

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

[Home](#)

[> Research Program](#)

[> Responses to Information Requests](#)

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

26 June 2014

IRN104897.E

Iran: Treatment by society and authorities of women's rights activists and women working for women's rights organizations, including those involved in divorce and custody issues (2012-2014)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Overview of Women's Rights Organizations in Iran

1.1 Defenders of Human Rights Center (DHRC)

According to the UN's 2014 *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, the DHRC is one of "the most important Iranian human right[s] organizations" (13 Mar. 2014, para. 33). Sources report that the DHRC was founded in 2001 (Independent Print Ltd. 31 May 2013; Legal Monitor Worldwide 30 May 2014) to provide workshops on human rights and women's rights and pro bono defence for political prisoners and prisoners of conscience (ibid.). The DHRC website indicates that it offers free training to social activists and groups on subjects such as women's rights (DHRC n.d.). The Center was founded by the first female judge in Iran, Shirin Ebadi, who campaigned for women's and children's rights, including to change child custody laws, which "still favour men over women" (Independent Print Ltd. 31 May 2013). Ebadi won a Nobel Peace Prize for her work on women's and children's rights in 2003 (ibid.). Sources report that the offices of the DHRC were shut down by the Iranian government (UN 13 Mar. 2014, para. 33; Legal Monitor Worldwide 30 May 2014). Sources report that the DHRC still functions (ibid.; Professor 24 June 2014), but that following its 2008 closure, it is no longer active in Iran and is based in the UK (ibid.). According to the DHRC website, the Iranian Ministry of the Interior has refused to issue an operating permit for the organization (DHRC n.d.). CNN reports that founder Shirin Ebadi was imprisoned for three weeks in 2000 following a "closed trial" and was banned from practicing law for five years (CNN 16 Dec. 2013). CNN also reports that protesters, calling her a supporter of Israel, attacked her property in 2009 (ibid.). Sources report that Ebadi left Iran and did not return (ibid.; Professor 24 June 2014).

1.2 One Million Signatures Campaign

The One Million Signatures Campaign to Reform Discriminatory Laws Against Women is a movement that was launched in Iran in 2006 to advocate for reforms to laws that discriminate against women (*The New York Times* 28 Nov. 2013; ICHRI 14 Jan. 2009; IHRDC Aug. 2010, 8). In an article published by the newspaper the *Australian*, Ida Lichter, author of *Muslim Women Reformers: Inspiring Voices Against Oppression*, states that the One Million Signatures Campaign sought to repeal gender-biased laws, such as "custody of children given to men in cases of divorce, a woman's entitlement to only half the inheritance of a man, and a woman's testimony in court carrying only half the weight of a man's" (*The Australian* 13 June 2013). Human Rights Watch reports that the campaign attempted to collect signatures to support reforms to these laws, launched a website, and held workshops in Tehran and in other cities to educate the public about the "legal challenges facing women and girls" (Human Rights Watch Dec. 2012, 15). The same source reports that "the campaign

both inspired and supported women's rights activists working outside of Tehran" (ibid.). According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran (ICHRI), a New York-based non-partisan, independent human rights non-profit organization that conducts research, and advocates for human rights issues in Iran (ICHRI n.d.), the One Million Signatures Campaign was active in over 15 provinces in Iran as of 2009 (ICHRI 14 Jan. 2009). Women associated with the campaign have been arrested, imprisoned, and charged with crimes threatening national security (ibid.; IHRDC Aug. 2010, 14; Human Rights Watch Dec. 2012, 23, 24).

1.3 Mourning Mothers of Park Laleh

According to Amnesty International (AI), the Mourning Mothers of Park Laleh [also known as Mourning Mothers] is a women's rights group that campaigns against "unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations" in Iran (AI Feb. 2012, 33). A professor at California State University who is also the former Chair of Gender and Women's Studies, and whose research focuses on gender, politics, and women's rights movements in Iran and Azerbaijan, indicated that the Mourning Mothers' group was created by a group of women who were the wives and sisters of those killed by the authorities during protests against Ahmadinejad in 2009 (24 June 2014).

