

exact phrase

Newest 50 entries

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date

event

tags

2026 7 Feb

202-

The passing of Glenford E. Mitchell (b. 3 March 1935 in Jamaica) in Decatur, GA, USA.

As a young man Mr Mitchell moved from Jamaica to North Carolina to attend university and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in business education from Shaw University in 1960. He then completed a master's degree in journalism at Columbia University in New York graduating in 1962. He was later awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters by the National College of Education in Evanston, Illinois, in 1980. He worked in publishing and was appointed as an instructor in English and journalism at Howard University in Washington D.C.

In 1967 he became the managing editor of the Bahá'í World Order Magazine and in 1968 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States as Secretary, an office he held for fourteen years.

In 1982 he was elected to the Universal House of Justice and served until his retirement in 2008 when he returned to the United States.

Publications

1962 - The Angry Black South: outhern Negroes Tell Their Own Story, (co-editor with William H. Peace III) published in 1962 by Corinth Books, New York

1972 - The Literature of Interpretation: Notes on the English Writings of Shoghi Effendi, article published in World Order, 7:2, pages 12-37 and available on Bahá'í Library Online.

1997 - Shoghi Effendi: Guide for a New Millennium

2009 - Bahá'í Administration, article published in The Bahá'í Encyclopedia. [Bahaipedia; BWNS1854]

- In Memoriam; Glenford Mitchell; Universal House of Justice, Membership on; World Order magazine

2026 30 Jan

202-

The premiere screening of Two Hundred Years of Hidden History drew an audience of 500 people to the Nizami Cinema Centre., including journalists, artists,

poets, musicians, and government representatives, highlighting the broad interest in the Bahá'í community's history and contribution to Azerbaijani society.

The documentary was directed by Kamala Musazade and produced through collaboration between the National Cinema Center and the Bahá'ís of Azerbaijan. [BWNS1851]

- Film; Baku, Azerbaijan; Two Hundred Years of Hidden History (film)

2025 31 Dec

202-

The publication of Handbook of Qur'anic Hermeneutics Volume 6; Qur'anic Hermeneutics by Non-Muslims, edited by Georges Tamer. It was published by Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co, Berlin/Boston.

Todd Lawson and Necati Alkan contributed a chapter titled The Qur'ān in Bahai Writings..

* Islam; Criticism and apologetics; Necati Alkan; Todd Lawson

2025 31 Dec

202-

The Universal House of Justice released a message sent to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counsellors regarding the Nine Year Plan of the worldwide Bahá'í community

A subsequent message was sent at the conclusion of the conference on 4 January 2026.

Conferences, Counsellors; Messages to the Counsellors; Nine Year Plan (2022-2031)

2025 27 Dec

202-

The Bahá'í World News Service published 2025 A Year in Review.

Bahá'í International Community (BIC); Statistics

2025 22 Dec

202-

The Bahá'í World Centre announced the release of a new short documentary titled Expressions of Equality in the Family and that it was available on Bahai.org, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook

The documentary examines how families are reconsidering long-held assumptions about responsibilities, decision-making, and the nature of mutual support. It touches on themes such as the practice of consultation in marriage, the education of girls, and how families are transcending barriers of caste and

tradition through a growing recognition of humanity's essential oneness.

[BWNS1844]

Expressions of Equality in the Family (film); Family; Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, New Delhi (Lotus Temple)

2025 22 Dec

202-

The launch of the book titled Religions and Social Life of Baha'i and Parsi Communities of Pakistan by Dr Abdul Fareed Brohi. The event was organized by the Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue (IRD), and the International Islamic University Islamabad. The author explained that the study presents an objective and analytical overview of the Baha'i and Parsi communities, tracing their historical origins to Iran and examining their religious practices, social structures, and methods of identity preservation. He shared that Baha'i communities are present in Karachi, Peshawar, and Islamabad and operate through an organized National Spiritual Assembly. He further emphasized that religious minorities in Pakistan enjoy constitutional protection and religious freedom, and that these communities maintain peaceful relations with the broader society. [International Islamic University]

Islamabad, Pakistan

2025 10 Dec

202-

Bahar Saba, a senior Iran researcher at Human Rights Watch, in a joint statement with the Bahá'í International Community (BIC) announced that “Iranian authorities are relentlessly persecuting Bahá'ís, depriving them of the most basic human rights in what amounts to ongoing crimes against humanity—solely because of their faith.”

The latest government crackdown, which intensified following the Israel-Iran conflict in June 2025, has involved arbitrary arrests, interrogations, unjust convictions, and imprisonments, as well as property confiscations.

Between June and November 2025, the BIC documented more than 750 persecutory acts across Iran, three times the number recorded during the same period in 2024. These incidents include over 200 raids on homes and businesses, followed by interrogations, resulting in the detention and arrest of at least 110 Bahá'ís. Revolutionary Courts held hearings for more than 100 individuals and issued new sentences against Bahá'ís, each ranging from two to ten years in prison. At least 45 people were summoned to begin serving their prison sentences during this period. Among those imprisoned are mothers who have been separated from their young children. [BIC News 10 December 2025; BIC News 18 December 2025; Human Rights Watch 10 December 2025]

* Persecution, Iran; Bahá'í International Community (BIC)

2025 1 Dec

202-

The Universal House of Justice announced in a message to all National Spiritual Assemblies, the acquisition of the German Templar home that had belonged to Elias Abyad with the words “Der Herr ist nahe”, inscribed in the capstone above the front door. In later years this building was the site of the Archbishop's Boarding School then became office space for the Mercantile Bank. At one point this house was occupied by the Pander family. [DH186; DH192-193]

