



B

Y ALL ACCOUNTS, the house of Mirza Abbas

Nuri was a masterpiece of Islamic architecture. Mirza Abbas Nuri was a renowned 18th century Iranian calligrapher, and his home in Tehran — marked by a verdant veranda, flowered courtyard, and tasteful tile-work — was considered among the most beautiful houses of that period. heritage tells much

In the summer of 2004, however, Iranian authorities demolished the house. The reason was all too clear: the state of Iran's 25-

home was considered by Iran's Bahá'ís as a sacred and historic site, inasmuch as Mirza Abbas Nuri was the father of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. year-campaign to eradicate the

That the Iranian government would destroy part of its country's own heritage tells much about the current state of Iran's 25-year-campaign to eradicate the Iranian Bahá'í

300,000-member Iranian Bahá'í community. Since community.

coming to power in 1979, Iran's cleric-led Islamic government has systematically persecuted Bahá'ís in

The demolition in June 2004 of the house of Mirza Abbas Nuri, a renowned 18th century Iranian calligrapher, reflects the Iranian government's willingness to destroy its own cultural heritage to eradicate the Bahá'í Faith from Iran.

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Iran, using execution, imprisonment, torture, and a wide range of measures designed to impoverish and drive out the country's largest religious minority.

Between 1978 and 1998, more than 200 Bahá'ís were executed by the Iranian government. Hundreds more Bahá'ís were imprisoned and tortured, and tens of thousands were deprived of jobs, pensions, businesses, and educational opportunities.

In the face of intense international pressure, most significantly through a series of United Nations human rights resolutions, the Iranian government has essen-

Farhang Mavaddat tially halted the executions and greatly reduced the number of Bahá'ís held in prison.

1981, and his wife Mehri Mavaddat was most egregious forms of direct violence against individual members of the Bahá'í community, the government

has nevertheless continued its campaign of persecution, albeit in a manner that clearly seeks to avoid the scrutiny of international human rights monitors.

Bahá'ís in every part of Iran continue to face the threat of short-term detention and harassment. In the spring of 2005, for example, more than 35 Bahá'ís in various areas were imprisoned without charge. While most were held less than a week, others were jailed for up to three months in a kind of “revolving door” detention apparently aimed principally at creating terror and repression. Some of the prisoners, for example, were held incommunicado, in unknown locations, while their families desperately searched for them. In addition, government agents conducted prolonged searches of many of their homes, confiscating documents, books, computers, copiers and other belongings.

Moreover, the government has sought overall to suffocate the Bahá'í community through extensive social and economic restrictions. In addition to incidents such as the razing of Mirza Abbas Nuri's home, which was preceded by the destruction of another

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important Bahá'í holy site in April 2004, this effort at slow strangulation — which must be considered as nothing less than cultural cleansing — can be most

Beyond the destruction of

Bahá'í clearly observed in the government's efforts to prevent the

holy places and

Bahá'í youth from obtaining higher education.

In the early 1980s, the government banned Bahá'í youth from Iranian universities and colleges. In early youth,

denial of education to Bahá'í

2004, however, apparently in response to international condemnation of the ban, the government publicly has in recent years

the government

promised to change its policies, indicating that it would allow Bahá'í students to enroll in university in regimen

adopted a

the autumn of that year. On that basis, about 1,000 Bahá'í youth took university entrance examinations. term

of arbitrary arrests, short

In August 2004, the government released the results of those exams, on which Bahá'í students scored well. and

imprisonment,

However, the government also falsely recorded the religious affiliation of each Bahá'í student, printing

the confiscation of homes and

the word “Islam” in the field listing each Bahá’í stuproperties,  
 designed  
 dent’s religion. Because their religious principle prevents them from even  
 “pretending” to deny their faith, to harass and  
 Bahá’ís were effectively precluded from matriculating. intimidate  
 the  
 Some 800 Bahá’ís — those who had otherwise passed Bahá’í  
 community.  
 their examinations — were denied the right to education for the 2004-2005  
 school year in this manner.  
 Beyond the destruction of Bahá’í holy places and  
 the denial of education to Bahá’í youth, the government has in recent years  
 adopted a regime of arbitrary  
 arrests, short term imprisonment, and the confiscation of homes and properties,  
 designed to harass and  
 intimidate the Bahá’í community. The community as  
 a whole remains under numerous restrictions, with  
 its administrative institutions dismantled, its worship  
 practices restricted, and its right to equal protection  
 under the law utterly refused.  
 The government’s long term strategy to destroy the  
 Bahá’í community without bringing undue international attention was cruelly  
 outlined in a secret 1991

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Many Bahá’ís have been tortured. The body of Dr. Nasir Vafai, a 49-year-old  
 physician  
 who was executed on 14 June 1981, was found to have a deep gash below his  
 abdomen  
 which ran all the way around his leg, severing the joint.

memorandum that aimed at establishing policy regarding “the Bahá’í  
 question.” Drafted by the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council and signed  
 by Supreme  
 Leader Ali Khamenei, the document calls for a series  
 of restrictions on the access of Bahá’ís to education

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and livelihood that is nothing less than a blueprint for  
 the strangulation of the Bahá’í community. Most sig- The  
 Bahá’í community in  
 nificantly, it lays out unequivocally the government’s poses no threat  
 Iran  
 overall objective — to ensure that the “progress and  
 to the  
 development” of the Bahá’í community “shall be  
 blocked.” [See page 18 for full text of document.] Iranian  
 authorities.

The recent destruction of holy sites and denial of education to Bahá'í youth, as well as the continuing Faith require measures aimed at harassing Bahá'ís and depriving its followers to avoid them of their rightful property and livelihood, indicate that the government's secret plan is still very much in political effect. All of the evidence flatly contradicts the government's oft-repeated contention that it has no campaign activity, of persecution against the Bahá'ís.

The fact is that the Bahá'ís of Iran remain in a precarious state. They are denied the right to practice their faith freely, guaranteed under international human rights instruments such as the International Bill of Human Rights, to which Iran is a party. The administrative institutions of their Faith have been dismantled in accordance with a government edict. They live each day knowing that their government seeks to block their development as a community, and that even slight infractions can result in the deprivation of their livelihood, imprisonment or worse.

The Bahá'í community in Iran poses no threat to the Iranian authorities. The principles of the Bahá'í Faith require its followers to avoid partisan political involvement, subversive activity, and all forms of violence. The community has painstakingly avoided aligning itself in any fashion with any of the country's governments, ideologies or opposition movements. While defending their right to worship and practice their religion freely, as promised by international law, Bahá'ís seek only to be peaceful, law abiding and productive contributors to the advancement of Iranian society.

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### The Bahá'í Faith: A global community

FOUNDED A CENTURY and a half ago in Iran, the Bahá'í Faith is today among the fastest-growing of the world's religions. With more than five million followers, who reside in virtually every nation on earth, it is the second-most widespread independent world religion, surpassing every faith but Christianity in its geographic reach. Bahá'ís reside in more than 100,000 localities around the world, an expansion that reflects

their dedication to the ideal of world citizenship.  
 The Bahá'í Faith's global scope is mirrored in the  
 People of every composition of its membership. Representing a  
 cross  
 nationality, race, ethnic section of humanity, Bahá'ís come from  
 virtually every  
 group, and religious nation, ethnic group, culture, profession, and  
 social or  
 background around the economic class. More than 2,100 different ethnic  
 and  
 world have declared tribal groups are represented.  
 their belief in the Bahá'í The Faith's Founder is  
 Bahá'u'lláh, a Persian noble-  
 Faith. Shown here is man from Tehran who, in the mid-nineteenth  
 century,  
 a group of people from left a life of princely comfort and security and,  
 in the  
 around the world who face of intense persecution and deprivation,  
 brought to  
 have volunteered to serve humanity a stirring new message of peace and  
 unity.  
 at the Bahá'í World Bahá'u'lláh claimed to be nothing  
 less than a new  
 Centre in Haifa, Israel. and independent Messenger from God. His life,  
 work,

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Entrance to the Shrine  
 of Bahá'u'lláh, near  
 Acre, Israel.

and influence parallel that of Abraham, Krishna,  
 Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ, and Muhammad.  
 Bahá'ís view Bahá'u'lláh as the most recent in this succession of  
 divine Messengers.  
 The essential message of Bahá'u'lláh is that of  
 The essential  
 unity. He taught that there is only one God, that there  
 is only one human race, and that all the world's reli- message of  
 gions represent stages in the revelation of God's will  
 Bahá'u'lláh is that  
 and purpose for humanity. In this day, Bahá'u'lláh said, of unity. He  
 taught  
 humanity has collectively come of age. As foretold in  
 all of the world's scriptures, the time has arrived for that there is  
 only  
 the uniting of all peoples into a peaceful and integrated one God, that  
 there

global society. “The earth is but one country, and man-kind its citizens,” He wrote. race, and that all

For a global society to flourish, Bahá’u’lláh said, it must be based on certain fundamental principles. They include the elimination of all forms of prejudice; full equality between the sexes; recognition of the essential oneness of the world’s great religions; the elimination of extremes of poverty and wealth; universal education; will the harmony of science and religion; a sustainable balance between nature and technology; and the establishment of a world federal system, based on collective security and the oneness of humanity.

is only one  
the world’s  
represent stages  
in the revelation  
of God’s  
and purpose for  
humanity.

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### Chapter II

#### A CAMPAIGN OF CULTURAL CLEANSING

##### I

IN THE WORLD today, Iran seeks to portray itself as a deserving partner in international trade, inter-governmental affairs, and other cooperative activities. Understanding that its international reputation on human rights is critical, Iran has embarked on a multi-pronged effort to convince the world at large that it has largely abandoned the practices of execution, torture, imprisonments, and repression that marked the early days of the Islamic revolution. Since 2002, for example, Iran has engaged in a series of “dialogues” with the European Union and others on human rights and trade.

The story of its ongoing persecution of the Bahá’í community of Iran offers a singular litmus test of the Iranian government’s degree of sincerity in meeting

The House of the Báb in Shiraz, Iran, one of the most holy sites in the Bahá’í world, was destroyed by Revolutionary Guardsmen in 1979 and later razed by the government. The photo at top was taken before the demolition took place, shown at bottom.

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globally accepted human rights standards. Bahá’ís hold no political ambitions, are committed to non-violence, and seek only to help in the redevelopment of their native land. Yet, for more than 25 years, they have been

persecuted wholly for their religious beliefs.

Consider the following images:

- After executing Bahá'ís by firing squad, Iranian officials in the 1980s would frequently demand payment for the price of the bullets from the families of the victims.
- Ten Bahá'í women, arrested and charged with the “crime” of teaching religious classes for children and youth, were hanged, one by one, from the oldest to the youngest, as the others stood by. Prisoners who watched the 1983 hangings said that the executioners had hoped to force the younger women to recant their Faith, or even simply to say they were not Bahá'ís. None did, all preferring to die rather than to renounce their beliefs.
- Bahá'ís, seeking simply to educate young people who had been excluded by government decree from higher education in Iran, set up their own college classes in private homes around the country in the late 1980s. In 1998, Iranian officials raided 500 private homes where such classes were held, arresting 30 teachers and confiscating hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of books, furniture and educational equipment.
- Bahá'í holy sites, including those associated with the Iranian-born Founders of the Faith, have been systematically destroyed throughout the country, by officials using everything from pickaxes to bulldozers.
- When Bahá'ís in Yazd approached government officials in late 2004 to call attention to their

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persecutions, they were warned that any public complaints might cause the Iranian public to rise up against them, invade and burn down their homes, assault them, and possibly even kill them. Within weeks, indeed, Bahá'í homes were invaded, Bahá'ís were beaten, the Bahá'í graveyard was desecrated, and at least one Bahá'í-owned business was set ablaze. Evidence emerged that the police chief, who in theory should have protected the Bahá'ís, ordered the attacks. Although the

persecution of the

These and other images and events add up to nothing less than a systematic campaign aimed at the complete eradication of an entire minority community. It is, in short, a government-led effort at cultural cleansing. Bahá'í Faith in

Iran has its roots in Iranian history [See "The Historical Background," page 65], the current campaign of systematic persecution began with the 1979 Islamic Revolution. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, virtually the entire leadership of the Iranian Bahá'í community was arrested and executed or disappeared. In all, more than 200 Bahá'ís have been killed or executed since the Islamic Republic's founding, and nearly 1,000 Bahá'ís have been imprisoned.

Although the persecution of the Bahá'í Faith in Iran has its roots in Iranian history [See "The Historical Background," page 65], the current campaign of systematic

systematic persecution began with the 1979 Islamic Revolution. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, virtually the entire leadership of the Iranian Bahá'í community was arrested and executed or disappeared. In all, more than 200 Bahá'ís have been killed or executed since the Islamic Republic's founding, and nearly 1,000 Bahá'ís have been imprisoned.

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The campaign at that time openly sought the wholesale destruction of the Bahá'í community. Thousands of Bahá'ís also were fired from jobs, deprived of pensions, and excluded from education (including primary and secondary education). Bahá'í properties, sacred sites, and cemeteries were confiscated and destroyed. All manner of rights to religious freedom, worship and assembly were abrogated.

All of this has been well documented. Governments, non-governmental organizations, and the news media have widely reported on the persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran. In the 1980s and 1990s, the international

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community rose up and condemned this oppression through a series of resolutions at the United Nations and in other venues.

For a time, conditions seemed to improve. In the late 1990s, the killings all but stopped. Most of those Bahá'ís held in prison were released. Bahá'í children were allowed to re-enroll in primary and secondary schools in most parts of the country. Some Bahá'ís were allowed to obtain new business licenses, and restrictions on other forms of economic activity appeared to random acts, lessen.

but deliberate At the same time, however, those who followed government policy. events in Iran closely could see that the government

never gave up its plans of eliminating the Bahá'í community as a viable entity in Iranian society. Indeed, evidence emerged continuing through today, the Bahá'í community has that the government been kept off guard through the constant threat of arbitrary arrest and harassment. Restrictions on owning businesses and property have remained in force. a secret blueprint And Bahá'í youth have been prevented from entering for the quiet institutions of higher education. strangulation of the Bahá'í community. The Bahá'í Question Iran's anti-Bahá'í actions are not random acts, but deliberate government policy. In 1993, concrete evidence emerged that the government had in fact adopted a secret blueprint for the quiet strangulation of the Bahá'í community. That evidence came in the form of a secret memorandum, which had been drawn up by the Iranian Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council (SRCC) in 1991. [See page 18 for complete text of the SRCC document.] Stamped "confidential," the document was prepared at the request of the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the then President of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

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The memorandum was signed by Hujjatu'l Islam Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani, Secretary of the Council, and approved by Mr. Khamenei, who added his signature to the document.

The memorandum came to light in the 1993 report by UN Special Representative Reynaldo Galindo Pohl. According to Mr. Galindo Pohl, the document came as "reliable information" just as the annual report on Iran to the UN Commission on Human Rights was being completed.

The memorandum specifically calls for Iran's Bahá'ís to be treated in such a way "that their progress and development shall be blocked," providing for the first time conclusive evidence that the campaign against the Bahá'ís is centrally directed by the government. A photocopy of the 1991 memorandum from the Iranian Supreme

The document indicates, for example, that the gov-

ernment aims to keep the Bahá'ís illiterate and uneducated, living only at a subsistence level, and fearful at every moment that even the tiniest infraction will question."

Revolutionary  
Cultural Council on  
"the Bahá'í

bring the threat of imprisonment or worse.

Although some of its provisions appear to grant a measure of protection to Bahá'ís, its overall impact is to create an environment where the Bahá'í community of Iran will be quietly eliminated.

The memorandum says, for example, that all Bahá'ís should be expelled from universities; that they shall be denied "positions of influence," and instead only be allowed to "lead a modest life similar to that of the population in general"; and even that "employment

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The ISRCC document

[Translation from Persian]

[Text in square brackets added by translator]

In the Name of God!

The Islamic Republic of Iran

The Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council

Number: 1327/....

Date: 6/12/69 [25 February 1991]

Enclosure: None

CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

Head of the Office of the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei]

Greetings!

After greetings, with reference to the letter #1/783 dated 10/10/69 [31 December

1990], concerning the instructions of the Esteemed Leader which had been conveyed to the Respected President regarding the Bahá'í question, we inform you that,

since the respected President and the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural

Council had referred this question to this Council for consideration and study, it was

placed on the Council's agenda of session #128 on 16/11/69 [5 February 1991] and

session #119 of 2/11/69 [22 January 1991]. In addition to the above, and further to

the [results of the] discussions held in this regard in session #112 of 2/5/66 [24 July

1987] presided over by the Esteemed Leader (head and member of the Supreme Council), the recent views and directives given by the Esteemed Leader regarding

the Bahá'í question were conveyed to the Supreme Council. In consideration of the contents of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the religious and civil laws and general policies of the country, these matters were carefully studied and decisions pronounced.

In arriving at the decisions and proposing reasonable ways to counter the above question, due consideration was given to the wishes of the Esteemed Leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran [Khamenei], namely, that “in this regard a specific policy should be devised in such a way that everyone will understand what should or should not be done.” Consequently, the following proposals and recommendations resulted from these discussions.

The respected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council, while approving these recommendations, instructed us to convey them to the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei] so that appropriate action may be taken according to his guidance.

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### A. General status of the Bahá'ís within the country's system

1. They will not be expelled from the country without reason.
2. They will not be arrested, imprisoned, or penalized without reason.
3. The government's dealings with them must be in such a way that their progress and development are blocked.

### B. Educational and cultural status

1. They can be enrolled in schools provided they have not identified themselves as Bahá'ís.
2. Preferably, they should be enrolled in schools which have a strong and imposing religious ideology.
3. They must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís.
4. Their political (espionage) activities must be dealt with according to appropriate government laws and policies, and their religious and propaganda activities should be answered by giving them religious and cultural responses, as well as propaganda.
5. Propaganda institutions (such as the Islamic Propaganda Organization) must establish an independent section to counter the propaganda and religious activities of the Bahá'ís.

6. A plan must be devised to confront and destroy their cultural roots outside the country.

C. Legal and social status

1. Permit them a modest livelihood as is available to the general population.  
2. To the extent that it does not encourage them to be Bahá'ís, it is permissible to provide them the means for ordinary living in accordance with the general rights given to every Iranian citizen, such as ration booklets, passports, burial certificates, work permits, etc.

3. Deny them employment if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís.

4. Deny them any position of influence, such as in the educational sector, etc.  
Wishing you divine confirmations,

Secretary of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

[Signature]

[Note in the handwriting of Mr. Khamenei]

In the Name of God!

The decision of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council seems sufficient.

I thank you gentlemen for your attention and efforts.

[signed:] Ali Khamenei

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shall be refused to persons identifying themselves as Bahá'ís.”

The provisions regarding arrest, imprisonment and punishment can be read in two ways. The document says:

(a) With regard to the general condition of Bahá'ís,

Although some of its the following guidelines are hereby adopted: (i) they

provisions appear are not to be expelled from the country without to grant a measure reason; (ii) they are not to be detained, imprisoned or punished without reason; (iii) the government's of protection to treatment of them shall be such that their progress Bahá'ís, its overall and development shall be blocked.

impact is to create At first glance, it might seem that the term “without reason” is a move towards greater justice, inasmuch an environment

as virtually all of the detentions, arrests and imprisonwhere the Bahá'í ments of Bahá'ís in the past have been without cause.

community of Iran However, when the entire memo is understood in the will be quietly context of what to do about “the Bahá'í question,”

it is

clear that the directive is merely instructing officials to

eliminated. be sure that they justify their actions before they make

any moves against a Bahá'í. It in no way promises any sort of protection.

