



Tuesday 18 March 2025

**To: Member states of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned Iranian and international human rights organizations, call your attention to the ongoing full-fledged human rights crisis in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and urge your government to support the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the continuation of a complementary international independent investigative mechanism with a sufficiently broad and robust mandate, to follow up on, and build upon, the work of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran (FFMI). The mechanism should have a mandate, inter alia, to investigate, collect and preserve evidence of recent and ongoing patterns of serious human rights violations and crimes under international law, and to pursue accountability efforts.

The work of the FFMI and of the Special Rapporteur over the past two years have demonstrated the importance of these two distinct yet complementary mandates for addressing the protracted human rights and impunity crisis in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Special Rapporteur ensures regular independent monitoring of and reporting on ongoing violations of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights in the country, engages with Iranian authorities and other stakeholders on these issues, brings issues to the attention of the international community through public statements, and critically, issues urgent appeals and other communications to protect the right to life and other human rights of individuals at risk.

Meanwhile, the FFMI plays a critical role by thoroughly investigating patterns of violations of significant gravity and scale, establishing structural causes and reaching factual and legal findings that can support paths toward accountability. Its functions also entail preserving evidence and identifying those suspected of criminal

responsibility, both of which are crucial for combating systematic impunity for recent and ongoing violations and preventing recurrence. As stressed by the Human Rights Council, impunity “creates an enabling environment for perpetrators, violates victims’ right to an effective remedy and perpetuates cycles of violence.”<sup>1</sup>

After two years of thorough and independent investigations focused on the repression of the Woman Life Freedom protest movement since September 2022, the FFMI has established that Iranian officials have committed multiple crimes against humanity – murder, imprisonment, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, enforced disappearance, other inhuman acts, and persecution, including based on gender. Crucially, it also came to three conclusions.

First, it concluded that serious human rights violations and crimes under international law are ongoing<sup>2</sup>. It states that violations and acts of persecution against women and girls and against minorities continue unabated. Despite repeated calls, Iranian authorities have failed to deliver truth, justice, and reparations and have taken no steps to address structural impediments to accountability. On the contrary, the FFMI found that authorities escalated repression against victims and families seeking truth and justice, as well as defenders and independent monitors, including through arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, death sentences and executions. These alarming findings should not remain confined to UN reporting. States should ensure that there are meaningful avenues of justice for victims and their families.

Second, the FFMI found that the violent state repression of the Woman Life Freedom uprising was neither an isolated outburst, nor did it happen in a vacuum. Instead, it is part of a deeper pattern of lethal state repression aimed at crushing largely peaceful protests and silencing dissent – a pattern recently and most distinctly witnessed since 2017-2018, escalating in 2019 and continuing through since 2022.

The systematic discrimination and violence against women and girls, members of ethnic and religious or belief minorities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, is not limited to the repression they face in times of public protests but permeates many aspects of their daily lives. There is a continuum between the repression of these groups during protests and their continued persecution beyond.

Third, the FFMI found that the systematic impunity granted to Iranian authorities enables the recurring cycles of gross human rights violations, the continued persecution of women and girls, and the targeting of minorities and perceived dissenters<sup>3</sup>. The same institutions, often even the same individuals, have carried out successive waves of brutal crackdowns, emboldened each time by deeply entrenched institutionalized impunity that shields them. Recurring abuses can be prevented and meaningful steps toward justice can be taken only by fully taking stock of this repetitive cycle of violence and impunity and identifying and holding to account those suspected of criminal responsibility.

For these reasons, it is critical that an investigation mechanism continues with a broader mandate and temporal scope, including interconnected patterns of serious human rights violations and the structural root causes of such violations. Your government should support, at the 58<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, both renewing the Special Rapporteur’s mandate and continuing an international independent investigative mechanism with a sufficiently broad and robust mandate. We further urge member states to provide the capacity and resources to build upon the work already done by the FFMI to complete the mapping of and evidence gathering on victims and

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council, Resolution S35/1, *Deteriorating situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially with respect to women and children*, 24 November 2022, UN Doc: [A/HRC/RES/S-35/1](#)

<sup>2</sup> Independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Report to the UN Human Rights Council*, Advance unedited version, 14 March 2025, UN Doc: [A/HRC/58/63](#), para. 123

<sup>3</sup> Independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Report to the UN Human Rights Council*, Advance unedited version, 14 March 2025, UN Doc: [A/HRC/58/63](#), para. 123

suspected perpetrators linked to successive and interconnected cycles of serious violations and crimes under international law.

Victims and survivors of past and ongoing violations and crimes under international law in Iran need a holistic approach, including reporting, intervening urgently, investigating, carrying out legal analysis and identifying those responsible to ensure real prospects for human rights, justice, truth and reparation in Iran. We appeal to your government to respond to this need. We also appeal to your government to publicly condemn and demand an immediate end to the grave and persistent rights violations committed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and support the continuation of efforts aimed at ensuring that justice ultimately prevails for the people in Iran.

