

URGENT ACTION

TORTURED DISSIDENT RAPPER FACING SPURIOUS CHARGES

Dissident rapper, Toomaj Salehi, is arbitrarily detained in Esfahan central prison, Esfahan province, in relation to his peaceful activities, including participation in the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising and social media posts critical of the Iranian authorities. In June 2024, the Supreme Court overturned his conviction and death sentence, and sent the case to a lower court. He is also facing new spurious charges in separate proceedings solely for peacefully exercising of human rights, including freedom of expression through his music.

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 **Second Urgent Action 44.24**. It’s important to report 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

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

Dear Mr. Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,

Rapper **Toomaj Salehi**, 33, is arbitrary detained in Esfahan central prison, Esfahan province, in relation to his participation and support of the “Woman Life Freedom” uprising, his music, publicly condemning Iranian authorities’ oppression and executions, and calling for human rights and freedom for people in Iran. On June 22, 2024, Toomaj Salehi’s lawyer posted on X [formerly Twitter] that that Branch 39 of the Supreme Court overturned Toomaj Salehi’s conviction and death sentence for “corruption on earth” (efsad fel arz). An informed source told Amnesty International that the case was referred to Branch 5 of the Revolutionary Court of Esfahan by July 7, 2024, noting that the charges remained unknown. The source added that on July 10, 2024, intelligence agents interrogated Toomaj Salehi again without a lawyer present in relation to two new cases both solely stemming from his peaceful activities, including his new song released in March 2024 while imprisoned. He was charged in two cases the same day. If convicted, he faces prolonged imprisonment.

I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release Toomaj Salehi, as he is held solely for the peaceful exercise of his human rights, and to drop all charges against him related to exercising his right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Pending his release, provide Toomaj Salehi with adequate healthcare and regular visits with his family and lawyers; and protect him from further torture and other ill-treatment. A prompt, independent, effective, and impartial investigations into his torture allegations must be conducted, with those suspected of criminal responsibility brought to justice in fair trials.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In a media interview on October 30, 2022, following **Toomaj Salehi's** arrest in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province, the Esfahan prosecutor, Mohammad Mousavian, violated Toomaj Salehi's right to the presumption of innocence by publicly accusing him of playing a "key role in instigating, inciting, and encouraging riots". In violation of his rights not to self-incriminate and to presumption of innocence, state media outlets broadcast multiple propaganda videos accusing Toomaj Salehi of "inciting sedition and street riots" and airing his forced "confessions" obtained while he was detained without access to a lawyer and subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. While briefly released on bail in November 2023, Toomaj Salehi publicly said agents injected him with an unidentified substance in his neck. Following arrest, Toomaj Salehi was transferred to a detention facility run by the Intelligence Organization of the Revolutionary Guards inside Esfahan central prison before being moved to the public ward after 252 days.

On July 2, 2023, Toomaj Salehi was tried before Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court in Esfahan. He was only permitted 30 minutes to meet with his lawyers prior to trial, thereby violating his right to adequate time and facilities to prepare a defense. On July 10, 2023, Toomaj Salehi's lawyer said in a media interview that Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court in Esfahan had issued its verdict, convicting him of six charges and sentencing him to a total of 18 years and nine months in prison. According to his lawyer, the court sentenced him to six years and three months in prison under the Note to Article 286 of the Islamic Penal Code, which is the charge of "corruption on earth" (efsad fel arz). In November 2023, Branch 39 of the Supreme Court overturned the Revolutionary Court ruling and referred the case back to the same lower court for retrial. On January 21, 2024, Toomaj Salehi's lawyer reported on X that the Revolutionary Court called the Supreme Court's ruling "advisory" and sent the case back to the prosecutor's office and ordered a new indictment with 10 charges to be issued, including the two he was previously acquitted of, as well as two new charges. In April 2024, Branch 1 of Revolutionary Court in Esfahan sentenced Toomaj Salehi to death for "corruption on earth" (efsad fel arz).

On November 18, 2023, after the Supreme Court had overturned the Revolutionary Court verdict, Toomaj Salehi was released on bail. On November 26, 2023, he published a video on YouTube detailing the torture to which he was subjected and the formal complaints he had made to the authorities about his detention. After the authorities re-arrested him on November 30, 2023, the judiciary announced that he "was detained after making baseless and unsubstantiated claims online and was charged with 'spreading lies with the intention of disturbing the public mind'". In early January 2024, his lawyer publicly said that Toomaj Salehi was sentenced to one year in prison in relation to this case, which was before a Revolutionary Court; an appeal court upheld this conviction and prison sentence in mid-February 2024. All of Toomaj Salehi's trials have been grossly unfair.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Persian, English, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: November 30, 2024

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Toomaj Salehi (he; him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8055/2024/en/>