

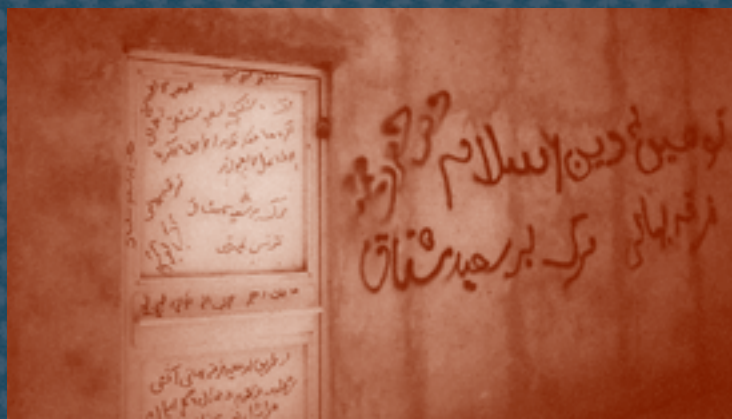
THE BAHÁ'Í QUESTION  
*Cultural Cleansing in Iran*

Bahá'í International Community  
September 2008



# THE BAHÁ'Í QUESTION

## *Cultural Cleansing in Iran*





1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities related to the project.

2. It then outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data, including interviews, surveys, and focus groups.

3. The next section describes the results of the data collection and analysis, highlighting the key findings and trends.

4. Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the overall findings and recommendations for future research and practice.

5. The document also includes a list of references and a glossary of key terms used throughout the study.

6. The document is organized into several sections, each focusing on a specific aspect of the research process.

7. The first section provides an overview of the research project and its objectives.

8. The second section describes the research methodology and the data collection process.

9. The third section presents the results of the data analysis and the key findings of the study.

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September 2008

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## THE BAHÁ'Í QUESTION: CULTURAL CLEANSING IN IRAN

.....  
*International experts on ethnic, racial or religious cleansing have identified a number of warning signs that often foreshadow widespread purges.*

SINCE 1979, IRANIAN Bahá'ís have faced a government-sponsored, systematic campaign of religious persecution in their homeland. In its early stages, more than 200 Bahá'ís were killed and at least 1,000 were imprisoned, solely because of their religious beliefs.

In the early 1990s, the government shifted its focus to social, economic and cultural restrictions aimed at blocking the development of Iran's Bahá'í community. Such measures included efforts to deprive Bahá'ís of their livelihood, to destroy their cultural heritage, and to prevent their young people from obtaining higher education.

Over the last several years, however, there has been a resurgence of more extreme forms of persecution directed at the 300,000-member Bahá'í community of Iran, that country's largest religious minority.

This upsurge has alarmed human rights monitors, who fear not only for those Bahá'ís affected by the government's renewed campaign but also that such attacks portend something far worse.

International experts on ethnic, racial or religious cleansing have identified a number of warning signs that often foreshadow widespread purges.

These include the “classification” of minority groups into categories of “us versus them,” efforts to “dehumanize” them in the media and other venues, the organization of hate groups, and “preparation” for extermination — a category that starts with the “identification” of individual members of the group.

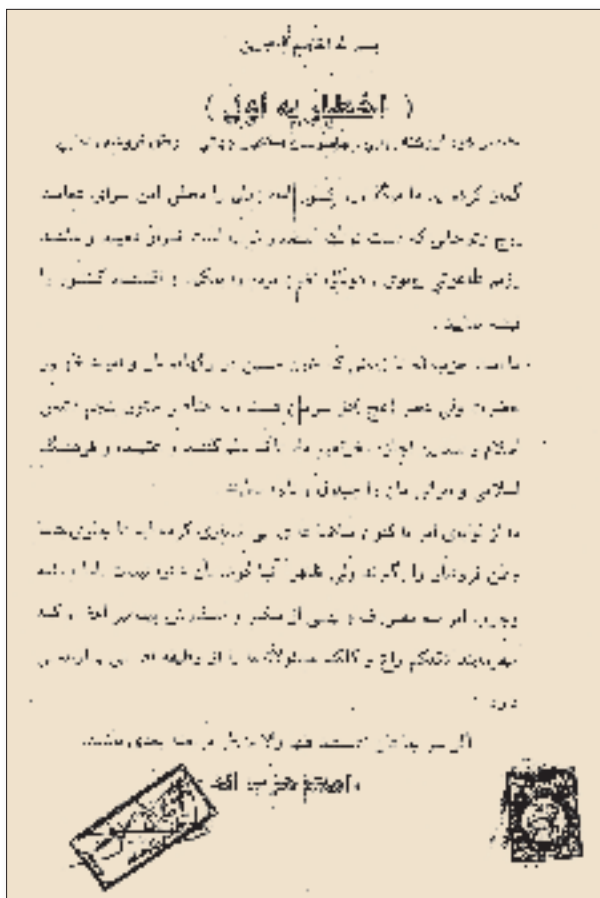
Ominously, a number of recent events in Iran fit into these categories:

- The emergence of documents that clearly spell out a secret government plan to identify and monitor Bahá'ís and their activities. The best example of this occurred in March 2006 with the public disclosure by a United Nations official of a 29 October 2005 letter from Iranian military headquarters instructing state intelligence services, police units, and the Revolutionary Guard to make a “comprehensive and complete report of all activities” of Bahá'ís “for the purpose of identifying all individuals” of this “misguided” sect.



*In March and May 2008, seven Bahá'í leaders who see to the minimum needs of Iran's 300,000-member Bahá'í community were arrested in ominous sweeps similar to episodes in the 1980s when many Bahá'í leaders were rounded up and killed. As of publication, they were being held in Tehran's notorious Evin prison on false charges that they had "confessed" to "illegal" activities. They are, seated from left, Behrouz Tavakkoli and Saeid Rezaie, and, standing, Fariba Kamalabadi, Vahid Tizfahm, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, and Mahvash Sabet.*

- The arrest and imprisonment of national-level Bahá'í leaders in March and May 2008 in a manner that was grimly similar to episodes in the 1980s when scores of Iranian Bahá'í leaders were rounded up and killed. That, along with a marked upsurge in arrests and imprisonments.
- A vigorous campaign in the state-run news media to vilify and defame Bahá'ís. Since 2005, for example, the *Kayhan* newspaper has run more than 200 false or misleading articles about Bahá'í teachings, history and activities — an effort that has been echoed on television and radio.
- The targeting of Bahá'í children for harassment and abuse by teachers and administrators at elementary and secondary schools throughout the country, with the clear aim of forcing Bahá'í children to give up their faith. During a 30-day period from mid-January to mid-February 2007, for example, some 150 incidents of insults, mistreatment, and even physical violence by school authorities against Bahá'í students were reported in at least 10 Iranian cities.
- A general upsurge in violence against Bahá'ís and their properties, often by anonymous individuals. In the summer of 2007, for example, unknown individuals bulldozed Bahá'í cemeteries in two cities (apparently as part of a coordinated effort, since virtually every Bahá'í cemetery in Iran has recently been vandalized or desecrated), sent threatening letters to 30 Bahá'í families in Najafabad, and scrawled hateful graffiti on Bahá'í homes and shops in Abadeh.



On 8 September 2007, an intimidating and offensive letter was distributed to approximately 30 Bahá'í homes in the village of Vilashahr, outside Najafabad. The letter, denouncing Bahá'ís as traitors and agents of colonialism, threatens them with retribution, in the absence of decisive government action against them. At about the same time, hostile and insulting graffiti was sprayed on the walls of these homes. Such graffiti included: “Unclean Bahá'ís and agents of Israel,” “Bahá'ís: enemies of God,” and “Bahá'ís: traitors to their country.” For a full-size version, see page 75, Appendix III

The government's long term strategy to destroy the Bahá'í community without attracting undue international attention was cruelly outlined in a secret 1991 memorandum that aimed at establishing a policy regarding “the Bahá'í question.”

Drafted by the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council and signed by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, the document calls for a series of restrictions on the access of Bahá'ís to education and livelihood that is nothing less than a blueprint for the strangulation of the Bahá'í community. Most significantly, it lays out unequivocally the government's overall objective — to ensure that the “progress and development” of the Bahá'í community are “blocked.”

The recent upsurge in state-sponsored violence against Bahá'ís and their properties, coupled with the ongoing denial of higher education to Bahá'í youth, continuing measures aimed at depriving Bahá'ís of their rightful property and livelihood, and ongoing attempts to destroy the cultural heritage of Iranian Bahá'ís, all indicate that the government's secret plan is still very much in effect.

Such incidents and trends, moreover, are well documented not only by human rights groups but also UN investigators and others — which flatly contradicts the government's oft-repeated contention that it has no campaign of persecution against the Bahá'ís.

The fact is that the Bahá'ís of Iran remain in a precarious state. They are denied the right to practice their faith freely, guaranteed under international human rights instruments such as the International Bill of Human Rights, to which Iran is a party. The administrative institutions of their faith have been dismantled in accordance with a government edict. They live each day knowing that their government seeks to eradicate their community as a viable entity in the country, and that even slight infractions can result in the deprivation of their livelihood, imprisonment or worse.

Bahá'ís recognize that there are many other oppressed groups in Iran, including academics, women's rights activists, students, and journalists. The situation of Iranian Bahá'ís, however, offers a special case, inasmuch as they are persecuted solely because of their religious belief, remain committed to nonviolence and nonpartisanship and seek only to contribute to the development of their homeland.

## Chained to a tree and doused with gasoline

THE STORY OF a middle-aged Bahá'í businessman living in Shiraz, Iran, tells much about life for Iranian Bahá'ís today, who are targets of a state-sponsored campaign to incite hatred against them.

The owner of a small manufacturing firm, the businessman came to work one day to find an anti-Bahá'í slogan defacing the walls of his shop. He lodged a complaint with the police and they had members of the local Basij Resistance Force come and clean the wall.

A few days later, the man received an anonymous letter, which openly denounced the Bahá'í Faith as a false religion and threatened his life.

“[S]o that future generations may know that Islam and Muslims are vigilant and will never be deceived by the agents and spies of Israel and will not allow the followers of the pure religion of Muhammad to be deceived by impostors like you...you and eight other evil ones are sentenced to a revolutionary execution, which will soon be carried out in public. O ye followers of the false prophets, Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, if They are truly of the Truth, then ask Them to prevent the execution of this verdict...”

Two days after he received the threatening letter, the businessman was walking towards his car when an individual approached him with an empty gasoline container and asked for fuel. The man claimed that his family was in the car and he needed some fuel to get to the nearest gasoline station. The

businessman saw a woman in a black chador sitting in the passenger seat and so, reassured, he allowed the man to siphon four liters of gasoline from his own car.

When that was done, however, the man put the container down and grabbed the Bahá'í firmly from behind, placing one hand over his mouth. Another person, who appeared to be a passer-by, came forward and helped carry the Bahá'í to a nearby tree.

Then they chained him to the tree and doused him with gasoline.

The second individual began striking matches and tossing them at the fuel-drenched man. Fortunately, the first did not light. A second match went out immediately after it was lit. A third match ignited but was extinguished when it hit the man's clothing. Finally, a fourth match flared but fell harmlessly on the ground and the man was able to put it out. At that point, apparently worried about the approach of others, the assailants gave up and sped away. People in the neighborhood ran to assist the man, freed him, and notified the local police.

Sadly, the story does not end happily there. In late July 2008, the same businessman was arrested and driven to Tehran, where he was accused of fabricating the story about his threatened burning as a way of defaming the Islamic regime. He refused to “confess” and so was beaten, hung by his arms for hours, and burned with cigarettes before being released on 3 August 2008.

.....  
*Two attackers  
chained a Bahá'í to  
a tree and doused  
him with gasoline.  
Then they began  
striking  
matches and tossing  
them at him.*

## The Bahá'í Faith: A global community

FOUNDED A CENTURY and a half ago in Iran, the Bahá'í Faith is today among the fastest-growing of the world's religions. With more than five million followers, who reside in virtually every nation on earth, it is the second-most widespread independent world religion, surpassing every faith but Christianity in its geographic reach. Bahá'ís reside in more than 100,000 localities around the world, an expansion that reflects their dedication to the ideal of world citizenship.

The Bahá'í Faith's global scope is mirrored in the composition of its membership. Representing a cross section of humanity, Bahá'ís come from virtually every nation, ethnic group, culture, profession, and social or economic class. More than 2,100 different ethnic and tribal groups are represented.

The Faith's Founder is Bahá'u'lláh, a Persian nobleman from Tehran who, in the mid-nineteenth century, left a life of princely comfort and security and, in the face of intense persecution and deprivation, brought to humanity a stirring new message of peace and unity.

Bahá'u'lláh claimed to be nothing less than a new and independent Messenger from God. His life, work, and influence parallel that of Abraham, Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ, and Muhammad. Bahá'ís view Bahá'u'lláh as the most recent in this succession of divine Messengers.

The essential message of Bahá'u'lláh is that of unity. He taught that there is only one God, that there is only one human race, and that each of the world's religions represent stages in the revelation of God's will and purpose for humanity. In this day, Bahá'u'lláh said, humanity has collectively come of age. As foretold in all of the world's scriptures, the time has arrived for the uniting of all peoples into a peaceful and

*People of every nationality, race, ethnic group, and religious background have declared their belief in the Bahá'í Faith. Shown here is a group of people from around the world who have volunteered to serve at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel.*





*Above: Entrance to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, near Acre, Israel.*

*Right: Glowing terraces surround the Shrine of the Báb on Mount Carmel.*

integrated global society. “The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens,” He wrote.

For a global society to flourish, Bahá'u'lláh said, it must be based on certain fundamental principles. They include the elimination of all forms of prejudice; full equality between the sexes; recognition of the essential oneness of the world’s great religions; the elimination of extremes of poverty and wealth; universal education; the harmony of science and religion; a sustainable balance between nature and technology; and the establishment of a world federal system, based on collective security and the oneness of humanity.



.....  
*Bahá'ís reside in more than 100,000 localities around the world, an expansion that reflects their dedication to the ideal of world citizenship.*

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THE CURRENT SITUATION

Recent events and trends prove that the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to actively pursue efforts to carry out the plan outlined by the 1991 “Bahá’í Question” memorandum, and that since late 2005 these efforts have increased dramatically.

FOR HUMAN RIGHTS groups around the world, it was the equivalent of a “yellow alert” — a step or two down from the highest level of alarm — in March 2006 when a United Nations official announced she had come into possession of a confidential letter from Iranian military headquarters, dated 29 October 2005, asking various intelligence agencies, police organizations and the Revolutionary Guard “to identify persons who adhere to the Bahá’í Faith and monitor their activities.”

Asma Jahangir, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, warned that “such monitoring constitutes an impermissible and unacceptable interference with

the rights of members of religious minorities.”

Within weeks, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) said it “fears that the identification and monitoring of the Bahá’ís combined with the current hatred propaganda in the media could lead to increased discrimination in their regards and calls upon the Iranian authorities to abide by their international human rights commitments.”

Governments, too, responded. A spokesman for the President of the United States called on “the regime in Iran to respect the religious freedom of all its minorities, and to ensure that these minorities are free to practice their religious beliefs without discrimination or fear.”

The Council of the European Union expressed “deep concern” over the human rights situation in Iran in a 15 May 2006 resolution, specifically mentioning the situation of the Bahá’ís, while the then French Foreign Affairs Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy said in an April 2006 interview that “[w]e are deeply worried about the harassment of the Bahá’í and Sufi minorities who are highly discriminated against.”

Perhaps most tellingly, the Anti-Defamation League issued a press release in April 2006 saying that the orders issued in the 29 October letter were “reminiscent

## The 29 October 2005 letter to police and other agencies in Iran

**I**N MARCH 2006, Asma Jahangir, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, issued a statement regarding a secret letter from the Iranian military headquarters to various Revolutionary Guard, police, and other forces instructing them to “identify” and “monitor” Bahá’ís around the country.

News of the letter, dated 29 October 2005, stirred alarm among international human rights groups. Ms. Jahangir expressed concern that “the information gained as a result of such monitoring will be used as a basis for the increased persecution of, and discrimination against, members of the Bahá’í Faith.”

On 24 July 2006, the London-based human rights group Amnesty International made the letter public. Originally in Persian, the letter was signed by the Chairman of the Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces, Basij Major General Dr. Seyyed Hossein Firuzabad. It was stamped “highly confidential.” It read:

*With salutations and praise to Muhammad and his descendants (S) [May the Blessing of God be Upon Him and His Descendants], while we express our deepest sympathy on the occasion of the martyrdom of the Lord of believers in divine unity [Amir-al-Momenin] and the Commander of the faithful (MPBUH) [May Peace be Upon Him], and wishing for the acceptance of [our] obligations and worships, further to the reports received concerning the secret activities and meetings of the misguided sects of Bahaism and Babism, in Tehran and other cities in the country, and according to the instructions of the Exalted Rank of the Supreme Leader, His Holiness Ayatollah Khamenei (may his exalted shadow be extended), the Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces has been given the mission to acquire a comprehensive and complete report of all the activities of these sects (including political, economic, social and cultural) for the purpose of identifying all the individuals of these misguided sects. Therefore, we request that you convey to relevant authorities to, in a highly confidential manner, collect any and all information about the above-mentioned activities of these individuals and report it to this Command Headquarters.*

*This [either this information, or the reports to be received] will be submitted for the blessed consideration of the Exalted Rank of the Supreme Leader, the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces (may his exalted shadow be extended).*

The letter listed the following recipients:

- The Ministry of Information of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Belief-Political [organization] of [the office of] the Commander in Chief
- The Commander of the [Revolutionary] Guard
- The Commander of the Basij Resistance Forces of the [Revolutionary] Guard
- The Commander of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Deputy of the Intelligence Branch of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Representative of the Jurist Cleric [Ayatollah Khamenei] in the [Revolutionary] Guard
- The Chairman of the Belief-Political Organization of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Chief Commander of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran



For a full-size version, see  
page 77, Appendix III

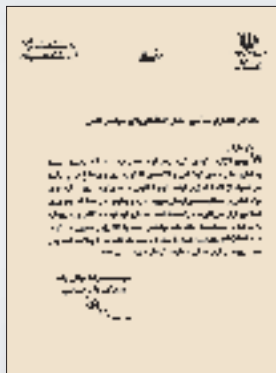
of the steps taken against Jews in Europe and a dangerous step toward the institution of Nuremberg-type laws.”

As experts on ethnic, racial or religious cleansing know well, the “identification” of a minority group is one of the early warning signs of an impending crisis.

Since the 29 October 2005 letter, moreover, other documentary evidence has emerged that tells of Iran’s extraordinary secret effort to track down, identify, and monitor its Bahá’í citizens.

- In a letter dated 19 August 2006, Iran’s Ministry of the Interior ordered officials throughout the country to step up the surveillance of Bahá’ís, focusing in particular on their community activities. Among other things, the Ministry requested provincial officials to complete a detailed questionnaire about the circumstances and activities of local Bahá’ís, including their “financial status,” “social interactions,” and “association with foreign assemblies.”

*19 August 2006 letter  
ordering police to  
step up surveillance  
of Bahá’ís.*



For a full-size version,  
see page 79, Appendix III

28 Murdád 1385 [19 August 2006]

Islamic Republic of Iran

Number: 70878/43

Ministry of the Interior

In the Name of God

To the honourable political-security deputies of the offices  
of the Governors-General of the country

Greetings,

Respectfully, we have received reports that some of the elements of the perverse sect of Bahaism are attempting to teach and spread the ideology of Bahaism, under the cover of social and economic activities. In view of the fact that this sect is illegal and that it is exploited by international and Zionist organizations against the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we therefore ask you to order the relevant offices to cautiously and carefully monitor and manage their [the Bahá’ís’] social activities. In addition, complete the requested information on the enclosed form and forward it to this office for its use by 15 Shahrivar [6 September 2006].

Seyyed Mohammad-Reza Mavvalizadeh  
Director of the Political Office

- Another letter, dated 2 May 2006, showed the degree to which the government has sought to implement such surveillance at the local level. That letter, from the Trades, Production, and Technical Services Society of Kermanshah to the Iranian Union of Battery Manufacturers, asked the Union to provide a list of members of “the Bahá’í sect” in their membership. To read the full letter in English and Persian, see page 80, Appendix III.

Unfortunately, the intent and prejudice that lie behind such orders are also playing out on the ground in a manner that is all too real.

## The arrests of Bahá'í leaders

Perhaps the most worrisome development has been the arrest and imprisonment of national-level Bahá'í leaders in March and May 2008. Six members of a coordinating group that helped see to the minimum needs of Bahá'ís in Iran were arrested on 14 May 2008 when government intelligence agents entered their homes in Tehran in the early morning and spent up to five hours searching through their possessions, before taking the people away.

The seventh member of the group had been arrested in early March 2008 in Mashhad after being summoned by the Ministry of Information office there.

The manner and fact of their arrests aroused extreme concern among human rights groups, given the early history of the Islamic Republic's persecution against Bahá'ís, when the leadership of the Bahá'í community was summarily rounded up and killed.

On 21 August 1980, all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran were abducted and disappeared without a trace. They are presumed dead.



*The arrest of seven Bahá'í leaders in March and May 2008 was ominously reminiscent of episodes in the early 1980s when Iranian authorities rounded up and later killed Bahá'í leaders. In August 1980, for example, the national Bahá'í governing council, shown here, was apparently kidnapped. They are presumed to have been executed.*

Then on 27 December 1981, the recently re-elected national Bahá'í assembly was again ravaged by the execution of eight of its members. And, in 1984, four more members of the same assembly, which had been courageously re-established through fresh elections, were executed — although by then a government decree had forced the institution to disband and the individuals held no official position in the Bahá'í community.

The 2008 arrests, moreover, have not come in isolation. Since 2005, the government has increasingly used short-term arrests and detentions as a way to keep the Bahá'í community off balance.

At the time this publication was prepared, there were some 30 Bahá'ís in prison in Iran. Another 70 or more were awaiting possible prison time pending appeal or a summons to serve their sentence. And at least 70 other Bahá'ís were out on bail and awaiting trial on various charges, all related to their religious belief.

The details of these arrests and imprisonments include the sweeping arrest of more than 50 mostly young Bahá'ís in Shiraz in May 2006 as they were engaged in a humanitarian project. Many of those arrested have held ad hoc leadership positions at the local level.

## Jailed for trying to help children

FOR A GROUP of Bahá'ís in the city of Shiraz, the idea was to help poor children, not land in jail. But prison time was the result for three Bahá'ís, who helped start social service projects for underprivileged children and youth in 2005.

Haleh Rouhi, 29, Raha Sabet, 33, and Sasan Taqva, 32, were each sentenced to four years in prison and then suddenly taken into custody on 19 November 2007.

The charge, according to a government official, was “propaganda against the regime.” That’s what judiciary spokesman Ali Reza Jamshidi told the Agence France Presse at a press briefing in Tehran on 29 January 2008.

Accounts that have emerged from Iran tell a far different story. In fact, the three were engaged in a project that most governments would praise: a humanitarian program aimed at helping underprivileged young people in the region.

The projects were launched in 2004 by a group of Bahá'ís — including Ms. Rouhi, Ms. Sabet, and Mr. Taqva — who were concerned about low literacy rates and other problems facing poor children in and around Shiraz.

They began discussing what kinds of social action they could take, eager to act on the humanitarian impulse found not only in the Bahá'í Faith but in all religions.

In fact, it was a Muslim friend of one member of the group who suggested that the program be



*Haleh Rouhi, Sasan Taqva and Raha Sabet were taken into custody in November 2007. They are serving a four-year sentence on charges connected entirely with their belief in and practice of the Bahá'í Faith.*

instituted to help schoolchildren in Katsbas, a poverty-stricken suburb of Shiraz. The project aimed specifically at tutoring children to help them prepare for their end-of-term school examinations.

Those that served as tutors, who included Muslims, met with the children every Friday morning for four hours. In the project’s infancy, the tutors would lay out rugs in front of the houses of the parents so that the families could see that their only intention was to serve the children. The mothers would stand nearby to observe the lessons and exercises the tutors were delivering. Many expressed interest in learning their methods.

The tutors started working with 20 children, but the number quickly swelled to 120. At the end of the school term, the parents of the children asked whether the activities could continue. At that point the group

When arrested, Bahá'ís have increasingly faced violence and harsh treatment by their captors. In November 2007, Mr. Diyanat Haghighat, who was arrested after a three-hour search of his home, was then physically assaulted at an Intelligence Ministry detention center in Shiraz before his interrogation. Also in the fall of 2007, a young Bahá'í was physically assaulted by agents of the Intelligence Ministry after they had raided the office where he worked and taken him into custody in Shiraz. And in Kermanshah, a 70-year-old man was sentenced to 70 lashes and a year in prison for “propagating and spreading Bahaism and the defamation of the pure Imams.”



*Class in Katsbas, outside Shiraz, Iran.*

decided to extend its services to include the fostering of social and moral skills so that the children themselves could become the agents of advancement in their own lives and in the society.

By summer 2005, the number of children involved in the program had increased so significantly that it was necessary to divide them into two groups, each group comprising more than 100 students and 30 tutors.