The memorandum also belies its underlying intentions when it says that Bahá'ís will be allowed to go to school only if they do not identify themselves as Bahá'ís, and that they should be sent to schools “with a strong religious ideology.” The aim here, obviously, is to wrest Bahá'í children from their faith.

Ominously, the memorandum says that “A plan must be devised to confront and destroy their cultural roots outside the country.” That Iran would like to reach outside its borders to stamp out the Bahá'í Faith makes clear the degree of blind animosity felt by the government towards Bahá'ís.

In the years since the memorandum was written, the Bahá'í community has experienced persecution in all of the areas outlined by it: Bahá'ís have been

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detained, imprisoned, and falsely charged with “spy- Bahá'ís have Iran's  
ing”; they have been denied access to education and experienced  
persecution  
sources of livelihood; they have been stripped of all in every region of  
the  
influence in Iranian society and deprived of their right country.  
to religious freedom.

Indeed, as the next chapter indicates, the Iranian government has focused on social, economic and cultural repression aimed quite clearly at carrying out the plan endorsed by the “Bahá'í question” memorandum.

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### 22 | The Bahá'í Question

#### Chapter III

#### THE CURRENT

#### SITUATION

#### I

IN CONTRAST TO its campaign of outright killing, imprisonment, and torture of Bahá'ís during The government's  
the 1980s, the Iranian government has in recent efforts to deny  
years focused largely on economic and social ef- Bahá'í youth access  
forts to drive Bahá'ís from Iran and destroy their  
cultural and community life. to higher

education

Such measures include ongoing efforts to prevent perhaps most clearly  
Bahá'ís from receiving higher education, to deny them demonstrate

the means of economic livelihood, and to deprive them lengths to which the of the inspiration provided by their sacred and historic sites. Iranian government The government has also used arbitrary arrests and is willing to go in detentions, coupled with the confiscation of personal its campaign of property, to terrorize, oppress and otherwise keep the community off balance — a stratagem that appears to be cultural cleansing. on the rise. Behind these techniques remains the implicit threat of long term imprisonment and execution. Above all else, the Bahá'í community remains

Interior of the house of Mirza Abbas Nuri, an architectural landmark in Tehran, during its demolition in June 2004.

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without fundamental religious freedoms accorded to it in international human rights documents that Iran has signed. These include the right of Bahá'ís to freely assemble, to choose their leadership, and to openly manifest their religion “in worship, observance, practice and teaching.”

#### Denial of Access to Education

The government's efforts to deny Bahá'í youth access to higher education perhaps most clearly demonstrate the lengths to which the Iranian government is willing to go in its campaign of cultural cleansing. As previously stated, the Iranian government banned Bahá'í youth from education shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution. At first, all Bahá'í children were excluded from schooling, but in the 1990s, primary and secondary school children were allowed to re-enroll. But the ban on the entry of Bahá'í youth into public and private institutions of higher education has remained. The Bahá'í Faith places a high value on education, and Bahá'ís have always been among the besteducated groups in Iran. Being denied access to higher education for years has had a demoralizing effect on Bahá'í youth, and the erosion of the educational level of the community is clearly aimed at hastening its impoverishment. In late 2003, early 2004, however, the government indicated that it would allow Bahá'í youth to enroll in university in the autumn of 2004. (It's worth noting that the government

was at the time engaged in a human rights dialogue with the European Union, and one demand of the Europeans was improved access to education for Bahá'ís.)

The key to this change was the publication of news articles stating that the question of religious affiliation would be removed from university entrance examina-

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tions and other university enrollment documents.

The removal of the data field asking for religious affiliation was critical to Bahá'í youth who sought to enter university. The government had always said that if Bahá'ís simply declare themselves as Muslims, they would be allowed to enroll. But for Bahá'ís, such a false declaration would not only be against the principles of their faith, which precludes lying or dissimulation, it would also tacitly play into the hands of government efforts to get them to deny their faith.

The Iranian government banned Bahá'í youth

from

education shortly

False Promises

after the 1979

With the promise that religious affiliation would not matter, about 1,000 Bahá'ís accordingly signed up

Islamic

Bahá'í

At first, all

for and took university entrance examinations. And, indeed, no field declaring religion was on the papers.

children were

Students were asked to take a religious subject examination, however. It came as part of the whole

excluded from

range of subject tests relating to mathematics, language, history, and so on. The religion tests were

schooling, but in

offered in four subjects, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism, corresponding to the four recog-

and secondary

were

school children

nized religions in Iran.

allowed to

re-enroll.

Most Bahá'í students opted for the Islamic subject test since, as the majority religion, Islam is taught in all schools and most Bahá'ís in Iran accordingly have a solid familiarity with its teachings.

In August, however, when the examination results were mailed out, government authorities had printed the word "Islam" in a data field listing a prospective student's religion. Officials cynically explained they did that on the assumption that choosing to take the subject test on Islam amounts

to a de facto declaration of faith in Islam.

Upon learning of the forced religious declaration, (continued on page 28)

### CHAPTER III: The Current Situation | 25 The Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education

#### I

WHAT THE New York Times called “an elaborate act of communal self-preservation,” the Bahá'í community in 1987 established its own higher education program to meet the educational needs of as many of its young people as resources would allow. That program evolved over the years into a full-fledged university, known as the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE), which, until mid-1998, had an enrollment of some 900 students, a faculty of more than 150 first-rate academics and instructors, and complete course offerings in ten subject areas.

Because of the continual threat of persecution, the BIHE was forced to operate in a highly circumspect and decentralized manner. Most of its classes were held in private homes throughout Iran and what little permanent infrastructure it had was composed of a handful of rented classrooms and laboratories scattered throughout the capital.

Then, in an act that speaks volumes about the government's real attitude towards Bahá'ís, hundreds of government agents fanned out across the country in September 1998, arresting some 36 BIHE faculty and staff, raiding some 500 homes, and confiscating hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of books, equipment and records in a blatant effort to shut the university down.

“The materials confiscated were neither political nor religious, and the people arrested were not fighters or organizers,” said the New York Times, in a 29 October 1998 article about the raids. “They were lecturers in subjects like accounting and dentistry; the materials seized were textbooks and laboratory equipment.”

Teaching was done principally via correspondence, or, for specialized scientific and technical courses and in other special cases, in small group classes that were usually held in private homes.

“At the beginning, the students did not even know the names of their professors,” said one BIHE professor, who, like most others quoted in this article, wanted to remain anonymous out of fear for his safety and that of his relatives in Iran. “Even after three or four years, the students did not know the names of their professors. They had never seen them. Because it was very dangerous. If somebody knows the name of them, maybe they would tell their friends. So it was all correspondence at the beginning of this plan.”

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Over time, however, the Institute was able to establish a few laboratories, operated in privately owned

commercial buildings in and around Tehran, for computer science, physics, dental science, pharmacology, applied chemistry and language study. The operations of these laboratories were kept prudently quiet, with students cautioned not to come and go in large groups that might give the authorities a reason to object.

Most of the classes offered by the Bahá'í

Among its faculty were approximately 25 or 30 professors who had been fired from government-run universities after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Other faculty members included

Institute for Higher Education have been like this one, which shows a professor with his back to the easel and several students on living room couches.

doctors, dentists, lawyers and engineers. The majority were educated in Iran, but a good number have degrees from universities in the West, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Columbia University, the University of California at Berkeley and the Sorbonne.

None of the Bahá'í faculty members were paid for their time; all worked as volunteers.

“These youth are very precious people,” said a faculty member, explaining why they were willing to take such risks, without monetary remuneration, to establish the Institute. “We all care about them. They have been through tests and trials and they had no hope. They have been deprived of many things so if there was any chance for us to get something better for them, we did it.”

While most of those arrested were ultimately released, and the holding of classes in private homes has resumed on a small scale, the effort by the government to shut down the BIHE clearly demonstrates the degree of hatred and prejudice against the Bahá'ís that remains in certain circles of the government — and shows unambiguously why the Bahá'í community will not be safe until legal protections are firmly institutionalized, regardless of talk of reform.

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a group of Bahá'í students complained to officials at the Educational Measurement and Evaluation Organization (EMEO), asking if they could return the exam

results with corrected information. A footnote in the

The Bahá'í Faith letter conveying examination results said that incorrect

places a high value names and addresses could and should be corrected on education, and returned.

However, no mention was made about correcting

and Bahá'ís have religious information. Indeed, Bahá'ís were told by always been among EMEQ officials that “incorrect religion would not be the best educated corrected” on the forms since the Bahá'í Faith is not among the officially recognized religions in Iran. groups in Iran.

Shortly after that meeting, Bahá'í students wrote a Being denied access letter of protest to the EMEQ. The students expressed, to higher education clearly, their objection to having been designated as for years has had a Muslims after having been promised that they would not have to disclose their religion in order to take the demoralizing effect entrance examination.

on Bahá'í youth, At first, officials of the EMEQ seemed to sympaand the erosion of thize with their problem, even allowing Bahá'ís to fill

out revised registration forms with no religious affiliathe educational level tion. However, even though some 800 Bahá'í students of the community who had passed their examinations also met the new is clearly aimed deadline for submission of the revised forms, only at hastening its ten names were published in an EMEQ bulletin on 12 September 2004 announcing which students had been impoverishment. admitted to university.

It's worth noting also that many Bahá'ís received high scores on the examinations, and, in fact, many of them were passed over in the admission process, while many lower-scoring Muslim students were accepted. In the end, out of solidarity with the rest of the 800 students who had been unfairly discriminated against, those ten Bahá'ís declined to register in the universities to which they had been accepted. And so, for the school year 2004-2005, Bahá'í young people were once again utterly deprived of access to higher education.

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For Bahá'ís, the entire episode seems calculated to accomplish a number of government objectives. First, it apparently seeks to demoralize Iranian Bahá'í youth in an effort to induce them to leave the country. Second, it allowed Iranian authorities to identify by name those Bahá'ís with outstanding academic ability, who might at some point play a role in helping to revive the Bahá'í community's fortunes. And, third, it allowed the Iranian government to say to international human rights monitors that they had given the Bahá'ís a chance to enroll — and that it was the Bahá'ís themselves who refused the opportunity.

Yet the government, of course, has long been aware that Bahá'ís cannot and will not as a matter of religious principle falsify or misrepresent their beliefs. And so it is clear from the whole affair that the 1991 policy aiming at blocking the development and progress of the Bahá'í community remains in effect.

#### Destruction of Holy Places

In the destruction of Bahá'í holy places, the government also demonstrates the lengths to which it will go to suffocate the Bahá'í community in Iran and to cleanse Bahá'í culture from modern memory — even though it may mean destroying monuments and buildings of historic importance to the society at large.

In June 2004, authorities demolished an historic house in Tehran that had been designed and owned by the father of the Faith's founder. The house was not only significant to Bahá'ís but was also considered to be a sterling example of period architecture of historic importance to Iranians.

The house that was destroyed in June was owned by Mirza Abbas Nuri, the father of Bahá'u'lláh. Its destruction prompted an outcry by Bahá'ís around the world.

(continued on page 34)

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#### The Bahá'í community of Iran speaks for itself

##### I

ON NOVEMBER 2004, the Iranian Bahá'í community addressed a letter to Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, outlining the scope of the persecution they have faced for 25 years. The letter examines the persecution in light of those verses of the Qur'an and Islamic law that proscribe violence and uphold freedom of religion. It also notes that Iran signed and ratified the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and associated covenants that protect freedom of religion. It then recounts the government's recent duplicity in offering university enrollment to Bahá'í youth but then falsely recording them as Muslims. It ends with a call for the full emancipation of the Bahá'í community. Here follow excerpts from the letter:

15 November 2004

The Esteemed Presidency of the  
Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Khatami

For more than 161 years, the Bahá'ís have been exposed, in the sacred land of Iran—the native soil of their forefathers in whose name they take pride—to a series of abuses, tortures, murders and massacres and have tolerated numerous forms of persecution, tragedy and deprivation, for no other reason than believing in God and following their

Faith, the largest religious minority in Iran. Contrary to all religious, legal and moral standards, and supported by existing official documentation, they have been, individually and collectively, the subject of unwarranted discrimination and various injustices. Every time a political and social turmoil has occurred in this country, new machinations have been devised against this religious minority, and, in one way or another, their inalienable rights have been violated.

Day after day, the pressure against this wronged community became more intense and the scope of the injustice and infringement of their rights in various aspects of their lives more overt, such that their possessions, their homes, their jobs and their very existence were the target of attacks.

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Bahá'ís would never commit any act contrary to the law of the land; they are well-wishers of the people and the state; they do not involve themselves with any political party; and they tenaciously uphold their Faith's principles, which call on them to love and serve the entire human race and to bring about peace, amity and unity of religion.

From the perspective of the holy religion of Islam, people are free to choose and follow their own religion, and no one has the right to impose his religion on another. The following noble verses “Let there be no compulsion in religion...” and “To you be your Way, and to me mine” confirm this point. From the perspective of the holy religion of Islam, no one has the right to attack and violate the properties, the life and the dignity of those who live under the banner of this religion, which is to be secure and protected: “...if anyone slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land—it would be as if he slew the whole people...”

The equality, the freedom and the inalienable rights of all members of the human family, without discrimination as to race, gender, language and religion, have been unequivocally specified in all international covenants, especially in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Notwithstanding the Divine Standards and social and legal norms, to which brief reference has been made, certain decisions which have baffled humanity were made at the beginning of the [Islamic] Revolution, under authority of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Under the rubric of Cultural Revolution, the authorities of the [Ministry of ] Culture and Education decided to expel Bahá'í students, some of whom were completing their last term, from universities and other institutions of higher learning in which they were studying. Others were barred from entering these institutions solely because of their adherence to the Bahá'í Faith. Then in 1369 [1990/91], the Council of Cultural Revolution, with reference to a well-planned agenda, openly deprived Bahá'í youth from higher education, thereby denying a number of the youth

of this land the opportunity to realize their potential. This situation continued for some 20 years until in Ádhar of 1382 [December of 2003]

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“Peykesanjesh” (the publication of the Ministry of Science) officially announced that for the first time the religious affiliation of applicants would not be included in the application for the [university] national examination, and, instead, applicants would be asked to choose the subject of religious studies in which they would wish to be examined. Owing to the limitation cited in Article 13 of the Constitution, Bahá’í applicants necessarily chose Islamic studies for this examination.

Having received their entrance identification cards and subsequently taking this national examination, the success of Bahá’í youth, based on the government announcement of results in the first phase, was significant in that some 800 students were qualified to choose their fields of study, of whom hundreds ranked in the one to four digit range [a ranking scale extending to 200,000]. After receiving their test result forms, however, the Bahá’í applicants were surprised to see that their religion was specified as Islam. This duplicity astounded the Bahá’í community. Alas, the joyful news that the question about the religion of the applicants had been omitted from the national university entrance examination, which was a reflection of freedom of belief and a sign that the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran was moving toward establishing the foundation of human rights and eliminating discrimination in education, was quite short-lived.

Questions continue to preoccupy the minds of the members of the Bahá’í community in Iran and throughout the world as well as free thinkers and advocates of human rights: Does such unfair decision-making, such resorting to strategies whose direction is obvious and whose aim is to create prejudice and to violate the indisputable rights of a community, conform to standards of justice and equity? Should those who seek progress be barred from acquiring knowledge and deprived of actualizing their God-given potentialities because of their religious belief?

By now, a quarter of a century has elapsed in the reign of the Islamic government. To every act of injustice, Bahá’ís have responded

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with magnanimity. Faced with widespread and intense persecutions and multi-faceted iniquities, the Bahá’ís have never deviated, even by a hair’s breadth, from the straight divine path, and they continue to hold fast onto the cord of patience and tolerance as dictated by their Faith and belief.

They fain would expect that, over such a long period of time, which should have been sufficient to remove suspicions and misunderstandings, the esteemed authorities would have realized that the Bahá’ís

firmly believe in the oneness of God and the divine nature of all religions and prophets, as well as the realm beyond as confirmed in all the divine scriptures; they obey the laws and regulations of their country in accordance with the principles of their religion; they strive to preserve the interests of their homeland by offering cultural, social, economic and developmental assistance; and they would never refuse any service to establish human virtues and perfections which fulfil such universal visions as world peace and the oneness of humanity.

It is now hoped that [that respected authority], based on the Constitution, will take immediate action to ensure the emancipation of the Iranian Bahá'í community, reinstating their human rights and restoring the privileges of which they have been deprived.

Respectfully,

The Iranian Bahá'í community

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In six nations, Bahá'í communities coordinated the publication of a statement in major newspapers that decried the house's destruction as part of a campaign of "cultural cleansing" against the minority Bahá'í community in Iran.

Noting that the house was an "historical monument, a precious example of Islamic-Iranian architecture, 'a matchless model of art, spirituality, and architecture,'" the statement compared this action by Iran's extremist Muslim leadership to those of the Taliban of Afghanistan. "The hatred of the extremist mullahs for the Bahá'ís is such that they, like the Taliban of Afghanistan who destroyed the towering Buddhist sculptures at Bamian, intend not only to eradicate the religion, but even to erase all traces of its existence in the country of its birth," said the statement.

"In their determination to rid Iran of the Bahá'í community and obliterate its very memory, the fundamentalists in power are prepared even to destroy the cultural heritage of their own country, which they appear not to realize they hold in trust for humankind,"

Destruction of cultural the statement continued.

heritage. Another image Mirza Abbas Nuri himself was widely regarded of the interior of the house as one of Iran's greatest calligraphers and statesmen.

of Mirza Abbas Nuri In July, the Iranian newspaper Hamshahri

published  
in Tehran during its a lengthy article about his life and the  
architecture of  
demolition in June 2004. his house.

“As he had good taste for the arts and for beauty, he  
designed his own house in such a style that it became  
known as one of the most beautiful houses of that

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period,” wrote Iman Mihdizadih on 13 July 2004. “The  
plasterwork and the tile-work in the rooms as well  
as the verdant veranda, the courtyard with its central  
pool, and the trees planted in the flowerbeds, all created a tranquil  
atmosphere in this house.”

The house was destroyed over the period of about  
one week in June. The demolition order was issued in  
April by Ayatollah Kani, director of the Marvi School  
In the destruction of

and the Endowments Office of the government, ostensibly for the purpose of  
creating an Islamic cemetery. Bahá'í holy places,  
When the demolition started on 20 June, officials from the government  
the Ministry of Information were present, and by 29 also  
demonstrates

June more than 70 percent of the structure had been  
destroyed. the lengths to

The destruction of the house of Mirza Abbas Nuri which it will go to  
followed the razing in April 2004 of another historic suffocate the  
Bahá'í

Bahá'í property, the gravesite of Quddus, an early  
community in Iran

disciple of the Bahá'í Faith. The action came after  
demolition work started in February and then halted and to cleanse  
Bahá'í

temporarily in the face of protest at the local, national, culture from  
modern

and international levels. memory — even

Indeed, Bahá'ís had approached national authorities after the demolition  
work had been started, and though it may  
for a time that work was halted. Then, in April, it was mean destroying  
discovered that the dismantling of the gravesite had monuments and  
continued surreptitiously over a period of days until  
buildings of historic

the structure was entirely demolished.

