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“They have dehumanized us”:

Minority rights violations during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Independent International Fact-finding Mission on the Islamic Republic
of Iran

August 2024

Background

In its resolution S-35/1, the United Nations Human Rights Council established the Independent International Fact-finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (“the Mission”), to thoroughly and independently investigate alleged human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran (hereafter “Iran”) related to the protests that began on 16 September 2022, especially with respect to women and children. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Mission has taken an intersectional approach, placing special attention on discrimination on grounds of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, socio-economic status, religion and ethnicity, as well as against members of minorities. In this regard, particular attention was given to alleged violations of the rights of groups that have faced discrimination, exclusion and marginalization and the nature and extent of the impact and effect of such violations.ⁱ

The Mission was also mandated to establish the facts and circumstances surrounding the alleged violations, and collect, consolidate and analyse, and preserve evidence, in view of cooperation in any legal proceedings.ⁱⁱ The Council extended the Mission’s mandate on 4 April 2024 for one year, to allow the Mission to effectively document, verify, consolidate and preserve the large amount of evidence collected.ⁱⁱⁱ This latter aspect of the Mission’s mandate is aimed at directly supporting accountability, including the pursuit of truth, equality, justice and reparations for and by victims and their families.

Pursuant to its mandate, the Mission presented its report to the Human Rights Council in March 2024, as well as an accompanying extended conference room paper, which elaborated on the facts, legal determinations, and recommendations.^{iv}

The present paper highlights the gravity of the Mission’s findings of gross human rights violations and crimes under international law committed against women, children and men belonging to minorities in the context of the protests that began in Iran on 16 September 2022 and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement that followed. It further deepens its recommendations on potential accountability avenues both in third States and internationally, in view of the entrenched and systematic discrimination and impunity that persists in Iran, and in particular for members of minorities.

Consistent with the general guidance and practice of investigative bodies established by the Human Rights Council, the Mission applied the “reasonable grounds to believe” standard of proof.^v

The Mission regrets that its investigation remains curtailed by the denial of access to the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the continuing risks to the security and safety of its sources and their families to come forward and share their experiences. In all cases, the Mission remained strictly guided by the “do no harm” principle ensuring that independence, impartiality, objectivity, transparency, and integrity were fully adhered to at all stages of its work.

The Mission remains grateful to those who contributed to its investigation, despite risks to their safety and security, as well as to their families. Under no circumstances should anyone face reprisals for cooperating with the Mission.

I. Introduction

In its report before the Human Rights Council in March 2024, the Mission concluded that “ethnic and religious minorities, as well as other minorities, were disproportionately impacted by the Government’s response to the protests that began in September 2022.”^{vi} Pursuant to its investigations, the Mission established that these affected minorities comprise in particular ethnic Kurds and Baluch as well as others, including ethnic Azerbaijani Turks and Ahwazi Arabs. These ethnic minorities are primarily concentrated in the western, north-western and eastern border provinces of Iran, namely Kermanshah, Kurdistan, West Azerbaijan, East Azerbaijan as well as Sistan and Baluchestan.^{vii} The Baluch and the Kurd ethnic minorities as well as many members of the Ahwazi Arab ethnic minority are also predominantly Sunni and are thus considered ethnic religious minorities.^{viii} The Azerbaijani Turks account for 16 percent of Iran’s population, followed by Kurds at 10 percent, Lur at 6 percent, while the Baluch and Ahwazi Arab minorities both constitute 2 percent.^{ix}

In examining the situation of minorities in Iran, the Mission considered structural, legal, and socio-economic factors that underpin ongoing institutionalized discrimination and marginalisation against them. It found these to constitute the root causes or “enablers” of the gross human rights violations and crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, committed against members of ethnic and religious minorities in the context of the protests that began on 16 September 2022. The long-standing grievances stemming from decades-long discrimination, widespread poverty and pervasive impunity for violations committed against these communities markedly culminated during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement. Accordingly, the highest and longest participation in the protests was recorded among ethnic and religious minorities, with protests continuing long after the larger protests had already subsided elsewhere in the country.

The Mission documented pre-existing securitization in Iran’s border provinces, predominantly inhabited by ethnic and religious minorities. The securitization is justified by authorities due to a long history of security threats and challenges on Iran’s eastern and western borders, including separatist movements, cross-border infiltrations of armed groups engaged in terrorist acts, including on Iranian territory, as well as drug smuggling and trafficking. The enhanced military and security presence created a permissive environment for the State to repress the September 2022 protests, including through launching a militarized response almost immediately after the movement began. This, in turn, coupled with the widespread mobilization of the population in these regions, resulted in ethnic and religious minorities experiencing the highest numbers of deaths and injuries of the entire movement. In parallel, the State restricted Internet connectivity and imposed complete shutdowns in Zahedan in Sistan and Baluchestan, as well as in Kurdistan, which prevented protesters from informing each other of imminent threat by security officers and obstructed simultaneous reporting on violations emanating from the violent crackdown in these provinces by the State authorities.

In this already militarized environment, security forces engaged in mass arrests and detained members of ethnic and religious minorities, who joined the protesters or expressed solidarity with the movement. In detention, security forces subjected victims to inhuman conditions, torture, ill-treatment, and rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence. These acts were often accompanied by ethnic and religious undertones. When carried out against women, torture and sexual violence were particularly brutal and often characterized by gendered insults, reflecting intersectional discrimination against them both as women, and as minorities.

The trials that followed these arrests were marred with fair trial and due process violations. Members of ethnic and religious minorities arrested and detained in the context of the protests were most often accused of security-related charges, as part of a long-standing State narrative conflating activism by minorities with a threat to national security or separatism. Minority rights activists, women human rights defenders as well as trade unionists and outspoken religious leaders of the Sunni religious minority were particularly targeted in this manner.

As a State Party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (“ICERD”), the Islamic Republic of Iran has committed to specific obligations to respect and protect the rights of persons or groups of persons against racial discrimination. The Iranian Government has confirmed that the ICERD has been directly integrated into the Iranian legal system, including article 1 which defines racial discrimination, and is thus considered part of its domestic legal framework.^x However, the Mission’s investigations found no evidence of the rights afforded by the ICERD being protected by the Iranian judicial system. On the contrary, structural discrimination against minorities is embedded in law, policies and practices. Moreover, through its conduct in repressing the protests in the west, north-west and eastern provinces, Iran violated its obligations under the ICERD, and minorities’ rights to be protected by the State against violence or bodily harm, to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, to freedom of opinion and expression, of peaceful assembly, and to freedom of association.^{xi}

Iran is also a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (“ICCPR”). The Mission underscores that, as enshrined in the Covenant and in the context of the protests, Iran has violated minorities’ right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language as well as the rights to life, not to be subjected to torture and ill-treatment, to personal liberty and security, to a fair trial, to belief and religion, to freedom of expression, and of peaceful assembly.^{xii}

The right to equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, gender, age, religion or belief, political or other opinion, race and ethnicity, was also violated. Accordingly, the Mission found that the conduct of the State authorities towards ethnic and religious minorities, in particular the Baluch and the Kurds ethnic and religious minorities, as well as other minorities, constituted a severe deprivation of their fundamental rights as a distinct group, and as such, amounted to persecution under international human rights law.^{xiii}

Many of the gross human rights violations, as noted above, were committed alongside unlawful deaths, extra-judicial executions, unnecessary, disproportionate use of lethal force, arbitrary arrests, torture, rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, enforced disappearances and gender persecution. The Mission found that many of these violations amounted to the crimes against humanity of murder, imprisonment, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, persecution, enforced disappearance and other inhumane acts, as committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against a civilian population, namely women, girls and others expressing support for human rights.

The Mission found that the crime against humanity of persecution on gender grounds committed in the context of the protests, intersected with persecution on ethnic and religious grounds under human rights law. Almost half of the Mission’s interviews were conducted with victims and witnesses from ethnic and religious minority background, and a substantial number of incidents investigated by the Mission took place in provinces where ethnic and religious minorities are generally concentrated. It found that ethnic and religious minorities were victims of violations of international human rights law and crimes against humanity under international criminal law.

Considering the gravity of its findings and the systematic discrimination and entrenched impunity in Iran, accountability at the domestic level for violations committed against members of minorities remains elusive. Two years after the protests began, the Mission is not aware of any meaningful criminal investigations of high-ranking officials for human rights violations committed against members of minorities in connection with the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement. Instead, the Government continues to take concerted measures to silence victims, their families as well as those supporting them to seek truth, equality, justice and reparations, such as lawyers and journalists. The resilience of these communities in seeking justice nevertheless continues, despite their fears, with many women, including from minority backgrounds, at the forefront of the fight for equality and accountability.

The impact of the protests on minorities cannot be overstated. The social fabrics of these communities have been frayed, as families struggle to deal with the consequences of State actions taken to repress the protests, including the loss of their loved ones or the displacement and departure abroad of family members, including those who sustained protest-related injuries or were subjected to sexual violence. The impact on children is transgenerational – the multifaceted harms of which may be expected for decades to come.

For these reasons, the Mission issues the present paper to highlight its findings of gross human rights violations and crimes against humanity committed in the context of the protests in minority-populated provinces of Iran. Building on its previous recommendations, the Mission also offers pathways for accountability and reparations for crimes and violations committed against victims and their families, belonging to minorities.^{xiv}

II. Structural discrimination in law and in practice

Iran is a deeply multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious country, home to Arab ethnic communities, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluch, Kurds, Lur, Turkmen and ethnic minorities, as well as religious minorities, including the Baha'is, Christians, Gonabadi Dervishes, Jews, Sabeian Mandaeans, Sunni Muslims, Yaresan and Zoroastrians, among others.^{xv} Despite this diversity, the State has regularly attempted to subjugate the identities of minority groups by enacting, enforcing, and implementing a discriminatory legal framework that represses minority languages, cultures, and faiths, excludes members of minorities from public life, and severely limits their economic opportunities.^{xvi}

Pursuant to its mandate, the Mission reviewed structural factors that form the basis of institutional discrimination against minorities in Iran, in law and in practice, contributing to their marginalisation. It found these factors to constitute the root causes or “enablers” of the violations and crimes under international law committed by State officials in the northern, north-west and eastern border minority-populated provinces in Iran, in the context of the protests.

a. Institutionalized discrimination

The Iranian Constitution guarantees the rights of all people of Iran “regardless of their ethnic group or tribe” and states that “colour, race, language and other such considerations shall not be grounds for special privileges.”^{xvii} Despite these afforded guarantees, however, the Constitution restricts the right to religious freedom to practitioners of Islam, and three other recognized religions, namely Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians.^{xviii}

Atheists, as well as adherents of faiths other than Islam, including the Baha'is, Sabeian-Mandaeans and Yaresan, are afforded neither recognition nor protection under Iranian law. Separately, article 14 of the Constitution provides for the protection of non-Muslims as long as they “refrain from conspiracy against Islam or the Islamic Republic” – a vaguely phrased and catch-all provision that allows for arbitrary interpretation, placing protected rights at serious risk, including the rights to freedom of religion, belief, and expression.^{xix}

Shi'a Islam is the official state religion in Iran. Though the Constitution recognises various other Islamic schools of thought, including the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence, Sunni Muslims are also affected by discriminatory laws and practices, as noted below.^{xx} The Iranian Government has stated that it does not recognize the Sunni minority “as a religious minority”.^{xxi}

Discrimination on the basis of religion

“States Parties condemn racial discrimination and undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races, and, to this end (a), Each State Party undertakes to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation. (..)”

