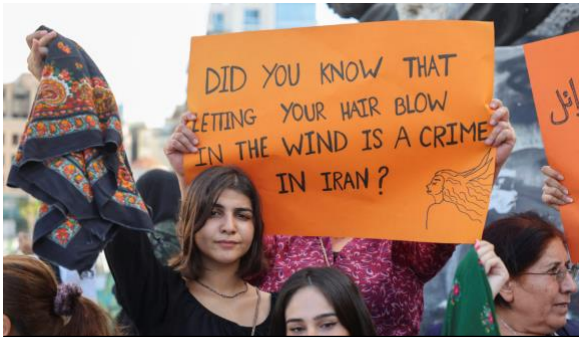


FORUM:	Security Council
ISSUE:	Situation in Iran
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Introduction

On September 13, 2022, 22-year-old Mahsa Amini was detained by Iran’s Morality Police for having supposedly breached Iran’s directive regarding women’s headscarf attire. Three days after her detention on September 16, she was confirmed deceased at a hospital in Tehran. Reports from Iranian



Iranian women protest the brutalities of Iran’s strict penal code enforcing the hijab via a protest.

security forces publicized the case, dogmatically linking her death to natural causes. However, convinced that police had callously beaten Amini to her decease while refraining from disclose truthful accounts of her autopsy, Iranian demonstrators took to the streets to protest the brutalities of the notorious Morality Police that had struck fear in the lives of its citizens for decades following the rise of the Iranian Republic. Amini’s death would soon

ignite a cacophonous battle for the gaining of women’s rights in Iran and eventually become one of the most supported movements in four decades of Iran’s history involving political and social activism.

Women and youth activists took to the streets to outwardly question Iran’s misogynistic and radical frameworks of the Iranian government that have degraded the rights of women since the abolishment of its secular monarchy, flagrantly exemplified through its myriad legislation. Public outcry from national personnel has been deemed immensely impactful despite restrictive media barricades enforced by the Iranian government, as protests began to emerge in areas outside of the pertaining premise of Iran; women from around the world explicitly addressed their opposition against the totalitarian regime for its crimes against women by burning their headscarves, followed by a rash cutting of their hair in public arenas. Protests have only begun to escalate as increasingly greater populaces are reminded of Iran’s unpleasant history entailing negligence to the social discontent of its citizens during times of national precariousness. Such a topical uprising serves as a clear reflection of the current state of Iran’s government marginalizing not only women but also smaller minority groups, further underscoring the nation’s crises attributable to its severe national instability, mass bigotry, and humanitarian suppression.



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Background

The Iranian (Islamic) Revolution of 1979

The Iranian or Islamic Revolution marked a turning point for Iran in terms of its divide of power, as the parliament underwent an exhaustive change after the overthrowing of the Pahlavi dynasty - prompted by social discontent with the autocratic rulings of the Shah of the time - to establish the current Islamic Republic through a movement governed by the late supreme leader Ruhollah Khomeini. The revolution aimed to call upon reformative measures in Iran by upending the constitution by means of abdicating and/ or overthrowing of the despotic monarchy of the time. Initially, the movement received immense approval from the general public as they believed that the monarch remained completely insensitive to the interests of its people.

“Undemocratic Democracy”

After the abolishment of its once heavily secular Westernized monarchy, Iran adopted a system involving frameworks of both democratic and theocratic ruling, defining itself as an Islamic republic operating through a mixed government



Image taken during one of the largest protests during the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

united under one legislative house. The Iranian Revolution introduced democratic characteristics to its political realms through the establishment of an electoral system where people were permitted to vote for presidential candidates. However, despite the creation of new, democratic seatings in the parliament, the divine supreme leader remained as the individual with the utmost power over every aspect of the nation’s legislative assembly, responsible for electing almost every other member of the nation’s affiliated councils including the Guardian Council and Chief of Justice. Because of this mixed government that favors an unelected, homogeneous minority by granting them limitless authority to represent the entirety of the Iranian populace, certain minority groups have been stripped of their social and/ or political voices. This has been blatantly demonstrated in the system’s new legislation resulting from its imperious stances that hegemonize women and minorities in Iran; polygamy became a licit practice, wives lost the ability to file for divorce, and the hijab became an obligatory piece of attire, all of which became the ultimate corollaries of the Iranian Revolution, and the current crises present in the regime. The democratic façade



with overpowering tones of theocracy and totalitarianism ultimately led to the higher councils establishing the Guidance Patrol, otherwise more known as the Morality Police, who are notoriously known to resort to myriad forms of unnecessarily harmful brute force against even the most minor infringements of the law.

