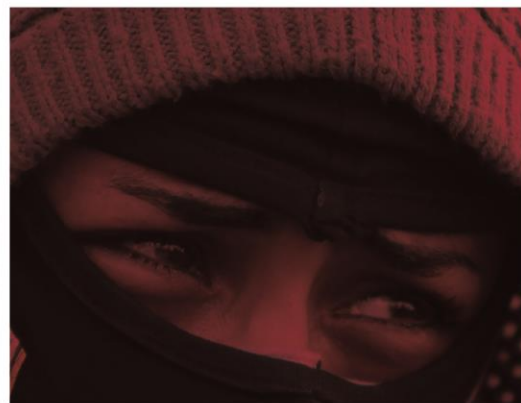


FACT SHEET

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

| Introduction | Institutionalized Human Rights Abuses | Democracy | Rouhani | Women's Rights | Religious Persecution | Academic Freedom | Cultural Repression | Freedom of Speech | The Charge of Moharabeh | Abuses of Prisoners | The Iran Tribunal | Other Resources |

Prepared by Clarion Project Research Fellow Elliot Friedland.



HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN **FACT SHEET**

Founded in 2006, Clarion Project is a non-profit, educational organization providing a platform for human rights activists and for challenging Islamic extremism through facts. Clarion Project is a registered 501 (c) (3).

Clarion's award-winning movies have been seen by **over 50 million people** around the world. They grapple with issues such as religious persecution, human rights, women's rights, the dangers of a nuclear Iran and what the concept of jihad means for the West. Our dynamic website, viewed by **over 900,000 unique visitors** annually, covers breaking news and provides expert analysis on extremism and the struggle for human rights.

Clarion Project's factsheets and films are used as teaching materials by professional educators, military intelligence, counter-terrorism specialists and human rights activists.

Clarion Project draws together Middle East experts, scholars and human rights activists from diverse backgrounds to promote tolerance, engage in dialogue and challenge extremism.

Website: www.clarionproject.org | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | Inquiries: press@clarionproject.org

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

After the revolution in 1979, which overthrew the Pahlavi dynasty, an Islamic republic was established in Iran that concentrated all power in the hands of religious authorities. Laws are based on the Shiite interpretations of *sharia* (Islamic law). Freedom of speech, assembly, and religion are all forbidden under the theocratic regime. Heavily restricted access into and out of the country makes accurate measurement of the extent of human rights abuses difficult. Such restrictions are a breach of human rights in and of themselves.

Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, was denied entry to the country when compiling his report. He gathered evidence on the state of human rights by conducting hundreds of interviews and concluded that that serious violations of human rights were occurring including torture and executions, among others.

In a recent vote in February 2014, the UN Human Rights Council decided to renew the mandate of the special rapporteur by a vote of 21 to 9, with 16 abstentions.¹ An open letter to the Human Rights Council urging them to renew the mandate was signed by representatives of 27 leading human rights organizations.² This decision reiterated that the international community regards the ongoing lack of human rights in Iran to be of grave concern and of sufficient severity to merit further monitoring.

The International People's Iran Tribunal, held at The Hague, which heard testimony from hundreds of witnesses concerning Iranian repression against political opponents in the 1980s found "overwhelming proof that systemic and systematic abuses of human rights were committed by and on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran."³



¹ <http://shaheedoniran.org/english/human-rights-at-the-united-nations/human-rights-monitoring-mechanisms/un-human-rights-council/iran-mandate-renewed-by-un-human-rights-council/>

² <https://www.cpij.org/blog/Iran%20HRC%20Letter%2026%20NGOs%20with%20logos%2012.3.2014.pdf>

³ <http://www.irantribunal.com/images/PDF/Iran%20Tribunal%20Judgment.pdf>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN FACT SHEET

INSTITUTIONALISED HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

Many of the human rights abuses taking place in Iran are embedded into the legal structures of the country. Iranian law is based on a Shiite interpretation of *sharia*, although vestiges of the civil law put in place under the overthrown Pahlavi dynasty remain. The head of the judiciary is appointed by the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, who is the highest-ranking political and religious figure in the country. The judiciary is not independent, but is controlled directly by the Minister of Justice. This is with the exception of the Special Clerical Court, which is solely accountable to the Supreme Leader. All women judges were fired after the revolution.⁴

Iran's unique system thus results in two forms of institutionalized human rights abuses. The first set results from the integration of hardline sharia law into the justice system, which incorporates extreme and brutal punishments. The second set results from the concentration of power in the hands of a small cadre of individuals with little to no oversight, which leads to systematic abuses of that power.



