

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 55th SESSION

### Interactive dialogue with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran

18 March 2024

**Ms Sara Hossain, Chairperson of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran** shared with the Council Mission’s findings in relation to *“the alleged human rights violations in Iran in connection with the protests that began there on 16 September 2022, especially with respect to women and children”*.

The Government did not grant the Mission access to the country, nor respond to calls for meetings. The Government of Iran’s continued and extensive restrictions on online communications, including surveillance, harassment and intimidation of victims and their families, inhibited people from coming forward for fear of reprisals. Despite these challenges, Ms Hossain reported that State authorities in Iran were **responsible for egregious human rights violations** in connection with the protests that started on 16 September 2022. These include unlawful deaths, extra-judicial executions, unnecessary and disproportionate use of force, arbitrary arrests, torture and ill-treatment, rape and sexual violence, enforced disappearances and gender persecution. These acts were conducted in the context of a widespread and systematic attack against women and girls, and other persons expressing support for human rights. Some of these serious violations of human rights thus rose to the level of crimes against humanity, including murder, torture, rape, and gender persecution, intersecting with ethnicity and religion.

She focused on the findings regarding Jina Mahsa Amini, the 22-year-old Iranian- Kurdish woman whose death in custody of the “morality police” sparked the protests that September 2022. Her death was unlawful and caused by physical violence in the custody of State authorities. In response to the protests, the entire State apparatus mobilized to suppress the mounting demands for basic and fundamental human rights. Ms Hossain further reported that children, boys and girls, were subjected to extrajudicial killings, torture, rape, and held in detention along with adults, women and men. Others were brought to juvenile detention centres or mental health facilities aimed at “reforming” them.

Considering that States have the primary responsibility and duty to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms; in Iran historical and systemic impunity has robbed a society of any hopes for justice and redress. She urged the Government of Iran to take immediate and concrete measures to halt executions, promptly release all those arbitrarily detained in connection with the protests, including women arrested for defying the mandatory hijab, cease judicial harassment of victims and their families, provide them with redress, truth, justice and reparations and dismantle and disband the persecutory system of the enforcement of these laws and policies.

**Islamic Republic of Iran (Country concerned)** stated that certain countries, purporting to uphold human rights - including the United States, Germany, England, France, and Canada - have assumed a veneer of humanitarianism. Through the establishment of a politically charged mechanism, they have positioned themselves as advocates for Iranian women and children. However, their endorsement and enforcement of cruel and unlawful unilateral sanctions have egregiously violated the rights of tens of millions of Iranians. The Country stressed the lack of independence and impartiality of the Mission, as well as any credible documentary sources. The report conspicuously omits any acknowledgment of the role played by other countries, foreign-based anti-Iranian media outlets, social networks, and terrorist groups in instigating and perpetuating the riots.

## Interactive dialogue

36 country delegations took the floor during the interactive dialogue. **Many of the countries** were particularly concerned by the lack of consideration shown by the Iranian authorities regarding the fight against all forms of discrimination against women and girls. They face systemic discrimination, violations of their basic human rights, and violence at the behest of the state. It is high time that Iran took concrete steps towards gender equality. **Member States** affirmed that the death penalty does not only constitute a violation of human rights and human dignity, but it also brings neither justice nor security, and on the contrary contributes to maintaining a climate of violence.

**DPRK** stated that abusing the human rights mechanism to single out the nations that do not align with the hegemonic and geopolitical interests of the west is a gross violation of core principles of respecting sovereignty and noninterference in the internal affairs of the state enshrined in the UN charter. Politically motivated pressure and biased approach is counterproductive that undermines the dialogue and cooperation for genuine promotion and protection of human rights. **China** called upon the international community and respect sovereignty. **Syrian Arab Republic** emphasized the failure of the Mission's approach to play any positive role in protecting and promoting human rights, focusing only on achieving political goals against the targeted country. It welcomed Iran's efforts to restore security and stability to the country after the events of 2022, despite the attempt to implement foreign interventionist agendas and the involvement of terrorist groups. **The Russian Federation** strongly disagreed with a number of recommendations of the Fact-Finding Mission to Iran, which go far beyond the mandate of this mechanism. At their core, they are aimed only at inciting anti-Iranian sentiments instead of providing the authorities of this country with all possible assistance in solving the problems they face. **Nicaragua** unconditional supported the Islamic Republic of Iran and rejected the existence and all actions of the misnamed Independent International Investigation Mission. This so-called "Independent" International Mission is only an instrument of aggression by the imperialists, which intentionally and maliciously remains silent about the negative, destructive and deadly impacts of the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States and its allies against the People of Iran.

Although they deepest concern over human rights violations and crimes listed in the Mission's report, **NGOs** highlighted that under international law, the responsibility for dealing with internal discontent, in whatever form, lies primarily with governments. If domestic mechanisms fail, international mechanisms are necessary to ensure potential victims have access to the justice they need. It is regrettable that the fact-finding mission's access to second-hand and biased information weakens the credibility of its conclusions and judgments; this data must be verified. The Council should allow the Mission more time to complete its work to document mass crimes under international law and preserve evidence effectively: this is vital for tackling the crisis of systemic impunity that has fuelled cycles of deadly repression in Iran, affirmed **Amnesty International**. **WILPF**, calling for international accountability mechanisms, reported cases of torture, kills, rape, and arbitrary arrests against political prisoners, women, and girls.

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive dialogue (36 country delegations):

*Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Chile, Costa Rica (on behalf of a group of countries<sup>1</sup>), European Union, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Estonia (on behalf of Nordic-Baltic countries<sup>2</sup>), Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, Cuba, Germany, Canada (on behalf of a group of Countries<sup>3</sup>), France, Ireland, United States of America, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Argentina.*

NHRIs and NGOs that took the floor during the Interactive dialogue (10):

Amnesty International, Association of Iranian Jurists Defending Human Rights, Association of Iranian Short Statured Adults, Baha'i International Community, International Educational Development, Inc., International Foundation Witnesses Ashoora, Iran Autism Association, The Institute for Protection of Women's Rights (IPWR), Women's Human Rights International Association, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

To watch the full meeting refer to UN Web TV: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

<sup>2</sup> Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden.

<sup>3</sup> Australia, New Zealand and Canada.