

**Press release**  
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**109 HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ASK UNITED NATIONS TO CONDEMN  
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN IRAN**

*Global outpouring of solidarity with Iran's human rights defenders*

(16 November 2009) New York - Over one hundred independent human rights and civil society organizations from around the world have urged delegations to the United Nations to support a resolution in the General Assembly condemning human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI), and urging the IRI to abide by its international human rights obligations.

**“Human rights conditions in Iran have deteriorated dramatically since the General Assembly’s 2008 Resolution...It is incumbent upon the international community and a matter of the utmost moral urgency to emphasize to the government of Iran that common human rights standards must be upheld,”** the groups stated in their letter dated 11 November 2009 (copy attached).

The signatories include local groups from Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Russia, Malaysia, India, South Africa and other non-western societies, as well as global organizations including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and International Commission of Jurists. The groups expressed their concern about the killing of peaceful demonstrators, arbitrary arrests, rape, torture and ill treatment in detention, and “show trials” of those charged with serious crimes, for which they may be executed, simply for expressing their political opinions.

"It is a crucial moment for the human rights situation in Iran," said Yap Swee Seng, executive director of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA). "We urge the Iranian government to demonstrate its genuine will to improve the situation by honoring its standing invitation for special procedures and facilitating the visits of independent monitors for credible investigations of all allegations of human rights violations."

More organizations are expected to join the appeal ahead of the vote on a resolution tabled by Canada, which enumerates the wide range of human rights that have been violated by the Islamic Republic including torture, excessive use of capital punishment and the execution of juvenile offenders, executions by stoning, the repression of women's rights advocates, discrimination against minorities, and denial of basic civil and political rights.

“We join Iranian human rights defenders in insisting that the Iranian government respect the fundamental rights of its people,” said Aylona Ob'ezdchikova of the Youth Human Rights Movement in Russia. “As citizens of the Russian Federation, we feel a special

responsibility to demonstrate solidarity, and we ask our government to urge to Iran halt these violations.”

The draft resolution calls on Iran to “redress its inadequate record of cooperation with international human rights mechanisms,” “regrets that the Islamic Republic it has not fulfilled any requests from [United Nations] special mechanisms to visit the country in 4 years and has not answered numerous communications from these special mechanisms,” and “[i]nvites the thematic special procedures mandate holders to pay particular attention to the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran” with regard to abuses that have occurred since disputed presidential election in June 2009.

“It must be made clear that it is not just the nuclear issue that that the world is concerned about when it comes to Iran,” said Moataz El Fegiery, executive director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies in Egypt. “We are deeply concerned about the Iranian government’s ill-treatment of its people and we are asking governments and the United Nations to strengthen their attention to this issue.”

The diversity of voices calling on the international community to act this year reflects the growing concern about the human rights situation inside the country. The organizations joining the call represent civil societies from over 40 countries, the majority from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The 109 groups conclude their appeal by urging delegations to support a resolution “that will help show Iran a path toward respecting the human rights values and standards upon which the United Nations was founded.”

To read the letter, visit: <http://www.demcoalition.org/site09-2008/pdf/pdf/Iran%20UNGA%20Sign%20On%20Letter%20FINAL.pdf>

For more information:

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