



General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 June 2025

Original: English

Human Rights Council

Fifty-ninth session

16 June–11 July 2025

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 79/183, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit an interim report on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-ninth session.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 79/183, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit an interim report on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-ninth session. It contains information on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution, including options and recommendations to improve its implementation, and covers the period from 1 August 2024 to 31 January 2025. It also contains information from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, non-governmental organizations and media organizations, including information submitted by stakeholders, and draws on observations and recommendations of United Nations human rights mechanisms.

2. During the reporting period, the death penalty continued to be applied at an alarming rate. Reports of torture, arbitrary detention and trials that failed to adhere to international due process and fair trial standards were received. Restrictions on civic space – both online and offline – continued to pose barriers to freedom of opinion and expression, notwithstanding some steps to ease online restrictions. Discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities and women and girls persisted in law and in practice. There are also challenges in realizing economic, social and cultural rights, particularly for at-risk groups.

3. The Government continued to engage with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations human rights mechanisms, including with the treaty bodies, special procedure mandate holders and the universal periodic review. The comments provided by the Government in response to the present report were acknowledged.

II. Overview of the situation of human rights

A. Death penalty and arbitrary deprivation of life

4. At least 975 individuals were reportedly executed in 2024, compared with an estimated 834 executions in 2023, marking the highest rate of executions since 2015. Of those, 52 per cent of executions were for drug-related offences, 43 per cent for murder, 2 per cent for sexual offences and 3 per cent for security-related offences, including *fesad fil-arz* (corruption on earth) and *moharebeh* (enmity against God). Four executions in 2024 were reportedly carried out in public.¹

5. According to information received by OHCHR, the execution of women also reportedly increased, with at least 31 women reportedly executed in 2024 – compared with at least 22 women executed in 2023. Of the 19 women reportedly executed for murder, 9 were convicted of killing their husbands in cases involving domestic violence, forced marriage or child marriage. However, domestic law does not recognize factors such as abuse as a mitigating circumstance in murder cases, leaving judges with no legal basis to adjust sentences based on the context of the crime.

6. During its universal periodic review, which took place on 24 January 2025, the Government stated that capital punishment for minors had not been observed in practice.² However, according to information received by OHCHR, at least one child offender, Mehdi Jahanpour, was executed on 17 September 2024 in Adelabad Prison in Shiraz.³ He was arrested in 2016 and was convicted of premeditated murder committed at the reported age of 16 and was executed after he turned 18. Reports indicate that his family was not notified before his execution, denying them a final visit,⁴ which may amount to inhuman treatment. In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran confirmed that Mr. Jahanpour had been referred to the Forensics Commission to assess his mental maturity and he had been

¹ See https://iranhr.net/media/files/Rapport_iran_2024-WEB.pdf.

² A/HRC/59/12, para. 34.

³ See also <https://www.en-hrana.org/annual-analytical-and-statistical-report-on-human-rights-in-iran-for-the-year-2024/#A08>.

⁴ See <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/6936>.

sentenced to *qisas* (retribution in kind), which had been upheld by the Supreme Court. Although legal reforms⁵ introduced in 2013, along with subsequent judicial directives,⁶ have narrowed the application of the death penalty for child offenders, it has not been fully abolished. Gaps remain in domestic law, particularly regarding the limited exemptions for *ta'zir* offences (those involving discretionary punishments) and the discretionary application of article 91 of the Penal Code in *hadd* offences (crimes for which the Qur'an specifies the punishment). Article 91 relies on subjective assessments of the maturity of the child, rather than prohibiting the death penalty for crimes committed by persons below 18 years of age in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party. In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that, over the past two years, it had halted the execution of more than 20 individuals under the age of 18 through mediation efforts.

7. Iranian authorities continued to carry out executions in connection with the protests that took place in September 2022 under the banner "Woman, Life, Freedom". On 6 August 2024, 34-year-old Gholamreza Rasaei was executed in Dizel Abad Prison, Kermanshah Province. He was convicted of "direct perpetration of murder" of a security official during the protests. His execution was reportedly carried out without notifying him, his family or his legal representative.⁷ According to the Human Rights Committee, failure to provide individuals on death row with timely notification about the date of their execution constitutes, as a rule, a form of ill-treatment violating article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁸ Mr. Rasaei was allegedly subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment to extract forced confessions, which were subsequently used to convict him in judicial proceedings that did not meet international fair trial standards.⁹ The Islamic Republic of Iran rejected those allegations.