The house-like structure marked the resting place of importance to the  
Mullah Muhammad-Ali Barfurushi, known as Quddus society at  
large.

(The Most Holy). Quddus was the foremost disciple of

the Báb, the Prophet-Herald of the Bahá'í Faith. The destruction of two such important holy sites in 2004 was not without precedent. In March 1979, the House of the Báb, the holiest Bahá'í shrine in Iran, was turned over by the government to a Muslim cleric known for his anti-Bahá'í activities. In September that year, that house was destroyed by a mob led by mullahs

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and officials of the Department of Religious Affairs. Likewise, in the early years of the Islamic Republic, the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Takur, where the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith spent His childhood, met a similar fate: it was demolished and the site was offered for sale to the public.

Over the years, as well, in Tehran and other cities throughout Iran, Bahá'í buildings have been looted and burned, Bahá'í cemeteries have been bulldozed and Bahá'í graves have been broken open. In the Tehran area, the Bahá'ís were forced to bury their dead in a barren stretch of land reserved by the authorities for "infidels." Having access to their own cemeteries is especially important to Bahá'ís because, as might be expected, they are not allowed to bury their dead in Muslim cemeteries.

the structure was entirely demolished. Arbitrary Arrests and Harassment Beyond such specific efforts at cultural cleansing, the government has in recent years continued its policy of keeping the Bahá'í community off balance through various measures, including arbitrary arrests, short term detention, persistent harassment, and other forms of intimidation and discrimination.

As noted, hundreds of Bahá'ís were imprisoned during the early 1980s. Then, in response to international pressure, the government gradually released nearly all long-term Bahá'í prisoners. As of July 2005, for example, only two Bahá'ís, Dhabihu'llah Mahrami and Mehran Kawsari, were being held under longterm prison sentences. Yet the use of arbitrary arrest and short-term imprisonment as methods of harassment, terror and oppression against Bahá'ís not only continues but appears to be on the rise. In late July-early August 2005, as this

publication was going to press, some 16 Bahá'ís in three

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Gravesite of Quddus, an historic figure of the Bahá'í Faith, during its surreptitious demolition in April 2004. The gravesite is located in Babol, Iran.

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Bahá'ís gather outside Tehran in 1982 for the funeral of one of their co-religionists who was killed by the government.

locations were arrested and imprisoned.

In March, April, and May of 2005 some 35 Bahá'ís across Iran were arrested and held for short periods, ranging from a week to nearly three months. Those arrested included not only prominent members of the community in Tehran, but also six Bahá'ís in Shiraz, nine in the city of Semnan, and nine Bahá'í farmers whose homes and land had previously been confiscated in the village of Kata.

Most were arbitrarily detained without any charge being filed against them. Some of the prisoners were

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held incommunicado, in unknown locations, while their families desperately searched for them. Most were released only after having posted significant amounts of money, property deeds or business licenses as bail. Moreover, government agents conducted prolonged searches of many of the homes of those who were arrested, confiscating documents, books, computers, copiers and other belongings.

Among those arrested in the spring of 2005, only Mr. Kawsari remains in prison at the time this booklet

was published in August 2005. Mr. Kawsari was arrested of keeping the

on 8 March 2005 for distributing the open letter sent to President Khatami [see page 30]. He received a one-year community

sentence and has been incarcerated in Evin prison. through

Also recently in the city of Yazd, long a center of anti-Bahá'í activities, it appears that the police chief orchestrated a series of incidents against Bahá'ís. In arbitrary

late 2004 and early 2005, a number of Bahá'ís were short term

The Iranian

government has

in recent years

continued its

Bahá'í

off balance

various measures,

including

arrests,

arrested, detained, and interrogated; several were beaten detention, persistent in their homes; at least one Bahá'í-owned business was harassment, and set afire; and the Bahá'í graveyard was desecrated. Such incidents are hardly isolated. In 2003, for exam- other forms of ple, some 23 Bahá'ís in 18 different localities in Iran were intimidation and subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention for short peri- discrimination. ods of time. In all cases, Iranian authorities summoned these people because they were Bahá'ís, questioned them about their beliefs, and then released them. In 2002, 17 Bahá'í youth who were participating in a camp were arrested and detained for questioning. Reports about this incident in the Iranian press carried a negative slant, referring to the young Bahá'ís in a derogatory and vulgar manner.

#### Discrimination in the courts

The story of Mr. Mahrami, also in prison at the time of the publication of this booklet, is instructive in that

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it likewise reflects the very real and continuing threat of imprisonment for the Bahá'ís in Iran — and the degree to which the legal system is prejudiced against Bahá'ís. Mr. Mahrami was first called before the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Yazd in 1995 and questioned about his adherence to the Bahá'í Faith. Several 23 Bahá'ís in 18 meetings were held in an effort to persuade him to different localities in renounce his beliefs; he refused and was charged with Iran were subjected apostasy. In 1996 he was sentenced to death. Since his heirs are not Muslims but Bahá'ís, his properties and to arbitrary arrest assets were confiscated. After his lawyer had appealed and detention for to the Supreme Court, Iranian officials announced short periods of that the Court had rejected the verdict of the Revolutionary Court and referred the case to a civil court. In all cases, the Supreme Court confirmed the Iranian authorities death sentence (communicated orally to his relatives). summoned these Finally, in 1999, the Bahá'í International Community people because was unofficially informed that a Presidential amnesty had commuted Mr. Mahrami's death sentence to life they were Bahá'ís, imprisonment. questioned them The government has also used the courts to reinabout

their beliefs, force a general sense of second-class citizenship for and then released Bahá'ís. Over the years, there have been numerous discriminatory decisions rendered against Bahá'ís.

them. In a recent court case, for example, 12 plaintiffs filed a petition against a man accused of murdering their relative, who was a Bahá'í. The court's verdict recognized the crime as a "quasi-intentional" murder and convicted the man as charged. But he was sentenced, without payment of blood money, to only four months imprisonment, and that was suspended as time already served. Calling Bahá'ís a "perverse sect" and "infidels," the court concluded that they should receive neither requital nor blood money in cases of murder. This verdict is alarming, as it could incite Muslims to believe that they are free to take the lives of Bahá'ís in Iran with impunity.

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##### Economic Measures

In the 1980s, over 10,000 Bahá'ís were dismissed from positions in government and educational institutions.

Many remain unemployed and receive no unemployment

benefits. The pensions of Bahá'ís dismissed on religious grounds were terminated, and some were 10,000 Bahá'ís

even required to return salaries paid to them before dismissed

they were dismissed. from positions

Efforts to impoverish the Bahá'í community and to in government

deprive its members of their economic livelihood have continued through a variety of means. In particular, educational

government authorities have in many places around Many

the country continued to block Bahá'ís from receiving unemployed

pensions, conducting business, or finding employment.

Authorities have also continued in the arbitrary confiscation of homes and properties owned by Bahá'ís.

unemployment

benefits. The

Employment

Bahá'ís

Limitations on employment opportunities continue

In the 1980s,

were

and

institutions.

remain

dismissed on

to be imposed on Bahá'ís in various sectors of the religious grounds economy. Even when Bahá'ís find employment in the were terminated, private sector, government officials often intervene and force the owners of the companies to fire them. And and some were even when Bahá'ís start a private business, the authorities required to return attempt to block their activities. salaries paid to them

Two recent court cases, for example, demonstrate before they were the efforts of the authorities to impede Bahá'ís from conducting private business activities. dismissed.

In September 2003, Branch 13 of the Tribunal of Administrative Justice rejected an appeal by a Bahá'í businessman against an injunction that required him to cease his business operations. The court also rejected his petition to obtain a business license. The tribunal held that his appeal was “disqualified as irrelevant, as [it was] outside the scope of the applicable regulations,”

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citing the information the court had “about the plaintiff ’s being associated with the perverse Baha’i sect.”

In 2003, in a second, similar case, an administrative injunction was issued to impede a Bahá'í-owned company in Isfahan from doing business. The company is owned and directed by a Bahá'í engineer and employs some 120 staff — most of whom are Bahá'ís — manufacturing electrical and communication cables. In the

The government injunction, the Director-General of the Central Office continues to deny of Protection, which is under the Iranian Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone, informed the company many Bahá'ís of an official memorandum issued in April 2003. The rightfully earned document concluded that “the link between the... pension funds. company... and the perverse Baha’i sect is established to be true; therefore it is advisable to adopt measures

Documents prove to prevent any collaboration with the above-mentioned that this policy is company.”

intentional — and The intergovernmental body most concerned with solely related to the right to employment, the International Labour Organization (ILO), made a number of references to the pensioner’s the ongoing discrimination against the Bahá'ís in Iran

membership in the Bahá'í Faith. at its annual Conference on Conventions and Recommendations in June 2003. The “situation of members of the Bahá'í Faith, an unrecognized religious minority, continues to be a source of concern,” said the report. “The barriers that these people face in access to higher education and to employment in public institutions are still high.”

#### Deprivation of Pensions

In the first years of its campaign of persecution, the Iranian government stopped pension payments to thousands of Bahá'ís who had been employed in government service. Bahá'ís have, over the years, sought to have their pensions restored. The government, however, continues to deny many Bahá'ís rightfully earned

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pension funds. Documents prove that this policy is intentional — and solely related to the pensioner's membership in the Bahá'í Faith.

In a letter dated 30 May 2003, for example, the Office of Beneficiary Affairs of the Keshavarzi Bank instructed its General Office to discontinue the disbursement of a Bahá'í's pension to his heirs because he was a member of the Bahá'í “sect.” The decision was later confirmed by the head of the Office of Legal and Parliament Affairs, who cited a judicial decree of Imam Khomeini and said a letter of the National Retirement Bureau number 6/18448 (dated 3 November 2003) must be implemented in such cases. In virtually every case, court judgments or documents have emerged that prove the properties were confiscated because employment had been terminated due to his belief in the owners were “the perverse Baha'i sect,” there was no authorization Bahá'ís.

to return or transfer his retirement deductions. Earlier documented evidence involved decisions in four more cases, dating from July 2001 to November 2002, where Iranian Bahá'ís have been denied access to their own, rightfully earned pensions. The documents prove that this action was taken solely on the basis of religious belief, as they explicitly state: “payment of pension to those individuals connected with the Baha'i sect is illegal.”

## The Confiscation of Property

During the past few years, there has been an increase in confiscation of Bahá'í properties, in particular in the cities of Rafsanjan, Kerman, Marv-Dasht, and Yazd. Property owned by Bahá'ís has also been confiscated in Tehran, in the village of Kata and in the village of Matneq. In October 2004, for example, the homes of

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six Bahá'í families in Kata (in the Buyir-Ahmad region of Iran) were confiscated on the order of the prosecutor of the city of Shiraz, with the assistance of the local police.

In virtually every case, court judgments or documents have emerged that prove the properties were

confiscated because the owners were Bahá'ís.

For example, one house confiscated in Tehran in 1998 belonged to a Muslim landlord, who was leasing the property to a Bahá'í. The landlord lodged an appeal, and an extract from the court documents (dated 15 Sep-

### The ongoing threat of execution

S

INCE 1978, MORE than 200 Bahá'ís have been killed or executed in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Most were killed in the early 1980s, before international attention was focused on the crisis. A full list of those killed or executed can be found in Appendix I.

Although in recent years the government has sharply reduced its killing rate, it continued occasionally to execute Bahá'ís through the late 1990s. The most recent execution of a Bahá'í in Iran was in July 1998, when Ruhullah Rawhani was hanged in Mashhad.

Nevertheless, the threat of execution or killing still looms large for Iranian Bahá'ís, who remain without recognized legal status in Iran. A number of Bahá'ís in recent years have been held in prison under the sentence of death, for example. Fortunately, international pressure has helped to convince Iranian authorities to commute or reduce those sentences.

One such case surrounded the sentence given to Musa Talibi, a Bahá'í from Vilashahr, who was arrested in 1994 and then sentenced to death in 1996 on the charge of apostasy. He was 63 years old at the time.

After appeal and initial confirmation of this sentence by the Supreme Court, the Bahá'í International Community was unofficially

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tember 2001) reveals the underlying judicial issues:

“In principle, the foundation for the Ministry of Intelligence taking legal and serious action against the cultural activities of the misguided sect of Baha'ism

has been on the order of His Excellency the Supreme Leader.... The action taken by Court 49 regarding the seizure and confiscation of the properties belonging to the misguided sect of Baha'ism is legally and religiously justifiable.... Such opposition [however] must be carried out in a manner and within a framework through which the rights of the righteous [literally, 'those to

informed in 1999 that his death sentence had been commuted to life imprisonment. Finally, in May 2003, after being visited by members of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention that February, Mr. Talibi was freed. Likewise, two men, Bihnam Mithaqi and Kayvan Khalajabadi were released in February 2004, after having been imprisoned since 1989 on charges arising solely from membership in the Bahá'í Faith.

They had been sentenced to death in 1991, and their sentences reconfirmed on appeal by the Supreme Court in 1996. In 2001, however, the chief of the judicial branch reduced their sentences to 15 years in prison for "association with Bahá'í institutions." Both men were released on 7 February 2004, having served out their full sentences.

The stories behind the two most recent executions — in 1998 and 1992 — reflect the arbitrary and terrifying nature of the threat. Ruhullah Rawhani, a father of four and an active Bahá'í during his entire life, suffered through the indignities of religious persecution

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whom rights are due'] would be safeguarded and protected." In yet another recent case, a Bahá'í appealed for the return of his home, confiscated because of its alleged use as a venue for teaching about the Bahá'í Faith, and for holding classes of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education. In rejecting the appeal, the Islamic Revolutionary Court upheld the decision of a lower court on the grounds that the owner had held Bahá'í classes in this home and that over 900 volumes of Bahá'í books

throughout much of Iran's recent history. In 1984, Mr. Rawhani was arrested and imprisoned for more than a year, during which he was tortured, according to relatives. He was subsequently released but then was arrested a second time in the mid-1990s. The charge was apparently related to his volunteer work at purely religious activities, such as prayer meetings and children's classes. He was released after 24 hours. In September 1997, however, the medical supplies salesman was

arrested for a third time, and placed in solitary confinement in Mashhad. Mr. Rawhani had been accused of “converting” a woman from Islam to the Bahá’í Faith. The woman, however, denied that she had converted; she explained that her mother was a Bahá’í and that she herself had been raised as a Bahá’í. She was not arrested.

Mr. Rawhani was kept incommunicado for the duration of his imprisonment and no information is available regarding his treatment in prison. There is no evidence that he was accorded any legal process, and no sentence was announced. It appears certain that he was not allowed access to a lawyer.

On 20 July 1998, someone from the Iranian Intelligence Department telephoned a Bahá’í in Mashhad stating that Mr. Rawhani was to be executed the next day. Initially, this statement was not believed, as Bahá’ís in Iran have received similar calls previously in apparent attempts to frighten them.

The next morning, the family was called, told to come to the prison

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had been found there. A further attempt to obtain redress was also denied, as Branch 23 of the Appeals Court in Tehran declared the verdict final and ended all legal recourse in this case.

Such verdicts demonstrate that the Iranian authorities continue to consider the Bahá’í Faith as an illegal movement and legitimize, through the courts, violations against the rights of Iranian citizens who are members of the Bahá’í community.

to collect Mr. Rawhani’s body, and given an hour to bury him. Rope marks on his neck indicated he had been hanged.

Bahman Samandari, a Tehran businessman, was executed in March 1992. Mr. Samandari, who ran a well-known Tehran travel agency, was summoned without explanation to Evin prison by authorities on 17 March 1992.

The next day, he was secretly executed.

No official charge or verdict was announced, and inquiries by family members produced vague indications that Mr. Samandari’s execution was related to his previous detention more than four years before, when he and four other Bahá’ís were arrested for having a prayer meeting in his home.

In addition to these governmentsponsored executions, Bahá’ís have also recently been killed under circumstances Mr. Bahman Samandari, that indicate continuing disregard for who was summarily executed Bahá’ís as individuals who deserve protection under the law. March 1992.

How the contemporary  
persecutions started

L

ONG BEFORE THE targeting of innocents

by suicide bombers and the gruesome webcast of “infidel” executions on the  
Internet

became commonplace, the Bahá'í community of Iran faced and survived a  
horrific

campaign of killing, torture and imprisonment that had “He was a  
Bahá'í,

been inspired by religious fanaticism. and to kill a

Bahá'í

In 1982, in the village of Rahimkhani, armed assail- is a good deed for  
ants broke into the home of Askar Muhammadi and  
devout Muslims.”

shot him in the back. Confronted by Mr. Muhammadi's  
brother as they were leaving the scene of the crime, the  
murderers stated simply: “He was a Bahá'í, and to kill a  
Bahá'í is a good deed for devout Muslims.”

While many Iranians hailed the establishment of  
the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979 as the dawn of a  
long awaited era of political liberty and national reconstruction, it was clear  
from the start that the Bahá'ís  
would be unjustly reviled for their beliefs.

Funeral of Hashin Farnush, arrested 5 November 1980,  
executed 23 June 1981. His wife is shown kneeling down  
at his graveside in Tehran.

CHAPTER IV: “To kill a Bahá'í is a good deed...” | 49

Even before Ayatollah Khomeini returned from  
exile to assume power in February of that year, an  
increase in attacks on Bahá'ís presaged the wholesale  
persecution that was to come. In 1978 at least seven  
Bahá'ís were killed, most as a result of mob violence.

When the Republic's new constitution was drawn  
up in April 1979, certain rights of the Christian, Jew-  
Courts in the Islamic

ish and Zoroastrian minorities in Iran were specifi-  
Republic have cally mentioned and protected. However, no mention  
denied Bahá'ís the whatsoever was made of the rights of the Bahá'í  
comright of redress or munity, Iran's largest religious minority.

Under Iran's concept of an Islamic government,

protection against this exclusion has come to mean that Bahá'ís enjoy assault, killings or other forms of persecution — and have ruled that Iranian citizens who kill or injure Bahá'ís are not liable for damages because their victims are “unprotected infidels.” Without any claim to civil rights, the Bahá'í community saw rapid deterioration of its position within Iranian society. In March 1979, the House of the Báb, because their victims the holiest Bahá'í shrine in Iran, was turned over by the government to a Muslim cleric known for his anti-Bahá'í activities. In September, the house was destroyed by a mob led by mullahs and officials of the Department of Religious Affairs. A November 1979 edict from the Ministry of Education required not only the dismissal of all Bahá'í teachers, but also held them responsible for the repayment of all salaries they had previously received.

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The nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly who were kidnapped in 1980.

At least seven Bahá'ís were killed in 1979. Two were executed by the government and one was hanged in prison. Others were beaten to death or killed in local incidents.

“To cut off the head...”

Buoyed by their growing influence over all aspects of Iranian life, in 1980 the clergy moved “to cut off the head” of the “heretical” Bahá'í movement by destroying its leadership, believing that the majority of the Bahá'ís would then succumb to social pressures to recant their Faith.

This policy is reflected in the fact that nearly half the Bahá'ís executed in Iran since 1979 have been members of national and local governing councils of the Bahá'í community, known as Spiritual Assemblies.

The execution on 27 June 1980 of Yusuf Sobhani, a

highly regarded member of the Tehran Bahá'í community, was among the first of such killings that targeted Bahá'í leadership. This was followed by the executions of the chairman and another member of the local Spiritual Assembly of Tabriz on 14 July 1980, a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Rasht on 16 July 1980, and two prominent Bahá'í spokesmen in Tehran on 30 July and 15 August 1980.