Punishments meted out in Iran regarded as human rights abuses include:⁵

- Execution of minors⁶
- Amputation of limbs
- Torture, beatings etc.
- Cruel and unusual punishment. Exact forms of retribution; for example, a man was sentenced to be blinded with acid after he threw acid in the face of a girl who spurned his advances.⁷

Hadi Ghaemi, spokesman for the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, commented about the punishments in an appeal to the UN: "These inhuman and barbaric acts are nothing but torture under international law and should be abolished."⁸

⁴ <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/islamic-judiciary>

⁵ <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/10/amputations-floggings-rising/>

⁶ <http://iranhr.net/2014/05/afghan-juvenile-executed-in-iran-for-drug-related-charges/>

⁷ In the end the victim pardoned her attacker.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/31/ameneh-bahrami-iranian-woman-blinded-acid-pardons_n_914333.html

⁸ <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/10/amputations-floggings-rising/>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN FACT SHEET

DEMOCRACY

Despite officially having democratic elements in the Iranian governmental system, these are very limited. A parliament and president are directly elected on universal suffrage, but the candidates are vetted first by the Guardian Council, a body of clerics charged with guarding the Islamic nature of the country.



The Guardian Council also vets candidates for the Assembly of Experts, whose role is to appoint or dismiss the Supreme Leader. The Assembly of Experts have never publicly criticized the Supreme Leader or visibly exercised their role as an oversight body. The Supreme Leader in turn appoints 50% of the Guardian Council. The other 50% are elected by

the parliament from a list of nominees drawn up by the head of the judiciary, who is himself a Supreme Leader appointee. This system creates a largely closed and self-replicating clerical elite clustered around the Supreme Leader, in whom all power is vested.⁹

Even the limited democratic elements within the Iranian system have been accused of fraud and corruption. After the 2009 election, in which Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was re-elected to the presidency, the result was contested and millions came out onto the streets to protest the result. The protests were violently crushed by a combination of police and paramilitary forces.^{10 11}

It remains unclear whether or not the election was rigged. The government arrested opposition leaders Mir Hossein Mousavi, Zahra Rahnavard and Mehdi Karroub in 2011 during the Arab Spring protests. At the time of writing they are still under house arrest.¹²

⁹ http://www.iranchamber.com/government/articles/structure_of_power.php

¹⁰ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/05/201351661225981675.html>

¹¹ <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/03/iran-green-movement-moderates-relevance-rouhani-hard-liners.html>

¹² <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/13/mir-hossein-mousavi-photograph-emerges>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN FACT SHEET

HASSAN ROUHANI



Since President Hassan Rouhani came to power, he has been widely considered a moderate, due to a large extent to his conciliatory statements and overtures towards the West.

He has ostensibly made various concessions in the field of human rights, such as releasing 80 prisoners since Sept 2013 and proposing a new charter for citizens' rights.¹³ His reputation as a moderate has been challenged however, with critics citing a litany of ongoing abuses, especially with regard to executions, which have spiked since Rouhani came to power.¹⁴

Selected quotes from Rouhani commonly cited by critics include:

“At dusk yesterday we received a decisive revolutionary order to crush mercilessly and monumentally any move of these opportunist elements wherever it may occur.” [Rouhani led the crackdown on a 1999 student uprising. Quote: Rohani at a pro-regime rally in July 1999]

“Saying ‘Death to America’ is easy. We need to express ‘Death to America’ with action.” [Rouhani in a campaign speech on May 8th, 2013]

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Women's rights are severely restricted in Iran in a number of ways. There are both legal restrictions, but also cultural and social restrictions imposed on women unrelated to the government.¹⁵

Restrictions include:

- The husband is the head of the family, and his wife is legally bound to obey him. Article 1105 of the civil code states: “In relations between husband and wife, the position of the head of the family exclusively belongs to the husband.”

