

# International Liberty Association Newsletter

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## EDITORIAL

Following the end of the 12-day war between the regime ruling Iran and Israel and amid intensifying internal crises, the regime—unable to respond to the legitimate demands of the people or to solve economic, social, and political problems—has once again turned to repressive tools such as arrests, torture and executions.

Repeated warnings from inside Iran's prisons, issued by brave prisoners of conscience, indicate that recent developments point toward preparations for another organised massacre—a tragedy reminiscent of the 1988 massacre, when more than 30,000 prisoners of conscience were executed in silence, with no reaction from the international community.

In recent days, prisoners have reported suspicious transfers, severed communications, increased security pressure and illegal restrictions. These disturbing actions are clear and blunt warnings of a deadly scenario that could claim the lives of hundreds of innocent people.

The regime is attempting to control public anger and pre-empt potential protests by instilling fear and carrying out hasty executions. This is not only a gross violation of human rights—it also risks triggering yet another humanitarian catastrophe.

Prisoners of conscience - honourable ... continued on p.2

## UN EXPERTS EXPRESS CONCERN OVER INTENSIFIED REPRESSION IN IRAN

Many United Nations experts, including **Mai Sato** (Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iran), **Nazila Ghanea** (Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief), **Morris Tidball-Binz** (Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions), **Nicholas Loura** (Special Rapporteur on minority issues), **Richard Bennett** (Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan), **Irene Khan** (Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of freedom of opinion and expression), **Mary Lawlor** (Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders), and members of the Working Group on Enforced



or Involuntary Disappearances such as **Gabriela Citroni** (Chair-Rapporteur), **Grażyna Baranowska** (Vice-Chair), **Aua Balde**, and **Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez** – as well as **Margaret Satterthwaite** (Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers) and members of the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls including **Laura Nyirinkindi** ... continued on p.2

## IRANIAN REGIME INTENSIFYING CRACKDOWN AT A TERRIFYING PACE

On Friday 4th July 2025, the New York Post published an article stating that the Iranian regime is oppressing its people with a “North Korea-style” model of terrifying repression. According to the article, following the 12-day war between Israel and Iran, it appears the regime is turning inward and intensifying its crackdown at an alarming rate.

The article quotes Kasra Aarabi, Director of IRGC Research at United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI) that the regime is accelerating toward what he described as “a model



of isolation and control in the style of North Korea”.

In an interview with Fox News Digital, Aarabi stated:

“We are witnessing a form of internal ... continued on p.2



**Editorial**

*continued from p.1*

men and women who are incarcerated solely for standing up for justice, freedom, and human dignity - now face the threat of death. These individuals are among the most valuable assets of Iranian society and represent the unyielding voice of the people for freedom, justice, and peace.

We have a duty to expose this urgent threat in the media, raise public awareness, and mobilise international human rights institutions to prevent the repetition of one of the darkest chapters in Iran’s modern history.

We call on each and every one of you—supporters of freedom and justice — to stand with us as always, and be the voice of the voiceless.

**Iran regime intensifying crackdown at a terrifying pace** *continued from p.1*

isolation that will have major consequences for the people of Iran. The regime has always been authoritarian but the current level of repression is unprecedented. This is unlike anything we’ve seen before.”

A source inside Iran confirmed to Fox News Digital that “the repression has become terrifying”. Aarabi, who maintains direct communication lines inside Iran, described a country increasingly besieged by its own rulers.

He explained how in Tehran, citizens are randomly stopped, their phones confiscated and searched.

“If you have any content that’s seen as pro-Israel or mocking the regime, you disappear. People now leave their phones at home or wipe everything before stepping outside.”

**UN experts express concern over intensified repression** *continued from p.1*

(Chair), **Claudia Flores** (Vice-Chair), **Dorothy Estrada-Tanck**, Ivana Krstić and **Haina Lu** – issued a joint statement expressing concern over the increasing repression in Iran following the outbreak of the Iran-Israel war on 12 June and the subsequent ceasefire.

The UN experts’ statement states that: “Governments must not exploit post-conflict conditions as an opportunity to intensify repression of ethnic and religious minorities, or political dissidents”.

