

# **Iran:**

## **Serious Violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

**Report to the Human Rights Committee**

**Near East Policy Research (NEPR)**  
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## Executive Summary

Systematic and gross violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) continue unabated in Iran. In its everyday practice, the Iranian regime's raison d'être obliges it to commit serious denials of the equal and inalienable rights of Iranian citizen, especially vulnerable groups like women and minorities. Gross violations of Covenant rights and freedoms are everyday facts of life in Iran, and this repression is most often accompanied by grotesque use of violence and torture. Unjustified interference in fundamental freedoms, including freedom of thought, conscience, and expression of opinion, exists as a staple of state practice. .

This report will outline some of the more recent examples of the violations of ICCPR by the Iranian regime. These cases and other human rights abuses in Iran have exposed the Iranian regime's repressive and violent ideology, and the continuing international condemnation of these regime policies is indicative of the fact that such violations result from the fundamental nature, laws and practices of the regime. The 2011 report of the U.N. Human Rights Committee on the record of Iran can help to draw attention to this dreadful history of human rights abuse.

Although the regime discriminates on various bases, it is most clearly defined through its misogynistic character. Gender discrimination is not only cemented in Iran's laws, it is also a well-entrenched and binding ideological tenet and inexorable practice for almost all the regime's institutions. Numerous statistics and cases of violations against women have been reported and recorded both recently and over the years past, indicating that the violations against women are inherent, endemic and systematic.

Women do not only experience inequality in socio-political and economic contexts, they are also active and deliberate targets of state violence and do not have effective remedies within the system, as the law of the land is deliberately designed to limit women's rights and freedoms. As a result, not only Article 3, but also Articles 2, 7, 23, 24, and 26 are violated systematically in cases of discrimination based on gender. With the prominent participation of women in the protest movement, it is expected that the regime's violations against women will intensify in the coming months. Already, the increasing number of arbitrary arrests, tortures, rapes, stonings, executions, and inhumane treatment of women has raised serious alarm.

In addition to Article 3, the Iranian regime systematically violates Article 6 with arbitrary killings, inhumane corporal punishments, juvenile executions, and excessive use of force against peaceful demonstrators and detainees. Although the Covenant does not, as such, forbid the death penalty, paragraph 2 reserves capital punishment "only for the most serious crimes." The regime, however, continues to issue and carry out death sentences for petty crimes including theft, devise cruel means of execution such as stoning for adultery, and impose hangings on ideological or political grounds. An abhorrent campaign of detaining or physically eradicating dissidents and political prisoners on an arbitrary basis persists.

With growing uprisings and political activism, especially among students and women, the number of hangings in Iran has skyrocketed since the start of 2011, and is projected to grow even more based on the growing number of people on death row. Disturbingly, many executions are carried out en masse or in secret, and the bodies are not made available to family members for proper burial. Other executions are performed in public spectacles in order to spread terror and fear in society.

Another disturbing trend is the labeling of numerous dissidents as “enemies of God” (Moharebeh), an offense under Iranian law that carries the death penalty. Currently, several political prisoners are awaiting their execution as “Moharebs.”

Torture, in violation of Article 7, is another bitter reality in today’s Iran. There are numerous reports and testimonies of systematic and inhumane torture in Iranian prisons, especially after the post-June 2009 protests. In addition to “routine” torture, political prisoners are often denied medical treatment and subjected to other forms of degrading and inhumane treatment in order to break them down or force them to give “confessions” to the trumped up charges against them. Even elderly political prisoners diagnosed with cancer are not spared.

The extensive Iranian security apparatus, comprised of a wide array of forces, commit almost daily violations of Article 9, making arbitrary arrests of political activists, union leaders, lawyers, and peaceful demonstrators to counter calls for more freedoms. Almost a quarter of the current prisoner population were detained since the June 2009 uprisings. Many people are also being held in prisons without being formally charged with any crimes.

The abysmal conditions of detention in Iran lead to systematic violations of Article 10 in particular (in addition to article 7). Prisons are overcrowded, political prisoners are regularly mixed in with common criminals and ailing political prisoners are routinely denied medical treatment.

Articles 17, 18, 19, 21, and 22, which deal with other fundamental freedoms such as the freedom of thought, expression, assembly and association, are also flagrantly violated. Peaceful demonstrations have been brutally suppressed on the streets; people are detained and killed for their political views or religious beliefs; and the population is denied the right to express itself freely.

There are also persistent abuses against religious minorities in Iran, in violation of Article 27. New converts and members of other faiths and religions are regularly persecuted, harassed, imprisoned and in some cases murdered simply on the basis of their religious outlooks or practices.

In addition to actively suppressing the opposition within Iran’s boundaries, but as part and parcel of it, the regime has also waged a campaign of suppression against dissidents concentrated in Camp Ashraf, Iraq. The 3400 Iranian refugees, who have been residents of Ashraf since 1986 have been placed under siege, denied basic foodstuffs, medicine, and fuel, since an Iraqi proxy government took over the perimeter control of the camp in January 2009. Although recognized as protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United States in 2004, Ashraf residents have come under regular and fatal assaults by Iraqi security forces using whips,

bludgeons, and vehicles that run people over. As part of the psychological torture and to make life intolerable in the camp, Iraqi authorities, acting at the behest of the Iranian regime, have denied access to medical care for terminally ill patients in Camp Ashraf. Iranian intelligence agents have been permitted by Iraq to set up more than 240 high volume broadcast loudspeakers on towers around the perimeter of the camp, broadcasting round-the-clock at intolerable levels, threatening the residents with death and torture and preventing any physical rest – with an intensity that amounts to psychological torture. The Iranian government has broadcast threats of immediate execution and torture against all inhabitants of Camp Ashraf. The risks of genocide against Ashraf are real and immediate, unless prompt action is taken by the international community.

