



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 46th SESSION

Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran
(9 March 2021) - To watch the full recording of the Interactive Dialogue, [click here](#).

Special Rapporteur's report [A/HRC/46/50](#) "Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran"

The first part of the report provides an **overview of the human rights situation in Iran**, including issues such as death penalty, fair trial, arbitrary detention, freedom of association, assembly and expression, prison conditions, the situation of minorities and the impact of the economic crisis and sanctions.

The second part of the report focuses specifically on the **situation of women and girls in Iran**, including child marriage, domestic violence, harassment of women's rights advocates, lack of representation of women, discriminations and restrictions of women's participation in cultural, public and political life.

Javaid Rehman, Special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran:

COVID-19 has added to a myriad of economic, political and social challenges facing Iran. **Sanctions** should be eased to enhance Iran's pandemic response and to protect the **right to health**. The issue of sanctions should not, however, distract from the fundamental responsibilities of the Iranian Government to **protect human rights**.

Almost 18 months since the **deadly crackdown against the November 2019 protests** in Iran, the Government has still not conducted a proper **investigation** nor held anyone **accountable** for the lethal force used against protestors, which caused at least 304 deaths. Families seeking justice for relatives killed have been threatened by State agents.

Iran's **high death penalty rate** continues to be troubling. In 2020, at least 267 executions took place, including at least four **child offenders**. Death penalty is applied for acts that should not be considered crimes. The Special Rapporteur urges Iran to establish a **moratorium on the death penalty** as a first step towards its abolition.

The continued **arbitrary detention of human rights defenders** and lawyers persists, with denial of medical treatment to **prisoners**. Unacceptable restrictions on **freedom of expression** continue, including the imprisonment of journalists for critical reporting, and threats against domestic and **overseas-based journalists** and their families.

The **targeting of minorities** is alarming, including through executions, enforced disappearances and arbitrary sentencing of individuals from the **Baluch, Kurdish and Ahwazi Arab** minorities. The arbitrary arrests and imprisonments of **religious minorities**, particularly members of the **Baha'i faith** is alarming. The report also outlines the wide-spread discrimination against **sexual minorities** in Iran, including hate speech from public officials and the application of the **death penalty for consensual same-sex relations**. The Special Rapporteur urges the authorities to eliminate all forms of discrimination against all minorities and to ensure the equal rights and dignity of all.

While some positive steps are recognized, **gender-based discrimination** persists in law, practice and societal attitudes, disempowering women and girls from **participating in society**. Iran must take immediate action to end **child marriages**. It is unacceptable that Iranian law sets the marriage age for girls as low as **13**. Official statistics registered over 16,000 marriages involving girls aged 10-14 between March and September 2020. Iran must raise the marriage age in line with its commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Violence against women is a serious concern that the Iranian authorities must do more to address. Iran should repeal all legislation which exonerates or mitigates so called **honour killings** and violence against women.

Iranian women's rights advocates continue to be harassed and imprisoned. Many remain arbitrarily imprisoned under national security laws for defending women's rights. The Special Rapporteur urges the Government to immediately **release all women and men arbitrarily detained** for standing up for women's rights, as well as to immediately introduce fundamental reforms to ensure gender equality under the law and end to discrimination against women in society.

Islamic Republic of Iran (country concerned):

Iran requests this Council to observe a **minute of silence** for the many **female healthcare professionals** who sacrificed their lives on the frontline of **Covid-19**. In Iran, women run 50% of managerial positions in the ministry of health and close to 50% of higher education graduates are women. **Women in Iran are not second class citizens.**

For more than 10 years, this particular interactive dialogue has been used as a platform to launch campaigns against Iran. It is not a debate, it is not interactive. It is a **direct attack at Iran**. The report by the Special Rapporteur lacks legitimate grounds and its **mandate lacks objectivity** and do not respect the **principle of non-interference**.

United States' **sanctions** are having a disastrous impact on Iran's Covid-19 response. They must be **held to account**. Still, Iran continues despite all the challenges imposed by external forces. Iran will stand resolute in supporting the cause of human rights. Iran will continue its valuable engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE: 29 State delegations took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue.

States condemned the increasing **use of death penalty** by Iran, deploring the execution of **child defenders, women's rights defenders** and **protesters** as well as the application of death penalty for **same sex relations** (European Union, Denmark o/b of Nordic countries, Canada, Germany, North Macedonia, Israel, France, Slovenia, Switzerland, Australia, Netherlands, Belgium, Albania, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland, Czech Republic).

Many States were worried about the persisting **gender-based discriminations** in Iran, including legal **child marriage** from the age of 13, **gender-based violence, right to participate** for women and girls in society, widespread **inequalities** (European Union, Denmark on behalf of Nordic countries, Germany, North Macedonia, Israel, France, Slovenia, Switzerland, Australia, Belgium, Albania, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Czech Republic).

Several States deplored the regular **attacks against the rights to freedom of expression, free opinion and peaceful assembly**, particularly targeting **human rights defenders** and **journalists** in Iran through **arbitrary arrests**. Some states highlighted the disastrous detention conditions in Iranian prisons (Canada, United States of America, Albania) and other states condemned the lack of fair trials in Iran

States also condemned the systematic **targeting and discrimination** operated against **ethnic, religious and sexual minorities**, including Baluch, Kurdish and Ahwazi Arab, members of the Baha'i faith, Christians and LGBTQI persons.

Some States deplored that **no investigation** have been conducted by Iran for its **repression of the 2019 protests**, showing a strong lack of accountability (Denmark o/b of Nordic countries, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, USA)

Several States, including the Russian Federation, Venezuela, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Belarus, China, Syria, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Nicaragua and Burundi deplored the **politicization of this debate**. For these states, **country mandates should not exist** because they lack selectivity, impose double standards and represent **interference** in domestic states affairs. Belarus, China, Syria, Nicaragua and Burundi demanded the illegal unilateral coercive **sanctions on Iran to be lifted**.

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (29 delegations):

European Union, Denmark on behalf of Nordic countries, Canada, Germany, Israel, France, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Australia, Netherlands, Venezuela, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Belgium, United States of America, Albania, Belarus, China, Syria, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Czech Republic, Nicaragua, Burundi.

10 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue.

Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort, Baha'i international Community, International Federation of Journalists, International Humanist and Ethical Union, International Pen, British humanist Association, Right Livelihood Award Foundation, Article 19, Iran's Human Rights Documentation Center

NGOs condemned the grave **human rights violations committed in Iran**: alarming use of the death penalty, discriminations against ethnic and religious minorities, targeting of journalists and human rights defenders, absence of accountability in the 1988 massacre and 2019 repression of protests by state officials, arbitrary detention of cultural workers, absence of freedom of religion and freedom of expression.