We are pleased to announce that, after many years of patient negotiation, the city of Haifa has agreed to transfer to the Bahá'í World Centre the ownership of a two-storey Templar house on the lower slopes of Mount Carmel where Bahá'u'lláh Himself once stayed during a visit to the city. The property is to the east of the plaza at the foot of the Terraces of the Shrine of the Báb and adjacent to land where Bahá'u'lláh's tent was pitched. The building, which sits on three hundred and sixteen square metres of land, is located in the World Heritage area of the Shrine of the Báb and its surroundings. It was built by a family of German Templars who inscribed the capstone above the front door of the house with the prophetic words “Der Herr ist nahe”, the Lord is nigh. When the Blessed Beauty visited Haifa in the summer of 1891 and suffered a short illness, He stayed for a few days in the house as a guest of the family. Plans are being prepared for the restoration of the building so that, in time, it may be opened to pilgrims and visitors.

See 1891-06-27 for information on Bahá'u'lláh's fourth visit to Haifa.

Haifa, Israel; Templar Society (German Templar colony); UNESCO World Heritage Sites

2025 27 Nov

202-

In a letter dated 27 November from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies the House announced that:

“Since the establishment in 2005 of the International Board of Trustees, assuming the responsibilities of the Chief Trustee, the institution of the trusteeship of Huqúqu'lláh has evolved rapidly. Notably, the membership of the International Board of Trustees has increased from three to seven; its term of service—as well as that of the members of the National and Regional Boards—has been extended from three to five years; and with the able support of the Office of Huqúqu'lláh in the Holy Land, the International Board oversees the work of a worldwide network of National and Regional Boards, Deputy Trustees, and Representatives. Given these developments, and since there is no longer a Chief Trustee, members of the

National and Regional Boards, previously referred to as Deputy Trustees, will henceforth be known simply as Trustees.”

Huqúqu'lláh; Huququllah, Basic timeline; Huququllah, Board of Trustees of; Huququllah, Trustees of

2025 27 Nov

202-

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Thursday condemning the systematic persecution of Iran’s Bahá’í community and urging EU governments to impose sanctions on officials involved in rights abuses. The adopted resolution also said Bahá’í women face gender-based persecution and account for around two thirds of those detained.

MEPs called on Iran to compensate victims, return seized assets and allow the Baha’i community access to education, employment and services. [Iran International.

* Persecution, Iran; European Union (EU)

2025 25 Nov

202-

In a message dated the 15th of October the Universal House of Justice announced that a new five-year term of service for the members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith will commence. The number of Counsellors will remain at ninety.

For AFRICA (20 Counsellors): Izzat Abumba Mionda, Mariama Ousmane Djaouga, Alain Pierre Djoulde, Augustino Ibrahim, Mati Issoufou, Hamed Javaheri, Musonda Kapusa-Linsel (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Linet Nafula Kisaka, Townshend Lihanda, Makoena Martha Masha, Judicaël Mokolé, Amélia Mujinga Ngandu, Nsika Mutasa, Justave Ndjibu Kapenga, Mélanie Ngalula Muambangu, Michael Okiria, Nana Yaw Otu-Ansah, Nancy Oloro Robarts, Djamila Tchakréo, Annie Yohari Kingombe

For THE AMERICAS (21 Counsellors): Vafa William Akhtar-Khavari, José Luis Almeida, Sonya Appadoo, Ayafor Temengye Ayafor, Louis Boddy, Natasha Bruss, Brígida Carrillo, Ingrid Umpierre Conter, Blas Cruz Martínez, Daniel Duhart, Farah Guchani-Rosenberg, Badi Hernandez, Nazanin Ho, Irene Iturburo, Jasmine Miller-Kleinhenz, Borna Nouredin (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Wedzer Saintea, Pejman Samoori, Bernardino Sánchez, William Silva, Margarita Valdez Martínez

For ASIA (27 Counsellors): Yam Prasad Acharya, Vafa David Amirkia, Bhavna Anbarasan, Walid Ayyash, Marijini Deraoh, Gulnara Eyvazova, Shareen Farhad, Rahul Kumar, Nicholas Loh, Parimal Mahato, Tarrant Matthew Mahony, Uttam Mitra, Fares Naimi, Melonna Jane Montalban Njang, Rasha Oflazoglu, Thi Thuc Quynh Ho,

Zafar Rahimov, Foad Reyhani (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Hesham Saad, Niroshini Saleh, Omid Seioshansian, Oxana Shulga, Dregpal Singh, Sadhu Ram Tamang, Fang Jung Tseng Chung, Lyazzat Yangaliyeva, Ozoda Zoidova

For AUSTRALASIA (10 Counsellors): Bob Ale, Latai 'Atoa, Bererin Barnabas, Julie Joekari, Kirk Johnson, Taraz Nadarajah, Daniel Pierce Olam, Vahid Saberi (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Jeffrey Sabour, Reena Torabi

For EUROPE (12 Counsellors): Faina Berger, Marina Bruckmann, Raffaella Capozzi Gubinelli, Orlando Ravelo Hernández, Varqá Khadem (Trustee of the Continental Fund), Ana-Maria Marian, Puria Mahally, Veronika Medvedeva, Hedyeh Nadafi-Stoffel, Navid Sabet, Alexis Semple, Shirin Youssefian Maanian

The following believers, now being relieved of the duties of membership on the Boards of Counsellors, have earned our abiding gratitude for their sacrificial contributions to the progress of the Cause:

Jamil Aliyev, Ritia Kamauti Bakineti, Beatriz Carmona, Nadera Fikri, Kam Mui Fok Sayers, Agatha Sarinoda Gaisie-Nketsiah, Sonlla Heern, Nwandi Ngozi Lawson, Ada Micheline Leonce Ferdinand, Sabà Mazza, Jalal Rodney Mills, Maina Mkandawire, Myint Zaw Oo, Yevgeniya Poluektova, Arthur Powell, Sokuntheary Reth, Artin Rezaie, Mehdi Rezvan, Kessia Ruh, Tessa Scrine, Zebinisso Soliyeva, Ircham Sujadmiko, Jacques Tshibuabua Kabuya, Paul Verheij. [UK BAhá'í News 15 October 2025]

Continental Board of Counsellors; Counsellors, Appointments

2025 3 Oct

202-

Dr. Saba Haddad, Representative of the Bahá'í International Community at the UN, delivered a statement about the ongoing persecution of Bahá'ís in the Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, at the 40th meeting of the 60th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, held on 3 October 2025. Read statement, here [BIC Statements 3OCT25](#).

- BIC statements; Persecution, Yemen

2025 22 Sep

202-

The launch of *Millennialism, Millerites, and Prophecy in Bahá'í Discourse*, by William P Collins. It was published by Routledge and is available in Kindle format from Amazon.

This book explores the role of millennialism, the Millerites, and prophecy in the historical development of the Bahá'í faith, especially in North America. The author demonstrates the importance of the Bahá'í religion to millennialism studies and its connection to certain Protestant American and Shia Islamic modes of thought. Bahá'ís see two millennial visions on far-separated continents, within different religious milieux, and from contrasting social climates, as spiritually and prophetically linked: the

Millerites who expected the return of Christ in 1844 CE and Shia Muslims who expected the Mahdí/Qá'im/Twelfth Imam in 1260 AH/1844 CE. The chapters in this volume reflect on theories about millennialist movements, the continuum from catastrophic to progressive millennialism, Bahá'í interpretations of biblical prophecy, and Bahá'í efforts to build the "Kingdom of God on earth" under a systematic divine plan. The book highlights the maturation of the Bahá'í community toward a focus on process and a capacity to deal with both catastrophe and progress. It provides scholars of religion with a detailed study of the trajectory in Bahá'í millennial ideas.

William Collins

2025 17 Sep

202-

The launch of *In Full Partnership: Thirty Years of Women's Advancement at the United Nations and Beyond: A Collection of Statements by the Bahá'í International Community on the subject of Gender Equality*. The occasion commemorated the Fourth Conference on Women held in Beijing. Over 100 participants joined the launch event, both online and in person.

The publication offers hopeful and practical examples, drawing on the efforts of Baha'i communities in over 100,000 localities worldwide, showcasing how collaborative efforts with friends, co-workers, and government officials can foster societies that embody the principle of gender equality.

The publication, which will be published in hardcopy in the near future, covers the original 12 "critical areas of concern" outlined in the Beijing Declaration and introduces two additional significant themes: the role of men and boys in the advancement of women, and the intersections between faith and feminism. [BIC News 17 Sep 25; BIC News 2 Sep 25]

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); New York City, NY; UN Women; Womens rights

2025 17 Sep

202-

Six Baha'i women in Hamadan, western Iran, who have been sentenced to a combined total of 39 years in prison, are facing imminent imprisonment. They were charged and sentenced for their belief in the Bahá'í Faith. The arrests follow a joint statement by 18 United Nations experts who raised the alarm at the "systematic targeting of Bahá'í women," flagging the "increase" in these human rights violations and denouncing the "arrests, summoning for interrogation, enforced disappearance, raids on homes, confiscation of personal belongings, limitations on freedom of movement and prolonged consecutive deprivations of liberty."

The six Bahá'í women were first arrested in November 2023, held in solitary confinement for 31 days, which runs counter to international law, and forced to

endure prolonged interrogations without access to lawyers or their families. Guilty verdicts and sentences were handed down in April 2024—after which the women appealed the verdicts. The six women are Zarrindokht Ahadzadeh, Farideh Ayyoubi, Noura Ayyoubi, Neda Mohebbi, Jaleh Rezaie, and Atefeh Zahedi. Two of the women, Atefeh and Neda, have children from as young as five years old. [BIC News]

* Persecution, Iran; - Persecution, Court cases; - Persecution, Human rights; Hamadán, Iran

2025 4 Sep

202-

The Bahá'í World Centre announced that the landscaping project at the Mansion of Mazra'ih which began in 2020 was completed. The objective in the design of the project was to reproduce, as closely as possible, the appearance of the site during Bahá'u'lláh's time. While various native plant species were introduced to the site, such as evergreen trees and perennials accented with flowering and deciduous species, existing olive and mulberry trees were preserved. Cypress and deciduous trees have now been planted along much of the perimeter of the property. Accessible pathways with hard surfacing ensure that all may experience the gardens, and thoughtfully placed benches provide spaces for prayer and rest. [BWNS1817]

Mazraih, Israel; Pilgrimage

2025 13 Aug

202-

A Doha court sentenced the chair of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís in Qatar, Remi Rohani (71), to five years in prison. He had been charged with promoting a doctrine or ideology that “casts doubt on the foundations and teachings of Islam” under article 259 of the penal code. They also charged him with violating social principles and values using information technology, under article 8 of the 2014 Cybercrime Prevention Law, and disseminating material that calls and promotes the adoption of “destructive principles,” under article 47(b) of the 1979 Law on Publications and Publishing. The charges were based on an X account and an Instagram account that represent the Qatari Bahá'í community linked to Rowhani's phone number and e-mail address.

