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International Liberty Association Newsletter

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IRAN PROTESTS ENTER SECOND MONTH



EDITORIAL

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

As we progress towards Christmas and the New Year we are stunned by the bravery of Iran's women and youth. They have shown that they are no longer accepting the brutal abuse of their most fundamental human rights and are willing to sacrifice everything to obtain freedom from oppression.

We are witnessing a profound transition in Iran where the people have continued their protests for more than two months in spite of repressive measures and gross human rights violations by agents of the brutal regime. In the streets we see people from every social, ethnic or religious group, even elementary and high school students as well as those in ... continued on p.2

Protests expand and continue across Iran despite the regime's attempts to quash this uprising.

A highly confidential directive order by the IRGC's commander-in-chief, Hossein Salami, on 11 October, was revealed which reflects the regime's utter fear of the nationwide uprising.

Salami ordered IRGC commanders to be "alert and brief the forces on the ground, including employed forces, Basij agents, as well as intelligence sources."

He also ordered IRGC commanders to "refrain from deploying demoralised, disaffected, and disgruntled ... continued on p.2

FOOTAGE FROM PRISON FIRE ADDS TO MYSTERY

Excerpts from a report by Associated Press (Dubai AP):

In an effort to clarify the government's narrative amid growing international pressure, Iran on Sunday [23 October] released

security footage that it said came from its notorious Evin Prison the night a fire broke out that killed at least eight inmates.

The purported CCTV footage of the mayhem last weekend only added to the mystery of what happened the night of the blaze at the detention facility. Evin Prison is known for holding political prisoners, including protesters from the demonstrations that have convulsed the country over the past five weeks. Rights groups estimate that thousands have been swept up since the unrest began over the Sept. 16 ... continued on p.3





Iran protests enter second month

continued from p.1

personnel in riot control operations and prevent their participation in operations from calming the situation.”

The main reason for the officials’ contradictory remarks and propaganda is the regime’s weakness in accepting the Iranian people’s demand for freedom and basic, universally accepted human rights including the right to happiness, to free speech, freedom to assemble, religious choice, choice of attire and so on.

The primary objective of Iran’s

ruling theocracy is quashing this uprising which the regime sees as an existential threat. Denying these protests while violently suppressing them is part of the IRGC modus operandi.

Nevertheless, people, including university and high school students are adamant to end the four decades of tyranny that has deprived them of everything. In several weeks since start of these protest, hundreds have lost their lives to the brutality of the regime forces yet they chant during their daily protest: “Freedom or death”, expressing readiness to

die for obtaining their most basic rights. This is a significant stage, unforeseen in past 4 decades since the brutal mass killings in early 1980’s. The regime has systematically used brute force to intimidate and terrorise the public into submission during these past 4 decades yet now the young girls chant “tell my mum she has no daughter anymore”, expressing readiness to die for freedom.

Facing these brave young women, the mullahs have no choice but to let go and face a leaner sentence when tried for their crimes.



Editorial *continued from p.1*

universities across the country. They unanimously call for an end to human rights violations and dictatorship.

Despite an internet blockade we have been able to gather and spread the news of abysmal violations and attract international public attention to the cause. This has in turn led to widespread international support for the people of

Iran who, seeing this, are encouraged that their voice is being heard and their sacrifices are meaningful.

Tens of thousands of people across the globe have been taking part in demonstrations in support of the people of Iran and their right for freedom. Obviously we have to continue these efforts and increase our support for the people of Iran and the rest of the world

who are suffering from the ill-intentioned activities of Iranian regime and its proxies. In this regard we need the support of each and every one of you and hope that the people of Iran will achieve their righteous demands soon and all these sufferings will end.

Once again we salute you for standing with us in this uphill struggle and wish you a joyous Christmas and a successful 2023.

