

18/11/02

BS-608/02

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

With request for inclusion in the debate on topical and urgent subjects of major importance to Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure

By Alima Boumédiène Thiery, Per Gahrton, Joost Lagendijk and Nelly Maes
On behalf of the GREEN/EFA Group

On Iran

The European Parliament,

A. Whereas Professor Hashem Aghajari, head of the history department of the Tarbiat Modaress University of Teheran has been sentenced to death for apostasy on 9 November after a philosophical speech in which he rejected demands to "blindly follow" clerical rule, and whereas this sentence comes on top of 74 lashes of the whip, eight years imprisonment and 10 years prohibition to teaching,

B. Whereas the verdict was issued after a closed trial without a jury

C. Whereas Professor Aghajari is a prominent member of the reformist movement supporting President Mohammad Khatami

D. Whereas the verdict against Hashemi Aghajari touched off days of demonstrations, mainly by university students, in Iran

E. Whereas the Iranian parliament called on 10 November for the sentence to be overturned whereas Aghajari has declined to appeal the sentence

F. Whereas the highest religious leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has ordered the revision of Aghajari's death sentence by the court of appeal,

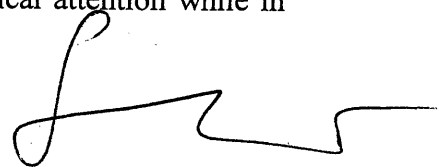
G. Considering the ongoing EU-Iran talks, including the visit of Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi to Brussels on 18 November, in view of launching negotiations on a cooperation and trade agreement, as well as a separate dialogue on human rights on the Troika level in December

1. Condemns the death sentence against Professor Hashem Aghajari and calls for his immediate release

2. Insists that the Islamic Republic of Iran has an obligation to protect free of expression under Art. 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which it is a party

3. Expresses its concern about reports that Professor Aghajari 's health is rapidly deteriorating and calls on the authorities to assure that he receives the correct medical attention while in detention

325.123



4. Calls for the release of all political prisoners and the respect for the right to the freedom of expression
5. Notes positively that the biggest protest demonstrations in the last 3 years passed reportedly without major arrests or police interference and welcomes this as a hopeful sign for growing openness towards civil liberties and towards basic democratic rights in Iran
6. Welcomes the two reform proposals by President Khatami as a decisive step to democracy which have been approved by Parliament, aiming at a restriction of the absolute powers of the Council of Guardians and an enlargement of the limited legislative powers of government
7. Notes that President Khatami, his cabinet and dozens of deputies have announced to resign in case that the Council of Guardians should veto the proposed legislation and calls on all decision makers concerned to grasp this historical chance for a fundamental democratisation of Iran
8. Reiterates the importance it attributes to improved relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and stresses how much closer ties are linked to progress on the respect for human rights and democracy
9. Instructs its President to forward the resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.