“Even considering the impact of the illegal military actions by Israel and the United States, the reports received about mass executions and widespread arrests – especially among minority populations – are deeply alarming.

“Under international law, states are obligated to uphold fundamental human rights even during and after armed conflict.”

The report also highlights the mass deportation of Afghan refugees: “The mass expulsion of Afghan nationals from Iran has also drastically increased, with 256,000 Afghan citizens forcibly returned just last month (June). This has raised serious concerns about forced repatriation, which constitutes a violation of human rights standards.”

The experts also voiced concern about official statements indicating fast-

tracked trials on charges of espionage, warning that these may lead to hasty executions or punishments without fair judicial proceedings.

Additionally, the Iranian parliament’s efforts to advance legislation that classifies espionage and intelligence activities as “corruption on Earth” (*moharebeh*) – a charge that can carry the death penalty – was described as highly alarming.

About prison transfers and enforced disappearances, the statement says: “The experts continue to receive reports about deteriorating conditions



for prisoners who were transferred from Evin Prison to Tehran’s Great Prison and Qarchak Prison following the Israeli attack on Evin.

“The whereabouts of some Evin detainees remain unknown, raising serious concerns about possible enforced disappearances.”

The statement warns that Iran must not revert to the dark pattern of widespread post-conflict repression.



## IRAN EXECUTED AT LEAST 975 PEOPLE IN 2024, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL SAYS IN HIS REPORT TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL



On Friday, 21st June 2025, the United Nations presented a concerning picture of the human rights situation in Iran in its latest report. According to the report, Iran has recorded one of the worst human rights records in the past year due to a high rate of executions, increased arbitrary arrests, torture, severe restrictions on freedom of expression and the repression of minorities. The UN Secretary-General and other senior officials have called on the international community to respond appropriately and pressure Iran to end its human rights violations.

According to **António Guterres'** report presented to the UN Human Rights Council, Iran executed at least 975 people in 2024; a significant increase compared to 834 executions in 2023 and the highest number since 2015.

The report highlights that some of these executions were carried out publicly.

Experts see the variety of charges and the opaque judicial procedures as evidence of systematic violations of the right to life and the right to a fair trial in Iran.

The UN report also noted a sharp increase in the execution of women in Iran. At least 31 women were executed in 2024, up from 22 the previous year.

Many of these women were convicted in cases involving domestic violence, forced marriage or child marriage. Among them, nine women were hanged for killing their husbands, often in the context of prolonged domestic abuse. From a human rights perspective, this represents a gross violation of gender justice and disregard for international standards protecting women subjected to violence.

A significant portion of the report focuses on the execution and suppression of protesters linked to the popular uprising following the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022. According to the UN Human Rights Office, several executed individuals were connected to the nationwide protests against the ruling dictatorship.

These executions took place despite prior warnings from human rights organisations about the lack of fair trial standards in these cases, further raising alarm over widespread human rights violations in Iran.

The UN has also warned that ethnic minorities have been disproportionately targeted for harsh punishment and execution: at least 108 of those executed were Baluch citizens; at least 84 were Kurdish prisoners.

According to UN experts, this data reflects systematic discrimination and human rights violations against ethnic minorities in Iran.

Another section of the Secretary-General's report

points to increased instances of arbitrary detention and the widespread use of torture in detention centres.

The UN Human Rights Office states that many trials fell short of legal standards and fair procedures, constituting serious human rights violations.

Severe restrictions on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly continue. In 2024, at least 125 journalists in Iran were prosecuted for their media work, including 40 women who were summoned or even arrested for publishing critical reports.

The UN Human Rights Office has stressed that such repressive actions violate Iran's international obligations and are clear breaches of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.



**Nada Al-Nashif**, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, urged the Iranian regime to immediately halt all executions as a step toward respecting human rights.

She further called on the international community to apply effective diplomatic pressure to stop human rights violations in Iran, particularly the executions and suppression of protesters.