Article 2, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

The Islamic Penal Code of Iran contains provisions which enable prosecution and punishment on religious grounds in cases where individuals are deemed to have expressed critical or derogatory views towards Islam. This includes the offense of “apostasy,” which is a capital *hadd* offense under the Shari’a. As the offense is not codified in law, the Constitution provides judges with a wide discretion to rely on Shari’a sources, and thus allows for the imposition of the death penalty based on the *hadd* offense.^{xxii} Similarly, religious expressions found to be “insulting the Prophet of Islam” are also punishable by death.^{xxiii}

A prison sentence may be imposed on “anyone who insults Iranian ethnicities or divine religions or Islamic schools of thought recognised under the Constitution with the intent to cause violence.”^{xxiv} Additionally, article 500 *bis* of the Islamic Penal Code criminalises adherence to, practice, and promotion of religions and beliefs that fall outside the legally recognized religions by allowing prosecution of “any deviant educational or proselytising activity that contradicts or interferes with the sacred law of Islam.” This provision is reported to be disproportionately used against the Baha’i and Gonabadi Dervishes religious minorities, both considered as “deviant sects” by the Iranian government.^{xxv}

Despite being afforded constitutional protections as noted above, Sunni Muslims still face restrictions on their freedom to worship, with reports indicating that Sunni mosques and religious schools have been demolished and/or seized in recent years, including most recently in June 2024.^{xxvi} According to reports, Sunni Muslims may not build new mosques in large cities, including Tehran.^{xxvii} Separately, followers of the Baha’i faith are prohibited from practicing their religion in public, including from opening houses of worship.^{xxviii} Mandatory *hijab* rules and regulations are enforced on all women and girls regardless of their religion, or lack thereof, or beliefs.

Equality before the law

Iranian laws prescribe different penalties for Muslims and non-Muslims, including for the offence of “fornication” between an unmarried woman and unmarried; in such cases the penalty for a man who is a non-Muslim is the death sentence.^{xxix} The Iranian Civil Code also contains discriminatory provisions for non-Muslims, for example, a bar on their inheriting property from a Muslim.^{xxx}

Right to education and language rights

Given that the Islamic Republic of Iran recognizes only Persian as its official language, many are denied access to learning in their mother tongue in primary schools.^{xxxi} Regarding access to higher education, the United Nations and human rights organizations have repeatedly expressed concerns over the denial of higher education to the Baha’i, who were either prevented from continuing their studies after passing university exams, or expelled from universities later, for refusing to formally deny or recant allegiance to their faith.^{xxxii} A 1991 confidential memorandum issued by the Iranian Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council reportedly prohibits the Baha’i from enrolling in universities altogether.^{xxxiii} Kurdish language activists have also been arrested and imprisoned for their activities, including for teaching the Kurdish language.^{xxxiv}

Right to work and participation in public life

State policies further exacerbate the effects of laws and regulations that discriminate on the grounds of religion and belief. The *gozinesh* criteria – based on which a mandatory screening is conducted in relation to recruitment for Government jobs and State corporations – limits eligibility to candidates who pledge loyalty to the Islamic Republic, Iran’s state religion Shi’a Islam, and the principle of *Velâyat-e Faqih*, or governance of a Muslim jurist. This practice excludes followers of “non-recognized” religions (above), as well as Sunni Muslims (despite their constitutionally afforded protections) from employment opportunities in the public sector.

While Sunnis may be elected to parliament being Muslims, in practice, they are not appointed as government ministers or provincial governors, even in provinces with significant Sunni populations.^{xxxv} High-level decision-making political positions, including of the Iranian President, are, furthermore, reserved for Shi’a Muslims, and/or candidates who adhere to the “absolute rule of the Islamic jurist.”^{xxxvi} This excludes all

religious minorities, including “recognized” Sunni Muslims, leading to a pattern of a legal and *de facto* exclusion of these minorities from the highest ranking levels of government. The Iranian Government has however, stated that as of early 2022, the total number of Sunni judges in Iran amounts to a total of 85 judges, including 5 women and 80 men.^{xxxvii} The Baha’is are barred from entering employment in the public sector altogether and have faced restrictions on their engagement in the private sector, including closure of private businesses.^{xxxviii}

Hate speech

State-sponsored media regularly publishes stigmatizing and defamatory content against ethnic and religious minorities, as well as, in some contexts, incitement to violence against them. This includes language referring to “separatists,” “terrorists,” and “foreign agents” to describe Kurds, Baluch, and Ahwazi Arab minorities, and references to a “perverse sect” to describe the Baha’i faith.^{xxxix} In 2006, for example, protests broke out in Tabriz city and other provinces populated with Azerbaijani Turks, after an Iranian state newspaper published a cartoon depicting member of this minority as cockroaches.^{xl} In 2014, a state television channel broadcasted a series perceived as insulting to the Bakhtiari community (a branch of the Lur minority) living in southwestern Iran.^{xli}

State rhetoric that equates members of ethnic and religious communities to “terrorists” enables the Government to justify harsher measures against them both as a community and when engaging in minority rights activism at the individual level, under the pretext of national security concerns. This has placed minorities at a disproportionately high risk of being prosecuted and sentenced to the death penalty if convicted for national security offenses.^{xlii} According to credible human rights organizations, at least 853 executions were recorded in 2023 in Iran, which marked a 48 percent increase from 2022 and a 172 percent increase from 2021. Of those, the Baluch minority, which constitutes about 2 percent of the Iranian population, accounted for 20 percent of the executions, or 166 men and 6 women. At least 82 men from Kurdish-populated provinces were also executed, while 14 other Kurdish individuals were executed in other parts of the country. While more than half of these executions (481) related to drug offences, this striking surge in executions, especially after the September 2022 protests, may be indicative of a state tactic to instil fear and terrorize communities, and to suppress dissent in minority-populated provinces.^{xliii}

b. Economic isolation and further marginalisation

Deep-rooted structural discrimination has led to economic neglect, poverty and further marginalisation of minority communities. This is particularly relevant in Iran’s border provinces where, as noted above, ethnic and religious minorities, including Azerbaijani Turks, Ahwazi Arabs, Baluch and Kurds, are primarily concentrated.

Though Government officials have declared initiatives and dedicated resources to improving development in the border provinces,^{xliv} disparities widened between 2011 and 2020, with poverty increasingly concentrated in the south-east and north-west border regions.^{xlv} Most ethnic minorities, including the Azerbaijani Turks, Ahwazi Arab, Baluch and Kurds live below the national poverty line. In 2022, the unemployment rate was at 11.4 percent in Sistan and Baluchestan and 10.2 percent in Kurdistan, both higher than the national average of 8.9 percent.^{xlvi} Khuzestan, where the Ahwazi Arab minority is concentrated, reportedly has the third-highest rate of unemployment, even though it has 80 percent of Iran’s oil and 60 percent of its gas reserves.^{xlvii} In some parts of Sistan and Baluchestan, the unemployment rate is as high as 60 percent.^{xlviii} Sistan and Baluchestan province also has the highest recorded illiteracy and infant mortality rates in the country.^{xlix} Persistent environmental challenges, such as water scarcity and drought, compound the already dire living conditions, further increasing economic hardship.

The intersecting discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and religion against women in Sistan and Baluchestan, Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces means that they face even greater barriers to access employment in the public sector. Women who had experienced the loss of their spouses in the protests have also become the sole heads of households, further exacerbating their economic hardship.

Widespread unemployment and poverty have resulted in some residents of Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Sistan and Baluchestan, and West Azerbaijan engaging in hazardous cross-border couriering (commonly referred to as *kulbar* in Kurdistan or *soukhtbar* in Sistan and Baluchestan), which entails importing merchandise through unofficial routes on the north-western borders of Iran. These activities continuously expose border couriers to significant safety and security risks, including killings by security forces, as previously documented by the United Nations and human rights organizations.^l

c. Securitization of the border provinces

Poverty, underdevelopment, and porous borders have contributed to security threats and challenges, both transnational and internal, along Iran's borders in its northern, north-west and eastern provinces. Over the years, security considerations, both real and perceived, have translated into the securitization of these areas with notable deployment of military and security forces, as well as military equipment.

This increased securitization has rendered ethnic and religious minorities residing in these regions more vulnerable to State violence.^{li} In 2019, during the nationwide protests triggered by the increase of fuel prices, Khuzestan province, home to the Ahwazi Arab minority, saw a particularly militarized response by the State. Security forces deployed military grade weaponry, tanks, and armoured vehicles resulting in the highest number of deaths in this province compared to the rest of the country.^{lii} Likewise, in 2021, protests in Khuzestan province triggered by a worsening water crisis were met with violence by security forces who, according to reports, fired live ammunition and metal pellets at protesters, killing several people and injuring others. Following this, in January 2022, the Government reportedly deployed former IRGC commanders and high-ranking security officials to positions in Khuzestan and Sistan and Baluchestan, to strengthen control and enhance the security apparatus in these provinces.^{liii}

Securitization of these areas has also created a permissive environment for security forces to maintain control of the border provinces by keeping communities subdued, isolated, and in fear while systematically pre-empting any form of dissent. Harsh responses to previous protests in Khuzestan, in particular, may have been the reason why this region witnessed less participation in the 2022 “Woman, Life, Freedom” protests than other regions. In September 2023, anticipating another spate of protests to mark the one-year anniversary of the death in custody of Jina Mahsa Amini, security forces in Bijar, Kurdistan province, reportedly barricaded the roads leading to Sanandaj, held a military parade in Sanandaj, and deployed armed forces to Mahabad and Saqqez, as well as to Aychi cemetery where Jina Mahsa Amini is buried.^{liv} In May 2023, the IRGC reportedly opened a new military base in Zahedan, while military helicopters were reportedly deployed to Kurdistan in June 2023.^{lv}

III. Escalated crackdown in minority regions during the September 2022 protests

The death in custody on 16 September 2022 of Jina Mahsa Amini, a young Iranian Kurdish woman, and the Kurdish slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadi” or “Woman, Life, Freedom,” became a rallying cry for many of Iran's minorities.^{lvi} The violence and injustice leading to and surrounding her death, referred to by many as the “the spark that set fire to the ashes,” resonated deeply amongst Kurd, Baluch and other minorities, triggering widespread outrage. A week later, reports emerged of the rape of a 15-year-old Baluchi girl by a local police commander in Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchestan. Combined, these events encapsulated decades of State-sanctioned violence against minority women and girls, in a context of a systematic discrimination and lack of accountability for violations committed against minorities in Iran, including the Baluchis. In another reminder of this entrenched impunity, the alleged perpetrator of the reported rape was released on bail, and the victim's family placed under house arrest.^{lvii}

Protests in Kurdistan erupted immediately after Jina Mahsa Amini's funeral on 17 September 2022, and spread shortly thereafter, continuing for months in East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Kermanshah, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Ilam and Sistan and Baluchestan provinces. The cities of Zahedan in Sistan and Baluchestan, as well as Sanandaj, Saqqez and Mariwan in Kurdistan, and Mahabad in West Azerbaijan became the epicentres of the protest movement.

