

# URGENT ACTION

## FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED SWEDISH-IRANIAN AT RISK OF EXECUTION

Iranian authorities are subjecting Swedish-Iranian academic Ahmadreza Djalali, sentenced to death following a grossly unfair trial, to enforced disappearance, a crime under international law, since 24 June 2025. Authorities are denying his family and lawyers information about his fate and whereabouts, raising fears that he is at grave risk of secret execution amid the ongoing execution crisis in Iran. Authorities have also denied Ahmadreza Djalali access to timely and adequate health care, including following a heart attack in May 2025, further heightening fears for his health and life while forcibly disappeared.

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei*

*c/o Embassy of Iran to the United Nations in Geneva, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland*

*Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,*

Swedish-Iranian academic and medical doctor Ahmadreza Djalali, arbitrarily detained in Iran since April 2016 and sentenced to death following a grossly unfair trial, is being subjected to enforced disappearance, a crime under international law. Since 24 June 2025, Iranian authorities have denied his family and lawyers information about this fate and whereabouts despite their repeated efforts to obtain information. This raises fears he is at grave risk of secret execution amid an ongoing execution crisis and as the authorities have intensified their use of the death penalty under the guise of national security in the aftermath of the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran in June 2025. Ahmadreza Djalali last communicated with his family on 23 June 2025, when he briefly called after the Israeli military's [deliberate air strikes](#) on Tehran's Evin prison that day. After the air strikes, the authorities transferred about 180 men prisoners from Evin prison to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary. According to information received by Ahmadreza Djalali's family from an informed source, he was amongst those transferred but was suddenly taken to an unknown location on 24 June 2025.

Throughout 2025, Ahmadreza Djalali's health deteriorated further, including following a heart attack in early May 2025, while authorities denied him access to adequate healthcare, further heightening fears for his health and life while forcibly disappeared. In October 2017, a Revolutionary Court sentenced Ahmadreza Djalali to death for "corruption on earth" (efsad-e fel-arz) after a grossly unfair trial on unsubstantiated allegations of collaborating and communicating with Israel, which he has repeatedly denied. Ahmadreza Djalali's detention is arbitrary due to the gravity of the violations of his fair trial rights, including to the presumption of innocence; to not self-incriminate; to a trial before an independent, competent and impartial tribunal; to access a lawyer from the time of arrest; to an adequate defence; to be protected from torture and other ill-treatment and to meaningfully challenge the legality of his detention.

***I call on you to immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of Ahmadreza Djalali, halt any plans to execute him, quash his conviction and death sentence, and immediately release him as his detention is rendered arbitrary due to the severe non-observance of his fair trial rights. Pending release, he must be provided prompt and ongoing access to his family, lawyers, adequate medical care and protected from further torture and other ill-treatment. Prompt, independent, effective and impartial investigations into those suspected of ordering, committing, aiding or abetting unlawful acts must be conducted and suspects of such offences brought to justice in fair trials. An official moratorium on executions must also be established with a view to abolishing the death penalty.***

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since the Iranian authorities began subjecting Ahmadreza Djalali to enforced disappearance, his family and lawyers have repeatedly gone to multiple offices, including of the prosecution and Evin prison, in order to obtain information about his fate and whereabouts but either told to go to a different office or told there is no information available. In mid-September 2025, according to an informed source, Evin prison officials said that he is not being held there and that only the prosecutor (*dadsetan*) on his case can make decisions on access to him.

In a letter written from prison in August 2017, Ahmadreza Djalali said that following arrest he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment in order to force him to “confess” to being a spy, including threats to execute him, kill or otherwise harm his children, who live in Sweden, and his mother, who lived in Iran and died in 2021. In the same letter, Ahmadreza Djalali wrote that he was held solely because of his refusal to use his academic ties in European institutions to spy for the Iranian authorities. Ahmadreza Djalali was sentenced to death for “corruption on earth” (*efsad-e fel-arz*) in October 2017 after a grossly unfair trial before a Revolutionary Court which relied primarily on “confessions” that Ahmadreza Djalali said were obtained under torture and other ill-treatment while he was held in prolonged solitary confinement and denied access to a lawyer. Amnesty International has repeatedly [held](#) that “corruption on earth” fails to meet requirements for clarity and precision needed in criminal law. On 9 December 2018, his lawyers learned that the Supreme Court had upheld his death sentence without granting them the opportunity to file defence submissions. In May 2022, Ahmadreza Djalali’s lawyers filed a request for judicial review to the Supreme Court and, separately, an appeal to the head of judiciary under Article 477 the Code of Criminal Procedure to order a review of the case; no responses have been received over three years later. Throughout Ahmadreza Djalali’s arbitrary detention, Iranian authorities [denied him](#) access to timely and adequate health care. In 2025, Ahmadreza Djalali’s health deteriorated further and on 9 May 2025, he suffered a heart attack and was not provided medical care until the prison medical clinic opened five hours later, and then denied him the specialized care he required until 10 May following international interventions, including public calls from human rights organizations and activists as well as intervention from Sweden’s Minister of Foreign Affairs. Following this, authorities again denied him access to timely and adequate health care, including follow up examinations on his heart. Amnesty International has previously [warned](#) that Iranian authorities held Ahmadreza Djalali hostage and threatened to execute him to compel third parties to swap him for former Iranian officials convicted and/or on trial abroad as well as to refrain from future prosecutions of Iranian officials. The circumstances of the pardon that the Swedish government provided Hamid Nouri, a former Iranian official convicted and sentenced in 2022 to life imprisonment for his role in the 1988 prison massacres in Iran, and his [return](#) to Iran from Sweden on 15 June 2024 confirmed Amnesty International’s earlier concerns that the Iranian authorities were holding Swedish nationals hostage to swap them for Hamid Nouri.

Ahmadreza Djalali is a medical doctor and academic who was living in Sweden and was also a visiting professor in disaster medicine at the Vrije Universiteit Brussels. Following arrest, he was held in Evin prison for seven months in section 209, under the control of the Ministry of Intelligence, which included three months in prolonged solitary confinement, without access to a lawyer. In November 2017, the [UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention](#) called on Iranian authorities to release him and accord him an enforceable right to compensation and other reparations. The Working Group found that his right to a fair trial had been violated so gravely “as to give Mr Djalali’s deprivation of liberty an arbitrary character”. From late November 2020 to early April 2021, Ministry of Intelligence agents tortured and otherwise ill-treated Ahmadreza Djalali while he was held incommunicado in prolonged solitary confinement in section 209. During this time, Ministry of Intelligence agents kept a bright light on in his cell 24 hours a day, which he said caused him great mental distress, and forced him to sleep on the floor on a thin blanket for over five months.

Since the Woman Life Freedom uprising in 2022, the authorities have weaponized the [death penalty](#) to instil fear among the population. After the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran in June 2025, Iranian officials, including Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje’i, the head of judiciary, [called](#) for expedited trials and executions for “supporting” or “collaborating” with hostile states, including Israel. Since 13 June 2025, at least 10 men have been arbitrarily executed on politically-motivated charges and/or accusations of espionage for Israel, including [Babak Shahbazi](#) on 17 September 2025 after he was sentenced to death by a Revolutionary Court in May 2025 following a grossly unfair trial. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception regardless of the nature of the crime, the characteristics of the offender, or the method used by the state to kill the prisoner. The death penalty is a violation of the right to life and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Persian, English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 31 December 2025

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Ahmadreza Djalali (he/him)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8279/2024/en/>

## ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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