On 21 August 1980, all nine members of the national Bahá'í governing council, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran, were abducted and disappeared without a trace. It seems certain that they were executed.

During 1980 at least 24 Bahá'ís were killed in Iran;

CHAPTER IV: “To kill a Bahá'í is a good deed...” | 51

20 were executed by the government and the rest were

“The Qur'an recognized only stoned, assassinated or burned to death.

Despite a growing international outcry, the rate of

the People of the Book executions continued to grow through 1981. By late summer that year, revolutionary courts were openly

sentencing Bahá'ís to death purely on religious grounds

and announcing the fact in Iranian media. The

Attorney General, Siyyid Moussavi-Tabrizi, stated explicitly:

“The Qur'an recognized only the People of the Book as must be eliminated.”

religious communities. Others are pagans. Pagans must

— Iranian Attorney General, Siyyid Moussavi-Tabrizi, stated

explicitly:

“People of the Book” include only Muslims, Jews, Christians and,

Moussavi-Tabrizi by special dispensation, Zoroastrians.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of

Iran was reconstituted through new elections but was again ravaged by the execution of eight of its members on 27 December 1981. In all at least 48 Bahá'ís were killed in Iran during 1981; of those, all but two were executed by the government.

Executions continued apace through 1982, 1983 and 1984. At least 32 Bahá'ís were executed or killed in 1982, 29 were executed or killed in 1983, and 30 were executed or killed in 1984. And, again, the targets of

Faramarz Samandari, with his wife Anita,

and children. He was a physician and professor at the University of Tabriz. He was executed in Tabriz on 13 July 1980.

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these executions were often members of Bahá'í governing councils. Four members of the National Spiritual Assembly, which had once again been re-established through fresh elections, were executed in 1984, although by then the institution had been disbanded in accordance with a government decree and particularly of the individuals held no official position in the Bahá'í community. [See Appendix I for a complete list of those who have been killed or executed.]

governing councils

One of the most dramatic groups of executions came in June 1983, when ten Iranian Bahá'í women, including two teen-age girls, were hanged. The primary charge against them: teaching Bahá'í children's classes. [See page 54.]

The women were subjected to intense physical and mental abuse in an effort to coerce them to recant their Faith — an option that was almost always pressed upon Bahá'í prisoners. Yet, like most Bahá'ís who have been arrested in Iran, they refused to deny their beliefs. Nevertheless, the fact that so many Bahá'ís were given the option of recanting, with the promise of release if they did so, is among the strongest proofs that some persecutions were based solely on religious beliefs. treasonous activity.

Imprisonment and Torture

Since 1979, nearly 1,000 Bahá'ís have been arrested and imprisoned. At one point in 1986, some 747 Bahá'ís

were being held in prisons throughout Iran. In most cases, they had no trials.

The torture of Bahá'ís in Iranian prisons — and particularly of those who had been members of Bahá'í governing councils — was routine and systematic.

Again, according to Bahá'ís who survived, the purpose of the torture almost invariably was to make the

Bahá'ís recant their Faith or confess to some treasonous activity.

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Hanged for teaching “Sunday school”

F

EW INCIDENTS ARE more shocking — or revealing of the religious basis of the persecution against Bahá'ís and the courage with which they faced it — than the group hanging of ten Bahá'í women in Shiraz on 18 June 1983.

Their crime: teaching religious classes to Bahá'í youth — the equivalent of being “Sunday school” teachers in the West.

Ranging in age from 17 to 57, the ten Bahá'í women were led to the gallows in succession. Authorities apparently hoped that as each saw the others slowly strangle to death, they would renounce their own faith.

But according to eyewitness reports, the women went to their fate singing and chanting, as though they were enjoying a pleasant outing.

One of the men attending the gallows confided to a Bahá'í: “We tried saving their lives up to the last moment, but one by one, first the older ladies, then the young girls, were hanged while the others were forced to watch, it being hoped that this might induce them to recant their belief. We even urged them to say they were not Bahá'ís, but not one of them agreed; they preferred the execution.”

All of the women had been interrogated and tortured in the months leading up to their execution. Indeed, some had wounds still visible on their bodies as they lay in the morgue after their execution.

The youngest of these martyrs was Muna Mahmudnizhad, a 17-year-old schoolgirl who because of her youth and conspicuous

Muna Mahshid Simin Sabiri Zarrin Muqimi- Akhtar  
Thabit

Mahmudnizhad Nirumand Abyáníh

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innocence became, in a sense, a symbol of the group. In prison, she was lashed on the soles of her feet with a cable and forced to walk on bleeding feet.

Yet she never waivered in her faith, even to the point of kissing the hands of her executioner, and then the rope, before putting it around her own throat.

Another young woman, Zarrin Muqimi-Abyanih, 28, told the interrogators whose

chief goal was to have her disavow her faith: “Whether you accept it or not, I am a Bahá’í. You cannot take it away from me. I am a Bahá’í with my whole being and my whole heart.”

During the trial of another of the women, Ruya Ishraqi, a 23-year-old veterinary student, the judge said: “You put yourselves through this agony only for one word: just say you are not a Bahá’í and I’ll see that...you are released...” Ms. Ishraqi responded: “I will not exchange my faith for the whole world.”

The names of the other women hanged on 18 June 1983 were: Shahin Dalvand, 25, a sociologist; Izzat Janami Ishraqi, 57, a homemaker;

Mahshid Nirumand, 28, who had qualified for a degree in physics but had it denied her because she was a Bahá’í; Simin Sabiri, 25; Tahirih Arjumandi Siyavushi, 30, a nurse; Akhtar Thabit, 25, also a nurse; Nusrat Ghufrani Yalda’i, 47, a mother and member of the local Bahá’í Spiritual Assembly.

All had seen it as their duty to teach Bahá’í religious classes — especially since the government had barred Bahá’í children from attending even regular school.

Shahin (Shirin)	Ruya Ishraqi	Izzat Ishraqi	Tahirih Siyavushi
Nusrat Yalda’i			
Dalvand	(Janami)		

#### CHAPTER IV: “To kill a Bahá’í is a good deed...” | 55

Torture included sustained beating and flogging, Bahá’ís were the bastinado (whipping the soles of the feet), the pullalso subjected ing out of fingernails and teeth, and the deprivation of to psychological food and water for days at a time. Bahá’ís were also subjected to psychological torture, torture, including including mock executions and being forced to witness mock executions the torture of family members and friends. and being forced to Thus an elderly Bahá’í woman, who was a member witness the torture of a local Bahá’í council, was tortured in front of a dozen other Bahá’ís in an effort to persuade her and of family members them to deny their Faith. The woman’s jailer took her and friends. by her hair and continually banged her head against the wall. She was beaten about the head for a long time, until her body was covered with blood. After two years of imprisonment, she was summarily released, with no recourse against the abuse she had received. At least 13 Bahá’ís who died in prison are believed to have been tortured to death. In these cases, the bodies were buried by the authorities before the families could view them.

Two of the most recent cases involving torture and intimidation took place in July 1997.

Masha’llah Enayati, a 63-year-old Bahá’í resident of

Tehran, died on 4 July 1997, after being severely beaten while in custody. During a visit to his native village of Ardistan to attend a Bahá'í meeting, Mr. Enayati was arrested under circumstances which are not clear. He was taken to prison in Isfahan, where he was severely beaten on all parts of the body. It appears that he was held in prison for about a week before being taken to a hospital, where he eventually died. Mr. Enayati's death certificate is worded in a most unusual way, suggesting that the doctor himself may have been under threat.

Under "cause of death" the doctor entered in his own handwriting, "will be known later."

Shahram Reza'i, a young Bahá'í serving as a conscript in the Iranian army on a military base near the

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A woman from Kata, murdered by a mob in 1979, shown with her two younger sisters.

city of Rasht, was shot in the head by his superior officer on 6 July 1997 and died the following day. The officer concerned, who was responsible for weapons training, maintained that the bullets were fired in error.

He was released after a few days, once it was determined that the dead soldier was a Bahá'í. The court

excused the officer from paying the blood money normally required in such instances, ordering him to pay

just the cost of the three bullets used to kill Mr. Reza'i.

Mr. Reza'i was the seventh Bahá'í in Iran engaged in compulsory military service to have been slain by officers or other soldiers.

### Social and Economic Intimidation

As noted earlier, the authorities have also conducted a campaign of economic, social and cultural intimidation against the Bahá'í community of Iran. The objective, it is clear, has been to deprive Bahá'ís of their rights to education, to jobs and to homes of their own — once again with the intention of forcing them to recant.

## CHAPTER IV: "To kill a Bahá'í is a good deed..." | 57

Since the 1930s, the Bahá'ís in Iran have been forbidden to run their own educational establishments,

and have therefore educated their children at state-run schools and universities where they have often suffered discrimination and persecution.

The level of discrimination and persecution in schools rose sharply following the Islamic revolution in 1979. In 1981, an official decree was issued barring

Bahá'í students and professors from admission to or employment at any university in Iran. Universities published new prospectuses in 1981 requiring that applicants belong to one of the four religions recognized in the constitution, namely the Muslim, Jewish, Christian or Zoroastrian religions.

Admission to primary and secondary schools was refused to those who identified themselves as Bahá'ís, and hundreds of students were expelled.

#### Deprivation of Employment

The Iranian government has also sought to intimidate and stifle Bahá'ís by making it impossible for them to earn a living.

In 1979 the government started dismissing all Bahá'í Government document civil servants without compensation. By July 1982, all of permanent dismissal Bahá'í public servants had been dismissed and the from employment for pensions of all retired Bahá'í civil servants had been being a Bahá'í. terminated.

In late 1984, the Attorney General started issuing summonses demanding that all those Bahá'í civil servants who had been dismissed repay salaries they had received during their employment. They were threatened with imprisonment if they did not comply. Obviously, repayment of a lifetime's wages was beyond the means of most victims. Many were imprisoned as a result of failure to meet this absurd demand.

The government has also systematically sought to

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drive Bahá'ís in the private sector to economic ruin.

In the early 1980s, the trading licenses of most Bahá'í In the early 1980s, businessmen were revoked, the assets of businesses the trading licenses run by Bahá'ís were confiscated, and bank accounts of of most Bahá'í most Bahá'í businessmen were frozen. In addition, the authorities intimidated private employers into dismissing businessmen were ing many Bahá'í employees. revoked, the assets

Almost every dismissal notice served on a Bahá'í of businesses run employee, whether in the public or the private sector, by Bahá'ís were stated that the reason for dismissal was membership in the Bahá'í Faith and that the individual's job would be confiscated, and restored if he or she would recant his or her faith. bank accounts

In addition to depriving Bahá'ís of a livelihood, of most Bahá'í

the government in the early 1980s sought to deprive arrested Bahá'ís of many of their possessions, including businessmen were their homes. frozen.

Through its takeover of the major Bahá'í savings company, Nawnahalan — literally meaning “new plant,” a reference to the fact that the savings institution was started by Bahá'í children at the turn of the century — the government in one move swept away the life savings of 15,000 Bahá'í shareholders and investors. In addition, thousands of Bahá'ís, rich and poor alike, have had their homes and personal possessions confiscated by the government, and thousands more have had their homes destroyed by arson and looting. In rural areas, the authorities have encouraged the plunder and destruction of the livestock and crops of Bahá'í farmers.

#### Confiscation of Community Assets

The Bahá'í community in Iran has never been allowed to hold community property in its own name. As a result, all community property has been held in the name of a non-profit company created for this purpose. This body, the Umana — meaning “Trustee” — Company, was

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How Iran has justified the persecution

#### I

NEVITABLY, IRAN'S RESPONSES to the world outcry on behalf of the Bahá'ís have proven entirely unsatisfactory. The reaction has ranged from simple silence to attempts to justify the persecutions by charging the Bahá'ís with a wide variety of offenses.

An examination of the charges that have been made against the Bahá'ís illuminates the depth of animosity and prejudice directed towards them — as well as the degree of ignorance regarding the basic principles and history of the Bahá'í Faith.

Despite the overwhelming proof that the Bahá'í community in Iran is being persecuted solely because of its religious beliefs, the Iranian government continues — in both public and private forums — to justify its behavior with unsubstantiated accusations.

Here follow some of the principal accusations advanced by the government:

**THE ACCUSATION:** That Bahá'ís were supporters of the Pahlavi regime and the late Shah of Iran; that they collaborated with SAVAK, the secret police; and that the Bahá'í Faith is a political organization opposed to the present Iranian government.

THE REALITY: Bahá'ís are required by the basic principles of their Faith to show loyalty and obedience to the government of the country in which they live. The Bahá'í community in Iran thus did not oppose the Pahlavi regime, just as it does not oppose the present government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Indeed, members of the community

allowed to administer such properties without undue interference until the change of government in 1979.

One of the first acts of the new government was to confiscate the Umana Company and all its holdings. This meant that in one stroke all Bahá'í community properties were arbitrarily transferred to the state without compensation. The government also

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have obeyed every law and instruction of the present government, including the instruction to disband all Bahá'í administrative institutions in Iran.

Bahá'í principles also require the avoidance of any form of involvement in partisan politics. Accordingly, Iranian Bahá'ís were precluded by membership in their faith from accepting cabinet posts or similar political positions under the Pahlavi regime. They did not collaborate with SAVAK. On the contrary, the Pahlavi regime consistently persecuted the Bahá'í Faith, and SAVAK was one of the main agencies of this persecution.

The Iranian government has alleged that certain SAVAK officials were Bahá'ís. These allegations are completely untrue, fabricated to mask the religious nature of the persecutions.

Indeed, the non-political nature of the Bahá'í case was significantly bolstered by the 1996 report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance. Professor Abdelfattah Amor of Tunisia wrote: “With regard to the Bahá'ís, the Special Rapporteur hopes that a clear distinction will be drawn between questions of belief or other questions of a political nature. In that connection, it should not be presumed that the entire community has been politicized or is engaged in political or espionage activities. Considering the religious principles of the Bahá'í community, the Special Rapporteur believes that there should not be any controls that might, through prohibition, restrictions or discrimination, jeopardize the right to freedom of belief or the right to manifest one's belief.”

(continued on page 62)

confiscated the assets of all Bahá'í welfare agencies, which provided services to people of all religions on an equal basis.

Among the government's next steps were to desecrate and in many cases destroy Bahá'í holy places throughout Iran. As noted, these properties include the holiest Bahá'í shrine in Iran, the House of the Báb

THE ACCUSATION: That Bahá’ís are heretics or enemies of Islam.

THE REALITY: Such charges are false. The Bahá’í Faith is widely recognized as an independent world religion — even by Islamic scholars.

As long ago as 1924, a Sunni appellate court in Egypt recognized that the Bahá’í Faith was an independent world religion, stating that, in its judgment, “The Bahá’í Faith is a new religion entirely independent.... No Bahá’í therefore can be regarded as Muslim or vice versa, even as no Buddhist, Brahmin or Christian can be regarded as Muslim.”

Accordingly, no charge of heresy can be made.

Bahá’ís revere Muhammad and His Book, the Qur’an, as they do Jesus, Buddha, and the founders of the other great religions. Indeed, alone among the followers of the world’s other major independent religions, only Bahá’ís recognize the station of Muhammad as a Prophet of God.

THE ACCUSATION: That Bahá’ís are agents of Zionism.

THE REALITY: This charge is based on the fact that the Bahá’í World Centre is in Israel. The Bahá’í World Centre was, however, established on Mt. Carmel in the 19th century, long before the State of Israel came into existence, in accordance with the explicit instructions of Bahá’u’lláh, who was exiled there from Iran.

THE ACCUSATION: That Bahá’ís are involved with prostitution, adultery and immorality.

in Shiraz, which was confiscated and then destroyed.

The House of Bahá’u’lláh in Takur, where the Founder of the Bahá’í Faith spent His childhood, met a similar fate: it was demolished and the site was offered for sale to the public.

In Tehran and other cities throughout Iran, Bahá’í buildings were looted and burned, Bahá’í cemeteries were bulldozed and Bahá’í graves were broken open.

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THE REALITY: This charge, like the others, is without foundation.

Bahá’ís have a strict moral code and attach great importance to chastity and to the institution of marriage.

The Bahá’í marriage ceremony is not recognized in Iran and no civil marriage ceremony exists. Consequently, Bahá’ís have been faced with the choice of denying their faith in order to be married according to the rites of one of the religions recognized in Iran, or of marrying in accordance with the rites of their own faith. They have consistently chosen to be married in accordance with Bahá’í law. The government does not recognize these marriages and denounces Bahá’í wives as prostitutes.

The other charges of adultery and immorality against Bahá’ís are based on the fact that, in accordance with the Bahá’í principle of the

equality of men and women, there is no segregation of the sexes at Bahá'í gatherings.

**THE ACCUSATION:** That the Bahá'í Faith is not a religion but a political movement, devised by colonial powers in the 1800s to influence and control the Persian government.

**THE REALITY:** The Bahá'í Faith has been widely recognized by Western historians, religious leaders, and others as an independent world religion. Its founding had nothing to do with the work of British or other colonial powers. Moreover, as noted, the teachings of the Faith explicitly prohibit Bahá'ís from involvement in partisan politics.

In Tehran, as noted earlier, the Bahá'ís have long been forced to bury their dead in a barren stretch of land reserved by the authorities for “infidels.” Having access to their own cemeteries is especially important to Bahá'ís because, as might be expected, they are not allowed to bury their dead in Muslim cemeteries.

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Chapter V

## THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

T

HE PRESENT DAY status of human rights and social reform in the Islamic Republic Early followers faced

of Iran cannot be adequately understood without taking into account the historical background of persecution against Islamic religious

the Bahá'í community — a history that does much to explain the cultural crisis gripping Iranian society today as its leadership struggles to face the challenge of modernity. authorities succeeding

The Bahá'í Faith has been persecuted in Iran since its founding there in the mid-1800s. Early followers faced violent opposition from both the Islamic religious authorities and succeeding dynasties. It has been estimated that some 20,000 persons perished in these pogroms during the nineteenth century.

The illustration at top left, depicting the death of an early Bahá'í, appeared in the Persian magazine, *Imá'mat*, circa 1911. The photo bottom left, a Bahá'í father and son (left) in chains after being arrested with fellow Bahá'ís

shown in a photograph taken around 1896. Both were subsequently executed.

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The takeover of the National Bahá'í Centre in Tehran during the Khomeini regime, 1979.

The persecutions have continued intermittently in the twentieth century, coinciding most often with the need of various governments to shore up support with certain elements of Iran's Islamic leadership. And they have come regardless of the leaders' political orientation. Some of the outbreaks against Bahá'ís were directed by local or regional authorities. In 1903, for example, 101 Bahá'ís were killed in the city of Yazd after the populace was incited by hostile mullahs. At other times the oppression of Bahá'ís was made a part of official national policy. During the early years of the Pahlavi regime (1927 to 1979), the government formalized a policy of discrimination against the Bahá'ís as a concession to the clergy. Beginning in 1933, Bahá'í literature was banned, Bahá'í marriages were not recognized, and Bahá'ís in public service were demoted or fired. Bahá'í schools — of which there were some 50 in

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Mullah Falsafi supervising workmen in the act of destroying the dome of the National Bahá'í Center in 1955, Tehran.

the country — were forced to close. Another round of persecutions commenced in 1955, when the Pahlavi regime allowed the nationwide broadcast of a series of incendiary sermons against the Bahá'ís by a leading Shia preacher in Tehran — apparently hoping to make the Bahá'ís a scapegoat to deflect attention from unpopular government policies. Both the national and army radio stations were put at the disposal of the responsible cleric, Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Falsafi, who joined the Shah's Minister of Defense, General Batmangelich, in demolishing the dome of Bahá'í national headquarters with pickaxes. A wave of anti-Bahá'í violence swept the country. Murders, rapes and robberies were reported in many areas, while the government assured the Majlis that it had ordered the suppression of all activities of “the Bahá'í sect.”

