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## Iran: Amnesty International's recommendations to states at 64<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations' General Assembly

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The mass human rights violations that unfolded in Iran this summer in the wake of the disputed presidential election result were a sombre reflection of entrenched methods of repression that Amnesty International has been documenting for many years<sup>1</sup>. Patterns of repression that had developed unchecked were exposed to the world as peaceful demonstrations were banned and protestors beaten, arbitrarily arrested and in some cases shot. Scores of deaths have been recorded, including some of persons in custody. Severe restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly were imposed. More than 100 opposition supporters and protestors have appeared “confessing” in mass “show trials” after being held for long periods of detention – often in solitary confinement or incommunicado detention - in centres where torture and other ill-treatment are known to occur. At least four persons have been sentenced to death and others have been sentenced to prison terms of up to 15 years. Such trials make a mockery of justice.

While the Iranian authorities have acknowledged that some abuses occurred, other allegations of torture – including allegations of rape – and of unlawful

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Iran: Human Rights in the Spotlight AI Index MDE/13/010/2009, February 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/010/2009/en>. Previous Amnesty International reports dating from 1965 are available from [archives@amnesty.org](mailto:archives@amnesty.org). More recent reports can be viewed online at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iran>

killings have been dismissed after cursory investigations. Indeed, it appears that the authorities are intent on hiding the truth: they have closed down the offices of persons collecting evidence of violations, and arrested some of them; they have opened a case against defeated presidential candidate Mehdi Karroubi; and they have brought forward persons falsely claiming to be among of those listed as having died, in order to discredit evidence collected.

The Iranian authorities are also doing their utmost to prevent outside scrutiny of events. Not only are international NGOs such as Amnesty International not granted permission to travel to Iran for fact-finding and government talks, or to observe proceedings at the “show trials” now taking place in Tehran, but international human rights mechanisms of the United Nations – which would be the normal process by which human rights are investigated - are also being obstructed in their attempts to visit. Despite the Standing Invitation issued to all mechanisms in 2002, no special procedure has visited since August 2005.

In this regard, it should be noted that the Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions and freedom of religion and belief, as well as the Working Group on enforced and involuntary disappearances, have agreement in principle to visit, but the Iranian authorities have so far failed to propose any dates. The Special Rapporteurs on torture and the independence of judges and lawyers, as well as the Independent Expert on minority issues, have all made requests to visit but so far without response.

In addition, Iran has failed to meet its obligations to report to the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for more than a decade, and the concluding observations of these bodies adopted in 1993 have not, for the most part, been implemented<sup>2</sup>.

As member states of the United Nations gather for the 64th session of the General Assembly, they will consider the compelling evidence of human rights violations in Iran collected by the United Nations' Secretary General, as presented in his 2009 report submitted in accordance with General Assembly

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<sup>2</sup>On 26 September 2008, Iran submitted its combined 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> periodic reports on its implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which had been due on 3 January 2006.

resolution 63/191<sup>3</sup>. Such evidence requires a more robust response by the international community to address the failure of the Iranian authorities to address human rights concerns and their obstruction of international scrutiny. Concerted action is needed to enable the people of Iran to gain greater access to the full spectrum of their internationally-recognized human rights.

### **Amnesty International's recommendations to member states**

In the light of the severity of the human rights situation, and the failure of the Iranian authorities to allow international scrutiny of Iran's human rights record by refusing to cooperate with existing international human rights mechanisms or to report on their implementation of international human rights treaties which Iran has ratified, Amnesty International recommends that:

- the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue his annual reporting on the human rights situation in Iran;
- the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to report to the Human Rights Council on the situation in Iran in addition to the General Assembly;
- a special envoy of the Secretary General be appointed by the General Assembly, with a mandate to investigate human rights violations in Iran;
- the special envoy's findings be submitted to the Secretary-General for consideration during the preparation of his annual report to the Assembly;
- member states use all possible means to encourage the government of Iran to cooperate with all international human rights mechanisms, including the Secretary-General's special envoy if appointed, including by granting them access to the country.

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<sup>3</sup>The situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Report of the Secretary-General <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/482/25/PDF/N0848225.pdf?OpenElement>