At the same time, at the suggestion of a Muslim friend, a similar project was started in another locality, Sahlabad, where children and their families had voiced keen interest in such an undertaking. That project involved 100 children, also tutored by both Bahá'ís and Muslims. Another initiative serving 100 children and young teens was undertaken in Sahlabad.

In addition, the group organized a weekly program offering art classes to young cancer patients at a hospital in Shiraz. This program, which had been enthusiastically received by the head of the hospital, also ran

for a year until it was halted because of the arrest of the Bahá'ís. During that same period, members of the group made regular visits to orphanages and facilities for physically and mentally challenged children.

All of these projects came to a halt on 19 May 2006 when tutors and project leaders in six locations were simultaneously arrested by the police. In all, 54 Bahá'ís and about 10 Muslims were taken into custody.

The Muslims (and one Bahá'í) were released immediately; the remaining 53 Bahá'ís were released over the course of the next few days and weeks. Ms. Rouhi, Ms. Sabet, and Mr. Taqva were held for nearly a month.

In August 2006, the 53 were notified by a local court that they had been convicted of “offenses relating to state security.” Statements made in court also seemed to indicate that their real offense was “teaching the Bahá'í Faith.”

This is a charge that Bahá'ís have often faced, despite the fact that Iran has signed international human rights covenants that protect the right to “teach” one’s religion.

Yet, while teaching the Bahá'í Faith cannot be considered a crime of any sort, given that freedom of religion is protected by international law, the fact is that the Bahá'ís arrested were not working to spread Bahá'í teachings — rather their goal was merely to act on those principles of their faith that encourage them to serve humanity.

## Sowing hatred in the media

The demonization of minorities has long been understood as a precursor to ethnic or religious cleansing. And for more than 150 years, Bahá'ís have been portrayed falsely from the pulpit, in the press, and more recently on radio, television, and even in scholarly publications. This campaign of demonization, however, has been stepped up recently.

Since 2005, for example, the semi-official *Kayhan* newspaper has run more than 200 false, misleading or incendiary articles about Bahá'í teachings, history and activities — an effort that

has been echoed on television and radio. An organ of Iran's ultra-conservative hardliners in the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Kayhan* has a large circulation and its managing editor is appointed by Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei.

The *Kayhan* articles engage in a deliberate distortion of history, make use of fake historical documents, and falsely describe Bahá'í moral principles in a manner that would be offensive to Muslims.

A 27 October 2005 article titled “Understanding the Roots of Bahaism,” for example, attempts to incite public sentiment by raising time-worn, utterly false alle-



*Kayhan is one of Iran's most influential newspapers. Published directly under the supervision of the Office of the Supreme Leader, it closely reflects the government's official ideology. Since 2005, it has run more than 200 false or misleading articles about Bahá'í teachings, history, and activities.*

gations that the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths were the creation of colonial powers. “Babism and Bahaism are [merely] notions and are among the religious sects that were created by colonialists to corrupt the noble and pure Islamic ideas...,” the article said.

The media campaign against Bahá'ís extends to the Internet. On 26 May 2008, for example, *Kayhan* reported that a new Internet site dedicated to the “fight against Bahaism” will soon be launched by an “organization of the people.” The article quotes the late Ayatollah Khomeini as saying that it was

his duty to warn Iran and all the Muslims in the world to free the country from the control of Zionism, which has appeared in Iran as the “Bahaist sect.”

### Anti-Bahá'í articles published in *Kayhan*, 2001-2007



## An upsurge in violence

Another troubling sign is the general upsurge in violence against Bahá'ís and their properties. This violence is often undertaken by anonymous individuals, as exemplified by the story of the Bahá'í businessman in Shiraz who was doused with gasoline by unknown assailants, as described on page 7.

Other incidents that reflect this trend of anonymous violence or threats against Bahá'ís include: a number of cases of arson directed against Bahá'í homes; the bulldozing of two Bahá'í cemeteries in Yazd and Najafabad in mid-2007; the receipt of threatening letters by 30 Bahá'í families, also in Najafabad during that period; and the scrawling of hateful graffiti on Bahá'í homes or properties.

All of this violence comes with the clear blessing of the government. As noted above, the government has sought to incite hatred against Bahá'ís through the news media. Moreover, a number of incidents point to a kind of institutionalized “plainclothes” violence by government agents or their proxies.

In December 2007, for example, four men abducted Mr. Sepehr Sharifi while he was out walking. They forced him into a car, covered his head and took him to an unknown place for interrogation. After three hours of interrogation, he was set free outside the city. Prior to this incident, Mr. Sharifi had received a number of anonymous phone calls threatening him with serious bodily harm and even death.

To cite another recent example of such violence, reports were received in late July 2008 that three Bahá'ís in Mashhad had received telephone threats and were later run over by a car, apparently on purpose. Two of them were killed and the third was hospitalized with serious injuries.

Such “plainclothes” violence, whether stirred directly by government agents or by the atmosphere of hatred the government has cultivated, allow Iranian authorities to distance themselves from attacks on Bahá'ís, as if to say it cannot be helped if ordinary people feel prejudice against them.

*Arson has recently emerged as a means of violence against Bahá'ís. The home of the family Mebran Shaaker of Kerman, Iran, was gutted by fire on 18 July 2008. Family members had received threatening phone calls, and their car had been the target of a recent arson attempt.*



*The Mousavi family of Fars province narrowly escaped injury when an arsonist poured gasoline and caused an explosion and fire that destroyed a hut near where the family was sleeping outside their home.*

## While the government seeks to inspire hatred, the people often offer their support

WHILE THE GOVERNMENT has sought to incite hatred and prejudice against Bahá'ís, many ordinary Iranians — along with a few lower-level officials and even some high-level clerics — have in various ways given support to their Bahá'í neighbors and fellow citizens.

Among the best recent examples was the story of how neighbors rallied around a family in Abadeh (*see facing page*).

There have been a number of incidents in Iranian schools, as well, where other students, and even teachers and parents, have come to the defense of Bahá'í children who have been harassed by school administrators or misguided teachers.

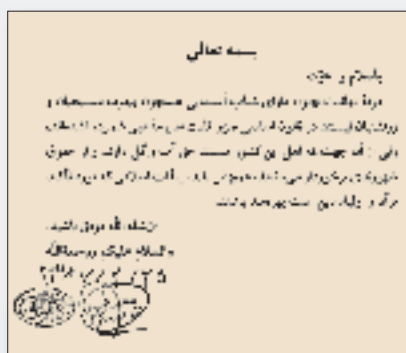
In Kerman recently, a Bahá'í student at a university preparatory college was given an ultimatum: choose your education or your faith. She told education department officials she would not give

the right of citizenship and should be treated with “Islamic compassion,” even if not recognized as an official religious minority, as Christians and Jews are.

And although Bahá'ís have generally been treated unfairly in Iranian courts since the revolution, several courts have recently upheld their rights — once again indicating a reservoir of support for Bahá'ís among some elements of the population.

On 15 March 2008, for example, the appeals court of the Province of Hamadan overturned the guilty verdicts against four Bahá'ís from that city who had been arrested and then found guilty by a lower court on charges of “teaching against the regime.” The appeals court, however, ruled that not only are Bahá'ís not against the government, but they are also absolutely obedient to it; teaching the Bahá'í Faith cannot be regarded as “teaching against the regime.”

Similarly, on 26 September 2007 the Semnan Court of Appeals overturned the conviction of a Bahá'í who had been sentenced to four months' imprisonment on the charge that he had engaged in anti-regime activity by distributing the 15 November 2004 letter from the Bahá'í community of Iran to the then President Mohammad Khatami. The Court of Appeal found that the letter “was in fact a way of petitioning and conveying an expression of the situation and treatment of the Bahá'ís, and as there had been no intention to protest against or defame the regime,” it therefore endorsed the man's appeal and set aside the guilty verdict.



On 14 May 2008, Ayatollah Montazeri issued a fatwa saying that Bahá'ís have the right of citizenship and should be treated with “Islamic compassion,” offering the government a “theological” rationale for ending persecution of the Bahá'ís. For a full-size version, see page 82, Appendix III

up her faith for anything. When the school headmaster then told her forcefully to leave the school, 800 students caused a commotion in protest.

An example of the kind of high-level support given to Bahá'ís can be found in the 2008 statement issued by Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, one of the leaders of the Islamic Revolution in Iran who was for a time the designated successor to the former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini.

Ayatollah Montazeri issued a decree on 14 May 2008 saying that Bahá'ís have

## One family's recent trials

**A**MONG THE EXAMPLES of “plainclothes” violence unleashed against Bahá’ís recently is this story of a family in the town of Abadeh.

On 27 January 2008, members of the Basij, a revolutionary paramilitary group, closed the entrance leading to the house of the family and drove a bulldozer into it, demolishing a wall. Then, 20 Basij personnel, whose faces were covered, raided the home.

The women and children who were in the house fled in terror, taking refuge in the homes of neighbors. The male head of the household arrived home during the attack and was handcuffed and held in his car while the Basijis completed the demolition of the wall. They ransacked the house, collecting all the books and other Bahá’í materials they could carry. A threatening letter was dropped into the house during the night following these events. It said:

As Bahaism is a perverse sect, it is our duty to purge Abadeh of your presence; inform your Bahá’í friends that we will also attend to them! Last night was your first warning! Out of respect for your family, we restrained ourselves in this first endeavor. If you value your family you have two weeks to leave this town, otherwise, the lovers of Imam Husayn will consider it their duty to totally destroy your home.

Of note, while government officials are doing much to stir up the general population against Bahá’ís, the Bahá’í family in Abadeh received support from some local officials and friends, who denounced the attackers. A staff member in the office of the governor told the family: “We are embarrassed; the matter is so complicated that the government authorities are also worried.” Neighbors and other townspeople also visited the



*The wall to this house, owned by a Bahá’í family in Abadeh, was partially destroyed by members of the Basij Resistance Force using a bulldozer in an incident in early 2008. Later, friends and neighbors gave support and sympathy to the family.*

home, expressing sympathy and even offering to compensate the family for the damage that had been caused.

## The targeting of schoolchildren

As an example of how low Iranian authorities will go to eradicate the Bahá'í Faith as a religious entity, there is likely no better example than the growing harassment and abuse of Bahá'í children at elementary and secondary schools, with the clear aim of forcing them to give up their faith.

The effort, which is distinct from the long-running government endeavor to deny Bahá'í university-age students from obtaining higher education, is particularly reprehensible because it has engaged the very people who should protect young people — teachers and school administrators — in attacks on their vulnerable charges.

News of the effort first emerged in early 2007 when it was learned, by compiling reports from Iran, that some 150 incidents of insults, mistreatment, and even physical violence by school authorities against Bahá'í children had occurred in at least 10 Iranian cities during a 30-day period from mid-January to mid-February 2007.

Among other things, those reports indicated that students were being pressured to convert to Islam, required to endure slander of their faith by religious instructors, and being taught and tested on 'Iranian history' in authorized texts that denigrate, distort, and brazenly falsify

Bahá'í religious heritage. They were also being repeatedly told that they are not to attempt to "teach" or discuss their religion with other students.

One report said that Bahá'í children in Kermanshah were called to the front of the classroom and required to listen to insults against their Faith.

On 18 May 2008, on the last day in school in Shiraz, every primary school child received a sealed envelope as a "gift" from a publishing company, containing a 12-page color children's booklet that provided an erroneous and misleading life story of the Báb, the Herald of the Bahá'í Faith, presented in a mocking and degrading manner.

As with any situation involving human rights, full and comprehensive reports about persecution and abuse are difficult to obtain — and Bahá'ís believe that the problems are likely to be much more widespread.

## The Bahá'í Question secret memorandum

All of these trends — official efforts to identify and monitor Bahá'ís, the government-inspired propaganda against them, the reprehensible treatment of Bahá'í schoolchildren, and institutionalized plainclothes violence — come against a larger backdrop of ongoing persecution against Bahá'ís that has in recent years clearly sought to drive the followers of this religion from Iran and to destroy their cultural and community life.

Such measures include ongoing efforts to prevent Bahá'ís from receiving higher education, to deny them the means of economic livelihood, and to deprive them of the inspiration provided by their sacred and historic sites. These efforts and others were, in fact, spelled out in a secret government memorandum, obtained by the United Nations in 1993, that was a virtual blueprint for the quiet elimination of the



*In 2007, Bahá'ís discovered that individuals were handing out a glossy printed card that advertised an anti-Bahá'í Web site.*

Iranian Bahá'í community as a viable entity.

Drawn up by the Iranian Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council (ISRCC) in 1991 and stamped “confidential,” the document was prepared at the request of the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the then President of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The memorandum was signed by Hujjatu'l Islam Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani, Secretary of the Council, and approved by Mr. Khamenei, who added his signature to the document.

The memorandum came to light in the 1993 report by UN Special Representative Reynaldo Galindo Pohl. According to Mr. Galindo Pohl, the document came as “reliable information” just as the annual report on Iran to the UN Commission on Human Rights was being completed.

The memorandum specifically calls for Iran's Bahá'ís to be treated in such a way “that their progress and development are blocked,” providing conclusive evidence that the campaign against the Bahá'ís is centrally directed by the government.

The document indicates, for example, that the government aims to keep the Bahá'ís illiterate and uneducated, living only at a subsistence level, and fearful at every moment that even the tiniest infraction will bring the threat of imprisonment or worse.

Although some of its provisions appear to grant a measure of protection to Bahá'ís, its overall impact is to create an environment where the Bahá'í community of Iran will be quietly eliminated.

The memorandum says, for example, that all Bahá'ís should be expelled from universities; that they shall be denied “positions of influence,” and instead only be allowed to earn “a modest livelihood as is available to the general population”; and even that they are to be denied “employment if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís.”

The provisions regarding arrest, imprisonment and punishment can be read in two ways. The document says that in regard to the “general status of the Bahá'ís within the country's system”:

1. They will not be expelled from the country without reason.
2. They will not be arrested, imprisoned, or penalized without reason.
3. The government's dealings with them must be in such a way that their progress and development are blocked.

At first glance, it might seem that the term “without reason” is a move towards greater justice, inasmuch as virtually all of the detentions, arrests and imprisonments of Bahá'ís in the past have been without cause. However, when the entire memo is understood in the context of what to do about “the Bahá'í question,” it is clear that the directive is merely instructing officials to be sure that they justify

## Cell phones as an instrument of harassment

IN RECENT YEARS, many Iranian Bahá'ís have received anonymous, provocative text messages on their cell phones, apparently in an effort to scare them. Such messages have included:

- Those who respond rudely, we will ignore, as such responses are indicative of the real Bahá'í morals. Those who respond politely, we will soon meet in person.
- Bahá'ís, do you know that your cooperation with America makes the Muslims hate you and that they will take their revenge on you?

.....  
*The memorandum specifically calls for Iran's Bahá'ís to be treated in such a way “that their progress and development are blocked,” providing conclusive evidence that the campaign against the Bahá'ís is centrally directed by the government.*

# The 1991 secret memorandum on the Bahá'í Question

[Translation from Persian]  
[Text in square brackets added by translator]  
In the Name of God!  
The Islamic Republic of Iran  
The Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council  
Number: 1327/....  
Date: 6/12/69 [25 February 1991]  
Enclosure: None

CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

Head of the Office of the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei]

Greetings!

After greetings, with reference to the letter #1/783 dated 10/10/69 [31 December 1990], concerning the instructions of the Esteemed Leader which had been conveyed to the Respected President regarding the Bahá'í question, we inform you that, since the respected President and the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council had referred this question to this Council for consideration and study, it was placed on the Council's agenda of session #128 on 16/11/69 [5 February 1991] and session #119 of 2/11/69 [22 January 1991]. In addition to the above, and further to the [results of the] discussions held in this regard in session #112 of 2/5/66 [24 July 1987] presided over by the Esteemed Leader (head and member of the Supreme Council), the recent views and directives given by the Esteemed Leader regarding the Bahá'í question were conveyed to the Supreme Council. In consideration of the contents of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the religious and civil laws and general policies of the country, these matters were carefully studied and decisions pronounced.

In arriving at the decisions and proposing reasonable ways to counter the above question, due consideration was given to the wishes of the Esteemed Leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran [Khamenei], namely, that "in this regard a specific policy should be devised in such a way that everyone will understand what should or should not be done." Consequently, the following proposals and recommendations resulted from these discussions.

The respected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council, while approving these recommendations, instructed us to convey them to the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei] so that appropriate action may be taken according to his guidance.



To see the original document in Persian, see page 85, Appendix III

their actions before they make any moves against a Bahá'í. It in no way promises any sort of protection.

The memorandum also belies its underlying intentions when it says that Bahá'ís will be allowed to go to school only if they do not identify themselves as Bahá'ís, and that they should be sent to schools "with a strong religious ideology." The aim here, obviously, is to wrest Bahá'í children from their faith.

Ominously, the memorandum says that "A plan must be devised to confront and destroy their cultural roots outside the country." That Iran would like to reach outside its borders to stamp out the Bahá'í Faith makes clear the degree of blind animosity felt by the government towards Bahá'ís.

## SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

### A. General status of the Bahá'ís within the country's system

1. They will not be expelled from the country without reason.
2. They will not be arrested, imprisoned, or penalized without reason.
3. The government's dealings with them must be in such a way that their progress and development are blocked.

### B. Educational and cultural status

1. They can be enrolled in schools provided they have not identified themselves as Bahá'ís.
2. Preferably, they should be enrolled in schools which have a strong and imposing religious ideology.
3. They must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís.
4. Their political (espionage) activities must be dealt with according to appropriate government laws and policies, and their religious and propaganda activities should be answered by giving them religious and cultural responses, as well as propaganda.
5. Propaganda institutions (such as the Islamic Propaganda Organization) must establish an independent section to counter the propaganda and religious activities of the Bahá'ís.
6. A plan must be devised to confront and destroy their cultural roots outside the country.

### C. Legal and social status

1. Permit them a modest livelihood as is available to the general population.
2. To the extent that it does not encourage them to be Bahá'ís, it is permissible to provide them the means for ordinary living in accordance with the general rights given to every Iranian citizen, such as ration booklets, passports, burial certificates, work permits, etc.
3. Deny them employment if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís.
4. Deny them any position of influence, such as in the educational sector, etc.

Wishing you divine confirmations,  
Secretary of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council  
Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani  
[Signature]

[Note in the handwriting of Mr. Khamenei]

In the Name of God!

The decision of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council seems sufficient.

I thank you gentlemen for your attention and efforts.

[signed:] Ali Khamenei

In the years since the memorandum was written, the Bahá'í community has experienced persecution in all of the areas outlined by it: Bahá'ís have been detained, imprisoned, and falsely charged with “spying”; they have been denied access to education and sources of livelihood; they have been stripped of all influence in Iranian society and deprived of their right to religious freedom.

Indeed, a careful reading of the events and trends outlined above — as well as those in the next chapter — proves that the government continues to actively pursue efforts to carry out the plan outlined by the “Bahá'í Question” memorandum, and that since late 2005 these efforts have increased dramatically.

## THE BAHÁ'Í CASE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

.....  
*In the face of international condemnation, the government shifted its tactics in the 1990s, focusing on efforts to block the development of the Bahá'í community in a way that would attract less notice from international human rights organizations.*

**B**Y MANY ACCOUNTS, one of humanity's greatest collective achievements is the widespread recognition of human rights.

Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called human rights the “common language of humanity.” His predecessor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, called them “the quintessential values through which we affirm together that we are a single human community.” And before that, Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the UN from 1953-1961, referred to human rights “as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.”

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, coupled with the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, stand today as humanity's collective vision for how governments everywhere must treat their citizens.

Yet, for more than 30 years, Iranian Bahá'ís have faced a ferocious, hateful, and ultimately unjust persecution by the government.

Between 1978 and 1998, more than 200 Bahá'ís were executed by Iranian authorities. Hundreds more Bahá'ís were imprisoned and tortured, and tens of thousands were deprived of jobs, pensions, businesses, and educational opportunities.

In the face of international condemnation, the government shifted its tactics in the 1990s, focusing on efforts to block the development of the Bahá'í community in a way that would attract less notice from international human rights organizations. Among other things, the government banned Bahá'í youth from attending university, undertook an effort to destroy Bahá'í historic and cultural sites, and waged economic warfare against Bahá'í businesses and employees — all the while keeping the harassment of individual Bahá'ís at a low boil through revolving door arrests and detentions.

In other words, the persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís has over the course of time violated virtually all of the rights that are now recognized everywhere as the birth-right of every human being.

In this regard, the systematic persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís for nearly 30 years has in many ways been the ultimate test case for the monitoring and enforcement of international human rights, for a variety of reasons:

- Bahá'ís in Iran are persecuted solely for their religious beliefs. Prejudices regarding ethnicity, race, or national origin are not factors.
- Bahá'ís in Iran are committed to nonviolence and noninvolvement in partisan politics, as fundamental principles of their faith, and pose no political threat to the government. Yet the government animosity directed against them has been systematic, bigoted, and intense.
- Iran is a signatory to the main international instruments of human rights. Indeed, in its posture to the outside world, Iran claims to defend human rights. The Bahá'í case offers a litmus test of Iran's sincerity and reliability as an international partner.
- Of special concern is the manner in which the Iranian government has sought to subvert the international human rights regime by shifting tactics in its persecution of Bahá'ís so as to evade the notice of monitors.

## Freedom of religion

The first two articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights state that “all human beings” are born free and in equal dignity, and that everyone is entitled to such rights “without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, *religion*, political or other opinion...”

The right to freedom of religion is more clearly outlined in Article 18 — and fully codified in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Iran has signed. The Covenant states, for example, that everyone has the right to “to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.”

At its heart, the persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís is about the persecution of individuals solely because of their religious beliefs — and as such touches the core of nearly every fundamental right outlined in the Declaration and following documents.

That Bahá'ís are persecuted solely for their religious beliefs is demonstrated by the fact that in numerous cases, Bahá'ís who have been faced with prison or worse have been given the option of converting to Islam, with the promise that such a conversion would lead to their instant freedom. It is an option that few Bahá'ís have taken.

Persecution on the basis of religion is further evidenced by the fact that, in document after document, whether in the courts, in letters to police or other agencies, or in newspaper articles, the government or their proxies refer to the Bahá'í Faith with derision, calling it a “misguided sect” or “perverse sect” and stating the Bahá'ís are “infidels” or even “apostates.”

Moreover, Iranian Bahá'ís come from every ethno-linguistic group within Iran, including Azeris, Kurds, Arabs, Baluchis, Turkmen, Armenians, and Georgians. They also come from every religious background within Iranian society, including Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Zoroastrian.

.....  
*The systematic persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís for nearly 30 years has in many ways been the ultimate test case for the monitoring and enforcement of international human rights . . .*

.....  
*Since 1983, the Bahá'í community in Iran has been denied both the right to assemble officially and the right to maintain its sacred institutions. In other countries, democratically elected Bahá'í governing bodies organize and administer the religious activities of the community.*

Bahá'ís are not distinguished by their skin color, manner of dress, accent or names. The only distinguishing characteristic is their faith. This, of course, is one reason the current government effort to “identify” Bahá'ís is significant and ominous. There is no other way to identify Bahá'ís.

As a case of religious persecution, the government effort to eliminate the Bahá'í Faith as a viable religious community in Iran is sweeping and all-encompassing. All manner of rights to religious freedom, worship and assembly have been taken away from Bahá'ís.

Since 1983, the Bahá'í community in Iran has been denied both the right to assemble officially and the right to maintain its sacred institutions. In other countries, democratically elected Bahá'í governing bodies organize and administer the religious activities of the community. The Bahá'í Faith has no clergy. Its institutions perform many of the functions reserved to clergy in other religions and are the foundational element of Bahá'í community life. In Iran, they continue to be banned.

Iranian Bahá'ís gradually made arrangements to worship in small groups, conduct classes for children, and take care of other community needs in their homes. Authorities continued to harass them by disrupting meetings, arresting teachers of children's classes, and giving Bahá'ís suspended sentences to be carried out should they again commit the “crime” of attending religious instruction in a private home.

The authorities have long attempted to prevent Iranian Bahá'ís from participating in monthly religious gatherings and other group activities. In 2004, the authorities intensified their pressure on the community (in ways that included threatening individual believers) and ordered the Bahá'ís to suspend all social, educational and community-related activities — in other words, all activities that went beyond the individual observance of religious obligations. For Bahá'ís, however, many of these activities are an integral part of their religious practice.