Early on in the protests, the Government of Iran characterised the nationwide movement as a breakaway uprising by Jina Mahsa Amini's fellow Kurds, threatening the nation's unity.^{lviii} Later in September 2022, the Government blamed opposition groups, such as the Kurdish group Komala, for the increase of protests in the north-west, including in Mahabad, Bukan, Piranshahr in West Azerbaijan, and Javanroud and Kermanshah, both in Kurdistan.^{lix} In November 2022, after firing rockets into the Komala headquarters and Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan's base in Koye near Erbil, both in northern Iraq, the commander of the IRGC ground forces who launched the attack said they were targeting "terrorist groups" with missiles and drones "after repeated warnings about cross-border separatist groups bringing weapons into Iran and fuelling tensions."^{lx} On 19 November 2022, a Brigadier-General stated that "Takfiri and terrorist groups" had spread out in Kurdistan and Sistan and Baluchestan, but that the "security forces had defeated them."^{lxi} Additionally, also at the beginning of the movement, the Government blamed the Baha'i community for initiating the protests, which has reportedly led to intensified repression against them, including through increased house raids, arrests, and hate speech.^{lxii}

a. Use of force resulting in killings and injuries

Absent official State data on the number of killings linked to the September 2022 protests, the Mission relied on the credible figure of 551 people killed in 26 out of 31 provinces of Iran, including as many as 49 women and 68 children. The Mission established a pattern whereby security forces resorted to unnecessary and disproportionate use of lethal force including firearms, which resulted in deaths and injuries, of protesters and bystanders in situations where there was no imminent threat of death or serious injury. Lethal force was, moreover, used to disperse protests, including through indiscriminate firing of shotguns and other weapons loaded with ammunition. Such conduct also caused extensive, permanent, and life-changing injuries to protesters and bystanders, including ocular injuries.^{lxiii} The Mission acknowledges that security forces were killed and injured and found instances of violence by protesters, but concluded that the large majority of protests were carried out peacefully.

Distinctive conduct to repress protests in ethnic and religious minority-populated provinces

While the above patterns are illustrative of State use of force countrywide, nowhere was this phenomenon more pervasive than in Iran's border provinces where ethnic and religious minorities are concentrated. The protests that started in Kurdish areas were immediately met with the State's use of lethal force, with protests in Saqqez and Divandarreh in Kurdistan province marking the first victims of protest-related killings and injuries.^{lxiv} A credible figure of 121 deaths was recorded in Sistan and Baluchestan, followed by 45 deaths in Kurdistan and 60 in West Azerbaijan, amounting to up to 226 deaths between 16 September and 10 December 2022. The data indicates that almost half of the killings comprised members of ethnic and religious minorities.

The highest number of casualties in one day, 103 persons, including 13 children, was recorded by credible human rights organizations during the protests on 30 September 2022 in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchestan, home to the ethnic Baluch minority and, as described above, one of the most impoverished provinces of Iran.^{lxv}

The Mission, moreover, received information that a significant number of killings resulting from the State's lethal use of force in the context of the protests occurred in provinces populated with the Azerbaijani Turk ethnic minority. These cases are currently under investigation by the Mission.^{lxvi}

Large scale deployment and use of military grade-weapons

The disproportionately high number of killings and injuries amongst ethnic and religious minorities corresponds to the Mission's overall analysis that security forces resorted to a concerted, heavily militarized response to repress protests in ethnic and religious minority-populated provinces. The use of live ammunition, in particular, was confirmed by State officials in October and November 2022, in the context of protests in Mahabad and Sistan and Baluchestan, including Zahedan, on 30 September 2022.^{lxvii}

While weapons and ammunitions designed for military purposes were also used to repress protests in other parts of the country, security forces deployed to protests in West Azerbaijan, Kurdistan and Sistan and Baluchestan, resorted to military-grade weapons, often immediately after the protests had begun, in a higher rate, and in a consistent manner. Such weapons included assault rifles, including AK-47, and automatic, semi-automatic, and heavy machine-guns. In the Kurdish regions, security forces resorted to Degtyarov-Shpagin Krupnokaliberny (also known as DShK), a heavy machine gun, traditionally used as an anti-aircraft gun for low-flying aircraft in military operations. There, DShKs have been used when mounted on armoured vehicles or tripods of security forces deployed to protest sites.^{lxviii}

Establishment of checkpoints

In the context of an already militarized environment, another distinct characteristic of the State's violent response to the protests in ethnic and religious minority-populated provinces, was the reported establishment of checkpoints in and around hotspot protest cities, including Mahabad, Oshnavieh and Bukan in West Azerbaijan, and Sanandaj and Saqqez in Kurdistan.^{lxix} In Mahabad, for example, IRGC and special units of the security forces, armed with rifles, Kalashnikov, and machine guns, erected checkpoints at the entrance of the city and along sideroads impeding residents' freedom of movement. There, security forces also confiscated medical supplies of doctors and volunteers travelling across the province to provide medical care to injured protesters. Confiscation of medical supplies created further impediments for the injured to access medical care, given that many refused to go to hospitals for fears of, among others, arrest by security forces deployed to medical facilities.^{lxx} Reportedly, security forces erected checkpoints in Javanroud, Kurdistan province, following the protests on 20 and 21 November 2022, and maintained their presence until at least March 2023, by when large-scale protests had already subsided.^{lxxi} A curfew was imposed in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan, in November 2022 and, reportedly also in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan, between at least 21 and 26 September 2022.^{lxxii}

Internet shutdowns and other repressive means

The State resorted to other means to limit the spread of protests and respond forcefully in these provinces to a much more far-reaching degree than in other parts of the country, often in a pre-emptive manner. For example, connectivity data analysed by the Mission showed Internet restrictions and complete shutdowns in Zahedan on 30 September 2022, during the "Bloody Friday" events (see below). Internet shutdowns continued to be routinely enforced in Sistan and Baluchestan province well into 2023, in particular during regular Friday prayers, when large-scale protests had already subsided.

Likewise, Internet connectivity in Kurdistan province was severely restricted during the days following the funeral of Jina Mahsa Amini, coinciding with the eruption of protests in her hometown Saqqez. In both Kurdistan and Sistan and Baluchestan provinces, connectivity data showed severe restrictions around 27 October 2022, when protests to commemorate the 40th day of the death of Jina Mahsa Amini also increased.^{lxxiii} In Tabriz, predominantly inhabited by the Azerbaijani Turk minority, communications were reported to have been interrupted for days around 21 September 2022.^{lxxiv} Streetlights were cut off during peak protest hours in Kamyaran and Baneh in Kurdistan province and Mahabad and Balou in West Azerbaijan province.^{lxxv}

In the aggregate, these measures rendered protesters more vulnerable to violence, including use of force against them, and limited their ability to react, hide and/or document violations against them or others.^{lxxvi}

b. Emblematic incidents

The examples detailed below are illustrative of the disproportionate use of lethal force by the State to repress protests in ethnic and religious minorities-populated provinces.

30 September 2022, "Bloody Friday", Zahedan city, Sistan and Baluchestan province

In Sistan and Baluchestan, protests erupted first in Chabahar on 27 September 2022, following the reported rape of a 15-year-old Baluch girl by a police commander. A witness stated that around 4,000 people gathered

to protest the rape, and that, in response, protesters were shot at from the roof of a police station building and the Governor's house.^{lxxvii}

The protest that followed that week on Friday, 30 September 2022 in Zahedan became commonly known

"I saw around 30 people being shot in the head and torso and killed.

I also saw a 10-year-old-boy fall, and he was bleeding from his neck. He was a protester. He used to sell water and chew gum during the Friday prayers from a small shop, some 100 meters from the police station. I believe he was shot by security forces."

Witness to "Bloody Friday", Zahedan, 30 September 2022

as the "Bloody Friday." According to credible information, 103 worshippers, protesters, and bystanders, including 13 children, were killed by live ammunition and at an estimated 350 others were injured. The Mission found ample evidence to conclude that, in repressing the protests on that day, State security forces resorted to lethal force, disproportionate to the threat posed by some of the protesters to public order resulting in unlawful and extra-judicial killings.^{lxxviii}

On 30 September, mid-day Friday prayers took place as usual, gathering thousands of worshippers in the Great Mosalla of the Zahedan prayer complex.^{lxxix} The mosque may accommodate up to 70,000 people for Friday prayers, the most important weekly ritual for many Muslims.

Witnesses stated that the Friday prayers began at around 11:45 a.m. and ended at around 12:30 p.m., with worshippers continuing to pray until around 1 p.m. The IRGC, police officers, and plainclothes agents were deployed to the streets, rooftops, a city square, and hills surrounding the Mosalla, before the prayers had begun.^{lxxx}

Meanwhile, at around 12:30 p.m., while worshippers were still inside the Mosalla, a group of individuals gathered in

front of police station number 16, situated across the street from the Mosalla, and around 700 to 800 meters from Makki Mosque, the main Sunni Mosque in Zahedan.^{lxxxi}

At around 1 p.m., security officers stationed on the rooftop of the police station number 16 opened fire against the protesters.^{lxxxii} Video footage analysed by the Mission showed a group of protesters, mainly men, outside the police station with some throwing stones towards the building as gunshots can be heard. As the sound of shooting intensified, the number of protesters grew, and more people engaged in throwing stones towards the police station.^{lxxxiii}

Consistent with witness interviews, credible information and video footage analysed by the Mission indicated that at least five members of the security forces, including plainclothes agents, shot directly at protesters and bystanders over a sustained period of time, with AK-47s and other assault rifles from the rooftop of the police station.^{lxxxiv} Ballistic analysis confirmed that one of the weapons discharged was an AK-47 while the sound of other assault rifles could be heard.^{lxxxv}

Credible information also indicated that plainclothes forces engaged in shooting from positions on the rooftops of nearby buildings and hills in proximity to the mosque.^{lxxxvi} One worshipper told the Mission that they saw bullet holes on trees located within the compound, while another saw a worshipper who was shot in the head and killed while praying.^{lxxxvii}

Witnesses described the chaos outside the Mosalla, and seeing motionless bodies scattered on the ground bearing visible injuries on their bodies. Injured protesters were also brought inside the Mosalla. Credible information confirmed scattered dead bodies "everywhere," while one witness said that they have carried at least five dead children. Burial certificates analysed by the Mission further confirmed that two victims died from bullet wounds to the head and chest.^{lxxxviii}

Protests then expanded into the afternoon to the neighbouring area towards Makki Mosque, before spreading into other areas of the city. Security forces continued to use force causing injuries and killings until late into the evening.^{lxxxix}

State response

Immediately after the events, State media began publishing material referring to “armed persons” who had carried out a “terrorist attack” in Zahedan.^{xc} State media (Fars news) also published video footage of the events, depicting an individual firing a gun in front of the police station entrance.^{xcii}

In its report, the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran (HCHR) noted that “several extremist and armed elements attacked a police station”, and that “19 citizens lost their lives as a result of the terrorist incident, and 32 security and law enforcement officers sustained injuries.”^{xciii} In its report in November 2022, the HCHR explained that “a group of people attacked the police station” which then led to some “citizens and worshippers losing their lives during the attack and following clashes.” It further noted that, after the incident, “several armed individuals abused the highly charged atmosphere and — in addition to attacking citizens and various places set fire to and looted public and private properties and clashed with the security forces, during which some rioters were killed, and some innocent people and several members of law enforcement forces martyred.”^{xciii}

Video footage and credible information reviewed by the Mission indicated that, after the Friday prayers, some protesters kicked and broke the door of the police station, while another protester, under heavy firing, drove his vehicle into the building destroying one of the walls.^{xciv}

The Mission notes that any such cases would have been isolated incidents. In addition, and as described above and detailed in the Mission’s conference room paper, while several protesters threw stones at the police station, such conduct would not warrant the violent response by security forces on the scale documented.^{xcv} According to one witness, it was several hours later in the day from when protesters had been killed that some family members of those killed returned with arms.^{xcvi} Another statement received by the Mission stated that protesters, including children, were not armed as security forces “massacred” them, but later at night, several people took out hunting guns to prevent the security forces from killing more people.^{xcvii}