1.4 The Campaign to Stop Stoning

According to the German broadcaster Deutsche Welle, which "represents Germany in the international media landscape" (Deutsche Welle n.d.), the Campaign to Stop Stoning [also known as Campaign Against Stoning, Stop Stoning Forever] is a group that seeks to prevent execution by stoning and to support women who have been subjected to gender-based violence (ibid. 27 May 2013). Asieh Amini, co-founder of the organization, went into exile in 2009 following the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ibid.). According to *Silencing the Women's Rights Movement in Iran*, a report published by the Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre (IHRDC), both Amini and another of the leaders of the group, Mahboubeh Abbasgholizadeh, were detained by authorities during a protest in March 2007 (IHRDC Aug. 2010). The IHRDC is a Connecticut-based organization that seeks to "establish a comprehensive and objective historical record of the human rights situation in Iran since c 1979" (IHRDC Aug. 2010, 2).

2. Treatment of Women's Rights Activists by Society

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a Senior Research Associate [1] at the UK-based Foreign Policy Centre, "an independent, progressive foreign affairs think tank" (Foreign Policy Centre n.d.), indicated that in Iranian society, "women who are activists, in any field, are portrayed as problematic characters and often branded as prostitutes" and that "violence and discrimination against women's rights activists remain rampant" (Senior Research Associate 19 June 2014). The same source added that some members of society "continue to label and mistreat women human rights activists and defenders in order to stigmatise and dehumanize them" (ibid.). An article by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) states that feminism is considered "taboo" in Iran (RFE/RL 13 July 2013). However, according to the Professor at California State University, the views and treatment of women activists may vary across regions, classes, and social groups, with "conservative and underdeveloped" rural regions holding "negative" and "biased" views, in contrast with regions such as Tehran and northern areas where people have more "liberal" views (24 June 2014). She indicated that a few clerics not associated with the regime have "more women-friendly interpretations of Sharia" (24 June 2014). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints for this Response.

The IHRDC indicates that some women's rights activists "have been fired from their jobs because of their activism" (Aug. 2010, 2). For example, Deutsche Welle indicates that Asieh Amini, co-founder of the Campaign Against Stoning, lost her job as a journalist due to her activism regarding secret stoning executions by the government (27 May 2013). The Senior Research Associate said that women activists face "social pressures after release from prison, such as denial of employment, expulsion from educational institutions or employment, legal challenges in marriage and divorce and custody, right to property and inheritance, as well as exposure to various forms of violence and propaganda schemes" (19 June 2014).

3. Treatment of Women's Rights Activists by Authorities (2009-2014)

3.1 Treatment of Women's Rights Activists by Authorities Following 2009 Elections

Sources report that during the administration of President Ahmadinejad [August 2005-August 2013 (CNN 23 June 2013)], the situation and status of women in Iran "deteriorated" (RFE/RL 13 July 2013; ICHRI 14 Jan. 2009). The 2012 Human Rights Watch report *Why They Left*, which is based on interviews with Iranian women activists who left Iran following the government's 2009 post-election "crackdown," states that the government of Ahmadinejad "stepped up repressive measures against women's rights organizations and activists" after he first became president in 2005 (Human Rights Watch Dec. 2012, 23). IHRDC has documented the actions of

the government of Ahmadinejad in "targeting of women's rights activists leading up to and following the 2009 election" (IHRDC Aug. 2010, 2). Their report states that authorities labeled the One Million Signatures Campaign the "'prostitutes' campaign" or the "'corrupt campaign,'" and that "these insults were published in [the Iranian newspaper] *Kayhan*" (ibid., 10). The IHRDC also reports that authorities "arbitrarily arrested, detained, and interrogated" women's rights activists in an effort to "dismantle" the women's rights movement (ibid., 2). According to the report, following the 2009 election, members of the women's movement – "from part-time volunteers to world-renowned human rights defenders" – who continued their work risked "facing criminal allegations, arbitrary arrest and detention, interrogation, torture, and even death" (ibid.). The source notes that during this period,

[t]he crackdown increased in frequency, magnitude and scope. The authorities arrested activists during demonstrations, and continue to arrest them in their homes and in public, often without warrants. They have searched their homes and seized their belongings. They have detained activists without charge and denied them access to their lawyers or families. Prison authorities have subjected activists to lengthy periods of solitary confinement, and lengthy and often violent interrogations. (ibid.)

