpour, who was arrested on January 25, 2007, is believed to have been convicted of being a *mohareb* ('enemy of God') and 'acting against national security', apparently for expressing his views on Kurdish issues. His sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court on October 22, 2007, but his lawyer was not notified until November 5, 2007. Hassanpour now plans to appeal the sentence, a process which is expected to take some considerable time.

Adnan Hassanpour is a journalist and advocate of cultural rights for Iranian Kurds. In April 2007, the Mehr News Agency, said to have close links with Iran's judiciary, apparently alleged that Adnan Hassanpour had been in contact with Kurdish opposition groups and had helped two people from Khuzestan province, who were wanted by the authorities, to flee from Iran. However, in an interview carried by the online publication *Rooz*, Hassanpour's lawyer, Saleh Nikbakht, said that the charges related to a phone conversation he had with a staff member of Radio Voice of America (see: <http://www.roozonline.com/english/archives/2007/07/006302.php>).

International PEN is deeply concerned about an apparent pattern of repression against journalists and human rights activists in Iranian Kurdistan, which has been ongoing since unrest broke out in the Kurdish areas of Iran in July 2005, and was violently suppressed by the authorities. Several other Iranian-Kurdish journalists are currently detained, including Kaveh Javanmard, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand and Ejlal Qavami.

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**APPEAL LETTER**

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic  
His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: [info@leader.ir](mailto:info@leader.ir) or [istiftaa@wilayah.org](mailto:istiftaa@wilayah.org)

Your Excellency:

As a member of PEN Canada, the Canadian centre of the writers' organization, International PEN, I write to express my deep dismay at the death sentence handed down to journalist Adnan Hassanpour, which was recently upheld by the Supreme Court.

I am gravely concerned about reports that Adnan Hassanpour has been ill-treated in detention. I seek reassurance that his wellbeing is guaranteed.

With my colleagues at PEN Canada, I call for Adnan Hassanpour's immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a signatory.

Yours sincerely,

[your signature and name here]

COPIES TO:

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
Email: via Judiciary website: [Iranjudiciary.org/feedback\\_en.html](http://Iranjudiciary.org/feedback_en.html)  
Salutation: Your Excellency

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**Please send copies of your appeal to the following Canadian authorities:**

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