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PUBLIC STATEMENT¹

Oral Statement on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

UN Human Rights Council
39th Special Session
23 January 2026

Mr President,

This session convenes as people in Iran are reeling from the grief and trauma of unprecedented protest massacres. The authorities maintain an internet shutdown, isolating over 90 million people to conceal their crimes. Yet here in Geneva, they deny and distort the truth.

Let us be clear about the facts, corroborated by eyewitness testimony and verified video evidence. Security forces fired firearms into crowds, unlawfully killing thousands, including children, and injuring many more.

The victims the authorities shamelessly describe as “terrorists” were people demanding human rights, democracy and dignity. They were students, workers, teachers, medical workers and shop owners – people with extraordinary courage, hoping for a brighter future.

Today, crushed hopes lie in body bags, sprawled in overflowing morgues, their traces visible on blood-stained streets. Authorities claim that “stability” has been restored, but this was achieved through brutally cutting thousands of lives short and ongoing armed patrols, nighttime curfews and threats of lethal force to terrorize people into silence.

Authorities have carried out cycles of protest bloodshed in 2017, 2019, and 2022 – each met with mass unlawful killings, arbitrary arrests, torture and enforced disappearance. The Fact-Finding Mission has concluded that authorities committed crimes against humanity in 2022. Systemic impunity has emboldened authorities now, in 2026, to escalate their policy of mass killings to unprecedented levels to eradicate dissent.

To look away from overwhelming evidence of atrocities is not “constructive dialogue”. It is an abdication of the responsibility of members of this Council. We urge all states to support the resolution and recognize that without accountability through international justice mechanisms, bloodshed will only escalate. History will not forgive silence and inaction.

Thank you.

¹ An abbreviated version of this public statement was delivered to the Human Rights Council on the 23 January 2026.