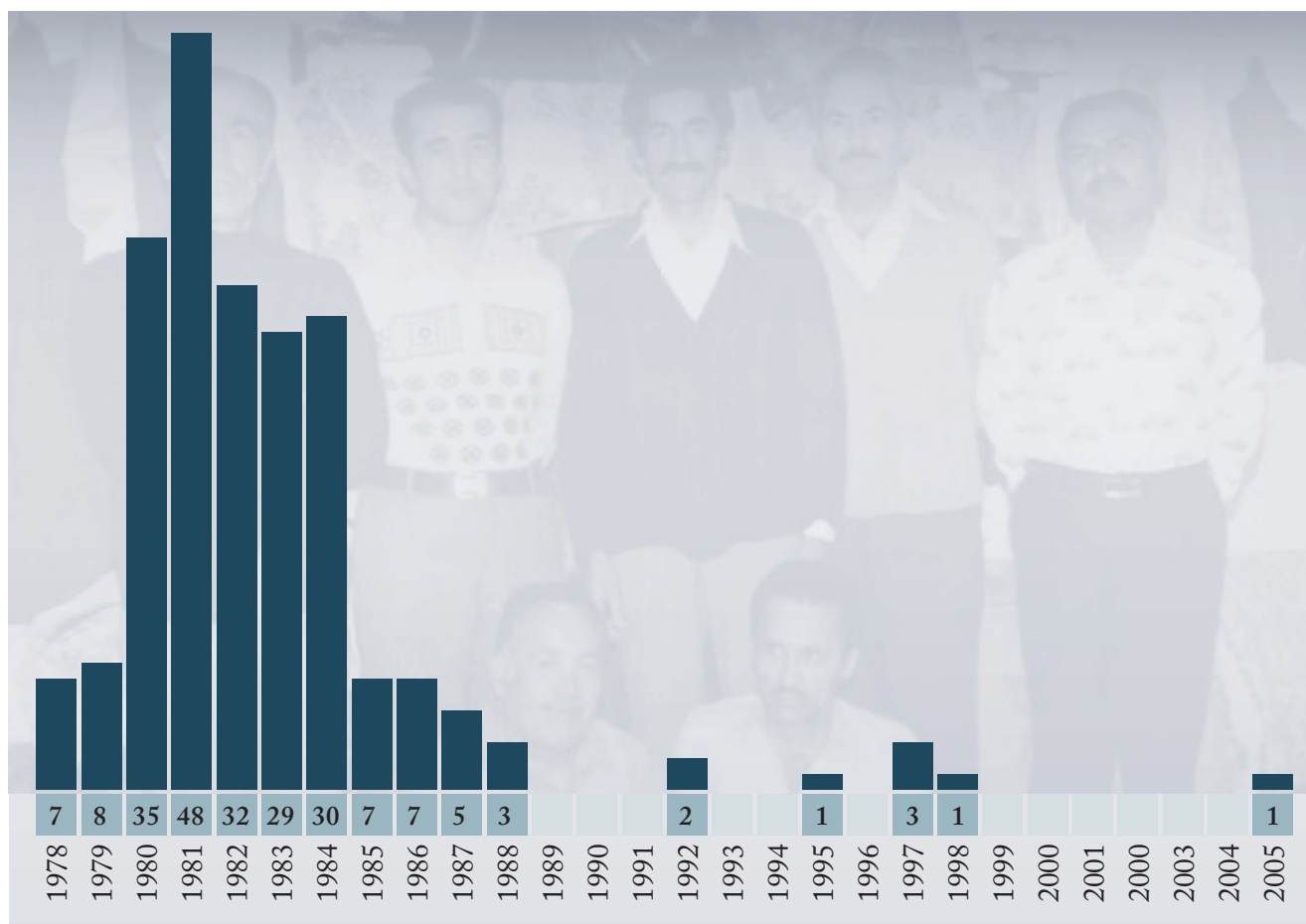
Moreover, the community was told that its members would face the government's withdrawal of protection if they did not ban all collective activities. The officials stated that the most compassionate act of the Islamic Republic had been to establish laws that protect the Bahá'ís from the people of Iran, who might otherwise take the law into their own hands and “follow the dictates of their Islamic sentiments.” Beginning in 2005, human rights violations against members of the community began to increase. As reported in other sections of this document, their situation has been gradually but steadily worsening ever since.

## The right to life, liberty and security

The second article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly spells out the right to “life, liberty and security of person.” And, of course, protections for such rights undergird all other human rights: if one is threatened with death, imprisonment, or the likelihood of physical assault as one tries to practice his or her religion and exercise freedom of speech, those freedoms are essentially nonexistent.

And since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the threat of death, imprisonment or physical assault have been a matter of daily concern for Iranian Bahá'ís.

## Bahá'ís killed in Iran since 1978



In the late 1970s and early 1980s, virtually the entire leadership of the Bahá'í community was arrested and executed or disappeared. In all, more than 200 Bahá'ís have been killed or executed since the Islamic Republic's founding. A full list of their names can be found in Appendix I.

In recent years the government has sharply reduced its killing rate although it continued occasionally to execute Bahá'ís through the late 1990s. The most recent execution of a Bahá'í in Iran was in July 1998, when Ruhu'llah Rawhani was hanged in Mashhad.

Nevertheless, the threat of execution or imminent death still looms large for Iranian Bahá'ís, who remain without recognized legal status in Iran.

In December 2005, for example, a Bahá'í who was wrongly jailed for 10 years died in his prison cell of unknown causes. Mr. Dhabihu'llah Mahrami, 59, was held in a government prison in Yazd under harsh physical conditions at the time of his death. Mr. Mahrami had originally been arrested in 1995 on charges of apostasy — and was initially sentenced to death. That sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment after an international outcry and widespread media attention.



*Ruhu'llah Rawhani, who was hanged in Mashhad by government authorities on 21 July 1998.*

## The threat of execution

FOR IRANIAN BAHÁÍS, the threat of execution is never far from mind. More than 200 Bahá'ís were executed or killed in the early 1980s, and the most recent execution occurred in 1998.

Ruhu'llah Rawhani, a father of four and an active Bahá'í during his entire life, suffered through the indignities of religious persecution throughout much of Iran's recent history. In 1984, Mr. Rawhani was arrested and imprisoned for more than a year, during which he was tortured, according to relatives. He was subsequently released but then was arrested a second time in the mid-1990s. The charge was apparently related to his volunteer work at purely religious activities, such as prayer meetings and children's classes. He was released after 24 hours.

In September 1997, however, the medical supplies salesman was arrested for a third time, and placed in solitary confinement in Mashhad. Mr. Rawhani had been accused of "converting" a woman from Islam to the Bahá'í Faith. The woman, however, denied that she had converted; she explained that her mother was a Bahá'í and that she herself had been raised as a Bahá'í. She was not arrested.

Mr. Rawhani was kept incommunicado for the duration of his imprisonment and no information is available regarding his treatment in prison. There is no evidence that he was accorded any legal process, and no sentence was announced. It appears certain that he was not allowed access to a lawyer.

On 20 July 1998, someone from the Iranian Intelligence Department telephoned a Bahá'í in Mashhad stating that Mr. Rawhani was to be executed the next day. Initially, this statement was not believed, as Bahá'ís in Iran had received similar calls previously in apparent attempts to frighten them.

The next morning, the family was called, told to come to the prison to collect Mr. Rawhani's body, and given an hour to bury him. Rope marks on his neck indicated he had been hanged.

More recently, Bahá'ís have died under mysterious circumstances. In February 2007, Mrs. Shah Beygom Dehghani was lured out of her house in the middle of the night and savagely attacked with a lawn rake. She suffered broken hands and ribs, head injuries, and critical damage to her liver and kidneys. Her screams caused the attacker to flee, and she crawled to the home of her neighbor for help. Despite medical attention, her wounds proved fatal. She died on 7 March 2007, 18 days after the attack.

Even if government-sponsored executions have halted, the threat of death or execution remains very real for Iranian Bahá'ís. Bahá'ís are often referred to as "apostates" in the media or even by officials — and under some interpretations of Islamic law, the crime of apostasy requires the death penalty.

Indeed, in early 2008, it emerged that the Iranian Parliament, in considering legislation designed to overhaul its penal code, included wording that would explicitly fix the death penalty as the punishment for apostasy, and also spell out the conditions under which an individual could be considered an apostate. Although that legislation has not yet passed, its terms and definitions pose a great danger for Iranian Bahá'ís.

## Imprisonment and the right to liberty

Nearly 1,000 Bahá'ís have been imprisoned over the last 30 years. At one point in 1986 some 747 Bahá'ís were being held in prisons throughout Iran. In most cases, they had no trial.

Although the number of Bahá'ís in prison began to diminish for a time in the late 1990s and early 2000s, apparently in response to international pressure, that figure has begun to rise again.

At publication of this document, there were 30 Bahá'ís in prison and 70 out on bail and awaiting trial. Another 76 were free on suspended sentences or awaiting appeal or a summons to serve their sentences.

Since early 2005, there has also been a significant increase in the number of Bahá'ís arbitrarily arrested and detained — sometimes for only a day or two, sometimes for weeks or months — before being released on bail. Bail demands have been high, usually requiring members of the community to hand over deeds to property, or business or work licenses. Government officials are persistently retaining the assets of people who have not been officially charged with any crime and for whom no trial dates have been set.

Many of those arrested were members of small teams that coordinate community affairs on an ad hoc basis or supervise Bahá'ís in studying their Faith. In the years following the revolution, the government banned the Bahá'í institutions and executed or abducted scores of Bahá'í administrators. In recent years, “revolving door” arrests and imprisonments have systematically targeted the few Bahá'ís who do what is minimally required to manage community affairs.

In 2005, an Iranian intelligence official said just that to a Bahá'í during an interrogation: “We have learned how to confront you. We no longer pursue ordinary [Bahá'ís]; we will paralyze your inner core.” Twenty-six imprisonments singled out those involved in community affairs during the last six months of 2005; similar “revolving door” detentions continued throughout 2006, 2007 and into 2008. In nearly all these cases, the homes or places of business of those arrested were searched and personal belongings were confiscated, in particular Bahá'í books and materials, copying machines, computers and supplies.

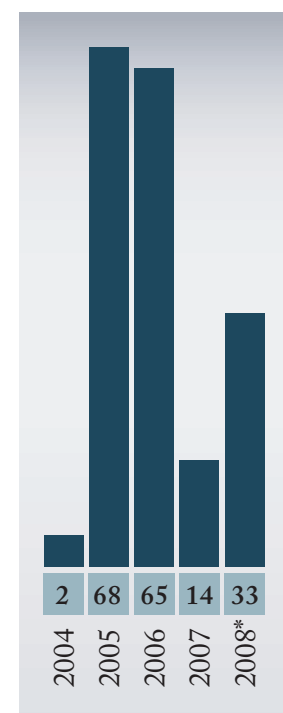
Other “ordinary” Bahá'ís have been arrested and detained, as well. As of August 2008, over 180 Bahá'ís had spent time in jail since late 2004. Some 37 were taken into custody during one three-month period from March to May 2005, including six in Shiraz, eleven in Semnan and nine Bahá'í farmers whose homes and land had previously been confiscated in the village of Kata. In addition, police or Intelligence Ministry officials have summoned many more for interrogation without officially arresting or detaining them: 196 such cases were reported in 2007 alone.

## Torture

International law clearly prohibits torture. Yet, in the 1980s, the torture of Bahá'ís in Iranian prisons — and particularly of those who had been members of Bahá'í governing councils — was routine and systematic. According to Bahá'ís who survived, the

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Number of  
Iranian Bahá'ís  
arrested,  
2004 through  
mid-2008



*\*as of mid-July 2008*



*Many Bahá'ís have been tortured. The body of Dr. Nasir Vafai, a 49-year-old physician who was executed on 14 June 1981, was found to have a deep gash below his abdomen which ran all the way around his leg, severing the joint.*

purpose of the torture almost invariably was to make the Bahá'ís recant their Faith or confess to some treasonous activity.

Torture included sustained beating and flogging, the bastinado (whipping the soles of the feet), the pulling out of fingernails and teeth, and the deprivation of food and water for days at a time.

Bahá'ís were also subjected to psychological torture, including mock executions and being forced to witness the torture of family members and friends.

Thus an elderly Bahá'í woman, who was a member of a local Bahá'í council, was tortured in front of a dozen other Bahá'ís in an effort to persuade her and them to deny their Faith. The woman's jailer took her by her hair and continually banged her head against the wall. She was beaten about the head for a long time, until her body was covered with blood. After two years of imprisonment, she was summarily released, with no recourse against the abuse she had received.

At least 13 Bahá'ís who died in prison are believed to have been tortured to death. In these cases, the bodies were buried by the authorities before the families could view them.

While reported cases of torture have subsided as the number of Bahá'í

*This young Bahá'í man's body bears the marks of torture from an interrogation by government agents in late 2007.*



## “Cause of death will be known later..”

**I**N 1997, Masha'llah Enayati, a 63-year-old Bahá'í resident of Tehran, died after being severely beaten while in custody. During a visit to his native village of Ardistan to attend a Bahá'í meeting, Mr. Enayati was arrested under circumstances which are not clear. He was taken to prison in Isfahan, where he was severely beaten on all parts

of the body. It appears that he was held in prison for about a week before being taken to a hospital, where he eventually died. Mr. Enayati's death certificate is worded in a most unusual way, suggesting that the doctor himself may have been under threat. Under “cause of death” the doctor entered in his own handwriting, “will be known later.”

prisoners has dropped, there are increasing reports that physical assault and abuse of Bahá'ís while in detention is again on the rise.

In November 2007, for example, Mr. Diyanat Haghighat was arrested, and then physically assaulted at an Intelligence Ministry detention center in Shiraz before his interrogation. Also in late 2007, a young Bahá'í was physically assaulted by agents of the Intelligence Ministry after they had raided the office where he worked and taken him into custody in Shiraz.

In December 2007, Mr. Shahreza Abbasi, who had been detained for six days in 2006 and treated very harshly at that time, was arrested. At the detention center of the Intelligence Ministry in Hamadan, he was incarcerated for two days in a 1.5- by 1.5-meter chamber and interrogated.

### The right to due process

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights also deals with the right to due process, stating that people must be treated equally before the law, and that they must receive fair and public trials when facing criminal charges.

The record of the Islamic Republic of Iran at providing due process of law is widely recognized as poor and hardly needs elaboration here. However, the status of Iranian Bahá'ís when arrested and in subsequent court appearances has been especially bad.

As noted, between late 2004 and mid-2008, more than 180 Bahá'ís were arrested or detained, often after arbitrary searches of their homes and properties. When brought before courts, charges against them were often left unspecified or delivered orally — apparently in an effort to prevent the spurious nature of such charges from being made public.

On 19 June 2007, for example, a report was received that a 70-year-old man of limited means had been arrested in April 2007 in Kermanshah. Authorities charged him with the possession of three Bahá'í CDs. He was tried on 23 April 2007 and charged with “propagating and spreading Bahaism and the defamation of the pure Imams.” His lawyer was given only 10 minutes to prepare a defense. Then the verdict was not published, only given orally: one year in prison and 70 lashes.

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*The record of the Islamic Republic of Iran at providing due process of law is widely recognized as poor and hardly needs elaboration here. However, the status of Iranian Bahá'ís when arrested and in subsequent court appearances has been especially bad.*



*Iranian authorities have destroyed buildings and sites that are among the most sacred to Bahá'ís — and of historic significance to all Iranians.*

## The right to own property

The right to “own property alone as well as in association with others” is also recognized under the International Bill of Rights — a right that extends to the idea that “no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.”

Yet, since the 1979 Islamic revolution, numerous Bahá'í properties, sacred sites, administrative centers, and cemeteries have been confiscated, along with numerous private homes. No community properties have been returned, and many have been destroyed.

Some of the sites that have been destroyed are among the most sacred to Bahá'ís — and, even, of historic significance to all Iranians.

In June 2004, for example, authorities demolished an historic house in Tehran that had been designed and owned by Mirza Abbas Nuri, the father of Bahá'u'lláh. The house was not only important to Bahá'ís but was also considered to be a sterling example of period architecture.



*Interior of the house of Mirza Abbas Nuri, an architectural landmark in Tehran, during its demolition in June 2004.*



*The grave site of Quddus, an historic figure of the Bahá'í Faith, during its surreptitious demolition in April 2004. The site is located in Babol, Iran.*



*The House of the Báb in Shiraz, Iran, one of the most holy sites in the Bahá'í world, was destroyed by Revolutionary Guardsmen in 1979 and later razed by the government. The photo at top was taken before the demolition took place, shown at bottom.*

Mirza Abbas Nuri was widely regarded as one of Iran's greatest calligraphers and statesmen. In July 2004, shortly after authorities demolished the structure, the Iranian newspaper *Hamshahri* published a lengthy article about his life and the architecture of his house. "As he had good taste for the arts and for beauty, he designed his own house in such a style that it became known as one of the most beautiful houses of that period," wrote Iman Mihdizadih in the article.

In April 2004, likewise, another historic Bahá'í property was confiscated and destroyed. The grave site of Quddus, an early disciple of the Bahá'í Faith was dismantled surreptitiously over a period of days until the structure was demolished.

The house-like structure marked the resting place of Mullah Muhammad-Ali Barfurushi, known as Quddus (The Most Holy). Quddus was the foremost disciple of the Báb, the Prophet-Herald of the Bahá'í Faith.

The destruction of two such important holy sites in 2004 was not without precedent. In March 1979, the House of the Báb, the holiest Bahá'í shrine in Iran, was turned over by the government to a Muslim cleric known for his anti-Bahá'í activities. In September that year, that house was destroyed by a mob led by mullahs and officials of the Department of Religious Affairs.

Likewise, in the early years of the Islamic Republic, the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Takur, where the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith spent His childhood, met a similar fate: it was demolished and the site was offered for sale to the public.

Over the years, in Tehran and other cities throughout Iran, Bahá'í buildings have been looted and burned, Bahá'í cemeteries have been bulldozed and Bahá'í graves have been broken open. In the Tehran area, the Bahá'ís were forced to bury their dead in a barren stretch of land reserved by the authorities for "infidels." Having access to their own cemeteries is especially important to Bahá'ís because, as might be expected, they are not allowed to bury their dead in Muslim cemeteries.

*The Bahá'í cemetery in Yazd, Iran, was destroyed in July 2007. The tracks left behind and the severity of the damage show that heavy equipment was used.*



*Desecration of graves is part of a government-led hate campaign against Bahá'ís in Iran. This grave is in a cemetery in Yazd that was bulldozed in July 2007.*



In 2007 and early 2008, there was an upsurge in the destruction of Bahá'í cemeteries. Bahá'í cemeteries in nine localities were attacked, vandalized or destroyed over a ten-month period.

On 4 March 2008, for example, the Bahá'ís in Zarnan discovered that the Bahá'í cemetery in their town had been vandalized. Unknown individuals had broken into the reception room, poured a flammable substance on the floor, burned benches in the room and spray-painted walls outside the building with graffiti.

The Bahá'í cemetery in Najafabad, which serves five communities, was attacked four times during the month of September 2007 and ultimately razed. In the first incident, sometime over 8-9 September 2007, some gravestones were damaged, a number of saplings were uprooted, and the water tank was destroyed. The following day there was further damage to the site. A few days later, intruders demolished 95 graves, destroyed a small sanitation facility, and damaged beyond repair two water tanks used for watering trees.

## The right to livelihood

International law also firmly spells out the right of individuals to be free to work and earn a livelihood, without discrimination in employment or other means to earn a living.

In 1979 the government started dismissing Bahá'í civil servants without compensation. By July 1982, all Bahá'í public servants had been dismissed and the pensions of all those who had retired had been terminated. In all, more than 15,000 Bahá'ís have lost jobs or sources of livelihood since the Iranian revolution.

In late 1984, the Attorney General started issuing summonses demanding that all those Bahá'í civil servants who had been dismissed repay salaries they had received during their employment. They were threatened with imprisonment if they did not comply. Obviously, repayment of a lifetime's wages was beyond the means of most victims. Many were imprisoned as a result of failure to meet this absurd demand.

The government has also systematically sought to drive Bahá'ís in the private sector to economic ruin. In the early 1980s, the trading licenses of most Bahá'í businessmen were revoked, the assets of businesses run by Bahá'ís were confiscated, and bank accounts of most Bahá'í businessmen were frozen. In addition, the authorities intimidated private employers into dismissing many Bahá'í employees.

Almost every dismissal notice served on a Bahá'í employee, whether in the public or the private sector, stated that the reason for dismissal was membership in the Bahá'í Faith and that the individual's job would be restored if he or she would recant his or her faith.

As noted, the 1991 ISRCC memorandum mandates the continuation of this policy, saying Bahá'ís should be denied employment if they identify themselves.

Efforts aimed at the economic strangulation of the Iranian Bahá'í community are still being actively pursued. Perhaps the most significant evidence of this was the emergence of a letter, dated 9 April 2007, from the Public Places Supervision Office of the Public Intelligence and Security Force in the province of Tehran. Addressed to regional commanders of police and the heads of public intelligence and security



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## 9 April 2007 letter restricting Bahá'í businesses

Date: 19/1/1386 [9 April 2007]

From: The Public Intelligence and Security Force, Tehran — Public Places Supervision Office

To: Esteemed Commanders of County Police Forces — Heads of the Public Intelligence and Security Force;

Subject: Review of the eligibility of individuals belonging to small groups and the perverse Bahaist sect

Greetings,

May peace be upon Muhammad and His family! With respect, and based on the instructions received from the Head of the Public Intelligence and Security Force (NÁJÁ) — Public Places Supervision Office (number 31/2/5/30/14, dated 21/12/85 [12 March 2007]) and with due attention to the increase in the number of requests from the perverse Bahaist sect to obtain work permits and their rightful and legal presence in the crafts industry once they have acquired their work permit; it is necessary, for the benefit of the ongoing monitoring and supervision of their activities and in order to halt — as much as possible — their extensive presence throughout sensitive and important craft organizations and also individuals from small groups requesting work permits, for measures to be taken with due consideration for the below points based on instruction number 100/7/30/14, dated 17/2/82 [8 May 2003] (Final Review Commission), which determines the cases to go before the Commission.

### a. Perverse Bahaist Sect

1. Take measures to identify Bahá'í individuals working in craft businesses and collect statistics broken down by (their distribution and type of occupation).
2. Their activities in high-earning businesses should be halted, and only those work permits that would provide them with an ordinary livelihood should be allowed.
3. Issuing of [work] permits for the activities of the mentioned individuals in sensitive business categories (culture, propaganda, commerce, the press, jewellery and watchmaking, coffee shops, engraving, the tourist industry, car rentals, publishing, hostel and hotel management, tailoring training institutes, photography and film, [illegible] Internet, computer sales and Internet cafés), should be prevented.
4. In accordance with the religious canons, work permits will not be issued to the followers of the perverse Bahaist sect in business categories related to Tahárat [cleanliness] (1. catering at reception halls, 2. buffets and restaurants, 3. grocery shops, 4. kebab shops, 5. cafés, 6. protein [poultry] shops and supermarkets, 7. ice cream parlours, fruit juice and soft drinks shops, 8. pastry shops, 9. coffee shops)

See the original document in Persian, page 87, Appendix III

.....  
*"In accordance with the religious canons, work permits will not be issued to the followers of the perverse Bahaist sect in business categories related to Tahárat [cleanliness]"*

forces, it instructs them to prevent members of the “perverse Bahaist sect” — along with members of other “anti-revolutionary political organizations” — from engaging in a wide range of businesses. These include “high-earning businesses,” “sensitive business categories” (such as the press, engraving, the tourist industry, car rentals, publishing, hostel and hotel management, photography and film, computer sales and Internet cafés), and food businesses which might offend Muslim concepts of “cleanliness.”

## The right to housing

The International Bill of Rights also states that everyone has the right to access to food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services.

In June 2006, Miloon Kothari, the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing issued a report stating that Iranian Bahá'ís face discriminatory housing policies, including “the abusive use of property confiscation.” He said that at least 640 Bahá'í properties have been seized since 1980.

“The properties listed included houses and agricultural land, but also Bahá'í sacred places such as cemeteries and shrines,” said Mr. Kothari. “The affected owners have allegedly not been given an opportunity to participate or receive prior information related to ongoing confiscation procedures.”

He said many of the confiscations were ordered by Iranian Revolutionary Courts, and that some of the verdicts he examined declared that “the confiscation of the property of ‘the evil sect of the Bahá'í’ [were] legally and religiously justifiable.”

In rural areas, he said, such confiscations were often accompanied by threats and physical violence before and during related forced evictions.

Among those ejected from their homes in 1996 was a blind Bahá'í woman. The authorities confiscated her belongings and took possession of her house, despite the protests of her neighbors. A document issued by the Prosecutor of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tehran, states that the Bahá'í woman “is accused of affiliation with the wayward Bahá'í sect” and therefore, “she has been sentenced to complete confiscation of all her belongings,” which are placed “under the authority of selected lawyers of the spiritual guardians.”

The confiscation of Bahá'í homes has continued. During the months of September and October 2007, for example, a farm belonging to Bahá'ís in Mamaghan was seized by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards, a Bahá'í home in Yazd was summarily confiscated, and another home in Hamadan was confiscated by court order.

## The right to education

Since 1979, the government of Iran has systematically sought to deprive Bahá'ís of access to education — especially higher education.

Shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution, large numbers of Bahá'í youth and children were expelled from school. The expulsions were not systematic, focusing mainly on children who were most strongly identified as Bahá'ís, but they ranged across the

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*The UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing issued a report stating that Iranian Bahá'ís face discriminatory housing policies, including “the abusive use of property confiscation.” He said that at least 640 Bahá'í properties have been seized since 1980.*

## The Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education

**B**EING DENIED ACCESS to higher education for years has had a demoralizing effect on Bahá'í youth, and the erosion of the educational level of the community is clearly aimed at hastening its impoverishment. The Bahá'í Faith places a high value on education, and Bahá'ís have always been among the best-educated groups in Iran.

