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Rape and Torture Victims Face Renewed Risk After Documents Detailing Abuse Are Confiscated, Says Amnesty International Human Rights Organization Seeks Assurances of Victims' Safety

(**New York**) -- Victims of rape and other torture by Iranian security forces face renewed risk after documents detailing abuses against them were confiscated, Irene Khan, Amnesty International's Secretary General, said today, urging Iran's supreme leader to ensure the victims' safety and hold the perpetrators to account.

"The Supreme Leader must intervene and ensure that there is no cover up of the grave abuses committed against those who challenge the official election result," said Khan. "He must ensure that victims of rape, torture and other abuses are fully protected against reprisals or further abuse at the hands of those who tortured them."

On Monday, judiciary officials removed computers, files and other records and closed down the offices of a committee set up by opposition political leader Mehdi Karroubi, one of four permitted candidates in the June presidential election, to collect information about torture and other abuses committed against detainees held for protesting the election's official outcome.

The committee has accused the security forces of raping and torturing people detained for protesting the official election result; it is reported to have recently submitted information to a parliamentary committee set up to investigate abuses. The seized records would allow the judicial authorities to identify former detainees who were prepared to speak on a confidential basis due to their fear of reprisals and the shocking nature of their ordeal.

Judicial officials also closed down the office of the Association for the Defense of Prisoners Rights, established by human rights activist Emadeddin Baghi, which had also been compiling information on the torture and abuse of detainees.

"The Iranian authorities appear to be more intent on finding the identities of those who claim to have been tortured by security officials than in carrying out an impartial investigation so that the perpetrators can be brought to justice," said Khan.

Amnesty International has urged Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei to invite international experts, such as United Nations special rapporteurs, to carry out an independent inquiry in Iran.

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