### **Article 3 (Discrimination against women)**

1. Owing to its fundamental outlook on women as the inferior sex, the Iranian regime continues to systematically and blatantly violate all the applicable provisions of the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights (ICCPR) with regards to the fundamental rights and freedoms of Iranian women. Gender discrimination is not only cemented in Iran's laws, it is also a well-entrenched and binding ideological tenet and inexorable practice for almost all the regime's institutions. Not only do women experience inequality in the context of inheritance, marriage, divorce and family life (a violation of Article 23), they are also not protected against such discrimination because the laws have a built-in prejudice on the basis of gender (in violation of Article 26). As a result, the regime uses various pretexts to attempt to mask its discrimination.
2. Over the past year, arrests and intimidation have increased drastically against female rights activists, lawyers, journalists, and protestors. In January 2011, a prominent female lawyer and human rights advocate was sentenced to 11 years in jail and banned for 20 years from working as an attorney and required to leave the country.<sup>1</sup> In November 2010, Amnesty International called for the immediate release of three Iranian women lawyers, and another two colleagues, arbitrarily detained that month: Maryam Kiyani, Maryam Karbasi and Sara Sabaghian were detained upon returning from Turkey, and face security charges and charges of "violating moral standards outside Iran."<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International has announced that "The waves of arbitrary arrests of lawyers suggest that the judiciary has given carte blanche to the security forces to stop any lawyer whose work or statements get in their way."
3. There are also routine reports about systematic pressures imposed on Iranian women. One type of crime committed by Iranian security forces against women is rape, which also amounts to a violation of Article 7. There have been multiple reports and eyewitness accounts chronicling systematic rape in Iranian prisons. Last November, Zahra Kamali, a student arrested in July 2009, told Amnesty International about the sexual assaults she was subjected to by her interrogators,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12149201>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news\\_details.asp?NewsID=19092](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=19092)

and described even worse behaviour towards her former cellmate, a women's rights activist.<sup>3</sup> As early as August 2009, reports of "brutal rape" in Iranian prisons were even acknowledged by senior regime officials like Mehdi Karoubi, a former parliamentary speaker and presidential contender.<sup>4</sup> Immediately after the June 2009 post-election protests, the burnt body of a young female protestor, Taraneh Mousavi, was discovered in Tehran bearing signs of brutal sexual assault.<sup>5</sup> In July 2010, it was revealed that three members of the paramilitary Bassij forces abducted a young woman identified as Elnaz B., 26, in Tabriz and shot her dead after beating and raping her.<sup>6</sup> The agents then disposed of her body somewhere outside of the city. The body was discovered and returned to the family some time later, with the coroner confirming that she was raped, beaten and then shot.<sup>7</sup>

4. Several female political prisoners have also received sentences of long imprisonment or execution, with at least one executed over the past several months,<sup>8</sup> apparently to spread fear among women against taking a more prominent role in anti-regime protests. The President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, strongly condemned the execution of Zahra Bahrami, a Dutch-Iranian citizen, by the Iranian authorities on January 29, 2011, and described it as "a cowardly act of arbitrary justice."<sup>9</sup> Ms. Bahrami's case was not only an example of systematic cruelty against women with an intention to silence their legitimate demands, but also a violation of Articles, 2, 14, and 26. A January 18, 2011 resolution adopted by the European Parliament "deeply deplored the lack of fairness and transparency of the judicial process."<sup>10</sup>
5. Another female political prisoner, Farah Vazehan, has been sentenced to 17 years in prison.<sup>11</sup> The 49-year-old mother was arrested during the December 2009 anti-regime rallies, and spent at least 40 days in solitary confinement before being transferred to the Women's Ward in Tehran's Evin Prison. She suffers from heart complications and requires medical attention. Along with some of her cellmates, in November 2010, she was moved to a ward together with convicted prisoners and drug addicts in an attempt by the regime to harm her mental integrity and cause her suffering, clearly in violation of Article 7 and Article 10.
6. There are also severe social restrictions on women, including but not limited to forced veiling. Regime officials across Iran are trying to impose more strict veiling rules for women. As just one example, the head of the Education Office in the town

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/8102358/Rape-in-Irans-prisons-the-cruellest-torture.html>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.rferl.org/content/New\\_PrisonRape\\_Allegations\\_In\\_Iran\\_Bring\\_Practice\\_To\\_Light/1808311.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/New_PrisonRape_Allegations_In_Iran_Bring_Practice_To_Light/1808311.html)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shirin-sadeghi/the-rape-of-taraneh-priso\\_b\\_233063.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shirin-sadeghi/the-rape-of-taraneh-priso_b_233063.html)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.hra-news6.info/1389-01-27-05-26-53/2680-1.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.hra-news6.info/1389-01-27-05-26-53/2680-1.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12314886>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/president/preview/en/press/press\\_release/2011/2011-January/press\\_release-2011-January-35.html;jsessionid=0252042E1DEB9098C04B97AB610FF20E](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/president/preview/en/press/press_release/2011/2011-January/press_release-2011-January-35.html;jsessionid=0252042E1DEB9098C04B97AB610FF20E)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=B7-2011-0049&language=SV>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/00/7150-1.html>

of Kazroun in the Fars Province said in August 2010 that the official uniform for female junior high and high schools students would be the “chador.”<sup>12</sup> And so-called “mal-veiling” has been criminalized – that is, the use of a veil that does not fully cover the hair, whether by design or accident. On February 5, the Majlis (Parliament) announced plans to implement a new dress code for women journalists who cover its proceedings.<sup>13</sup> Reports have also indicated that authorities have ordered a ban on women from watching live broadcasts of soccer matches at public movie theatres.<sup>14</sup> Women already are banned from attending men's soccer matches at stadiums.