Qatar has a long-standing record of discriminating against Bahá'ís, including by deportation, delaying the community's attempts to reestablish an existing Bahá'í cemetery, and refusing to register marriage certificates issued by elected Bahá'í institutions in Qatar. [Human Rights Watch 15 Aug]

Qatar's deputy attorney general appealed the sentence on September 7 seeking a longer prison term, the appeal document reviewed by Human Rights Watch revealed. An appeal hearing was held on September 10, with the decision expected on September 17. Court documents show the prosecution lists two

grounds for the appeal. The first alleges the court erred in law by linking the offenses with which he was charged, thus treating them as one crime. The prosecutor is asking for Rowhani to be given the maximum sentence for each of three offenses. The prosecution also claims that the offenses constituted an “infringement upon the authority of the State.” The prosecutor requested a “deterrent penalty,” stating that the aim is not only to deter the individual from reoffending, but also the rest of society. Qatari authorities convicted Rowhani despite United Nations experts’ warnings of what they described in July as “a broader and disturbing pattern of disparate treatment of the Bahá’í minority in Qatar.” Qatari authorities have discriminated against members of the Bahá’í faith based solely on their religious identity through deportations and blacklisting. This has resulted in the separation of families and loss of employment and income, delaying the community’s attempts to re-establish an existing Bahá’í cemetery, and rejecting marriage certificates issued by elected Bahá’í institutions in Qatar. Qatar deported as many as 14 members of the group over more than 20 years for no apparent reason other than belonging to the Bahá’í faith. [Human Rights Watch 16 September]

On the 1st of October the Bahá’í International Community announced that Mr Rohani had been acquitted of the charges against him and release. [BIC News; Geneva Council for Rights and Liberties]

- Persecution, Court cases; - Persecution, Court cases; Doha, Qatar; Persecution, Qatar; Remy Rowhani

2025 30 Jul - 3 Aug

202-

The 49th annual conference of the Association for Bahá’í Studies was held in Calgary, AB at the Telus Convention Centre.

Videos of the plenary sessions and of a number of breakouts are now available on the ABS YouTube channel.

Association for Bahá’í Studies (North America); Calgary, AB

2025 12 Jul

202-

In a handover ceremony in the Württemberg State Library conference room (Konrad-Adenauer-Str. 10, 70173 Stuttgart) two volumes related to the Bahá’í faith that had been seized as a result of the May 1937 decree by Heinrich Himmler to ban the Faith in Nazi Germany. The books had belonged to Alice Schwarz-Solivo (1875–1965) who had been a native of Stuttgart at the time and was one of the leading women in the Bahá’í community. They were returned to her grandson and the heir, Mr. Gisbert Schaal. [Hypotheses]

- Persecution, Bans; Persecution, Germany

2025 8 Jul

202-

The Universal House of Justice through the Department of the Secretariat announced the publication of Bahá'í Sacred Writings on the Bahá'í Reference Library. The volume comprised of 257 selections from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 241 from the Writings and utterances of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. When published the book will be titled Bahá'í Sacred Writings, a collection of selections from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Writings and utterances of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The Department of the Secretariat of the Universal House of Justice shared the following about this publication:

“Designed to serve as a resource that will support and reinforce the process of growth that is currently under way in neighbourhoods, clusters, and villages worldwide, this collection will vastly increase access to the Sacred Writings for many of those whose initial encounter with the Creative Word has been through participation in the courses of the training institute. Among the passages included in the volume will be found many excerpts that are quoted in the materials of the training institute, here frequently set within the original sources from which the quotations were drawn, along with a number of newly translated excerpts which are published here in English for the first time. The book gathers together in a single volume a comprehensive collection of selections representing the range of the Bahá'í teachings.” [from a letter from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada to all Assemblies, Groups and Regional Councils dated 8 July 2025]

* 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Writings and talks of; * Bahá'u'lláh, Writings of; - Baha'i Sacred Writings (book); - Websites

2025 12 Jun

202-

The Bahá'í World News Service announced the launch of the Chinese language version of its website. This is the seventh language, the others are: English, Arabic, French, Persian, Russian, and Spanish.

In addition to the website, the News Service is also available on a mobile application Android and iOS, Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X, and YouTube, as well as through an email subscription.

- Arabic language; - English language; - Persian language; Bahá'í World News Service (BWNS); French language; Russian language; Spanish language

2025 28 May

202-

Roya Sabet, a Bahá'í citizen residing in the United Arab Emirates, where she had lived for 23 years, travelled to Shiraz on January 4, 2024, to care for her elderly and ill parents. While there, she was arrested by IRGC intelligence

agents, on 15 February, 2024 on charges of propaganda against the regime and actions against national security. On this day she was sentenced by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court to 25 years of discretionary imprisonment, a two-year travel ban with passport cancellation, deprivation of social rights, and a ban on online activities. If upheld by the appeals court, 10 years of imprisonment—as the most severe charge—will be enforceable under sentencing aggregation laws.

The charges against her include:

Collaboration and communication with citizens and institutions of the Israeli government.

Forming and leading a group with the intent to act against national security.

Propaganda activities contrary to the sacred Islamic law.

She was eventually released from Adelabad Prison in Shiraz in August 2024, after seven months of pre-trial detention, upon posting bail. [Iran Press Watch 4 June 2025; Hengaw 5 Dec 2025]

* Persecution, Iran; Roya Sabet; United Arab Emirates

2025 14 Apr

202-

The European Union imposed sanctions on sections of Iran's judiciary over human rights abuses—including the persecution of Bahá'ís. This measure represented one of the strongest mechanisms for communicating such condemnation available to the EU.