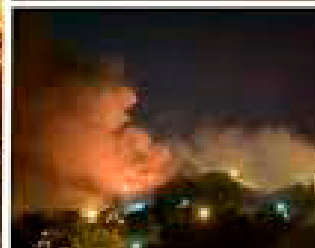
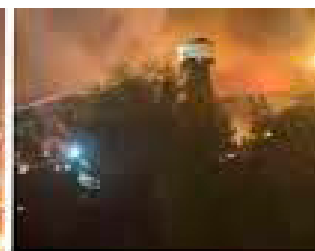


Footage from prison fire adds to mystery *continued from p.1*

death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman in police custody for allegedly not adhering to the country's strict Islamic dress code.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency aired an interview with an unnamed top prison guard who claimed a riot broke out as prisoners convicted of financial crimes tried to escape. However, no unrest or violence is visible in the released CCTV footage. The quick glimpses show crowds of detainees rushing through cell doors. Some men appear panicked as smoke fills the ward and a siren wails. A prisoner tries to break his cell lock with a fire extinguisher, while another tries with a mop. A man tries to damage a CCTV camera.

The cryptic video and shifting explanations for what happened last Saturday night at Evin Prison have sown doubt about the government's version of events. Officials first said the unrest was stoked by



“enemy agents” and some inmates who attempted to escape. They also claimed inmates set a sewing workshop on fire. But in numerous videos shared on social media, gunshots, explosions and protest chants can be heard.

Iran's nationwide protests first focused on Iran's state-mandated hijab, or headscarf, for women but transformed into one of the most serious challenges to the country's ruling clerics. Protesters have

clashed with police and even called for the downfall of the Islamic Republic itself. Security forces have fired live ammunition and tear gas to disperse demonstrations, killing over 200 people, according to estimates by rights groups.

Also on Sunday, Iran's atomic energy agency alleged that hackers acting on behalf of an unidentified foreign country broke into a subsidiary's network and had free access to its email system.

FULL JAILS MEAN ARRESTED WOMEN ARE BEING HELD IN HOUSES - WITH SOME 'BEATEN AND TORTURED'

Excerpts from Sky News report - 23 October 2022:

Mina left solitary confinement a few days ago. She has now been arrested twice by Iranian forces for taking part in the protests sweeping her country.

Speaking to Sky News through voice notes sent on an encrypted messaging app, she spoke about her experience and why she is prepared to risk her life to help secure change in Iran. We have changed her name and withheld some details to protect her identity.

“Our whole life has changed,” she says.

Before the death of Mahsa Amini in mid-September, Mina - an academic in her early 30s - was focused on her PhD studies in the Kurdish region of Iran.

Now, she says the daily lives of

Iranian and Kurdish Iranians have been transformed by the constant



21-year-old student at Hamedan University of Technology, Negin Abdolmaleki (left) and Arnika Qaem Maghami, 17 (right) were beaten to death by the regime's Security Forces.

protests triggered by the young woman's death. A few days ago, she was detained and confined in a solitary cell by the regime's intelligence office.

“This is a place where detainees

are not transferred into the justice system. They undergo beatings and torture”, she explains.

The torture is sometimes physical, mental or a combination of the two. Mina is too afraid to describe what happened to her in her voice messages to us.

“When women's rights activists are detained, they [the police] don't attack you physically.