8. According to information received by OHCHR, in 2024, the authorities reportedly executed at least 31 individuals, including political dissidents, on national security-related offences, including *fesad fil-arz*, *moharebeh* and espionage for Israel.¹⁰ Information received by OHCHR indicates serious violations of due process and fair trial rights, including a lack of transparency in judicial proceedings, reliance on coerced confessions and denial of access to legal counsel.¹¹

9. According to information received by OHCHR, at least 54 individuals reportedly remained on death row for national security-related offences, including political dissidents and those connected to the protests in 2022. The majority of them have been convicted for *baghy* (armed rebellion against the State), while serious due process concerns have also been reported.¹² Among those reportedly facing execution are two Kurdish-Iranian women, Pakhshan Azizi and Varisheh Moradi. Ms. Azizi, a 40-year-old humanitarian worker from the Kurdish minority, was sentenced to death by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran in July 2024. Her conviction was based on accusations of involvement with armed groups, despite a number of human rights organizations stating that her work focused on assisting displaced women and children in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic.¹³

⁵ Introduction of article 91 of the Penal Code enabled courts to exempt children from the death penalty if they were found to lack "mental maturity" or awareness of the consequences of their actions.

⁶ A directive for determining the growth and full mental development of mature individuals under 18 years was issued in 2023 to standardize the application of article 91.

⁷ See <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/iran-shocking-secret-execution-of-young-man-in-relation-to-woman-life-freedom-uprising>.

⁸ General comment No. 36 (2018), para. 40.

⁹ See <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/iran-shocking-secret-execution-of-young-man-in-relation-to-woman-life-freedom-uprising>.

¹⁰ See <https://iranhr.net/en/reports/42>.

¹¹ See <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/6936>; and <https://www.en-hrana.org/annual-analytical-and-statistical-report-on-human-rights-in-iran-for-the-year-2024/#A08>.

¹² See <https://www.en-hrana.org/the-latest-comprehensive-list-of-54-political-and-security-prisoners-sentenced-to-death-in-iran>.

¹³ Ms. Azizi's legal team released letters from the Kurdish Red Crescent and Shams Rehabilitation Organization, revealing evidence submitted to the court confirming her role as a social worker aiding displaced women and children in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. See also <https://x.com/amirreii/status/1864588645518147915> (in Persian).

According to information received by OHCHR, she was arrested on 4 August 2023 and held in prolonged solitary confinement in Evin Prison. She was reportedly tortured and denied access to legal representation and family visits. Several of her family members were also arrested, allegedly to pressure her into making a confession. She was sentenced to death for *baghy* offences without credible evidence linking her to armed activities. The Supreme Court upheld her conviction in January 2025.¹⁴

10. Varisheh Moradi, a 39-year-old Kurdish political activist and member of the Free Women's Society of Eastern Kurdistan, was arrested on 1 August 2023, by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence in Sanandaj, Kordestan Province. Following her arrest, she was detained for 13 days in a security facility in Sanandaj, where she was reportedly subjected to torture and ill-treatment to extract forced confessions. Subsequently, she was transferred to Evin Prison, enduring nearly five months in solitary confinement before being moved to the women's ward. In November 2024, Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced her to death for *baghy*. Throughout her detention and trial, Ms. Moradi reportedly faced serious violations of her fair trial rights.¹⁵ In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran noted that those allegations were unfounded.

11. In 2024, the death penalty continued to have a disproportionate impact on minority groups. According to information received by OHCHR, at least 108 Baluchi prisoners and 84 Kurdish prisoners were executed in 2024, accounting for, respectively, 11 and 9 per cent of the total number of executions recorded in 2024, mainly for drug-related crimes and for murder.

12. The total number of executions in 2024 included at least 72 Afghan nationals¹⁶ in the Islamic Republic of Iran compared with 25 in 2023, mostly for drug-related offences. Afghan detainees, many of whom arrive in the country as refugees and migrants, commonly face limited access to legal representation and due process partly because of financial hardship, social exclusion and lack of access to equal legal resources.

13. There are concerning reports of executions being carried out in a manner that may constitute torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. On 27 April 2024, it was reported that Ahmad Alizadeh, a 26-year-old student, had been initially hanged in Ghezelhesar Prison, but after approximately 28 seconds into the execution, the plaintiff's family granted him forgiveness.¹⁷ Mr. Alizadeh was reportedly removed from the gallows, resuscitated and returned to his cell. However, he was ultimately executed on 13 November 2024, as the family changed their minds.¹⁸ Under domestic law, the plaintiff's family has the right to demand retribution (*qisas*) or grant forgiveness, even during the execution process. If the forgiveness is revoked or no agreement on *diya* (blood money) is reached, the execution can be carried out. The Human Rights Committee has stated that painful and humiliating methods of execution are unlawful under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.¹⁹ Moreover, the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty of 1984 emphasize that, in situations in which capital punishment occurs, it should be carried out so as to inflict the minimum possible suffering.²⁰

14. On 28 October 2024, the authorities reportedly announced that a German-Iranian dual national, Jamshid Sharmahd, who had been sentenced to death, had died in prison.²¹ Initially, a statement from the Office of the Prosecutor in Tehran was published, stating that "he was convicted by a competent court and faced the consequences of his actions" on 29 October

¹⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/iran-un-experts-alarmed-supreme-court-upholds-death-sentence-kurdish-woman>; and <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/9035/2025/en>.