## Article 6 (Right to life)

7. Article 6.2 notes that “sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes.” The Iranian regime, however, continues to issue cruel death sentences, such as public hangings and stoning of women, for petty crimes (including theft and drug trafficking), adultery, and also expression of political or religious thought.
8. The UN Secretary General said in a report in March 2011, that, “According to Iranian press reports, at least 66 people were executed in the month of January, with some sources indicating the figure to be as high as 83 executions.<sup>15</sup> According to Amnesty International, at least 71 persons were executed between 1 and 24 January 2011 alone. By one estimate, there are over 2,100 individuals on death row in the city of Mashhad alone.<sup>16</sup>
9. According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, Iran has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of executions so far in 2011. She has said the rate is three times that of last year. Her aides said they had recorded about 300 executions for the whole of last year, so if the current rate of executions continues for this year, there will be three times as many executions in 2011 than 2010.<sup>17</sup>
10. Secret hangings that are not reported in the news media are also a routine practice. As recent as March 14, for example, the regime secretly hanged five people in the notorious Evin prison.<sup>18</sup> They included one woman, two men and a couple identified as Adiva Mirza Soleiman and Varjoun Petrosian, followers of the Jewish and Christian faiths respectively. It was also reported on March 18 that the regime carried out 10 secret executions at a prison where the practice was recently

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=8905240215>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.france24.com/en/20110205-iran-parliament-plans-dress-code-women-reporters>

<sup>14</sup> [http://articles.cnn.com/2011-01-22/world/iran.women.soccer\\_1\\_ilna-government-officials-and-clerics-iranian-authorities?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2011-01-22/world/iran.women.soccer_1_ilna-government-officials-and-clerics-iranian-authorities?_s=PM:WORLD)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75\\_AUV.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75_AUV.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/08/2100-indiv-death-row/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/02/us-iran-executions-idUSTRE71161O20110202>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/1389-01-28-00-30-11/7525-1.html>

criticized in a UN report.<sup>19</sup> The 10 were executed in early March at Vakil Abad Prison in Mashhad without the prior knowledge of their families or lawyers, as is typically the case. The UN Secretary General's March interim report on the human rights situation in Iran, noted, "In July 2010, a large number of prisoners were reportedly executed at one time in Mashhad prison."<sup>20</sup>

11. More executions and inhumane death sentences have also been reported in the official and semi-official media or by rights groups. Two people have been sentenced to be hanged in Kerman, according to the chair of the second revolutionary court branch in Kerman.<sup>21</sup> The regime's prosecutor in Ahvaz reported on February 27, 2011, that more than 40 people have been hanged in Ahvaz city alone over the past seven months.<sup>22</sup> Farhad Afsharnia, the regime's general prosecutor in the southern city of Ahvaz, said, "The execution sentences are still continuing and upon the agreement of the head of the judiciary these sentences will be implemented in public." His deputy, Ahmad Fatehi, was also quoted talking about other forms of corporal and degrading punishments by the regime, saying, "We will also publicly flog. ... Armed robbers will be paraded around town."
12. A 24-year-old man identified as Mahmoud A'alai, was hanged on Wednesday, March 2, 2011, in Khomein Shahr Prison (Esfahan province) on drug-related charges.<sup>23</sup> On March 1, Kerman's judiciary public relations office announced seven people were hanged on drug-related offenses in Jiroft and Bam prisons. The judiciary in Shiraz announced on the same day that three people were hanged in Adel-Abad prison for drug trafficking.<sup>24</sup>
13. Public executions are also added to the mix in order to terrorize the population as protests continue to grow in force against the regime. Following the large-scale protests during the week of February 14, on February 20, 2011, three people were publicly hanged in the town of Salmas (northwestern Iran).<sup>25</sup> They were identified as Moslem Isapour, Ardalan Hatami, and Peyman Qane, all of whom belonged to minority groups (also a violation of Article 27). On March 6, it was reported that three people have been sentenced to death in Oroumieh Central Prison.<sup>26</sup> On March 3, the Prosecutor in Ardebil announced that four people would be hanged in public in the near future. Fardin Arjangi added that the "new approach by the judiciary" is "serious confrontation with offenders" and that he believed, "based on several decades of experience in the judiciary," public hangings "will create fear and act as a deterrent."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> [http://www.rferl.org/content/iran\\_secret\\_executions/2342862.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/iran_secret_executions/2342862.html)

<sup>20</sup> [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75\\_AUV.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75_AUV.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> <http://isna.ir/ISNA/NewsView.aspx?ID=News-1727483>

<sup>22</sup> <http://isna.ir/ISNA/NewsView.aspx?ID=News-1723537>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.irna.ir/NewsShow.aspx?NID=30274912>

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2011/03/110302\\_144\\_execution\\_bam\\_jiroft.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2011/03/110302_144_execution_bam_jiroft.shtml)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/1389-01-28-00-30-11/7006-1.html>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.rahsanews.com/?p=7491>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=8912120083>

14. The judiciary also continues to sentence both men and women to execution by stoning, as emphasized by the UN Secretary General's interim report to the Human Rights Council in March.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Arbitrary Killings***

15. The UN Secretary General's interim report states, "A worrying trend is the increased number of cases in which political prisoners are accused of Moharebeh (enmity against God) offences which carry the death penalty."<sup>29</sup> For example, on December 28, 2010, Ali Saremi, 63, and a father of four, was hanged on charges of being a Mohareb through supporting the main opposition People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK).<sup>30</sup> (The PMOI/MEK has been recognized by the European Parliament, the United States Congress and many other national parliaments in Europe as a legitimate political opposition movement in Iran.) Less than a month later, on January 24, 2011, two others, Jafar Kazemi and Mohammad Ali Haj Aghaie, were hanged at Tehran's Evin Prison. Both were sentenced as Moharebs due to having contacts with the PMOI.<sup>31</sup> According to Amnesty International, at least four others are facing execution on charges of Moharebeh.<sup>32</sup> According to a statement by the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), "Mr. Jafar Kazemi, 47 years old, and Mr. Mohammad Ali Haj Aghaie, 62 years old, were hanged, on 24 January 2011, in Evin prison, Tehran, without their family or lawyers being notified," which in addition to the non-transparent and unfair trial, violates Articles 2, 14, and 26, since the men were tried and hanged after being discriminated against based on their religious and political affiliations with a particular group.
16. According to the regime prosecutor's office, Mr. Kazemi and Mr. Haj Aghaie's charges were declared as "distributing pictures and banners related to the [PMOI], taking photos and films of the clashes as well as chanting slogans in favour of the group."<sup>33</sup> The arbitrary executions of the two men and many others are also in flagrant violation of the spirit and texts of Articles 18, 19, 21, and 22.
17. On March 17, Amnesty International called for an investigation into reports that up to 14 people were killed after guards opened fire indiscriminately on defenceless prisoners during a disturbance in a jail in Tehran.<sup>34</sup> The incident happened at the

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<sup>28</sup> [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75\\_AUV.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75_AUV.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75\\_AUV.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/16session/A.HRC.16.75_AUV.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/29/world/middleeast/29iran.html>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/iran-hangs-two-activists-detained-during-2009-unrest-2011-01-24>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/iran-hangs-two-activists-detained-during-2009-unrest-2011-01-24>

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<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hO7xHNkWfxNRyOUTK87v5o3ef4kw?docId=CNG.85bc84cf65dec965e2307bfe85784c7f.61>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/deaths-iranian-prison-must-be-investigated-2011-03-17>

overcrowded Qezelhessar Prison in Karaj when clashes broke out involving prisoners and prison guards.