¹³ http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/human-rights-documents/united-nations-reports/un-reports/1000000443-special-rapporteurs-march-2014-report-on-the-situation-of-human-rights-in-the-islamic-republic-of-iran.html#.U53Wi_mSwrU

¹⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/21/us-iran-executions-idUSBREA1K1CN20140221>

¹⁵ <http://iranhrdc.org/english/publications/legal-commentary/1000000261-gender-inequality-and-discrimination-the-case-of-iranian-women.html#5>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN FACT SHEET

- A married woman cannot leave the country without her husband's permission.
- A woman's testimony as a witness is worth half that of a man, in compliance with the Sharia basis of the legal system.
- Women are forced to wear the *hijab*, a headscarf, in all public places. More broadly, Islamic modesty requirements are enforced by a morality police.
- Polygamy and temporary marriage are permitted for men (up to four wives are allowed, subject to certain restrictions), but not for women.
- Women are frequently subject to honor killings. In cases where the father kills his daughter, he is not liable for the death penalty, but only for imprisonment. This is further compounded as when someone is murdered, the family of the victim can forgive the murderer.



Morality police, comprised of volunteer members of the Basij militia, patrol the streets enforcing Islamic law in public spaces. They routinely detain young, unmarried women found 'fraternizing' with men they are unrelated to.¹⁶ Recently, President Rouhani asked the morality patrols to be more moderate in enforcing the hijab (hair scarf) requirement. However, 195 members of the 230 member parliament demanded that the government enforce sharia dress code fully. Police in Tehran recently launched a new 'moral security plan' to crackdown on un-Islamic dress. This includes loose hijabs for women and any clothing that exposes skin, while men are banned from

wearing necklaces or shorts. Over 70,000 'morality police' will enforce the new directive.¹⁷



Recently, a Facebook page entitled 'My Stealthy Freedom' has gained traction featuring photos uploaded by Iranian women of themselves without their hijabs.

¹⁶ <http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2014/03/03/285244225/my-brief-detention-by-irans-morality-police>

¹⁷ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/14/necklace-ban-men-tehran-police>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN FACT SHEET

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

Twelver Shiite Islam is the official state religion of Iran. 90% of Iran's population are Shiite Muslims, most of them belonging to the "Twelver" sect.¹⁸ 9% are Sunni Muslims. The rest of the population is made up of a myriad of minority groups. Conversion from any group to any group other than Islam is punishable as apostasy.

Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians are all technically afforded certain legal protections as 'People of the Book.' Five seats are reserved for each of these minority groups in Parliament. However, they are still subject to restrictions. Certain crimes carry heavier sentences than would be applied to Muslims, and they are banned from serving as judges. In particular, evangelical Christians or those who have converted from Islam are targeted. Evangelical Christianity and proselytizing are severely punished, as is attending informal 'house churches' and associations with non-Iranian church groups.

Other minorities are persecuted severely. Baha'i, which numbers around 300,000 followers, is regarded as a heretical offshoot of Islam, and as such is heavily repressed. It is illegal to worship according to the Baha'i faith, and a widespread propaganda campaign against the Baha'i faith is perpetuated by Iranian government-controlled media outlets. Civil liberties, property rights, access to higher education and many other rights have been severely curtailed for Baha'is by the Iranian regime.