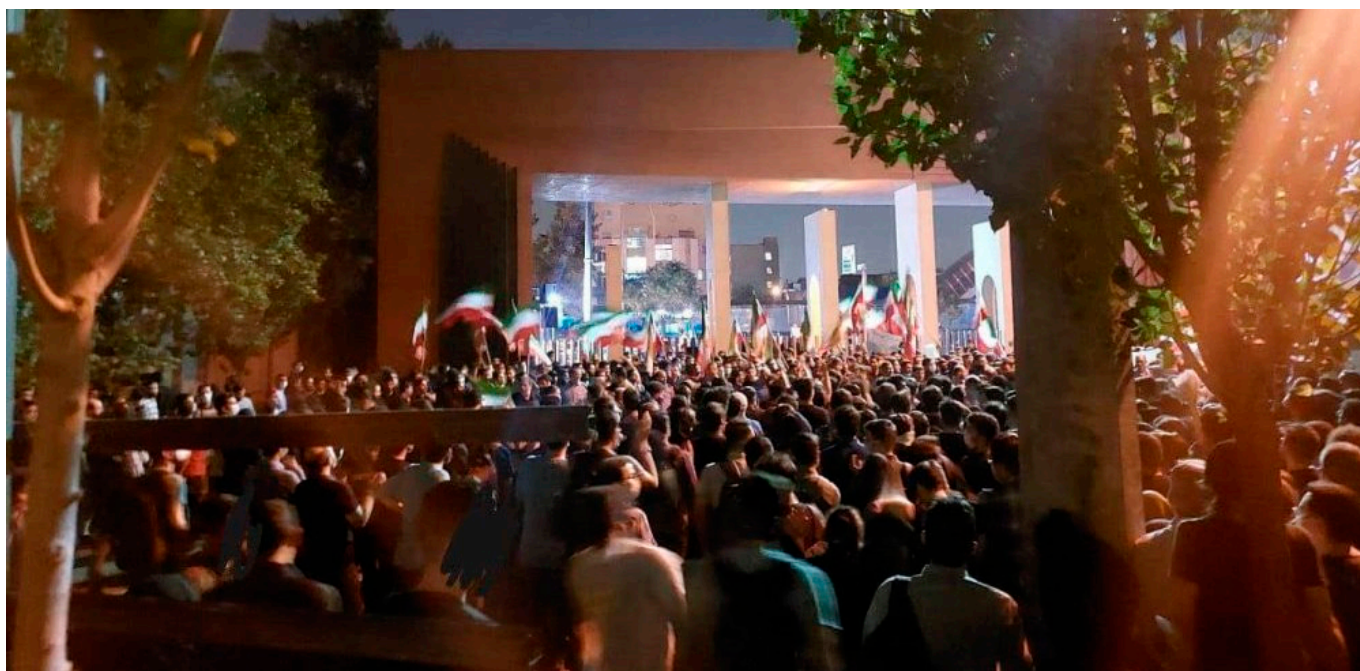
“Instead [the police] threaten, intimidate and try to frighten them. They insult people's beliefs. It is an intense psychological violence.

“I and many other people have concluded that maybe it is true that change will not happen right now but in the coming months or years, we will achieve the result people want.

“So hopefulness is greater than hopelessness. We will continue.”



YOUR COMMENTS



From the start of recent protests in Iran many of you have sent us comments and messages to the brave people who are risking their lives to keep the flames of hope alive. Here are excerpts of some of the messages. We are sorry that we don't have space to include them all.

Alistair: My heart is with those who are held in prison and their families seeking their release. I hope that the volunteers in ILA will succeed in their wonderful work as the voice of the people of Iran, and the voice of people like me around the world who believe in freedom and human rights.

Patricia: I was briefly in Iran several years ago and saw at first hand how they operate to suppress women. My sympathy is with all the women of Iran and my hopes and prayers are for their liberation, and the liberation of all those unjustly detained in Iran.

Sue: The world watches in horror at the evil use of power by the authorities in your country. Their excuse that it is a religious rule is antiquated and ignorant. Please be strong but stay safe and we will work to help you.

Kevin: I want you to know that you enjoy the support and

admiration of so many here in Britain, including myself, who wish you continued strength, resilience, safety and lasting success in your struggle to bring about a peaceful, successful and outward looking Iran. May God's grace fortify you and bring you the victory and transformation of the nation for which so many have sacrificed their lives. The world is watching in hope.

Emma: I think particularly of the brave women of Iran who are taking off their hajibs and burning them and for the youth who are fighting for the kind of country they want to grow up in. For the rights of women; for education for all; for freedom of thought and expression; for democracy; for free speech. We salute you and stand with you in your struggle.

Annie: God help all those who have lost loved ones, and those who have been arrested. May He bring you peace and joy, even in the middle of your time of tribulation.

Martin: Special greetings to all those prisoners who are suffering for challenging the wrongs of the regime. I think of you and your families who work for your release.

Pat and John: Please continue to BE THE VOICE OF THE

PEOPLE OF IRAN. You are representing the future of your country and civilisation. What an example you have set us all. We thank you.

Anna: May the sacrifice of so many of your beloved daughters, mothers, fathers and sons be for all of us a flame of hope. May God hear your cries and wipe every tear from your eyes.

Jane: No God of any religion would condone what is being done by this oppressive regime. It is easy for me to say 'Stay strong' when I am not risking my life for an ideal of freedom and equality but I want you to know that there are people who support you and stand with you in spirit. I send my condolences to the families of all those who have been killed or injured in the fight for liberty in Iran. I pray for the day when you are able to live as you would wish in peace and freedom.