¹⁵ See <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8788/2024/en>.

¹⁶ See <https://amu.tv/147345/?utm>.

¹⁷ <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/7106>. See also <https://www.ecpm.org/app/uploads/2025/02/Annual-Report-on-the-Death-Penalty-in-Iran-2024.pdf>, p. 67.

¹⁸ See <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/7106>.

¹⁹ General comment No. 36 (2018), para. 40.

²⁰ Approved by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1984/50. See paragraph 9 thereof.

²¹ See <https://iranhr.net/en/reports/42>.

2024.²² Following that, local media reported his execution.²³ However, the judiciary spokesperson later denied that, claiming that Mr. Sharmahd had died before the execution could take place.²⁴ No details of the cause of his death have been provided. The conflicting narrative raises serious concerns about the circumstances of his death. Mr. Sharmahd was reportedly abducted by Iranian security forces in 2020 and sentenced to death in February 2023 for *fesad fil-arz* for his alleged involvement in the bombing of a mosque in 2008. His conviction was reportedly based on a televised confession.²⁵ In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that the broadcast of his confession had been carried out in response to public demand. His detention was considered arbitrary by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, citing enforced disappearance, incommunicado detention and lack of legal or consular access, depriving him of legal recourse. The Working Group also found that he had been targeted for legitimately exercising his freedom of expression due to his involvement with a news website perceived to be critical of the Government.²⁶

15. The Islamic Republic of Iran does not publish official figures on sentences and executions in relation to the death penalty. The Secretary-General has consistently emphasized the importance of transparency in death penalty cases by recommending that States systematically and publicly provide full, accurate and disaggregated data on death sentences to facilitate a fully informed public debate on the scope of the use of the death penalty and its impact on human rights.²⁷

B. Torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

16. On 24 January 2025, the Government announced, during its universal periodic review, that it was considering the provisions of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment as it was not yet a State Party to the Convention.²⁸ However, the use of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in the country remains a serious concern.

17. According to the Human Rights Committee, the prohibition of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights must extend to corporal punishment, including excessive chastisement ordered as punishment for a crime or as an educative or disciplinary measure.²⁹ In October 2024, the authorities reportedly amputated the fingers of two Kurdish brothers convicted of theft in Urmia Prison.³⁰ According to article 268 of the Penal Code, theft is considered a *hadd* crime if it meets specific conditions. Article 278 of the Penal Code mandates finger amputation as the punishment for first-time theft. Reports received by OHCHR indicate that a disproportionate number of individuals sentenced to amputation come from marginalized, low-income communities. That is particularly troubling in the light of the country's ongoing economic crisis, high unemployment and rising poverty,³¹ which underscore the need to address the underlying socioeconomic factors that drive crime.

18. There are also serious concerns about reports of torture and inhuman treatment, particularly during the interrogation stage. In August 2024, the alleged torture and subsequent death of 36-year-old Mohammad Mir-Mousavi in police custody sparked outrage after a

²² See <https://irna.ir/xjRXwT> (in Persian); and <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4801143/> (in Persian).
²³ See <https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/1009043/> (in Persian).

²⁴ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
²⁵ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
²⁶ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
²⁷ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
²⁸ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
²⁹ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
³⁰ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).
³¹ See <https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802502/> (in Persian).

²⁵ A/HRC/WGAD/2022/27, para. 70.

²⁶ Ibid., paras. 56 and 60.

²⁷ A/HRC/54/33, para. 64; and A/HRC/57/26, paras. 33 and 34.

²⁸ A/HRC/59/12, para. 35.

²⁹ General comment No. 20 (1992), para. 5; CCPR/C/MRT/CO/2, para. 28; and CCPR/C/SDN/CO/5, paras. 35 and 36.

³⁰ See <https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/1010243/> (in Persian).

³¹ Ibid.

video of his battered body surfaced three days after his arrest. Mr. Mir-Mousavi was arrested by police officers on 24 August 2024 as he had been involved in a fight in the street in Lahijan, Gilan Province. He was allegedly severely beaten and tortured by police while in custody. He died three days later in police custody and the cause of death has not been confirmed.³² In a welcome step, Lahijan's prosecutor announced the arrest of five police officers in connection with his death and the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian, ordered a thorough investigation into the incident.³³ In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran confirmed that the five police officers arrested had been "temporarily suspended".

C. Rights to freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly

19. According to information received by OHCHR, in 2024, at least 125 journalists were prosecuted for their work. Of note, at least 40 women journalists were prosecuted or summoned for their reporting, including their coverage of violations of the rights of women and girls. In January 2025, the home of journalist Zhila Bani-Yaghoub, who is the former editor of both the Iranian website Kanoon Zanan Irani, which focuses on matters related to Iranian women, and *Sarmayeh*, a daily business newspaper, was raided, with her electronic devices seized together with those of her husband. That was reportedly in response to her social media posts and her reporting on the increasing number of women on death row for adultery.