### ***Deaths in Custody***

18. Recently, following protests in mid-March, Behnoud Ramezani, a young protestor was killed after a brutal beating by the regime's security forces. The coroner's report indicates that he died as a result of severe blows to the head.<sup>35</sup> In August 2010, another prisoner was killed under torture in solitary confinement in Oroumieh Prison, and his mother burnt herself in protest outside the prison. The man, identified as Bahman Massoudi, reportedly died after a prison guard struck him in the head with a baton.<sup>36</sup> On June 20, 2010, Dariush Arjman, a prisoner in Gohardasht Prison in Karaj, who was suffering from AIDs, died after being denied proper medical care. In August 2010, it was revealed that at least 3 protestors died while in custody in Kahrizak detention center.<sup>37</sup> In addition to Article 6, such cases are a violation of Article 10.

### ***Excessive use of force by law enforcement personnel or armed forces (Also Articles 19 and 21)***

19. As far back as June 2009, just a week after the start of nationwide uprisings, human rights groups and world governments condemned the excessive use of force by the regime's armed forces against unarmed and peaceful demonstrators.<sup>38</sup> The world was shocked to watch the death of a 26-year-old woman, Neda Agha Soltan, on the streets of Tehran. She was gunned down by a member of the Bassij militia on June 20, 2009. Barely a month after the start of the protests, hundreds were feared dead.<sup>39</sup> Since the June 2009 uprisings, there have been numerous small and large protests against the regime, in the course of which protestors have been subjected to barbaric suppression and excessive use of force by security forces. On February 14, dozens were arrested in Tehran alone,<sup>40</sup> and at least two were killed.<sup>41</sup> Anti-regime protesters gathered throughout parts of Iran on February 20 to mark the deaths of these two men. The regime had a highly visible security presence in the capital, with the police making arrests and using tear gas to try to prevent the unrest from escalating.<sup>42</sup> According to news reports, police officers and baton-holding mercenaries, who outnumbered the protestors, fired into the crowds.<sup>43</sup> Opposition

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.newsagency-ina.com/Report-Details.aspx?reportId=4714&back=1>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.hra-news6.info/1389-01-27-05-27-21/3545-1.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11058399>

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Amnesty's urgent call for action:

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/actioncenter/actions/uaa15009.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/16/hundreds-feared-dead-iran-clashes>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.euronews.net/2011/02/14/iranian-dissidents-arrested-at-tehran-protest/>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/19/iranian-opposition-fresh-protests-pair-killed>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/21/world/middleeast/21iran.html>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/21/world/middleeast/21iran.html>

websites and witnesses recounted that even ambulances were driven into the crowds. And, on March 8, Iranian security forces fired tear gas at anti-regime protesters as they tried to hold a demonstration in Tehran.<sup>44</sup> On Tuesday, March 1, 2011, more than 200 people were arrested while trying to protest in Tehran. Opposition websites said security services rounded up protesters in several locations in the capital and were helped by police in plain clothes. Another 40 people were said to have been detained in the city of Isfahan.<sup>45</sup>

### ***Use of the death penalty for crimes committed under eighteen (also Articles 14 and 24)***

20. As recent as March 5, a 16 year old boy, Shayan Omidi, was sentenced to death in the province of Gilan by a judge identified as Mostafa Lesani.<sup>46</sup> He was charged with murder.
21. A court in the province of Fars has sentenced another teenage boy, Ashkan Amiri, to death by hanging. He was sentenced on February 5 and was only 14 years old at the time of committing the crime attributed to him.<sup>47</sup>
22. In a report published in June 2007, Amnesty International said Iran has the status of being the world's last official executioner of children accused of crimes.<sup>48</sup>

### **Article 7 (Prohibition on torture)**

23. The Iranian regime is well-known for carrying out brutal torture against dissidents. There have been numerous reports and testimonies of torture in Iranian prisons especially after the post-June 2009 protests. In early March, 2011, about 70 political prisoners in Ward 12 of the Central Prison in Oroumieh launched a hunger strike in protest of the severe psychological and physical pressures and restrictions, following the secret execution of Hossein Khezri. Reports indicate that some prisoners were kept in solitary confinement and subjected to barbaric torture.<sup>49</sup>
24. Jafar Kazemi, among the many others charged with having contacts with the opposition PMOI, “was tortured for months by his interrogators at Evin Prison to

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<sup>44</sup> AFP:

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j6\\_DYV9dFy7qfDqB77\\_1Wz2rQYRA?docId=CN015f4239109d12efcb919dfa4925869a.ca1](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j6_DYV9dFy7qfDqB77_1Wz2rQYRA?docId=CN015f4239109d12efcb919dfa4925869a.ca1)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12625798>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=8912140769>; and <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=8912040996>

<sup>47</sup> <http://farsi.iranbriefing.net/?p=3381>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/059/2007>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.iranpressnews.net/source/094088.htm>

force him to make a televised ‘confession’ but he refused to do so.”<sup>50</sup> In January, letters by two political prisoners on death row, Zaniar Moradi and Loqman Moradi, surfaced, in which they revealed their experiences of being subjected to torture and attempts by interrogators to obtain forced confessions from them.<sup>51</sup> They reported being tortured and forced to stay awake for several days at a time to undergo interrogation. They were also threatened with rape.