## LETTER FROM WOMEN PRISONERS TRANSFERRED FROM EVIN



On Tuesday, 24th of June in the morning, under tight security restrictions, we, the women of Evin, were transferred to Qarchak Prison in Varamin, while approximately three thousand male prisoners were moved to Greater Tehran Prison. Although our conditions have worsened since the transfer, we declare, in solidarity with our comrades and brothers in Greater Tehran who are also under attack and pressure, that these current circumstances will not hinder our struggle. Because we know that “this is not a path where one reaches the destination without retribution”.

From the Constitutional Revolution to the present, through wars, anti-people coups, massacres of defenceless citizens and political dissidents at the hands of authoritarian regimes over the past century – through all these ups and downs, the path of struggle has continued.

Today, we are in Qarchak Prison, facing the same conditions that thousands of women with various charges have endured and lived with for years. Women from the depths of society, whose eyes

bear the silent imprints of their suffering – testimonies to the injustices they have wandered through, which we now walk this path to overcome. These are the discarded at the edge of the world – excluded from life’s equations, news reports, and media waves – whose names and stories go unmentioned in human rights reports.

What has stunned us in recent days is the brutal reality of these women’s lives: women hunched over in beds no bigger than graves, yearning for the most basic necessities of life and hygiene. Within filthy, crusted walls built from years of squalor, many of them, with not a single rial in their accounts, are forced to barter themselves to their cellmates – exploited, sexually and otherwise – for the price of a daily cigarette. They endure humiliation for a piece of bread, for a taste of what their hearts ache for. They work in the prison labour units, pushing food and garbage carts or cleaning the guards’ restrooms, not for wages, but for a few extra minutes on the phone. In the prison workshop, they are used as forced labour, sewing and stitching to earn a single pack of cigarettes by the

end of the day.

These are the very women whom political prisoners like us are usually kept away from – except when the authorities wish to punish or exile us. And now, although we are housed separately from them in Qarchak, our suffering is not separate from theirs.

Alongside the people’s tireless struggle against dictatorship, with clear goals and firm principles, we will continue our resistance until tyranny in all its forms is overthrown. Standing beside these forgotten women – cast out from the cycle of life – with greater resolve than ever, we recommit to resistance. And to those who raise their voices for us and our dire conditions, we say even louder: what has been imposed on us today is not greater than the suffering these women have endured for years.

So, work to improve our conditions – regardless of our charges. Work to improve our conditions – those of us now in Qarchak and Greater Tehran – regardless of our gender. And know this: those who are still missing under the rubble of the attack, and those discarded by this merciless system, deserve your attention even more than we do.

Let us be one link in the long chain of struggles for equality and freedom – a struggle the people of Iran have carried forward for over a century against oppression and exploitation.



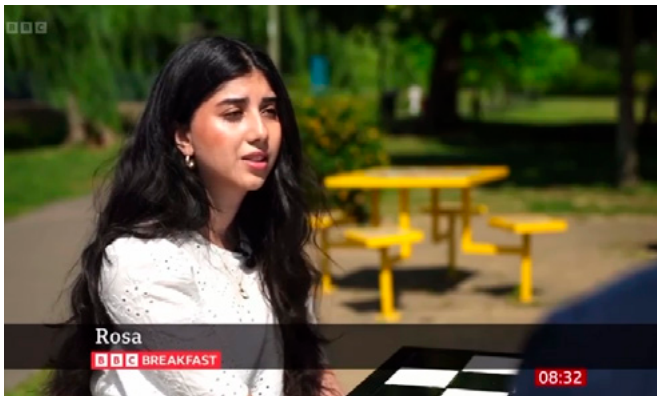
## BBC BREAKFAST NEWS INTERVIEW WITH ILA VOLUNTEERS



The BBC Breakfast show interviewed two ILA volunteers about the effects of Israel's bombing campaign against Iran. Here is the text of that section of the program:

**Ben Thompson (BT):** Good morning, it's just after 8:30 and ten days since Israel began its attack on Iran, prompting many British Iranians to fear for the safety of friends and family.

**Sally Nugent:** With regular internet blackouts it's been even harder for people here in the UK to contact their loved ones. Our reporter Vincent McAviney (VM) has been speaking to some of them.



**Rosa:** My name is Rosa, I'm 23 years old, and although I was born in London my entire family is still in Iran



**VM:** Rosa and her parents are refugees. Communication with families still in Iran has been intermittent but we have received some footage.

