

Editorial

Dear friends of ACAT,

On 26 June, we hosted our Veillée pour les Victimes de la Torture in the Chapelle Christ Roi, for the first time together with the Pope's Prayer Network, the Jesuits of Christ-Roi and the Youth Ministry. Michele Camposeo and his co-musicians provided us with a dignified and sustaining setting with their musical accompaniment. We thank everyone for their contribution and we look forward to organising the Veillée together again next year in order to remembering the victims of torture and inhumane treatment together in prayer.

Newsletter No. 12 October is dedicated to the International Day for the Abolition of the Death Penalty on 10 October. Together with the Comité de défense des droits de l'homme en Iran and the Iranian Students Organisation, with the support of Amnesty International Luxembourg, we have put the topic "Death Penalty in Iran" on the agenda. Attached to this newsletter you will find an appeal letter in support of Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri (Iran) who was sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court in Ahvaz at the beginning of April 2023.

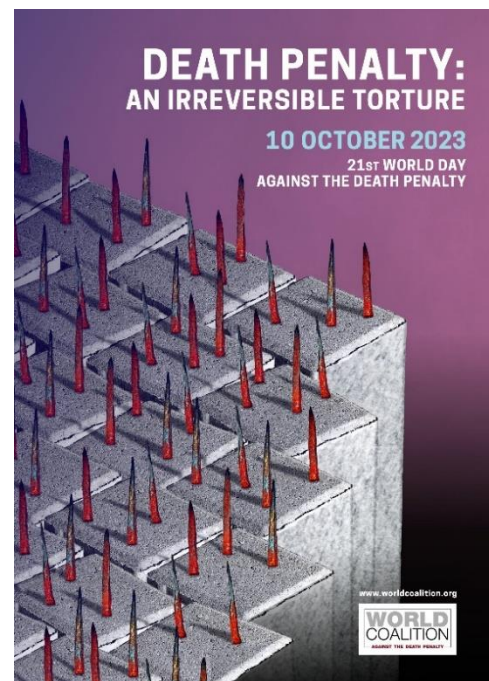
On 10 October at noon, we invite you to a vigil at the Place d'Armes. We are happy to cooperate with the Comité de défense des droits de l'homme en Iran and the Iranian Students Organisation, and we will continue this cooperation in March 2024 in a campaign on the topic of "Women and Torture", with a focus on Iran.

Last but not least: on page 4 you will find the preliminary programme around 10 December 2023, for the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights! We will keep you updated on our homepage www.acat.lu and kindly ask you to promote all ACAT activities in your networks.

Christina Fabian, President of ACAT Luxembourg

Save the dates

- **ACAT vigil together with the Iranian Students Association and "Comité Nationale - Comité pour la défense des droits de l'Homme en Iran", supported by Amnesty International Luxembourg**, on the occasion of the International and European Day against the Death Penalty
10 October 2023 12:00 Place d'Armes Luxembourg City
- **Vernissage "Pictures for the Human Rights"**
18 November 2023 18:00 at the Evangelical Trinity Church, 5 rue de la Congrégation, Luxembourg City
- **Matinée Musicale on the occasion of the celebration of 75 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**
26 November 2023 11:00 Centre Culturel "Schéiss"
142 Val-Sainte-Croix L-1370 Luxembourg
- **Friedrich Spee Evening - Music and text**
28 November 2023 18:30 at the Protestant Trinity Church, 5 rue de la Congrégation, Luxembourg City



Political Death Penalties Resulting from the Woman Life Freedom Movement

Death Penalty and Political Execution in Iran

The death penalty in Iran has drawn significant international attention and concern, especially for its use in both criminal and political cases. Over the first eight months of 2023, Iran witnessed 489 executions, according to Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO), ranking it second only to China in terms of the death penalty rate. The legal system in Iran allows the death penalty to be applied for various offences such as drug-related crimes and murder, and also the execution of political prisoners. Many political prisoners face vague charges such as "enmity against God" (Moharebeh), "spreading corruption on Earth" (Efsad-e Fel Arz), or "insulting the Prophet" (Sab-al-Nabi), often simply for criticizing the government, expressing dissent, or engaging in activism. These cases lack transparency, with reports of torture, coerced confessions, inadequate legal representation, and unfair trials, all contributing to a deep erosion of trust in the judicial system.

The targeting of political prisoners in Iranian jails goes beyond death penalties. Instances of torture, the misuse of psychiatric drugs and treatments, and housing political prisoners alongside violent inmates have resulted in tragic incidents. For example, Javad Rouhi, a 31-year-old imprisoned protester, died under suspicious circumstances on August 31, 2023, after enduring horrifying torture and psychological complications.

