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Iran: Amnesty International deplores Iran's lack of cooperation with the Special Procedures and calls for a Council special procedure on Iran

United Nations Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Iran

In the Working Group, Iran indicated its immediate support of *general* recommendations about cooperation with the Special Procedures.¹ Like its 2002 standing invitation, these recommendations are unlikely to be acted upon by current government of Iran. Since 2005, the government has refused to grant a Special Procedure access to Iran thereby rendering the standing invitation misleading and meaningless. Indeed, while accepting general recommendations about cooperation with the Special Procedures, Iran outright rejected no less than seven recommendations calling for it to facilitate visits by *specific* Special Procedures: by the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, and the Working Group on arbitrary detention.² The contrast between Iran's position on the general and specific recommendations is a stark reminder of the reality of Iran's lack of cooperation with this Council's Special Procedures.

Since 2005, requests for visits from seven Special Procedures have remained ignored. The Special Rapporteur on torture requested to visit in 2005 and 2007, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers in 2006, the Independent Expert on minority issues in 2008, and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression in February this year. The government has in theory agreed to a visit by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, requested since 2004, and to visits by the Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief but has since stalled the process. All of these requests remain outstanding.

Iran's failure to cooperate with the Special Procedures is particularly objectionable given that the former Human Rights Commission terminated the mandate of the Special Representative on the human rights situation in Iran in 2002, the same year that Iran extended its standing invitation to the Special Procedures. Iran's lack of cooperation with the Special Procedures calls into question the sincerity of the standing invitation and demonstrates that the termination of the Special Representative's mandate was premature.

The government continues to impose severe restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, targeting in particular students, journalists, political activists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, and members of Iran's ethnic and religious minorities. Amnesty International continues to receive reports of many being sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, flogging or death in grossly unjust trials. Executions have been carried out for politically-motivated reasons and used to send a chilling message to those who would demonstrate. These human rights violations appear to be committed by state officials with virtually total impunity.

The government of Iran has taken the incomprehensible stand that virtually no violations have occurred in Iran. It is playing cat and mouse with the procedures of this Council as illustrated

¹ A/HRC/14/12, paragraph 90, recommendations 24-28.

² Ibid, paragraph 92, recommendations 5-11

again during the UPR. The Council should not tolerate this. Acting pursuant to paragraph 37 of the Institution Building Package, this Council should re-establish an Iran-specific special procedure to address the compelling evidence of gross and systematic human rights violations being committed in Iran.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Iran on 10 June 2010 during its 14th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis for the review through its submission on Iran: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/009/2009/en>

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