



To the attention of:

- His Excellency Masoud Pezeshkian, President of Iran
- Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader
- Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, Head of judiciary

31 October 2024

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you on behalf of the World Medical Association (WMA), the global federation of National Medical Associations representing millions of physicians worldwide, acting for the advancement of good practice, medical ethics and medical accountability internationally.

We have been informed that Hadi Rostami, Kasra Karami, Mehdi Shahivand, Mehdi Sharifian and Morteza Esmaeilian, who have been convicted of robbery, are being held in Urumieh Central Prison in the province of West Azerbaijan and are at imminent risk of having their fingers amputated by your authorities.

We are deeply concerned about the fate of these five men. Amputation purposely inflicts extreme pain, irreversible disability and obliterates human dignity. As such, it constitutes a grave, cruel, inhumane and degrading punishment. These barbaric practices are revolting, all the more so from a State that has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which prohibits cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment in all circumstances and without exception.

Furthermore, we draw your attention to the [core ethical principles of the medical profession](#) prohibiting physicians to participate in any acts of torture or other forms of cruel, inhumane or degrading procedures. The requirement under Iranian law of the presence of a physician for the assessment and enforcement of corporal punishments, such as amputation, is therefore in direct violation with our professional duties and we condemn it unconditionally. It is our [standards](#) to encourage physicians to honour their commitment to serve humanity and to resist any pressure to act contrary to the ethical principles governing their dedication to this task. We are determined to fully support physicians who refuse to participate in these inhumane actions.

We urge the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally abolish all forms of corporal punishment, and to finally comply with its international obligations, in particular under the International Covenant Civil and Political Rights that the Republic of Iran has ratified in 1975 and for which you are accountable.

Thank you for your attention.

Dr. Ashok Philip
President of the World Medical Association

Cc: Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva (missionofiran@gmail.com / iran.unog@mfa.gov.ir)