Lucy: To you all, and especially to those who have lost loved ones in this struggle, we send our thoughts, hopes, prayers. Please know that your actions are viewed, by us and I am sure by people all over Britain and all over the world, as acts of supreme courage, and that we support you in all that you are undertaking to achieve.



FORMER EUROPEAN MINISTERS SUPPORT IRAN PROTESTS



In a joint statement, 11 former European Ministers expressed their support for the nationwide protests in Iran.

In their statement former ministers refer to protests that have spread all over Iran and highlight: “The protests by women and youth have so far expanded to more than 162 cities in all 31 provinces. Demonstrations are taking place in all major universities.”

At least 400 demonstrators have been killed, countless others have been injured, and over 20,000 arrested. The former ministers emphasise: “By disrupting and disconnecting the Internet in large parts of Iran, the regime is trying

to prevent the transmission and dissemination of news and images of protests, the true dimensions of the uprising, and finally, revelations regarding the scope of its massacre and suppression. The international community must guarantee free access to the Internet for the people of Iran.”

They call on the UN and international organisations to:

“Strongly condemn the killing of demonstrators in Iran and take urgent measures to stop this repression. The dossier of this regime’s crimes must be referred to the United Nations Security Council and those responsible for committing such crimes must be

brought to justice.”

The signatories emphasise that “Any dialogue or dealings with the Iranian regime or the continuation of relationships with it must be predicated on the release of all those arrested during the recent uprising.”

The signatories are: **Janez Jansa**, former Prime Minister, Slovenia; **Tonio Borg**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malta; **Ase Maria Kleveland**, former Minister of Culture and renowned singer, Norway; **Corinne Lepage**, former French Minister of Environment; **Audronius Ažubalis**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania; **John Perry**, former Irish Minister of State for small business; **Francis Zammit Dimech**, former Minister of foreign affairs, Malta; **Anatol Șalaru**, former Minister of Defence, Moldova; **Marcin Świącicki**, former Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, former Mayor of Warsaw, Poland; **Mario Galea MP**, former Minister of Health and former Chief Government Whip, Malta; **Nicola Renzi**, former Captain Regent and foreign minister, San Marino.

BRITISH LAWMAKERS SUPPORT IRAN PROTESTS



The British Committee for Iran Freedom exchanged opinions on the uprising in Iran at a meeting in the House of Commons on Tuesday, 18 October 2022.

Dozens of cross-party British lawmakers from the House of Commons and the House of Lords

participated in this meeting, expressing strong support for the major Iran protest. They also praised the bravery of Iranian women, who act as trailblazers of the current uprising.

Baroness Sandip Verma, former minister of Energy, Climate Change, and International Development, who chaired the meeting, also highlighted the Iranian women’s role in the current uprising.

“Women’s role in protests did not emerge overnight or spontaneously but is rooted in the 40 years