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Successive stages of the demolition of the House of the Báb. The first image is an interior room in early 1979; the second photo shows Revolutionary Guards in the process of destruction; the third the collapse of the roof.

Bahá'ís understand that this pattern of persecution is a manifestation of the misunderstanding and fear that often occur when a new religion emerges from the matrix of a well-established orthodoxy. The pattern has been repeated through the ages; virtually all of the world's great religions have faced intense persecution at their birth. In the case of the Bahá'í Faith, the teachings of its two Founders, especially when viewed through the lens of traditional Islam, are as challenging as those of any Prophet in ancient times.

The initial wave of persecution came in response to the claims of a young Iranian merchant, known to history as the Báb, who announced in Shiraz in May 1844 that He was the bearer of a new revelation from God. His primary mission, the Báb said, was to prepare humanity for the advent of "Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest," the universal divine Messenger anticipated in the scriptures of all the major religions.

The teachings of the Báb called for the spiritual and moral reformation of Persian society, and for the upliftment of the station of women and the poor. His promotion of education and the useful sciences was also revolutionary. Such progressive and idealistic teachings, which made a clear break with the Islamic frame of reference, were rapidly embraced by thousands of followers and were seen by both secular and

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The area is completely razed in preparation for the later construction of the Mosque of Mihdi. The white circles on the images below indicate the location of the House of the Báb. The last photo shows the Mosque in 1994.

religious authorities as a threat to their power. Widespread persecutions ensued, and, as noted above, some 20,000 believers, who were known as Bábís, paid with their lives. The Báb Himself

was executed by the government in 1850.

Among the followers of the Báb was an Iranian nobleman named Bahá'u'lláh. In 1863 He announced that He was the Messenger the Báb had heralded, founding the Bahá'í Faith, which develops and extends many of the teachings and principles introduced by the Báb. The

central theme of Bahá'u'lláh's message is that humanity is a single race and that the day has come for unification into one global society.

"The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens," wrote Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahá'u'lláh taught that there is only one God, and that all of the world's religions are expressions of a single, unfolding divine plan, "the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future."

Bahá'ís believe that God progressively reveals religious truth to humanity through a series of divine Messengers, each of Whom has founded a great religion.

These Messengers have included Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad; the most recent are the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. Others will follow in ages to come.

The idea that there should be new Messengers of God after Muhammad is viewed by many Muslims as heresy. In the Qur'an, Muhammad referred to Himself

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as the "Seal of the Prophets," and most Muslim scholars interpret this to mean that He would be the last Messenger of God.

Bahá'ís, however, believe that the coming of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh poses no contradiction to Islamic Bahá'u'lláh taught teachings or those of any of the other revealed religions. Bahá'ís understand that Muhammad ended or that there is only one "sealed" the prophetic cycle. Then, with the advent of

God, and that all of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, a new era of religious fulfillment the world's religions ment began. Bahá'u'lláh referred to this new period

in human history as the "stage of maturity." Bahá'ís are expressions of

believe that this is all in accordance with the prophetic single, unfolding cycles of Islam and the world's other major religions.

divine plan. Other aspects of the Bahá'í teachings also arouse opposition among some followers of Islam. In outlining His vision for a new

world civilization, Bahá'u'lláh advocated a series of highly progressive social principles. These include the elimination of all forms of prejudice; equality between the sexes; the elimination of extremes of poverty and wealth; universal education; the harmony of science and religion; a sustainable balance between human society and the natural world; and the establishment of a world federal system, based on collective security and the oneness of humanity. Some fundamentalist Muslims view the progressive nature of these teachings, such as the equality of women and the absence of religious clergy, as particularly antithetical to the traditions of Islam. To Iran's Shia establishment, especially — and also to many among their Sunni Muslim counterparts — the emergence of an independent religion that postdates the Qur'an by almost thirteen centuries is not only theologically abhorrent but threatens the system of patronage, endowments, political influence, and social perquisites to which they lay claim. The effect has been to arouse in the Shia establishment a determination to extinguish the new faith and suppress its followers.

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The words, "Enemy of Islam," were found written on the leg of Dr. Masih Farhangi, a Bahá'í who was executed in Tehran on 24 June 1981.

The persecution of the Bahá'ís in Iran is not related to any underlying issue of ethnicity or political agenda. The overwhelming majority of Iranian Bahá'ís come from the same Persian and Azerbaijani ethnic stock as the rest of the population, and they represent a cross section of Iran's social classes.

Only their religious beliefs distinguish them from their fellow countrymen — beliefs which the Bahá'í teachings forbid them from imposing on others. Paradoxically, because of the control exercised by the Islamic clergy over the media of communication, the nature of Bahá'í beliefs remains virtually unknown to a public that has been systematically taught to fear and hate them.

The Iranian Bahá'í community has itself consistently been denied the use of any means of mass communication, including radio, television, newspapers, films, the distribution of literature and public lectures. The result

has been widespread, unreasoning prejudice.

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### The international response

T

HE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY has responded to the persecution of the Bahá'í community in Iran with overwhelming sympathy, expressing concern for the Bahá'ís and condemnation of the Iranian government. The Bahá'í community believes that this outpouring has been a strong restraining force against the government, preventing a pogrom on a much greater scale.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has passed more than 20 resolutions expressing concern about reports of human rights violations in Iran, and each has made specific mention of the situation of the Bahá'í community there. [See Appendix II]. The specific reference to a religious community is quite unusual for the Commission, which normally confines itself to expressions of diplomatic concern and general references to charges of human rights violations and discrimination.

Following the lead of the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations General Assembly itself has since 1985 approved some 17 resolutions that have specifically mentioned the situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran and expressed concern over reports of human rights violations there.

Virtually all of these resolutions have called on Iran to stop violating the rights of Bahá'ís and to abide by the various international covenants on human rights that the government has freely signed. UN resolutions have also called explicitly for the “emancipation” of the Bahá'ís of Iran.

Among the most salient features of the United Nations' attention to the Bahá'í case has been the continuing investigations conducted by a succession of highly regarded human rights specialists. Each was appointed by the Commission on Human Rights and given the mandate to probe into the human rights situation in Iran. And each has reported extensively on the real and serious nature of the persecution of the Bahá'ís of Iran, lending unimpeachable credibility to the Bahá'í case.

The first Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights, as these investigators are called, was Andres Aguilar of

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Venezuela, who was appointed in 1984. After his resignation in 1986, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, a law professor and human rights expert from El Salvador, was appointed to the position. Following Mr.

Galindo Pohl's departure in 1994, the Commission appointed Maurice Copithorne, a noted Canadian jurist, as its Special

Representative for Iran. Diane Ala'i, a Bahá'í

Unfortunately, as part of an effort to engage Iran International Community in a "human rights dialogue," the Commission on representative to the United

Human Rights stopped appointing Special Repre- Nations, addresses the UN sentatives in 2002. And in many respects, the situa- Commission on Human tion has grown worse since that time. Rights in Geneva.

Nevertheless, the Commission's Special Representatives have produced over the years a series of extremely important and influential reports to the United Nations on the situation in

Iran. Gathering their information from a variety of sources and — in at least four cases — making visits to Iran, Special Representatives have managed to catalogue the whole range of abuses and persecutions which the Bahá'í community in Iran has experienced.

For example, Mr. Galindo Pohl's 1990 report to the General Assembly noted that he had received extensive documentation that provides "evidence of discrimination, confiscation, rejection by universities, suspension of pensions, demands for the return of pensions earned and paid, denial of passports and other irregularities."

The report added that "it would seem that the attitude towards the Bahá'ís and their situation depends on the temperament and personal convictions of individual officials. This keeps the Bahá'ís in a perpetual state of uncertainty about their activities."

In Mr. Copithorne's 1998 report to the General Assembly, he wrote that continuing reports of violations of human rights against the Bahá'ís force him "to conclude that the pattern of persecution of members of this community has not abated."

And in his last report, released in 2002, Mr. Copithorne said that while there had been "some hopeful signs" concerning the "commutation of death sentences" and "the release of prisoners," the Bahá'í community "continues to be subject to harassment and discrimination in the areas of, inter alia, education, employment, travel, housing and

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the enjoyment of cultural activities." Seven Bahá'ís were in prison at that time, he said, and "Bahá'í property continues to be subject to confiscation."

Of interest, Mr. Copithorne also expressed a conviction that the "Bahá'í Question" policy is still operative.

Also of concern is the sentence issued by a judge of the Supreme Office of Control and Review, Hamzih Khalili, on 15 September 2001, in the context of an appeal by the Muslim owners of property rented to the Baha'is that was confiscated in 1998. According to an unofficial translation to which the Special Representative has had access, the verdict declares that the "seizure and confiscation of the properties belonging to the misguided sect of Baha'ism is legally and religiously justifiable" and states that "the cultural activities of the misguided

sect of Baha'ism — as prescribed by the order of His Excellency the Supreme Leader — do need to be seriously opposed". This would seem to indicate that the 1991 memorandum on "The Baha'i Question", issued by the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council and approved by the Supreme Leader, is still in force and therefore that discrimination against Baha'is continues to be official practice, a situation the Special Representative deeply deplores.

As well, in 1996, United Nations support for the Bahá'í case was further strengthened by the release of a report by the UN's Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, which called on Iran to end its ban on Bahá'í institutions and other oppressive measures. Authored by Professor Abdelfattah Amor, a noted Tunisian legal expert, the report explicitly stated that the persecution of the Bahá'ís was based on religious intolerance.

More recently, in 2003, the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance took note of the continuing confiscations, imprisonments, and efforts to block Bahá'í youth from receiving higher education, and concluded:

While noting some promised improvements in treatment of the Baha'i minority, the Special Rapporteur is of the view that the measures taken by the Iranian authorities to end the persecution of Baha'is, including by non-State entities, and to guarantee them the same rights as any other Iranian citizen are still inadequate. He

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again reminds the Iranian authorities of the need to ensure respect for the relevant provisions of international law, including article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. In addition, as a religious minority, Baha'is are entitled to the respect due to all other religious minorities.

In addition to efforts by the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies and agencies, numerous national legislatures and regional bodies have spoken out against Iran's treatment of the Bahá'í community over the last twenty years. Expressions of concern for Iran's Bahá'ís have come from the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, and from the legislatures of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, among others. Many heads of state and government leaders have also voiced their dismay over Iran's treatment of the Bahá'ís.

International and national non-governmental organizations have also risen to the defense of Iran's Bahá'ís. Amnesty International, the Minority Rights Group, and Middle East Watch, among others, have closely monitored the situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran and published extensive reports that confirm the persecutions there.

The world's news media, as well, have reported extensively on the

persecution of Iran's Bahá'í community. Major articles and editorials which detail, confirm and condemn the persecutions have appeared in *Le Monde*, the *Times of London*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Economist*, the *Times of India*, and the *Sydney Morning Herald* — as well as smaller and lesser known newspapers such as the *Uganda Times*, the *Papua New Guinea Post Courier*, the *Straits Times of Singapore*, and *La Republica* in Panama City. The Associated Press, Reuters, and the Agence France-Presse have also carried numerous dispatches on the persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran and the response of international organizations and agencies.

In many respects the Bahá'í case has been a model for how international human rights machinery can be used to protect an oppressed minority. Thanks to international support for the Bahá'ís, the wholesale genocide of the Bahá'í community in Iran has so far been prevented.

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### Chapter VI

## CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

T

HE WORLDWIDE BAHÁ'Í community is today one of the most diverse and widespread organizations on earth. Comprising individuals from virtually every nation, ethnic group, trade, profession, and social or economic class, more than five million followers of the Bahá'í Faith reside in at least 235 countries and territories. They represent some 2,100 different tribes, racial and ethnic groups, and come from every religious background: Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Jain, and animist, as well as from non-religious backgrounds. Yet in the land where their religion originated, Bahá'ís continue to face a campaign of systematic, centrally directed persecution. At best, by denying them basic rights and freedoms, the government hopes merely to block the growth and development of the Bahá'í community, while keeping it as a ready scapegoat for its own failures. At worst, the government harbors the goal of exterminating the Bahá'í community as a viable entity in Iran and erasing all traces of its culture.

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During the 1980s Bahá'ís were executed, tortured, imprisoned, deprived of jobs, pensions and educational opportunities — solely because of their religious the

On the  
question,

beliefs. In the 1990s some aspects of this persecution Iranian government subsided as a result of international pressure. However, in 1993 came the exposure of a secret governmental plan to suffocate the Bahá'í community. has utterly silent. There has been no admission Subsequent actions — ranging from random killings, revolving door imprisonment, arbitrary arrest of the government's and harassment, denial of access to higher education, the destruction of important Bahá'í holy sites, and the campaign against continued efforts to deprive Bahá'ís of their livelihood Iran's Bahá'í community and — reveal the Iranian government's intention of continuing its efforts to destroy the Bahá'í community without attracting international attention. the need for reform

Indeed, as of the time of publication of this booklet, the signs point only towards increasing problems for Iran's innocent Bahá'ís. The arbitrary arrests and statements that that it represents, let alone public detentions of some 35 Bahá'ís around the country in March, April and May 2005 exemplify the worsening might somehow situation. Held incommunicado for periods ranging from one week to three months, these prisoners were pave the way for held without any formal charges while personal possessions were seized by recognition of the government agents from their Bahá'í community's fundamental rights. homes in wanton searches. Other incidents in Yazd in January and February, involving the beating of several Bahá'ís and the burning of a Bahá'í-owned business, along with other short term arrests and detentions, point to ominous signs for the future.

For most people, whatever their religious background, the continued campaign against the Bahá'ís defies rational explanation. The Bahá'í community in Iran poses no threat to the Iranian authorities. The fundamental principles of the Bahá'í Faith require its followers to be obedient to their government and to avoid partisan political involvement, subversive activity, and all forms of violence.

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In recent years, Iran has sought to portray itself as Continued ready to rejoin the world community as a respected international partner in international affairs, projecting an image of

tolerance and civility. President Khatami, for example, spoke of humanity's entry into a "new century of the only form of humanity, understanding, and durable peace." Yet on the Bahá'í question, the Iranian government

has been utterly silent. There has been no admission of the government's campaign against Iran's Bahá'í community and the need for reform that it represents, let alone public statements that might somehow pave the way for recognition of the Bahá'í community's fundamental rights.

In this regard, continued international monitoring remains the only form of protection for Iran's Bahá'ís.

Any lessening of international support for the Bahá'í community will be perceived by the Iranian authorities as condoning the persecution of the Bahá'ís at the

least, and therefore as a license to continue their campaign with impunity.

The Bahá'ís in Iran seek no special privileges. They seek only their rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the right to life, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to education and work, and the right to profess and practice their religion.

What is needed are legal and entirely public steps that will firmly establish the complete emancipation of the Bahá'ís of Iran. Only then can it be said that Iran has truly complied with its oft-stated commitment to universal human rights.

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### Appendix I:

#### BAH Á'ÍS KILLED SINCE 1978

NO.	NAME	PLACE	METHOD	ROLE*	DATE
1978					
1.	Mr. Ahmad Ismá'ílí	Ahram	Killed		1978
2.	Mr. Díyá'u'lláh Haqíqat	Jahrum	Killed		Aug 13
3.	Mr. Shír-Muhammad Dastpísh	Buyr-Ahmad	Mobbed		December
4.	Mrs. 'Avad-Gul Fahandizh	Shíráz	Mobbed		Dec 14
5.	Mr. Sifatu'lláh Fahandizh	Shíráz	Mobbed		Dec 14
6.	Mr. Khusraw Afnání	Míyán-Duáb	Mobbed		Dec 22
7.	Mr. Parvíz Afnání				Dec 22

Míyán-Duáb	Mobbed		
19 7 9			
8. Mr. Ibráhím Ma'navi		early 1979	
Hisár	Killed		
9. Mr. Hájí-Muhmmad 'Azizi		Jan 9	
Khurmúj	Beaten		
10. Mr. Husayn Shakúrí		Apr 2	
Ushnavíyyíh	Killed		
11. Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Khursandí		LSA Apr 12	
Tehran	Hanged		
12. Mr. Bahár Vujdání		Sep 27	
Mahábád	Executed		
13. Mr. 'Alí Sattárzádíh		Oct 28	
Búkán	Killed		
14. Mr. 'Azamatu'lláh Fahandizh		Dec 14	
Shíráz	Executed		
19 8 0			
15. Mr. Habíbu'lláh Panáhi		Feb 4	
Urúmíyyih	Assassinated		
16. Mr. Ghulám-Husayn A'zamí		May 6	
Tehran	Executed		
17. Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Mu'íní		May 6	
Tehran	Executed		
18. Mr. Badi'u'lláh Yazdání		May 6	
Tehran	Executed		
19. Mr. Parviz Bayáni		May 11	
Píránshahr	Executed		
20. Mr. Mir-Asadu'lláh Mukhtarí		May 18	
Andrún	Stoned		
21. Mr. Hasan Ismá'ílzádíh		June	
Sanandaj	Killed		
22. Mr. Yúsuf Subhání		Jun 27	
Tehran	Executed		
23. Mr. Yadu'lláh Astání		LSA Jul 14	
Tabríz	Executed		
24. Dr. Farámarz Samandari		LSA Jul 14	
Tabríz	Executed		
25. Mr. Muhammad Akbarí		Jul 16	
Rasht	Executed		

\* Many of those killed or executed played a leadership role in the Iranian Bahá'í community. The acronym "LSA" in this column indicates that the person was a member of a local Spiritual Assembly, the community-elected local Bahá'í governing council. "NSA" identifies a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran, the national-level governing council. "ABM" identifies an "auxiliary board member," an appointed leadership position within

the Bahá'í administrative framework. "CBC" identifies a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, an appointed leadership position which oversees the auxiliary board members.