In its November 2022 report, the HCHR referenced a state investigation into the events in Zahedan. To date however, the results thereto have not been made public by the Government, nor shared with the Mission, despite a request for information made to the Government by the Mission in 2023.^{xcviii} Instead, credible information indicated that families were pressured by security forces not to lodge complaints, to accept “blood money”, and that State authorities refused to release the bodies of the victims or to provide families with burial certificates.^{xcix} Reportedly, two court sessions were held in February 2024 however, the judge did not hear victims’ statements, and instead asked them to accept compensation, which they refused.^c

Throughout 2023, protests in Zahedan continued after every Friday mid-day prayer, with reports of security forces using tear gas, shotguns, and machine guns to repress and disperse protests, causing injuries to protesters, including to children.^{ci} According to a credible human rights organization, in early 2024, owing to the violence and numerous arrests reportedly carried out after each Friday protest, Mowlana Abdolhamid, the leader of the Friday prayer in Zahedan, called on the community to instead “protest in silence”.^{cii}

Javanroud, Kermanshah province, 20 and 21 November 2022

The protests that took place in Javanroud on 20 and 21 November 2022 are illustrative of security forces resorting to a particular militarized response to quell protests in Kurdish areas that resulted in deaths and injuries. Credible information indicated that during the protests on these two days, security forces resorted to use of lethal force, including military-grade weapons, killing at least six men and a boy. At least 80 others were injured, including children, many of them severely.^{ciii} Following these events, the IRGC reportedly sealed off the city, erecting checkpoints at the city entrance and exit points until at least March 2023.^{civ}

On 20 November 2022, a large protest was held at around 3 p.m. in solidarity with the people of Mahabad at the commonly known “Tooti square” in Javanroud city. Reportedly, a car with a loudspeaker warned people to go back to their homes, referring to the crowd as “anti-revolutionaries who belonged to the Komala party and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran” which they said they “would crush.”^{cv}

Around 7 p.m., as protesters began returning to their homes, the news of the killing of Erfan Kakaee, a 52-year-old sports instructor, began spreading. This resulted in people coming back to the streets. Later, a 16-year-old boy was killed inside a car in procession in front of the hospital to which his body of Erfan Kakaee had been taken earlier. Two other car passengers, including the boy’s brother, sustained severe injuries. Bullet holes on the windshield were consistent with the use of assault rifles traditionally used by snipers.^{cvi}

These two killings triggered another spate of protests the following day, on 21 November 2022, starting immediately after the boy’s funeral. Evidence collected showed that, peaceful protesters first marched to the home of the victims, and then returned to Javanroud. Once in the city, they were met by security forces, primarily IRGC, armed with military-grade weapons, including AK-47s, Uzis, DshK machine guns mounted on vehicles, and Dragunov SVD rifles. In response, protesters chanted slogans and threw stones. Security forces then reportedly fired tear gas and warning shots before firing live ammunition at unarmed peaceful protesters, including women and children.^{cvi} Video footage analysed by the Mission showed security forces firing directly at protesters, with many fleeing in all directions, desperately seeking refuge.

The Mission is not aware of any official who has been held accountable for the killings and injuries that occurred during the protests on 20 and 21 November in Javanroud city.

IV. Arbitrary arrests, detention, and sentencing

Arbitrary arrests of members of ethnic and religious minorities

In the absence of official comprehensive and disaggregated data on detainees and prisoners linked to the September 2022 protests, the Mission reviewed data collected by credible human rights organizations, indicating that, as of 30 November 2023, at least 936 verified cases of detained protesters were recorded countrywide. While not fully indicative of the estimated scale and breadth of the arbitrary arrests that took place during this period, this data suggests that minorities were disproportionately affected. Of those, 43 percent, or 404 persons, were Kurds, and 16 percent, or 147 persons, were reported to be Baluchi.^{cvi} Given that the Kurd and the Baluch minorities represent 10 and 2 percent, respectively, of Iran’s population, the reported data is illustrative of the disparate detention practices that affected ethnic and religious minorities in the context of the September 2022 protests.

Consistent with established patterns, arrests of ethnic and religious minorities, as well as other minorities, were carried out in large numbers against protesters, including children, as well as bystanders or others who provided medical care to injured protesters.^{cix}

In Mahabad, a Kurdish-majority region, according to a witness, in the night on 19 October 2022 alone, around 100 people were arrested.^{cx} In West Azerbaijan, also a Kurdish-majority province, between 21 and 26 October 2022, security forces patrolled during the day and raided homes arresting individuals during the night, creating an atmosphere of palpable fear, effectively terrorizing residents.^{cx} On 16 October 2022, a prominent lawyer in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province, traditionally populated by Azerbaijani Turks, was arrested and sentenced to three months of imprisonment and a fine for “spreading lies” after he posted on X (formerly Twitter) that around 1,700 people, including activists, had been arrested in the city.^{cxii}

Torture and ill-treatment of members of ethnic and religious minorities

In detention, victims were primarily held in the custody of the Ministry of Intelligence and IRGC in unofficial facilities, and often *incommunicado*, deprived from accessing a lawyer or contacting their families. To extract confessions, security forces subjected detainees to various forms of physical violence, including beating, flogging until some vomited blood, holding them suspended by their arms for days, forcing them to lie down on the ground with security forces stomping on them in military boots, waterboarding, placing

them in stress positions, and leaving them outside in the cold for hours, in acts amounting to torture. Other tactics included prolonged solitary confinement, exposing detainees to bright lights, and sleep deprivation.^{cxiii} Torture occurred mostly in the context of interrogations, during which detainees were hooded and questioned for hours by security officers who did not identify themselves.^{cxiv}

Detainees were also held in conditions amounting to inhuman, cruel or degrading treatment and, in some cases, to torture. Victims were deprived of food, and crammed into small, unsanitary, overcrowded cells holding some 50 detainees at times. Security forces deprived them of medical care, with detainees reporting being held alongside others who either bore visible marks of beating or had been rendered unconscious.^{cxv}

Credible information reviewed by the Mission also indicated that detainees were held in a manner amounting to enforced disappearance. One witness, who led an activist group documenting protest-related violence, noted that detainees in Mahabad would “completely disappear” after their arrest.^{cxvi} Human rights organizations also reported deaths in custody due to torture and ill-treatment of individuals arrested in connection with the protests in Zahedan, Bukan and cities in Kurdish provinces.^{cxvii}

Discriminatory ethnic and religious drivers of violence, including sexual violence

The above acts of torture and ill-treatment were carried out with apparent ethnic and religious undertones. Victims narrated that, to obtain confessions, security forces humiliated them, ridiculed their cultural, spiritual, and religious values, calling them “dogs,” “violent Kurds,” “rebels,” “terrorists,” or “acting against the State” and questioned them on their alleged links to political parties or known religious leaders in their community.^{cxviii} In one example, a Kurdish woman was interrogated by intelligence officers in a room where she was shown traditional Kurdish clothing covered in blood. She understood this act to mean that her life was in danger and felt compelled to confess to supporting the protests.^{cxix} In another example, security officers questioned a Kurdish activist during interrogations in 2024 over, among others, his wife’s participation in the protests, and referred to the death in a forest fire of his Kurdish friend’s as “شدند سقط” a term in Persian used to describe the death of an animal, rather than of a human.^{cxx}

“Why do you (minority group) have such a skin colour? Why are you so dirty? Why is your body in such a shape? Why are you (minority group) so retarded and ugly?”

Plainclothes officer to a torture and rape woman survivor, held in a “safe house”, late 2022

Security forces subjected minority women, men, and children arrested in connection with the September 2022 protests to rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities were subjected to particularly brutal acts, including gang rape and rape with an object, in acts also amounting to torture. In one example, a minority woman arrested in late 2022 by plainclothes agents was beaten during interrogations for wearing a traditional piece of jewellery and questioned about her alleged relationship to political parties. She was subsequently gang-raped by members of security forces, who then released her and left her on the street.^{cxxi} In another case, a woman who was arrested in one province by plainclothes officers in late 2022, described how security officers mocked her physical appearance and ridiculed her faith, and interrogated her on her alleged relationship with a known religious leader. The security officers also questioned her why she thought she “deserved respect” given that she belonged to a particular minority. She was raped and then thrown out on a street while blindfolded.^{cxxii}

Security charges used against ethnic and religious minorities in the context of the protests

Detainees were ultimately forced to “confess” to charges ranging from possession of arms, leading protests, and involvement in or membership of opposition groups, including armed groups. Those who provided medical help to the injured were accused of “helping terrorists.”^{cxxiii} Credible information indicated that

women arrested in late 2022 in one province were threatened with rape to sign confessions confirming that they had cooperated with “Kurdish parties,” or that they were involved in “armed revolution.”^{cxxiv}

Court documents reviewed by the Mission indicated that some members of ethnic and religious minorities were then convicted of national security offenses, such as “propaganda against the system,” “insulting the Supreme Leader,” leading an “illegal gathering,” and affiliation with opposition groups and parties.^{cxxv}

International human rights law allows for restrictions on grounds of national security and public order. Such measures must be the least intrusive possible and are only very exceptionally permissible in relation to peaceful protests. The Mission found that, in the cases it investigated, the State generally equated activism by the protesters with threats to national security, criminalizing protected conduct under human rights law. Restricting or punishing such protected conduct constitutes a violation of human rights law.

V. Children belonging to ethnic and religious minorities

Children belonging to ethnic minorities including Ahwazi Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluch and Kurds, experience distinct harms based on their age and gender, in the context of broader structural discrimination, in law and in practice, against minorities in Iran. Children of ethnic minorities have no access to books in their native languages, which places the preservation of their cultures and traditions under severe pressure. Children belonging to religious minorities, such as the Baha’i and Sunni Muslims, are equally subject to multiple forms of discrimination.^{cxxvi} Children are expected to announce their religion at school, which has led to Baha’i children being dismissed or even expelled from school.^{cxxvii} Irrespective of their religious affiliation or absence thereof, girls at the age of seven must wear the mandatory *hijab* in public. Iran’s textbooks largely neglect minorities or exclude them altogether.^{cxxviii} Despite the best interest of the child, in one case in 2020, the District Court and Court of Appeal of Bushehr (southern Iran) revoked custody of an adopted girl because her “parents had converted to Christianity.”^{cxxix}

Such harms were further compounded during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement. In the context of a heavily militarized environment as noted above, child protesters belonging to ethnic and religious minorities were exposed to multiple forms of violence, including killing and maiming, arrests, enforced disappearances, detention, as well as torture and rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Many also lost a parent in the protests, or had a parent imprisoned, rendering them more vulnerable to violence and economic hardship, especially when residing in impoverished provinces, as described above. The impact of these experiences on children is transgenerational – the multifaceted harms of which may be expected for decades to come.