25. In February, a prisoner being held at Karaj’s Gohardasht Prison was severely beaten by interrogators, leaving him with a broken left foot, fingers and nose.<sup>52</sup> Farhang Pourmansouri and some of his cellmates were transferred to solitary confinement at Gohardasht’s Ward 1 (known as the “doghouse” for its abysmal living conditions) after protesting against inhumane conditions at Ward 5. Almost all of them suffered from severe injuries, including broken limbs, after being severely beaten by regime agents. Mr. Pourmansouri spent 18 days in solitary confinement where he was brutally tortured and beaten with electric batons. Mr. Pourmansouri is deprived of medical care after being transferred to Ward 4 of the prison. The remaining prisoners are still in solitary confinement and believed to be under torture.
26. Elderly people, such as a 56-year-old mother named Kobra Banazadeh, have also been treated inhumanely in prison.<sup>53</sup> In March, it was revealed that Ms. Banazadeh is bleeding in her eyes as a result of undergoing torture. She was arrested in 2008 along with 18 others, including two of her brothers, on charges of planning to visit Camp Ashraf in Iraq to meet with their relatives. She is currently being held at Gohardasht Prison in Karaj.
27. Political prisoners in Sanandaj, northwestern Iran, were reportedly under severe torture in February. On February 5, reports indicated that political prisoners are interrogated and beaten for hours at a time by regime agents.<sup>54</sup>
28. The Iranian regime’s ill treatment, abuses and torture towards women and men, both young and elderly, has been well-documented. General Comment 20 stresses that the purpose of Article 7 is to protect both the dignity and the physical and mental integrity of the individual.” The text of the Article does not allow any exceptions to the prohibition of torture, which means the provision may not be suspended or derogated from under any circumstances whatsoever. Yet political prisoners especially in Iran are subjected to some of the worst types of violations of their dignity and physical and mental integrity.

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<sup>50</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/iran-hangs-two-activists-detained-during-2009-unrest-2011-01-24>

<sup>51</sup> <https://hra-news.org/component/content/article/55-1389-01-14-13-18-46/6298-1.html>

<sup>52</sup> <http://news.gooya.com/politics/archives/2011/02/117167.php>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.rahana.org/archives/37488>

<sup>54</sup> <http://farsi.iranbriefing.net/?p=3466>

## Article 9 (Prohibition of arbitrary detention)

29. Iranian security and intelligence forces, which include those from the Ministry of Intelligence (MOIS), the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the paramilitary Bassij Force, plainclothes agents and others, can and regularly do arrest human rights advocates, peaceful demonstrators, journalists, and lawyers, among others. “The lack of transparency of this system ... [reinforces] the practice of arbitrary arrest and detention that is already facilitated by flawed provisions in the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure,” according to Amnesty International.<sup>55</sup>
30. From March 2010 to March 2011, on one account alone, dozens of civil rights activists have been sentenced to a total of 67 years in prison. 24 of the cases remain in limbo, dozens of others have been summoned and interrogated, many others expelled from work.<sup>56</sup>
31. The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran recently interviewed Mahmoud Taravatrouy, lawyer for Mohammad Saber Abbasian, a prisoner of conscience and student activist. “He has remained in ‘temporary detention’ since 26 February 2010, which is more than a year. ... Unfortunately, about a week ago, his ‘temporary detention’ orders were extended,” Taravatrouy told the Campaign.<sup>57</sup>
32. Student activist Iman Sedighi was arrested in Babol in recent months. According to Amnesty, he “was held in detention centres that are not under the control of the Judiciary, where individuals are at particular risk of torture or other ill-treatment, often to attempt to force them to make ‘confessions’ which are then used as evidence in unfair trials. It is often difficult for family members to discover information concerning the fate of their relatives when held in such centres. These circumstances may amount to enforced disappearance, which is strictly prohibited under international law.”<sup>58</sup>
33. Iranian blogger Hossein Maleki Ronaghi has been reportedly sentenced to 15 years in prison.<sup>59</sup> Ronaghi’s mother, Zoleikha Mousavi, has said that authorities informed him about the heavy prison sentence verbally.<sup>60</sup> She said that Ronaghi has been on a hunger strike since October 3 to protest his mistreatment in prison. He is reportedly being held in an Evin Prison ward that is controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Ronaghi’s mother says that her son, who was arrested during the June 2009 post-election crackdown, has spent 300 days in solitary confinement. Charges

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<sup>55</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/062/2010/en/a009a855-788b-4ed4-8aa9-3e535ea9606a/mde130622010en.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> Some of the identities of those detained can be seen here:  
[http://www.hrai.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=113:000&catid=3:newsflash&Itemid=90](http://www.hrai.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=113:000&catid=3:newsflash&Itemid=90)

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2011/03/abbasian-temporary-detention/>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/032/2011/en/700c667a-2785-49ba-a264-df540eaf50f3/mde130322011en.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.aftabnews.ir/vdchvwnzi23nv6d.tft2.html>

<sup>60</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2010/10/101007\\_hunger\\_strike\\_maleki.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2010/10/101007_hunger_strike_maleki.shtml)

against him reportedly include acting against Iran's national security and working with foreign media. She says her son has said that he has been threatened in jail with execution and that he has been pressured to make false confessions.<sup>61</sup>

34. Four union activists are also among the many others held in Iranian prisons for their opinions. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini and Reza Shahabi are prisoners of conscience and held solely for their peaceful trade union activities. Two other members of the Bus Company union in Tehran, Mansour Ossanlu and Ebrahim Maddadi, respectively head and deputy head of the union, are currently serving prison sentences; both are prisoners of conscience.<sup>62</sup>

#### **Article 10 (Conditions of detention)**

35. The conditions in the regime's prisons and detention centers are reported to be simply abysmal. Prisons are overcrowded, political prisoners are regularly mixed in with convicted criminals and ill political prisoners are routinely denied medical treatment. According to the Director of Iran's Prison Organization, there are now more than 220,000 prisoners in Iran, with 55,000 added to the prison population in the course of the past year and a half alone.<sup>63</sup> Gholamhossein Esmaili suggested that expanding the prison system is a critical task for the regime. He said that while the "official capacity" of prisons is 85,000, there are well over 220,000 people behind bars. "During the period that I took over as director of the Prisons Organization, 55,000 people have been added to the overall number of prisoners while even as little as 55 meters of space has not been added to the current system," he said. He referred to some examples of cases related to prisoners, saying, "An individual has been in prison for 11 months simply for not paying a debt of (an equivalent of) \$100."<sup>64</sup>

36. A jailed ethnic Azeri journalist and human rights activist is in critical condition in Tehran's Evin prison, according to his wife.<sup>65</sup> Saeed Matinpour's wife, Atieh Taheri, said on March 8 that he has been suffering from severe heart problems since shortly after his detention in December 2009, but has been denied medical treatment.