Political Executions linked to the Woman Life Freedom Movement

The death of Jina Mahsa Amini on September 16, 2022, while in the custody of the Iranian morality police, ignited a nationwide protest known as the "Woman-Life-Freedom Movement," which continues to this day. At least seven men have been executed on charges related to these protests, namely Mohsen Shekari, Majid Reza Rahnava, Mohammad Mehdi Karami, Seyed Mohammad Hosseini, Saleh Mirhashemi, Said Yaghoubi, and Majid Kazemi. Additionally, the Center for Human Rights in Iran has identified at least ten more instances of political executions in 2023.

Various UN representatives, including the special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iran and members of the Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, consistently express concerns about Iran's use of the death penalty to suppress fundamental rights like freedom of thought, expression, and assembly. In a report dated May 9, 2023, UN experts explicitly highlight the use of the death penalty and executions by the government of Iran as tools of political repression. The execution of political prisoners has deep historical roots in the Islamic Republic of Iran, with examples such as the execution of four Iranian army generals just days after the Islamic revolution on February 16, 1979.

Thousands of Iranians were sentenced to death and executed by the Islamic revolutionary courts up until the late 1980s due to their beliefs or political affiliations, after unfair trials. Numerous reports also document widespread torture, including the rape of female prisoners arrested for political activism before their executions. Iran's authorities have consistently employed death penalties, executions, and enforced disappearances against dissidents since the 1980s, with an increase following each wave of protests in the country.

Currently, at least seven prisoners linked to the 2022 protests await decisions on their appeals by the supreme court. These prisoners include Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri, Ebrahim Naroui, Kambiz Kharout, Mansour Dahmardeh, Shoeib Mirbaluchzahi Rigi, Manouchehr Mehman Navaz, and Mohammad Ghobadlou. Additionally, at least three prisoners, including Milad Armoun, Mohammad Mehdi Hosseini, and Alireza Kafaei, are facing charges of enmity against God in trial courts, which carry the potential for death sentences. Beyond those detained in connection with the 2022 protests, Abbas Deris, arrested following the November 2019 nationwide protests, faces a serious risk of execution, as the supreme court has issued a verdict of enmity against God. Below, we delve into the stories of two of these prisoners, with similar stories shared by others.

Condemned to Death: Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri

Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri, a 40-year-old Iranian citizen, was arrested on December 20, 2022, amid the protests following the death of Jina Mahsa Amini. He now faces the serious possibility of being executed, having been found guilty of charges, including "enmity against God," "corruption on earth," and "armed rebellion against the state" (Baghi), resulting in a death sentence.

On Wednesday, November 16, 2022, several Iranian cities witnessed mass protests in support of the Woman-Life-Freedom movement and to commemorate the victims of the November 2019 repression, which was dubbed the "bloodiest crackdown on protesters since the Islamic Revolution in 1979," according to Reuters. Security forces responded with force, attacking and firing upon unarmed individuals, leading to numerous casualties, injuries, and arrests of protesters across the country. Around 17:30 on that day, a group of armed individuals attacked protesters



Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri

in the market area of Izeh, a southwestern city in Iran, resulting in the tragic deaths of Kian Pirfalak, aged 9, and Sepehr Maghsoudi, aged 14. This incident stirred widespread anger among Iranians toward the Islamic republic. Subsequently, the authorities accused Mojahed of involvement in the attack, leading to his detention on December 20, 2022, during an event described by state media as an "armed clash."

Mojahed's family and his chosen lawyer have been denied any information about his whereabouts and legal proceedings until April 2023. He endured an unfair trial, with authorities preventing him from selecting a lawyer. He has suffered physical and psychological torture and chemical coercion for a forced confession. In December 2022, state media broadcasted his coerced confessions, revealing him in a vulnerable state with visible injuries. Mojahed's family, particularly his mother and sister Negar Kourkouri, have faced pressure and threats since his arrest due to their advocacy on his behalf. On June 22, 2022, his family reported that security forces raided their home and arbitrarily arrested Negar.

In April 2022, judicial authorities pronounced the death sentence for Mojahed Kourkouri. The supreme court of Iran will decide his appeal.

In Danger of Death Penalty: Milad Armoun

Milad Armoun, a 24-year-old Iranian citizen, was arrested during the Woman-Life-Freedom protests on November 3, 2022. He now faces a potential death penalty, charged with "enmity against God" and murder, based on coerced confessions and fabricated evidence.