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NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE	METHOD
19 8 0 (continued)					
26.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Mahbubíyán		Jul 30	Tehran	Executed
27.	Mr. Dhabíhu'lláh Mu'miní		Aug 15	Tehran	Executed
28.	Mr. Núru'lláh Akhtar-Khávarí	ABM	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
29.	Mr. 'Azizu'lláh Dhabíhíyán	ABM	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
30.	Mr. Firaydún Faridání	ABM	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
31.	Mr. Mahmúd Hasanzádíh		Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
32.	Mr. 'Abdu'l-Vahháb		Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
Kázimi-Manshádí					
33.	Mr. Jalál Mustaqím	LSA	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
34.	Mr. 'Ali Mutahari	LSA	Sep 8	Yazd	Executed
35.	Mr. Rídá Firúzí		Nov 9	Tabríz	Executed
36.	Mr. Muhammad-Husayn Ma'súmí		Nov 23	Núk, Birjand	Burned
37.	Mrs. Shikkar-Nisá Ma'súmí		Nov 23	Núk, Birjand	Burned
38.	Mr. Bíhrúz Saná'í		Dec 17	Tehran	Executed
19 8 1					
39.	Dr. Manúchihr Hakim	NSA	Jan 12	Tehran	Assassinated
40.	Mr. Mihdí Anvari		Mar 17	Shíráz	Executed
41.	Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Dihqání		Mar 17	Shíráz	Executed
42.	Mrs. Núráníyyih Yárshátir		Apr	Shíráz	Assassinated
43.	Mr. Sattár Khushkhú		Apr 30	Shíráz	Executed
44.	Mr. Ihsánu'lláh Mihdí-Zádíh		Apr 30	Shíráz	

- Executed
45. Mr. Yadu'lláh Vahdat ABM Apr 30 Shíráz  
Executed
46. Mr. Muhmmad (Suhráb) Habibí LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed
47. Mr. Muhammad-Baqir (Suhayl) LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed  
Habíbí
48. Mr. Husayn Khándil LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed
49. Mr. Tarázu'lláh Khuzayn LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed
50. Mr. Husayn Mutlaq LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed
51. Dr. Fírúz Na'ími LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed
52. Dr. Nasir Vafá'í LSA Jun 14 Hamadán  
Executed
53. Mr. Buzurg 'Alaviyán LSA Jun 23 Tehran  
Executed
54. Mr. Háshím Farnúsh ABM LSA Jun 23 Tehran  
Executed
55. Mr. Farhang Mavaddat LSA Jun 23 Tehran  
Executed
56. Dr. Masíh Farhangí CBC ASIA Jun 24 Tehran  
Executed
57. Mr. Badí'ulláh Farid Jun 24 Tehran  
Executed
58. Mr. Yadu'lláh Pústchí Jun 24 Tehran  
Executed
59. Mr. Varqá Tibyániyán (Tibyání) Jun 24 Tehran  
Executed
60. Mr. Kamálu'd-Din Bakhtávar Jul 26 Mashhad  
Executed
61. Mr. Ni'matu'llah Kátibpúr Jul 26 Mashhad  
Executed  
Shahidi
62. Mr. 'Abdu'l-'Alí Asadyá'í LSA Jul 29 Tabríz  
Executed
63. Mr. Husayn Asadu'lláh-Zadeh LSA Jul 29 Tabríz  
Executed
64. Mr. Mihdí Báhiri LSA Jul 29 Tabríz  
Executed
65. Dr. Masrúr Dakhílí LSA Jul 29 Tabríz  
Executed
66. Dr. Parvíz Fírúzí LSA Jul 29 Tabríz  
Executed

67.	Mr. Manúchihr Khádí'í	LSA	Jul 29	Tabríz
	Executed			
68.	Mr. Alláh-Vírdí Mítháqi		Jul 29	Tabríz
	Executed			
69.	Mr. Habíbu'lláh Tahqíqi	LSA	Jul 29	Tabríz
	Executed			
70.	Mr. Ismá'íl Zihtáb	LSA	Jul 29	Tabríz
	Executed			
71.	Mr. Husayn Rastigar-Námdár		Aug 5	Tehran
	Executed			
72.	Mr. Habíbu'llah 'Azizí	LSA	Aug 29	Tehran
	Executed			
73.	Mr. Bahman 'Atifi		Sep 11	Dáryún,
	Isf. Executed			
74.	Mr. 'Izzat Atifi		Sep 11	Dáryún,
	Isf. Executed			
75.	Mr. Ahmad Ridvání		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.
	Executed			

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NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE
	METHOD			
	19 8 1 (continued)			
76.	Mr. Atá'u'lláh Rawhání		Sep 11	Dáryún,
	Isf. Executed			
77.	Mr. Gushtásb Thábit-Rásikh		Sep 11	Dáryún, Isf.
	Executed			
78.	Mr. Yadu'lláh Sipih-r-Arfa		Oct 23	Tehran
	Executed			
79.	Mr. Mihdí Amin Amin	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
80.	Mr. Jalál 'Azizi	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
81.	Dr. 'Izzatu'lláh Furúhi	ABM NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
82.	Mrs. Zhínús Ni'mat Mahmúdi	ABM NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
83.	Dr. Mahmúd Majdhúb	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
84.	Mr. Qudratu'lláh Rawhání	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
85.	Dr. Sírús Rawshani	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
86.	Mr. Kámrán Samimi	NSA	Dec 27	Tehran
	Executed			
	19 8 2			
87.	Mrs. Shiva Mahmudi	LSA	Jan 4	Tehran

Executed

Asadu'llah-Zadeh

88. Mr. Iskandar 'Azizi LSA Jan 4 Tehran  
Executed
89. Mrs. Shidrukh Amir-Kiyá Baqa Jan 4 Tehran  
Executed
90. Mr. Fathu'llah Firdawsi LSA Jan 4 Tehran  
Executed
91. Mr. Khusraw Muhandisi LSA Jan 4 Tehran  
Executed
92. Mr. Kúrush Talá'í LSA Jan 4 Tehran  
Executed
93. Mr. Atá'u'lláh Yávari LSA Jan 4 Tehran  
Executed
94. Mr. Ibráhím Khayrkháh Feb 22 Tehran  
Executed
95. Mr. Husayn Vahdat-i-Haq Feb 28 Tehran  
Executed
96. Mr. 'Askar Muhammadi Apr 2 Rahímkhán,  
Assassinated  
Kírmán
97. Mr. Ihsánu'lláh Khayyámi Apr 12 Urúmíyyih  
Executed
98. Mr. 'Azizu'llah Gulshani Apr 29 Mashhad  
Executed
99. Mrs. Ishraqiyyih Faruhar LSA May 8 Karaj  
Executed
100. Mr. Mahmud Faruhar LSA May 8 Karaj  
Executed
101. Mr. Badí'u'lláh Haqpaykar LSA May 8 Karaj  
Executed
102. Mr. Agahu'lláh Tizfahm May 10 Urúmíyyih  
Executed
103. Miss Jaláliyyih Mushta May 10 Urúmíyyih  
Executed
- il Uskú'í
104. Mrs. Irán Rahímpúr (Khurmá'í) May 12 Dizfúl  
Executed
105. Mr. Nasru'lláh Amini LSA May 16  
Kháníábad,Tehe. Executed
106. Mr. Sa'du'lláh Bábázádeh LSA May 16  
Kháníábad,Tehe. Executed
107. Mr. Atá'u'lláh Haqqání Jun 1 Tehran  
Killed
108. Mr. Muhammad Abbásí LSA Jul 9 Qazvín  
Executed
109. Mr. Jadidu'lláh Ashraf LSA Jul 9 Qazvín

Executed				
110. Manúchíhr Farzánih	LSA	Jul 9	Qazvín	
Executed				
Mu'ayyad				
111. Mr. Muhammad Mansurí	LSA	Jul 9	Qazvín	
Executed				
112. Mr. Manúchíhr Vafá'í		Jul 9	Tehran	
Assassinated				
113. Mr. 'Abbás-Ali Sadiqipur		Jul 15	Shíráz	
Executed				
114. Mr. 'Ali Na'imíyán		Aug 11		
Urúmíyyih				
Executed				
115. Mr. Habibu'lláh Awji		Nov 16	Shíráz	
Executed				
116. Mr. Dhíyá'u'lláh Ahrári	LSA	Nov 21	Shíráz	
Executed				
117. Mr. Husayn Nayyiri-Isfahani		Nov 29	Isfahán	
Died in Prison				
118. Mrs. Guldánih 'Alipúr		Dec 24	Sári	
Mobbed				
19 8 3				
119. Mr. Hidáyatu'lláh Síyávushí	LSA	Jan 1	Shíráz	
Executed				
120. Mr. Yadu'lláh Mahmúdnizhad	LSA ABM	Mar 12	Shíráz	
Executed				
121. Mr. Rahmatu'lláh Vafá'í	LSA	Mar 12	Shíráz	
Executed				
122. Mrs. Túbá Zá'irpúr		Mar 12	Shíráz	
Executed				
123. Mr. Adadu'llah (Aziz) Zaydí		Apr 1	Míyán-Duáb	
Killed				

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NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE
	METHOD			
19 8 3	(continued)			
124. Mr. Jalál Hakímán			May 1	Tehran
Executed				
125. Mr. Suhayl Safá'í			May 1	Tehran
Executed				
126. Dr. Bahrám Afnán	LSA		Jun 16	Shíráz
Executed				
127. Mr. 'Abdu'l-Husayn Azádí	LSA		Jun 16	Shíráz
Executed				
128. Mr. Kúrush Haqbín	LSA		Jun 16	Shíráz
Executed				
129. Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Ishráqí			Jun 16	

Shíráz	Executed			
130. Mr. Jamshíd Siyávushi	Executed	LSA	Jun 16	Shíráz
131. Mr. Bahrám Yaldá'í	Executed		Jun 16	Shíráz
132. Miss Shahín(Shírín) Dálvand	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
133. Mrs. 'Izzat Jánamí Ishráqí	Executed		Jun 18	
Shíráz				
134. Miss Ru'yá Ishráqí	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
135. Miss Muná Mahmúdnizhád	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
136. Miss Zarrín Muqímí-Abyáníh	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
137. Miss Mahshíd Nírúmand	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
138. Miss Símín Sábírí	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
139. Mrs. Táhirih Arjumandí Sýávushi	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
140. Miss Akhtar Thábit	Executed		Jun 18	Shíráz
141. Mrs. Nusrat Ghufrání Yaldá'í	Executed	LSA	Jun 18	
Shíráz				
142. Mr. Suhayl Húshmand	Executed		Jun 28	Shíráz
143. Mr. Ahmad-'Alí Thábít-	Died in Prison		Jun 30	Shíráz
Sarvístání				
144. Mr. Muhammad Ishráqí	Died in Prison	ABM	Aug 31	Tehran
145. Mr. Akbar Haqíqí	Mobbed		Sep 19	Khuy
146. Mr. Bahman DÍhqání	Mobbed		Nov 19	
Muhammadíyyíh				
147. Mr. 'Abdu'l-Majíd Mutahhar	Died in Prison		Dec 15	Isfahán
19 8 4				
148. Mr. Rahmatu'lláh Hakímán	Died in Prison		Jan 11	Kírmán
149. Mr. Ghulám-Husayn Hasanzádih-	Executed		Mar 10	Tehran
Shákírí				
150. Mr. Muhsin Radaví	Died in Prison		Mar 13	Tehran
151. Mr. Nusrat'ulláh Díyá'í			Mar 19	

Báft, Kírmán	Died in Prison			
152. Mr. Kámrán Lutfí	Executed		Apr 9	Tehran
153. Mr. Rahím Rahímíyán	Executed		Apr 9	Tehran
154. Mr. Yadu'lláh Sábíríyán	Executed		Apr 9	Tehran
155. Mr. Asadu'lláh Kámíl-Muqaddam	Died in Prison		May 2	Tehran
156. Mr. Maqsúd 'Alízádih	Executed		May 5	Tabríz
157. Mr. Jalál Payraví	Executed	ABM	May 5	Tabríz
158. Mr. Jahángír Hidáyati	Executed	NSA	May 15	Tehran
159. Mr. 'Ali-Muhammad Zamání	Executed		May 15	Tehran
160. Mr. Nusratu'lláh Vahdat	Executed		Jun 17	Mashhad
161. Mr. Ihsánu'lláh Kathírí	Executed		Jun 27	Tehran
162. Dr. Manúchíhr Rúhí	Executed		Aug 16	Bujnúrd
163. Mr. Aminu'lláh Qurbánpúr	Died in Prison		Aug 25	near Tehran
164. Mr. Rustam Varjávandí	Died in Prison		Sep 15	Tehran
165. Mr. Shápúr (Húshang) Markazi	Executed	NSA ABM	Sep 23	Tehran
166. Mr. Fírúz Purdíl	Executed		Oct 30	Mashhad
167. Mr. Ahmad Bashiri	Executed	NSA	Nov 1	Tehran
168. Mr. Yúnis Nawrúzi-Iránzád		LSA	Nov 1	Karaj
169. Mr. 'Alíridá Níyákán	Died in Prison		Nov 11	Tabríz
170. Mr. Díyá'u'lláh Maí'í-Uskú'í	Died in Prison		Nov 13	Tabríz
171. Dr. Farhád Asdaqí	Executed	NSA	Nov 19	Tehran
172. Mr. Fírúz Atharí	Executed	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)
173. Mr. Ghulám-Husayn Farhand	Executed	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)
174. Mr. 'Ináyatu'lláh Haqíqí	Executed	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran (Karaj)

NO.	NAME	ROLE*	DATE	PLACE	METHOD
19 8 4 (continued)					
175.	Mr. Jamál Káshání (Karaj)	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran	Executed
176.	Mr. Jamshíd Púr-Ustádkár (Karaj)	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran	Executed
177.	Dr. Rúhu'lláh Ta'lím (Kirmánsháh)	LSA	Dec 9	Tehran	Executed
19 8 5					
178.	Mr. Rúhu'lláh Hasúrí		Jan 21	Yazd	Executed
179.	Mr. Rúhu'lláh Bahrámsháhi (Kirmánsháh)	LSA	Feb 25	Yazd	Executed
180.	Mr. Nusratu'lláh Subhání (Kirmánsháh)		Mar 5	Tehran	Executed
181.	Mr. 'Abbás Idilkhání (Kirmánsháh)		Aug 1	Tehran	Executed
182.	Mr. Rahmatu'lláh Vujdání Bandar-'Abbás	LSA	Aug 31		Executed
183.	Mr. Núr'ud-Din Tá'ifí (Kirmánsháh)		Oct 12	Gurgán	Died in Prison
184.	Mr. 'Azízu'lláh Ashjári (Kirmánsháh)		Nov 19	Tabríz	Executed
19 8 6					
185.	Mr. Paymán Subhání (reported) (Kirmánsháh)		Apr 28	Saráván	Mobbed
186.	Mr. Sirru'lláh Vahdat-Nizámí (Kirmánsháh)		May 4	Tehran	Executed
187.	Mr. Fidrus Shabrukh (Kirmánsháh)		May 9	Záhidán	Executed
188.	Mr. Farid Bihmardí (Kirmánsháh)	NSA	Jun 10	Tehran	Executed
189.	Mr. Habíbu'lláh Muhtadí (Kirmánsháh)		Aug 27	Tehran	Killed
190.	Mr. Bábak Tálibí (Kirmánsháh)		Sep 2	Karaj	Beaten
191.	Mr. Iraj Mihdi-Nizhád Bandar-'Abbás		Sep 4		Mobbed
19 8 7					
192.	Mr. Ahmad Kávih (Kirmánsháh)		Jan 26	Isfahán	Killed
193.	Mr. Surúsh Jabbári (Kirmánsháh)		Mar 3	Tehran	Killed

194. Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Sháyiq Mar 3 Tehran  
Killed
195. Mr. Ardishír Akhtari Sep 28 Tehran  
Executed
196. Mr. Amír-Husayn Nádiri Sep 28 Tehran  
Executed
- 19 8 8
197. Mr. Bihnám Páshá'í presumably Nov Tehran  
Executed
198. Mr. Iradj Afshín presumably Nov Tehran  
Executed
199. Mr. Mihرداد Maqsudi Feb 16 Urúmíyyih  
Killed
- 19 9 2
200. Mr. Bahman Samandari Mar 18 Tehran  
Executed
201. Mr. Ruhú'lláh Ghedami Jun 17 on Qum  
Highway Killed
- 19 9 5
202. Mr. Shirvin Falláh Approx Dec Arak  
Killed
- 19 9 7
203. Mr. Mansúr Dawlat Apr 4 Kírmán  
Killed
204. Mr. Shahrám Reza'í Jul 7 Rasht  
Killed
205. Mr. Mashá'lláh Enáyatí Jul 4 Isfahán  
Beaten in prison
- 19 9 8
206. Mr. Rúhu'lláh Rawhání Jul 21 Isfahán  
Executed

APPENDIX I: Bahá'ís killed since 1978 | 83

Appendix II

#### THE UNITED NATIONS' RESPONSE

Since 1980, human rights organs of the United Nations have been expressing concern about the tragic situation of the Bahá'í religious minority in Iran. This when the Committee discusses with representatives of the Iranian Government the preliminary critical role in moderating the actions of the Iranian authorities and providing a measure of security to the Bahá'í community.

Grave concern by members of the Human Rights Committee at its 16th session, repdemonstration of international concern has the preliminary report submitted by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in accordance with its reporting obligations under

the International Covenant on Civil and

A summary history of this issue at the United Nations is outlined below: Political Rights. Resolution

1982/25 (8.9.1982) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

recalls its earlier resolutions on the plight

Resolution 10 (XXXIII) (10.9.1980) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

and expresses its continuing concern at violations in Iran. human rights

Protection of Minorities expresses profound concern for the Bahá'ís both individually and collectively, and

1983

invites the Government of Iran to protect their fundamental human rights and freedoms. Resolution

1983/34 (8.3.1983) of the Commission on Human Rights

expresses its profound concern at the religious persecution of the Bahá'ís and requests

1981

the Secretary-General to continue his direct contacts

Resolution 8 (XXXIV) (9.9.1981) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

of Iran on the human rights situation in that country, "including the situation of

Protection of Minorities draws the attention of the Commission on Human Rights to the perilous situation facing the Bahá'ís and requests the Secretary-General to report on their plight to the next session of

Bahá'ís." Resolution

1983/14 (5.9.1983) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

expresses its grave concern at the continuing

the Commission. religious persecution of the Bahá'ís and

1982 suggests that the Commission on Human

Rights appoint a Special Rapporteur to study the human rights

Resolution 1982/27 (11.3.1982) of the Commission on Human Rights

notes the Secretary-General's report on the Bahá'ís and requests him to establish direct

1984 contacts with the Government of Iran and to continue his efforts to ensure the Bahá'ís full

enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Resolution

1984/54 (14.3.1984) of the Commission on Human Rights

expresses its concern for the Bahá'í

minority and requests its Chairman to appoint

1984/54 (14.3.1984) of the Commission on Human Rights

expresses its concern for the Bahá'í

minority and requests its Chairman to appoint

1984/54 (14.3.1984) of the Commission on Human Rights

expresses its concern for the Bahá'í

a Special Representative to establish contacts with the religion” (operative paragraph 2); Government of Iran and to make a thorough study of “Decides to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, during its forty-first session in order to appoint a Special Representative. examine this situation anew in the light of additional Resolution 1984/14 (29.8.1984) of the Sub-Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council” (operation of Minorities expresses alarm at the continuing situation paragraph 8). gross violations of human rights in Iran, including the 1986 religious persecution of the Bahá’ís, and welcomes the Commission’s decision to appoint a Special Representative. Resolution 1985/41 (12.3.1986) of the Commission on Human Rights “expresses its deep concern over the specific and detailed allegations of grave human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Preliminary Report of the Special Representative Special Representative refers in his report”; endorses to the Commission on Human Rights expresses great his conclusion that “specific and detailed allegations concerning grave human rights violations” in Iran can of human rights in Iran, including denial of the right to not be dismissed; decides to extend the mandate of the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Commission’s Special Representative and requests him to present an Resolution 1985/39 (13.3.1985) of the Commission to present an interim report on the situation, “including the situation of on Human Rights endorses the general observations of the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís” to the General Assembly at its forty-first session and a the number and gravity of alleged violations of human final report to the Commission at its forty-third session to which his preliminary report bears witness, session in 1987. Decision 1986/137 of the Economic and Social Council approves extends his mandate, and requests him “...to present an Decision interim report to the General Assembly at its fortieth Council approves

the Commission's decision to extend session on the human rights situation in the Islamic Representative's mandate and its request Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority Representative to submit reports to the groups such as the Bahá'ís..."

forty-first session of the General Assembly and the Decision 1985/148 of the Economic and Social Council of the Commission.

