



New UN General Assembly Resolution Condemns Iran's Track Record of Human Rights Violations

On 18 November 2020, the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution titled **Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran**, which was ultimately passed by a vote of 79 yes to 32 no, as well as 64 abstentions. This resolution commends the Republic of Iran's positive steps such as making commitments on improving women's and refugees' status, an observable decrease in executions of convicted individuals, as well as some new legislations protecting children and the disabled. However, the resolution points out that the human rights situation in Iran remains bleak, especially for vulnerable communities:

"The General Assembly...expresses serious concern, notwithstanding the previously noted reduction in the number of executions, notably for drug-related crimes, at the alarmingly high frequency of the imposition and carrying-out of the death penalty by the Islamic Republic of Iran, in violation of its international obligations...[and] Also expresses serious concern at the continued imposition of the death penalty by the Islamic Republic of Iran against minors...."

The Resolution's calls to action include the following:

- cease the imposition of the death sentence against minors
- cease the practice of arbitrary and prolonged detention as well as enforced disappearances, all of which have disproportionately targeted foreign nationals
- ensure that all trial proceedings meet the standards of due process
- release prisoners who were detained on account of their participation in peaceful protests and demonstrations, and rescind cruel sentences such as the death penalty or prolonged exile
- recognize that prisoners face a higher risk of contracting COVID-19, and provide them with timely and proper medical treatment, potable water, and adequate sanitation
- cease all practices which violate or infringe upon the right to freedom of expression, opinion, association, and peaceful assembly
- cease all human rights violations and discrimination against women and girls, human rights activists, ethnic and linguistic minorities

The Resolution also highlights the observable increasing restrictions upon freedom of religion or belief:

"The General Assembly...expresses serious concern about ongoing severe limitations and increasing restrictions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, restrictions on the

establishment of places of worship, undue restrictions on burials carried out in accordance with religious tenets, attacks against places of worship and burial and other human rights violations, including but not limited to harassment, intimidation, persecution, arbitrary arrests and detention, and incitement to hatred that leads to violence against persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities...."

Jubilee Campaign welcomes the passing of such a landmark resolution which seeks to hold Iran accountable to its human rights and religious freedom violations, and we hope that the United Nations will remain steadfast in encouraging Iran to take concrete steps to uphold its obligations as a Member State and to meet international human rights standards. During November, a Christian believer was given 80 lashes for drinking wine as part of Holy Communion. Iranian authorities also sentenced a pastor of a legally recognized church to ten years of prison, and his appeal of that verdict was rejected. His wife was given a five year prison sentence for her house church activities. Iran continues its relentless crackdown on converts to Christianity and house churches.

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