On October 26, 2022, marking 40 days since Jina Mahsa Amini's death, extensive protests erupted in Iranian cities in support of the Woman-Life-Freedom movement which were responded by security forces responded aggressively. In an incident in Ekbatan town, Arman Aliverdi, a member of the Islamic Republic Guard Corps' (IRGC) Basij paramilitary force, was injured and later passed away. On November 3, 2022, Fars News, affiliated with the IRGC, released a report including a video featuring the blindfolded Milad as the alleged stabber, although Milad vehemently denies the accusation in the video.

Reports from human rights organizations reveal Milad's ordeal of severe physical and psychological torture to extract coerced confessions, along with the denial of legal representation and public defenders during trials.

The letter is to be sent to

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

Don't forget to put your name, surname and address, the date and your signature.
Write before 31 October 2023.

The letter has to be franked at **1,40 €**.

Currently, Milad faces the looming threat of the death penalty, charged with enmity against God and murder. These charges have historically led to the execution of thousands of political prisoners, including seven cases linked to the Woman-Life-Freedom movement.



Manifestation Luxembourg, Woman Life Freedom 2022

WHAT CAN WE DO ?

On 10 October 2023, the World Day against the Death Penalty, ACAT Luxembourg will hold a vigil at Place d'Armes in Luxembourg City in partnership with the "Comité Nationale-Comité de défense des droits de l'homme en Iran" and the Iranian Students Association, with the support of Amnesty International Luxembourg, starting at 12:00. Our aim is to make the public and politicians more aware of the pressing issues related to the death penalty in Iran. We ask you to join us and contribute to the high visibility of this action by mobilising more participants.

International pressure has proven to be very effective in averting death sentences and executions in Iran or reducing their frequency.

We therefore ask you to sign the appeal in support of Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri. In doing so, we join Amnesty International's urgent appeal of 28 June 2023. Amnesty International has published a petition urging an end to the rampant wave of death sentences in Iran. You can sign this petition using the link pasted below.

<https://www.amnesty.lu/nos-petitions/halte-a-la-vague-dexecutions-en-iran/>

You can find more information about Iran and the violation of human rights, as well as the text of a petition drawn up by the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran, on our website www.acat.lu.

For more information and newsletters in French and German, please visit www.acat.lu



“Pictures for the Human Rights”
at École Privée Fieldgen from April 18th until May 16th



Nuit des Veilleurs 2023
at the Chapelle du Christ-Roi

ACAT Program November – December–January

Exhibition “Pictures for the Human Rights”

Place Clairefontaine Luxembourg
16.11 – 14.12.2023

Vernissage 18.11.2023 18:00h

Trinity Church, 5 rue de la Congrégation Luxembourg

Guided tours & inclusive guided tours

Information: risch@youngacat.lu

10 December – International Human Rights Day

Ecumenical celebration, place and hour to be announced

Inauguration of the ACAT Human Rights Path including guided tour (if the weather permits)

10.12.2023, Place Clairefontaine

Matinée musicale to celebrate 75 years of the Human Rights Declaration

26.11.2023, 11:00 h, Centre Culturel „Schéiss“, 142 Val-Sainte-Croix, Luxembourg

“A Friedrich Spee Evening– Music & Texts”

28 November 2023, at Trinity Church, Luxembourg
12 December 2023 18:30h in the Jesuit Church, Trier
6 January 2024 at St. Joseph Church, Esch/Alzette

ACAT Charity Auction - 75 Years Human Rights Declaration

We are delighted to have secured a respected professional auctioneer for our art auction, who will auction our artworks with passion and expertise. It is a great opportunity to discover modern and contemporary art.

In total, **75** fascinating works of art by talented national and international artists will be presented.

At the end of October, you will have access to our digital catalogue containing all the artworks and detailed information about the auction.

To ensure the success of this auction, we count on your help. Please share the information about the event and the catalogue in your networks and your environment. The more people who know about this unique opportunity, the better. Pre-bids are possible.

We would like to thank you in advance for your support and involvement in spreading the word about this event.

VIEWING OF THE ARTWORKS 23-26 November

- ◆ Thursday 23.11.2023 16:00 - 20:00
18:00 Afterwork & Apéro
- ◆ Friday 24.11.2023 14:00 - 18:00
- ◆ Saturday 25.11.2023 10:00 - 18:00

◆ Sunday 26.11.2023:

10:00 Viewing
11:00 - 13:00 Musical Matinée & Apéro

14:00 AUCTION

Exhibition & Auction at Centre Culturel “Schéiss”
142, Val-Sainte-Croix - L-1370 Luxembourg



Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture

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