So this is on the street in Tehran.

**Rosa:** Yeah.

**VM:** And then rockets start firing.

**Rosa:** Yeah. It was 2 a.m. when my cousin called my father to say that Israel has attacked us, and she lives in Tehran, and just to get that call was absolutely horrifying

knowing that there's nothing for us to do.

**VM:** What do you think the world should be doing for the Iranian people now?

**Rosa:** I don't think that the US is going to free the Iranian people, I do not believe that Israel is going to free the Iranian people, but only the Iranian people are able to do this. We have said no to this religious dictatorship, we have said no to the past dictatorship, we want the Iranian people to be able to choose for themselves.



**Zohreh:** My name is Zohreh and I am 64 years old. I am from the north-west of Iran, a city called Zanjaan.

**BT:** Zohreh was a political prisoner before escaping to the UK with her husband, 36 years ago. She's campaigned since against what she describes as appeasement of the regime.

**VM:** There is a possibility that you might be able to return if the regime falls. How would you feel about taking a flight to Tehran?

**Zohreh:** This is something that I dream every single day. This is something that – it's my country, I have lost so many of my family: my dad, my sister, but I have hope that, you know, one day soon we'll be able to go back to the country this time, to go not for the revenge, not for the hatred but for rebuilding the country, for bringing the democracy and freedom.



## WIDESPREAD DEPORTATION OF AFGHAN REFUGEES



According to reports from the Red Cross and UNHCR, over 1.2 million Afghans have been deported or forced to return from Iran since the beginning of 2025. Following the Iran–Israel conflict, this trend intensified, with sources reporting that the number of returns surged to around 30,000 per day.

Persian-language media also reported that more than 230,000 refugees were sent back to Afghanistan within just a few days. Many were forced to leave in extreme heat, separated from their families, and without the opportunity to take their belongings.

Iranian military officials issued directives for the expulsion of Afghan nationals, including the invalidation of rental agreements signed by Afghan tenants. Property owners were forced to evict them, and official documents were seized by authorities.

Numerous reports have documented the separation of children from parents, confiscation of property, termination of residence permits, and forced evictions with no time to gather personal belongings.

Videos circulated online

show long queues at border crossings, people walking under extreme heat without aid, and reports of deaths, mockery, and systemic discrimination, all of which highlight the inhuman conditions faced by Afghan refugees.

Iran has been a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention since 1976 and, under international obligations, is prohibited from sending refugees to regions where their life or freedom may be at risk.

However, reports indicate that Iran has carried out forced deportations without proper assessments or security guarantees, in clear violation of this principle.

The people of Sistan and

Baluchestan, one of Iran's most deprived and oppressed provinces, have stepped up to support Afghan refugees.

Despite their own hardships, local residents are doing everything they can to provide water, food, and basic assistance to Afghan refugees who have been abandoned by the Iranian regime without any support.

Their solidarity and humanitarian spirit stand in stark contrast to the government's harsh and discriminatory actions.

In summary, following the conflict with Israel, the Iranian government exploited the situation to suppress domestic dissent and internal security challenges by devastating the lives of hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees: making baseless accusations against Afghans, branding them as spies and carrying out mass, unlawful deportations with humiliating and abusive treatment.

This is blatant violation of international law and refugee rights. As a result of these policies, thousands of families have been displaced, children separated from their parents, and the mental and physical well-being of countless refugees severely endangered.





## NEWS IN BRIEF

### THE GLOBAL NEED TO ADDRESS IRAN'S HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS



The recent UN report once again confirms the widespread and systematic violations of human rights in Iran. Mass executions, discrimination against minorities, suppression of free speech, arbitrary arrests and torture are among the documented abuses.

If these conditions persist, Iran risks increasing international isolation. Human rights organisations have repeatedly emphasised that an immediate halt to executions, judicial reform, respect for civil liberties, and adherence to human rights must top the list of demands from the ruling dictatorship in Iran.

Given the global concern over Iran's human rights situation, targeted sanctions and increased legal and diplomatic pressure may serve as effective tools to stop the cycle of violence and abuse. Without urgent reform, human rights violations in Iran will remain one of the world's most serious crises.