Sunnis are also persecuted. They have frequently complained of being treated like second-class citizens.²⁰

According to the March 2014 UN report, "As at 3 January 2014, at least 307 members of religious minorities were in detention, of whom 136 were Baha'is, 90 Sunni Muslims, 50 Christians, 19 Dervish Muslims (four Dervish human rights lawyers were also reportedly detained), four were Yarasan, two were Zoroastrians and six were from other groups."²¹

¹⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html>

¹⁹ For an explanation of Shiite Islam and its different sects see here:

<http://www.patheos.com/Library/Shia-Islam/Historical-Development/Schisms-Sects.html>

²⁰ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/03/iranian-sunnis-complain-discrimination-2014397125688907.html>

²¹ P10, Section 37 <http://shaheedoniran.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/A-HRC-25-61-updated.pdf>

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The Iranian regime has long been suspicious of areas of public life that are deemed susceptible to Western influence. Universities have been subject to government controls, surveillance and monitoring, to ensure that what is taught and disseminated there falls in line with what the regime considers to be acceptable.

After Ahmadinejad's election for the first time in 2005 "he embarked on a new surge of "Islamicization" of the universities, in which courses deemed "Western-influenced" were expunged from the curriculum, academic staff considered "secular" were dismissed or forced to retire, and student activists were expelled or suspended. At the same time, the authorities intensified



gender segregation on campuses and tightened enforcement of dress and disciplinary codes for both students and teaching staff. This process then accelerated and intensified in the wake of the mass peaceful protests that punctuated the second half of 2009 when millions of Iranians took to the streets of Tehran and other cities to protest against President Ahmadinejad's disputed re-election in June 2009.²²

In the aftermath of the 2009 protests, the government closed many student societies, outlawed many student publications and arrested students and faculty in any way associated with the opposition Green Movement.

Government censorship of universities is an extension of the broader controls on free speech and assembly and reflects the religious leaders' policy of imposing their interpretation of Islam in all spheres of life.

²² <http://amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/2014/en/a44b334a-cbcb-468d-a2f8-e3e66ce9e939/mde130152014en.pdf>

CULTURAL REPRESSION

All forms of cultural expression are tightly controlled by the Iranian regime. Art, music and film are all subject to tight censorship by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. They also have responsibility for granting licenses to journalists.^{23 24}

Restrictions include:

- In order to be able to import or export any cultural item (e.g. film, art, books, recordings etc.), one must first obtain a license from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.
- Books require licenses to be published, and this has a lengthy review process.²⁵ Independent publishing houses are banned.
- All screenplays are reviewed and censored.
- Cooperating with international media or satellite networks is a criminal offence.
- Female singers are restricted from singing in front of men, to what degree varies by province.
- All lyrics and music must be pre-approved and permission granted for performances.



Recently these restrictions made international headlines after police arrested the makers of a music video to accompany the song 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams.

The video showed six young Iranians dancing, including three women without headscarves.²⁶ Reports suggest that those arrested have now been released.

There are conflicting reports as to whether the authorities continue to detain the director of the video.

²³ <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2013/08/ministry-culture/>

²⁴ http://www.ihr.org/ihr/article/youth-en_our-only-nightclub-for-performing-is-our-website-the-internets-role-in-the-dissemination-of-unofficial-rock-music/

²⁵ <http://iwpr.net/report-news/books-stuck-irans-censorship-quagmire>

²⁶ <http://www.clarionproject.org/videos/six-arrested-iran-over-happy-video>

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Freedom of speech is severely restricted in Iran. Journalists are regularly incarcerated. Facebook and Twitter are both banned. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists as of March 12, 2014, there are "some 35 journalists and bloggers in prison, thus making Iran the second largest jailer of journalists worldwide."²⁷

The Association of Iranian Journalists has not been allowed to operate despite Rouhani's pledge that it would be. The Association was raided and closed by police in 2009 during widespread protests against the re-election of President Ahmadinejad. It had 4,000 members and was a member of the International Federation of Journalists.²⁸ There is systematic censorship of the internet and blocking of websites.