In a 2009 report, *The Systematic Repression of the Women's Rights Movement-May 2008*, ICHRI states that Iranian authorities had "systematically thwarted peaceful and legal civil society efforts to advocate for women's rights in Iran" (14 Jan. 2009, 1). Similarly, the March 2014 report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran stated that since 2010, "the coordinated mass arrest of human rights defenders has served to effectively dismantle the most important human rights organizations" in Iran, including the DHRC (UN 13 Mar. 2014, para. 33).

According to the Professor, despite increases in "gender consciousness," due to "intense and widespread repression" against women's rights activists, "there has not been a homogenous ... or well organized women's rights movement" in Iran; she further noted that many women's rights activists left Iran after 2009, and that

[s]ince 2009, and as a result of the actions of authorities to suppress women's rights activists, the women's movement has become more fragmented, disorganized, segmented; it has had a lower profile and lower morale. To characterize the movement generally since Rouhani was elected, it is basically [composed of] smaller networks and some small NGOs, rather than [of] any cohesive organizations. Previous networks have been essentially dismantled by the authorities' actions to arrest leaders/participants/members since 2009. (24 June 2014)

Similarly, the Senior Research Associate indicated that many "better known figures" in the women's movement have left Iran and that

individuals and networks who in the past may have been on more collaborative terms, over the past 4-5 years, have disintegrated into small but vibrant cells of activists. Due to repressive policies and changes in laws, security remains a major concern. ... the movement may no longer be a nation-wide or visible and structured phenomenon, but ...[it] is operating at a more local and organic level. (19 June 2014)

3.2 Assembly and Monitoring

The US Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012* indicates that the Iranian government "restricted freedom of assembly and closely monitored gatherings," such as women's meetings and protests (US 19 Apr. 2013, 30). The IHRDC reports that authorities monitored telephone and email communication of women's rights activists (Aug. 2010, 10). Sources report that some activists have also been subjected to travel bans (US 19 Apr. 2013, 44; AI Feb. 2012, 32). The Professor noted that the Mothers of Park Laleh group is still "illegal," that its members are not allowed to meet (24 June 2014). According to the Professor, the One Million Signatures campaign is "dormant" and "not active" while women associated with the group continue to face "harassment, threats of arrest, and repression" (24 June 2014). The Freedom House report *Freedom in the World 2013* indicated that women's rights activists, particularly those involved with the One Million Signatures Campaign, "continue to face repression" (Freedom House 2013).

3.3 Arrest, Detention and Imprisonment

The *Country Reports* for both 2012 and 2013 indicate that during those years, the government arrested women's activists, charging many with crimes, such as "'propaganda'" and "'insulting the supreme leader or regime,'" treating such cases as national security trials (US 19 Apr. 2013, 17; US 27 Feb. 2014, 14). Similarly, AI reported in 2012 that during that year, several women's rights activists were arrested on "vaguely worded charges related to offences against the state" (AI Feb. 2012, 32). Human Rights Watch reports that according to activists interviewed, security and judiciary officials have "routinely subjected women's rights activists to threats, harassment, interrogations, and imprisonment" (Human Rights Watch Dec. 2012, 23). *Country Reports 2012* states that the government "continued its crackdown of the One Million Signatures Campaign" and that "several members remained under suspended prison sentences and travel bans, were in prison, or were in self-imposed exile at year's end" (US 19 Apr. 2013, 44). Similarly, AI indicates in its 2012 report

Expanding Repression of Dissent in Iran that several women's rights activists have been detained or are serving prison sentences for peaceful activities and that most of them are members of the One Million Signatures Campaign (AI Feb. 2012, 32). Some members of the group Mothers of Park Laleh have been detained and arrested (ibid., 33; UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 15). Some members have also been convicted of "acting against state security" for having participated in the group (AI Feb. 2012, 33).