In the late 1980s, Bahá'ís sought to mitigate the effects of the ban by establishing their own institution of higher education. Known as the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE), the Institute offered classes in private homes and via correspondence throughout the country, augmented by a scattering of specialized classrooms, laboratories and libraries. By the late 1990s, the Institute enrolled more than 900 students.



*Most of the classes offered by the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education have been held in private homes, like this one, which shows a professor with his back to the camera and several students on living room couches.*



*The BIHE relied heavily on the use of extensive photocopying, and one of the biggest blows in the 1998 raids was the confiscation of several large photocopying units.*

The Institute, however, was temporarily shut down in 1998 when agents of the government staged a series of raids, arresting at least 36 members of the BIHE's faculty and staff and confiscating much of its equipment and records.

In recent years, the Institute has gradually managed to rebuild itself. As of this writing, it serves about 1,000 students, offering university-level programs in 17 academic subjects. Courses that were delivered initially by correspondence are now provided on-line, using leading-edge communication technologies. In addition, hundreds of accredited professors from universities outside Iran now assist BIHE as researchers, teachers and consultants. The Institute's commitment to high academic standards, international collaboration, and an innovative teaching and learning environment is increasingly recognized, and many of its graduates have been accepted into graduate-level programs in other countries.

entire education system, from primary, through secondary, to the college level, where the ban was virtually total.

In the 1990s, partly in response to international pressure, primary and secondary schoolchildren were allowed to re-enroll. However, the government maintained the ban on the entry of Bahá'í youth into public and private colleges and universities until 2004.

Until then, the government used a very simple mechanism to exclude Bahá'ís from higher education: it simply required that everyone who takes the national university entrance examination declare their religion. And applicants who indicated other than one of the four officially recognized religions in Iran — Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism — were excluded.

For Bahá'ís, it is a matter of religious principle to refuse to lie or dissimulate about their belief, so even pretending to be a Muslim for the sake of going to university was unthinkable.

In late 2003, the government announced it would drop the declaration of religious affiliation on the application for the national university entrance examination. This, Bahá'í youth believed at the time, cleared the way for them to take the examination and to enroll in university in academic year 2004-2005.

However, each year since then, the government has used some type of ploy or ruse to prevent large numbers of Bahá'ís from enrolling in university.

In 2004 and 2005, Bahá'ís were prevented from enrolling because the government sent back the examination papers with the word “Islam” printed in the data field for a prospective student’s religion. That was unacceptable to Bahá'ís until it was clarified in 2006 and 2007 that that notation only meant the student had passed the exam’s section on Islam, and did not indicate religious identity.

For the 2006-2007 academic year, the main tactic used to deprive Bahá'ís of access to higher education was expulsions. About 900 Bahá'í students sat for the exam in June 2006. Nearly 500 passed and were listed as eligible to apply to university. Yet of the roughly 200 who ultimately managed to enroll, the majority were gradually expelled over the course of the academic year as their identity as Bahá'ís became known to university officials.

That those expulsions reflect official government policy was confirmed in a confidential 2006 letter from Iran’s Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructing Iranian universities to expel any student who is discovered to be a Bahá'í. To see the full letter in English and Persian, see page 88, Appendix III.

For the 2007-2008 academic year, the government adopted yet another tactic, that of sending back entrance examinations marked as “incomplete.” Of the more than 1,000 students who sat for and properly completed the entrance examination, nearly 800 were excluded because of “incomplete files.”

All of these tactics prove that the secret 1991 ISRCC memorandum remains in effect. As noted earlier, that memorandum states that Bahá'ís “must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís.”

.....  
... the government used a very simple mechanism to exclude Bahá'ís from higher education: it simply required that everyone who takes the national university entrance examination declare their religion. And applicants who indicated other than one of the four officially recognized religions in Iran — Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism — were excluded.

Confidential 2006 letter instructing Iranian universities to expel Bahá'ís.



For a full-size version, see page 90, Appendix III

## WHY DOES THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN PERSECUTE BAHÁ'ÍS?

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*More than ever before, the policies and plans of the Islamic Republic of Iran today cannot be understood without reference to religion and the beliefs of its leaders — and how the history and theology of the Bahá'í Faith have had an impact on that thinking.*

**I**N RECENT YEARS, the international news media have offered extensive reporting about how Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's religious views might be affecting Iranian policy across a wide range of areas, from nuclear power to domestic reform.

News organizations from the BBC to the *Washington Post* have discussed President Ahmadinejad's reported belief in the imminent reappearance of the Twelfth Imam, promised in Shiite theology as the herald of an age of peace. Some reports have suggested that President Ahmadinejad believes the Imam's return might be hastened through apocalyptic violence.

Other reports have connected President Ahmadinejad with a semi-secret Iranian anti-Bahá'í group known as the Hojjatieh Society — whose founders also were very much concerned with prophecies involving the Twelfth Imam.

Such examples illustrate why, more than ever before, the policies and plans of the Islamic Republic of Iran today cannot be understood without reference to religion and the beliefs of its leaders.

Less widely known is the degree to which the history and theology of the Bahá'í Faith have had an impact on the thinking of Iranian clerics and leaders — and how they underlie the ongoing persecutions against Bahá'ís.

- The Hojjatieh Society, which also figured prominently in guiding the thinking of the lay leadership of the 1979 revolution, was founded as a specifically anti-Bahá'í organization.
- The Bahá'í Faith was initially seen as a reform movement when it emerged in 1844 in Iran — and its progressive ideals (such as equal rights for women) remain at the center of Iran's struggle with the modern world.
- Early opposition to the Bahá'í Faith in Iran was so intense that more than 20,000 followers were killed in the mid-1800s. Since then, Bahá'ís have been used as scapegoats by all sides of the political spectrum in Iran whenever there was a need to divert attention from policy failures in other areas.

Such points go far in helping to answer the question: why are Iranian Bahá'ís persecuted so vehemently by the government — despite their commitment to nonviolence, their steadfast noninvolvement in politics, and their long-standing efforts to promote the development of their country?

## The Bahá'í Faith in Iranian history

Since its founding in 1844 in Iran, the Bahá'í Faith has been the object of intense interest — and persecution — in its native land. Early followers faced violent opposition from both the Islamic religious authorities and political rulers.

The most extreme example was the pogrom against Bábis, as the early Bahá'ís were known. As noted above, more than 20,000 Bábis were killed in the mid-1800s, set upon by mobs incited by religious leaders, blown from the mouths of cannons, or paraded through the streets with lighted candles thrust into holes in their flesh.

### Eyewitness to early persecution

**A**N AUSTRIAN OFFICER, Captain Von Goumoens, employed by the Shah at that time, wrote in 1852 of the terrible attacks he witnessed on early Bahá'ís, then known as Bábis, who were often tortured in the worst manner before their executions:

“[F]ollow me to the unhappy ones who, with gouged-out eyes, must eat, on the scene of the deed, without any sauce, their own amputated ears; or whose teeth are torn out with inhuman violence by the hand of the executioner; or whose bare skulls are simply crushed by blows from a hammer; or where the bazaar is illuminated with unhappy victims, because on right and left the people dig deep

holes in their breasts and shoulders, and insert burning wicks in the wounds. I saw some dragged in chains through the bazaar, preceded by a military band, in whom these wicks had burned so deep that now the fat flickered convulsively in the wound like a newly extinguished lamp. Not seldom it happens that the unwearying ingenuity of the Oriental leads to fresh tortures. They will skin the soles of the Bábi's feet, soak the wounds in boiling oil, shoe the foot like the hoof of a horse, and compel the victim to run....

“As for the end itself, they hang the scorched and perforated bodies by their hands and feet to a tree head downwards, and now every Persian may try his marksmanship to his heart's content from a fixed but not too proximate distance on the noble quarry placed at his disposal. I saw corpses torn by nearly one hundred and fifty bullets.”

.....  
*Since its founding in 1844 in Iran, the Bahá'í Faith has been the object of intense interest — and persecution — in its native land. Early followers faced violent opposition from both the Islamic religious authorities and political rulers.*



*Before they were closed by government decree in 1934, Bahá'í schools in Iran attracted thousands of students. Shown here are participants in Bahá'í classes in Tehran with their teachers, in a photograph taken on 13 August 1933.*

The persecutions have continued intermittently in the twentieth century, coinciding most often with the need of various governments to shore up support from certain elements of Iran's Islamic leadership. And they have come regardless of the leaders' political orientation.

Some of the outbreaks against Bahá'ís were directed by local or regional authorities. In 1903, for example, 101 Bahá'ís were killed in the city of Yazd after the populace was incited by hostile mullahs.

At other times the oppression of Bahá'ís was made a part of official national policy. During the early years of the Pahlavi regime (1927 to 1979), the government formalized a policy of discrimination against the Bahá'ís as a concession to the clergy. Beginning in 1933, Bahá'í literature was banned, Bahá'í marriages were not recognized, and Bahá'ís in public service were demoted or fired. Bahá'í schools — of which there were some 50 in the country — were forced to close.

Another round of persecutions commenced in 1955, when the Pahlavi regime allowed the nationwide broadcast of a series of incendiary sermons against the Bahá'ís by a leading Shiite preacher in Tehran — apparently hoping to make the Bahá'ís a scapegoat to deflect attention from unpopular government policies. Both



*Muslim leaders and members of the Shah's army destroyed the National Bahá'í Center with pickaxes in Tebran in 1955.*

the national and army radio stations were put at the disposal of the responsible cleric, Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Falsafi, who joined the Shah's Minister of Defense, General Batmangelich, in demolishing the dome of the Bahá'í national headquarters with pickaxes. A wave of anti-Bahá'í violence swept the country. Murders, rapes and robberies were reported in many areas, while the government assured the Iranian Parliament that it had ordered the suppression of all activities of "the Bahá'í sect."

## The 1979 revolution

With the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the attacks on Bahá'ís reached a new level, that of official government policy. Whereas attacks in the past had typically been spasmodic, and the government's support for them had been based on political expediency, the clerics who came to power during the Iranian revolution brought with them a deep and abiding prejudice against Bahá'ís.

Even before Ayatollah Khomeini returned from exile to assume power in February of that year, an increase in attacks on Bahá'ís presaged the wholesale persecution that was to come. In 1978 at least seven Bahá'ís were killed, most as a result of mob violence.

When the Republic's new constitution was drawn up in April 1979, certain rights of the Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities in Iran were specifically mentioned and protected. However, no mention whatsoever was made of the rights of the Bahá'í community, Iran's largest religious minority.



*A woman from Kata, murdered by a mob in 1979, shown with her two younger sisters.*

.....  
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recant their faith.*

Under Iran’s concept of an Islamic government, this exclusion has come to mean that Bahá’ís enjoy no rights of any sort, and that they can be attacked and persecuted with impunity. Courts in the Republic have denied Bahá’ís the right of redress or protection against assault, killings or other forms of persecution — and have ruled that Iranian citizens who kill or injure Bahá’ís are not liable for damages because their victims are “unprotected infidels.”

Without any claim to civil rights, the Bahá’í community saw rapid deterioration of its position within Iranian society. As noted earlier, the House of the Báb, the holiest Bahá’í shrine in Iran, was destroyed in September 1979. Then a November 1979 edict from the Ministry of Education required not only the dismissal of all Bahá’í teachers, but also held them responsible for the repayment of all salaries they had previously received.

At least seven Bahá’ís were killed in 1979. Two were executed by the government and one was hanged in prison. Others were beaten to death or killed in local incidents.

### **“To cut off the head...”**

Buoyed by their growing influence over all aspects of Iranian life, in 1980 the clergy moved “to cut off the head” of the “heretical” Bahá’í movement by destroying its leadership, believing that the majority of the Bahá’ís would then succumb to social pressures to recant their faith.

This policy is reflected in the fact that nearly half the Bahá’ís executed in Iran since 1979 have been members of national and local governing councils of the Bahá’í community, known as Spiritual Assemblies.

The execution on 27 June 1980 of Yusuf Sobhani, a highly regarded member of the Tehran Bahá’í community, was among the first of such killings that targeted Bahá’í leadership. This was followed by the executions of the chairman and another member of the local Spiritual Assembly of Tabriz on 14 July 1980, a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Rasht on 16 July 1980, and two prominent Bahá’í spokesmen in Tehran on 30 July and 15 August 1980.

On 21 August 1980, all nine members of the national Bahá’í governing council, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Iran, were abducted and disappeared without a trace. It seems certain that they were executed.

During 1980 at least 24 Bahá’ís were killed in Iran; 20 were executed by the government and the rest were stoned, assassinated or burned to death.

Despite a growing international outcry, the rate of executions continued to grow through 1981. By late summer that year, revolutionary courts were openly sentencing Bahá’ís to death purely on religious grounds and announcing the fact in Iranian media.

The Attorney General, Siyyid Moussavi-Tabrizi, stated explicitly: “The Qur’an recognized only the People of the Book as religious communities. Others are pagans. Pagans must be eliminated.” Under Islamic law in Iran, “People of the Book” include only Muslims, Jews, Christians and, by special dispensation, Zoroastrians.



*Seven members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Hamadan, the local Bahá'í governing body, were executed on 14 June 1981. Shown here, in a photograph taken in prison shortly before their execution are, front row, left to right. Tarazu'llah Khuzayn and Husayn Mutlaq; back row, left to right: Muhammad-Baqir (Subayl) Habibi, Husayn Khandil, Dr. Nasir Vafai, Muhammad (Subrab) Habibi, and Dr. Firuz Naimi.*

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran was reconstituted through new elections but was again ravaged by the execution of eight of its members on 27 December 1981. In all at least 48 Bahá'ís were killed in Iran during 1981; of those, all but two were executed by the government.

Executions continued apace through 1982, 1983 and 1984. At least 32 Bahá'ís were executed or killed in 1982, 29 were executed or killed in 1983, and 30 were executed or killed in 1984. And, again, the targets of these executions were often members of Bahá'í governing councils. Four members of the National Spiritual Assembly, which had once again been courageously re-established through fresh elections, were executed in 1984, although by then the institution had been disbanded in accordance with a government decree and the individuals held no official position in the



*The words "Enemy of Islam" were found written on the leg of Dr. Masih Farhangi, a Bahá'í who was executed in Tehran on 24 June 1981.*

Bahá'í community. [See Appendix I for a complete list of those who have been killed or executed.]

One of the most dramatic sets of executions came in June 1983, when ten Iranian Bahá'í women, including two teen-age girls, were hanged. The primary charge against them: teaching Bahá'í children's classes.



*Mona  
Mahmudnizhad*



*Mahshid Nirumand*



*Simin Sabiri*



*Zarrin  
Muqimi-Abyanib*



*Akhtar Thabit*

## Hanged for teaching “Sunday school”

FEW INCIDENTS ARE more shocking — or revealing of the religious basis of the persecution against Bahá'ís and the courage with which they faced it — than the group hanging of ten Bahá'í women in Shiraz on 18 June 1983.

Their crime: teaching religious classes to Bahá'í youth — the equivalent of being “Sunday school” teachers in the West.

Ranging in age from 17 to 57, the ten Bahá'í women were led to the gallows in succession. Authorities apparently hoped that as each saw the others slowly strangle to death, they would renounce their own faith.

But according to eyewitness reports, the women went to their fate singing and chanting, as though they were enjoying a pleasant outing.

One of the men attending the gallows confided to a Bahá'í: “We tried saving their lives up to the last moment, but one by one, first the older ladies, then the young girls, were hanged while the others were forced to watch, it being hoped that this might induce them to recant their belief. We even urged them to say they were not Bahá'ís, but not one of them agreed; they preferred the execution.”

All of the women had been interrogated and tortured in the months leading up to their execution. Indeed, some had wounds still visible on their bodies as they lay in the morgue after their execution.

The youngest of these martyrs was Mona Mahmudnizhad, a 17-year-old schoolgirl who because of her youth and conspicuous innocence became,

The women were subjected to intense physical and mental abuse in an effort to coerce them to recant their Faith — an option that was almost always pressed upon Bahá'í prisoners. Yet, like most Bahá'ís who have been arrested in Iran, they refused to deny their beliefs. Nevertheless, the fact that so many Bahá'ís were given the



*Shahin Dalvand*



*Ruya Ishraqi*



*Izzat Janami  
Ishraqi*



*Tahirih Siyavushi*



*Nusrat Ghufrani  
Yalda'i*

in a sense, a symbol of the group. In prison, she was lashed on the soles of her feet with a cable and forced to walk on bleeding feet.

Yet she never wavered in her faith, even to the point of kissing the hands of her executioner, and then the rope, before putting it around her own throat.

Another young woman, Zarrin Muqimi-Abyanih, 28, told the interrogators whose chief goal was to have her disavow her faith: "Whether you accept it or not, I am a Bahá'í. You cannot take it away from me. I am a Bahá'í with my whole being and my whole heart."

During the trial of another of the women, Ruya Ishraqi, a 23-year-old veterinary student, the judge said: "You put yourselves through this agony only for one word: just say you are not a Bahá'í

and I'll see that...you are released..." Ms. Ishraqi responded: "I will not exchange my faith for the whole world."

The names of the other women hanged on 18 June 1983 were Shahin Dalvand, 25, a sociologist; Izzat Janami Ishraqi, 57, a homemaker; Mahshid Nirumand, 28, who had qualified for a degree in physics but had it denied her because she was a Bahá'í; Simin Sabiri, 25; Tahirih Arjumandi Siyavushi, 30, a nurse; Akhtar Thabit, 25, also a nurse; Nusrat Ghufrani Yalda'i, 47, a mother and member of the local Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly.

All had seen it as their duty to teach Bahá'í religious classes — especially since the government had barred Bahá'í children from attending even regular school.

option of recanting, with the promise of release if they did so, is among the strongest proofs that the persecutions were based solely on religious beliefs.

## Explaining the animosity against Bahá'ís

Bahá'ís understand that this pattern of persecution is a manifestation of the misunderstanding and fear that often occur when a new religion emerges from the matrix of a well-established orthodoxy. The pattern has been repeated through the ages; virtually all of the world's great religions have faced intense persecution at their birth.

In the case of the Bahá'í Faith, the teachings of its two Founders are as challenging as those of any Prophet in ancient times — especially when viewed through the lens of traditional Islam.

The story of the Bahá'í Faith — and its persecution in Iran — begins with the announcement in May 1844 by a 25-year-old merchant in Shiraz that He was the bearer of a new revelation from God. The man, Siyyid Ali Muhammad, took the title “the Báb,” which means “gate” or “door,” explaining that his primary mission was to prepare humanity for the advent of “Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest,” the universal divine Messenger anticipated in the scriptures of all the major religions.

*Funeral of Hashim Farnush, arrested 5 November 1980, executed 23 June 1981. His wife is shown kneeling down at his graveside in Tehran.*





*In May 2007, the home of a Bahá'í in the village of Ival in the province of Mazindaran was burned by unknown arsonists.*



The teachings of the Báb called for the spiritual and moral reformation of Persian society, and for the upliftment of the station of women and the poor. His promotion of education and the sciences was also revolutionary. Such progressive and idealistic teachings, which made a clear break with the Islamic frame of reference, were rapidly embraced by thousands of followers and were seen by both secular and religious authorities as a threat to their power. The Báb Himself was executed by the government in 1850.



*Cover of a special 64-page anti-Bahá'í supplement to Jame-Jam, an Iranian daily newspaper, published 27 August 2007, on the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of the Twelfth Imam. The supplement carried misleading and inflammatory articles and interviews about the history of the Bahá'í Faith and its alleged political involvement with Zionism and colonialism. On the cover is a photograph of Abdu'l-Bahá.*

Among the followers of the Báb was an Iranian nobleman named Bahá'u'lláh. In 1863 He announced that He was the Messenger the Báb had heralded, founding the Bahá'í Faith, which develops and extends many of the teachings and principles introduced by the Báb. The central theme of Bahá'u'lláh's message is that humanity is a single race and that the day has come for unification into one global society. "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens," wrote Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahá'u'lláh taught that there is only one God, and that all of the world's religions are expressions of a single, unfolding divine plan, "the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future."

Bahá'ís believe that God progressively reveals religious truth to humanity through a series of divine Messengers, each of Whom has founded a great religion. These Messengers have included Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad; the most recent are the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. Others will follow in ages to come.

The idea that there should be new Messengers of God after Muhammad is viewed by many Muslims as heresy. In the Qur'an, Muhammad referred to Himself as the "Seal of the Prophets," and most Muslim scholars interpret this to mean that He would be the last Messenger of God.

Bahá'ís, however, believe that the coming of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh poses no contradiction to Islamic teachings or those of any of the other revealed religions. Bahá'ís understand that Muhammad ended or "sealed" the prophetic cycle. Then, with the advent of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, a new era of religious fulfillment began. Bahá'u'lláh referred to this new period in human history as the "age of maturity." Bahá'ís believe that this is all in accordance with the prophecies of Islam and the world's other major religions.

To Iran's Shiite establishment, especially — and also to many among their Sunni Muslim counterparts — the emergence of an independent religion that postdates the Qur'an by almost thirteen centuries is not only theologically abhorrent but threatens the system of patronage, endowments, political influence, and social perquisites to which they lay claim. The effect has been to arouse in the Shiite establishment a determination to extinguish the new faith and suppress its followers.

The Hojjatieh Society, for example, was founded in 1953 by the charismatic cleric Shaikh Mahmud Halabi. According to the Encyclopedia Iranica, Halabi's explicit goal was to establish an organization to "train cadres for the 'scientific defense' of Shiite Islam in the face of Bahá'í theological challenges." Later, many of its followers became members of the elite among early leaders in the 1979 Islamic revolution. However, the society was later criticized by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini, who in 1983 threatened the group with violent suppression, and its activities were allegedly terminated. Among the reasons given by scholars for Khomeini's attack on the Hojjatieh Society was a differing view over how and when the Twelfth Imam might return.

More specifically, Bahá'ís understand that the coming of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh satisfies Shiite prophecies for the reappearance of the Twelfth Imam, among other things. This has led some observers to speculate that it is President Ahmadinejad's strong identification with traditional interpretations of such beliefs that has perhaps triggered the present escalation of attacks on Bahá'ís.

Other aspects of the Bahá'í teachings also arouse opposition among some followers of Islam. In outlining His vision for a new world civilization, Bahá'u'lláh advocated a series of highly progressive social principles. These include the elimination of all forms of prejudice, equality between the sexes, the elimination of extremes of poverty and wealth, universal education, the harmony of science and religion, a sustainable balance between human society and the natural world, and the establishment of a world federal system based on collective security and the oneness of humanity.

Some fundamentalist Muslims view the progressive nature of these teachings, such as the equality of women and the absence of religious clergy, as particularly antithetical to the traditions of Islam.

## No recourse for Bahá'ís

One common theme in all of these rounds of persecution has been the fact that Bahá'ís have been given no chance to defend themselves against the charges leveled against them.

The persecution of the Bahá'ís in Iran is not related to any underlying issue of ethnicity, social class, or political ideology.

Only their religious beliefs distinguish them from their fellow countrymen — beliefs which the Bahá'í teachings forbid them from imposing on others. Paradoxically, because of the control exercised by the Islamic clergy over the media of communication, the nature of Bahá'í beliefs remains virtually unknown to a public that has been systematically taught to fear and hate them.

The Iranian Bahá'í community has itself consistently been denied the use of any means of mass communication, including radio, television, newspapers, films, the distribution of literature and public lectures. The result has been widespread, unreasoning prejudice.

.....  
*Some fundamentalist Muslims view the progressive nature of these teachings, such as the equality of women and the absence of religious clergy, as particularly antithetical to the traditions of Islam.*



*"The 'Party of God' is awake and despises the Bahá'ís" reads this piece of graffiti on a building in the city of Abadeh. Dozens of hateful anti-Bahá'í slogans have been painted on homes, offices and cemetery buildings in various locations in Iran.*

## THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE



*Diane Ala'i, a Bahá'í International Community representative to the United Nations, addresses the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.*

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY has responded to the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Iran with overwhelming sympathy, expressing concern for the Bahá'ís and condemnation of the Iranian government. The Bahá'í community believes that this outpouring has been a strong restraining force against the government, preventing a pogrom on a much greater scale.

These expressions of concern have come not only from the United Nations and its various human rights bodies but also from assorted governments, parliaments, and intergovernmental bodies — as well as from the international news media and non-governmental human rights organizations.

The outcry against Iran's treatment of Bahá'ís began in the early 1980s, as the killings, imprisonment, and torture of Bahá'ís became known. The first register of concern at the UN, for example, came in 1980, when the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities expressed “profound concern” for the safety of Iranian Bahá'ís.

Such expressions quickly moved up the UN hierarchy to the General Assembly, which since 1985 has passed more than 20 resolutions expressing concern about human rights violations in Iran that have made specific mention of the situation facing Iranian Bahá'ís. And before it was replaced by the Human Rights Council, the UN Commission on Human Rights likewise passed more than 20 resolutions that also explicitly mentioned the persecution of Bahá'ís. [See Appendix II]

Such references to a specific religious community were at first unusual, since the UN had traditionally confined itself to expressions of diplomatic concern and general references to charges of human rights violations and discrimination.

It is also significant that virtually all of these resolutions have called on Iran to abide by the various international covenants on human rights that the government had freely signed. UN resolutions have also called explicitly for the “emancipation” of the Bahá'ís of Iran.