Prominent Journalists imprisoned²⁹ in Iran include:

- **Siamek Ghadari** - Became famous after he published interviews with Iranian homosexuals in 2007, to rebut then-President Ahmadinejad's claim that there are no homosexuals in Iran. He was arrested in 2010 after the protests surrounding Ahmadinejad's reelection and is serving four years in Evin prison.
- **Fereydoun Seydi Rad** - He published articles on his blog *Arak Green Revolution* about strikes, protests, and the pro-democracy movement. He was arrested in 2011 and sentenced to three years for 'propagating against the regime.' He is serving his time in Evin prison.
- **Shiva Nizar Ahari** - A founding member of the Committee of Human Rights Reporters, she was arrested for her work reporting on the human rights violations of the regime. In 2010 she was sentenced to six years for 'propagating against the regime' as well as 'moharebeh' or enmity against God. In 2011 an appeals court reduced her sentence to four years and 74 lashes. She is currently incarcerated in Evin Prison.

²⁷<https://www.cpi.org/blog/Iran%20HRC%20Letter%2026%20NGOs%20with%20logos%2012.3.2014.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/iran-journalists-under-siege-2010-04-30>

²⁹ <https://www.cpi.org/imprisoned/2013.php>

THE CHARGE OF MOHARABEH – ENMITY AGAINST GOD

This is a punishment unique to Iran. It loosely translates as 'war against God' or 'enmity against God' and is similar to apostasy. It is based in traditional Islamic jurisprudence, and was originally used for what would now be considered war crimes, such as poisoning wells, killing non-combatants, etc. It is now used to mean crimes against the state, normally armed. However, it also has been used against political protestors and human rights activists. Prominent Iranian



human rights lawyer Abdolfattah Soltani argued in favor of restricting *Moharabeh* to instances of armed confrontation.³⁰ He is currently incarcerated in Evin prison. *Moharabeh* carries the death penalty. In some human rights cases the sentence is commuted to imprisonment.

Executions:

- On June 1, 2014, Gholamreza Khosravi Savadjani was executed for '*moharabeh*' on the grounds that he had donated money to an opposition TV channel and refused to speak out in a TV interview against the opposition group PMOI.³¹ High profile Iranian human rights lawyer Abdolfattah Soltani represented Khosravi before Soltani was himself arrested.
- On January 27th, renowned Iranian poet and human rights activist Hashem Shabaani was executed for '*moharabeh*' along with his friend Hadi Rashedi. Both were members of the outlawed Dialogue Institute. In a 2013 letter, Shabaani denied ever having participated in armed activity.³²

³⁰ <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/02/abdolfattah-soltani-according-to-law-and-sharia-throwing-stones-or-breaking-windows-do-not-constitute-moharebeh/>

³¹ <http://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/execution-iranian-political-activist-sparks-outrage-iran>

³² <http://www.clarionproject.org/news/iran-hangs-well-loved-human-rights-activist-poet>

ABUSES OF PRISONERS

After the revolution of 1979, the prison system was expanded in order to accommodate the flood of new inmates. Human rights activists, journalists, women's rights activists and other opponents or perceived opponents of the regime were and are frequently arrested and given lengthy sentences. The most notorious prison is Evin Prison, where large numbers of political prisoners are held. Human rights abuses against prisoners are frequently reported. According to the UN's March 2014 report "As at 14 January 2014, at least 895 "prisoners of conscience" and "political prisoners" were reportedly imprisoned. This number includes 379 political activists, 292 religious practitioners, 92 human rights defenders (including 50 ethnic rights activists), 71 civic activists, 37 journalists and netizens, and 24 student activists"³³

Examples of abuse:

- On April 17, 2014, a raid on section 350 of Evin prison, where many high-profile political prisoners are held, was undertaken by prison guards in riot gear. At least 30 prisoners were beaten, suffering broken ribs amongst other things, and 32 prisoners were taken to solitary confinement after the riot. According to Amnesty International "all those transferred to solitary confinement were beaten with batons by guards during the transfer."³⁴
- On November 1, 2012, nine female political prisoners in Evin prison, including Committee for Human Rights Reporters member Shiva Nizar Ahari, began a hunger strike in response to what they said were humiliating and unnecessarily invasive body searches by guards.³⁵