Sources report that female political prisoners suffered from poor conditions and improper medical care (US 19 Apr 2013, 8, 9; AI Feb. 2012, 32). According to AI, these women prisoners have been held in solitary confinement, and have been given limited contact with their families and lawyers (ibid.). In a June 2014 interview with the *Guardian*, lawyer and women's rights activist Nasrin Sotoudeh, who had been imprisoned in 2010 and was released in 2013, described being subjected to interrogations by "representatives of the intelligence ministry," being placed in solitary confinement, being denied visitors and phone calls, and having deteriorating health (The *Guardian* 1 June 2014). Sotoudeh's family members were also reportedly mistreated by authorities during her imprisonment, according to the *Guardian* (19 Sept. 2013). A Tehran court ruled in 2013 that the death of jailed women's rights activist Haleh Sahabi in 2011 was "due to natural causes" (US 27 Feb. 2014, 15). However, Sahabi, who was serving a two-year sentence following her 2009 arrest during anti-Ahmadinejad demonstrations, was reportedly assaulted by security forces prior to her 2011 death (US 19 Apr. 2013, 20).

3.4 Treatment of Women's Rights Activists from 2013 Elections to June 2014

According to the *Country Reports 2013*, there is a law in Iran that forbids government censorship, but also "prohibits dissemination of information the government considers 'damaging'" (US 27 Feb. 2014, 21). The same source states that "'damaging'" information included "discussions of women's rights," as well as films on the subject (ibid., 26). According to a journalist interviewed by RFE/RL, the majority of websites that cover women's issues are filtered and blocked by authorities within Iran (13 July 2013).

3.4.1 2013 Elections

Sources report that during the June 2013 elections in Iran, all female presidential candidates were disqualified by the Guardian Council (Human Rights Watch Jan. 2014; US 27 Feb. 2014, 31). *Country Reports 2013* states that "according to the Guardian Council's interpretation, the constitution bars women and persons of foreign origin from serving as supreme leader or president; as members of the Assembly of Experts, Guardian Council, or Expediency Council ... and as judges" (ibid.).

Hassan Rouhani was elected president in June 2013 (US 27 Feb. 2014, 7). His campaign reportedly involved his expression of willingness to address issues with regards to women's rights (AWID 11 Apr. 2014; Deutsche Welle 13 Mar. 2014). The Association for Women in Development (AWID), "an international, feminist membership organization committed to achieving gender equality, sustainable development and women's human rights" (AWID n.d.), reports that during Rouhani's campaign, he "signalled willingness to ... end gender segregation enforced in universities, ... to revisit the approach to regulating Iranian women's dress, ... and to address legal discrimination against women" (AWID 11 Apr. 2014). According to Deutsche Welle, despite Rouhani's pledge during his election campaign to end "discrimination between men and women ... in all social arenas," improvements to women's rights under his administration have been "minimal" (Deutsche Welle 13 Mar. 2014). The same source reports that since Rouhani became president, there have been "smaller pockets" of progress in Iran, such as initiatives to promote jobs for women in government (ibid.). However, laws remain that are "stifling women's rights" and, according to a researcher for Human Rights Watch cited by the article, even the most educated women face "'barriers and restrictions in society'" due to these laws (ibid.). In an article posted by AWID, Iranian-American women's rights activist Sussan Tahmasebi [Tahmasebi] [who was arrested for membership in the One Million Signatures Campaign (Australian Broadcasting Corporation 25 Nov. 2013)], writes that while women's organizing is "beginning to take place more freely," and while Rouhani has appointed several women to government positions, nevertheless, "space for civil society has been slow to open up" (AWID 11 Apr. 2014). She notes that, for this reason, Rouhani's record has been "mixed when it comes to support for women's rights" (ibid.). According to the Professor, "no major high profile women's rights campaigns" have been happening since Rouhani was elected, however, activist organization continues through "ground level" organizing and small workshops and meetings (Professor 24 June 2014). She noted some "positive" changes, including a sense of a "little opening" of society, and "hope for women's rights," as well as events such as the recent appointment of female representatives in government, and Rouhani's presentation of a draft bill on citizenship and civil rights and calling for discussion with groups in society (ibid.).