37. Mr. Mohsen Dokmechi, 53, a prominent and respected merchant in the Tehran Bazaar, who had been imprisoned because of his affiliation to the PMOI, passed away on March 28, 2011 in prison due to deliberate denial of medical treatment by prison authorities after nine months of imprisonment and torture. He had been incarcerated for several years in the 1980s for his political activities. Mr. Dokmechi was rearrested again and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment and internal exile in August 2009 on the charge of helping the families of political prisoners and because his daughter Narges Dokmechi lived in Camp Ashraf. Last year, after being

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<sup>61</sup> [http://www.rferl.org/content/Genius\\_Blogger\\_Sentenced\\_To\\_15\\_Years/2184616.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Genius_Blogger_Sentenced_To_15_Years/2184616.html)

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/013/2011/en/45b05c4b-a4e7-44cb-ae29-80edd5a1f5d8/mde130132011en.html>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.mehrnews.com/fa/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=1265382>

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.isna.ir/isna/NewsView.aspx?ID=News-1726702>

<sup>65</sup> [http://www.rferl.org/content/matinpour\\_iran\\_jail/2333910.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/matinpour_iran_jail/2333910.html)

diagnosed with an advanced stage of pancreatic cancer<sup>66</sup>, prison officials prevented his treatment for months, after which, he was hospitalized last December. Tehran Prosecutor, Mahmoud Jafari Dowlatabadi rejected doctors' recommendation that Mr. Dokmechi needed chemotherapy. After surgery, he was transferred to Gohardasht Prison, west of Tehran, where he was denied medical care until his death.

38. In November 2010, it was reported that some of the female political prisoners in Tehran's Evin Prison were transferred to a special ward for detained drug addicts where they were held in profoundly inhumane conditions.<sup>67</sup> The political prisoners were kept in small spaces and banned from going to the prison yard. On July 15, 2010, an outbreak of hepatitis in Evin Prison's female cellblock 1, as well as the prevalence of lice, and the lack of sanitary facilities and cooling appliances were reported.<sup>68</sup>
39. Some of the reports of abuses and denial of medical treatment, as well as the abhorrent detention conditions, have been mentioned above. It should be added that families and lawyers are routinely denied access to their relatives and clients.<sup>69</sup>

#### **Article 18 (Freedom of thought, conscience and religion)**

40. Religious conversions are criminalized in Iran. A Christian convert, Khalil Yar'ali, was arrested in Ahvaz on January 15. He spent 28 days in an unknown location in solitary confinement and subjected to intense interrogations, and later transferred to Karoun prison. As of early March, he had still not been told why he was arrested, but it is believed his charges are similar to another convert in Ahvaz, Mostafa Shokrollahi. He did not have a lawyer and was brought to court on three occasions, but was returned to prison without a hearing.<sup>70</sup>
41. Places of worship of minority faiths are too often ransacked or destroyed by the regime's forces. In November 2007, more than 400 State Security Forces (SSF) levelled a Dervish Mosque in Boroujerd and set it on fire.<sup>71</sup>

#### **Article 22 (Freedom of association)**

42. The Iranian regime has placed severe restrictions on the recognition of associations, including political parties. It has even criminalized certain types of human rights

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/1389-01-27-05-27-21/7165-1.html>

<sup>67</sup> [http://hrdai.blogspot.com/2010/11/blog-post\\_16.html](http://hrdai.blogspot.com/2010/11/blog-post_16.html)

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.sabzlink.com/story.php?id=17314>

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/062/2010/en/a009a855-788b-4ed4-8aa9-3e535ea9606a/mde130622010en.pdf>

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/1389-01-27-05-27-21/7164-1.html>

<sup>71</sup> <http://ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/4346-photos-of-dervishes-mosque-destroyed-by-iranian-regimes-security-forces>

associations and political parties (also violating Article 25). It places severe penalties on members of prohibited organizations, in the case of the main opposition PMOI, capital punishment. Furthermore, trade unions and their members are regularly intimidated, threatened and arrested.

43. Since 1981, at least 120,000 members and sympathizers of the PMOI have been murdered by the Iranian regime. In a briefing on Iran, Amnesty International wrote that in the period between 1981 and 1982 alone, "...thousands of members of the People's Mojahedin organisation were executed."<sup>72</sup> Some 30,000 political prisoners were executed in a spate of a few months between the summer and autumn of 1988, following a fatwa issued against the PMOI by Ayatollah Khomeini.<sup>73</sup>
44. Since 1991, articles 186 and 190 of the Islamic Punishment Act have been in force for the purpose of killing the members of the PMOI group as such, i.e. "waging war against God" (moharebs): "Article 186 - All members or supporters of an organized group or association which has opposed the Islamic State with arms shall be regarded as enemies of God provided that they are aware of the position of that [group or organization], and actively support the furtherance of its aims while that group or organization's central [committee] is intact. This article applies to all members and supporters of such groups even if they are not part of the armed wing of the group or organization."<sup>74</sup> Article 190 of the same Act provides that: "The punishment for enemies of God (moharebs) and the corrupt on earth shall be one of the four following: a) Execution; b) If he or she is crucified for no more than three days and dies within those three days, he or she may be taken down [from the cross]; c) If he or she is still alive after three days, [he or she] should not be killed; d) Confinement in an isolated place."<sup>75</sup>
45. Since the beginning of 2009, Iranian officials have on a number of occasions stated that any link or affiliation with the PMOI is according to the law considered as Moharebeh (waging war on God). Ebrahim Raeesi, Deputy to the Judiciary, said in a television interview that: "Moharebeh is the description used for anyone who stands against God, God's Prophet, and the commands of God or the Prophet. In reality, it means waging war against God and God's Prophet, waging war against the Islamic ruling system, which is based on religious commands and do's and don't's..... But, Moharebeh is also sometimes referred to an Organisation. An Organisation can become a Mohareb Organisation, like the PMOI. According to Article 186 of the Islamic Punishment Act, anyone who helps PMOI in any way or under any circumstances, in light of the fact that the movement is an organized movement, would deserve the title of Mohareb."<sup>76</sup> Reuters reported on 8 January

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<sup>72</sup> Amnesty International, Iran briefing, London, 1987.