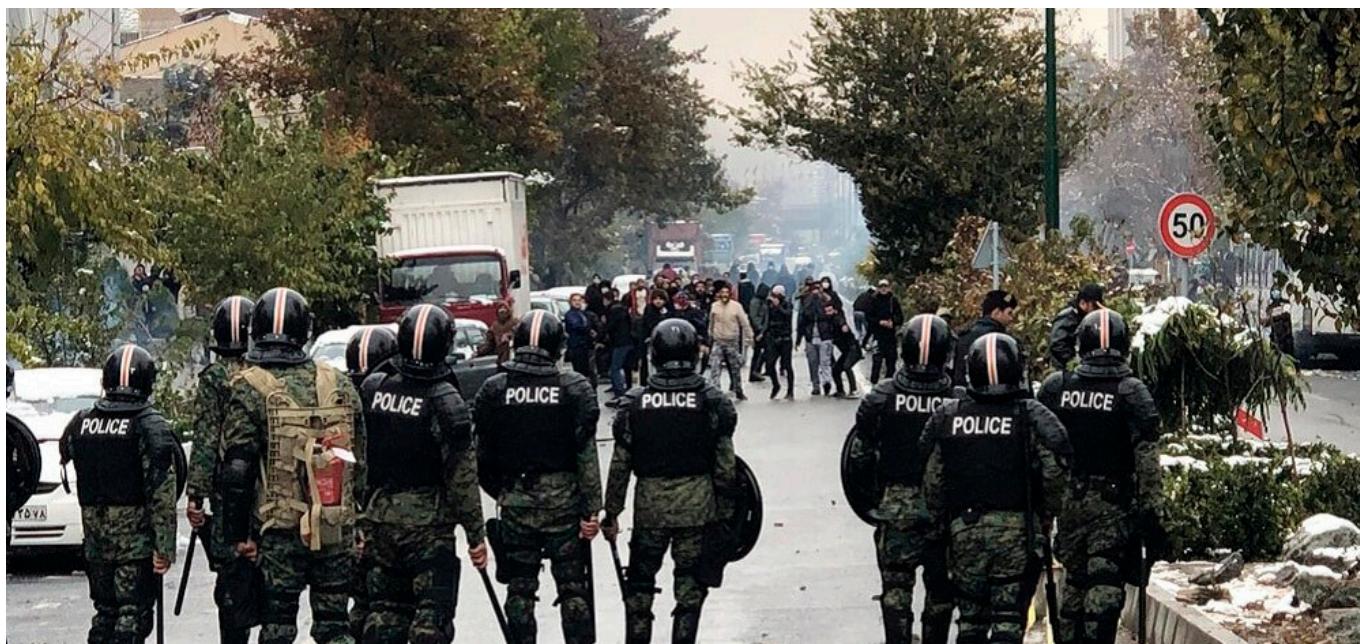
of struggle against the misogynist regime.”

The former Defense Secretary, the **Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP**, said: “I have had friends imprisoned by the regime in Tehran, and I have one friend who has never been found, disappeared by the regime. So, I understand the sacrifices that people are making.”

“We can offer moral support, and we can recognise the role of the resistance movement of the young women, the young people involved”, said **Steve McCabe MP**, co-president of the British Committee for Iran Freedom.



IRAN'S POLICE ARE FED UP WITH KILLING COUNTRYMEN SAYS EXILED OFFICER



Since protests began in solidarity with a young woman who died in custody on 16 September after being arrested by the morality police 3 days earlier, the protest movement has spread across the country and has been going on nonstop for over two months. The bravery of young girls who face the harshest treatment in the hands of regime forces, if arrested, has shocked the world and finally world media have been covering the news, albeit, not enough and not clean from the regime's propaganda. In this newsletter we have covered a few such reports and here are more.

THE TIMES

According to a report by Richard Spencer, Middle East Correspondent of *The Times* (Saturday 22 October 2022) Iran's police are fed up with killing countrymen and are looking for an opportunity to escape their frustrating situation. In this report Richard Spencer uses his interview with an exiled former officer of Iran's Security Forces to depict a real picture of the events in Iran. In particular he is picturing part of the equation that is systemically exaggerated by Iran's top officials.

"When he was ordered to send

his men out to face down the protesters, Fariborz Karamizand had a choice to make: kill his countrymen or flee the country.

Within weeks, he was being smuggled over the Iranian border. Today, from a country he cannot name for his safety's sake, he is watching as his friends and former colleagues in Iran face the same choice," says Mr Spencer.

Students continued to protest in large numbers at some of the country's main universities despite a warning from the head of the country's Revolutionary Guard Hossein Salami that Saturday was to be the last day of protest.



In a video obtained by CNN via the pro-reform activist outlet *Iran Wire*, two uniformed officers can be seen in what appears to be an attempt to arrest a protester. The video is said to be recorded at Sanandaj Technical College in northwestern Iran.

In the capital Tehran, activist groups claimed clashes broke out between protesters, members of the Basij militia and police officers in plain clothes at Azad University but CNN cannot independently verify

whether those in the clashes are security forces.

Bloomberg

Thousands of Iranians gathered

on Thursday [27 October] to mourn a 16-year-old girl killed in police crackdowns on protests that have embroiled the country for nearly six weeks.

Videos shared on social media purportedly from the town of Veysian and the city of Khorramabad in Iran's Lorestan province, where **Nika Shakarami**'s family is from, showed large crowds of mourners chanting "death to the dictator" and "we are all Nika."

Other footage from the area appeared to show security forces shooting at protesters. None of the videos can be verified by *Bloomberg*.