20. The persecution of journalists also extended to those working with foreign media. On 19 December 2024, Italian journalist Cecilia Sala was detained during a reporting trip to Tehran for "violating the laws of the Islamic Republic" and held in solitary confinement at Evin Prison for nearly three weeks before her release on 8 January 2025. In December 2024, an Iranian-American journalist, Reza Valizadeh, was sentenced to 10 years in prison by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran for "collaborating with a hostile Government".³⁴ According to his lawyer, his conviction was based on his previous employment with media outlets funded by the United States of America, including Radio Farda and Voice of America. The Tehran Provincial Court of Appeals confirmed the verdict on 29 January 2025.

21. In December 2024, the Government lifted bans on WhatsApp and Google Play Store after more than two years.³⁵ Despite that, significant barriers to online freedom of expression remain, with many users inside the country still relying on virtual private networks to bypass ongoing censorship.

22. The Law on Protecting the Family through the Promotion of the Culture of Chastity and Hijab, which was supposed to come into effect in December 2024, has been temporarily suspended to "enact necessary revisions" as confirmed by the Government in response to the present report. Should the law be implemented, it would represent a significant threat to freedom of opinion and expression. Acts such as unveiling, promoting nudity, improper dressing or mocking the hijab in public or online are punishable by heavy fines, long-term imprisonment and travel bans. In extreme cases, when an act is classified as *fesad fil-arz*, it would carry the death penalty.³⁶ The law also criminalizes sending hijab-related photos, videos or audio to foreign Governments, networks, media outlets, groups or organizations, especially if the content is broadcast by opposition or foreign media.

³² See <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/03/iran-detainee-reportedly-tortured-death?utm;> and <https://www.sharghdaily.com/بخش-روزنامه-941594/100-گزارش-یک-قتل> (in Persian).

³³ See <https://www.sharghdaily.com/بخش-روزنامه-941594/100-گزارش-یک-قتل> (in Persian).

³⁴ See <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/iran-iranian-american-journalist-sentenced-to-10-year-prison-term?utm.>

³⁵ See <https://www.isna.ir/news/1403100403104/واتساب-و-گوگل-پلی-رفع-فیلتر-شدند> (in Persian).

³⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/iran-un-experts-call-hijab-and-chastity-law-be-repealed>; and <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/iran-new-compulsory-veiling-law-intensifies-oppression-of-women-and-girls>.

23. In several instances, security forces cracked down on peaceful protests, carrying out arrests, and organizers faced judicial prosecution. For instance, following the strike held on 22 January 2025 in several Kurdish cities, organized in protest against the death sentences issued against two Kurdish activists, Ms. Azizi and Ms. Moradi, shops were closed and security forces reportedly arrested, without judicial warrants, at least 12 Kurdish activists along with shopkeepers and others accused of organizing the strikes.³⁷

D. Right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

24. The adverse impact of the ongoing economic crisis in the Islamic Republic of Iran, compounded by government policies and the possible impact of the unilateral coercive measures that the Government continued to highlight as a key concern,³⁸ have detrimentally affected the enjoyment of a broad spectrum of economic and social rights. It remains challenging to assess the actual impact of the unilateral coercive measures due to the lack of official data. A report published by the State news agency in January 2025 stated that up to 300 types of drugs were in short supply in the country, with approximately 100 being practically unavailable. The Ministry of Health and Medical Education cited drug smuggling and excessive spending by national pharmaceutical companies as the primary reasons for the shortage.³⁹ In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that the impact of unilateral coercive measures also impeded scientific research, access to essential medicines and equipment.

25. A number of welcome measures were announced to advance the right to health. According to official information shared with OHCHR, on 22 October 2024, the Chief Executive Officer of the Iranian Health Insurance Organization announced that those aged 65 and older would receive free medical treatment in public hospitals and university-affiliated medical centres. On 22 November 2024, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education announced that HIV treatment would also be free of charge.