According to the UN Secretary General's March 2014 report, "human rights defenders and women's rights activists continue to face arrest and persecution" in Iran (UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 5). According to the Professor, members of the Mothers of Park Laleh continue to be, in her view, "persecuted" (24 June 2014). The Senior Research Associate similarly stated that, in her opinion, "[t]here is no protection for activists. Given

Iran's gender-based discriminatory codes, there is hardly any protection for women. So those who are women and activists have no protection whatsoever" (19 June 2014). The Professor expressed the view that,

[t]here is no clear mechanism for the protection of women's rights activists by authorities. There is a contradiction in practice, in that there are parallel organizations of power - those of the elected Rouhani government, and those of the Khamenei and Revolutionary Guards. Each system has its own agents and jails. A women's rights activist cannot predict who will target her and it is a very precarious security situation for that reason. It is very risky for women's rights activists to be openly active. There is great uncertainty over what the reaction of the government might be to women activists that are agitating for change. (24 June 2014)

According to a July 2013 article by RFE/RL, women who campaign against the Islamic laws that cause them to have difficulty obtaining divorces have been "summoned, threatened, jailed, or forced to leave the country" (RFE/RL 13 July 2013). In an interview with RFE/RL, Narges Mohammadi, the Deputy Head of the DHRC, who has also previously been sentenced to six years in prison for "acting against national security," stated that "a female rights activist or a children's rights activist ...[who] takes action, [cannot be sure] whether within two days [he or she] will not be summoned to the judiciary," and that such individuals may face "security problems" (ibid.). Similarly, the Senior Research Associate stated that

[m]any [women's rights activists] face harassment, regular round of summons, interrogation, suspended sentences, imprisonment, psychological and physical torture...[f]ollowing the departure of some of the better known figures in the Iranian women's rights movement since 2009, a good number who have remained in Iran are either in prison or face suspended sentences and regular harassment by the authorities. (19 June 2014)

According to the Professor, "women activists continue to experience a risky, insecure, and repressive situation because of their activities. Several women's rights activists continue to remain imprisoned or are 'free' conditionally" (24 June 2014).

3.4.2 Women's Rights Activists Who Have Been Released from Prison

According to the March 2014 UN *Report of the Secretary General on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran*, in September 2013, authorities reportedly released more than 80 political prisoners, including several women's rights activists, some of whom were involved with the One Million Signatures Campaign and the Mourning Mothers of Laleh Park (UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 15). However, sources indicate that the activists were already near the end of their prison terms (Human Rights Watch 21 Jan. 2014; US 27 Feb. 2014, 16).

Sources report that some of the activists released in 2013 include Nasrin Sotoudeh (UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 15; US 27 Feb. 2014, 16), a human rights attorney (ibid.). Sotoudeh represented women imprisoned for their work to gain equal rights (*The New York Times* 28 Nov. 2013; *The Guardian* 1 June 2014); she specialized in children's rights, and also represented Parvin Ardalan, the founder of the One Million Signatures Campaign (ibid.). She was convicted of "acting against national security" (*The New York Times* 28 Nov. 2013; AI 18 Sept. 2013) for her work with the DHRC and sentenced to 6 years in prison (ibid.).

Mahboubeh Karami, of the One Million Signatures Campaign, was also released in 2013 (UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 15; US 27 Feb. 2014, 40). According to Country Reports 2013, she had been charged with membership in an "illegal organization" (ibid.). AI reports that Karami, also the former director of the Women's Unit of the Human Rights Association (HRA) of Iran (of which over 30 members were arrested in 2010), began serving a 3-year sentence in 2011 (Feb. 2012, 32).

ICHRI reports that in June 2014, Narges Mohammadi, a "prominent" women's rights lawyer who has also been involved with the DHRC, was newly charged with national security crimes for attending a meeting in March 2014 with the European Union's Foreign Policy Chief, Catherine Ashton; she was reportedly released on \$10,000 bail (ICHRI 11 June 2014b).

3.4.3 Women's Rights Activists Who Remain Imprisoned as of 2014

The UN reports that, as of March 2014, "large numbers" of political prisoners, including women's rights activists, continue to serve sentences "for charges that are believed to be linked to the exercise of their freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly" (UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 17). The UN Special Rapporteur reported that, based on information submitted to its office in January 2014, there are 92 "human rights defenders" imprisoned, including a number of female activists as well as "women's rights" activists (UN 13 Mar. 2014, Annex 1). The Senior Research Associate listed Bahareh Hedayat, Maryam Shafipour, Hakimeh Shokri, Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi among those still in prison, adding that "there are many other women who remain in prison" (19 June 2014). Sources report that some of the imprisoned women's rights activists include:

- Bahareh Hedayat, one of the founding members of the One Million Signatures Campaign (Change for Equality 18 Mar. 2014). Sources report that she is serving a 10 year sentence (Human Rights Watch 8 Mar. 2014; Change for Equality 18 Mar. 2014) for "national security crimes" (ibid.).
- Maryam Shafipour was arrested in July 2013 for her student rights activism, charged and convicted of national security crimes, and was sentenced to 7 years in prison in March 2014 (ibid.; AI 10 June 2014).
- Hakimeh Shokri is a member of the Mourning Mothers of Park Laleh (ICHRI 7 Mar. 2014). She is reportedly serving a 3-year sentence (ibid.; Human Rights Watch 8 Mar. 2014).
- Mahnaz Mohammadi, a women's rights activist and filmmaker, began serving a 5-year sentence in June 2014, on national security-related charges (The Guardian 18 June 2014; ICHRI 11 June 2014a).
- The UN Secretary-General's March 2014 report also notes that two male lawyers that are members of the DHRC are presently serving prison sentences for their membership to the organization and national security crimes (UN 11 Mar. 2014, para. 20).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Note

[1] The Senior Research Associate is also the Chief Editor of the UK Foreign Policy Centre's publication, the *Iran Human Rights Review*, and an honorary research associate at the Crucible Centre for Human Rights Research, Roehampton University.

References

- Amnesty International (AI). 10 June 2014. "Urgent Action: Iranian Activist Jailed for Four Years." <<http://www.refworld.org/country,COI,,,IRN,,539ab2944,0.html>> [Accessed 16 June 2014]
- _____. 18 September 2013. "Iran Releases Prominent Human Rights Lawyer." <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/iran-nasrin-sotoudeh-released-2013-09-18>> [Accessed 26 June 2014]
- _____. February 2012. *"We Are Ordered to Crush You": Expanding Repression of Dissent in Iran.* <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/002/2012/en/2b228705-dfba-4408-a04b-8ab887988881/mde130022012en.pdf>> [Accessed 16 June 2014]
- Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID). 11 April 2014. "Rouhani and Women's Rights in Iran: Evidence of Continuity and Change." <<http://www.awid.org/Library/Rouhani-And-Women-s-Rights-In-Iran-Evidence-Of-Continuity-And-Change>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]
- _____. N.d. "Who We Are." <<http://www.awid.org/About-AWID/Who-We-Are>> [Accessed 26 June 2014]
- The Australian*. 13 June 2013. Ida Lichter. "Iranian Women Strangled by Web of Restrictions." (Factiva)
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 25 November 2013. Sarah Sedghi. "Iranian Activists Look for Movement on Women's Rights." (Factiva)
- Cable News Network (CNN). 16 December 2013. "Shirin Ebadi Fast Facts." (Factiva)
- _____. 23 June 2013. "Mahmoud Ahmadinejad Fast Facts." <<http://www.cnn.com/2012/12/10/world/meast/mahmoud-ahmadinejad---fast-facts>> [Accessed 24 June 2014]
- Change for Equality. 18 March 2014. "160 Human Rights Defenders Demand Release of Imprisoned Iranians." (Factiva)
- Defenders of Human Rights Center (DHRC). N.d. "About Us." <http://www.humanrights-ir.org/php/view_en.php?objnr=233> [Accessed 20 June 2014]
- Deutsche Welle. 27 May 2013. "Iranian Women Are Second-Class Citizens." (Factiva)
- _____. 13 March 2014. "Iran's Women See No Progress Under Rouhani." (Factiva)
- _____. N.d. "Who We Are." <<http://www.dw.de/about-dw/who-we-are/s-3325>> [Accessed 25 June 2014]
- Foreign Policy Centre. N.d. "About Us." <<http://fpc.org.uk/about/>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

Freedom House. 2013. "Iran." *Freedom in the World 2013*. <<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/iran>> [Accessed 11 June 2014]

The Guardian. 18 June 2014. Saeed Kamali Dehghan. "Iranian Film-Maker Jailed for Five Years for 'Collaborating with the BBC.'" <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/18/iranian-film-maker-mahnaz-mohammadi-jailed-colaborator-bbc>> [Accessed 18 June 2014]

_____. 1 June 2014. Simon Tisdall. "Freed Iranian Rights Lawyer: I've a Bad Feeling About the Women I Left Behind." <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/01/iran-rights-lawyer-nasrin-sotoudeh>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