Presidential Election of 2021

The presidential election of 2021 stirred an international frenzy over the regime’s fragrant silencing of moderately reformist to reformist candidates running for the presidential role. International reports suggest that all candidates representing even the slightest of progressive stances and/ or political presences (such as that of repealing the rights of women and minorities through amendments to its current legislation) were mysteriously eliminated from partaking in even the most preliminary stages of the presidential elections.

Past Protests

The recent protests involving the death of Amini are undoubtedly not Iran’s first mass demonstration dissenting from the opinions of the higher court of Iran after the rise of its theocracy. Mass protests involving human rights violations have been conducted in the past by youth activists; in response to such uproar, the government has been consistently successful in suppressing voices alternative to their own through sadistic forms of physical force from Morality Police. Maintained by a report published between September and October of 2022 by Iran’s Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), around 13500 individuals were arrested, 575 individual protests were held, 119 cities were involved, and 252 individuals, including children, were brutally massacred during that one-month period. Many compare such momentum of protests to that of the 1979 revolution that was successful in completely reshaping Iran’s leadership.

Death of Mahsa Amini/ “Woman, Life, Freedom” (Zan, Zendegi, Azadi)



“Women, Life Freedom” Protests

Amini was detained in the Voxara Detention Center by Morality Police for her alleged loose wearing of the hijab. Surprisingly, she was pronounced deceased three days after her arrest, for what authorities believed was due to a coma and/ or prior health conditions.

However, her family denied all accusations of Amini possessing any underlying illness, allowing them to strike the initial flames for the current situation in Iran

involving the annulment of laws that encroach on the rights of Iranian women. The “Women, Life,



Freedom” (Zan, Zendegi, Azadi) slogan of Kurdish origins has been widely used in recent protests that were sparked after the death of Amini and other female activists. “Women, Life, Freedom” possesses no intentions of presenting itself as an Anti-Islam or Anti-Hijab movement; the protest’s collective motive strives to bring Iranian women closer to the ideas of choice and self-agency that have been confiscated since the rise of the Iranian republic. This entails one’s access to fair education, freedom, and the choice to wear or not wear a non-obligatory hijab.

Problems Raised

Gender Discrimination

One of the most fundamental impetuses for the uprising of recent protests in Iran involves the breaching of women’s rights; due to religious backgrounds, women have been continually excluded from major opportunities and freedoms enjoyed by their male counterparts. Fundamentally, Iran has remained scandalous in terms of its distribution and formation of power within its parliamentary divide, where all deliberative practices revolve around not only a male supreme leader but also an entire council consisting of male chauvinists. It is thus most evident to claim that Iran has maintained a dominantly patriarchal system of governance that is then able to dismiss laws that relegate patriarchal authority and adopt new ones that deem analogous to their homogenous political stances. Gender discrimination exists in myriad forms within Iran, many of which are linked to laws purposefully enacted after the 1979 revolution that ruthlessly violate the privacies, self-agencies, and human prerogatives of women in Iranian society. Such forms of ill-treatment and prejudice are revealed through legislation (obligatory hijab, civil code, no legal protection from forms of violence including but not limited to domestic violence and sexual assault, restrictions on employment opportunities, the lack of right to file for divorce with custody of one’s child and many more) that have been selfishly ratified by an unelected, patriarchal council. Other forms of gender discrimination lie in the retribution that may proceed with crimes categorized under the civil code, which at most times involve unnecessary forms of violence induced by police officials such as stoning and lashes to the back.

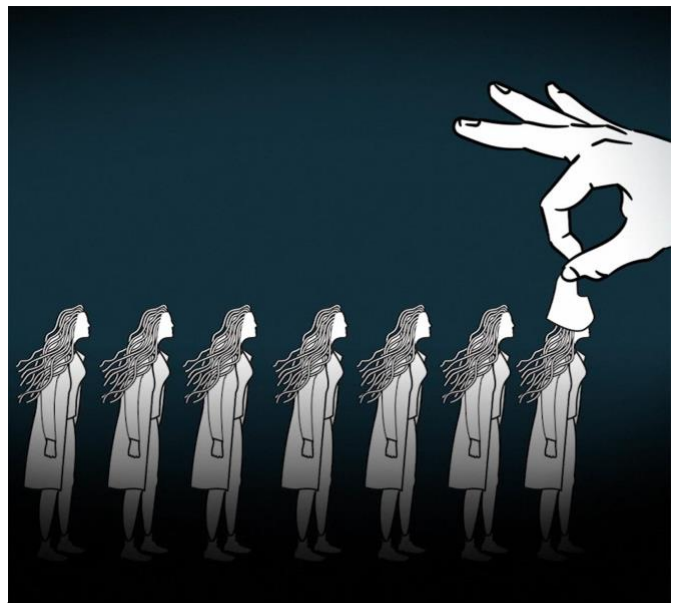


Illustration that depicts the oppressiveness of Iran’s notorious penal code that enforces the wearing of an obligatory hijab.