Credible information reviewed by the Mission indicates that up to two-thirds of the children killed in the context of the September 2022 protests belonged to ethnic and religious minority groups.^{cxxx} Illustrative of this pattern is the case of Javad Poushed, a 12-year-old Baluch boy, who was shot and killed with live ammunition fired to the back of his head, during the “Bloody Friday” protests on 30 September in Zahedan.^{cxxxi} The authorities repeatedly denied that Javad Poushed had been killed, and failed to provide justice or reparations to his family.^{cxxxii} In West Azerbaijan, where many ethnic Kurds reside, a 16-year-old Kurdish boy, Zakharia Khial, was killed with live ammunition while at a protest on 20 September 2022 in Piranshahr.^{cxxxiii} Likewise, a 9-year-old boy, Kian Pirfalak, was fatally shot and his father seriously injured while in a car with his family in Izeh, Khuzestan province, where the Ahwazi Arab minority is concentrated. State authorities claimed that his death was the result of a “terrorist act.”^{cxxxiv}

Like adults, children of ethnic and religious minorities were arrested while participating in protests as well as in their schools or at their homes. In detention, girls and boys were held *incommunicado* and kept in solitary confinement, while their parents were not informed of their whereabouts. Detained children were also forcibly administered unidentified pills which rendered them unconscious, severely beaten, and subjected to rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, in acts also amounting to torture. In one case, security forces severely beat one boy, deprived him of food, hung him by his arms from a ceiling, and choked him with a scarf they had tied around his neck. When they failed to obtain a confession from him, they raped him with a hosepipe. The boy had been arrested after a protest in one minority province in late

2022.^{cxxxv} Several hundred children were reported to have been abducted and forcibly disappeared in Kurdish cities since the start of the protests.^{cxxxvi}

Children were also subjected to violence in the context of the systematic repression of students, with arrests and beatings also occurring on school premises.^{cxxxvii} In one case, on 12 October 2022, several students were attacked by plainclothes agents for protesting at Shahed girls' school in Ardebil, East Azerbaijan province, home to the Azerbaijani Turkic minority. After refusing to sign a pledge that praised the Supreme Leader, security forces beat some of the children, while forcibly taking others to an unknown location. Asra Panahi, a 15-year-old schoolgirl was among the children who were reportedly severely injured from the beatings and died two days later in a local hospital. While local sources reported that Asra Panahi was killed at school in connection with the protests,^{cxxxviii} the Iranian government stated that the child was not present at school at the time of the incident and died due to "underlying illness" or "suicide."^{cxxxix} This corresponds with the overall State narrative that seeks to minimize the role of women and girls in the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement, as noted below.

In another case, in late 2022, a 16-year-old girl was reportedly removed from her classroom, interrogated and beaten on the premises of the school by security officers in one minority province. The girl had been identified earlier on the basis of her school uniform by a CCTV camera while distributing flyers in support of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement.^{cxl}

Two months after the protests began, on 30 November 2022, the first incident of school poisonings was reported in the holy city of Qom. School poisoning reports intensified in March 2023 and subsided by November 2023.^{cxli} The Mission notes with concern that these incidents were particularly prevalent in Khuzestan, home to Ahwazi Arabs, as well as other minority-populated cities and provinces, namely Borujerd, Mazandaran, Ardebil, and Khorasan, where the Ahwazi Arab, Azerbaijani Turk and Lur ethnic minorities are concentrated. The Mission found it plausible that the school poisonings may have taken place with a view to intimidating and/or punishing schoolgirls for their involvement in the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement or to dissuade them from defying the mandatory *hijab* laws.^{cxlii}

V. Crackdown on civic space

State authorities also sought to restrict civic space in minority-populated regions, conflating advocacy by minorities in the context of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement with threats to national security.^{cxliii}

While women human rights defenders were targeted countrywide, minority women human rights defenders and activists, including labor activists, were arrested in particularly large numbers and subjected to prosecution and harsh sentences, including the death penalty following a conviction for national security offenses. Such conduct appears to be indicative of State tactics to repress and punish even nascent forms of dissent, in particular against women activists and human rights defenders, including from minorities, for their calls for equality and non-discrimination in the context of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement.^{cxliv}

In a glaring example, on 4 July 2024, Sharifeh Mohammadi, a labor activist from East Azerbaijan, was sentenced to death by Branch 1 of the Rasht Revolutionary Court on conviction of "armed rebellion against the state" based on allegations of membership in an opposition group. Ms. Mohammadi had been active earlier with the Coordination Committee to Aid the Formation of Labor Unions in Iran but had ceased activities some 10 years ago. Ms. Mohammadi had been arrested by intelligence officers in December 2023 in Rasht, Gilan province. According to reports, prior to receiving the death sentence, she was held in solitary confinement, tortured, and denied contact with her family and access to a lawyer.^{cxlv} When her mother was eventually allowed to visit her in prison in Rasht, Ms. Mohammadi was forced to speak to her in Persian, instead of her mother tongue Azeri, which her mother does not speak.

On 23 July 2024, Pakhshan Azizi, a Kurdish activist, was also sentenced to death by a Revolutionary Court in Tehran on charges of "armed rebellion against the state" on allegations of membership in the Kurdistan Free Life Party. Court documents showed that she had been sentenced for *inter alia* her role in organizing protests and visiting families of killed protesters.^{cxlvi} As of 31 July 2024, another Kurdish woman, Warisha

Moradi, is facing trial before a Revolutionary Court in Tehran on the same charges of “armed rebellion against the state” for her support of the protests.^{cxlvii}

Jina Modares Gorji, a Kurdish women’s rights activists, who was arrested in September 2022 in Sanandaj was sentenced to 21 years in prison and internal exile by the Revolutionary Court in Sanandaj in May 2024 for her public support, including on social media, of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement. She faced charges of “forming illegal groups with the aim of overthrowing the state,” “collaborating with hostile groups and governments,” and “propaganda against the state.”^{cxlviii} According to a credible source, between November 2022 and November 2023, at least 39 Kurdish women were arrested by security forces in various cities in Kurdistan.^{cxlix}

In October 2022, the head of one Azerbaijan Turkic human rights organization was referred to as a “separatist” and subjected to death threats simply for expressing support for the protests and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.^{cl} Numerous Baluch women human rights defenders have been also arrested in the context of their activism for similar protected conduct.^{cli}

Trade unionists in minority-populated regions, have also come under increased pressure during the protests. For example, after the Kurdistan Teachers’ Union published statements calling for fundamental change in the country and criticizing the State’s response to the protests, the Education Department formed an “Emergency Committee” to identify and monitor influential trade union leaders active in the Kurdish cities of Sanandaj, Marivan, and Saqqez.^{clii}

VI. Persecuting Sunni religious leaders

Persecution of ethnic and religious minorities during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement was most evident in the targeting of their religious leaders. Sunni leaders with prominent voices were routinely silenced through summons, arrests, detention, restrictions on freedom of movement and religious practices, prosecution and, in one case, through imposing the death penalty (see below). To justify these restrictions, State authorities vilified and deliberately misconstrued the statements by outspoken Sunni religious leaders as posing a threat to national security.^{cliii}

For example, Mowlawi Abdolghaffar Naghshbandi, the senior Sunni cleric from Baluchestan, who called for a state investigation into the reported rape of a 15-year-old Baluchi girl, was summoned twice between September and December 2022. In August 2022, Security officers also arrested his father, another senior religious cleric. On 20 August 2023, official State media (IRNA) said that Mowlawi Abdolghaffar Naghshbandi was charged with “disturbing public opinion through false speeches and defaming and slandering the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran” and “acting against national security.”^{cliv}

Another similar case is that of Mowlana Abdolhamid, the leader of Friday prayers in Zahedan, who was accused of supporting “Baluchi separatists.” On 10 June 2024, another Sunni cleric was reportedly arbitrarily arrested in his home in Zahedan and taken to an unknown location. According to a media report, he had been previously arrested during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.^{clv}

Kurdish *mamustas* (clerics/religious scholars) were affected in a similar manner. For example, Seifollah Hosseini, the lead-prayer at Khatam al-Anbiya mosque in Javanroud was arrested by security forces after he gave a speech at the funeral of killed protesters in Javanroud. On 25 January 2023, he was sentenced by the Hamedan Special Clergy Court to 17 years imprisonment, 74 lashes, being defrocked and two years of exile to Ardabil.

Reprisals against Sunni leaders further extended to the imposition of the death penalty. For example, Mamusta Mohammad Khezrnejad, a Sunni cleric from West Azerbaijan province, and his son were arrested on 19 November 2022 in Bukan, after Mamusta Khezrnejad delivered a speech during the funeral of a protester in Orumiah, during which he reportedly condemned the killing of protesters and criticised the Government. Court documents reviewed by the Mission showed that Branch Three of the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Orumiah, convicted Mamusta Khezrnejad of “corruption on earth” and sentenced

him to death. The court further sentenced him to 16 years imprisonment for the charges of “acting to harm the integrity or independence of the country” and “propaganda against the system” in a trial marred by fair trial and due process violations, including “confessions” underpinning the judgement that, according to credible information, were obtained under torture.^{clvi} On 21 June 2024, Mizan News Agency reported that his death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment after he reportedly expressed “remorse and pledged good behaviour.”^{clvii}

VI. Intersecting discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and gender

The Islamic Republic of Iran relies on a system – both in law and in practice – that fundamentally discriminates on the grounds of gender. Women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities thus experience distinct harms that are compounded by pre-existing discrimination and violence against them both as women, as well as by virtue of their status as ethnic and religious minorities.

Intersecting gender, ethnic and religious discrimination was apparent in the protest-related killings of women, the number of which, as of September 2022, was at least 49. The State sought to minimize the role of women in the protests by attributing killings to suicide, illness, or traffic accidents, among other similar causes.^{clviii} The killings of women belonging to minorities however were attributed to “opposition groups” as in the case of Minoo Majidi. Ms. Majidi, a 62-year-old Kurdish woman, was killed during a protest in Kermanshah on 20 September 2022. Forensic analysis, medical documents and pictures noted 144 visible wounds on her body, concluding that her death was caused by projectiles likely to have been birdshot.^{clix}

Sexual violence against women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities was likewise accompanied by ethnic and religious undertones, markedly interwoven with gender-based insults for their support to the movement. Security forces punished and humiliated minority women for participating in the protests, while also ridiculing and mocking their faith and cultural beliefs in a broader context of deep-rooted discrimination on the grounds of both gender and ethnicity in Iran.^{clx}

Moreover, security officers weaponized sexual and cultural taboos, especially in conservative communities, to punish women for supporting the movement, in a manner also illustrative of the layers of discrimination women of ethnic and religious minority backgrounds face in Iran. In one case, a rape survivor, described how rape, and the associated shame especially prevalent in traditional families, was used to pressure survivors’ families to prevent women from going to the streets altogether.^{clxi} Irrespective of whether sexual violence had occurred in detention, women from conservative communities face similar constraints after their release, including pressure to marry because of the “shame” brought to the family.^{clxii} This, combined with the chronic lack of accountability in Iran for sexual violations, have compelled these rape survivors interviewed by the Mission to subsequently leave Iran.

Security officers also took advantage of generalised tolerance and encouragement of violence against LGBTQ+ people in Iranian society, to punish them for their support to the protests. For example, a gay Kurdish man who was arrested in one province in late 2022 by plainclothes agents was threatened with informing his family of his sexuality to compel him to confess to his participation in the protests.^{clxiii}

It has been reported that the authorities accused the Baha’i community of initiating the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement, leading to an increase in their arrests and detentions, home raids and hate speech against them.^{clxiv} Credible information indicated that arbitrary arrests of Baha’i women increased during the September 2022 protests, in an apparent effort by the State to accelerate reported persecution of the Baha’i

“You, Baluchi people, it would be better for us if you just all die. Your entire generation should be destroyed.

As a Baluchi woman, how do you even dare to stand against the State?”

