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**International Commission
against the Death Penalty**

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Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: Minors in Iran could face death penalty on protest-related charges

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP or the Commission) is deeply concerned after hearing reports that suggest that three teenage protesters, who were arrested during the recent crackdowns on protests in Iran, face charges that carry the death penalty. According to reports reaching the ICDP, prosecutors with the Revolutionary Court system, a special branch of the judiciary that tries national security crimes, have accused the three minors namely, Arin Farzamnia, Amin Mehdi Shokrollahi, and Amir Mehdi Jaffari, on charges of killing a police officer and of “corruption on earth (*efsad-e fel-arz*).” Both crimes carry the death penalty in Iran. The reports noted that the trial, which was held on Wednesday, 30 November, and Thursday, 1 December proceeded with the defendants being refused access to a lawyer and instead given a court-appointed counsel. At the trial, the presiding judge said the three teenage boys could be tried alongside the adults because the judge was trained for both criminal and juvenile hearings. There is increasing concern as Iranian authorities have carried out the executions of two men, Mohsen Shekari and Majidreza Rahnavard, reportedly both 23 years old, on similar charges during the recent protests.

“I join ICDP Commissioners in expressing our deep concern at the imminent possibility of death penalty-applicable crimes being imposed on minors. We note that Iran is a State Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which explicitly prohibits the imposition of the death penalty on people below 18 years of age. These three minors should not be facing the cruel, inhuman treatment of potentially facing the death penalty in their tender years. Moreover, in ICDP’s experience, the capital punishment does not lessen the pain of the victims and fails to deter crime more effectively than other punishments. The death penalty is a cruel and inhuman punishment that amounts to a denial of human dignity and integrity,” said ICDP President Judge Navi Pillay.

The Commission strongly believes that the death penalty is a brutally violent act not only against minors but to the whole population. As established by facts and research, capital punishment often inflames a further cycle of violence and undermines the legitimacy of its rulers. The ICDP calls on the Iranian government to stop handing out death sentences to any person, including these three minors and consider joining the vast majority of countries who do not use the death penalty in law or in practice.



North-South Prize
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Background

Composed of 24 Commissioners of high international standing following highly respected careers in public service and representing all regions of the world, the International Commission against the Death Penalty acts with total independence. The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in countries that observe a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in states that retain capital punishment. ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, Governments, and nongovernmental organizations to advocate for worldwide abolition of the death penalty. The work of ICDP is supported by a geographically diverse Support Group of Member States who are committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Its Secretariat is based in Madrid and is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Commission.



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