Moreover, UN bodies have over the years appointed a number of special investigators — known as “special rapporteurs” — to monitor and report on human rights

## UN human rights monitors have offered an independent view

SINCE THE EARLY 1980s, a series of United Nations human rights monitors — known as “special representatives” or “special rapporteurs” — have offered independent confirmation of the persecution Iranian Bahá’ís have faced from their government.

Gathering their information from a variety of sources and — in at least four cases — making visits to Iran, special representatives have managed to catalogue the whole range of abuses and human rights violations that the Bahá’í community in Iran has experienced.

In 1990, for example, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, a law professor and human rights expert from El Salvador, stated that he had received extensive documentation that had provided “evidence of discrimination, confiscation, rejection by universities, suspension of pensions, demands for the return of pensions earned and paid, denial of passports and other irregularities.”

In 1998, Maurice Copithorne, an eminent Canadian jurist, wrote that continuing reports of violations of human rights against the Bahá’ís had forced him “to conclude that the pattern of persecution of members of this community has not abated.”

In 1996, Abdelfattah Amor, a noted Tunisian

legal expert who was then acting as the UN’s Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, explicitly stated that the persecution of the Bahá’ís was based on religious intolerance — not politics. “With regard to the Bahá’ís, the Special Rapporteur hopes that a clear distinction will be drawn between questions of belief or other questions of a political nature. In that connection, it should not be presumed that the entire community has been politicized or is engaged in political or espionage activities. Considering the religious principles of the Bahá’í community, the Special Rapporteur believes that there should not be any controls that might, through prohibition, restrictions or discrimination, jeopardize the right to freedom of belief or the right to manifest one’s belief.”

And in 2006, Asma Jahangir, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and a well-known human rights lawyer from Pakistan, was instrumental in exposing and then condemning the secret efforts of the Iranian government to “identify and monitor” Bahá’ís when she called attention to a secret 29 October 2005 letter from Iranian military headquarters to police and intelligence agencies that called for stepped up surveillance of Bahá’ís.



*Because Bahá’í marriages are not recognized as legal in Iran, the Islamic government has charged that Bahá’ís are involved with prostitution, adultery and immorality — charges that are without foundation. The photograph here shows a wedding celebration by Bahá’ís in Iran, taken in Tehran in 1960.*

concerns in Iran and elsewhere. Over the years, the reports of these special rapporteurs have consistently refuted Iran's denials and confirmed that the oppression of Bahá'ís is extensive, systematic, and based on religious persecution.

In addition to efforts by the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies and agencies, numerous national legislatures and regional bodies have spoken out against Iran's treatment of the Bahá'í community over the last 28 years. Expressions of concern for Iran's Bahá'ís have come from the European Council, the European Parliament, and from the legislatures of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Spain, the United

## The Bahá'í community of Iran speaks for itself

IN NOVEMBER 2004, the Bahá'í community of Iran addressed a letter to Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, giving its viewpoint on 25 years of persecution.

Here are excerpts:

15 November 2004

.....  
*Day after day, the pressure against this wronged community became more intense and the scope of the injustice and infringement of their rights in various aspects of their lives more overt, such that their possessions, their homes, their jobs and their very existence were the target of attacks.*

The Esteemed Presidency of the  
Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Khatami

For more than 161 years, the Bahá'ís have been exposed, in the sacred land of Iran — the native soil of their forefathers in whose name they take pride — to a series of abuses, tortures, murders and massacres and have tolerated numerous forms of persecution, tragedy and deprivation, for no other reason than believing in God and following their Faith, the largest religious minority in Iran. Contrary to all religious, legal and moral standards, and supported by existing official documentation, they have been, individually and collectively, the subject of unwarranted discrimination and various injustices. Every time a political and social turmoil has occurred in this country, new machinations have been devised against this religious minority, and, in one way or another, their inalienable rights have been violated.

Day after day, the pressure against this wronged community became more intense and the scope of the injustice and infringement of their rights in various aspects of their lives more overt, such that their possessions, their homes, their jobs and their very existence were the target of attacks.

Bahá'ís would never commit any act contrary to the law of the land; they are well-wishers of the people and the state; they do not involve themselves with any political party; and they tenaciously uphold their Faith's principles, which call on them to love and serve the entire human race and to bring about peace, amity and unity of religion.

Kingdom, and the United States of America, among others. Many heads of state and government leaders have also voiced their dismay over Iran's treatment of the Bahá'ís.

International and national non-governmental organizations have also risen to the defense of Iran's Bahá'ís. Amnesty International, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), and Human Rights Watch, among other international human rights organizations, have compiled extensive reports on and called for action to stop the persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís.

From the perspective of the holy religion of Islam, people are free to choose and follow their own religion, and no one has the right to impose his religion on another. The following noble verses "Let there be no compulsion in religion..." and "To you be your Way, and to me mine" confirm this point. From the perspective of the holy religion of Islam, no one has the right to attack and violate the properties, the life and the dignity of those who live under the banner of this religion, which is to be secure and protected: "...if anyone slew a person — unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land — it would be as if he slew the whole people..."

The equality, the freedom and the inalienable rights of all members of the human family, without discrimination as to race, gender, language and religion, have been unequivocally specified in all international covenants, especially in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

By now, a quarter of a century has elapsed in the reign of the Islamic government. To every act of injustice, Bahá'ís have responded with magnanimity. Faced with widespread and intense persecutions and multi-faceted iniquities, the Bahá'ís have never deviated, even by a hair's breadth, from the straight divine path, and they continue to hold fast onto the cord of patience and tolerance as dictated by their Faith and belief.

They fain would expect that, over such a long period of time, which should have been sufficient to remove suspicions and misunderstandings, the esteemed authorities would have realized that the Bahá'ís firmly believe in the oneness of God and the divine nature of all religions and prophets, as well as the realm beyond as confirmed in all the divine scriptures; they obey the laws and regulations of their country in accordance with the principles of their religion; they strive to preserve the interests of their homeland by offering cultural, social, economic and developmental assistance; and they would never refuse any service to establish human virtues and perfections which fulfill such universal visions as world peace and the oneness of humanity.

Respectfully,  
The Iranian Bahá'í community

.....  
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Recently, as well, Iranian human rights activists and leaders, including Nobel laureate Shirin Ebadi, journalist Akbar Ganji, and student leader Ahmad Batebi, have expressed concern about the treatment of Bahá'ís.

The world's news media have long reported on the persecution of Iran's Bahá'í community. Major articles and editorials which detail, confirm and condemn the persecutions have appeared in *Le Monde*, the *Times of London*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Times of India*, as well as less well known newspapers such as *Folha de Sao Paulo* in Brazil, *Today's Zaman* in Ankara, Turkey, and the *Tribune* in Chandigarh, India. The major wire services, such as the Associated Press, Reuters, and Agence France-Presse, have also carried numerous dispatches on the persecution, as have international radio and television networks, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Voice of America.

## How the Islamic Republic of Iran has justified the persecution

**O**VER THE YEARS, in public and private statements, officials of the Iranian government have offered a variety of justifications for the persecution of Bahá'ís. These have ranged from outright denial that the persecution has occurred, suggestions that Bahá'ís fail to make up a significant minority group, to accusations that Bahá'ís pose a “security” threat to the Iranian state.

Some of the main accusations advanced by the government include:

**THE ACCUSATION:** That Bahá'ís were supporters of the Pahlavi regime and the late Shah of Iran; that they collaborated with SAVAK, the secret police; and that the Bahá'í Faith is a political organization opposed to the present Iranian government and poses some sort of “security threat.”

**THE REALITY:** Bahá'ís are required by the basic principles of their Faith to show loyalty and obedience to the government of the country in which they live. The Bahá'í community in Iran thus did not oppose the Pahlavi regime, just as it does not oppose the present government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Indeed, members of the community have been obedient to the present government, including to the order to disband all Bahá'í administrative institutions in Iran.

Bahá'í principles also require the avoidance of any form of involvement in partisan politics. Accordingly, Iranian Bahá'ís were precluded by membership in their faith from accepting

cabinet posts or similar political positions under the Pahlavi regime. They did not collaborate with SAVAK. On the contrary, the Pahlavi regime consistently persecuted the Bahá'í Faith, and SAVAK was one of the main agencies of this persecution.

Far from being a threat to state security, Iranian Bahá'ís have a great love for their country and they are deeply committed to its development. This is evidenced, for example, by the fact that the vast majority of Bahá'ís have remained in Iran despite intense persecution, the fact that students denied access to education in Iran and forced to study abroad have returned to assist in the development of their country, and the recent effort by Bahá'ís in Shiraz to provide schooling for underprivileged children.

**THE ACCUSATION:** That Bahá'ís are heretics, apostates, or enemies of Islam.

Moreover, a number of prominent Iranian journalists and commentators, both inside and outside Iran, have recently written articles in defense of their Bahá'í countrymen. They include Faraj Sarkouhi, Ahmad Zeidabadi, and Olof Palme prize winner Parvin Ardalan, along with famous blogger Arash Sigarchi. "We are all Iranian Bahá'ís," wrote Ali Keshtgar, a prominent Iranian thinker, in August 2008.

In many respects the Bahá'í case has been a model for how international human rights machinery, combined with support from civil society advocates and accurate coverage from the news media, can be used to protect an oppressed minority. Thanks to international support for the Bahá'ís, along with growing support inside Iran and among Iranian expatriates, the wholesale genocide of the Bahá'í community in Iran has so far been prevented.

**THE REALITY:** Such charges are false. The Bahá'í Faith is widely recognized as an independent world religion — even by Islamic scholars. As long ago as 1925, a Sunni appellate court in Egypt recognized that the Bahá'í Faith was an independent world religion, stating that, in its judgment, "The Bahá'í Faith is a new religion, entirely independent.... No Bahá'í, therefore, can be regarded as Muslim or vice versa, even as no Buddhist, Brahmin or Christian can be regarded a Muslim." Accordingly, no charge of heresy can be made.

Bahá'ís revere Muhammad and His Book, the Qur'an, as they do Jesus, Buddha, and the founders of the other great religions. Indeed, alone among the followers of the world's other major independent religions, only Bahá'ís recognize the station of Muhammad as a Prophet of God.

**THE ACCUSATION:** That Bahá'ís are agents of Zionism.

**THE REALITY:** The charges linking the Bahá'ís to Zionism are a distortion of history. The Bahá'í Faith has its world headquarters in Israel because Bahá'u'lláh was, in the mid-1800s, sent as a prisoner to the Holy Land by two Islamic countries: Ottoman Turkey and Iran.

The fact that the Iranian government continues to make such charges, moreover, is nothing more than an effort by the government to stir animosity

against Bahá'ís among the Iranian population at large. This is but the most recent iteration in a long history of attempts to foment hatred by casting the Bahá'ís as agents of foreign powers, whether of Russia, the United Kingdom, or the United States — and now Israel — all of which are completely baseless.

**THE ACCUSATION:** That Bahá'ís are involved with prostitution, adultery and immorality.

**THE REALITY:** This charge is also without foundation. Bahá'ís have a strict moral code and attach great importance to chastity and to the institution of marriage. However, the Bahá'í marriage ceremony is not recognized in Iran and no civil marriage ceremony exists. Consequently, Bahá'ís have been faced with the choice of denying their faith in order to be married according to the rites of one of the religions recognized in Iran, or of marrying in accordance with the rites of their own faith. They have consistently chosen to be married in accordance with Bahá'í law. The government does not recognize these marriages and denounces Bahá'í wives as prostitutes. The other charges of adultery and immorality against Bahá'ís are based on the fact that, in accordance with the Bahá'í principle of the equality of men and women, there is no segregation of the sexes at Bahá'í gatherings.

## CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

.....  
*In July 2008, UNESCO added the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the Shrine of the Báb to the World Heritage List, stating that these two sites — which are the most holy spots on earth for Bahá'ís — have “outstanding universal value.”*

THE WORLDWIDE BAHÁ'Í community is today one of the most diverse and widespread organizations on earth. Comprising individuals from virtually every nation, ethnic group, trade, profession, and social or economic class, more than five million followers of the Bahá'í Faith reside in at least 235 countries and territories. They represent some 2,100 different tribes, racial and ethnic groups, and come from every religious background: Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Jain, and animist, as well as from nonreligious backgrounds.

In July 2008, UNESCO added the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the Shrine of the Báb to the World Heritage List, stating that these two sites — which are the most holy spots on earth for Bahá'ís — have “outstanding universal value.” It is a decision that underscores the undisputed recognition of the Bahá'í Faith as an independent world religion in most nations of the world.

Yet in the land where their religion originated, Bahá'ís continue to face a campaign of systematic, centrally directed persecution. Since the 1800s, Bahá'ís have faced a generalized persecution in Iran. But with the coming of the 1979 Revolution, they have been executed, tortured, imprisoned, deprived of jobs, denied an education, and prevented in almost every way possible from organizing themselves as a legitimate community of faith.

Although this persecution has gone through various phases — from efforts at outright extinction in the early 1980s to efforts at social, economic and cultural suffocation in the late 1990s — it is clear today that the government has begun a re-escalation of its systematic efforts to eliminate the Bahá'í community as a viable entity in Iranian life.

There are, moreover, a number of warning signs today that Iran's cleric-led government may have something even worse in mind for that country's largest religious minority. These indicators include efforts to identify and monitor Bahá'ís, escalating violence against them, attacks on Bahá'í leadership, and, perhaps worst of all, the abuse of Bahá'í schoolchildren.

Documents prove that Iran has long had a plan to block the growth and



*The Shrine of the Báb was recently chosen by UNESCO for its World Heritage List for its “outstanding universal value” as an historic and cultural site.*

development of the Bahá’í community, while keeping it as a ready scapegoat for its own failures. Facts on the ground show that this campaign continues — and that only the watchful eye of the international community, along with the support of Iranian people and intellectuals, restrains the government.

Recent trends — increasing random violence, the arrest of national Bahá’í leaders, revolving-door imprisonment, arbitrary arrest and harassment, an official anti-Bahá’í media campaign, the ongoing denial of access to higher education, the destruction of important Bahá’í holy sites, and the continued efforts to deprive Bahá’ís of their livelihood — reveal the Iranian government’s intention of continuing its efforts to destroy the Bahá’í community.

The continued campaign against Iranian Bahá’ís defies rational explanation. The Bahá’í community in Iran poses no threat to the Iranian government. The fundamental principles of the Bahá’í Faith require its followers to be obedient to their government and to avoid partisan political involvement, subversive activity, and all forms of violence.

Continued international monitoring remains the only form of protection for Iran’s Bahá’ís. Any lessening of international support for the Bahá’í community will be perceived by the Iranian authorities as condoning the persecution of the Bahá’ís at the least, and therefore as a license to continue their campaign with impunity.

The Bahá’ís in Iran seek no special privileges. They seek only their rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the right to life, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to education and work, and the right to profess and practice their religion.

What is needed are legal and entirely public steps that will firmly establish the complete emancipation of the Bahá’ís of Iran. Only then can it be said that Iran has truly complied with its oft-stated commitment to universal human rights.

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*The fundamental principles of the Bahá’í Faith require its followers to be obedient to their government and to avoid partisan political involvement, subversive activity, and all forms of violence.*

## BAHÁ'ÍS KILLED SINCE 1978

NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE	METHOD
<b>1978</b>					
1.	Mr. Ahmad Ismá'ílí		1978	Ahram	Killed
2.	Mr. Díyá'u'lláh Haqíqat		Aug 13	Jahrum	Killed
3.	Mr. Shír-Muhammad Dastpísh		December	Buyr-Ahmad	Mobbed
4.	Mrs. 'Avad-Gul Fahandizh		Dec 14	Shíráz	Mobbed
5.	Mr. Sífatu'lláh Fahandizh		Dec 14	Shíráz	Mobbed
6.	Mr. Khusraw Afnání		Dec 22	Míyán-Duáb	Mobbed
7.	Mr. Parváz Afnání		Dec 22	Míyán-Duáb	Mobbed
<b>1979</b>					
8.	Mr. Ibráhím Ma'navi		early 1979	Hisár	Killed
9.	Mr. Háji-Muhammad 'Azizi		Jan 9	Khurmúj	Beaten
10.	Mr. Husayn Shakúrí		Apr 2	Ushnavíyyih	Killed
11.	Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Khursandí	LSA	Apr 12	Tehran	Hanged
12.	Mr. Muhammad Muvahhid		May 24	Shíráz	Disappeared, presumed dead
13.	Mr. Bahár Vujdáni		Sep 27	Mahábád	Executed
14.	Mr. 'Alí Sattárázádh		Oct 28	Búkán	Killed
15.	Mr. 'Azamatu'lláh Fahandizh		Dec 14	Shíráz	Executed
<b>1980</b>					
16.	Mr. Habíbu'lláh Panáhi		Feb 4	Urúmiyyih	Assassinated
17.	Mr. Ghulám-Husayn A'zamí		May 6	Tehran	Executed
18.	Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Mu'íní		May 6	Tehran	Executed
19.	Mr. Badi'u'lláh Yazdání		May 6	Tehran	Executed
20.	Mr. Parviz Bayáni		May 11	Piránshahr	Executed
21.	Mr. Mir-Asadu'lláh Mukhtarái		May 18	Andrún	Stoned
22.	Mr. Hasan Ismá'ilzádh		June	Sanandaj	Killed
23.	Mr. Yúsuf Subhání		Jun 27	Tehran	Executed
24.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Astání	LSA	Jul 14	Tabríz	Executed
25.	Dr. Farámarz Samandari	LSA	Jul 14	Tabríz	Executed
26.	Mr. Muhammad Akbarí		Jul 16	Rasht	Executed
27.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Mahbubíyán		Jul 30	Tehran	Executed
28.	Mr. Dhabíhu'lláh Mu'míní		Aug 15	Tehran	Executed
29.	Dr. Husayn Nají	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
30.	Mr. Manúchir Qá'im-Maqámí	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
31.	Mr. Yusif Qadímí	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
32.	Mr. 'Abdul-Husayn Taslímí	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
33.	Mr. Hushang Mahmudí	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
34.	Mrs. Bahíyyih Nádirí	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
35.	Mr. 'Ata'u'lláh Muqarrabí	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
36.	Mr. Kámbíz Sádiqzádh	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead

\* Many of those killed or executed played a leadership role in the Iranian Bahá'í community. The acronym "LSA" in this column indicates that the person was a member of a local Spiritual Assembly, the community-elected local Bahá'í governing council. "NSA" identifies a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran, the national-level governing council. "ABM" identifies an "auxiliary board member," an appointed leadership position within the Bahá'í administrative framework. "CBC" identifies a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, an appointed leadership position which oversees the auxiliary board members.

NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE	METHOD
37.	Mr. Ibrahim Rahmání	NSA	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
38.	Dr. Yusif 'Abbásiyán Milání	ABM	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
39.	Dr. Hishmat' u'lláh Rawhání	ABM	Aug 21	Tehran	Disappeared, presumed dead
40.	Mr. Núru'lláh Akhtar-Khávarí	ABM	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
41.	Mr. 'Azizu'lláh Dhábíhiyán	ABM	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
42.	Mr. Firaydún Faridání	ABM	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
43.	Mr. Mahmúd Hasanzádíh		Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
44.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-Vahháb Kázimi-Manshádi		Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
45.	Mr. Jalál Mustaqím	LSA	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
46.	Mr. 'Ali Muthari	LSA	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
47.	Mr. Ridá Firúzi		Nov 9	Tabriz	Executed
48.	Mr. Muhammad-Husayn Ma'súmi		Nov 23	Núk, Birjand	Burned
49.	Mrs. Shikkar-Nisá Ma'súmi		Nov 23	Núk, Birjand	Burned
50.	Mr. Bihruz Saná'i		Dec 17	Tehran	Executed
<b>1981</b>					
51.	Dr. Manúchíhr Hakim	NSA	Jan 12	Tehran	Assassinated
52.	Mr. Mihdi Anvari		Mar 17	Shiráz	Executed
53.	Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání		Mar 17	Shiráz	Executed
54.	Mrs. Núrániyyih Yáshátir		Apr	Shiráz	Assassinated
55.	Mr. Sattár Khushkhú		Apr 30	Shiráz	Executed
56.	Mr. Ihsánu'lláh Mihdí-Zádih		Apr 30	Shiráz	Executed
57.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Vahdat	ABM	Apr 30	Shiráz	Executed
58.	Mr. Muhmmad (Suhráb) Habibí	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
59.	Mr. Muhammad-Baqir (Suhayl) Habibí	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
60.	Mr. Husayn Khándil	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
61.	Mr. Tarázu'lláh Khuzayn	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
62.	Mr. Husayn Mutlaq	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
63.	Dr. Firúz Na'imi	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
64.	Dr. Nasir Vafá'i	LSA	Jun 14	Hamadán	Executed
65.	Mr. Buzurg 'Alaviyán	LSA	Jun 23	Tehran	Executed
66.	Mr. Háshim Farnúsh	ABM LSA	Jun 23	Tehran	Executed
67.	Mr. Farhang Mavaddat	LSA	Jun 23	Tehran	Executed
68.	Dr. Masih Farhangí	CBC ASIA	Jun 24	Tehran	Executed
69.	Mr. Badí'ulláh Farid		Jun 24	Tehran	Executed
70.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí		Jun 24	Tehran	Executed
71.	Mr. Varqá Tibyániyán (Tibyáni)		Jun 24	Tehran	Executed
72.	Mr. Kamálu'd-Din Bakhtávar		Jul 26	Mashhad	Executed
73.	Mr. Ni'matu'llah Kátibpúr Shahidi		Jul 26	Mashhad	Executed
74.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-'Alí Asadyári	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
75.	Mr. Husayn Asadu'lláh-Zadeh	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
76.	Mr. Mihdí Báhiri	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
77.	Dr. Masrúr Dakhilí	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
78.	Dr. Parváz Firúzi	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
79.	Mr. Manúchíhr Khadí'i	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
80.	Mr. Alláh-Virdí Mitháqi		Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
81.	Mr. Habíbu'lláh Tahqíqí	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
82.	Mr. Ismá'il Ziháb	LSA	Jul 29	Tabriz	Executed
83.	Mr. Husayn Rastigar-Námdár		Aug 5	Tehran	Executed
84.	Mr. Habíbu'llah 'Azizi	LSA	Aug 29	Tehran	Executed
85.	Mr. Bahman 'Atifi		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.	Executed
86.	Mr. Izzat Atifi		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.	Executed
87.	Mr. Ahmad Ridvání		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.	Executed
88.	Mr. Atá'u'lláh Rawhání		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.	Executed
89.	Mr. Gushtásb Thábit-Rásikh		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.	Executed
90.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Sipíhr-Arfa		Oct 23	Tehran	Executed
91.	Mr. Mihdí Amin Amin	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
92.	Mr. Jalál 'Azizi	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
93.	Dr. 'Izzatu'lláh Furúhi	ABM NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
94.	Mrs. Zhínús Ni'mat Mahmúdi	ABM NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
95.	Dr. Mahmúd Majdhúb	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
96.	Mr. Qudratu'lláh Rawhání	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
97.	Dr. Sirús Rawshani	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
98.	Mr. Kámrán Samimi	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran	Executed
<b>1982</b>					
99.	Mrs. Shiva Mahmudi Asadu'llah-Zadeh	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran	Executed
100.	Mr. Iskandar 'Azizi	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran	Executed
101.	Mrs. Shidrukh Amir-Kiyá Baqa		Jan 4	Tehran	Executed

NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE	METHOD
102.	Mr. Fathu'llah Firdawsi	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran	Executed
103.	Mr. Khusraw Muhandisi	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran	Executed
104.	Mr. Kúrush Talá'i	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran	Executed
105.	Mr. Atá'u'lláh Yávari	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran	Executed
106.	Mr. Ibráhím Khayrkháh		Feb 22	Tehran	Executed
107.	Mr. Husayn Vahdat-i-Haq		Feb 28	Tehran	Executed
108.	Mr. 'Askar Muhammadi		Apr 2	Rahímkhán, Kírmán	Assassinated
109.	Mr. Ihsánu'lláh Khayyámi		Apr 12	Urúmiyyih	Executed
110.	Mr. 'Azizu'llah Gulshani		Apr 29	Mashhad	Executed
111.	Mrs. Ishraqiyyih Faruhar	LSA	May 8	Karaj	Executed
112.	Mr. Mahmud Faruhar	LSA	May 8	Karaj	Executed
113.	Mr. Bad'i'u'lláh Haqqpaykar	LSA	May 8	Karaj	Executed
114.	Mr. Agáhu'lláh Tizfahm		May 10	Urúmiyyih	Executed
115.	Miss Jaláliyih Mushta il Uskú'i		May 10	Urúmiyyih	Executed
116.	Mrs. Irán Rahimpúr (Khurmá'i)		May 12	Dizfúl	Executed
117.	Mr. Nasru'lláh Amini	LSA	May 16	Kháníábad, Tehe.	Executed
118.	Mr. Sa'du'lláh Bábázádeh	LSA	May 16	Kháníábad, Tehe.	Executed
119.	Mr. Atá'u'lláh Haqqání		Jun 1	Tehran	Killed
120.	Mr. Muhammad Abbási	LSA	Jul 9	Qazvín	Executed
121.	Mr. Jadidu'lláh Ashraf	LSA	Jul 9	Qazvín	Executed
122.	Manúchíhr Farzáníh Mu'ayyad	LSA	Jul 9	Qazvín	Executed
123.	Mr. Muhammad Mansúri	LSA	Jul 9	Qazvín	Executed
124.	Mr. Manúchíhr Vafá'i		Jul 9	Tehran	Assassinated
125.	Mr. 'Abbás-Ali Sadiqipur		Jul 15	Shíráz	Executed
126.	Mr. 'Ali Na'imíyán		Aug 11	Urúmiyyih	Executed
127.	Mr. Habibu'lláh Awji		Nov 16	Shíráz	Executed
128.	Mr. Dhiyá'u'lláh Ahráni	LSA	Nov 21	Shíráz	Executed
129.	Mr. Husayn Nayyiri-Isfahani		Nov 29	Isfahán	Died in prison
130.	Mrs. Guldáníh 'Alipúr		Dec 24	Sári	Mobbed
<b>1983</b>					
131.	Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Siyávushí	LSA	Jan 1	Shíráz	Executed
132.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Mahmúdnizhad	LSA ABM	Mar 12	Shíráz	Executed
133.	Mr. Rahmatu'lláh Vafá'i	LSA	Mar 12	Shíráz	Executed
134.	Mrs. Tüba Zá'irpúr		Mar 12	Shíráz	Executed
135.	Mr. Adadu'llah (Aziz) Zaydi		Apr 1	Míyán-Duáb	Killed
136.	Mr. Jalál Hakímán		May 1	Tehran	Executed
137.	Mr. Suhayl Safá'i		May 1	Tehran	Executed
138.	Dr. Bahráh Afnán	LSA	Jun 16	Shíráz	Executed
139.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-Husayn Azadí	LSA	Jun 16	Shíráz	Executed
140.	Mr. Kúrush Haqbín	LSA	Jun 16	Shíráz	Executed
141.	Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí		Jun 16	Shíráz	Executed
142.	Mr. Jamshíd Siyávushí	LSA	Jun 16	Shíráz	Executed
143.	Mr. Bahráh Yaldá'i		Jun 16	Shíráz	Executed
144.	Miss Shahín(Shírín) Dálvand		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
145.	Mrs. 'Izzat Jánami Ishráqí		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
146.	Miss Ru'yá Ishráqí		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
147.	Miss Muná Mahmúdnizhad		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
148.	Miss Zarrín Muqímí-Abyáníh		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
149.	Miss Mahshíd Nírúmand		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
150.	Miss Símín Sábíri		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
151.	Mrs. Táhírih Arjumandí Siyávushi		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
152.	Miss Akhtar Thábit		Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
153.	Mrs. Nusrat Ghufrání Yaldá'i	LSA	Jun 18	Shíráz	Executed
154.	Mr. Suhayl Húshmand		Jun 28	Shíráz	Executed
155.	Mr. Ahmad-'Alí Thábit-Sarvístání		Jun 30	Shíráz	Died in prison
156.	Mr. Muhammad Ishráqí	ABM	Aug 31	Tehran	Died in prison
157.	Mr. Akbar Haqíqí		Sep 19	Khuy	Mobbed
158.	Mr. Bahman Díhqnání		Nov 19	Muhammadiyyih	Mobbed
159.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-Majíd Mutahhar		Dec 15	Isfahán	Died in prison
<b>1984</b>					
160.	Mr. Rahmatu'lláh Hakímán		Jan 11	Kírmán	Died in prison
161.	Mr. Ghulám-Husayn HasanzádiH-Shákíri		Mar 10	Tehran	Executed
162.	Mr. Muhsin Radavi		Mar 13	Tehran	Died in prison
163.	Mr. Nusrat'ullah Díyá'i		Mar 19	Báft, Kírmán	Died in prison
164.	Mr. Kámrán Lutfi		Apr 9	Tehran	Executed
165.	Mr. Rahím Rahímíyán		Apr 9	Tehran	Executed
166.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Sábíríyán		Apr 9	Tehran	Executed

NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE	METHOD
167.	Mr. Asadu'lláh Kámíl-Muqaddam		May 2	Tehran	Died in prison
168.	Mr. Maqsúd 'Alizádih		May 5	Tabriz	Executed
169.	Mr. Jalál Payraví	ABM	May 5	Tabriz	Executed
170.	Mr. Jahángír Hidáyati	NSA	May 15	Tehran	Executed
171.	Mr. 'Alí-Muhammad Zamání		May 15	Tehran	Executed
172.	Mr. Nusratu'lláh Vahdat		Jun 17	Mashhad	Executed
173.	Mr. Ihsánu'lláh Kathírí		Jun 27	Tehran	Executed
174.	Dr. Manúchíhr Rúhí		Aug 16	Bujnúrd	Executed
175.	Mr. Aminu'lláh Qurbánpúr		Aug 25	near Tehran	Died in prison
176.	Mr. Rustam Varjávandí		Sep 15	Tehran	Died in prison
177.	Mr. Shápúr (Húshang) Markazi	NSA ABM	Sep 23	Tehran	Executed
178.	Mr. Fírúz Purdil		Oct 30	Mashhad	Executed
179.	Mr. Ahmad Bashiri	NSA	Nov 1	Tehran	Executed
180.	Mr. Yúnis Nawrúzi-Iránzád	LSA	Nov 1	Karaj	
181.	Mr. 'Aliridá Niyákán		Nov 11	Tabriz	Died in prison
182.	Mr. Diyá'u'lláh Ma'í-i-Uskú'i		Nov 13	Tabriz	Died in prison
183.	Dr. Farhád Asdaqí	NSA	Nov 19	Tehran	Executed
184.	Mr. Fírúz Atharí	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)	Executed
185.	Mr. Ghulám-Husayn Farhand	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)	Executed
186.	Mr. Ináyatu'lláh Haqíqí	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)	Executed
187.	Mr. Jamál Káshání	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)	Executed
188.	Mr. Jamshíd Púr-Ustádkár	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)	Executed
189.	Dr. Rúhu'lláh Ta'lím	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Kirmánsháh)	Executed
<b>1985</b>					
190.	Mr. Rúhu'lláh Hasúrí		Jan 21	Yazd	Executed
191.	Mr. Rúhu'lláh Bahrámsháhi	LSA	Feb 25	Yazd	Executed
192.	Mr. Nusratu'lláh Subhání		Mar 5	Tehran	Executed
193.	Mr. 'Abbás Idilkhání		Aug 1	Tehran	Executed
194.	Mr. Rahmatu'lláh Vujdání	LSA	Aug 31	Bandar-'Abbás	Executed
195.	Mr. Núr'ud-Din Tá'ifi		Oct 12	Gurgán (Kirmánsháh)	Died in prison
196.	Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Ashjárí		Nov 19	Tabriz	Executed
<b>1986</b>					
197.	Mr. Paymán Subhání (reported)		Apr 28	Saráván	Mobbed
198.	Mr. Sirru'lláh Vahdat-Nizámí		May 4	Tehran	Executed
199.	Mr. Fidrus Shabruk		May 9	Záhidán	Executed
200.	Mr. Farid Bihmardí	NSA	Jun 10	Tehran	Executed
201.	Mr. Habíbu'lláh Muhtadí		Aug 27	Tehran	Killed
202.	Mr. Bábak Tálibí		Sep 2	Karaj	Beaten
203.	Mr. Iraj Mihdi-Nizhád		Sep 4	Bandar-'Abbás	Mobbed
<b>1987</b>					
204.	Mr. Ahmad Kávih		Jan 26	Isfahán	Killed
205.	Mr. Surúsh Jabbári		Mar 3	Tehran	Killed
206.	Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Sháiyiq		Mar 3	Tehran	Killed
207.	Mr. Ardishír Akhtari		Sep 28	Tehran	Executed
208.	Mr. Amír-Husayn Nádiri		Sep 28	Tehran	Executed
<b>1988</b>					
209.	Mr. Bihnám Páshá'í		presumably Nov	Tehran	Executed
210.	Mr. Iradj Afshín		presumably Nov	Tehran	Executed
211.	Mr. Mihrdad Maqsudi		Feb 16	Urúmiyyih	Killed
<b>1992</b>					
212.	Mr. Bahman Samandari		Mar 18	Tehran	Executed
213.	Mr. Rúhu'lláh Ghedami		Jun 17	on Qum Highway	Killed
<b>1995</b>					
214.	Mr. Shirvin Falláh		Approx Dec	Arak	Killed
<b>1997</b>					
215.	Mr. Mansúr Dawlat		Apr 4	Kírmán	Killed
216.	Mr. Shahrám Reza'í		Jul 7	Rasht	Killed
217.	Mr. Mashá'lláh Enáyati		Jul 4	Isfahán	Beaten in prison
<b>1998</b>					
218.	Mr. Rúhu'lláh Rawhání		Jul 21	Isfahán	Executed
<b>2005</b>					
219.	Mr. Dhabihu'llah Mahrami		15 Dec	Yazd	Died in prison

## THE UNITED NATIONS' RESPONSE

Since 1980, human rights organs of the United Nations have been expressing concern about the tragic situation of the Bahá'í religious minority in Iran. This demonstration of international concern has played a critical role in moderating the actions of the Iranian authorities and providing a measure of security to the Bahá'í community.

A summary history of this issue at the United Nations is outlined below:

### 1980

Resolution 10 (XXXIII) (10.9.1980) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities expresses profound concern for the Bahá'ís both individually and collectively, and invites the Government of Iran to protect their fundamental human rights and freedoms.

### 1981

Resolution 8 (XXXIV) (9.9.1981) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities draws the attention of the Commission on Human Rights to the perilous situation facing the Bahá'ís and requests the Secretary-General to report on their plight to the next session of the Commission.

### 1982

Resolution 1982/27 (11.3.1982) of the Commission on Human Rights notes the Secretary-General's report on the Bahá'ís and requests him to establish direct contacts with the Government of Iran and to continue his efforts to ensure the Bahá'ís full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Grave concern for the Bahá'í minority is expressed by members of the Human Rights Committee at its 16th session, when the Committee discusses with representatives of the Iranian Government the preliminary report submitted by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in accordance with its reporting

obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Resolution 1982/25 (8.9.1982) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities recalls its earlier resolutions on the plight of the Bahá'ís and expresses its continuing concern at human rights violations in Iran.

### 1983

Resolution 1983/34 (8.3.1983) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses its profound concern at the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís and requests the Secretary-General to continue his direct contacts with the Government of Iran on the human rights situation in that country, "including the situation of the Bahá'ís."

Resolution 1983/14 (5.9.1983) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities expresses its grave concern at the continuing religious persecution of the Bahá'ís and suggests that the Commission on Human Rights appoint a Special Rapporteur to study the human rights situation in Iran.

### 1984

Resolution 1984/54 (14.3.1984) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses its concern for the Bahá'í minority and requests its Chairman to appoint a Special Representative to establish contacts with the Government of Iran and to make a thorough study of human rights in Iran.

Decision 1984/138 of the Economic and Social Council endorses the Commission's decision to appoint a Special Representative.

Resolution 1984/14 (29.8.1984) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities expresses alarm at the continuing gross violations of human rights in Iran, including the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís, and welcomes the Commission's decision to appoint a Special Representative.

### 1985

Preliminary Report of the Special Representative to the Commission on Human Rights expresses great concern at the number and gravity of alleged violations of human rights in Iran, including denial of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Resolution 1985/39 (13.3.1985) of the Commission on Human Rights endorses the general observations of its Special Representative, expresses its deep concern at the

number and gravity of alleged violations of human rights to which his preliminary report bears witness, extends his mandate, and requests him "...to present an interim report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís..."

Decision 1985/148 of the Economic and Social Council endorses the Commission's decision.

Resolution 1985/17 (29.8.1985) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities welcomes the Commission's decision, expresses its alarm at the continuing reports of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Iran, "in particular at the evidence of persecution of the Bahá'í religious minority...", endorses the general observations of the Special Representative in his preliminary report, and expresses the hope that the initial contacts of the Government of Iran with the Special Representative will develop into a positive cooperation.

Resolution 40/141 (13.12.1985) of the General Assembly "Expresses its deep concern over the specific and detailed allegations of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Special Representative refers in his interim report, and in particular, those related to the right to life, such as summary and arbitrary executions; the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; the right to liberty and security of person and to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention; the right to a fair trial; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression; and the right of religious minorities to profess and practice their own religion" (operative paragraph 2);

"Decides to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, during its forty-first session in order to examine this situation anew in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council" (operative paragraph 8).

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#### 1986

Resolution 1985/41 (12.3.1986) of the Commission on Human Rights "expresses its deep concern over the specific and detailed allegations of grave human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Special Representative refers in his report"; endorses his conclusion that "specific and detailed allegations concerning grave human rights violations" in Iran cannot be dismissed; decides to extend the mandate of the Commission's Special Representative and requests him to present an interim report on the situation, "including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís" to the General Assembly at its forty-first session and a final report to the Commission at its forty-third session in 1987.

Decision 1986/137 of the Economic and Social Council approves the Commission's decision to extend the Special Representative's mandate and its request to the Special Representative to submit reports to the forty-first session of the General Assembly and the forty-third session of the Commission.

It is announced on 14 July 1986 that, in response to this request, the Chairman of the Commission appointed Mr. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl to serve as the Special Representative of the Commission.

Resolution 41/159 (4.12.1986) of the General Assembly "Expresses its deep concern over the specific and detailed

allegations of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in particular over those related to the right to life, such as summary and arbitrary executions, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person and to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention, the right to a fair trial, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression and the right of religious minorities to profess and practice their own religion";

"Requests the Commission on Human Rights to study carefully the final report of the Special Representative, as well as other information pertaining to the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to consider further steps for securing effective "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in that country";

Decides to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, during its forty-second session...."

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#### 1987

Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1987/55 (11.3.1987) of the Commission on Human Rights recalling its resolution 1986/41, extends the mandate of the Special Representative for one year; requests him to present an interim report on the human rights situation including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá'ís; regrets "that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has so far provided no comment or information to the Special Representative and has not allowed him to visit the country"; again expresses "its deep concern over the numerous and detailed allegations of grave and extensive human rights violations to which the Special Representative refers in his report (E/CN.4/1987/23) and in particular, those related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person and to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention, the right to a fair trial, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression, and the right of religious minorities to profess and practice their own religion"; requests "the Special Representative to present an interim report to the General Assembly, at its forty-second session on human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís...."

Decision 1987/150 of ECOSOC approves the Commission's decision to extend the Special Representative's mandate.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1987/12 (1.9.1987) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities refers to "various resolutions and documents published by other international bodies and organizations including resolutions ratified by the European Parliament and Council of Europe ... all of which have expressed great concern over the violations of human rights and violation of the most basic rights of the ethnic and religious minorities.."; learns "with renewed concern that the number of those allegedly executed by the ruling Government, including Bahá'ís and others, now exceeds 70,000..."; expresses "strong concern over the grave violations of human rights and basic freedom such as...the right to freedom of belief and religion..."; urges "determined protest by the Commission to the Islamic Republic of Iran concerning continuing disrespect for the Charter of the United Nations in relation to human rights"; and "requests the Secretary-General to inform

the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and its Special Representative of the information obtained from the Sub-Commission on the grave violation of human rights and the most basic freedoms in the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

Resolution 42/136 (7.12.1987) of the General Assembly takes note of the Commission’s resolution 1987/55 requesting the Special Representative “to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-second session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís...”; again expresses “its deep concern about the numerous and detailed allegations of grave human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Special Representative had referred in his report, namely, those related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person, and to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention, the right to a fair trial, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression, and the right of religious minorities to profess and practice their own religion”; expresses “its grave concern, in particular, that although the Special Representative indicates that the number of alleged violations of the right to life has diminished over the past two years, according to information made available to him, some one hundred persons were alleged to have been executed in the period October 1986–September 1987 because of their political and religious convictions”; expresses “its deep concern at allegations that maltreatment and torture, both physical and psychological, are common practice in Iranian prisons during interrogation and before and after the final verdict, and at the existence of extremely summary and informal proceedings, unawareness on the part of the prisoners of specific accusations, lack of legal counsel and other irregularities with respect to fair trial”; endorses “the conclusion of the Special Representative that acts continue to occur in the Islamic Republic of Iran that are inconsistent with the provisions of international instruments...”; decides “to keep under consideration the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, during its forty-third session...”

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#### 1988

Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1988/69 (10.3.1988) of the Commission on Human Rights recalls its decision to request the Special Representative to present an interim report to the General Assembly on human rights situation including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís; expresses “again its deep concern about the numerous detailed allegations of grave human rights violations... in particular those related to the right to life,... the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression...”; requests “the Special Representative to present an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session on the human rights situation, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís, and a final report to the Commission at its forty-fifth session.”

Decision 1988/137 of ECOSOC approves the Commission’s decision to extend the Special Representative’s mandate. This decision refers also to Commission resolution 1984/54.

Resolution 43/137 (8.12.1988) of the General Assembly takes note of the Commission’s resolution 1988/69 requesting the Special Representative “to submit an

interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís...”; notes “the recent contacts between the Special Representative and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which it is hoped will lead to a state of full co-operation between the Special Representative and that Government, including a visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, so that he can fulfil his mandate”; notes “that the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran continue to be subjected to various forms of harassment and discrimination, although there are indications that the intensity of the campaign of persecution against the Bahá’ís has diminished somewhat in recent months, and that a number of them have been released from prison”; expresses once more “its deep concern about the numerous and detailed allegations of grave human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Special Representative had referred in his report, namely, those related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial and the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion”; expresses “its deep concern also at the existence of extremely summary, informal and irregular proceedings, failure to inform defendants of specific accusations against them, lack of legal counsel, absence of an appropriate instance for appeal and other irregularities that contravene international standards on fair trial”; endorses “the conclusion of the Special Representative that acts continue to occur in the Islamic Republic of Iran that are inconsistent with the provisions of international instruments...”; decides “to keep under consideration the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, during its forty-fourth session...”

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#### 1989

Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1989/66 (7.3.1989) of the Commission on Human Rights recalling “...the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís...”; notes “that the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be uncertain”; expresses once more “its deep concern over the numerous and detailed allegations of grave and extensive human rights violations to which the Special Representative has referred in his reports, namely, those related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial and to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression...”; requests “the Special Representative to present an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on human rights situation in Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís and a final report to the forty-sixth session of the Commission.”

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1989/10 (31.8.1989) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities takes note “of numerous reports by United Nations special rapporteurs and by NGOs...”; concerned “also at reports of denial of rights of minorities to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own beliefs”; is “further concerned at reports about persecution and detention of members of the Bahá’í community in the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

Resolution 44/163 (15.12.1989) of the General Assembly takes note “with appreciation of the interim report of the Special Representative of the Commission on

Human Rights”; takes note “of the view of the Special Representative that, in order to achieve full co-operation between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Special Representative, there is a need to proceed to another stage in the discharge of his mandate”; welcomes “the invitation by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Special Representative for him to visit that country”; decides “to continue its examination... during its forty-fifth session.”

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#### 1990

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1990/79 (7.3.1990) of the Commission on Human Rights notes “the findings of the Special Representative on the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; expresses “its concern that testimony gathered by the Special Representative reiterated complaints about unlawful executions, torture, substitute prisoners, imprisonment beyond the period specified in the sentence, spontaneous decisions by low-ranking officials and the absence of council for defence as well as restrictions on the right to assemble...”; requests “the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís, and a final report to the Commission at its forty-seventh session.”

Decision 1990/243 of ECOSOC approves the Commission’s decision to extend the Special Representative’s mandate.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1990/9 (30.8.1990) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities notes “that the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be uncertain”; expresses “its deep concern about the grave violations of human rights namely those related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture and from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression...”; decides “to consider the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’í, at its forty-third session.”

Resolution 45/173 (18.12.1990) of the General Assembly noting “the findings of the Special Representative on the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; calls upon “the Islamic Republic of Iran to intensify its efforts to investigate and rectify the human rights issues raised by the Special Representative, in particular as regards the administration of justice and due process of law in order to comply with international instruments on human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in these instruments”; notes “that the co-operation of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the Special Representative has improved and has included replies by the Government to allegations that have been transmitted to it, and urges the Government to reply in detail to all allegations referred to by the Special Representative in his reports.”

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#### 1991

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1991/82 (7.3.1991) of the Commission on Human Rights noting further “the findings of the Special Representative on the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; welcomes

“the full cooperation extended by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Special Representative, which has reached its highest level, as well as the intention of the Government to continue its full cooperation with the Special Representative”; requests “the Special Representative to maintain his contact and cooperation with the Government...and to report on further progress with regard to the recommendations contained in his report, on the basis of his mandate pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1984/54 of 14 March 1984”; also requests the Special Representative “to submit a report to be considered by the Commission which will consider the report with the view to its discontinuing the mandate if there is further progress achieved regarding his recommendations.”

Decision 1991/261 of ECOSOC approves the Commission’s request to the Special Representative to maintain his contacts and cooperation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to report on further progress.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1991/9 (23.8.1991) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities notes “that the situation of the Bahá’í community in the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be a matter of great concern”; expresses “its deep concern at the escalating grave violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular of the right to life, the right to freedom from torture and from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression, and calls upon the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-eight session, to extend the mandate of the Special Representative and the monitoring of the situation of human rights”; decides “to consider the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’í community, at its forty-fourth session.”

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#### 1992

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1992/67 (4.3.1992) of the Commission on Human Rights takes note “with appreciation of the report of the Special Representative of the Commission (E/CN.4/1992/34) and the observations contained therein”; expresses “its deep concern at the continuing reports of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; expresses “its concern more specifically at the main weaknesses, according to the Special Representative, of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely, the lack of guarantees of due process of law, discriminatory treatment of certain groups of citizens for reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá’ís...”; welcomes “the fact that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has permitted the Special Representative to visit the country and has continued to reply to allegations of human rights violations transmitted to it by the Special Representative”; calls upon the Government “to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in the international instruments”; decides “to extend the mandate of the Special Representative requesting him to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session”; decides “to continue its consideration of the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a matter of priority, at its forty-ninth session.”

Decision 1992/239 of ECOSOC approves

the Commission's decision to extend the Special Representative's mandate and its request to the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly and a final report to the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1992/15 (27.8.1992) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities notes "in particular that the situation of the Bahá'í community in the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be a matter of concern"; condemns "the continuing grave violations of human rights by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially: (d) renewed persecution of religious minorities and summary killings of Bahá'ís."

Resolution 47/146 (18.12.1992) of the General Assembly expresses "its concern at continuing reports of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran"; expresses "its concern more specifically at the main criticisms according to the Special Representative of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely, the high number of executions, the practice of torture, the standard of the administration of justice, the absence of guarantees of due legal process, the treatment of the Bahá'í community and restriction of freedoms of expression, thought, opinion and press"; regrets "that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has not permitted the Special Representative to visit the country and failed to reply to allegations of human rights violations" and regrets also "that, as the Special Representative concluded, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not given adequate follow-up to many of the recommendations contained in the previous reports"; decides "to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran during its forty-eighth session under the item 'Human rights questions' in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the ECOSOC."

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#### 1993

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1992/62 (10.3.1993) of the Commission on Human Rights, noting "the Special Representative's ... view that during 1992 there was no appreciable progress in the Islamic Republic of Iran towards improved compliance with human rights standards in conformity with international instruments," "expresses its deep concern at continuing reports of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; expresses "its concern more specifically at the main criticisms of the Special Representative of the ... discriminatory treatment of certain groups of citizens for reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís," while conveying "its regret that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has not granted the request of the Special Representative to visit the country for more than a year," "calls upon the Government ... to comply with international instruments on human rights ... to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognised in these instruments," and "decides to extend the mandate of the Special Representative ... for a further year," requesting "the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly ... on the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá'ís," continuing its consideration of Iran's human rights situation "as a matter of priority, at its fiftieth session."

Decision 1993/273 of ECOSOC approves the Commission's decision to extend the mandate of the Special Representative for one year, to request him to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and to report to the Commission at its fiftieth session and to request to the Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to the Special Representative.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1993/14 (20.4.1993) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, gravely concerned at "the systematic repression of the Bahá'í community and at the plight of the Iranian Kurds," strongly condemns "the continuing and flagrant human rights violations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including: (d) The continued persecution of the Bahá'ís and other religious minorities," and decides to "consider further the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of women and minority groups such as the Bahá'ís and the Kurds, at its forty-sixth session."

Resolution 48/145 (20.12.1993) of the General Assembly expresses its concern "at the main criticisms of the Special Representative with regard to the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely, ... discriminatory treatment of certain groups of citizens by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable religious community is threatened..." also calls upon "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with international instruments on human rights, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in those instruments" and decides to "continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá'ís..."

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#### 1994

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1994/73 (9.3.1994) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses its concern "at the main criticisms of the Special Representative with regard to the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely, ... discriminatory treatment of certain groups of citizens for reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable religious community in the Islamic Republic of Iran is threatened, as well as the ill-treatment of certain Christians and restrictions on the freedoms of expression, thought, opinion and the press, and that, as noted by the Special Representative, there is continued discrimination against women," also calls upon "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with international instruments on human rights, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in these instruments" and requests the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá'ís, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-first session.