Intelligence officer to a detained Baluchi woman, September 2022, Sistan and Baluchestan

community, which has historically been increasing during times of protests.^{clxv} For example, on 23 October 2023, 10 Baha'i women were arrested in Isfahan and another 26 Baha'i, including 15 women, received sentences totalling 126 years in prison. Two prominent Baha'i women, Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi who had already served 10 years in prison, were re-arrested in July 2022. In December 2022, they were convicted to another 10 years of imprisonment on "spying charges."^{clxvi}

Mandatory *hijab* laws and regulations affect all women and girls countrywide, including women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities. Further to the violent enforcement of these policies, and the violations of women's and girls' fundamental human rights, minority women may additionally be restricted in expressing their culture, their religion, or lack thereof, or belief, and/or wearing traditional clothing. This is also due to the mandatory nature and the punishment including regular violence associated with non-compliance of the *hijab* in Iran.^{clxvii}

VII. Entrenched impunity

As detailed extensively in the Mission's report and conference room paper, there are no viable routes for accountability in Iran.^{clxviii} In a context of systematic discrimination and impunity in Iran, justice, in all its forms, cannot be delivered domestically to victims of gross human rights violations and crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, in the context of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement. Though the Iranian Government has announced a number of investigations into protest-related violence, including through the "Special Committee to investigate the 2022 unrest," established by the former President in 2023, the Mission found that these investigations fall short of international human rights standards, and that the Committee's recommendations did not include measures to bring legislation in line with Iran's obligations therein.^{clxix}

Lack of justice, truth and reparation for members of ethnic and religious minorities

Violations of minority rights and the rights of members of minorities were amplified in the context of the September 2022 protests, and the Mission found that some of these amounted to crimes against humanity. Accountability pathways for victims of such violations and crimes, however, remain inaccessible. In the broader context of impunity for State violence, a legal framework remains in place that fundamentally discriminates against minorities and erodes opportunities for justice, truth and reparation.

Women and girls belonging to minorities are doubly victimized, in a state system that fundamentally discriminates against them on the grounds of gender, ethnicity and religion. Pre-existing inequalities impacting women and girls, including limited educational and employment opportunities as well as linguistic barriers, further erodes their ability to obtain accountability and redress. Many have become the sole breadwinners in their families with their spouses killed in State violence in the context of the protests, leaving to battle for their rights even in the family, in the face of discriminatory laws regulating inheritance or child custody.

Consistent with the State narrative identifying minorities as a threat to national security, killings and injuries of members of minorities perpetrated in the context of the September 2022 protests have been attributed by state authorities to "opposition groups," "terrorists," or "unknown elements."^{clxx} Families have been coerced into not filing complaints, including through being pressured to accept "blood money."^{clxxi} State officials have withheld bodies of victims and put pressure on family members to refrain from filing complaints or speaking up publicly about the death of their loved ones.^{clxxii} Such conduct seriously restricts potential opportunities for accountability for violations committed against victims, including members of minorities, leaving them languishing in a vicious cycle of violence and impunity.

Torture and rape and other forms of sexual violence against women, children and men arrested in connection with the protests, were, moreover, routinely carried out in isolation and by members of security officers who often bore no insignia and concealed their identities.^{clxxiii} This, coupled with the shame traditionally associated with sexual violence, under-reporting and the lack of protection for survivors of

both torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence under domestic laws, diminishes any possibilities for accountability and redress for victims and survivors.^{clxxiv}

For example, in Sistan and Baluchestan, where a significant number of protest-related killings took place, access to civil documentation was already scarce prior to the protests.^{clxxv} In the absence of a birth certificate, families would find it challenging to prove the identity of victims, and in turn, officially register deaths in the context of the protests.^{clxxvi} Further, victims' deaths may go unacknowledged and unrecognized by the State, leaving families with no proof of death, and, accordingly, no opportunities to seek accountability and redress.

In addition to these challenges, fears of reprisals further impeded victims' ability to seek justice for the deaths of their loved ones. One witness stated that, in Zahedan, many feared that if they sought justice, government officials would brand them as "protesters, and, on this pretext deprive them from public services, including identity documents. For this reason, many feared did not register their deaths, leaving an unknown number of deaths unaccounted for."^{clxxvii} According to a credible human rights organization, families of victims from the "Bloody Friday" who feared that the State may remove the bodies of their loved ones from hospitals, took their bodies and "just buried them".^{clxxviii} One media report indicated that, following the "Bloody Friday" events, government offices in Zahedan stopped issuing birth certificates to residents.^{clxxix}

The right of victims to equality, to access justice, truth and reparations

Victims of serious human rights violations in Iran have the right to remedy and reparation guaranteed under international law instruments, including the ICCPR, to which Iran is a state party.^{clxxx} This right is also guaranteed by the Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law.

In view of the recurrence and ongoing nature of gross human rights violations against minorities in Iran, including women and children, the Mission highlights that Iran is liable to provide reparations, including guarantees of non-repetition or non-recurrence both as part of victim-specific remedy and for society at large. Reparations and guarantees for non-recurrence should encompass legal reforms of laws and regulations that do not comply with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, or are not based on legitimate grounds. This also includes laws, regulations, and practices which have enabled the commission of gross human rights violations and crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, against members of minorities.^{clxxxi}

Absent domestic avenues for reparations, victims, including victims of torture, may access some form of support at the international, regional, or domestic level as outlined previously by the Mission.^{clxxxii} In this regard, the Mission emphasizes the importance of temporary protection and humanitarian visas afforded by States to victims of human rights violations in Iran. Particular care should be taken in cases of victims who have sustained life-changing injuries during the protests, including blinding, visibly branding them, and those facing persecution on ethnic, religious and gender grounds as detailed in this paper and the Mission's report and detailed findings. The Mission also notes the importance of measures of rehabilitation, commemoration, solidarity and access to information that governments, international institutions, and civil society organizations can provide to victims.

Avenues for accountability outside of Iran

The Mission has previously detailed potential legal avenues for accountability, both in third States and at international level, for victims of gross human rights violations and crimes under international law in the context of the September 2022 protests. In doing so, the Mission considered the principle of universal jurisdiction which allows for prosecution in national courts for crimes committed abroad regardless of the nationality of the victim and the perpetrator. These include courts in Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland, in particular, that exercise some form of universal jurisdiction despite potential procedural violations.^{clxxxiii}

In relation to minorities specifically, the Mission recalls that the ICERD, to which Iran is a State Party, allows for States Parties to complain to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) that another State Party is not fulfilling its obligations under the convention through inter-state complaints.^{clxxxiv} The ICERD provides for inter-state disputes with respect of the interpretation or application of the Convention, to be referred to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), after certain pre-conditions are fulfilled, namely seeking inter-state dispute resolution before the Committee before bringing it to the ICJ.^{clxxxv} The Mission takes note of public expressions of concern by numerous Member States in response to its report and conference room paper, including during the 55th session of the Human Rights Council.

Importantly, a state party may bring a case to the ICJ for violations of the ICERD, even if its nationals are not affected, and demand compliance by a concerned State for *erga omnes* violations under the ICERD. Particularly notable in this regard is the case of *Georgia v. Russian Federation*, where the Court confirmed the right of one State Party to ICERD to demand compliance of another State Party “with specific obligations incumbent upon it under Articles 2 and 5 of the Convention.” Equally notable is the case of *The Gambia v. Myanmar* initiated for violations under the Genocide Convention, where several state parties alleged *erga omnes* violations, including under the ICERD, without their having suffered a direct prejudice.^{clxxxvi}

In light of its investigations as described in this document and previously detailed in its conference room paper, the Mission found reasonable grounds to believe that Iran violated its obligations under the ICERD. States parties to the ICERD should enter into negotiations with Iran with regard to the latter’s compliance with its substantive obligations under ICERD or bring the matter to the attention of the CERD Committee, pursuant to Article 11 of ICERD.

VIII. Recommendations

The Mission recalls and reiterates its findings in A/HRC/55/67 and detailed in A/HRC/55/CRP.1 and makes the following supplementary recommendations specific to the rights of minorities:

- Immediately halt all executions of protesters and put in place a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, with a view of its abolition;
- Immediately and unconditionally release all persons arbitrarily deprived of their liberty in the context of the protests, especially women and children;
- Cease and desist from any practices that amount to arbitrary arrest, detention, and torture as well as rape and other forms of sexual violence against members of minorities, and ensure their protection against reprisals;
- Repeal vaguely worded criminal offences in the Islamic Penal Code that are used to punish and criminalize ethnic, religious and other minorities as well as other minorities for exercising protected rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly and association;
- Undertake effective, thorough, independent, impartial and transparent investigations, into crimes and violations of international law, human rights, and international criminal law described in this document, in accordance with international standards;
- Provide full reparation, including compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, appropriate forms of satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition to victims of crimes and violations, in accordance with international standards;
- Provide collective reparations for marginalized minority communities, which may include employment opportunities, including in the public sector, and establishing or rehabilitating public infrastructure, such as schools or hospitals; and
- Grant access to the Mission to the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Mission further recommends that the Government of Iran:

- Amend its Constitution to ensure recognition, equal rights and protection for all ethnic and religious minorities in Iran;
- Repeal discriminatory provisions in the Islamic Penal Code, including those enabling prosecution and punishment on the basis of religion or belief;
- Ensure the right to education in their mother tongue for ethnic minorities and remove barriers to higher education for religious minorities;
- Take all measures to ensure full participation of minorities, and minority women in particular, in all levels of government and State institutions;
- Develop and implement targeted economic development programs in minority-inhabited border provinces to address poverty and unemployment;
- Implement structural reforms that enable the full realization of the right to participate in public affairs and other related civil and political rights, including the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association;
- Prohibit state-sponsored hate speech and defamatory content against minorities in media and public discourse; and
- Allow construction of places of worship for all faiths, including Sunni mosques and Baha'i houses of worship.

The Mission urges States Parties to the ICERD to:

- Enter into negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to the latter's compliance with its substantive obligations under the ICERD;
- In light of the Mission's findings, bring the matter of minorities in Iran to the attention of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination pursuant to Article 11 of ICERD;
- Invoke the responsibility of Iran as a State Party for breaches of obligations *erga omnes partes*; and
- Demand compliance with the said obligations under the ICERD and to cease the violation of these obligations, as well as guarantees of non-repetition.

The Mission urges all Member States to:

- Apply the principle of universal jurisdiction to prosecute Iranian officials responsible for crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, without procedural limitations;
- Provide humanitarian visas, support rehabilitation measures and temporary protection to minority victims of human rights violations, particularly those with life-changing injuries or those facing severe persecution, including minorities, especially minority women and children;
- Fully respect the principle of *non-refoulement*, especially in regard to journalists, women human rights defenders and victims of human rights violations who have fled Iran to their territories, and take appropriate gender- and age-sensitive measures to protect their rights, and enable them to lead dignified lives, including through the enjoyment of the right to work, full access to public and social services as well as medical, psychological and psychosocial support for victims of gross human rights violations, including torture, rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence; and
- Support efforts by civil society organizations to document and preserve information and evidence of violations and crimes committed in the context of the protests and beyond in order to guarantee the right to truth, and for future reparations and accountability purposes.