UAI 1013 #doc: MDE 130212014 Iran Date: 17 April 2014

URGENT ACTION

EVIN PRISONERS AT RISK AFTER REPORT OF RIOT
Reports of prison guards raiding Section 350 of Evin Prison, possibly to conduct a search. It is not clear what happened next, but some sort of confrontation with prisoners opposing the raid appears to have ensued, and several prisoners seem to have been injured. At least four of the injured prisoners have been transferred to a hospital outside of the prison. Another 20 prisoners are reported to have been injured, but it is not clear whether they have received medical treatment inside the prison. At least two prisoners, Esmail Barzangi and Akbar Amini, are reported to have suffered broken ribs. A third is said to have suffered a head attack and has been transferred to the intensive care unit of a hospital outside of the prison.

According to media reports on the morning of 17 April Ministry of Intelligence officials, along with about 100 guards dressed in riot gear reportedly entered Section 350 of Evin Prison, possibly to conduct a search. It is not clear what happened next, but some sort of confrontation with prisoners opposing the raid appears to have ensued, and several prisoners seem to have been injured. At least four of the injured prisoners have been transferred to a hospital outside of the prison. Another 20 prisoners are reported to have been injured, but it is not clear whether they have received medical treatment inside the prison. At least two prisoners, Esmail Barzangi and Akbar Amini, are reported to have suffered broken ribs. A third is said to have suffered a head attack and has been transferred to the intensive care unit of a hospital outside of the prison.

Another 32 individuals were taken to solitary confinement, including lawyer Abdolfattah Sobhani, minority rights activist and member of the Kuchakchi minority in Iran Sa'ad Meddavar, former prosecutor Mohammad Amir Hadavi, labour rights activist Behnam Ebrahimi-Zadeh, and political activists Behzad Arabgol and Hootan Dolati. It has been reported that all those transferred to solitary confinement were beaten with batons by guards during the transfer.

Please write immediately in Persian, English, Arabic or your own language:
• Calling on the Iranian authorities to ensure that all prisoners receive any medical care they may require.
• Urging them to protect those in solitary confinement from torture and other ill-treatment, and to have access to family and lawyers.
• Calling on them to immediately conduct an independent, impartial, and thorough investigation into what took place at the prison, including why so many prisoners were injured, and whether guards and officials used unnecessary or excessive force.


PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 MAY 2014 TO:

Location of the Islamic Republic	Head of the Embassy	Director of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Azerbaijan: Baku	Amnesty International	Hossein Hashemi
The Chief of the Supreme Leadership	Amnesty International	The Presidency
Islamic Republic: State of Qatar	Human Rights and Democracy	Farouk Ghannouchi, Farouk Ghannouchi
Iran: Islamic Republic of Iran	Amnesty International	Iranian Islamic Republic of Iran
Tehran	Amnesty International	Iranian Islamic Republic of Iran
Amnesty International	Amnesty International	Iranian Islamic Republic of Iran
Amnesty International	Amnesty International	Iranian Islamic Republic of Iran

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:
Home Address: 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax No. Number Email Email address Submission Submission

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



On March 3, 2014, the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center launched an online campaign entitled "Unlock Iran," which aims to highlight the plight of the over 800 prisoners of conscience currently incarcerated in the Islamic republic. The website provides information on a selection of

³³ P8, Section 27: <http://shaheedoniran.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/A-HRC-25-61-updated.pdf>

³⁴ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/021/2014/en/035bf674-5ead-4c38-b4f8-5c2db5ee3036/mde130212014en.pdf>

³⁵ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/iran-female-detainees-begin-hunger-strike-after-degrading-treatment-2012-11-01>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN **FACT SHEET**

high-profile political prisoners and encourages the public to write to high-ranking politicians in an effort to bring these continuing injustices to international attention.³⁶

GOVERNMENT SANCTIONED RAPE

Use of rape as a method of torture against political opponents has been deployed widely against both men and women, as well as sexual taunts, threats, and other forms of assault.³⁷ The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran told PBS that in the aftermath of the disputed 2009 election "rape was routinely practiced as a matter of policy to intimidate young ordinary people from ever coming out to protest again."³⁸ In prisons, virgin girls who are sentenced to death are typically forced into 'temporary marriages' with the prison guards and raped on the night before their execution. According to the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center this is "because the guards believed young girls executed while virgins would go to heaven."³⁹

