**Iran: More Than 800 Executions in 2015 as the World Day Against the Death Penalty Approaches**

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Iran Human Rights

http://iranhr.net/en/articles/2335/

On 10 October 2015, the 13th World Day Against the Death Penalty is raising awareness around the application of the death penalty for drug-related offences, to reduce its use.

As the 13th World Day Against the Death Penalty, approaches on 10. October, reports by Iran Human Rights (IHR) show that Iran's use of the death penalty in 2015 is higher than in more than 25 years.

According to a recent report by IHR, more than 800 people have been executed by 8. October 2015. More than 500 of those executed were sentenced to death for drug-related charges. Reports indicate that most of those executed for drug offences in Iran belong to the marginalized groups in the Iranian society. Moreover, unfair trials, use of torture to confessions and lack of access to lawyer are common practice for drug convicts in Iran.

Reports also indicate that some of those executed might even be innocent. **[Mahmood Barati](http://iranhr.net/en/articles/2309/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**, a school teacher who was solely sentenced to death for a false testomony by another drug convict, is an example of this practice.

The United Nations' Office for Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) cooperates with Iran in the fight against the drug trafficking. Several European countries contribute directly or through regional projects to this cooperation. IHR and several human rights NGOs have previously called on the UNODC to freeze its anti-narcotic cooperation with Iran. Several countries such as Ireland, Denmark and UK have ceased their funding of the UNODC project in Iran, in order "not to contribute" directly or indirectly to the execution of several hundred people every year.

On the occassion of the 13th World Day against the Death penalty, IHR once again called on the UNODC and the countries funding the UNODC projects in Iran to condition their anti-narcotic cooperation on a moratorium on the death penalty for drug offences. Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, the spokesperson of IHR said: " Iranian authorities have admitted that the executions have not contributed to a reduction in the drug crimes. As long as the cooperation between UNODC and Iran continues, the UNODC and countries cooperating with Iran on law enforcement against the drug trafficking must be held accountable for Iran's arbitrary execution of several hundred people for drug offences every year"