<sup>73</sup> Christina Lamb, "Killing of 30,000 in Iran, Prisoners were hanged in bunches of six, says book by Ayatollah's deputy," The Sunday Telegraph, 4 February 2001. Also, La Croix.com, 02/02/2010, refers to 30,000 members of the PMOI having been executed in 1988.

<sup>74</sup> Office of State Laws and Regulations, The Collection of Islamic Punishment, Government Punishments and the Fight Against Narcotics (Javidan Publishers), summer 1997.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.khabaronline.ir/news-33469.aspx>

2010 that “Five detainees that Iran plans to put on trial in connection with anti-government protests last month are members of the armed People's Mujahideen Organization of Iran (PMOI).”<sup>77</sup>

46. The regime considers even chanting slogans and distributing leaflets for the PMOI as a capital punishment. According to the regime’s prosecutor’s office, Mr. Kazemi and Mr. Haj Aghaei’s charges were “distributing pictures and banners related to the [PMOI], taking photos and films of the clashes as well as chanting slogans in favour of the group.”<sup>78</sup>

### **Article 27 (Religious minorities)**

47. On March 4, 2011, plainclothes agents in Isfahan arrested three Iranian Bahai followers, Payman Panah, 16, Saman Golshani, 18, and Ramina Ahrari.<sup>79</sup> The agents reportedly went to a religious ceremony, disturbed it, arrested the three people and took them to an undisclosed location. Three other Bahai followers, Misaq Mohammad Alipour, Anisa Motahar, and Farboud Eshtiaq had been previously detained, in addition to Ehsanollah Eshtiaq and Soroush Pezeshki. A number of Sunni religious leaders were arrested in Mashhad and Taibad on Friday, March 5, 2011.<sup>80</sup> They were identified as Adham Akhtari, Molavi Mozaffar and Shamsollah Heydari. At the time of this report, Mohammad Fazeli, the Sunni Friday Prayer leader of Taibad, was also in detention and his whereabouts and situation remain unknown, in addition to Hafez Abdolrashid, another Sunni religious leader.
48. On Monday, February 28, 2011, it was reported that the regime’s provincial officials in Sistan-va-Balouchestan prevented a meeting between Sunni university students with religious leaders.<sup>81</sup>
49. A Christian convert, Khalil Yar’ali, was arrested in Ahvaz on January 15, 2011. He spent 28 days in an unknown location in solitary confinement and subjected to intense interrogations, and later transferred to Karoun prison.<sup>82</sup>
50. On March 12, 2011 a number of Bahais were arrested. <sup>83</sup> According to a prosecutor in the southern city of Bam, they were "promoting their faith in kindergartens." Mohammad Reza Sanjari said a number of Bahais who were promoting their program “under the guise of kindergartens in Bam, Kerman and Tehran were arrested by intelligence agents after nine months of intelligence work.”

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<sup>77</sup> <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2010/01/08/idUKLDE6071LE>

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<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hO7xHNkWfxNRyOUTK87v5o3ef4kw?docId=CNG.85bc84cf65dec965e2307bfe85784c7f.61>

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/1389-01-27-05-24-07/7205-1.html>

<sup>80</sup> <http://fa.sunnionline.us/News/News-Ahl-al-Sunnah/2955-1389-12-15-08-49-43.html>

<sup>81</sup> <http://fa.sunnionline.us/News/News-Ahl-al-Sunnah/2938-1389-12-09-18-01-56.html>

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.hra-news.org/1389-01-27-05-27-21/7164-1.html>

<sup>83</sup> <http://www.france24.com/en/20110312-iran-arrests-number-bahais>

51. On January 4, 2011, it was reported that a number of Christian missionaries in Tehran province have been arrested.<sup>84</sup> The provincial governor was quoted as saying that “more will be arrested in the near future.” “Various kinds of fake, deviated and corrupt cults have sharpened their teeth for our beliefs and one can see their activities among the youth,” Governor Morteza Tamaddon said, branding Christian missionaries as an example of “cultural onslaught” against Iran.

### **Camp Ashraf: Violations of Articles 6, 7, 12, 17, 27**

52. Camp Ashraf is home to 3,400 members of Iran’s main opposition movement, the PMOI/MEK. These dissidents, including 1,000 women, have been living there since 1986. After a 16-month investigation by several US agencies, the United States recognized the residents as protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention in July 2004 and accordingly protected the unarmed residents until January 2009, when that protection was handed over to Iraqi authorities.

53. The established jurisprudence of the Human Rights Committee permits the examination of extraterritorial actions undertaken by a state in regard to its own citizens where the state is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.<sup>85</sup> Thus, the treatment of the Iranian expatriates at Camp Ashraf by the Iranian regime, or its agents, is a legitimate consideration in reflecting on the human rights situation in Iran as a whole.

54. The Iranian regime and its Iraqi proxies persistently violate articles 6, 7, 12, 17, and 27 with regards to Iranian refugees in Camp Ashraf, Iraq. The suppression of Ashraf residents, who are symbols of the political and ideological opposition to the regime, is in reality a continuation of the regime’s suppression of dissent at home.

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<sup>84</sup> <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5ga1XzdPjqpFjI5riidEgxOSU-mQQ?docId=CNG.4844c10793df1183202908033c62a66e.5f1>; Also see: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703730704576066033828042322.html>

<sup>85</sup> See, e.g., General Comment No. 31, The Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant, Human Rights Committee, U.N. Document CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13, June 26, 2004; and e.g., Burgos v. Uruguay, No. 52/1979, 29 July 1981, Para. 12.3 (“Article 2 (1) of the Covenant places an obligation upon a State party to respect and to ensure rights “to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction”, but it does not imply that the State party concerned cannot be held accountable for violations of rights under the Covenant which its agents commit upon the territory of another State, whether with the acquiescence of the Government of that State or in opposition to it. According to article 5 (1) of the Covenant:

Nothing in the present Covenant may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms recognized herein or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the present Covenant.