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Harsh punitive measures

As mentioned previously, Iran's Morality Police is notorious for coming up as violent and callous in any circumstance revolving around punishment and retribution of individuals. Harsh punishments do not only pertain to vulnerable communities; all individuals are subject to violent punishment. Recently, protesters of the women's rights movement in Iran have become targets of punitive measurements by authorities, in which authorities practice political repression of reformists employing legal executions and death sentences.

Lack of free expression and severe media censorship

The political suppression of reformist groups by Iranian cyber police through media censorships and active censorships (punitive measures conducted in public arenas) has significantly degraded the lives of



Iranian woman in Turkey cuts her own hair in means to protest against the brutalities of the Iranian regime.

Iranian civilians. The idea of censorship does not only pertain to certain portrayals or publications of material that go against the objectives of the Iranian regime and its relevant parties, but it also pertains to how people are physically suppressed through retribution including violence, detainment, and execution. Youth activists, despite risking

their lives to present their dissent against the practices of the regime, are at severe risk of facing life-threatening situations; the Iranian police have been successful in repressing such views that call for the government's rectification through such persistent mechanisms of abused power.

International Actions

International bodies have previously attempted to bring reform to Iran's myriad sectors of crisis. One of the biggest actions that took place in an attempt to reduce and ultimately cease the progression of its nuclear program, a hefty economic sanction was imposed by the United Nations Security Council, which led to an immense diminution of its gross domestic product. Not only have sanctions been levied on Iran's most lucrative business sectors, but nations like the United Kingdom have also attempted to impose sanctions directly on entities that violate human rights; such entities range from senior judicial officials to cyber police. In response to Amini's death, the European Union has also recently taken action

by sanctioning individuals involved, including one of the largest state-owned broadcasting platforms in Iran.

Key Players

The Center for Human Rights in Iran

Unlike many independent organizations that have received immense scrutiny over the verity of their motives and possibly Anti-Islam and neo-Khomeinist intentions, the Center for Human Rights in Iran has served as one of the world's most expansive platforms that assist journalists and publish realistic, in-depth reports consisting of nonpartisan analyses on human rights issues present in Iranian communities. The



A section on the official website of The Center of Human Rights in Iran.

impartial non-profit stationed in New York closely works with branches of the United Nations to share factual recounts for research and wider

dissemination, social media executives to better convey information on an international level, and other relevant NGOs striving for similar goals of reform. Press leases have been frequent, and the organization's reach has been immensely impactful. It is probable that such press leasing, journalist-encouraging non-profits will play a significant role in heightening global cognizance of human rights issues in Iran.

European Union (EU) & United States Congress

The European Union and the United States Congress have worked in a similar fashion to distort the regime's authoritarian take on power through sanctions. Such sanctions have been imposed to confront officials about their human rights violations yet have recently sparked debate internationally for their deleterious effects on other sectors of Iran, such as the environment. Nevertheless, both organizations seek to abolish forms of gender discrimination, political suppression, and acts of violence in Iran.

Islamic Republic of Iran

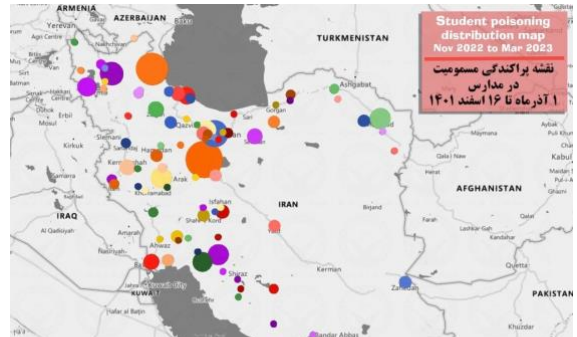
The Islamic Republic of Iran is the most instrumental player in the recent situation occurring over human rights violations. Iran has occasionally been held accountable by international authorities for its inability and blatantly breaches political and/ or economic promises between member states such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union. Treaties have been occasionally dismissed and ignored even upon agreement in the past; this includes completely disregarding recommendations and urges made by international communities regarding the repeal of human rights and gender equality