Decision 1994/263 of ECOSOC approves the Commission's decision to extend for a further year the

mandate of the Special Representative, to request him to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-first session and to request the Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to the Special Representative.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1994/16 (25.8.1994) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities deeply concerned “at extensive and continuing human rights violations by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including ... freedom of religion,” shocked “by the systematic repression of the Bahá'í community and at the situation of the Iranian Kurds and the Arab minority in Iran, and at increasing intolerance towards Christians, including recent murders of Christian religious ministers,” condemns “the flagrant violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran which, as noted by the Special Representative of the Commission, include: (d) Religious discrimination, notably against the Bahá'ís and Christian individuals and groups,” and requests the Secretary-General to “continue to keep the Sub-Commission informed of relevant reports and United Nations measures to prevent human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including, in particular, those concerning the situation of the Kurds and the Arab minority and the religious freedoms of the Bahá'í and Christian communities in Iran.”

Resolution 49/202 (23.12.1994) of the General Assembly expresses “its concern more specifically at the main criticisms of the Special Representative in his recent reports with regard to ... the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable religious minority is threatened ...,” urges “the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with international instruments on human rights, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups and other persons belonging to minorities, enjoy the rights recognized in those instruments”; and decides “to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá'ís, during its fiftieth session under the item entitled ‘Human rights questions’ in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council.”

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## 1995

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1995/68 (8.3.1995) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses “its deep concern at continued violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including those highlighted by the Special Representative in his report, namely ... the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable religious community in the Islamic Republic of Iran is threatened” ... also urges “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the Covenants and under other international instruments on human rights, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in these instruments,”

further urges “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to intensify its efforts to investigate and rectify the human rights issues raised by the Special Representative in his observations, in particular with regard to the administration of justice and due process of law, and, in fulfilment of its obligations under article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to take steps to ensure the recognition and enjoyment of human rights of persons belonging to minorities” and requests “the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-second session.”

Decision 1995/279 of ECOSOC approves the Commission's decision to extend for a further year the mandate of the Special Representative on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, to request him to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-second session and to request to the Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to the Special Representative.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1995/18 (24.8.1995) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities deeply concerned at “extensive and continuing human rights violations by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including arbitrary and summary executions, torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment, unexplained disappearances, the absence of guarantees essential for the protection of the right to a fair trial and disregard for freedom of expression and freedom of religion,” noting “that relevant international organizations and bodies emphasize the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in intimidating and harassing the religious minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran during the past year, in particular in the assassination of three Christian leaders,” condemns “the flagrant violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran which, as noted by the Special Representative of the Commission, include: (f) Religious discrimination, notably against Bahá'ís and Christian individuals and groups,” requests “the Secretary-General to continue to keep the Sub-Commission informed of relevant reports and United Nations measures to prevent human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including, in particular, those concerning the situation of the Kurds and the Arab minority and the religious freedoms and the emancipation of the Bahá'í and Christian communities in Iran.”

Resolution 50/188 (22.12.95) of the General Assembly expresses “its concern at violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular ... the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable religious community in the Islamic Republic of Iran is threatened ...,” urges “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to abide by its obligations freely undertaken under the Covenants and under other international instruments on human rights and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in those instruments,” and decides “to continue the examination of the situation of

human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, during its fifty-first session under the item entitled "Human rights questions," on the basis of the report of the Special Representative and in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council."

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#### 1996

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1996/84 (24.4.1996) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses "its concern at the continuation of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular ... the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable religious community in the Islamic Republic of Iran is threatened..." calls upon "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and to other minority religious groups, including Christians," urges "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to abide by its obligations under the Covenants and under other international instruments on human rights to which it is party, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in these instruments" and requests "the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-third session."

Decision 1996/287 of ECOSOC endorses the Commission's decision to extend for a further year the mandate of the Special Representative, and approves the Commission's request to the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, and to report to the Commission at its fifty-third session.

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1996/7 (20.8.1996) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities gravely concerned "at reports of: (a) Extensive and continuing human rights violations by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including arbitrary and summary executions, torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment, unexplained disappearances, the absence of guarantees essential for the protection of the right to a fair trial and disregard for freedom of expression and freedom of religion," requests "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to investigate fully in order to end the alleged violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran which include: (d) Religious discrimination, notably against Bahá'ís and Christians," urges "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement fully the conclusions and the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and to other minority religious groups, including Christians, until they are completely emancipated" and requests "the Secretary-General to continue to keep the Sub-Commission informed of relevant reports and United Nations measures to prevent human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including

violations of the religious freedoms of the Bahá'í and the Christian communities in Iran."

Resolution 51/107 (12.12.96) of the General Assembly expresses "its concern at the grave breaches of human rights of the Bahá'ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran and situations of discrimination against the members of this religious community, as well as at the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, including lack of adequate protection for the Christian minorities, some members of which have been the target of intimidation and assassination," urges "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the Covenants and under other international instruments on human rights and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including members of religious groups and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments," calls upon "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief relating to the Bahá'ís and to other minority religious groups, including Christians," expresses its grave concern at indications, according to the information received by the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, of a significant toughening of criminal legislation and its application in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in particular at the incidence of capital punishment imposed for apostasy and non-violent crimes, in violation of the relevant provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations safeguards," and decides "on the basis of the report of the Special Representative and in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council, to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, during its fifty-second session under the item entitled 'Human rights questions.'"

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#### 1997

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1997/54 (15.4.1997) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses "its concern: (b) At the grave breaches of the human rights of the Bahá'ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran and situations of discrimination against the members of this religious community, as well as at the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, including certain Christian minorities, some members of which have been the targets of intimidation and assassination," calls upon "the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: (b) To abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights and under other international instruments on human rights, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including members of religious groups and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments; (c) To implement fully the recommendations of the Special Representative and the relevant recommendations of the Special Rapporteurs on religious intolerance and on freedom of opinion and expression, in particular the recommendations relating to the Bahá'ís, Christians, Sunni and other minority religious groups; (g) To

ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed for apostasy or non-violent crimes, or in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the United Nations safeguards” and decides: “... (c) To continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, at its fifty-fourth session under the agenda item entitled ‘Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories.’”

Decision 1997/262 of ECOSOC endorses the Commission’s decision to extend for a further year the mandate of the Special Representative on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, approved the Commission’s request to the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session, and to keep a gender perspective in mind when seeking and analysing information, and to request the Secretary-General to continue to give all necessary assistance to the Special Representative to enable him to discharge his mandate fully.

Resolution 52/142 of the General Assembly expresses “its concern: (b) At the grave breaches of the human rights of the Bahá’ís, the discrimination against members of other religious minorities, including Christians, and the death sentences pronounced against Dhabihullah Mahrami, Musa Talibi and Ramadan-Ali Dhulfaqari, on the charge of apostasy, and against Bihnam Mithaqi and Kayvan Khalajabadi because of their beliefs,” calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: “... (b) To abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights and under other international instruments on human rights and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including members of religious groups and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments; (c) To implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief relating to the Bahá’ís and to other minority religious groups, including Christians, until they are completely emancipated; E/CN.4/1996/95/Add.2. (g) To ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed for apostasy or non-violent crimes or in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations safeguards” and decides “to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, at its fifty-third session under the item entitled ‘Human rights questions,’ in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights.”

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#### 1998

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1998/80 (22.4.1998) of the Commission on Human Rights expresses “its concern: (c) At continuing grave violations of the human rights of the Bahá’ís, as well as at the discrimination against members of other religious minorities, including Christians, despite constitutional guarantees, at the increased pressure on religious communities and persons suspected of proselytizing, and at the death sentences

pronounced against Mr. Dhabihullah Mahrami and Mr. Musa Talibi on the charge of apostasy, and against Mr. Bihnam Mithaqi and Mr. Kayvan Khalajabadi because of their beliefs,” calls upon “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: (b) To abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights and under other international instruments on human rights, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including members of religious groups and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments; ... (e) To implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá’ís, Christians and other minority religious groups, until they are completely emancipated ... (j) To ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed for non-violent crimes, for apostasy, or otherwise in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the United Nations safeguards” and decides: “... (c) To continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís and the Christians, at its fifty-fifth session under the same agenda item.”

Decision 1998/273 of ECOSOC endorses the Commission’s decision to extend the mandate of the Special Representative for a further year, to request the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fifth session, and to keep a gender perspective in mind when seeking and analysing information, and to request the Secretary-General to continue to give all necessary assistance to the Special Representative to enable him to discharge his mandate fully.

Resolution 53/158 (9.12.1998) of the General Assembly expresses “its concern at the discrimination against religious minorities and in particular remains gravely concerned at the unabated pattern of persecution against the Bahá’ís, in particular the execution and sentencing to death and arrests of members of the Bahá’í community, and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá’ís and to other religious minorities, until they are completely emancipated”; calls upon “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed for more than the most serious crimes, for apostasy, or otherwise in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations safeguards, and to provide the Special Representative with relevant statistics on this matter”; and decides “to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, at its fifty-fourth session under the item entitled ‘Human rights questions,’ in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights.”

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#### 1999

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1999/13 (23.4.1999) of the Commission on Human Rights notes with interest: “... (b) The reported elimination of discrimination against Bahá’í youth in enrollment in the pre-university year at the high-school level, while remaining concerned that their entry to universities continues to be refused,

expresses its concern: (c) At the continued discrimination against religious minorities, in particular the unabated and, in some instances, worsened pattern of persecution against the Bahá'ís, including death sentences, executions, arrests and the closure of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education" and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: "... (b) To ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed for other than the most serious crimes, not for apostasy or otherwise in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations safeguards, and to provide the Special Representative with relevant statistics on this matter; (c) To implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and other minority religious groups until they are completely emancipated"; and decides: "... (c) To continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of the Bahá'ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-sixth session under the same agenda item."

Resolution A/RES/754/177 (17.12.1999) of the General Assembly expresses its concern... "at the discrimination against religious minorities, in particular Bahá'ís, and remains gravely concerned at the unabated pattern of persecution against the Bahá'ís, including death sentences, arrests and the closure of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and other religious minorities until they are completely emancipated"; Decides... "to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá'ís, at its fifty-fifth session under the item entitled "Human rights questions", in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights".

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## 2000

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Resolution E/CN.4/2000/L.16 (10.4.2000) the Commission on Human Rights expresses its concern: ... "At the discrimination against religious minorities, in particular the unabated pattern of persecution against the Bahá'ís, including death sentences and arrests"; calls upon... "To ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed other than for the most serious crimes, not for apostasy or otherwise in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations safeguards, and to provide the Special Representative with relevant statistics on this matter"; "To implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and other minority religious groups until they are completely emancipated; Decides:... "To continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, paying particular attention to further developments, including the situation of the Bahá'ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-seventh session under the same agenda item".

Resolution A/RES/55/114 (4.12.00) The General Assembly expresses its concern: "At the discrimination against persons belonging to religious minorities, in particular the unabated pattern of persecution of the Bahá'ís, including the continuing detention and the sentencing to death of some of them". Calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran... "to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Representative with regard to religious

intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and other minority religious groups, Ibid., para 110. until they are completely emancipated"; Decides "to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, at its fifty-sixth session, under the item 'Human rights questions', in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights".

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## 2001

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Resolution E/CN.4/RES/2001/17 (20.4.2001) the Commission on Human Rights notes:

"recent positive steps regarding the situation of the Bahá'ís, including the report that they will be allowed to re-establish their cemetery in Tehran, but expresses its concern at the still-existing discrimination against persons belonging to minorities, in particular against Bahá'ís, and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious grounds or against persons belonging to minorities and to address this matter in an open manner with the full participation of the minorities themselves, as well as to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and other minority groups until they are completely emancipated". Decides... "to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, paying particular attention to further developments, including the situation of the Bahá'ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-eighth session under the same agenda item".

Resolution A/RES/56/171 (19.12.2001) the General Assembly expresses its concern: ... "At the continuing discrimination against persons belonging to minorities, in particular against Bahá'ís, Christians, Jews and Sunnis". It calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: ... "To eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious grounds or against persons belonging to minorities and to address this matter in an open manner, with the full participation of the minorities themselves, as well as to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of religious intolerances relating to the Bahá'ís and other minority groups until they are completely emancipated.". Decides: ... "To continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, paying particular attention to further developments, including the situation of the Bahá'ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-seventh session, under the agenda item entitled "Human rights questions", in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights".

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## 2003

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Resolution A/RES/58/195 (22.12.03) the General Assembly expresses its serious concern at:... "The Continuing discrimination against persons belonging to minorities, including the Bahá'ís, Christians, Jews and Sunnis, including cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, the denial of free worship or of publicly carrying out communal affairs and the disregard of property rights". It calls upon the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran:... "To eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious grounds or against persons belonging to minorities, including the Bahá'ís, Christians, Jews and Sunnis, and to address this matter in an open manner, with the full participation of the minorities themselves".

It decides:... “to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, paying particular attention to further developments, including the situation of the Bahá’ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-ninth session, under the item entitled “Human rights questions”, in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights”.

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#### 2004

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Resolution A/RES/59/205 (02.11.04) the General Assembly expresses its serious concern at:... “The continuing discrimination against persons belonging to minorities, including Christians, Jews and Sunnis, and the increased discrimination against the Bahá’ís, including cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, the denial of free worship or of publicly carrying out communal affairs, the disregard of property rights, the destruction of sites of religious importance, the suspension of social, educational and community-related activities and the denial of access to higher education, employment, pensions and other benefits”. It calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran:... “To eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious grounds or against persons belonging to minorities, including the Bahá’ís, Christians, Jews and Sunnis, and to address this matter in an open manner, with the full participation of the minorities themselves, and to ensure respect for the freedom of religion or belief of all persons”.

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#### 2005

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Resolution A/RES/60/171 (16.12.2005) the General Assembly “expresses its serious concern” at “continuing harassment, intimidation and persecution of human rights defenders, non-governmental organizations, political opponents, religious dissenters, political reformists, journalists, parliamentarians, students, clerics, academics and bloggers,” including “the escalation and increased frequency of discrimination and other human rights violations against the Baha’i, including cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, the denial of freedom of religion or of publicly carrying out communal affairs, the disregard of property rights, the destruction of sites of religious importance, the suspension of social, educational and community-related activities and the denial of access to higher education, employment, pensions, adequate housing and other benefits...”

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#### 2006

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Resolution A/RES/61/176 (19.12.2006) the General Assembly “expresses its serious concern” at the “persistent failure” of Iran to “comply fully with international standards in the administration of justice and, in particular, the absence of due process of law, the refusal to provide fair and public hearings, the denial of the right to counsel and access to counsel by those detained, the use of national security laws to deny human rights, the prevalent atmosphere of impunity for officials who commit human rights abuses, the harassment, intimidation and persecution of defence lawyers and legal defenders” including “the escalation and increased frequency of discrimination and other human rights violations against members of the Baha’i faith, including reports of plans by the State to identify and monitor Baha’is, as noted by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief; an increase in cases of arbitrary arrest and detention; the denial of freedom of religion or of publicly carrying out communal affairs; the disregard for property rights, including through de facto expropriation, as noted in the report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living; the destruction of sites of religious importance; the suspension of social, educational and community-related activities and the denial of access to higher education, employment, pensions, adequate housing and other benefits...”

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#### 2007

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Resolution A/RES/62/168 (18.12.2007) the General Assembly “expresses its deep concern at the ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as described in the above-mentioned resolutions, and at the failure of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement the steps called for in those resolutions” and specifically expresses “serious concern” over “attacks on Baha’is and their faith in State-sponsored media, increasing evidence of efforts by the State to identify and monitor Baha’is, preventing members of the Baha’i faith from attending university and from sustaining themselves economically, and an increase in cases of arbitrary arrest and detention...”

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

*English translation of a letter, distributed to 30 Bahá'í homes in Vilashahr on 8 September 2007, denouncing Bahá'ís as traitors and agents of colonialism. See page 6*

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

[Arabic verse]

(First Warning)

[To the] Bahá'í mercenaries—spies of powerful nations—betrayers of the homeland

Do you believe we will allow you to use the country of Imam-e-Zaman [the twelfth Imam] as a haven for your vain and futile beliefs, which are the fabrication of Western colonialism, and let you suck people's blood and take possession of the country's economy again, as in the time of the puppet Pahlavi regime?

We, the people of Hezbollah, as long as the blood of Hosein is in our veins, and the hope of the appearance of the Valiy-e-Asr [the twelfth Imam] is in our heads, will not permit fifth columnists who are the enemies of Islam as well as the Muslims, to plunder and destroy our Islamic and Iranian belief and culture.

We have asked the authorities endless numbers of times to restrain traitors like you, but it seems that they have no listening ear. However, the matter of commanding others to do good, and forbidding them from wrongdoing, and the advice of the Greatest Messenger, "You are all shepherds and you are all responsible", will help us focus on our main obligation.

If you are sitting still, then let it be; otherwise wait for the next phase.

People of Hezbollah

بسم الله القاسم الجبارين

## ( اخطاریه اول )

عناصر خود فروخته بهایی جزایر و سرزمین استکبار جهانی - وطن فروشان اجنبی

گمان کرده اید ما میگذاریم کشور امام زمان را محلی امن برای عقاید  
بوج و تو خالی که دست نوشته استعمار غرب است قرار دهید و مانند  
رژیم طاغوتی پهلوی ، دوباره خون مردم را بمکید و اقتصاد کشور را  
قبضه نمایید .

ما امت حزب اله تا زمانی که خون حسین در رگهایمان و امید ظهور  
حضرت ولی عصر (عج) در سرمان هست ، به عناصر ستون پنجم دشمن  
اسلام و مسلمین اجازه نخواهیم داد تا قد علم کنند و عقیده و فرهنگ  
اسلامی و ایرانی مان را چپاول و نابود نمایند .

ما از اولیای امر تا کنون تقاضای بی شماری کرده ایم تا جلوی شما  
وطن فروشان را بگیرند ولی ظاهراً آنها گوششان شنوا نیست . اما مسئله  
و جوب امر به معروف و نهی از منکر و سفارش پیامبر اعظم که  
میفرمایند «کلکم راع و کلکم مسئول» ما را از وظیفه اصلی باز نمی  
دارد .

اگر سر جایان نشستید فلها والا منتظر مرحله بعدی باشید.

«امت حزب اله»



[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

Urgent/Immediate [Stamp]

Logo of the Armed Forces      [The Office of] the Commander in Chief      Logo of IRI

Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces

Highly Confidential [Stamp]

From: Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces	Number: A/3/2/47/15
To: Recipients Listed Below	Date: 7/8/1384 [29/10/2005]
Subject: Identification of individuals of the misguided Sects of Bahaism and Babism	Enclosure: Salamati Rahbar [Health of the Supreme Leader]

With salutations and praise to Muhammad and his descendants (S) [May the Blessing of God be Upon Him and His Descendants], while we express our deepest sympathy on the occasion of the martyrdom of the Lord of believers in divine unity and the Commander of the faithful (MPUH) [May Peace be Upon Him], and wishing for the acceptance of [our] obligations and worships, further to the reports received concerning the secret activities and meetings of the misguided sects of Bahaism and Babism, in Tehran and other cities in the country, and according to the instructions of the Exalted Rank of the Supreme Leader, His Holiness Ayatollah Khamenei (may his exalted shadow be extended), the Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces has been given the mission to acquire a comprehensive and complete report of all the activities of these sects (including political, economic, social and cultural) for the purpose of identifying all the individuals of these misguided sects. Therefore, we request that you convey to relevant authorities to, in a highly confidential manner, collect any and all information about the above-mentioned activities of these individuals and report it to this Command Headquarters.

This [either this information, or the reports to be received] will be submitted for the blessed consideration of the Exalted Rank of the Supreme Leader, the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces (may his exalted shadow be extended).

Signed: Chairman of the Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces  
Basij Major General. Dr. Seyyed Hossein Firuzabadi

Recipients:

- The Ministry of Information of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Belief-Political [organization] of [the office of] the Commander in Chief
- The Commander of the [Revolutionary] Guard
- The Commander of the Basij Resistance Forces of the [Revolutionary] Guard
- The Commander of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Deputy of the Intelligence Branch of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Representative of the Jurist Cleric [Ayatollah Khamenei] in the [Revolutionary] Guard
- The Chairman of the Belief-Political Organization of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Chief Commander of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran

CC:

The Esteemed Chairman of the Judiciary – His Holiness Ayatollah Shahrudi for information and necessary action.  
The Esteemed Chairman of the Office of the Exalted Rank of the Supreme Leader – Basij Brigadier General Mehdi Shirazi for information.



گنجینه

فرماندهی کل نیروها

سناد کل نیروهای مسلح



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شماره: ۲۳۲/۴۷/۸۵

تاریخ: ۷ - ۱۳۸۵/۱۰

پیوست: سلامتی رفیق

**خیابانی محرمانه**

ار: سناد کل نیروهای مسلح

به: کیوندگان ذیل

موضوع: شناسایی افراد فرقه های ضاله بهائیت و بابیت

با سلام و صلوات بر محمد و آل محمد (ص)؛ ضمن عرض تسلیت به مناسبت شهادت مولی الموحدين امیر مؤمنان (ع) و با آرزوی قبولی طاعات و عبادات، پیرو گزارشات واصله از فعالیتهای و تشکیل جلسات مخفیانه فرقه های ضاله بهائیت و بابیت در تهران و شهرستانهای کشور، چنانچه دستور مقام معظم رهبری حضرت آیت الله خامنه ای (مدظله العالی)، سناد کل نیروهای مسلح صادر گردیده تا گزارش جامع و کاملی از کلیه فعالیتهای این فرقه ها (اعم از سیاسی، اقتصادی، اجتماعی و فرهنگی) جهت شناسایی کلیه افراد این فرقه های ضاله کسب کند. لذا خواهشمند است به مساعدی ذیوقت ابلاغ فرمایید تا هر گونه اطلاعاتی در زمینه شایسته مذکور از این افراد را بهسورت خیلی محرمانه جمع آوری و به این سناد گزارش فرمایید.

مراتب بهتئور تقدیم به محضر مبارک مقام معظم رهبری و فرمانده معظم کل قوا (مدظله العالی) ابلاغ می گردد.

**گیرندگان:**

- وزارت اطلاعات جمهوری اسلامی ایران
- ختبدی سیاسی فرماندهی کل قوا
- فرمانده کل سپاه پاسداران
- فرمانده نیروهای مشاورت سپاه پاسداران
- فرمانده نیروی انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران
- معاونت آگاهی نیروی انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران
- نماینده ولی فقیه در سپاه پاسداران
- رئیس سازمان عقیدتی سیاسی نیروی انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران
- فرمانده کل ارتش جمهوری اسلامی ایران

رونوشت:

- رئیس محترم توه قضائیه - حضرت آیت الله شاهرودی جهت اطلاع و اقدام لازم.
- رئیس محترم دفتر مقام معظم رهبری - مولی السجده مهدی شراری جهت اطلاع.

رئیس سناد کل نیروهای مسلح

سرلشکر سپنج دکتر سید حسن فیروز آبادی

*English translation of 19 August 2006 letter ordering officials to step up the surveillance of Iranian Bahá'ís. See page 12*

28 Murdád 1385 [19 August 2006]

Islamic Republic of Iran

Number: 70878/43

Ministry of the Interior

In the Name of God

To the honourable political-security deputies of the offices  
of the Governors-General of the country

Greetings,

Respectfully, we have received reports that some of the elements of the perverse sect of Bahaism are attempting to teach and spread the ideology of Bahaism, under the cover of social and economic activities. In view of the fact that this sect is illegal and that it is exploited by international and Zionist organizations against the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we therefore ask you to order the relevant offices to cautiously and carefully monitor and manage their [the Bahá'ís'] social activities. In addition, complete the requested information on the enclosed form and forward it to this office for its use by 15 Shahrívar [6 September 2006].

Seyyed Mohammad-Reza Mavvalizadeh

Director of the Political Office

شماره ۵۲۸  
تاریخ ۱۳۸۵/۸/۱۹

بسیار

جمهوری اسلامی ایران  
وزارت کشور

### معاونان محترم سیاسی امنیتی استانداریهای سراسر کشور

سلام علیکم،

آنرا برابر گزارشهای ارسالی، برخی از عناصر فرقه ضاله بهائیت، تحت پوشش فعالیت های اجتماعی و اقتصادی اقدام به ترویج و تبلیغ مرام بهائیت می نمایند از آنجا که این فرقه، غیر قانونی است و از سوی سازمانهای بین المللی و محافل صهیونیستی مورد بهره برداری علیه نظام جمهوری اسلامی قرار می گیرد. خواهشمند است دستور فرمائید دستگاههای مربوطه با ظراقت و حساسیت رفتارهای اجتماعی آنها را کنترل و مدیریت نمایند. ضمناً اطلاعات خواسته شده را طبق فرم پیوست تکمیل و تا پانزده شهریور جهت بهره برداری به این معاونت ارسال نمایند. م ۱۶/۸

سید محمد رضا موالی زاده  
مدیر کل دفتر سیاسی

محمد

*English translation of 2 May 2006 letter from the Trades, Production, and Technical Services Society of Kermanshah to the Iranian Union of Battery Manufacturers. See page 12*

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [].]