26. It is deeply concerning that 70 dialysis patients reportedly died in Isfahan, Mashhad, Shiraz and Tehran as confirmed by the Parliamentary Health and Medical Commission in November 2024. The peritoneal dialysis solutions, reportedly used on those patients between April and June 2024, were found to be contaminated, according to the Parliamentary Health and Medical Commission. The exact date of death of the patients is unclear. The Iranian Food and Drug Administration, the regulatory body overseeing pharmaceuticals and medical products, reportedly halted the production and distribution of the affected solutions in June 2024 and promised a full investigation.⁴⁰ However, in November 2024, a spokesperson for the Parliamentary Health and Medical Commission criticized the judiciary's handling of the case, noting that, despite initial commitments, no serious legal action had been taken against those responsible.⁴¹

27. Moreover, it was reported that, in December 2024, at least 107 thalassemia patients in several cities across Sistan and Baluchestan Province – home to a predominantly Baluchi ethnic minority – contracted hepatitis C after receiving contaminated and expired blood transfusions. The Iranian Thalassemia Association, a local non-governmental organization, confirmed and attributed the incident to structural deficiencies within the Sistan and Baluchestan healthcare system, such as overcrowded treatment centres, a shortage of medical personnel, inadequate transfusion monitoring and human errors in treatment protocols.⁴² Those incidents raise concerns over the realization of the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including providing adequate healthcare and related

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ A/HRC/59/12, para. 10.

³⁹ See <https://irna.ir/xjSDBj> (in Persian).

⁴⁰ See <https://www.sharghdaily.com/صفای-دبایز-محلول-دبایز-948325/100-قصه-دنباله-دار-محلول-دبایز-صفای> (in Persian).

⁴¹ See <https://www.samenco.com/fa> (in Persian).

⁴² See <https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-سیاسی-1600899/3-پیگیری-موضوع-ابتلای-بیماران-تالاسمی-به-هیاتیت-در-مجلس> (in Persian); and <https://akharinkhabar.ir/social/10410908/> (in Persian); and <https://akharinkhabar.ir/social/10410908/> (in Persian).

infrastructure in marginalized regions such as Sistan and Baluchestan. At the time of writing, an investigation into the incident had yet to be initiated.

E. Human rights situation of women and girls

28. Progress was made in increasing women's political participation and representation. In the formation of the new Government in August 2024, Farzaneh Sadegh was appointed as Minister of Roads and Urban Development, making her the second woman to hold a ministerial position in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the first to lead a traditionally male-dominated ministry.⁴³ In addition, Fatemeh Mohajerani became the first-ever female government spokesperson, Shadi Fazli became the first woman Governor of Koupayeh in Isfahan Province, Sudabeh Zargham-Nejad became the first woman Governor of Dehghan in Kordestan Province and Batoul Moallem became the first woman Governor of Sarvestan in Fars Province.⁴⁴ There has also been an increase in women's leadership in the economic sector, including the positions of Head of the Privatization Organization and Deputy Governor for New Technologies at the Central Bank.⁴⁵

29. While the Law on Protecting the Family through the Promotion of the Culture of Chastity and Hijab has been temporarily suspended, its potential future implementation remains a serious threat to the rights of women and girls. The law prescribes severe penalties, including imprisonment, flogging and even the death penalty, for individuals accused of promoting *fesad fil-arz* by opposing or challenging hijab regulations.⁴⁶ The Law also applies to girls as young as 9, enforcing compliance both in public and online spaces. Non-compliance carries criminal, administrative and financial consequences, including fines, job dismissals, travel bans, confiscation of assets and restricted access to education and healthcare, reinforcing systemic gender-based discrimination. The Human Rights Committee has stated that article 18 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights bars coercion that would impair the right to have or adopt a religion or belief, including the use of threat of physical force or penal sanctions to compel believers or non-believers to adhere to their religious beliefs. The Committee has also stated that article 18 protects the freedom to manifest religion or belief in worship, including the wearing of distinctive clothing or head coverings.⁴⁷

30. According to information received by OHCHR, surveillance of hijab compliance and morality policing has generally decreased since the new Government came to power. However, there are still reports of harassment of women for non-compliance based on existing mandatory hijab laws. On 14 December 2024, Iranian singer Parastoo Ahmadi and two of her band members, Ehsan Beiraghdar and Soheil Faghieh Nasiri, were arrested in Mazandaran and Tehran Provinces after performing a virtual concert without wearing a hijab.⁴⁸ Following their arrest, the judicial authorities issued a statement declaring that the concert had been held without legal authorization and confirmed that a judicial case had been filed against Ms. Ahmadi and the concert's production team. The three individuals were released on 15 December 2024 but were formally charged with not complying with the hijab dress code at Branch 38 of the Tehran Morality Security Court on 23 December 2024.⁴⁹

31. Moreover, Iranian universities have reportedly intensified hijab enforcement using facial recognition technology and stricter dress codes, leading to penalties such as denial of entry, withdrawal from courses and expulsion from dormitories. Those measures resulted in alarming incidents, including the detention of Ahoo Daryaei, a student at Azad University,

⁴³ See <https://www.pishkhan.com/news/328733> (in Persian).

⁴⁴ Submission by the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

⁴⁵ See <https://vista.ir/n/sharghdaily-0tbbq> (in Persian).

⁴⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/iran-un-experts-call-hijab-and-chastity-law-be-repealed>; and <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/iran-new-compulsory-veiling-law-intensifies-oppression-of-women-and-girls>.

⁴⁷ General comment No. 22 (1993), paras. 4 and 5.