In both Tehran and Shiraz, the named and sanctioned judges have convicted large numbers of Bahá'ís with harsh prison sentences solely for their beliefs. Trials were conducted without due process and in the absence of any evidence of wrongdoing, relying on spurious charges aimed at oppressing and extinguishing religious identity.

The decision also highlighted the role of prison authorities in the persecution of Bahá'ís. Not only are Bahá'ís unjustly detained, they are also subjected to harsh prison conditions, poor levels of sanitation and are frequently denied proper medical care. In addition, there are numerous cases where Bahá'í women have been arbitrarily imprisoned and separated from their infants and young children.

[Iran Press Watch; BIC News 16 April 2025]

* Persecution, Iran; Bahá'í International Community (BIC)

2025 8 Apr

202-

In a message addressed to all National Assemblies the Universal House of Justice announced the intention to construct a national Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to

be raised up in the vicinity of Manila in the Philippines.

- Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, National; Manila, Philippines; Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, Manila; Universal House of Justice, Letters and messages (collected)

2025 5 Apr

202-

The publication of *In Pursuit of a More Superb Mission: Exploring a framework for the elimination of racial prejudice in America* by Paul Lample. It was published ABS North America.

Warning: Undefined array key 1 in
/home/bahai/public_html/25_incfiles/chronology.php on line 431

Paul Lample;

2025 4 Apr

202-

The European Parliament passed an urgency resolution on Iran expressing its concern about the worsening human rights situation in the country. The resolution specifically calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Mahvash Sabet. This is the third urgency resolution of the European Parliament in five months condemning the escalating persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran, who have long faced systemic oppression. An urgency resolution is the mechanism used by the European Parliament to note and condemn pressing cases of human rights violations around the world.

In December 2024, after years of medical neglect and harsh prison conditions, she underwent open-heart surgery. Despite her deteriorating health, she now faces the harrowing prospect of being forced back into prison to serve the remainder of her unjust 10-year sentence. Since then, her condition has significantly worsened, with multiple medical reports warning that continued imprisonment could cause irreversible harm. [BIC News release]

See the News Release for further details on Ms Sabet.

* Persecution, Iran; - Persecution, Human rights; Mahvash Sabet

2025 19 Mar

202-

The Universal House of Justice released a message to the Bahá'ís of the world that looked at the family unit as “the basic building block of community, and beyond, of the entire social order”. Exploring family forms, arrangements, and definitions through time, the message highlighted the key role families play in the building of healthy, vibrant communities, and asked us to consider “the characteristics of Bahá'í family life and how are they distinguished from the way family life is understood in society today”.

Family; Universal House of Justice, Letters and messages (collected)

2025 17 Mar

202-

The Bahá'í International Community issued a statement on the situation for Bahá'ís in Egypt during the 58th UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. It called for the international community to hold Egypt accountable for upholding the fundamental right to freedom of religion for all, including the Bahá'ís.

This follows on the heels of a statement released on the 29th of January during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the United Nations Human Rights Council, in Geneva, at which Egyptian authorities were held accountable for the systematic abuse of the rights of religious and other minorities in Egypt, which includes the Egyptian Bahá'í community.

- BIC statements; Persecution, Egypt; United Nations Commission on Human Rights

2025 10 - 21 Mar

202-

The global community marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). The sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 10 to 21 March 2025. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world were invited to attend the session.

The Bahá'í International Community released a statement titled *In full partnership: Women's advancement as a prerequisite for peaceful societies*, emphasizing that true equality requires a transformation that goes beyond policy reforms to address the spiritual and cultural roots of inequality.

Liliane Nkunzimana, a BIC representative from the New York Office, noted: [Thehttps://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw59/feature-stories"> 12 critical areas of concern articulated in Beijing were an important evolution in equality of women and men. However, many of these advances have been eroded by policy rollbacks and other forces, from the grassroots through to the international stage. This is a disturbing regression. And it should prompt us to identify more enduring approaches to transformation.](https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw59/feature-stories) [BWNS1783; BWNS1719; Insights from the Field: Podcast explores advances in gender equality in India]

The pdf of the statement can be download [here](#).

- BIC statements; Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; Conferences, Women; Office for the Advancement of Women; UN Women; Womens rights

2025 26 Feb

202-

The U.S. House of Representatives, with bipartisan support from over 150 lawmakers, including committee and subcommittee chairs, introduced a House Resolution to affirm support for the Iranian people's right to establish a democratic, secular, and nonnuclear republic while strongly condemning the Iranian regime's terrorism, human rights abuses, and regional aggression.

The resolution explicitly acknowledged that the Iranian people had rejected all forms of dictatorship, including both the ruling theocracy and the monarchical regime, and have demonstrated their will for fundamental change through nationwide protests, particularly in 2018, 2019, and 2022. It recognized the role of Iran's Resistance Units in mobilizing protests inside the country against the regime's oppression.

The resolution highlighted the Ten-Point Plan proposed by Maryam Rajavi, President-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), as a viable and democratic alternative to the current regime. This plan called for a democratic republic based on universal suffrage, free elections, gender equality, separation of religion and state, a nonnuclear Iran, and peaceful coexistence with other nations. The resolution noted that this plan has gained support from over 4,000 parliamentarians worldwide, including 243 bipartisan U.S. House members, majorities in 33 legislative assemblies, 130 former world leaders, and 80 Nobel laureates.

It also raised concerns over Tehran's transnational repression, particularly the regime's threats against Iranian dissidents abroad. The resolution called on the U.S. government to work with Albania to ensure the full protection of Iranian refugees in Ashraf 3, many of whom are former political prisoners and survivors of regime massacres. [National Council of Resistance of Iran website]

The text of the Resolution can be read [here](#).