[Logo]	In the Name of God, the Exalted	Date: 12/2/85 [2 May 2006]
	Trades, Production, and Technical	Number: 3.3-6
	Services Society of Kermanshah	Attachment:

Confidential

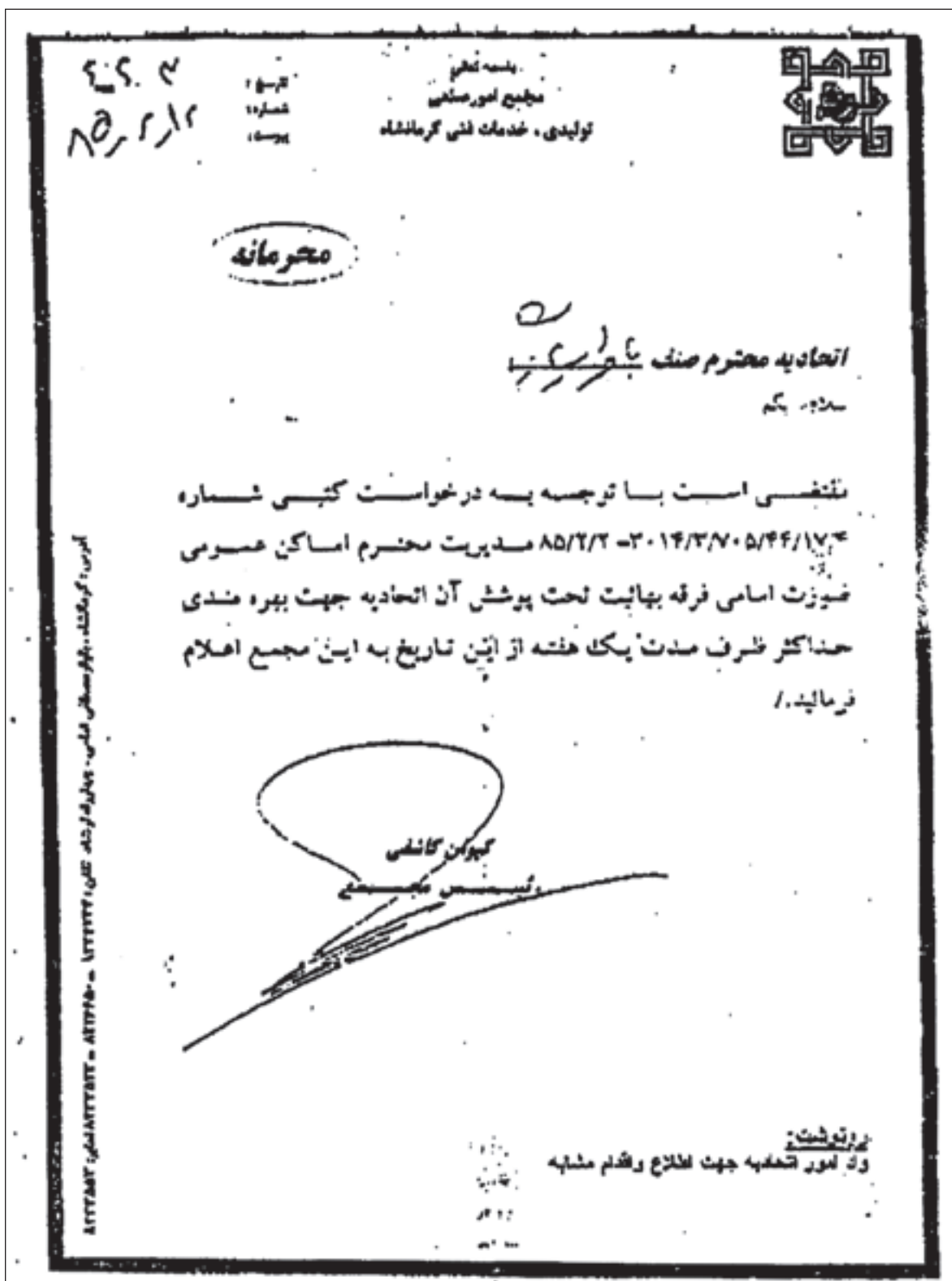
To the honourable Union of Battery Manufacturers

Greetings,

In consideration of the written request of the head of the [Department for the Monitoring of] Public Places, reference number 85/2/2-3014/3/705/44/174, it is requested that a list of the names of those who belong to the Bahá'í sect and are under the jurisdiction of your union be sent to this society within a week from today.

Keyvan Kashefi  
Head of the Society  
[Signature]

Copy: Affairs of the society for your information and similar action  
Ershad Intersection  
Mustafa Imami Boulevard  
Kermanshah  
Iran  
Tel: 8224234, 8223480, 8233523  
Fax: 8233553



English translation and, below, Persian text of the Ayatollah Montazeri fatwa as posted on 14 May 2008 on the web site Iranian.com. See page 18

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

In the name of God most high

With greetings,

The Bahaist sect, as it does not have its own heavenly Book as do the Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians, is not recognized as a religious minority by the constitution. But since they are in any case the citizens of this country, they have “the right to water and mud” and should thus be entitled to citizenship rights. They should likewise be the recipient of Islamic compassion, which has been so emphasized in the Qur’án and by the leaders of the Faith.

May God grant you every success.

[Signed:] Ayatollah Montazeri

25/2/1387 [14 May 2008]

بسمه تعالی

باسلام و تحیت

فرقه بهائیت چون دارای کتاب آسمانی همچون یهود، مسیحیان و زرتشتیان نیستند در قانون اساسی جزو اقلیت‌های مذهبی شمرده نشده‌اند، ولی از آن جهت که اهل این کشور هستند حق آب و گل دارند و از حقوق شهروندی برخوردار می‌باشند، همچنین باید از رأفت اسلامی که مورد تأکید قرآن و اولیاء دین است بهره‌مند باشند.

ان شاء الله موفق باشید.

والسلام علیکم ورحمة الله

۲۵/۲/۱۳۸۷  


[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Text in square brackets added by translator]

In the Name of God!

The Islamic Republic of Iran

The Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council

Number: 1327/....

Date: 6/12/69 [25 February 1991]

Enclosure: None

CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

Head of the Office of the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei]

Greetings!

After greetings, with reference to the letter #1/783 dated 10/10/69 [31 December 1990], concerning the instructions of the Esteemed Leader which had been conveyed to the Respected President regarding the Bahá’í question, we inform you that, since the respected President and the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council had referred this question to this Council for consideration and study, it was placed on the Council’s agenda of session #128 on 16/11/69 [5 February 1991] and session #119 of 2/11/69 [22 January 1991]. In addition to the above, and further to the [results of the] discussions held in this regard in session #112 of 2/5/66 [24 July 1987] presided over by the Esteemed Leader (head and member of the Supreme Council), the recent views and directives given by the Esteemed Leader regarding the Bahá’í question were conveyed to the Supreme Council. In consideration of the contents of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the religious and civil laws and general policies of the country, these matters were carefully studied and decisions pronounced.

In arriving at the decisions and proposing reasonable ways to counter the above question, due consideration was given to the wishes of the Esteemed Leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran [Khamenei], namely, that “in this regard a specific policy should be devised in such a way that everyone will understand what should or should not be done.” Consequently, the following proposals and recommendations resulted from these discussions.

The respected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council, while approving these recommendations, instructed us to convey them to the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei] so that appropriate action may be taken according to his guidance.

(continued)

## SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

### A. General status of the Bahá'ís within the country's system

1. They will not be expelled from the country without reason.
2. They will not be arrested, imprisoned, or penalized without reason.
3. The government's dealings with them must be in such a way that their progress and development are blocked.

### B. Educational and cultural status

1. They can be enrolled in schools provided they have not identified themselves as Bahá'ís.
2. Preferably, they should be enrolled in schools which have a strong and imposing religious ideology.
3. They must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís.
4. Their political (espionage) activities must be dealt with according to appropriate government laws and policies, and their religious and propaganda activities should be answered by giving them religious and cultural responses, as well as propaganda.
5. Propaganda institutions (such as the Islamic Propaganda Organization) must establish an independent section to counter the propaganda and religious activities of the Bahá'ís.
6. A plan must be devised to confront and destroy their cultural roots outside the country.

### C. Legal and social status

1. Permit them a modest livelihood as is available to the general population.
2. To the extent that it does not encourage them to be Bahá'ís, it is permissible to provide them the means for ordinary living in accordance with the general rights given to every Iranian citizen, such as ration booklets, passports, burial certificates, work permits, etc.
3. Deny them employment if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís.
4. Deny them any position of influence, such as in the educational sector, etc.

Wishing you divine confirmations,

Secretary of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

[Signature]

[Note in the handwriting of Mr. Khamenei]

In the Name of God!

The decision of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council seems sufficient.

I thank you gentlemen for your attention and efforts.

[signed:] Ali Khamenei

شماره ۸۳۲۷  
تاریخ ۱۹/۱۲/۵۷  
پیوست

جمهوری اسلامی ایران  
شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی



## استحضار

جناب آقای محمدی گاهکاز  
رئیس محترم دفتر مقام معظم رهبری

سلام علیکم

بعد از تحیات و عطف پرتابه شماره ۱/۷۸۲ مورخ ۹/۱۰/۱۰ و اثر به ابلاغ اوامر مقام معظم رهبری به ریاست محترم جمهوری در ۱۳۵۷ به انجمن بهائیان در تهران و در سراسر کشور حسب ارجاع ریاست محترم جمهوری رئیس شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی موضوع جهت طرح و بررسی در دستور جلسه ۲۲۴ مورخ ۱۱/۱۱/۱۰ و ۱۱/۱۱/۲۰ شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی قرار گرفت و در نتیجه مذاکرات و مراتبی که در جلسه ۱۱۲ مورخ ۱۱/۱۲/۱۰ شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی به ریاست مقام معظم رهبری (رئیس دفتر شورای عالی) در این خصوص به عمل آمد و بعد از مذاکرات و ابلاغ امر مقام معظم رهبری در رابطه با مسائل بهائیان به اطلاع شورای عالی رسید و با عنایت به مذاکره قانون اساسی جمهوری اسلامی ایران و مسائل شرعی و قانونی و سیاستهای عمومی کشور مورد مذاکره و مذاکره و اعلام نظر واقع گردید و در راستای تعیین و پیشنهاد متباینه صحیح و مطلوب در سربورد با مسائل مذکور و با مصلحت توجه خاص به اوامر مقام معظم رهبران جمهوری اسلامی ایران و اثر پراکنده "در این رابطه سیاست کلی فکری درستی بشود تا همه بگویند چه گریز باید بشود یا نشود" ماحصل مذاکرات و پیشنهادات و طرح زیر چنانچه بندی کرده به ریاست محترم جمهوری و رئیس شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی ضمن مساعدت و انقضای نتیجه مذاکرات و پیشنهادات مطرح فرموده مراتب به استحضار مقام معظم رهبری رسانده شود تا ضمن اثر نادات لازم به ترتیب که صلاح میدید بهایمانند عمل شود.

جمع بندی تفاهات مذاکرات و پیشنهادات

=====

الف: جایگاه کلی بهائیان در نظام ملکی

- ۱- به یون جهت آنان از ملکت اخراج نمی شوند
- ۲- به دلیل آنان دستگیر موندانی و با مجازات نمی شوند
- ۳- بر غیر نظام با آنان باید موری باشد که راه ترقی و توسعه آنان مسدود نشود.

ب: جایگاه فرهنگی

- ۱- در مدارس چنانچه اظهار نکردند بهائیانند ثبت نام شوند
- ۲- حتی انظار در مدارس که کارهای و مناسبات ملکی دارند ثبت نام شوند

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

Date: 19/1/1386 [9 April 2007]

From: The Public Intelligence and Security Force, Tehran — Public Places Supervision Office

To: Esteemed Commanders of County Police Forces — Heads of the Public Intelligence and Security Force;

Subject: Review of the eligibility of individuals belonging to small groups and the perverse Bahaist sect


Greetings,


May peace be upon Muhammad and His family! With respect, and based on the instructions received from the Head of the Public Intelligence and Security Force (NÁJÁ) — Public Places Supervision Office (number 31/2/5/30/14, dated 21/12/85 [12 March 2007]) and with due attention to the increase in the number of requests from the perverse Bahaist sect to obtain work permits and their rightful and legal presence in the crafts industry once they have acquired their work permit; it is necessary, for the benefit of the ongoing monitoring and supervision of their activities and in order to halt — as much as possible — their extensive presence throughout sensitive and important craft organizations and also individuals from small groups requesting work permits, for measures to be taken with due consideration for the below points based on instruction number 100/7/30/14, dated 17/2/82 [8 May 2003] (Final Review Commission), which determines the cases to go before the Commission.

a. Perverse Bahaist Sect

1. Take measures to identify Bahá'í individuals working in craft businesses and collect statistics broken down by (their distribution and type of occupation).
2. Their activities in high-earning businesses should be halted, and only those work permits that would provide them with an ordinary livelihood should be allowed.
3. Issuing of [work] permits for the activities of the mentioned individuals in sensitive business categories (culture, propaganda, commerce, the press, jewellery and watchmaking, coffee shops, engraving, the tourist industry, car rentals, publishing, hostel and hotel management, tailoring training institutes, photography and film, [illegible] Internet, computer sales and Internet cafés), should be prevented.
4. In accordance with the religious canons, work permits will not be issued to the followers of the perverse Bahaist sect in business categories related to Tahárat [cleanliness] (1. catering at reception halls, 2. buffets and restaurants, 3. grocery shops, 4. kebab shops, 5. cafés, 6. protein [poultry] shops and supermarkets, 7. ice cream parlours, fruit juice and soft drinks shops, 8. pastry shops, 9. coffee shops)

شماره: ۱۳۴۲/۲۲  
تاریخ: ۱۹ اردیبهشت ۸۶  
پوست: راور

  
 جمهوری اسلامی ایران



از پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی ف.ا.ا. تهران - اداره نظارت بر اماکن عمومی

به: فرماندهان محترم انتظامی شهرستانهای تابعه - روسای پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی

موضوع: بررسی صلاحیت افراد گروهکی و فرق ضاله بهائیت

سلام علیهم

فاکس شده

باصولات بر محمد و آل محمد (ص) و با احترام، به استناد دستورالعمل واسله از ریاست محترم پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی ناجا - نظارت بر اماکن عمومی (شماره ۱۴/۳۰/۵/۲/۳۱ مورخه ۸۵/۱۲/۲۱) و با عنایت به افزایش مراجعات وایستگان به فرقه ضاله بهائیت جهت اخذ پروانه کسب و حضور موجه و قانونی آنها در جامعه اصناف پس از اخذ پروانه، ضروری است بمنظور کنترل و نظارت مستمر بر فعالیت آنان و حتی المقدور جلوگیری از حضور وسیع آنان در سطح صنوف حساس و مهم و سازمانهای صنفی و همچنین افراد گروهکی متقاضی پروانه کسب ضمن مد نظر قرار دادن موارد ذیل برابر دستور العمل شماره ۱۴/۳۰/۷/۱۰۰ مورخه ۸۲/۲/۱۷ (کمسیون بررسی نهائی) که نوع پرونده های قابل طرح در کمیسیون را مشخص می نماید اقدام گردد.

الف) فرق ضاله بهائیت:

۱) نسبت به شناسائی افراد بهائی شاغل در صنوف و جمع آوری آمار به تفکیک (میزان برآکندگی، نوع دست شغلی) اقدام نمایند.

۲) از فعالیت آنان مشاغل با درآمد زانی بالا جلوگیری و صرفاً با صدور مجوز یا پروانه کسب در رسته های شغلی که بتوانند در حد متعارف امرار معاش نمایند موافقت گردد.

۳) از صدور مجوز فعالیت برای افراد مذکور در رسته های شغلی حساس (فرهنگی، تبلیغاتی، اقتصادی، نظیر جراید و نشریات، جواهر و طلا سازی و ساعت و چاپخانه داران، و گیر اور سازان، موسسات توریستی و اتومبیل کرایه، ناشران کتاب و روشنان، مسافرخانه داران، هتلداران، آرایشگاههای خیاطی، عکاسی و فیلم داری، گیم نت، ایاتنه، کافی نت) جلوگیری بعمل آورند.

۴) در راستای اجرای احکام شرعی برای پیروان فرقه ضاله بهائیت جهت فعالیت در رسته های شغلی مشروط به طهارت (۱) - تالارهای پذیرائی ۲ - رستوران و سلف سرویس ۳ - اغذیه فروشان و مواد غذایی ۴ - جلوگیری و جلوگیری خورشید ۵ - قهوه خانه ۶ - فروشندگان مواد پروتئینی و سوپر مارکت ۷ - پمپ بنزین و آبنمایه و نوشابه ۸ - قنادی و شیرینی فروشی ۹ - کافه شاپ پروتیه صادر نمیگردد.

معاونت

رئیس

۱۳۸۶/۰۴/۰۹

*English text of 2006 letter from Iran's Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructing Iranian universities to expel any student who is discovered to be a Bahá'í. See page 39*

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM Persian]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [].]

Date: [?]/[?]/1385 [2006]

[Emblem]

Number: [Illegible]

In the Name of God

Islamic Republic of Iran

[Illegible]: M/2/3/9378

Ministry of Science,

Research and Technology

[Unidentified emblem]

**Confidential**

The esteemed management of the Security Office,

[The 81 universities addressed in this letter are listed below.]

Subject: Banning of the education of Bahá'ís in universities

Greetings,

Respectfully, we inform you that in accordance with decree number 1327/M/S, dated 6/12/69 [25 February 1991], issued by the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council and the notification of the responsible authorities of the Intelligence [Office], if Bahá'í individuals, at the time of enrolment at university or in the course of their studies, are identified as Bahá'ís, they must be expelled from university. Therefore, it is necessary to take measures to prevent the further studies of the aforementioned [individuals] and forward a follow-up report to this Office.

Asghar Zári'í [Asghar Zarei]

Director General of the Central Security Office

[Signature]

[The list of 81 universities]

1. University of Arák [Arak]
2. Urúmiyyih [Urmia] University
3. University of Işfahán [Isfahan]
4. Ílám [Ilam] University
5. Al-Zahrá [Alzahra] University
6. Bú-'Alí Síná [Bu Ali Sina] University
7. University of Bírjand [Birjand]
8. Imam Khomeini International University
9. Payám-i-Núr [Payame Noor] University
10. University of Tabríz [Tabriz]
11. Tarbiat Modares [Lecturer Training] University
12. Tarbiat Moallem [Teacher Training] University of Tihrán [Tehran]

(continued)

13. Ādharbáyján [Azerbaijan] Tarbiyat-i-Mu'allim [Teacher Training] University	50. Dámghán [Damghan] University of Basic Sciences
14. Sabzivár [Sabzevar] Teacher Training University	51. Yásúj [Yasuj] University
15. University of Tīhrán [Tehran]	52. Iṣfahán [Isfahan] University of Art
16. Persian Gulf University	53. Khurramshahr [Khorramshahr] University of Nautical Sciences and Technology
17. Rázi [Razi] University	54. University of Qum [Qom]
18. Zābul [Zabol] University	55. University of Maláýir [Malayer]
19. Zanján [Zanjan] University	56. Shumál [Shomal] University
20. University of Simnán [Semnan]	57. University of Science and Culture
21. University of Sistán and Balúchistán [Sistan and Baluchestan]	58. Irshád [Irshad] University of Damávand [Damavand]
22. Shahr-i-Kurd [Shahrekord] University	59. Khátam [Khatam] University
23. Sháhíd [Shahid] University	60. University of Tafrish [Tafresh]
24. Sháhíd Bá-Hunar [Shahid Bahonar] University of Kirmán [Kerman]	61. University of Bujnúrd [Bojnurd]
25. Sháhíd Bihishtí [Shahid Beheshti] University	62. Gulpáygán [Golpaygan] School of Engineering
26. Sháhíd Chamrán [Shahid Chamran] University of Ahváz [Ahvaz]	63. School of Economic Affairs
27. Shíráz [Shiraz] University	64. Non-profit Khayyám [Khayyam] Institute
28. Iṣfahán [Isfahan] University of Technology	65. Non-governmental and non-profit Sajjád [Sadjad] Institute, Mashhad [Mashhad]
29. Amirkabír [Amirkabir] University of Technology	66. Non-governmental and non-profit Sháhíd Ashrafi Iṣfahání [Shahid Ashrafi Isfahani] Institute
30. Sháhrúd [Shahrud] University of Technology	67. Non-governmental and non-profit 'Allamiy-i-Muḥadaṭh-i-Núrí [Allameh Mohadas Noori] Institute
31. Khájih Naṣiru'd-Din-i-Tūsí [Khajeh Nasir ad-Din Toosi] University of Technology	68. Non-governmental and non-profit Institute of Ṭabaristán [Tabarestan]
32. Sahand [Sahand] University of Technology of Tabriz [Tabriz]	69. Non-profit Institute for Development and Rural Advancement of Hamidán [Hamedan]
33. Sharif [Sharif] University of Technology	70. Nautical and Marine Science Centre of Higher Education of Cháhbahár [Chahbahar]
34. 'Allámiy-i-Ṭabáṭabá'í [Allameh Tabatabaei] University	71. Institute of Higher Education of Marághih [Maragheh]
35. Iran University of Science and Technology	72. University of Islamic Sects
36. Gurgán [Gorgan] University of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources	73. Jund-i-Shapúr [Jundishapur] Institute of Higher Education of Dizfúl [Dezful]
37. Firdawsí [Ferdowsi] University of Mashhad [Mashhad]	74. Shíráz [Shiraz] University of Technology
38. University of Káshán [Kashan]	75. Sajjád [Sadjad] Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad [Mashhad]
39. University of Kurdistán [Kurdistan]	76. Mufid [Mofid] University of Qum [Qom]
40. University of Gílán [Guilan]	77. Varámin [Varamin] University of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
41. Luristán [Lorestan] University	78. Institute of Higher Education for Occupation
42. University of Muḥaqqiq Ardabílí [Mohaghegh Ardebili]	79. Najafábád [Najafabad] Institute of Higher Education
43. University of Mázindarán [Mazandaran]	80. Iran Institute of Higher Education for Technology Research
44. Sháhíd Rajá'í [Shahid Rajaei] Teacher Training University	81. Imam Khomeini Research Centre
45. Valíyy-i-'Asr [Vali-e-Asr] University of Rafsanján [Rafsanjan]	
46. Hurmuzgán [Hormozgan] University	
47. University of Art	
48. University of Applied Science and Technology	
49. University of Yazd	

Persian text of 2006 letter from Iran's Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructing Iranian universities to expel any student who is discovered to be a Bahá'í. See page 39



جمهوری اسلامی ایران  
وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری

بسمه تعالی

شماره: ۹۳۷۵/۹۳  
تاریخ: ۱۳۸۵/۹/۱۳

**محرمانه**

**مذہبیت محترم خرامست**

۱- دانشگاه اراک ۲- دانشگاه ارومیه ۳- دانشگاه اصفهان ۴- دانشگاه ایلام ۵- دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی (مرکز)

۶- دانشگاه بوعلی سینا ۷- دانشگاه تبریز ۸- دانشگاه تهران ۹- دانشگاه تبریز (مرکز) ۱۰- دانشگاه تبریز (مرکز)

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**موضوع: ممنوعیت تحصیل افراد بهائیان در دانشگاهها**

**باسلام**

احتراماً، به استحضار میرساند، براساس مصوبه شماره ۱۲۳۷/م/س مورخ ۶۹/۱۲/۶ شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی و اعلام مراجع ذیصلاح آموزشی، لذا خاص بهائیان چنانچه در حین ورود به دانشگاه و یا حین تحصیل مشخص گردند که بهائیان هستند، می بایست از دانشگاه اخراج گردند. لذا ضروری است نسبت به جلوگیری از ادامه تحصیل یا ششگان موصوفه نظام تعلیم و تربیت و نتیجه را به این مرکز منعکس فرمائید.

امیر زارعی  
مدیرکل فرهنگ و عبادت  
۱۳۸۵/۹/۱۳

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## FURTHER READING

### Books

*The Bahá'ís of Iran: Socio-historic studies*, edited by Dominic Parviz Brookshow and Seena B. Fazel (London: Routledge, 2008)

*Human Rights, the UN, and the Bahá'ís in Iran*, by Nazila Ghanea (Martinus Nijhoff/Brill: Leiden, 2002)

*The Bahá'í Faith: The Emerging Global Religion*, by William S. Hatcher and J. Douglas Martin (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985)

*The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions, 1844–1944: Some Contemporary Western Accounts*, by Moojan Momen (Oxford: George Ronald, 1981)

*God Passes By*, by Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944)

### On the World Wide Web

<http://bahai.org> — Official site of the Bahá'í International Community (for history and information about the Bahá'í Faith)

<http://news.bahai.org> — The Bahá'í World News Service (for latest updates on Iran situation)

<http://question.bahai.org> — This booklet in an online version

<http://bic.org> — Official site of the Bahá'í International Community's United Nations Office (for the latest on United Nations activities)