⁴⁸ See <https://www.en-hrana.org/singer-parastoo-ahmadi-and-musicians-charged-over-virtual-concert>; and <https://42653606.khabarban.com> (in Persian).

⁴⁹ See <https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1277452/> پرونده قضایی-علیه پرستو-احمدی به علت کنسرت بدون-حجاب (in Persian).

32. According to information received by OHCHR, femicide cases in the Islamic Republic of Iran have reportedly increased with at least 179 reported incidents in 2024 compared with 55 in 2023. The majority of convicted perpetrators were intimate male partners and relatives. Many killings were linked to family disputes or honour crimes, often targeting women and girls seeking divorce or rejecting marriage proposals, highlighting discrimination against women and girls in the family, which contributes to concerning practices, including violence or coercion against them. The domestic legal system's unequal application of *diya*, the absence of protective laws against domestic violence, limited shelters for victims and socioeconomic hardship further heighten the risk of femicides in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that the bill on the prevention of violence against women was in the final stages of approval in parliament.

34. OHCHR received concerning reports of suicides and attempted suicides, particularly among girls, that are linked to restrictive social conditions. The suicides of 16-year-old Arezo Khavari and 17-year-old Aynaz Karimi in early November 2024 were reportedly linked to strict dress code enforcement in State-run schools and what the Iranian Teachers' Trade Associations describe as part of a harrowing cycle rooted in flawed policies, systemic pressures, ideological impositions and the authorities' disregard for the growing mental health crisis in schools.⁵⁷ Both Ms. Khavari and Ms. Karimi were reportedly humiliated and threatened with expulsion by their school principals for not complying with the mandatory dress code.⁵⁸ Policies and regulations that induce severe distress leading to suicide also implicate the right to life, in terms of the State's responsibility to protect individuals from foreseeable harm. States must carry out independent, impartial, prompt, thorough, effective, credible and transparent investigations into potentially unlawful deprivation of life.⁵⁹ In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that Ms. Karimi had tragically taken her own life due to personal challenges. Thorough inquiries had revealed no evidence whatsoever of threats or warnings issued by school staff or administrators regarding her attire. It also added that there were specialized counselling centres in schools.

⁵⁹ Human Rights Committee, general comment No. 36 (2018), paras. 27 and 28.

F. Human rights situation of human rights defenders, lawyers and families

35. The temporary release of Narges Mohammadi on medical leave in December 2024 is welcomed,⁶⁰ but many women rights defenders remain imprisoned. Evin Prison alone reportedly holds 77 women in relation to national security offences, including those linked to the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.⁶¹ In December 2024, human rights defender Reza Khandan was arrested to serve a six-year sentence for his peaceful activism against compulsory hijab laws.⁶² Many more face imminent imprisonment, including student activist Leila Hosseinzadeh, sentenced in absentia in November 2024 to one year in prison for “propaganda against the State” and “public unveiling” for not wearing the hijab while defending her thesis. The following month, she was expelled from the University of Tehran, with her degree retroactively annulled.⁶³ In response to the present report, the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that Ms. Hosseinzadeh had been suspended from her studies due to disciplinary and academic violations.

36. On 11 November 2024, labour rights defender Mohammad Habibi began serving a six-month prison sentence in Evin Prison for “gathering and colluding against national and external security”. He was convicted on the basis of social media posts in which he protested against the wave of poisonings targeting schoolgirls between 2022 and 2023.⁶⁴ Mohammad Habibi has been repeatedly imprisoned since 2018 for his human rights activism, including on labour issues.

37. Penal legislation was used against lawyers representing political prisoners and human rights defenders. Human rights lawyer and trustee of the Prisoners’ Rights Defence Association, Mohammadreza Faghihi, was sentenced in October 2024 by the Revolutionary Court of Tehran to five years in prison for “assembly and collusion against national security”, alongside a two-year travel ban and a two-year prohibition from practising law reportedly in connection to his profession. That verdict was upheld by the Tehran Provincial Court of Appeals in November 2024 and Mr. Faghihi was arrested and taken to Evin Prison on 21 January 2025.⁶⁵ Similarly, human rights lawyer Taher Naqavi was sentenced in October 2024 to six years in prison by Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran – one year for “propaganda against the regime” and five years for “assembly and collusion against national security”.⁶⁶ He also received a two-year travel ban and a prohibition on social and political activism.