_____. 19 September 2013. Saeed Kamali Dehghan. "Iran's Top Human Rights Activist Is Freed, Fuelling Hopes of Change in Rouhani Era: Move Lays Ground for President's Visit to UN Women's Rights Lawyers Is Told Release Is Permanent." (Factiva)

Human Rights Watch. 8 March 2014. "Iran: Free Women Activists." <<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/07/iran-free-women-activists>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

_____. 21 January 2014. "Iran: Abuses Persist Under New Government." <<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/01/21/iran-abuses-persist-under-new-government>> [Accessed 12 June 2014]

_____. January 2014. "Iran." *World Report 2014: Events of 2013*. <<http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/iran>> [Accessed 8 June 2014]

_____. December 2012. *Why They Left: Stories of Iranian Activists in Exile*. <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iran1212webwcover_0_0.pdf> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

Independent Print Limited. 31 May 2013. "'The Next Person to Be Killed Is Shirin Ebadi.' Me..." (Factiva)

International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran (ICHRI). 11 June 2014a. "Filmmaker Mahnaz Mohammadi Begins 5-Year Sentence on Baseless Charges." <<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2014/06/mahnaz-mohammadi/>> [Accessed 14 June 2014]

_____. 11 June 2014b. "Prominent Rights Defender Faces New Charges for Her Meeting with Ashton." <<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2014/06/narges-mohammadi/>> [Accessed 14 June 2014]

_____. 7 March 2014. "Release Shafipour, Hedayat, and All Other Women Prisoners of Conscience." <<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2014/03/womens-day/>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

_____. 14 January 2009. "The Systematic Repression of the Women's Rights Movement - May 2008." <<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2009/01/repression-women/>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

_____. N.d. "About Us." <<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/background-2/>> [Accessed 20 June 2014]

Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC). August 2010. *Silencing the Women's Rights Movement in Iran*. <<http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/publications/reports/3007-silencing-the-women-s-rights-movement-in-iran.html?p=6>> [Accessed 10 June 2014]

Legal Monitor Worldwide. 30 May 2014. "Public Statement - The Law Society of Upper Canada Expresses Grave Concerns About the Trial and Ongoing Harrassment of Hadi Esmaeilzadeh in Iran." (Factiva)

The New York Times. 28 November 2013. Shirin Ebadi. "Women Rising." (Factiva)

Professor of women's and gender studies, California State University. 24 June 2014. Telephone interview.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). 13 July 2013. Golnaz Esfandiari. "Women's Rights Activists Tell Rohani What They Want." (Factiva)

Senior Research Associate. 19 June 2014. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

United Nations (UN). 13 March 2014. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*. (A/HRC/25/61) <<http://shaheedoniran.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/A-HRC-25-61-updated.pdf>> [Accessed 29 May 2014]

_____. 11 March 2014. *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*. (A/HRC/25/75) <<http://shaheedoniran.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2014-SG-Report.pdf>> [Accessed 29 May 2014]

United States (US). 27 February 2014. "Iran." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013*. <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/220564.pdf>> [Accessed 29 May 2014]

_____. 19 April 2013. "Iran." Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012.
<<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204571.pdf>> [Accessed 29 May 2014]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact the following individuals and organizations were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response: Defenders of Human Rights Center; Fellow, Brookings Institution; Foundation for Democracy in Iran; International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran; Justice for Iran; Professor of women's studies, Boston University; Professor, Center for Iranian Studies, Concordia University; Professor of political science, York University.

The following organizations and individuals were unable to provide information for this Response: Iran Human Rights Documentation Center; Ligue iranienne pour la défense des droits de l'homme; Professor of law, McGill University; Professor, Middle East Program, Woodrow Wilson Center.

Internet sites, including: Al Jazeera; Campaign for Equality; Defenders of Human Rights Center of Iran; ecoi.net; FARS News Agency; Frontline Defenders; Institute for War and Peace Reporting; International Civil Society Action Network; International Crisis Group; Iran – Center for Women and Family Affairs, website of the President; Pars Times; Radio Zamanah; *Tehran Times*; UN – Integrated Regional Information Networks, Refworld, UNWomen.

[Tips on how to use this search engine.](#)

[Top of Page](#)

Date modified: 2015-08-13