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- ⁱ FFM Iran, Terms of Reference, para. 11;
<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/ffmi-iran/FFM-Iran-TORs-EN.pdf>.
- ⁱⁱ A/HRC/RES/S-35/1.
- ⁱⁱⁱ A/HRC/RES/55/19.
- ^{iv} A/HRC/55/67. See also conference room paper “Detailed findings of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran”, A/HRC/55/CRP.1.
- ^v For the Mission’s methodology and standard of proof, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 30-43. See also Terms of Reference of the Independent International Fact-finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- ^{vi} A/HRC/55/67, para. 93.
- ^{vii} These provinces border Iraq and Türkiye to the west, and Afghanistan and Pakistan to the east.
- ^{viii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1001. Similarly, ethnic Armenians are predominantly Christian, and among the Ahwazi Arabs there are followers of Sunni Islam, Judaism and Christianity. The majority of the Azerbaijani Turkic minority are followers of Shia Islam.
- ^{ix} The Government of Iran does not publish the census data it collects on ethnicity, and does not collect demographic data for “non-recognized” religions. See “Iran” Minority Rights Group International, March 2018; “Iran”, Minority Rights Group International, December 2017.
- ^x CERD/C/IRN/20-27, paras. 33. Article 1 of the ICCPR defines the term of racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”
- ^{xi} ICERD, articles 5 (b), 5 (d) (vii), 5 (d) (viii), 5 (d) (ix).
- ^{xii} ICCPR, articles 2, 6, 7, 9, 14, 18, 19, 21, 27.
- ^{xiii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1715-1725.
- ^{xiv} A/HRC/55/67, paras. 122-126, and A/HRC/55/CRP.1, Section XIII.
- ^{xv} “Iran”, Minority Rights Group.
- ^{xvi} Report of the Secretary-General, “The situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran”, A/HRC/28/26, 20 February 2015, Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the eighth and ninth periodic reports of the Islamic Republic of Iran, CERD C/IRN/CO/18-19, 20 September 2010, and Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee, CCPR/C/IRN/CO/4, 23 November 2023.
- ^{xvii} Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979 Constitution), article 14.
- ^{xviii} Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979 Constitution), article 13.
- ^{xix} Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979 Constitution), article 14.
- ^{xx} of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979 Constitution), article 12. These include the Hanafi, Shafi‘i, Maliki and Hanbali schools of thought. Constitution
- ^{xxi} CERD/C/IRN/20-27, para. 46.
- ^{xxii} “Iran: Flawed reforms: Iran’s new Code of Criminal Procedure” Amnesty International, 11 February 2016.
- ^{xxiii} Islamic Penal Code, article 513 and 262. See also “Iran: UN experts alarmed by escalating religious persecution”, UN experts of the Human rights Council, 22 August 2022.
- ^{xxiv} Islamic Penal Code, article 499 *bis*.
- ^{xxv} Islamic Penal Code, article 500 *bis*. See also “Iran: New Penal Code provisions as tools for further attacks on the rights to freedom of expression, religion, and belief”, ARTICLE 19, 6 July 2022. See also Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/74/188, para. 65.
- ^{xxvi} “Southeastern Iran’s Sunni Prayer Hall Demolished”, Iran International, 4 June 2024; Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/74/188, para. 63, 18 July 2019; “State of Coercion, the Situation of Sunni Muslims”, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, 28 January 2022.
- ^{xxvii} Factsheet on minority rights, UPR of Iran, Impact Iran, Minority Rights International, Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre, November 2019.
- ^{xxviii} FFM-IRAN-D-002534 (FFMI Interview).
- ^{xxix} Islamic Penal Code, article 224 and article 230 prescribe punishment of 100 lashes for the offence of “fornication” between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman. When the man in question is a non-Muslim, the punishment is enhanced to death.
- ^{xxx} For example, under article 881 *bis* of Civil Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran, an unbeliever (*Kafer*) cannot inherit from a Muslim. In cases where there are unbelievers among the heirs of a deceased unbeliever, the unbelieving heirs do not take inheritance even if they are prior to the Muslim as concerns class and degree.
- ^{xxxi} Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, article 15. Minority languages in Iran include Kurdish, Arabic, Azerbaijani and Turkish, Baluchi, Lori, Gilki and Mazani, see “Language discrimination in Iran”, 27 April 2023, Minority rights group. While the Arabic language is reportedly mandatory after primary

education on religious grounds, no other minority language is allowed to be taught in school. See also “Issue of education in minority languages in Iran creates controversy”, Iran International, 25 February 2023.

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xxxiii “The boot on my neck: Iranian Authorities’ Crime of Persecution Against Baha’is in Iran”, Human Rights Watch, 1 April 2024.

xxxiv “Language Teacher Sentenced To 11 Years Amid Iran's Crackdown on Kurds”, Radio Farda, 26 April 2024; “Kurdish activist detained for 20 days without legal access, family visits”, Kurdistan Human Rights Network, 5 June 2024.

xxxv Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/HRC/53/23, 15 June 2023, para. 62. See also “State of Coercion, the Situation of Sunni Muslims”, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, 28 January 2022.

xxxvi Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, article 115. See also “Rights Denied: Violations against ethnic and religious minorities in Iran”, Minority Rights Group 2018.

xxxvii CERD/C/IRN/20-27, Annex I.

xxxviii FFM-IRAN-D-002534 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-001712 (FFMI Submission)

xxxix “The boot on my neck: Iranian’s authorities’ crime of persecution against Baha’is in Iran”, Human Rights Watch, 1 April 2024; “30 of the perpetrators of terrorist operations in Sistan and Baluchestan were foreigners”, Mehr News, 17 June 2024. See also “Our red line is the security of the people”, Mehr News, 28 March 2023.

xl “Iran: Cartoon Protests Point to Growing Frustration Among Azeris”, Radio Farda, 31 May 2006.

xli “Protests erupt against a TV show in Iran”, Global Voices, 14 February 2014.

xlii “State of Coercion, the Situation of Sunni Muslims”, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, 28 January 2022; “In the name of security- human rights violations under Iran’s national security laws”, Minority Rights Group, 26 June 2020; “Executions and ethnic minorities”, Iran Human Rights, April 2023; “Iran; the importance of receiving education in one’s mother tongue”, ARTICLE 19, 29 August 2014; “Iran: Minorities Campaign for Right to Education in their Mother Tongue”, Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), September 2018.

xliii “Do not let them kill us: Iran’s relentless execution crisis since the 2022 uprising”, Amnesty International, 4 April 2024.

xliv “IRGC with all its strength, “faithful help”/ 60,000 aid baskets were distributed among the needy of Sistan and Baluchistan”, Mehr News, 7 May 2021; “Investment in infrastructure is underway in Sistan Baluchestan”, ISNA, 5 January 2021; “The transfer of water from the Sea of Oman will end water tensions in Sistan and Baluchestan”, Mehr News, 21 May 2024.

xlv “Iran Poverty Diagnostic”, World Bank Group, November 2023.

xlvi “Iran’s protests fuel ethnic tensions”, Financial Times, 6 November 2022.

xlvi “Poverty, Separatism, and bloody memories of war: why Iran’s Khuzestan matters”, Golnaz Esfandiari, Radio Farda, 28 September 2018.

xlvi “Iran’s Baluch population leads anti-regime protests six months after Mahsa Amini’s death”, France 24, 16 March 2023.

xlvi “Zahedan representative in Parliament: 74% of the people of Sistan and Baluchestan are below the food security poverty line”, Entekhab, 24 April 2020. See also “Protests, discrimination and the future of minorities in Iran”, Minority Rights Group, 24 November 2022.

¹ *Kulbars* carry packages on their backs or on horses through hard-to-reach mountain passes over borders and into the region’s towns and villages in return for a small fee. See Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/77/525, 14 October 2022, para 8. See also report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/74/188, 18 July 2019, para. 91; “Protests, discrimination and the future of minorities in Iran”, Minority Rights Group International, Center for Supporters of Human Rights in Iran, 2022.

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lii Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/HRC/43/61, para. 7.

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lvi For the Mission’s detailed findings into the death in custody of Jina Mahsa Amini, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 207-259.

lvii See “The people of Chabahar gathered in protest against the rape of a teenage girl by a police commander and the death of Jina Mahsa Amini”, Persian Radio France Internationale, 28 September 2022.

lviii “Iran’s pro-government counter-protesters try to change narrative”, Al Jazeera, 25 September 2022. See also “Putting Kurds in spotlight, Iran’s leaders try to deflect national protest”, Reuters, 17 October 2022.

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lxiv A/HRC/55/CRP. 1, Annex III, paras. 5-8 and 10-14.

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lxvi FFM-IRAN-D-002338 (FFMI Submission).

lxvii “Five people killed in Mahabad/one was 15”, Shargh Daily, 28 October 2022. See also, “Why is the manner of treating protesters in Zahedan different?”, Shargh Daily, 6 November 2022.

lxviii See A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 465-470; FFM-IRAN-D-050356 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-050337 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000513 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000409 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000100 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000513 (FFMI Interview).

lxix FFM-IRAN-D-000532 (FFMI Interview) and FFM-IRAN-D-001622 (FFMI Interview)

lxx FFM-IRAN-D-000532 (FFMI Interview). See also A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 534-559.

lxxi “Massacre in Javanroud, State Atrocities Against Protesters in Iran’s Kurdish Regions”, Center Human Rights in Iran/Kurdistan Human Rights Network, September 2023.

lxxii FFM-IRAN-D-000532 (FFMI Interview).

lxxiii A/HRC/55/CRP. 1, paras. 1151-55.

lxxiv FFM-IRAN-D-002338 (FFMI Submission).

lxxv FFM-IRAN-D-000695 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000532 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-001515 (FFMI Interview).

lxxvi FFM-IRAN-D-000524 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-001515 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000100 (FFMI Interview).

lxxvii FFM-IRAN-D-001534 (FFMI Interview). See A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1028. See also “The People of Chabahar Gathered in Protest Against the Rape of a Teenage Girl by the Police Commander and the Murder of Mahsa Amini”, Persian Radio France Internationale, 28 September 2022.

lxxviii For the Mission’s detailed analysis of this incident, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1028-1047.

lxxix FFM-IRAN-D-000517 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-000745 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000524 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-001515 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000100 (FFMI Interview).

lxxx FFM-IRAN-D-000517 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000745 (FFMI Interview).

lxxxi FFM-IRAN-D-001534 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-000745 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-000517 (FFMI Interview).

lxxxii FFM-IRAN-D-001534 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000745 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000517 (FFMI Interview).

lxxxiii FFM-IRAN-D-001473 (Video).

lxxxiv FFM-IRAN-D-000517 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-001534 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000517 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-001474 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-001475 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001476 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001745 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001744 (Statement). See also FFM-IRAN-D-001473 (Video) and FFM-IRAN-D-001479 (Video).

lxxxv FFM-IRAN-D-001480 (Ballistic Analysis).

lxxxvi FFM-IRAN-D-001477 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001476 (Statement). See also “Bloody Friday in Zahedan, The Brutal Government Crackdown of September 30”, Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre, 29 October 2022; “Iran: At least 82 Baluchi protesters and bystanders killed in bloody crackdown”, Amnesty International, 6 October 2022.

lxxxvii FFM-IRAN-D-001534 (FFMI Interview), FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-001476 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001475 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001477 (Statement). See also A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1030.

lxxxviii FFM-IRAN-D-001518 (Burial Certificate); FFM-IRAN-D-001519 (Burial Certificate). The Mission highlights that in addition to some families being denied death and burial certificates, due to long-standing discriminatory policies, sectors of the Baluch people do not have identification papers which further hinders the receipt of burial and death certificates.

lxxxix FFM-IRAN-D-001477 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001485 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001475 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001484 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001483 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001476 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001745 (Statement). See also “Iran: ‘Bloody Friday’ Crackdown This Year’s Deadliest”, Human Rights Watch, 22 December 2022; “Bloody Friday in Zahedan, The Brutal Government Crackdown of September 30, 2022”, Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre, 29 October 2022.