Iran, History (general)

2025 22 Jan

202-

Iranian security forces arrested eleven Bahá'í women without arrest warrants or prior notification in a series of shocking home raids. Security agents reportedly scaled walls, coerced neighbors, and posed as utility workers to force entry into the women's homes, subjecting them to distressing and invasive searches. Neighbors were intimidated into silence and children in the homes were left traumatized by the operation. Several of these women were mothers of young children and infants or were caregivers to aging parents, seemingly a preferred demographic for victims of this sort of persecution.

The incident came just two days before Iran's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, where the country's systematic persecution of the Bahá'ís is expected to be scrutinized. [BIC News 22 January 2025]

* Persecution, Iran; - Persecution, Arrests; - Persecution, Human rights;

Women; Womens rights

2025 20 Jan

202-

The Joint Report on the Human Rights Situation in Egypt was released by the group Refugees Platform in Egypt (RPE), an independent organization working to defend human rights, focusing on supporting and advocating for the rights of people on the move. It was a joint report on mounting human rights in which thirteen rights groups presented recommendations to the Egyptian government as the UN review of its rights record approached.

The report can be found [here](#).

Egypt; Human rights; Persecution, Egypt

2025 18 Jan

202-

Two Supreme Court judges, Mohammad Moghiseh and Ali Razini, both clerics with the clerical rank of hojjat ol-islam, were shot dead in Tehran in a rare deadly attack on senior officials which remains largely unexplained. Both were frequently referred to as "hanging judges" for the sentences they passed on political dissidents, activists, followers of the Bahá'í faith, dissident clerics, and those accused of security-related "crimes." They were primarily remembered for their roles in the mass executions of 1988 which targeted members of the MEK (Mojahedin-e Khalq) and, to a lesser extent, leftist prisoners. These executions, which began in July, were carried out based on two orders issued by Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini. Many of the victims were teenagers or people in their 20s, serving prison sentences as political activists, with no history of armed actions against the government.

[Iran International 18Jan25; Iran International]

* Persecution, Iran

2025 11 Jan

202-

Mahvash Sabet, 71, was ordered to return to Evin Prison in Tehran following open-heart surgery in spite of the fact that a return to prison would pose serious risks to her life. She also suffers from severe heart and lung conditions, as well as osteoporosis and a lung tumor, a probable result of her over 13 years behind bars. Despite these conditions and worsening health, Iranian authorities granted her only one month of medical leave and expect her to return to prison—a decision that has provoked global campaign.

The Bahá'í International Community as well as human rights organizations and activists have urged Iranian authorities to release Sabet unconditionally. Activists worldwide have rallied around her case, organizing a social media campaign under the hashtag #FreeMahvash.

Her most recent arrest was on July 31, 2022, and she was subsequently sentenced to 10 years in prison by a preliminary court on charges of leading an “illegal group with the intention of disrupting national security.” This follows a previous decade-long sentence she served from 2008 to 2017 for her involvement in the administrative body of the Bahá’í community in Iran, the Yuran. [Agency France Press 2Jan25; Iran Press Watch 10Jan25]

* Persecution, Iran; Bahá’í International Community (BIC); Mahvash Sabet

2025 January

202-

Qatar’s government has discriminated against Bahá’ís in Qatar for decades, with hundreds of people harmed by a pattern of punishment and discriminatory policies. The government has deported as many as 14 members of the group for no apparent reason other than individuals belonging to the Bahá’í faith in cases Human Rights Watch documented from 2003 to 2025. Qatari authorities have also previously terminated the employment of a Bahá’í member and refused to grant a certificate of good conduct, which is required for employment in Qatar, to four members of the group.

Qatari authorities also issued a deportation order in January 2025 for a Bahá’í individual, without justification, an informed source told Human Rights Watch. He was born and raised in Qatar to Iranian parents and had lived there for 52 years during which he founded a company, got married, and had his daughter. He was also a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís in Qatar, the source said.

He was summoned to the Immigration Department on January 8, where a police officer informed him that he was to be deported for “disrupting public order” and that he had one week to leave Qatar, the source said. The officer in charge cited “immense pressure from above” to deport this person in particular, the source told Human Rights Watch. The Interior Ministry’s communication with the individual about the deportation was entirely verbal, the source said.

The individual continued to request weekly extensions until late February, when an influential Qatari friend intervened on his behalf, and he was given until March 26 to leave the country. His written request to the Ministry of Interior to reconsider the deportation order received no response. He left Qatar on March 22 and was told by officials that he is blacklisted, barring him from reentry.

This follows a series of deportations and blacklisting of Bahá’ís by Qatari authorities for over 20 years, as documented by the United Nations special rapporteurs on minority issues and freedom of religion or belief. According to their 2019 report, Qatari authorities’ discriminatory treatment against Bahá’ís has resulted in the separation of families and the loss of employment and income.

[Human Right Watch 25 May 2025].

Persecution, Qatar

2024 30 Did

202-

The BIC office in Brussels provided a review of the progress of the Faith in the year past.

In 2024, our work focused on understanding how individuals and communities across the world can meaningfully participate to address the challenges of our time. What does participation truly mean? And how can we redefine it to meet today's needs?

This work led us to many discussions on a range of essential topics, from the role of youth in shaping society, to building sustainable and equitable food systems, the role cities or towns play in bringing diverse populations together, overcoming racism and prejudice, reimagining global governance systems, and upholding the human rights of Baha'is in Iran, Egypt, Qatar and Yemen.

Film 2024 Year in Review

Bahá'í International Community (BIC); Statistics

2024 Dec

202-

An analysis of December's hate speech trends in Iran underscored the persistence of systematic discrimination in Iran's cyberspace, fueled by both government propaganda and divisive political factions. From targeting ethnic minorities to suppressing religious freedoms, Iranian online discourse reflects deep-seated societal and institutional prejudices.