Council endorses the Commission's decision. announced on 14 July 1986 that, in response Resolution 1985/17 (29.8.1985) of the Sub-Commission of the Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities welcomes the Commission's Representative of the Commission.

decision, expresses its alarm at the continuing reports of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Iran, "in particular at the evidence of persecution of the Bahá'í religious minority..." endorses the general observations of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights in his preliminary report, and expresses the hope that the initial contacts of the Government of Iran with the Special Representative will develop into a positive relationship, the right to liberty and security of person and to cooperation.

Resolution 40/141 (13.12.1985) of the General Assembly "Expresses its deep concern over the specific and detailed allegations of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which the Special Representative refers in his interim report, and in particular, those related to the right to life, such as summary and arbitrary executions; the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; the right to liberty and security of person and to a fair trial, the and religion of religious religion"; "Requests study carefully the final report of the Special Representative, as well as other information pertaining to the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to

consider further steps for securing effective freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention; the right to human rights and fundamental freedoms a fair trial; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression; and the right to continue its examination of the situation of religious minorities to profess and practice their own religion in the Islamic Republic of Iran including

“respect for all in that country”;  
Decides to  
of human rights

APPENDIX II: The United Nations’ Response | 85

ing the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, Resolution 42/136 (7.12.1987) of the General Assembly during its forty-second session...”  
note of the Commission’s resolution 1987/55 requesting the Special Representative “to submit an interim report to the General Assembly

Assembly takes

Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1987/55 (11.3.1987) session on the situation of human

at its forty-second

of the Commission on Human Rights recalling its Islamic Republic of Iran, including the resolution 1986/41, extends the mandate of the Special Representative for one year; requests him to present an

rights in the  
situation of

“its deep concern about the numerous and detailed allegations of grave human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which

again expresses  
the human rights situation  
violations

regrets “that the Government of the Islamic Republic Representative had referred in his report, of Iran has so far provided no comment or information related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading

the Special  
namely, those  
freedom from

to visit the country”; again expresses “its deep concern punishment, the right to liberty and security of person, and to freedom from arbitrary arrest or

treatment or

extensive human rights violations to which the Special Representative refers in his report (E/CN.4/1987/23) conscience and religion and to freedom

detention, the  
of thought,

and in particular, those related to the right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or practice their own religion”; expresses “its

of expression,  
profess and

degrading treatment or punishment, the right to liberty in particular, that although the Special Representative indicates that the number of alleged arrest or detention, the right to a fair trial, the right to life has diminished over the past two years, to freedom of thought; conscience and religion and according to information made available to him, some one hundred persons were alleged to have been executed in the period October 1986-September 1987 because requests “the Special Representative to present an interim report to the General Assembly, of their political and religious convictions”; expresses “its deep concern at allegations that maltreatment and torture, both physical and psychological, are common practice in Iranian prisons during as the Bahá’ís...”

interrogation and before and after the final verdict, and Decision 1987/150 of ECOSOC approves the at the existence of extremely summary and informal proceedings, Commission’s decision to extend the Special Representative’s mandate. unawareness on the part of the prisoners of specific accusations, lack of legal counsel and other Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1987/12 (1.9.1987) “the irregularities with respect to fair trial”; endorses conclusion of the Special Representative that acts of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities refers to “various continue to occur in the Islamic Republic of Iran that are inconsistent with the provisions of international resolutions and documents published by other international bodies and organizations including resolutions instruments...”; decides “to keep under consideration the situation ratified by the European Parliament and Council of of Iran, of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Europe ... all of which have expressed great concern as the including the situation of minority groups such as the over the violations of human rights and violation of the Bahá’ís, during its forty-third session...”

most basic rights of the ethnic and religious minorities..”; learns “with renewed concern that the number 1988 of those allegedly executed by the ruling Government, Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1988/69 (10.3.1988) of the including Bahá’ís and others, now exceeds 70,000...”; the

Commission on Human Rights recalls its decision expresses “strong concern over the grave violations of the Commission to request the Special Representative to present an interim report to the General Assembly on human rights freedom of belief and religion...”; urges “determined rights situation including the situation of minority groups, such as protest by the Commission to the Islamic Republic of the Bahá’ís; expresses “again its deep concern about Iran concerning continuing disrespect for the Charter of the United Nations in relation to human rights”; and grave human rights violations... in particular those related to the “requests the Secretary-General to inform the General right to life,... the right to freedom of thought, Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and its conscience and religion and to freedom of thought, Special Representative of the information obtained from the Sub-Commission on the grave violation of present an interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-third human rights and the most basic freedoms in the Islamic session on the human rights situation, including the Republic of Iran.” situation of minority groups, such as the

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Bahá’ís, and a final report to the Commission at its has referred in his reports, namely, those related to the right to life, forty-fifth session.” right to life, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading Decision 1988/137 of ECOSOC approves the treatment or punishment, the Commission’s decision to extend the Special Represent- right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial and to tive’s mandate. This decision refers also to Commis- freedom of thought, conscience, religion sion resolution 1984/54. and expression,”; requests “the Special Representative Resolution 43/137 (8.12.1988) of the General to present an interim report to the General Assembly at its Assembly takes note of the Commission’s resolution at its forty-fourth session on human rights situation in 1988/69 requesting the Special Representative “to Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís submit an interim report to the General Assembly at the Bahá’ís and a final report to the forty-sixth session

its forty-third session on the situation of human rights of the Commission.”

in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation R e s o l u t  
i on E / C N . 4 / S u b . 2 / R E S / 1 9 8 9 / 1 0

of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís...”; notes “the of Discrimination  
(31.8.1989) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention and Protection of Minorities takes  
and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, note “of  
numerous reports by United Nations special  
which it is hoped will lead to a state of full co-operation r a p p o r t e u r s a n d  
by NGOs,...”; concerned “also at  
between the Special Representative and that Govern- r e p o r t s o f d e n i a l  
of rights of minorities to enjoy their  
ment, including a visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, o w n c u l t u r e , t o  
profess and practice their own beliefs”;  
so that he can fulfil his mandate”; notes “that the is “further  
concerned at reports about persecution and  
Bahá'ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran continue to be d e t e n t i o n o f  
members of the Bahá'í community in the  
subjected to various forms of harassment and discrimi- I s l a m i c R e p u b l i c  
of Iran.”

nation, although there are indications that the intensity R e s o l u t i o n  
44/163 (15.12.1989) of the General  
of the campaign of persecution against the Bahá'ís has A s s e m b l y  
takes note “with appreciation of the interim  
diminished somewhat in recent months, and that r e p o r t o f t h e  
Special Representative of the Commisa number of them have been released from  
prison”; s i o n o n H u m a n R i g h t s ” ; t a k e s n o t e “ o f t h e v i e w o f  
the  
expresses once more “its deep concern about the nu- S p e c i a l  
Representative that, in order to achieve full  
merous and detailed allegations of grave human rights c o - o p e r a t i o n  
between the Government of the Islamic  
violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran to which R e p u b l i c o f I r a n  
and the Special Representative, there  
the Special Representative had referred in his report, is a need to  
proceed to another stage in the discharge of  
namely, those related to the right to life, the right to h i s m a n d a t e ” ;  
welcomes “the invitation by the Islamic  
freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading R e p u b l i c o f I r a n  
to the Special Representative for him  
treatment or punishment, the right to liberty and secu- t o v i s i t t h a t  
country”; decides “to continue its examinary of person, the right to a  
fair trial and the right to t i o n . . . d u r i n g i t s f o r t y - f i f t h s e s s i o n . ”  
freedom of thought, conscience and religion”; expresses  
1990

“its deep concern also at the existence of extremely summary, informal and irregular proceedings, failure Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1990/79 (7.3.1990) of to inform defendants of specific accusations against the Commission on Human Rights notes “the findings, lack of legal counsel, absence of an appropriate findings of the Special Representative on the situation of instance for appeal and other irregularities that concern the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; expresses “its concern that testimony gathered by the Special Representative “the conclusion of the Special Representative that acts Representative reiterated complaints about unlawful executions, continue to occur in the Islamic Republic of Iran that torture, substitute prisoners, imprisonment are inconsistent with the provisions of international beyond the period specified in the sentence, spontaneous instruments...”; decides “to keep under consideration serious decisions by low-ranking officials and the absence the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of council for defence as well as restrictions on the right of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such to assemble...”; requests “the Special Representative to submit an as the Bahá’ís, during its forty-fourth session....” interim report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session on the human rights situation in 1989 the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1989/66 (7.3.1989) of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís, and a final report the Commission on Human Rights recalling “...the to the Commission at its forty-seventh session.” situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís...”; Decision 1990/243 of ECOSOC approves the Commission’s decision to extend the Special Representative’s mandate. notes “that the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be uncertain”; expresses Representative’s once more “its deep concern over the numerous and Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1990/9 (30.8.1990) of the detailed allegations of grave and extensive human rights violations to which the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities notes “that the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights notes “that the

## APPENDIX II: The United Nations’ Response | 87

situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran ernment of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to report on further continues to be uncertain”; expresses “its deep concern

progress.

about the grave violations of human rights namely  
E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1991/9 (23.8.1991)

Resolution

those related to the right to life, the right to freedom of the  
Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities notes “that the  
and degrad-

tion and Protection of Minorities notes “that the  
situation of the Bahá’í community in the Islamic Republic  
security of person, the right to a fair trial, and the right of Iran  
continues to be a matter of great concern”;

to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expres- expresses  
“its deep concern at the escalating grave

sion...”; decides “to consider the situation of human violations  
of human rights in the Islamic Republic

rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the of Iran, in  
particular of the right to life, the right to

situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’í, at its freedom  
from torture and from cruel, inhuman and

forty-third session.” degrading  
treatment or punishment, the right to liberty

Resolution 45/173 (18.12.1990) of the General and security of  
person, the right to a fair trial and the

Assembly noting “the findings of the Special Represen- right to  
-freedom of thought, conscience, religion and

tative on the situation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Re-  
-expression, and calls upon the Commission on Human

public of Iran”; calls upon “the Islamic Republic of Iran Rights at  
its forty-eight session, to extend the mandate

to intensify its efforts to investigate and rectify the hu- of the Special  
-Representative and the monitoring of

man rights issues raised by the Special Representative, the situation  
of human rights”; decides “to consider the

in particular as regards the administration of justice situation of  
human rights in the Islamic Republic of

and due process of law in order to comply with inter- Iran,  
-including the situation of minority groups such as

national instruments on human rights, including the the Bahá’í  
community, at its forty-fourth session.”

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights  
1992

to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and  
to ensure that all individuals within its territory and

Resolution

E/CN.4/RES/1992/67 (4.3.1992) of

subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, the Commission  
on Human Rights takes note “with

enjoy the rights recognized in these instruments”; notes appreciation  
of the report of the Special Representative

“that the co-operation of the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Commission (E/CN.4/1992/34) and the observer with the Special Representative has improved and has variations contained therein”; expresses “its deep concern included replies by the Government to allegations that at the continuing reports of violations of human rights have been transmitted to it, and urges the Government in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; expresses “its concern to reply in detail to all allegations referred to by the more specifically at the main weaknesses, according to Special Representative in his reports.” the Special Representative, of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely, the lack of 1991 guarantees of due process of law, discriminatory treat- Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1991/82 (7.3.1991) of ment of certain groups of citizens for reason of their the Commission on Human Rights noting further religious beliefs, notably the Bahá’ís...”; welcomes “the fact that “the findings of the Special Representative on the situ- the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has ation of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran”; permitted the Special Representative to visit the country welcomes “the full cooperation extended by the Gov- and has continued to reply to allegations of human ernment of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Special rights violations transmitted to it by the Special Representative, which has reached its highest level, as Special Representative”; calls upon the Government “to ensure well as the intention of the Government to continue that all individuals within its territory and subject to its full cooperation with the Special Representative”; its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the requests “the Special Representative to maintain his rights recognized in the international instrucontact and cooperation with the Government...and ments”; decides “to extend the mandate of the Special Representative to report on further progress with regard to the recom- Representative requesting him to submit an interim report to the mendations contained in his report, on the basis of his General Assembly at its forty-seventh session”; mandate pursuant to Commission on Human Rights decides “to continue its consideration of the resolution 1984/54 of 14 March 1984”; also requests situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the the Special Representative “to submit a report to be Islamic Republic of Iran, as a matter of priority,

considered by the Commission which will consider the forty-ninth session.”

report with the view to its discontinuing the mandate if 1992/239 of ECOSOC approves the

there is further progress achieved regarding his recommendation to extend the Special Representative’s mandate and its request to the Special Decision 1991/261 of ECOSOC approves the

submit an interim report to the forty- Commission’s request to the Special Representative to seventh session of the General Assembly and a final maintain his contacts and cooperation with the Government report to the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

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Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1992/15

representative ...

for a further year,” requesting “the Special (27.8.1992) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities notes “in General Assembly ... on the human rights situation in particular that the situation of the Bahá’í community in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be a matter of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís,” continuing of concern”; condemns “the continuing grave violations consideration of Iran’s human rights situation “as a matter of human rights by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially: (d) renewed persecution of Decision 1993/273 of ECOSOC approves the religious minorities and summary killings of Bahá’ís.” Commission’s decision to extend the mandate of the Resolution 47/146 (18.12.1992) of the General Special Representative for one year, to request him to submit Assembly expresses “its concern at continuing reports an interim report to the General Assembly at its of violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic forty-eighth session on the situation of human rights of Iran”; expresses “its concern more specifically at the in the Islamic Republic of Iran and to report to the main criticisms according to the Special Representative Commission at its fiftieth session and to request to the of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to the Iran, namely, the high number of executions, the practice of the Special Representative.

tice of torture, the standard of the administration of  
 o l u t i o n E / C N . 4 / S u b . 2 / R E S / 1 9 9 3 / 1 4  
 justice, the absence of guarantees of due legal process,  
 (20.4.1993) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of  
 the treatment of the Bahá'í community and restriction  
 Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, gravely  
 of freedoms of expression, thought, opinion and press";  
 concerned at "the systematic repression of the Bahá'í  
 regrets "that the Government of the Islamic Republic  
 community and at the plight of the Iranian Kurds,"  
 of Iran has not permitted the Special Representative  
 condemns "the continuing and flagrant huto visit the country and failed to  
 reply to allegations man rights violations of the Islamic  
 Republic of Iran,  
 of human rights violations" and regrets also "that, as  
 including: (d) The continued persecution of the Bahá'ís  
 the Special Representative concluded, the Islamic  
 religious minorities," and decides to "consid-  
 Republic of Iran has not given adequate follow-up to  
 further the situation of human rights in the Islamic  
 many of the recommendations contained in the previ-  
 of Iran, including the situation of women and  
 ous reports"; decides "to continue the examination of  
 minority groups such as the Bahá'ís and the Kurds, at  
 the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic  
 forty-sixth session."  
 of Iran during its forty-eighth session under the item  
 Resolution 48/145 (20.12.1993) of the General As-  
 'Human rights questions' in the light of additional ele-  
 ssembly expresses its concern "at the main criticisms of  
 ments provided by the Commission on Human Rights  
 Special Representative with regard to the human  
 and the ECOSOC." rights  
 situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely,  
 ... discriminatory treatment of certain groups of  
 1993  
 citizens by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the  
 Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1992/62 (10.3.1993) of Bahá'ís,  
 whose existence as a viable religious commuthe Commission on Human Rights,  
 noting "the Spe- nity is threatened..." also calls  
 upon "the Government  
 cial Representative's ... view that during 1992 there was of  
 the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with interno appreciable progress in the  
 Islamic Republic of Iran national instruments on human rights, in  
 particular the  
 towards improved compliance with human rights stan-  
 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

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Bahá'ís,

the Commission on Human Rights,

of

appreciable progress in the

instruments on human rights, in

particular the

towards improved compliance with human rights stan-

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

dards in conformity with international instruments,” to  
 which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and to  
 “expresses its deep concern at continuing reports of ensure  
 that all individuals within its territory and subviolations of human rights in  
 the Islamic Republic of subject to its jurisdiction, including  
 religious groups, enjoy  
 Iran; expresses “its concern more specifically at the the  
 rights recognized in those instruments” and decides  
 main criticisms of the Special Representative of the ... to  
 “continue the examination of the situation of human  
 discriminatory treatment of certain groups of citizens rights in  
 the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the  
 for reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá’ís,”  
 situation of minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís...”  
 while conveying “its regret that the Government of the  
 Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1994/73 (9.3.1994) of the  
 Islamic Republic of Iran has not granted the request of  
 Commission on Human Rights expresses its concern  
 the Special Representative to visit the country for more “at the  
 main criticisms of the Special Representative  
 than a year,” “calls upon the Government ... to comply  
 with regard to the human rights situation in the Islamic  
 with international instruments on human rights ...  
 Republic of Iran, namely, ... discriminatory treatment  
 to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party, and of  
 certain groups of citizens for reason of their religito ensure that all  
 individuals within its territory and gious beliefs, notably the  
 Bahá’ís, whose existence as  
 subject to its jurisdiction, including religious groups, a viable  
 religious community in the Islamic Republic  
 enjoy the rights recognised in these instruments,” and of Iran  
 is threatened, as well as the ill-treatment of  
 “decides to extend the mandate of the Special Repe- certain  
 Christians and restrictions on the freedoms of

## APPENDIX II: The United Nations’ Response | 89

expression, thought, opinion and the press, and that, as  
 Republic of Iran to comply with international instrunoted by the Special  
 Representative, there is continued ments on human rights, in  
 particular the International  
 discrimination against women,” also calls upon “the  
 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the  
 Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply Islamic  
 Republic of Iran is a party, and to ensure that  
 with international instruments on human rights, in all  
 individuals within its territory and subject to its juparticular the  
 International Covenant on Civil and risdiction, including

religious groups and other persons

Political Rights, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran

belonging to minorities, enjoy the rights recognized in

is a party, and to ensure that all individuals within

those instruments”; and decides “to continue the

its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including

examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic

religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in these

Republic of Iran, including the situation of

instruments” and requests the Special Representative to

minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís, during its fiftieth session

submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its

under the item entitled ‘Human rights quesforty-ninth session on the

situation of human rights in tions’ in the light of

additional elements provided by

the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of the

Commission on Human Rights and the Economic

minority groups, such as the Bahá’ís, and to report to and

Social Council.”

the Commission at its fifty-first session.