### FAMILIES OF POLITICAL PRISONERS SPEAK OUT AGAINST EXECUTIONS IN IRAN



As Iran marked the 76th week of the nationwide “No to Execution Tuesdays” campaign, the voices of political

prisoners, the families of political prisoners and protesting citizens once again rose in unison – echoing through streets, public squares and from behind prison bars. What began as a grassroots initiative has now become one of the most resilient forms of resistance in the face of Iran's

repressive regime.

On Tuesday, 8th July 2025, families of political prisoners gathered in public spaces and circulated videos on social media, demanding an immediate halt to executions and the release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

In one widely-shared video, the families of **Vahid Bani-Amerian** and **Pouya Ghobadi** – two political prisoners sentenced to death – held placards reading “No to Execution”, “Free Political Prisoners” and “Stop the Executions” while condemning the inhumane conditions in prisons such as Fashafouyeh. Their message was clear: “No to executions. Stop the killing. Free all political prisoners. Support No to Execution Tuesdays.”

### NEW CHARGES AND RETRIAL OF ALI YOUNESI AND AMIRHOSSEIN MORADI

A court session to address new and baseless charges against **Ali Younesi** and **Amirhossein Moradi**, two imprisoned students from Sharif University, was held on 19 July. Amirhossein was brought to the courtroom in handcuffs and shackles, while Ali Younesi was not transferred to



the court, prompting objections from his lawyers. However, regime officials refused to allow

his presence. Aida Younesi, his sister, expressed concern over the family's lack of contact with him for the past 21 days.

According to reports, Younesi is being held under harsh conditions in a high-security ward of the Greater Tehran Prison. These two students were previously sentenced to a total of 10 years in prison following the Iranian people's protests and their opposition to the regime. This sentence was later reduced by the Supreme Court to six years and eight months.

Ali Younesi and Amirhossein Moradi, both medallists in the National Astronomy Olympiad, were arrested in April 2020 by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence. Their families have rejected the charges, and the judicial process in their case has faced widespread human rights criticism.



## ILA ACTIVISTS IN GENEVA

During the Saturday Zoom session 'An Hour With ILA', two volunteers who were in Geneva the previous week spoke about their experience. Here are excerpts of their talk.

**Rosa:** Hello, everyone, it's so nice to see so many familiar faces. As was just said, I wanted to take a moment to share something really important with all of you, something that is genuinely possible because of the support and strength we get in this community. Recently, me



and Amir and a few other young activists had the opportunity to go to the United Nations and we went there with a focus of talking about the rise of executions in Iran. The time that we went was when the war [with Israel] was at peak, and because of that there was an increase in executions because there was not only an internet blackout but a media blackout, and in the absence of information so much can be hidden, and that's exactly what had been happening and day by day as we were waking up in Switzerland and the second I got on my phone I'd see how many new people had been executed without trial. And therefore while we were in the UN we were able to join panels, attend discussions and we were actually able to speak with quite a few diplomats and ambassadors and we told them exactly what's happening, not just the headlines but first-hand stories and facts.

**Amir:** Hi, guys. So, thank you so much for having me in this beautiful Zoom meeting. So as Rosa said, this summer we went to the United Nations, we had the great opportunity to attend the United Nations Human Rights Council, in Geneva of course, and it was an incredibly eye-opening and humbling experience. So during our time there we spoke directly with, as Rosa said, several diplomats, including representatives from Portugal, Belgium and Lithuania. We focused our conversations on the current sharp rise in executions in Iran, and especially during the ongoing war, as Rosa did mention, there was a lot of executions happening because, you know, there was no media, no internet, lack of communication with the outside world, so this gave the regime the perfect opportunity to kill people secretly, under [false accusations of] them being Israeli spies.

**Join ILA's Mehregan (Autumn) Celebration**  
**Saturday 13 September from 14:00 to 19:00**

**ILEC Conference Centre, 47 Lillie Road, London SW6 1UD**

**RSVP: [info@iliberty.org.uk](mailto:info@iliberty.org.uk) or call 020 8452 3481**