In line with this, it would be unconscionable to so interpret the responsibility under article 2 of the Covenant as to permit a State party to perpetrate violations of the Covenant on the territory of another State, which violations it could not perpetrate on its own territory.”

55. Since taking control of the camp in January 2009 from the United States, the Iraqi government and its forces – acting at the insistence and request of the Iranian regime and in collaboration with elements of Iranian intelligence services --have imposed a variety of inhumane and unjust restrictions on the residents of Ashraf, drastically worsening living conditions of the vulnerable group of Iranian refugees and especially the 1,000 women among them.
56. Iraqi forces attacked Camp Ashraf on 28-29 July 2009, killing 11 residents and wounding a further 450 residents, 43 of them seriously.<sup>86</sup> Of those, 14 residents suffered gunshot wounds, 13 were run over by military vehicles and a further 16 suffered other injuries, including serious head injuries. Following the attacks, 36 Ashraf residents were forcibly removed from Ashraf and detained in Iraqi prisons and secret safe houses under extremely harsh conditions. The battalions which arrived to conduct the assault were armed with a variety of weapons, including firearms, sickles, axes, planks of wood (some with nails and other pieces of metal embedded), batons, metal bars, knives, chains, plastic cables, rubber tubing, tear gas, pepper spray and sound flash grenades (sonic grenades).
57. The operation was commanded by Gen. Abdol-Hussayn As-Shemmari (Damouk), Diyala Province's Police Chief. In January, a Spanish court launched a probe into the attacks to investigate possible war crimes and summoned Shemmari to appear before the court.<sup>87</sup>
58. The Iranian regime has since its inception referred to the PMOI as “hypocrite” Muslims and “Moharebs,” making it clear that the enmity of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the PMOI goes far beyond political differences. The Iranian authority, as a theocracy, considers the PMOI as having deviated from Islam itself. This raises the dangerous prospect of genocide. A method of destruction of Ashraf residents is the deliberate restriction and in some cases complete deprivation of resources needed for the group’s physical survival and which are available to the rest of the Iraqi population, such as clean water, fuel, food and medical services. In addition to the blockade of foodstuffs and medical supplies, residents of Ashraf are not permitted to leave and are subjected to forced detention inside the Camp. In addition, at the request of the Iranian regime, Iraqi authorities have threatened to carry out a forcible relocation or expulsion of all Ashraf residents to an extremely inhospitable environment in a maximum security facility in the southern province of Muthanna, which is unbearable for human beings, or even direct refolement to certain death in Iran.

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<sup>86</sup> <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1913399,00.html>;  
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?id=ENGMDE140242009&lang=e>;  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/30/world/middleeast/30iraq.html>; [http://articles.cnn.com/2009-07-31/world/iraq.mosques.bombings\\_1\\_camp-ashraf-iraqi-police-iran?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2009-07-31/world/iraq.mosques.bombings_1_camp-ashraf-iraqi-police-iran?_s=PM:WORLD);  
[http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=18440:irans-hand-is-seen-behind-camp-massacre&catid=7:iraq&Itemid=29](http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18440:irans-hand-is-seen-behind-camp-massacre&catid=7:iraq&Itemid=29)

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/8239212/Spanish-court-launches-probe-into-refugee-killings-in-Iraq.html>

59. Joint Iranian and Iraqi organized actions against Ashraf involve agents of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Iraqi forces -who should be there to protect Ashraf. Since 8 February 2010, agents of the Iranian regime have been stationed at the main gate of Ashraf under the pretext of meeting their family members residing in Camp Ashraf. They have used more than 240 mounted loudspeakers to blare propaganda and threats against the residents on an almost 24-hour basis amounting to what is considered to be psychological torture. The mission of the agents seems part of the psychological warfare by the Iranian regime to set the stage for a bloody confrontation. They are openly threatening to destroy Camp Ashraf and kill the residents. For example, some of the announcements that have been recorded and filmed are: "I swear to [Shiite Imam] Ali, I will cut your throats on Ashraf's soil." A female operative: "I will kill the PMOI [members]." (March 8, 2010). On another day, the loudspeakers blared, "The story of Ashraf is over. There is only one reason why we are standing behind these doors, listen well. We pleaded with the army to wait. Have you forgotten the July attacks? Do you want them to be repeated? Do you want the murders to be repeated?" (March 24, 2010).
60. The Central Investigative Court of Spain No. 4 said in a ruling released on March 17, 2011 that it will probe the psychological torture of Ashraf residents which began in February 2010 using loudspeakers as crimes against the international community.<sup>88</sup>
61. Reporting on the blockade on Ashraf, Amnesty International said in December 2010, "Hundreds of Iranian exiles, including refugees, resident in Camp Ashraf in Iraq, north of Baghdad, are reported to have suffered serious complications from medical restrictions imposed on them by the Iraqi authorities. In the past five months the already appalling medical conditions at the camp have deteriorated even further. Many residents are reportedly suffering from cancer, heart problems, loss of vision, gallstones, orthopaedic problems, kidney stones and other diseases that without prompt and adequate treatment can result in irreversible health damage."<sup>89</sup>
62. The intent of the regime with respect to dissidents within Iran is seen in stark relief in Ashraf. The way the Iranian regime treats the residents of Ashraf is indicative of the way it regards its internal opponents: its intentions are malicious, and it has zero tolerance for dissent. In this sense, the People of Ashraf are the canary in the coal mine: they demonstrate clearly what the attitudes and the intentions of the regime really are.

## CONCLUSION

In light of these many serious violations of the fundamental human rights protected under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the people of Iran hope that the Committee on Human Rights will use the occasion of the examination of the periodic report of Iran in July 2011 in order to pose key questions to the representatives of the Iranian government -- in order to seek a remedy of these flagrant breaches and to make a record for the future.

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<sup>88</sup> <http://ireport.cnn.com/docs/DOC-579870>

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/020/2010/en>