Possible Solutions

An organization that focuses on smaller, regional initiatives

Despite the unity of member nations that already operate independently to deliver their own courses of action to ameliorate current situations in Iran, a separate branch or branches under the close monitoring of a UN body could potentially be established between member nations to better focus on smaller and/ or regional initiatives. Maintained by recent reports, protests have been arising not only in the capital city Tehran but also in



Example of regional investigation on the situation of human rights in Iran (e.g. cases of student poisoning in 2022-2023 shown via regional distribution)

other regional premises such as that of Arak, Karaj, Isfahan, and more; this calls upon the need to better establish branches or to assign capable personnel to regional sectors to not only monitor but report life happenings. Smaller organizations may work towards other endeavors through the establishment of different roles within the committee, such as those that analyze the retrieved data of their correspondent counterparts to better devise solutions in a more efficient and time-suited manner to achieve better negotiation over future courses of action as a smaller regional body.

Accountability Mechanisms and Concessions

One may suggest that direct, forceful mechanisms should be directed in order to appease the works of the parliamentary body governing Iran; such examples would include direct announcements from formidable international bodies like the United Nations, urging the nation to adhere to the words of the international body. Such “direct” forms of ultimatums have been administered to some extent in the past through media, in which news outlets would wear down opposing Iranian authorities by attrition, portraying Iranian society in the most degrading and unfathomable ways possible. This tactic, referred to as “demonization” or “othering”, intends to convince a heavily peremptory group of individuals through the spread of content, information, and titles that adversely affect their public image. Despite such “benevolent” ideations, consistent forms of demonization of Iran have instead hurt myriad relations, predominantly in the United States. International relations and history professor at Boston University Andrew Bacevich stated how the United States’ perpetual inclination to “classify Iran as an evil power” (Andrew Bacevich) has deterred significant progress in finding plausible means of recovery for Iran. This example calls for the removal of such techniques and simultaneously encourages international bodies to embrace more logical and straightforward settlement that addresses specific issues head on. Such forms



of resolution may include establishing accountability mechanisms in myriad sectors of Iranian society (e.g. human rights violations, freedom of expression, gender discrimination) that avoid eliciting unwanted effects on Iranian citizens while being distinct enough to enforce time frames and frequent updates of change directly from Iranian government. Subsequently, such a solution may include adding greater stringency and exactness to existing forms accountability mechanisms while refraining from tactics that completely debase the country in a negative light. New concessions and an incentives system may be established between Iran and member states to ensure maintenance of change in the long term.

International/ External Forum



Protest in Turkey calls for deeper and truthful investigation into the death of Mahsa Amini.

Concerning the idea of “demonization of the Iranian Regime”, another aspect that delegates should consider is the use of an external council that monitors activity in private settings while abstaining from public belittlement as a form of warning. Such a forum could meet in private settings to discuss progress of changes in regional initiatives, review solutions and their outcomes, and devise future mechanisms for rectification. Additionally, external

forums or councils may be responsible for executing impartial investigations into the death of Mahsa Amini that has been concealed by Iranian forces.

Observers and Journalists

One overlooked yet potentially constructive strategy to gradually remedy issues concerning human rights in Iran is the act of encouraging greater coverage of realistic and actual observations and reporting of current and the most temporal issues happening in Iran. More extensive international coverage of issues such as examples of human rights violations, war crimes, and unnecessary forms of violence by police, on mass media publications with the assistance of relevant NGOs that have pre-existing relations with branches of the United Nations in order to quickly distribute relevant information, especially those of live updates or of emergencies. In addition to better heightening cognizance of the severities and realities of such problems that Iranian civilians must endure, the dissemination of information on a larger scale supported by evidence from observers will likely allow for connected international bodies to quickly respond to new threats against relevant personnel.

Glossary

Sharia



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Sharia is defined as an Islamic concept classified as the sacred law; it serves as the backbone for Iran's current court system.

Supreme Leader

The Supreme Leader refers to the most powerful official who possesses both sacred and constitutional power over the Iranian regime.

Guardian Council

The Guardian Council is an unelected 12-man group that decides parliamentary endeavors alongside the Chief Justice and Supreme Leader for the people of Iran. Half of the council is elected by the Chief Justice while the other is elected by the Supreme Leader himself. They are notoriously known for rejecting reformist bills that attempt to repeal women's rights in Iran.

Morality Police

The Morality Police refers to Iran's central police branch responsible for executing religious obedience analogous to the Sharia (or alternative branches of Sharia).



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