**Dr. Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Prize**

**Abdorrahman Boroumand Center**

**The Advocates for Human Rights**

**Ahwaz Human Rights Organization**

**All Human Rights for All in Iran**

**Amnesty International**

**Arseh Sevom**

**Article 18**

**ARTICLE 19**

**Association for the human rights of the Azerbaijani people in Iran - AHRAZ**

**The Baloch Activists Campaign**

**Balochistan Human Rights Group**

**Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies**

**Center for Human Rights in Iran**

**The Centre for Supporters of Human Rights (CSHR)**

**Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort**

**Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect**

**Harm Reduction International**

**Human Rights Watch**

**Hengaw Organization for Human Rights**

**Impact Iran**

**International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)**

**International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)**

**International Educational Development, Inc. (IED)**

**International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)**

**International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)**

**Iran Human Rights**

**Iran Human Rights Documentation Center**

**Justice for Iran**

**Kurdistan Human Rights Association-Geneva (KMMK-G)**

**Kurdistan Human Rights Network**

**Kurdpa Human Rights Organization**

**League for the Defence of Human Right in Iran (LDDHI)**

**Miaan**

**Minority Rights Group International (MRG)**

**PEN America**

**Rasank**

**Siamak Pourzand Foundation**

**United for Iran**

**Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)**

**World Organization against Torture (OMCT)**

**World Coalition Against the Death Penalty**

**Grang – Iranian Lesbian and Transgender Network**

## Annex: Human rights context

At this session, the Council is again presented with an extensive body of evidence of systemic and continuing human rights violations. The authorities treat women and girls as second-class citizens in law and practice. Even though the implementation of the “Hijab and Chastity” Law was paused following public outcries in December 2024, the authorities continue to enforce a wide array of discriminatory and abusive compulsory veiling laws and policies against women and girls, depriving them of their fundamental human rights and subjecting them to daily persecution and violence.

Ethnic and religious or belief minorities, as well as LGBTI people, continue to suffer widespread human rights violations including discrimination, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and severe restrictions on the exercise of their social, economic and cultural rights. Affected ethnic minorities include Ahwazi Arabs, Baluchis, Kurds, Azerbaijani Turks, Turkmen, while religious or belief minorities include Baha’is, Christian converts, Gonabadi Dervishes, Jews, the Yarsan (Ahl-e Haq), Sunni Muslims, atheists and non-believers.

Human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists and media workers, trade unionists, environmentalists, artists and protesters and other individuals perceived as expressing dissent face arbitrary arrests, unjust prosecutions, prison sentences and even the death penalty for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. Civic space is almost non-existent in Iran, and the authorities routinely intimidate, impose reprisals on and target journalists, victims and families seeking truth and justice and human rights defenders, both inside and outside the country. In its latest report, the Fact-Finding Mission has established that authorities have also extended their repression beyond the borders of Iran, with threats, intimidation and harassment, and repression by proxy on individuals through harassment, arrests and detention of their families who had remained in Iran<sup>4</sup>.

The government has also committed serious and widespread violations of the right to life during the past year, including through what the High Commissioner described as an “*ever-swelling tide of executions*.”<sup>5</sup> Iran executed well over 900 people in 2024 following systematically unfair trials, a significant increase for the third consecutive year, after more than 800 executions in 2023. The High Commissioner for human rights described this practice as “*frightening*.”<sup>6</sup>

Execution victims include an increasing number of women, persons who were below 18 at the time of the alleged offense, as well as protesters and people sentenced to death for alleged offences that do not meet the standard of “most serious crimes” under international law, including drug-related offenses. This ongoing execution crisis reflects the authorities’ increasing use of the death penalty as a tool for political oppression and repression and occurs amid their refusal to adhere to their international obligations on transparency including in relation to the number of executions and death sentences.

Throughout the year, death sentences, corporal punishment constituting torture, such as flogging and amputation, and prison terms were issued and/or carried out following grossly unfair trials within a judicial system that lacks

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<sup>4</sup> Independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Report to the UN Human Rights Council*, Advance unedited version, 14 March 2025, UN Doc: [A/HRC/58/63](#), para. 109-113

<sup>5</sup> Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Press Release, *Iran: Rise in executions deeply troubling*, 7 January 2025, accessible at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/iran-rise-executions-deeply-troubling-un-human-rights-chief>

<sup>6</sup> Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Press Release, *Iran: “Frightening” number of executions as Türk calls for end to death penalty*, 9 May 2023, accessible at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/05/iran-frightening-number-executions-turk-calls-end-death-penalty>

independence and, as established by the special rapporteur, “acts as a repressive organ instead of an independent body towards which individuals seek recourse.”<sup>7</sup>

Despite the severity of the situation, Iranian authorities fail to cooperate meaningfully with UN human rights monitors, limiting its cooperation to selective and nominal engagement. Iran refuses independent scrutiny and denies the Rapporteur and the FFMI access to the country. Most importantly, Iran has not taken tangible steps to reform the laws, policies and practices that are at the root of its multifaceted human rights crisis, despite receiving hundreds of recommendations from treaty bodies, special procedures, the UN Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, and many states within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review. Such inaction should not be tolerated or rewarded.

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<sup>7</sup> UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Javaid Rehman, *Report to the UN Human Rights Council, A/HRC/49/75*, 13 January 2022, para. 50, accessible at: <https://www.undocs.org/A/HRC/49/75>