^{xc} FFM-IRAN-D-000465 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-000500 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-000465 (Video). See also “Commander’s Important Explanations about Zahedan Today’s Events | Three police officers were attacked”, Hamshahri online, 30 September 2022.

^{xc} FFM-IRAN-D-000500 (Video).

^{xcii} See “Armed Attack of Extremist & Terrorist Agent in Zahedan”, High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, p. 1.

^{xciii} “A Collection of Explanatory Reports Regarding the Death of Mahsa Amini and the Recent Riots in Iran”, High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, p. 99.

^{xciv} FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000500 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-001476 (Statement).

^{xcv} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1040-41.

^{xcvi} FFM-IRAN-D-000522 (FFMI Interview).

^{xcvii} FFM-IRAN-D-001744 (Statement).

^{xcviii} “The Third Report on September 30 Incidents in City of Zahedan”, High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, p. 1. On 27 June 2023, the Mission send an information request to the Government of Iran, see also A/HRC/55/CRP.1, Annex I, “List of questions on reports of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in relation to the protests that began on 16 September 2022”, pt. 7.

^{xcix} FFM-IRAN-D-001745 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001499 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001498 (Statement).

^c “Security Forces in Bloody Friday massacre on trial in Iran”, Iran International, 8 February 2024.

^{ci} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1048.

^{cii} FFM-IRAN-D-002438 (Meeting note)

^{ciii} For the Mission’s full factual and legal analysis of the protests on 20 and 21 November 2022 in Javanroud, see A/HRC/51/CRP.1, paras. 1048-58.

^{civ} “Massacre in Javanroud, State Atrocities Against Protesters in Iran’s Kurdish Regions”, Center Human Rights in Iran/Kurdistan Human Rights Network, September 2023.

^{cv} “Massacre in Javanroud, State Atrocities Against Protesters in Iran’s Kurdish Regions”, Center Human Rights in Iran/Kurdistan Human Rights Network, September 2023; Unleashed Violence: Repression of Protests in Kurdish Areas of Iran, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, 30 June 2023.

^{cvi} FFM-IRAN-D-001701 (Image); FFM-IRAN-D-001677 (Ballistic Analysis).

^{cvi} “Field report from Javanroud: ‘Palestine Square was a killing ground’, Radio Zamaneh, 30 November 2022. “Government forces killed 5 Kurdish citizens in Javanroud with combat weapons”, Hengaw, 21 November 2022.

^{cvi} Iran Prison Atlas, United for Iran.

^{cix} For the Mission’s detailed analysis of patterns of arrests, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 626-650.

^{cx} FFM-IRAN-D-000532 (FFMI Interview).

^{cx} FFM-IRAN-D-001515 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1560. Instagram post on file.

^{cxiii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 687-707, and 1082-1091.

^{cxiv} Annual Report Mar 2022 – Mar 2023”, Kurdistan Human Rights Network, 27 April 2023. See also “Report regarding the death of prisoners inside the Iranian prisons during the first six months of 2023”, Hengaw, 4 July 2023.

^{cxv} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1084.

^{cxvi} FFM-IRAN-D-000532 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxvii} “Annual Report March 2022 – March 2023”, Kurdistan Human Rights Network 27 April 2023.

^{cxviii} FFM-IRAN-D-000589 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-002536 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-002537 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxix} FFM-IRAN-D-051002 (FFMI Interview).

^{cx} FFM-IRAN-D-002538 (FFMI Interview).

^{cx} FFM-IRAN-D-051001 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxii} FFM-IRAN-D-001622 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000124 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxiii} FFM-IRAN-D-001526 (FFMI Submission); FFM-IRAN-D-000146 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000339 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-050452 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-000124 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-050231 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-002536 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-D-002539 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxiv} FFM-IRAN-D-001633 (FFMI Submission).

^{cxv} FFM-IRAN-D-001750 (Court Documents); FFM-IRAN-D-001751 (Court Documents); FFM-IRAN-D-001749 (Court Documents); FFM-IRAN-D-050013 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxvi} Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of the Islamic Republic of Iran”, CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4, para. 29, 30, 49, Committee on the Rights of the Child, 14 March 2016.

^{cxvii} “UN Committee calls on Iran to stop identifying Baha’i schoolchildren”, Baha’i International Organization, 15 February 2006; “Baha’i children in Iran increasingly harassed and abused by local authorities”, Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights in Iran, 5 April 2007.

^{cxviii} “Discrimination and Intolerance in Iran’s Textbooks”, Freedom House, 27 March 2008.

^{cxix} “The Bushehr Court of Appeal issues a separation order for the two-year-old adopted child by a Christian couple”, HRANA, 24 September 2020.

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^{cxxi} FFM-IRAN-D-001521 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-001495 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-001489 (Video); FFM-IRAN-D-001746 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001709 (Statement); FFM-IRAN-D-001745 (Statement). See also “Iran: Killings of children during youthful anti-establishment protests”, Amnesty International, 9 December 2022;

^{cxxii} “The Additional Results of Investigations Conducted by the High Council for Human Rights About Deaths of Under-18 Individuals During recent Riots”, High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic, October 2022.

^{cxxiii} For the Mission’s detailed analysis of the killing of Javad Poushed and Zakaria Khia, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1060-65.

^{cxxiv} “Statement of IRGC’s Vali-e-Asr Unit in Khuzestan Following the Terrorist Incident of Martyrdom of a Group of Compatriots in Izeh”, IRNA, 16 November 2022.

^{cxxv} FFM-IRAN-D-001525 (FFMI Submission).

^{cxxvi} “Exclusive report on the abduction of 130 children in Kurdistan’s cities by authorities”, Hengaw, 5 December 2022.

^{cxxvii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1306-1330.

^{cxxviii} “New details of Ardebil teenager Asra Panahi killed in security forces attack”, Radio Farda, 27 October 2022.

^{cxxix} “Ardebil’s daughter (Asra Panahi) killed herself with rice pills/her father was executed”, Sedayiran, 14 October 2022.

^{cxl} FFM-IRAN-D-002004 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxli} Report of the High Council for Human Rights, “Measures Implemented by the Islamic Republic of Iran in Response to Poisoning of Students”, 03 March 2023, page 1.

^{cxlii} For the Mission’s detailed analysis of the school poisonings, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1335-1359.

^{cxliii} “Judicial Sciences University Basij Officer: Students Explain the Goals of the Rioters to the People”, Fars News Agency, 4 October 2022.

^{cxliv} “Iran: Labor Activist Sentenced to Death, Surge of Charges Against Women”, Human Rights Watch, 18 July 2024.

^{cxlv} FFM-IRAN-D-002535 (FFMI Interview).

^{cxlvi} FFM-IRAN-D-002541 (FFMI Court Document). See also, “FEMENA Strongly Condemns the Unjust Death Sentence against Kurdish-Iranian Activist Pakhshan Azizi and Calls for Her Immediate Release”, Femena, 25 July 2024.

^{cxlvii} “Tehran holds court hearings for two Kurdish political prisoners”, Kurdistan Human Rights Network, 17 June 2024.

^{cxlviii} “Jina Modarres Gorji sentenced to imprisonment and exile”, HRANA, 26 May 2024.

^{cxlix} FFM-IRAN-D-001779 (FFMI Submission); Feminists and WHRDs Detained – Report 1, Femena, 27 September 2022; Femena, Feminists and WHRDs Detained – Report 4, 12 October 2022; Feminists and WHRDs Detained – Femena, Report 6, 21 November 2022. See also “Human Rights Defenders in Iran 2023”, Iran Human Rights, 15 December 2023.

^{cl} “The project of disintegrating Iran in the terrorist network”, Tasnim news, November 2022.

^{cli} For the Mission’s detailed analysis on this and similar cases involving Kurdish and Baluch women human rights defenders, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1420-1423.

^{clii} FFM-IRAN-D-000510 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-0500109 (FFMI Interview); FFM-IRAN-0500411 (FFMI Interview). See also “Exclusive: Protesting Teachers in Iran’s Kurdistan Face Severe Retribution”, Iran Wire, 2 April 2023.

^{cliii} For the Mission detailed analysis on the intimidation and persecution of Sunni religious leaders, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1096-1111.

^{cliv} “The explanations of the Justice Department in Sistan and Balouchestan with regards to the arrest of Molawi Fathi Mohammad Naghshbandi”, IRNA, 20 August 2023.

^{clv} “Sunni Imam detained without warrant”, Iran Wire, 12 June 2024.

^{clvi} FFM-IRAN-D-001533 (Court Documents); FFM-IRAN-D-001532 (FFMI Submission).

^{clvii} “Mohammed Khadranjad’ sentence was reduced by one degree and his death sentence was changed to imprisonment”, Mizan online, 21 June 2024.

^{clviii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 513 and 516.

^{clix} FFM-IRAN-D-000524. See also A/HRC/55/CRP.1 para 515. See also, Annex III, paras. 21-22.

^{clx} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 736.

^{clxi} FFM-IRAN-D-000124 (FFMI Interview).

^{clxii} FFM-IRAN-D-002540 (FFMI Interview).

^{clxiii} FFM-IRAN-D-002537 (FFMI Interview).

^{clxiv} FFM-IRAN-D-001712 (FFMI Submission).

clxv FFM-IRAN-D-001712 (FFMI Submission). See also A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1114-1116. See also “The boot on my neck: Iranian authorities’ crime of persecution against Baha’i in Iran”, Human Rights Watch, 1 April 2024.

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clxvii For the Mission’s detailed analysis on the repression of women and girls defying the mandatory *hijab*, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1204-1305.

clxviii A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1831-1834, 1836-1850.

clxix A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1841-1850.

clxx “Iran Security Council First Official Statistics of the Killed in 2022 Protests: 200 Lost Their Lives”, Aftabnews, 3 December 2022.

clxxi A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para 1535.

clxxii A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1077.

clxxiii A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 690.

clxxiv A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 681-685 and para. 714, and fn. 1337.

clxxv “We have individuals without birth certificates”, IRNA, 24 July 2022.

clxxvi FFM-IRAN-D-001469 (FFMI Submission). In the absence of identity documents, courts in Iran often require a DNA test to verify one’s identity to be able to proceed with their case. Such tests reportedly cost several million toman which, in a context of severe poverty, would be unaffordable.

clxxvii FFM-IRAN-D-000745 (FFMI Interview).

clxxviii FFM-IRAN-D-002438 (Meeting note).

clxxix “Officials failing 43,000 undocumented children in Iran”, Iran Wire, 26 October 2023.

clxxx Including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 8; ICCPR, article 2 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 39.

clxxxi For guarantees of non-repetition as form of reparation, see A/RES/60/147; for guarantees of non-recurrence, see A/HRC/30/42; A/70/438.

clxxxii A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1852-1858.

clxxxiii For the Mission’s detailed analysis of ongoing accountability initiatives on alleged human rights violations in Iran in third States and internationally, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1864-1920.

clxxxiv ICERD, article 11-13. On 8 March 2018, the State of Qatar submitted an inter-state communication against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and against the United Arab Emirates, respectively; and on 23 April 2018, the State of Palestine submitted an inter-state communication against the State of Israel. See Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Information note on inter-state communications, 30 August 2018.

clxxxv ICERD, article 22. This was confirmed in *Azerbaijan v. Armenia* and *Armenia v. Azerbaijan*.

clxxxvi International Court of Justice, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia v. Myanmar)*, Provisional Measures, Order of 23 January 2020, and International Court of Justice, *Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia v. Russian Federation)*, Order on provisional measures, 15 October 2008, para. 126.