To illustrate:

- Sexist and misogynistic terms saw an 11 per cent increase compared to the previous month, reaching 410,000 instances across social media platforms.

- Monarchist-affiliated hashtags also featured prominently in this content.

- Nearly 3,000 anti-Christian posts were published in Persian cyberspace in December, reflecting a 50 percent increase from the prior month. The most notable spike occurred during Christmas celebrations.

- Anti-Semitic rhetoric persisted as well, with over 23,000 posts targeting Jews in December. These narratives often echoed broader government-backed themes of international conspiracy.

- Zoroastrians were also targeted, with 2,300 posts monitored,

- The Sunni Muslim community was targeted with some 3,200 posts.

- Hate speech against Bahá'ís remained ingrained in Iranian state media and

social media, with at least 2,500 posts monitored in December. Reports from Mehr News and Mashregh were two examples of anti-Bahá'í propaganda. One Mehr report celebrated the actions of a cleric, Mahdi Shahverdi, who reportedly travels across the country to counter “covert activities” by Bahá'ís.

Another story in Mashregh attempted to link the Bahá'ís in Iran with a recent YouTube concert given by Pasatoo Ahmadi, in which the female singer appeared unveiled.

[IranWire 10Jan25]

* Persecution, Iran; Hate Speech

2024 (In the Year)

202-

See 2024 Year in Review issued by Baha'i International Community's Brussels Office.

Annual Report

2024 23 Dec

202-

Remi Rohani, a senior Bahá'í dignitary was arrested at the Hamad International Airport in Doha, Qatar while leaving the country for a short holiday. He is a highly respected Qatari citizen who has served his country with distinction for decades—most recently as Director of the International Chamber of Commerce's Middle East and North Africa regional office. This action marks an arbitrary escalation after decades of discrimination against the Baha'is in Qatar merely on account of their religion.

In April 2021, a Qatari court framed Mr. Rowhani in a prejudicial case judged in absentia. The ruling was confirmed in May 2022 by an appeals court. In response to international concern, Qatari officials had given assurances that Mr. Rowhani's one-month prison sentence and \$13,700 fine would not be enforced, and he had been assured just week prior that he was free to travel. These actions marked an arbitrary escalation after decades of discrimination against the Bahá'ís in Qatar merely on account of their religion.

For over eight years, Mr. Rowhani has served as chairperson of the National Assembly of the Baha'is of Qatar, a pastoral voluntary role addressing the spiritual and administrative needs of the Baha'i religious community—which has existed in Qatar for over 80 years. His detention is emblematic of the broader pattern of discrimination faced by Baha'i community members in Qatar. [BIC Post on X; BIC News 30 December 2024; BIC News 17 June2025]

See the interview with his daughter, Nora Rowhani, on YouTube.

Persecution, Qatar; Remy Rowhani

2024 13 Dec

202-

The arrest of Reza Khandan by the Iranian security forces. An activist, artist, father he is the husband of the Sakharov Prize for the Freedom of Thought laureate Nasrin Sotoudeh. He faced three-and-a-half more years of an existing sentence (on top of time already served) for supporting women's rights in Iran.

In 2018, a few months after Nasrin was imprisoned for her legal work representing women who protested Iran's compulsory hijab laws, Reza and fellow activist Farhad Meysami were arrested for making thousands of buttons that said in Farsi, "I Oppose the Mandatory Hijab." Reza was charged with "spreading propaganda against the system" and "colluding to commit crimes against national security," for speaking out about Nasrin's arrest, and for challenging the country's compulsory hijab law. He was released on bail after 111 days while Nasrin remained in prison until she received a medical furlough in July 2021. Farhad was released in February 2023. [Iran Wire 13 Dec 2024]

Nasrin Sotoudeh; Reza Khandan

2024 10 Dec

202-

The passing of Keith Bartlett (b, 9 February 1945 in Rosetown, SK) in Saskatoon, SK. [Saskatoon Star-Phoenix 14 December 2024]. Keith was buried in the Harris Cemetery.

For an obituary see Arbor Memorial.

Also see SaskToday and Creative kids as well as his interview with Terry Hoknes.

Keith made a short biographical video that can be seen on YouTube.

Some of Keith's music can be found on ReverbNation and on YouTube.

Keith and two of his daughters, Natania and Tahirih, performed at the Toronto Regional Bahá'í Conference.

- In Memoriam; North Battleford, SK; Rosetown, SK; Saskatoon, SK

2024 28 - 29 Nov

202-

The United Nations Forum on Minority Issues, part of the UN Human Rights Council session running in Geneva, was criticized by UN member states after the candidacy of Diane Ala'i was blocked from becoming chair. Nominations for the Forum chair rotate across different UN member states groupings and are decided by the president of the Human Rights Council. The decision to bar her was influenced by the Iranian government. The move provoked sharp criticism from UN members and human rights advocates for barring a qualified member of a minority from chairing deliberations concerning minorities.

Ala'i was eminently qualified for the task. She is a human rights expert with more than 35 years of experience across the UN system and human rights mechanisms. She served as representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the UN in Geneva for 30 years, retiring in 2022, and was nominated as chair by the non-governmental Minority Rights Group. Her candidacy was also supported by several governments, including Austria, France, Switzerland, and at later stages of the selection process by Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. [IranWire 29Jan2024]

Roya Boroumand, a prominent Iranian human rights activist and the Executive Director of Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights in Iran commented saying, "It is simply unacceptable that one of the worst human rights abusers in the world is allowed to decide who the UN Human Rights Council, a body mandated to fight against discrimination and intolerance, can nominate." Boroumand added that Iran's government chose to persecute minorities such as Bahá'ís "rather than addressing the root causes of Iranians turning away from Islam."

