



# International Solidarity with the Iranian People

## To Promote Human Rights and Democracy in Iran

### Democracy & Advocacy for Human Rights in Iran

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### Proposal

## A Call to Convene: The International Conference on Human Rights & Democracy in Iran

### Introduction:

The Islamic Republic of Iran, since its inception in 1979, has systematically suppressed the basic human rights of the Iranian people. After more than 30 years of oppression, the regime continues to squash any pro-democracy movement by intimidating, imprisoning, torturing, and executing activists, intellectuals, and pro-democracy leaders. Furthermore, the autocratic regime of the mullahs in Iran is shamelessly fostering and financing terrorist groups in the Middle East as a means of dealing with threats to its survival. Vivid examples of the human rights violations by the Iranian regime are summarized below:

Since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979:

- Iranian citizens have been excluded from legal and constitutional immunity under this regime. The accused are ineligible for due process within the Iranian judicial system, and are not permitted to secure a defense in court.
- Several thousands of Iranians have been put to death without due process for political, ideological, religious and ethnic “crimes.”
- Irrefutable evidence and eye-witness accounts confirm the execution of innocent citizens, human rights activists and proponents of democracy, most without due process of law in the Iranian Kurdistan, Turkman Sahra, Gilan, Mazandaran, Khuzestan, and other regions of the country.
- More than seven thousand political prisoners were summarily executed in the summer of 1988, in the Islamic Republic’s various prisons. High level religious leaders including, but not limited to, the grand Ayatollah Montazeri (the original successor to the Ayatollah Khomeini), have verified and repeatedly condemned these executions.
- Defense lawyers are harassed, disbarred, and incarcerated for defending dissidents. Abbas Amir Entezam, the former deputy prime minister and one of the prominent spokespersons for the movement for democracy, has been jailed for more than 28 years on the spurious charge of spying for the U.S.

#### Supporting Organizations:

Action For Democracy & Human Rights  
in the Middle East.  
Esmail Khoi Foundation -U.S.A.  
Iranian Cultural Center e.V. -Germany

- Hundreds of political activists and pro-democracy leaders have been assassinated in the country and abroad by the agents of the Islamic regime. Despite the fact that perpetrators of these crimes were arrested and charged, none spent more than a few hours in custody.
- Women's worth is considered half that of a man according to a narrow interpretation of Shariah (Islamic Law), reducing them to half the worth of men in the letter of the law. Every year hundreds of young women become victims of this gender apartheid.
- The flogging, stoning, dismemberment and hanging of women in public are some of the many punitive measures to which women are subject, on a daily basis, in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- Peaceful demonstrations such as sit-ins, walk-outs, and strikes have been met with heavy-handed government reactions. The organizers of any group protest bear the harshest punishment, often banished to years of incarceration under inhumane conditions, and/or death at the hands of government agents responsible for their "protection."
- Law has become a weapon of the ruling caste against the absolute majority. Citizenry are divided into two camps of friends (khodi) and enemies (nakhodi) of the regime.
- Basic freedoms such as the right to assemble, the right to free press, unencumbered access to the Internet, and listening to Western music are non-existent.
- Many college students, human rights activists, and journalists are imprisoned as a direct result of these policies.
- Confiscating the property of dissidents, barring employers from hiring dissenting individuals, wiretapping, and conducting unlawful searches in the homes of activists are so commonplace that they have become second nature to ordinary citizens.
- The authorities stop at nothing to intimidate political activists; including, but not limited to, the harassment of their families by abduction and physical assault of their children.
- The mullahs and their cronies have monopolized the government through their sectarian and ideological interpretation of the tenets of Islam. They have routinely ignored the democratic and human rights of the ethnic and religious minorities in Iran. Even Sunni Muslims have not been spared.

### **Objective:**

For nearly 30 years, human rights activists and promoters of the democracy movement in Iran have struggled to draw the world's attention to the severe violation of human rights in Iran.

Until recently, many Western governments have been misinformed about the possibility of "reform" within the Islamic republic of Iran. This notion has been further promulgated by some of Iran's actions and discourse on the world stage. These diversions have allowed the mullahs to divert international attention from egregious human rights violations. It would be a tragic mistake on the part of the international community to fall for the ruse of the mullahs. It has been noted that the regime is seeking to develop nuclear weapons, is openly denying the Holocaust, is seeking the elimination of Israel, and is extending its reach in the Middle East and Central Asia by financing terrorist groups.

It is with these worries that we ask of all human rights organizations, democratic parties, and promoters of civil society to unite and help us organize

an **International Conference on the State of Human Rights in Iran**. With this help, we endeavor to put a stop to the Iranian government's repeated human rights violations and bolster solidarity with the Iranian people and all those who support democracy in Iran. We hope this will prompt the release of political prisoners in Iran and eventually define the conditions through which a new and hopeful civil society can flourish.

#### **Proposed Conference Agenda:**

1. Discuss and evaluate alternative means for direct support of the human right activists and pro-democracy leaders within Iran.
2. Discuss methods by which we can educate young men and women activists on ways to prevail in their struggle for democracy and human rights.
3. Bring international attention to the plight of political prisoners and their families in Iran.
4. Establish a "permanent international committee" for monitoring the human rights situation in Iran through cooperation and support from related international organizations.
5. Set up a special fund, under international supervision, that will assist in financially supporting the victims of the Islamic regime in Iran.

#### **Proposed Plan:**

- Prominent international experts on human rights and democracy will be invited to speak on the state of socio-political freedoms in Iran.
- An exhibit will be held of photos, books, and documentary films aimed at exposing the violations of human rights in Iran and crimes committed against the Iranian people.
- Former political prisoners in Iran, who were either tortured or were a witness to torture, will be invited to speak about their experiences.
- A panel consisting of foreign dignitaries will be invited to speak and show their support for the objectives of the conference.
- Representatives from the news media will be invited to report the conference's findings.
- A permanent international committee dedicated to promoting human rights protection will be formed. Its primary task will be supporting the democratic movement in Iran.
- Representatives from organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International will be invited to serve as panelists and/or keynote speakers.

#### **Financing and Budgetary Requirements:**

*We are planning to acquire the necessary funds for holding the conference by contacting international organizations and foundations involved in promotion of democracy and human rights as well as some private sector resources. The names of these sponsors will be announced at a later date.*

#### **Projected Expenses are as follows:**

- Travel expenses for speakers/panelists who are coming in from abroad.
- Hotel accommodation and meals for the above guests.
- Rental fees for the conference hall, technical equipment, and other related costs.

- Funds to cover all administrative expenses such as mailers, folders, and conference agendas and miscellaneous paperwork.
- Cost estimates range from approximately \$\$200,000-\$300,000.

**Location:**

TBD, College or University Campus in the United State and Europe

**Initiating Group:**

We propose that members of Iranian human rights organizations, outside Iran, with the cooperation of a number of international pro-democracy and human rights foundations undertake the initial organizing tasks of the conference. The initiating group will provide their names and addresses and will help in obtaining the financial sponsors as well as the speakers for the conference.

With best regards:

Executive members of “ Action for Democracy & Human Rights in the Middle East (Non-Profit)

June 2, 2011

