



Iran - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 2 November 2009

Current Human Rights Situation in Iran

A report from *Amnesty International* points out that:

“Impunity, arbitrary arrest, torture and other ill-treatment, as well as the use of the death penalty remain prevalent. Some sectors of society – including ethnic minorities – continue to face widespread discrimination, while the situation for other groups – notably some religious minorities – has significantly worsened. Those seen as dissenting from stated or unstated official policies face severe restrictions on their rights to freedom of belief, expression, association and assembly. Women continue to face discrimination - both in law and practice. Impunity for human rights abuses is widespread” (*Amnesty International* (5 February 2009) *Iran: Human Rights in the spotlight on the 30th Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution*, p.1)

Human Rights Watch commenting in the aftermath of the June 2009 elections states:

“...extensive violations committed by state-sponsored forces since the June 12 presidential election, including unlawful use of lethal force against peaceful protesters, lengthy solitary confinement, and coerced confessions” (*Human Rights Watch*, (21 September 2009), *Iran: Appoint Special UN Envoy to Investigate Rights Crisis*)

The *International Campaign on Human Rights In Iran* reports:

“Human rights in Iran have deteriorated precipitously for over four years, since the onset of the Administration of President Mahmood Ahmadinejad. But since the disputed presidential Election on 12 June 2009, Iran’s Slide into dictatorship has sharply accelerated. For the past four years, the government has increasingly cracked down on dissent; persecuted women’s rights activists seeking to end discriminatory legislation; denied labor activists their international right to organize; restricted the freedom of expression; persecuted student activists; arrested and otherwise persecuted members of religious minorities; tortured political defendants and convicted them in unfair trials; denied minorities their cultural rights; and executed more prisoners in absolute terms than any other country except China, including juvenile offenders. The Government has shut down human rights organizations and arrested and imprisoned human rights defenders” (*International Campaign on Human Rights In Iran*, (21 September 2009), *Accelerating Slide Into Dictatorship, Human Rights In Iran Since 12 June 2009*, p.1)

A report by the *UN Secretary General* states:

“Since June 2008, there have been negative developments in the area of civil and political rights. Local human rights activists have continued to engage in

strong advocacy on human rights issues, and, during the election campaign, there was considerable public debate and media commentary. The year also saw, however, an increase in human rights violations targeting women, university students, teachers, workers and other activist groups, particularly in the aftermath of the elections. Members of various ethnic and minority groups faced harassment, violence and, in some cases, persecution. The independent media also experienced tightened restrictions, with publications suspended and websites blocked” (UN Secretary General, (23 September 2009), *The situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, point 14, page 6)

This report also states:

“On 12 June 2009, after a vigorous campaign featuring open and critical debates, the Iranian electorate went to the polls to elect a new president. The public debates before and after the election were a positive sign of vitality and dynamism in the civil and political life of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but the handling by authorities of the protests that followed has raised concerns about respect for freedom of expression, assembly and association, the use of force in policing demonstrations and the treatment of and due process afforded to detainees...On 15 June 2009, following the announcement of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s victory, it was reported that tens of thousands of supporters of the other candidates took to the streets to protest the election result (*Ibid*, points 16 & 17, page 6)

A report by the *International Federation for Human Rights* notes:

“Throughout 2009, the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran has remained dire, and even further deteriorated, in the months preceding the June 2009 election, and afterwards” (International Federation for Human Rights, (October 2009), *FIDH Position Paper to the United Nations General Assembly at its 64th Session*, p.3).

The *European Parliament* states that:

“whereas the general human rights situation in Iran has continued to deteriorate, even more so since the presidential elections of June 2009” (European Parliament, (22 October 2009), *European Parliament resolution of 22 October 2009 on Iran*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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