A former Basij militia man spoke to the Jerusalem Post on the condition of anonymity, and recorded his role in perpetrating these rapes when he was a prison guard. "I could tell that the girls were more afraid of their 'wedding' night than of the execution that awaited them in the morning. And they would always fight back, so we would have to put sleeping pills in their food. By morning, the girls would have an empty expression; it seemed like they were ready or wanted to die. I remember hearing them cry and scream after [the rape] was over," he said. "I will never forget how this one girl clawed at her own face and neck with her fingernails afterwards. She had deep scratches all over her."⁴⁰

³⁶ <http://www.unlockiran.org/>

³⁷ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/8102358/Rape-in-Irans-prisons-the-cruellest-torture.html>

³⁸ http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/world-jan-june11-iranianwomen_06-10/

³⁹ http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/publications/reports/3401-surviving-rape-in-iran-s-prisons.html?p=17#.U5RISPmSw_Y

⁴⁰ <http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/I-wed-Iranian-girls-before-execution>

THE IRAN TRIBUNAL

In 2012, a group of leading jurists, human rights activists and victims of Iranian state violence convened in the Peace Palace at The Hague to investigate Iranian human rights abuses. 'The Iran Tribunal' was established as an International People's Tribunal brought by the families of the victims. The Iran Tribunal was independent both politically and financially from any political party or civil society group.



Over the course of five years, the tribunal assembled a leading team of international law experts to investigate and prosecute the Islamic Republic of Iran for crimes against humanity. It focused on the litany of human rights abuses committed by the Iranian regime in its repression of political opponents between 1981 and 1988.

The process was divided into two parts.⁴¹

- 1) A fact-finding commission, named the Truth Commission, which published a report after testimony from 80 witnesses. This was from June 18-22, 2012 and was held in London.
- 2) A trial of the Islamic Republic of Iran before a panel of internationally recognized judges expert in human rights and international law, prosecuted by leading human rights lawyers. This was from the October 25-27, 2012, at The Hague.

The Tribunal invited the Islamic Republic of Iran to send a representative to the tribunal in order to defend itself. No response was received regarding that invitation. Final judgment appeared in the form of a 52 page document on February 5, 2013. It endorsed the findings of the Truth Commission as wholly accurate.

⁴¹ <http://www.irantribunal.com/index.php/en/about-us/373-how-tribunal-was-formed>

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN **FACT SHEET**

The final verdict was as follows: ⁴²

- (I) The Islamic Republic of Iran has committed crimes against humanity in the 1980-1989 periods against its own citizens in violation of applicable international laws;
- (II) The Islamic Republic of Iran bears absolute responsibility for the gross violations of human rights against its own citizens under the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights; and,
- (III) Customary International law holds the Islamic Republic of Iran for its systematic and widespread commission of crimes against humanity in Iran in the 1980-1989 periods.

OTHER RESOURCES

The following reports are the most up to date and authoritative on the issues of Human Rights in Iran.

UN Special Rapporteur Dr. Ahmed Shaheed 2014 Report

<http://shaheedoniran.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/A-HRC-25-61-updated.pdf>

Amnesty International 2013 Report

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran/report-2013>

Amnesty International Report on Academic Repression

<http://amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/2014/en/a44b334a-cbcb-468d-a2f8-e3e66ce9e939/mde130152014en.pdf>

Human Rights Watch 2014 Report

<http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/iran>

Human Rights Watch 2013 Report

<http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2013/country-chapters/iran>

The Iran Tribunal, International People's Tribunal: Findings of the Truth Commission

<http://www.irantribunal.com/images/PDF/Commission%20Report-Website.pdf>

⁴² <http://www.irantribunal.com/images/PDF/Iran%20Tribunal%20Judgment.pdf>