1995

Decision 1994/263 of ECOSOC approves the

Commission’s decision to extend for a further year the

Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1995/68 (8.3.1995) of

mandate of the Special Representative, to request him the

Commission on Human Rights expresses “its deep concern

to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at

at continued violations of human rights in the Islamic

its forty-ninth session on the situation of human rights

Republic of Iran, including those highlighted by the

in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation

Special Representative in his report, namely ...

of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, and to report to

the discriminatory treatment of minorities by whose

the Commission at its fifty-first session and to request

reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Baha’ís,

the Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to

existence as a viable religious community in the

the Special Representative. the

Islamic Republic of Iran is threatened” ... also

R e s o l u t i o n E / C N . 4 / S u b . 2 / R E S / 1 9 9 4 / 1 6 urges

“the Government of the Islamic Republic of

(25.8.1994) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention Iran,

as a State party to the International Covenants on

of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities deeply

Human Rights, to abide by its freely undertaken

concerned “at extensive and continuing human rights

obligations under the Covenants and under other inviolations by the Government of the Islamic Republic international instruments on human rights, and to ensure of Iran, including ... freedom of religion,” shocked that all individuals within its territory and subject to “by the systematic repression of the Bahá’í community its jurisdiction, including religious groups, enjoy the and at the situation of the Iranian Kurds and the Arab rights recognized in these instruments,” further urges minority in Iran, and at increasing intolerance towards “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Christians, including recent murders of Christian intensify its efforts to investigate and rectify the hureligious ministers,” condemns “the flagrant viola- man rights issues raised by the Special Representative tions of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran in his observations, in particular with regard to the which, as noted by the Special Representative of the administration of justice and due process of law, and, Commission, include: (d) Religious discrimination, in fulfilment of its obligations under article 27 of the notably against the Bahá’ís and Christian individuals International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and groups,” and requests the Secretary-General to to take steps to ensure the recognition and enjoyment of “continue to keep the Sub-Commission informed of human rights of persons belonging to minorities” and relevant reports and United Nations measures to pre- and requests “the Special Representative to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session of Iran, including, in particular, those concerning the on the situation of human rights in the Islamic situation of the Kurds and the Arab minority and the Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority religious freedoms of the Bahá’í and Christian com- groups such as the Baha’ís, and to report to the Communities in Iran.” mission at its fifty-second session.”

Resolution 49/202 (23.12.1994) of the General Decision  
 1995/279 of ECOSOC approves the  
 Assembly expresses “its concern more specifically at  
 Commission’s decision to extend for a further year the  
 the main criticisms of the Special Representative in mandate  
 of the Special Representative on the situation  
 his recent reports with regard to ... the discriminatory of  
 human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, to

treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, whose existence as a viable Assembly at its fiftieth session on the situation of hureligious minority is threatened ...," urges "the Islamic man rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including

request

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the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, 1996

and to report to the Commission at its fifty-second session and to request to the Secretary-General to give all Commission on Human Rights expresses "its necessary assistance to the Special Representative. the continuation of violations of human

of the

Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1996/84 (24.4.1996) Commission on Human Rights expresses "its necessary assistance to the Special Representative. the continuation of violations of human

concern at

Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1995/18

rights in the

Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular (24.8.1995) of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities deeply their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá'ís, concerned at "extensive and continuing human rights existence as a viable religious community in the violations by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is threatened..." calls upon of Iran, including arbitrary and summary executions, Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and fully the conclusions and recommendations punishment, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment, un-Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance explained disappearances, the absence of guarantees to the Bahá'ís and to other minority religious essential for the protection of the right to a fair trial including Christians," urges "the Government and disregard for freedom of expression and freedom Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the of religion," noting "that relevant international organizations and bodies emphasize the role of the Islamic obligations under the Covenants and under other Republic of Iran in intimidating and harassing the religious minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran during party, and to ensure that all individuals within the past year, in particular in the assassination of three

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territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including Christian leaders,” condemns “the flagrant violations religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in these of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran which, instruments” and requests “the Special Representative as noted by the Special Representative of the Com- to submit an interim report to the General Assembly mission, include: (f ) Religious discrimination, notably at its fifty-first session on the situation of human rights against Bahá’ís and Christian individuals and groups,” in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation requests “the Secretary-General to continue to keep of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, and to report to the Sub-Commission informed of relevant reports the Commission at its fifty-third session.”

and United Nations measures to prevent human rights Decision 1996/287 of ECOSOC endorses the violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including, in Commission’s decision to extend for a further year the particular, those concerning the situation of the Kurds mandate of the Special Representative, and approves the Arab minority and the religious freedoms and the Commission’s request to the Special Representative to the emancipation of the Bahá’í and Christian com- to submit an interim report to the General Assembly munities in Iran.” at its fifty-first session on the situation of human rights Resolution 50/188 (22.12.95) of the General As- in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation ssembly expresses “its concern at violations of human of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, and to report to rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular ... the Commission at its fifty-third session.

the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/RES/1996/7 (20.8.1996) of their religious beliefs, notably the Bahá’ís, whose of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discriminaexistence as a viable religious community in the Islamic tion and Protection of Minorities gravely concerned

Republic of Iran is threatened ...,” urges “the Govern- “at reports of: (a) Extensive and continuing human rights violations by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to Republic of Iran, including arbitrary and summary exabide by its obligations freely undertaken under the ecutions, torture and inhuman or degrading treatment

Covenants and under other international instruments and punishment, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment, on human rights and to ensure that all individuals unexplained disappearances, the absence of guarantees within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, in- essential for the protection of the right to a fair trial including religious groups, enjoy the rights recognized in and disregard for freedom of expression and freedom those instruments,” and decides “to continue the exam- of religion,” requests “the Government of the Islamic ination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran to investigate fully in order to end Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority the alleged violations of human rights in the Islamic groups such as the Bahá’ís, during its fifty-first session Republic of Iran which include: (d) Religious discrimiunder the item entitled “Human rights questions,” on nation, notably against Bahá’ís and Christians,” urges the basis of the report of the Special Representative “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to and in the light of additional elements provided by the implement fully the conclusions and the recommenda- tions of Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance Social Council.” relating to the Bahá’ís and to other minority religious

APPENDIX II: The United Nations’ Response | 91 groups, including Christians, until they are completely ations of discrimination against the members of this emancipated” and requests “the Secretary-General to religious community, as well as at the discriminatory treatment of continue to keep the Sub-Commission informed of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, relevant reports and United Nations measures to pre- including certain Christian minorities, some members of which vent human rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including violations of the religious freedoms of tion and assassination,” calls upon “the Government of the Bahá’í and the Christian communities in Iran.” of the Islamic Republic of Iran: (b) To abide by its freely undertaken Resolution 51/107 (12.12.96) of the General As- obligations under the International Covenants on sembly expresses “its concern at the grave breaches of Human Rights and under other interhuman rights of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic national instruments on human rights, and to ensure

of Iran and situations of discrimination against the individuals within its territory and subject members of this religious community, as well as at jurisdiction, including members of religious the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason persons belonging to minorities, enjoy of their religious beliefs, including lack of adequate enshrined in those instruments; (c) To protection for the Christian minorities, some members the recommendations of the Special of which have been the target of intimidation and and the relevant recommendations of assassination,” urges “the Government of the Islamic Rapporteurs on religious intolerance and Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International opinion and expression, in particular the Covenants on Human Rights, to abide by its freely relating to the Bahá’ís, Christians, undertaken obligations under the Covenants and under minority religious groups; (g) To other international instruments on human rights and to capital punishment will not be imposed for ensure that all individuals within its territory and sub- non-violent crimes, or in disregard of the ject to its jurisdiction, including members of religious the International Covenant on Civil and groups and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all and the United Nations safeguards” the rights enshrined in those instruments,” calls upon “... (c) To continue its examination of the “the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to human rights in the Islamic Republic of implement fully the conclusions and recommendations the situation of minority groups such as of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Hu- at its fifty-fourth session under the agenda man Rights on the elimination of all forms of religious ‘Question of the violation of human intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or fundamental freedoms in any part of the belief relating to the Bahá’ís and to other minority reli- particular reference to colonial and other gious groups, including Christians,” expresses its grave countries and territories.’ ” concern at indications, according to the information 1997/262 of ECOSOC endorses the received by the Special Representative of the Com-

that all  
to its  
groups and  
all the rights  
implement fully  
Representative  
the Special  
on freedom of  
recommendations  
Sunni and other  
ensure that  
apostasy or  
provisions of  
Political Rights  
and decides:  
situation of  
Iran, including  
the Bahá’ís,  
item entitled  
rights and  
world, with  
dependent  
Decision  
Commission’s

decision to extend for a further year the mission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, of a significant in the Islamic Republic of Iran, aptoughening of criminal legislation and its application proved the Commission’s request to the Special Rep in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in particular at the an interim report to the General incidence of capital punishment imposed for apostasy and non-violent crimes, in violation of the relevant the Islamic Republic of Iran and to reprovisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations safeguards,” gender perspective in mind when seeking and and decides “on the basis of the report of the Special information, and to request the Secretary-Representative and in the light of additional elements continue to give all necessary assistance to provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Representative to enable him to discharge the Economic and Social Council, to continue the fully. examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of concern: (b) At the grave breaches of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, during its fifty-rights of the Bahá’ís, the discrimination second session under the item entitled ‘Human rights members of other religious minorities, includquestions.’ ” ing Christians, and the death sentences pronounced against Dhabihullah Mahrami, Musa Talibi and 1997 Ramadan-Ali Dhulfaqari, on the charge of apostasy, Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1997/54 (15.4.1997) Mithaqi and Kayvan Khalajabadi of the Commission on Human Rights expresses “its their beliefs,” calls upon the Government concern: (b) At the grave breaches of the human rights Republic of Iran: “. . . (b) To abide by its of the Bahá’ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran and situ-undertaken obligations under the International

mandate of the  
 of human rights  
 the Special Rep in the  
 representative to submit  
 Assembly at its  
 human rights in  
 the International Covenant  
 port to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session, and  
 to keep a  
 analysing  
 General to  
 the Special  
 his mandate  
 Resolution  
 presses “its  
 the human  
 against  
 and against Bihnam  
 because of  
 of the Islamic  
 freely  
 its fifty-fifth

session under the same agenda item.”

national instruments on human rights and to ensure Decision  
1998/273 of ECOSOC endorses the  
that all individuals within its territory and subject to Commission’s  
decision to extend the mandate of the  
its jurisdiction, including members of religious groups Special  
Representative for a further year, to request the  
and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all the rights Special  
Representative to submit an interim report to  
enshrined in those instruments; (c) To implement fully the General  
Assembly at its fifty-third session and to  
the conclusions and recommendations of the Special report to the  
Commission at its fifty-fifth session, and  
Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on to keep a gender  
perspective in mind when seeking and  
the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance and analysing  
information, and to request the Secretary of discrimination based on religion or  
belief relating General to continue to give all necessary assistance to  
to the Bahá’ís and to other minority religious groups, the Special  
Representative to enable him to discharge  
including Christians, until they are completely eman- his mandate fully.  
cipated; E/CN.4/1996/95/Add.2. (g) To ensure that Resolution  
53/158 (9.12.1998) of the General Assembly expresses “its concern at the discrimination  
apostasy or non-violent crimes or in disregard of the provisions against religious  
minorities and in particular remains  
of the International Covenant on Civil and Political gravely concerned  
at the unabated pattern of persecu-  
Rights and United Nations safeguards” and decides tion against the  
Bahá’ís, in particular the execution  
“to continue the examination of the situation of hu- and sentencing to  
death and arrests of members of the  
man rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including Bahá’í  
community, and calls upon the Government of  
the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá’ís, at the Islamic  
Republic of Iran to implement the recomits fifty-third session under the item  
entitled ‘Human mendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Comrights  
questions,’ in the light of additional elements mission on Human Rights  
on religious intolerance  
provided by the Commission on Human Rights.” relating to the  
Bahá’ís and to other religious minorities,  
until they are completely emancipated”; calls upon “the  
1998  
Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to ensure  
Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1998/80 (22.4.1998) of that capital punishment  
will not be imposed for other  
the Commission on Human Rights expresses “its con- than the most

serious crimes, for apostasy, or otherwise

cern: (c) At continuing grave violations of the human in disregard of the provisions of the International Covrights of the Bahá'ís, as well as at the discrimination enant on Civil and Political Rights and United Nations against members of other religious minorities, includ- safeguards, and to provide the Special Representative ing Christians, despite constitutional guarantees, at with relevant statistics on this matter"; and decides "to the increased pressure on religious communities and continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the persons suspected of proselytizing, and at the death Islamic Republic of Iran, including the sentences pronounced against Mr. Dhabihullah Mah- situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís, at its rami and Mr. Musa Talibi on the charge of apostasy, fifty-fourth session under the item entitled 'Human and against Mr. Bihnam Mithaqi and Mr. Kayvan rights questions,' in the light of additional elements Khalajabadi because of their beliefs," calls upon "the provided by the Commission on Human Rights."

Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: (b) To abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the 1999

International Covenants on Human Rights and under Resolution E/CN.4/RES/1999/13 (23.4.1999) of the Commission on other international instruments on human rights, and Human Rights notes with interto ensure that all individuals within its territory and est: "... (b) The reported elimination of discrimination subject to its jurisdiction, including members of reli- against Bahá'í youth in enrollment in the pre-university religious groups and persons belonging to minorities, en- year at the high-school level, while remaining conjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments; ... (e) cerned that their entry to universities continues to be To implement fully the conclusions and recommenda- refused, expresses its concern: (c) At the continued tions of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance discrimination against religious minorities, in parrelating to the Bahá'ís, Christians and other minority ticular the unabated and, in some instances, worsened religious groups, until they are completely emancipated pattern of persecution against the Bahá'ís, including ... (j) To ensure that capital punishment will not be death sentences, executions, arrests and the closure of imposed for non-violent crimes, for apostasy, or other- the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education" and calls upon the Government wise in disregard of the provisions of the International upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: "... (b) To Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the United

ensure that capital punishment will not be Nations safeguards” and decides: “... (c) To continue imposed for other than the most serious crimes, not its examination of the situation of human rights in the for apostasy or otherwise in disregard of the provisions Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of mi- of the International Covenant on Civil and Political nority groups such as the Bahá’ís and the Christians, at Rights and United Nations safeguards, and to provide

APPENDIX II: The United Nations’ Response | 93  
 the Special Representative with relevant statistics on the sentencing to death of some of them”. Calls upon the Government of this matter; (c) To implement fully the conclusions the Islamic Republic of Iran...”to implement fully and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the conclusions and recommendations of the religious intolerance relating to the Bahá’ís and other of the Special Representative with regard to religious minority religious groups until they are completely intolerance relating to the Bahá’ís and other minority emancipated”; and decides: “... (c) To continue its religious groups, Ibid., para 110. until they are completely examination of the situation of human rights in the pletely emancipated”; Decides “to continue the exami- Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of the nation of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Bahá’ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-sixth ses- Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority sion under the same agenda item.” groups such as the Bahá’ís, at its fifty-sixth session, under the item Resolution A/RES754/177 (17.12.1999) of the ‘Human rights questions’, in the light of additional General Assembly expresses its concern... “at the dis- elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights”. crimination against religious minorities, in particular Bahá’ís, and remains gravely concerned at the unabated 2001 pattern of persecution against the Bahá’ís, including death sentences, arrests and the closure of the Bahá’í Resolution E/CN.4/RES/2001/17 (20.4.2001) the Commission on Institute for Higher Education, and calls upon the Human Rights notes: Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to imple- “ recent positive steps regarding the situation of the ment fully the conclusions and recommendations of Bahá’ís, including the report that they will be allowed

the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to re-establish  
 their cemetery in Tehran, but expresses its concern  
 to the Bahá'ís and other religious minorities until they  
 at the still-existing discrimination against persons  
 are completely emancipated"; Decides... "to continue  
 belonging to minorities, in particular against Bahá'ís, and  
 the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran  
 calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
 the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups, such as the  
 to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious grounds or against  
 Bahá'ís, at its fifty-fifth session under the item entitled "Human rights ques-  
 persons belonging to  
 minorities and to address this matter in an open  
 tions", in the light of additional elements provided by  
 manner with the full participation of the minorities  
 the Commission on Human Rights". themselves, as well as to implement fully the  
 conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rap-  
 2000 porteur on religious intolerance relating  
 to the Bahá'ís  
 Resolution E/CN.4/2000/L.16 (10.4.2000) the and other minority  
 groups until they are completely  
 Commission on Human Rights expresses its concern: emancipated".  
 Decides... "to continue its examina-  
 ..."At the discrimination against religious minori- tion of the  
 situation of human rights in the Islamic  
 ties, in particular the unabated pattern of persecution Republic of Iran,  
 paying particular attention to further  
 against the Bahá'ís, including death sentences and ar- developments,  
 including the situation of the Bahá'ís  
 rests"; calls upon..."To ensure that capital punishment and other  
 minority groups, at its fifty-eighth session  
 will not be imposed other than for the most serious under the same  
 agenda item".  
 crimes, not for apostasy or otherwise in disregard of Resolution  
 A/RES/56/171(19.12.2001) The General Assembly expresses its concern: ... "At the conand  
 Civil Political Rights and United Nations safeguards, tinuing  
 discrimination against persons belonging to  
 and to provide the Special Representative with rel- minorities, in  
 particular against Bahá'ís, Christians,  
 relevant statistics on this matter"; "To implement fully Jews and  
 Sunnis". It calls upon the Government of the  
 the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Islamic Republic  
 of Iran: ..."To eliminate all forms of  
 Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the discrimination

based on religious grounds or against Bahá'ís and other minority religious groups until they persons belonging to minorities and to address this are completely emancipated; Decides:..." To continue matter in an open manner, with the full participation of the minorities its examination of the situation of human rights in the of the minorities themselves, as well as to implement Islamic Republic of Iran, paying particular attention to fully the conclusions and recommendations of the further developments, including the situation of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on Bahá'ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-seventh Rights on the question of religious intolerances relatsession under the same agenda item". ing to the Bahá'ís and other minority groups until they

Resolution A/RES/55/114 (4.12.00) The General are completely emancipated.". Decides : .."To continue the examination Assembly expresses its concern: "At the discrimina- Islamic Republic of the situation of human rights in the of Iran, paying particular attention to further tion against persons belonging to religious minorities, Bahá'ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-seventh developments, including the situation of the

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session, under the agenda item entitled "Human rights tions", in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights". questions", in the light of additional elements provided Human Rights". by the Commission on Human Rights".

2004

2003 Resolution A/RES/59/205 (02.11.04). The General

Resolution A/RES/58/195 (22.12.03). The Gen- Assembly expresses its serious concern at:.." The coneral Assembly expresses its serious concern at:.." The tinuing discrimination against persons belonging to mi- minorities, including Continuing discrimination against persons belonging increased Christians, Jews and Sunnis, and the to minorities, including the Bahá'ís, Christians, Jews and Sunnis, including cases of arbitrary arrest and cases of arbitrary discrimination against the Bahá'ís, including arrest and detention, the denial of free worship or of publicly carrying out communal affaires, worship or of publicly carrying out communal affaires, the disregard of carrying out communal affaires and the disregard of the disregard of

property rights, the destruction of sites of religious importance, the suspension of social, educational and community-related activities and the denial of access to higher education, employment, pensions and other benefits”. It calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran: ...” To eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious grounds or against persons belonging to minorities, including the Bahá’ís, Christians, Jews and Sunnis, and to address this matter in an open manner, with the full participation of the minorities themselves”. It decides:... “to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, paying particular attention to further developments, including the situation of the Bahá’ís and other minority groups, at its fifty-ninth session, under the item entitled “Human rights ques-

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## THE BAH Á’Í QUESTION

Cultural Cleansing in Iran

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