38. Iranian authorities continued to take action against families seeking justice for relatives killed during the 2022 and 2019 protests. In November 2024, Branch 36 of the Tehran Provincial Court of Appeals upheld 18-month prison sentences for Mahboubeh Ramazani and Rahimeh Yusefzadeh, mothers of victims of the protests held in November 2019, for “propaganda against the regime” and “insulting the Supreme Leader”. Their convictions were linked to their activism, including participation in the Mothers of the November 2019 Victims group, which seeks accountability for the killing of their children during the protests held in 2019.⁶⁷

39. Activists involved in the peaceful “No Death Penalty Tuesdays” abolitionist campaign, which began in Iranian prisons in January 2024, faced prosecution and harassment. In October 2024, Branch 1 of the Office of the Karaj Prosecutor reportedly charged Ahmadreza Haeri, a human rights defender and anti-death penalty campaigner

⁶⁰ See <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/dec/04/iran-releases-nobel-peace-laureate-narges-mohammadi-on-medical-leave-says-lawyer>.

⁶¹ See <https://www.en-hrana.org/female-prisoners-in-evin-latest-report-on-names-and-sentences>.

⁶² See <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/reza-khandan-began-serving-three-year-and-six-months-prison-sentence-issued-2019>.

⁶³ See <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/leila-hosseini-zadeh-sentenced-arbitrarily-absentia>.

⁶⁴ See <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/mohammad-habibi-begins-serving-six-month-prison-sentence>.

⁶⁵ See <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/profile/mohammad-reza-faghihi>.

⁶⁶ See <https://www.omct.org/en/resources/statements/marking-the-international-day-of-the-endangered-lawyer-amidst-escalating-persecution-in-iran>.

⁶⁷ See <https://www.en-hrana.org/appeals-court-upholds-sentences-of-mothers-of-november-2019-protest-victims>; and <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/10/iran-arrests-family-members-protesters>.

detained in Ghezel Hesar Prison, with “propaganda against the State” and “spreading false information”, allegedly due to his involvement in the “No Death Penalty Tuesdays” campaign.⁶⁸

G. Human rights situation of minorities

40. In its concluding observations adopted in August 2024, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed concern regarding the 2016 population census, which did not allow information to be gathered on the ethnic composition of the population based on the principle of self-identification. Furthermore, the Committee expressed concern about the lack of detailed and comprehensive information on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic and ethno-religious minority groups and of non-citizens, which did not allow for the assessment of the situation of such groups, including their socioeconomic status and any progress achieved by implementing targeted policies and programmes.⁶⁹

41. The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran has stated that ethnic, religious and other minorities, in particular the predominantly Sunni Kurds and Baluchis, have been disproportionately affected by the Government’s response to the protests.⁷⁰

42. In relation to religious minorities, in October 2024, the Revolutionary Court of Isfahan sentenced 10 Baha’i women to a combined total of 90 years in prison. They were convicted of “propaganda against the State” and “participation in deviant educational activities contrary to sharia law”, related to organizing community activities, such as English language, painting, music and yoga classes, as well as nature trips for Iranian and Afghan children and teenagers.⁷¹ Alongside the prison sentences, the Court imposed fines, travel bans and ordered the confiscation of their personal belongings.⁷²

43. On 23 and 24 September 2024, security forces rearrested three previously detained Christian converts, Jahangir Alikhani, Hamed Malamiri and Gholam Eshaghi, reportedly subjecting them to prolonged interrogations and coercive pressure to recant their faith before their trial on 17 November 2024.⁷³ The men were later released on bail. On 26 December 2024, more than 40 Christians were reportedly arrested in two separate incidents while gathering to celebrate Christmas. Those arrests coincided with an official announcement of five days’ leave for Christian prisoners to celebrate Christmas, from which at least 18 Christian prisoners of conscience were excluded for unknown reasons.⁷⁴

44. In 2024, Sunni Muslims faced reported restrictions on constructing mosques, holding religious ceremonies and practising their faith freely.⁷⁵ In August 2024, Sunni cleric Saber Khoda-Moradi, who served as the leader of Friday prayers in Qavah in western Kordestan, was sentenced to 15 months in prison by the Special Clerical Court in Hamadan.⁷⁶ He was convicted of “propaganda against the State”, allegedly for his perceived criticism of government policies and support for the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement, which he

⁶⁸ See <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/prison-sentence-human-rights-defender-ahmadreza-haeri-increased-arbitrarily?utm>.

⁶⁹ CERD/C/IRN/CO/20-27, para. 4.

⁷⁰ A/HRC/55/67, para. 93.

⁷¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/iran-experts-alarmed-systematic-targeting-bahai-women>.

⁷² See <https://iranhumanrights.org/2024/11/arrests-imprisonments-of-bahai-soar-as-irans-war-on-religious-minority-intensifies>; communication IRN/2024, available at <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=29216>; and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/iran-experts-alarmed-systematic-targeting-bahai-women?utm>.

⁷³ See <https://articleeighteen.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Annual-Report-2025.pdf>.

⁷⁴ Response of the Government to the present report.

⁷⁵ See <https://iranhumanrights.org/2025/01/irans-campaign-of-terror-against-minorities-surges-across-country>.