[Post on X; Post on X]

* Persecution, Iran; Bahá'í International Community (BIC); Diane Alai; Roya Boroumand; United Nations; Uskuli, Mr.

2024 27 Nov

202-

The European Parliament passed a joint motion for a resolution on the increasing and systematic repression of women in Iran in light of the recent increase in the number of arrests, prosecutions and imprisonments of Bahá'í women. [European Parliament resolution; BIC-Brussell]

* Persecution, Iran

2024 25 Nov

202-

The Bahá'í World Centre advised that the work on the Shrine of the Báb that had begun some four months earlier had been completed. The project implemented several features to enhance accessibility, particularly for wheelchairs. The main paths approaching the Shrine from both east and west were paved with Jerusalem Red Limestone, while the expansion of the plaza immediately in front of the Shrine was finished with Galil Gold Limestone—the same stone used for the floor of the Shrine's colonnade and the terraces above and below on Mt. Carmel.

The expansion of the plaza was inspired by drawings prepared by William Sutherland Maxwell—Hand of the Cause and distinguished Canadian architect—who designed the Shrine's superstructure in the early 1940s. The building's harmonious blend of Eastern and Western architectural styles has made it a familiar and well-loved landmark.

[BWNS1764]

See some "before" images.

In its letter of 26 July 2024 it was stated that "the opportunity will be taken to carry out some preparatory work inside the Shrine so that, in due course, all rooms can be dedicated to prayer and worship as part of the single Shrine of the Báb."

Báb, Shrine of (Haifa)

2024 19 Nov

202-

The Bahá'í International Community issued a statement regarding human rights in Egypt. They expressed concern that the persecution of Egypt's Bahá'í community by Egyptian authorities, something that the Bahá'ís have experienced for over 60 years, is intensifying. They encouraged member-states of the UN Human Rights Council to make five specific recommendations to Egypt at the January 2025 UPR session which will assist in alleviating the suffering of the Egyptian Bahá'ís.

Allocate land for Bahá'í burial in various regions of Egypt.

Appoint a government liaison for Egypt's Baha'i community to address their concerns.

Establish an official entity to oversee marriage, divorce, and inheritance matters for individuals whose national ID cards show generic religious identifiers.

Uphold the right of Bahá'ís to freely practice their faith.

Remove the names of Bahá'í individuals from airport arrivals watch lists, whether Egyptian or foreign nationals. [BIC-News 19Nov24]

Persecution, Egypt

2024 11 Nov

202-

The Bahá'í International Community in New York announced the launching of a new publication titled *Outsiders: Multifaceted Violence Against Bahá'ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran*. It is the latest in a series of highly significant independent reports and statements about the Bahá'ís in Iran published in recent months.

The new report was prepared by the Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights in Iran, in partnership with Eleos Justice at Monash University, a think tank created and directed by Mai Sato, the new UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iran. The report focuses on violence perpetrated against the Bahá'í community since the Baha'i Faith emerged in 1844, by documenting three forms of violence as described by sociologist Johan Galtung;

direct, structural and cultural, showing them to be part of the Iranian government's systematic effort to eliminate the Bahá'í religious minority from society.

One major finding of the report, however, is that the Iranian population has increasingly "resisted" the policy of discrimination against the Bahá'í community. There appears to have been a shift in public attitudes toward Bahá'ís from contempt and avoidance around the time of the Revolution to increasing indifference, acceptance and even support of the Bahá'í community.

[BIC News 11NOV24]

* Persecution, Iran; * Publications

2024 6 Nov

202-

The release of a documentary titled For the Betterment of Society explores how Bahá'í initiatives in Kazakhstan are fostering spiritual and material progress. The 23-minute film produced by the Bahá'ís of Kazakhstan examines how bonds of unity within extended families from diverse faith traditions are being strengthened through consultation and gatherings for prayer, nurturing new patterns of support and enhancing collective purpose throughout neighborhoods. [BWNS1759]

Kazakhstan

2024 16 Oct

202-

In a message the Universal House of Justice announced the intention to build a further two national Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs, one in Brasilia, Brazil and the other in Lilongwe, Malawi as well as a local Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Batouri, Cameroon. [Message 16 October 2024]

- Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, Local; - Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, National; Brasilia, Brazil; Cameroon; Malawi; Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, Batouri, Cameroon; Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, Brasilia, Brazil; Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, Lilongwe, Malawi

2024 22 - 23 Sep

202-

The 75th Anniversary of the United Nations was marked in June 2020 with a declaration by Member States that included 12 overarching commitments along with a request to the Secretary-General for recommendations to address both current and future challenges.

In September 2021, the Secretary-General responded with his report, Our Common Agenda, a wake-up call to speed up the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and propel the commitments contained in the UN75 Declaration. In some cases, the proposals addressed gaps that had emerged since 2015,

requiring new intergovernmental agreements. The report, therefore, called for a Summit of the Future to forge a new global consensus on readying for a future that is rife with risks but also opportunities. The General Assembly welcomed the submission of the "rich and substantive" report and agreed to hold the Summit on 22-23 September 2024, preceded by a ministerial meeting in 2023. An action-oriented Pact for the Future is expected to be agreed by Member States through intergovernmental negotiations on issues they decide to take forward.
[Road to the Summit of the Future]

New York, USA; New York City, NY; Summit of the Future (UN conference); United Nations

Only the earliest 50 entries are shown above, as a sample.

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