Thursday's developments came after a day of massive demonstrations in the country, concentrated in Tehran and western Kurdistan province where tens of thousands of people had gathered to mark 40 days since the death of Mahsa Amini, the 22-year-old woman whose death in police custody triggered the nationwide unrest.



GLOBAL SUPPORT OF THE ONGOING IRAN PROTESTS

The protests in Iran and the unlawful brutal killings of protesters by the regime's security forces have drawn massive international attention both by governments as well as non-governmental organisations whose primary goal is protecting human rights.

Below are a few samples taken from the many expressions of support and concern.

Responding to the unlawful killings of at least eight people by Iran's security forces as they again opened fire on mourners and protesters in at least four provinces, **Heba Morayef**, Amnesty International's Director for the Middle East and North Africa, said: "The Iranian authorities' reckless and unlawful use of firearms against protesters, including live ammunition, reveals yet again the tragically high cost of international inaction. These brutal tragedies in Iran have seemingly become normalised."

According to a statement issued by the **United Nations** media centre, "UN human rights experts condemned the killings and the crackdown by security forces in Iran on protesters following the death of Jina Mahsa Amini,

including alleged arbitrary arrests and detentions, gender-based and sexual violence, excessive use of force, torture, and enforced disappearances. They urged that the reports be thoroughly and independently investigated and those responsible held to account."

The **US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control** (OFAC) designated 10 Iranian regime officials for the brutal ongoing crackdown on nationwide protests in Iran, as well as two Iranian intelligence actors and two Iranian entities involved in the Iranian government's efforts to disrupt digital freedom.

OFAC's statement reads: "Forty days after the tragic death of Mahsa Amini, Iranians continue to bravely protest in the face of brutal suppression and disruption of internet access," said Under Secretary of the Treasury **Brian E. Nelson**. "The United States is imposing new sanctions on Iranian officials overseeing organizations involved in violent crackdowns and killings, including of children, as part of our commitment to hold all levels of the Iranian government accountable for its repression."

According to AFP, women foreign ministers from a dozen nations led by Canada's **Melanie Joly**, jointly condemned Iran's violent crackdown on women's rights, as protesters in Iran marked 40 days of unrest.

"As women foreign ministers, we feel a responsibility to echo the voices of Iranian women," said the joint statement issued by ministers from Albania, Andorra, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Iceland, Kosovo, Libya, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, and Norway.

Australian Prime Minister, **Anthony Albanese**, has publicly condemned Iranian authorities and appealed for protesters to be treated with respect and dignity, in the wake of a bloody crackdown.

The German Minister of Foreign Affairs **Annalena Baerbock** said in a statement: "Every day, the human rights situation in Iran is deteriorating, and the security forces are cracking down more brutally on the women and men on the streets who demand nothing more than their universal human rights."

More than 13,000 people are said to have been arrested and over 250 were shot or beaten to death."



Iranians in Brussels draw the attention of European Parliament to the events in Iran and call for severing ties with the regime.



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PHOTO EXHIBITION

From October 24 to 27, A photo exhibition was held in the European Parliament with the initiative of **Giana Gancia**, a member of the European Parliament from Italy.

The exhibition featured photos of some of the 400 martyrs of the nationwide Iran protests, the 1988 massacre of over 30,000 political prisoners, and martyrs of November 2019 nationwide uprising.

This photo exhibition also presented a chronology of the Iranian regime's crimes against humanity since 1981 and shed light on the record of the world's top executioner per capita.

The information presented in this exhibition underlined how Iran's ruling theocracy has been relying on gross human rights violations in order to control Iran's



volatile society.

The exhibition also highlighted current regime president's role in the 1988 massacre of political prisoners. Ebrahim Raisi was

a member of Tehran's "death commission."

The exhibition was organised on the World Day against Executions and was widely welcomed by MEPs.

ILA Christmas Celebration Tuesday 13th December 2pm–7pm

Entrance & Registration at 2pm
(you may stay for any length)

St Mary's Church
Wyndham Place, York Street
London W1H 1PQ

Please let us know by email,
telephone or post, if you can join us
for this magnificent event



*Please sign our petition online and encourage
your friends and family to do the same:*

<https://iliberty.org.uk/petition-to-support-human-rights-in-iran/>