⁷⁶ See <https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/en/news/2024/08/30/clerical-court-sentences-sunni-kurdish-cleric-to-15-months-in-prison>.

regarding the extent of the accountability for the lethal use of force and the transparency of the proceedings.

IV. Cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

A. Human rights treaty bodies and the universal periodic review

50. In August 2024, with the participation of the State's delegation, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination considered the periodic report of the Islamic Republic of Iran and adopted its concluding observations. The Committee requested the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide, within one year of the adoption of the concluding observations, information on its implementation of certain recommendations.⁸⁹

51. The fourth cycle of the universal periodic review of the Islamic Republic of Iran took place on 24 January 2025, during which 346 recommendations were made by 109 Member States. The responses of the Islamic Republic of Iran to each recommendation will be provided to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-ninth session. At the time of writing, the reports of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were overdue by seven years and three years, respectively.⁹⁰ The Islamic Republic of Iran is yet to join the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

B. Special procedures and the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran

52. The Secretary-General notes the appointment, in August 2024, of Mai Sato as the new Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Secretary-General also notes the constructive engagement of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the Special Rapporteur.

53. The Secretary-General welcomes the engagement of the Islamic Republic of Iran with special procedure mandate holders, including the responses to the communications issued. Between 1 August 2024 and 31 January 2025, special procedure mandate holders issued seven communications on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Government replied to six communications. At the time of writing, there are 10 pending requests for country visits from special procedure mandate holders.

54. The Secretary-General regrets that the Government denied the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran access to the country during the reporting period.

C. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

55. The Secretary-General welcomes the dialogue between the Islamic Republic of Iran and OHCHR through a human rights technical cooperation framework agreed upon in

⁸⁹ CERD/C/IRN/CO/20-27, para. 49.

⁹⁰ See https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/countries.aspx?CountryCode=IRN&Lang=EN.

September 2024 and notes the constructive engagement on substantive issues, including the death penalty.

V. Recommendations

56. The Secretary-General urges the Government:

(a) To immediately halt the execution of all individuals, including those sentenced to death in the context of protests, and for drug-related offences, and to refrain from further application of the death penalty;

(b) To abolish the death penalty and introduce an immediate moratorium on its use as a first step towards its abolition and to prohibit the execution of all offenders who were under the age of 18 at the time of the commission of the crime, in all circumstances, and commute their sentences;

(c) To release immediately all persons detained arbitrarily, including women and girls, human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists, and those who were detained for legitimately exercising their rights to freedom of opinion, expression, association and peaceful assembly;

(d) To uphold full respect for due process and fair trial rights in line with international norms and standards by, inter alia, ensuring that all defendants, including those accused of crimes against national security, have effective access to legal counsel of their choosing during the preliminary investigative stage and all subsequent stages of the judicial process;

(e) To ensure prompt, transparent, thorough and effective investigations by an independent and impartial body into allegations of deaths in custody, torture or other ill-treatment, and inadequate prison conditions;

(f) To prosecute and hold accountable public officials, including law enforcement officials, who act in breach of international human rights law and to make public the findings of investigations;

(g) To take further steps to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls in law and in practice, including revising and repealing laws and policies that criminalize non-compliance with compulsory veiling; and to urgently implement effective measures to respect and protect their fundamental human rights, in accordance with international norms and standards, and advance their equal and safe participation in public and cultural life;

(h) To effectively address root causes and drivers of child, early and forced marriage in order to prevent these harmful practices, including through comprehensive legal and policy measures, and provide comprehensive support to survivors;

(i) To guarantee the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and of peaceful assembly, and to ensure that any limitation to such rights offline and online complies with the criteria established under international human rights law;

(j) To ensure that human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists and labour rights activists are not harassed, detained or prosecuted for carrying out their legitimate work;

(k) To protect the rights of all persons belonging to ethnic, religious or other minorities and to address all forms of discrimination against them without delay;

(l) To take all measures necessary to mitigate the effects of economic challenges and to meet its obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including on the protection of at-risk groups;

(m) To guarantee that all individuals have equal access to quality healthcare services without discrimination; implement robust health information systems to monitor health outcomes and ensure accountability in healthcare delivery; and develop

policies that tackle underlying social determinants affecting health, such as poverty, education and housing, to improve overall health outcomes;

(n) To become a State Party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization;

(o) To submit the overdue periodic reports to the human rights treaty bodies; implement the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms, the treaty bodies, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the universal periodic review; continue cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; and cooperate with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, including by accepting visits by these mandate holders;

(p) To continue to engage with OHCHR and the United Nations country team on the implementation of all the recommendations made in the reports of the Secretary-General and those of international human rights mechanisms, including the universal periodic review.

57. Noting the economic and financial challenges experienced by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Secretary-General reiterates his call to States that have imposed unilateral coercive measures on it to take appropriate steps to ensure that measures such as humanitarian exemptions are given prompt, broad and practical effect in order to minimize the adverse consequences of such measures.
