

INTERNATIONAL  
CONVENTION  
ON THE ELIMINATION  
OF ALL FORMS OF  
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION



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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION  
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Twenty-seventh session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES  
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Seventh periodic reports of States parties due in 1982

Addendum

IRAN 1/

[30 September 1982]

Preamble

The country of Iran has since long, been the abode and dwelling place of various nations, peoples and sects with different races and religions. In the course of the History of Iran, the said peoples have always lived with each other in peace and tranquility, and the central government has treated all its subjects indiscriminately. In all its edicts and orders to the local governors, representatives and satraps, the central government has instructed and emphasized on the observance of their human rights and the respect for their dignity and honour.

The present status of different racial and religious groups existing in Iran reflects this reality and friendly and indiscriminative historical record that the question of racial segregation has never existed in Iran. The Government of Iran, however, due to the commitments it had undertaken on the basis of Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, passed July 1977 the law on the punishment of the propagation of racial segregation. This law is still in force, but no one has so far been prosecuted for this offence due to the non-existence of any racial hostility or conflicts.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the law makers paid careful and emphatic attention to this important fact and took it into consideration when preparing the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and deemed its observance as binding and indispensable.

1/ For previous reports submitted by the Government of Iran and the summary records of meetings of the Committee at which such reports were considered, see:

- (1) Initial report - CERD/C/R.3/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.31, 33 and 56);
- (2) Second periodic report - CERD/C/R.30/Add.3, Add.39 and Add.45  
(CERD/C/SR.127 and 179);
- (3) Third periodic report - CERD/C/R.70/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.179);
- (4) Fourth periodic report - CERD/C/R.90/Add.2 (CERD/C/SR.279);
- (5) Fifth periodic report - CERD/C/20/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.371);
- (6) Sixth periodic report - CERD/C/66/Add.5 (CERD/C/SR.472).

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Paragraph C, Principle 2 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran provides for the elimination of all forms of oppression, exploitation, domination and being dominated, and is of this opinion that justice and equity, and political, economic, social and cultural independence ensure the national solidarity.

The Third Paragraph of Principle 3, provides for the free education and physical training for everybody at all levels as well as the facilitating and generalizing the higher education.

The Eighth Paragraph stipulates the participation of the public in the determination of their own political, economic, social and cultural destiny.

The Ninth Paragraph provides for the elimination of unjust discriminations and the ensuring of all people the equitable possibilities in all material and spiritual fields.

The Fourteenth Paragraph provides for the ensuring of all-encompassing rights of individuals, men and women, and just legal security for everybody as well as the equality of all the people before the law.

Principle 28 of the Constitution reads that the government is bound to provide, with due regard to the need of the society to different professions, all the people with possibility of employment and equal conditions to get employed.

According to Principle 29, it is the right of everybody to benefit from the social security in cases of retirement, unemployment, old age, disablement, unprotectedness, running short of one's money while being away on a journey, accidents, the need to health and treatment services and medical care, in the form of insurance and the like. The Government is bound to provide the individual people of the country with the foregoing services and financial assistance to be financed from the public revenues and the income derived from public participation.

On the basis of Principle 30, the Government is bound to provide the means of free education until the completion of the high school for the whole nation and to expand the means of free higher studies until the attainment by the country to self-sufficiency.

In accordance with Principle 34, it is the inalienable right of any individual to seek justice, and refer to competent courts to plead. All individuals are entitled to have such courts to which, according to law, they are entitled to recourse.

Besides, in connection with religious minorities, mention should be made that the religion of Islam has a deep respect for other religions, and considers the observance of rights and dignity and free conducting of religious rites and duties of other divine religions and sects as respected. Principles 13, 14, 15 and 19, among other important principles of the Constitution, provides for the preservation of the rights of the religious minorities, the contents of which are explained for information.

## Principles on the Rights of Religious Minorities

Principle 13: The Zoroasterian, Jewish and Christian Iranians shall be the sole recognized religious minorities that are free to perform, in accordance with law, their religious rights and act in compliance with their religion as far as their personal status and religious teachings are concerned.

Principle 14: As specified in the Munificent verse of the Glorious Koran: "Allah does not forbid you to show kindness to and deal justly with those who did not war against you on account of your religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Allah loves the just dealers", the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Muslims are bound to deal with non-Muslim individuals with good morals and Islamic justice and equity and respect their human rights. The present principle applies only to those who do not conspire and act against Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Principle 15: The state and common language and script of Iran is Persian. Official documents, correspondence and texts and school books shall be written in this language and script. However, the use of local and ethnic languages in the press and mass media and the teaching of their literature in schools, along with Persian, is allowed.

Principle 19: The people of Iran, belonging to any ethnic or tribal group, shall enjoy equal rights and colour, race, language and the like shall not be considered as a privilege.

On the basis of these principles religious minorities are free to practise their religion and teach their rituals through the religious instruction books they teach in school. The Constitution binds the Muslims to respect the religious minorities. The non-Muslims similar to Muslims should enjoy Islamic justice and equity.

Religious minorities have independent publications peculiar to themselves, the number of which has, after the victory of the Revolution, increased several times by comparison to what existed before the Revolution.

For the implementation of the above principles, the Ministry of Islamic Guidance has created a unit to deal with the affairs of the religious minorities.

This section is charged with the duty of investigating and settling the difficulties of the minorities, satisfying their cultural needs and facilitating their religious ceremonies. This section extends its assistance to official religious minorities in the following cases:

1. Participation of the members of the official religious minorities in religious conferences held abroad to which they are invited.
2. Inviting non-Iranian missionaries needed by religious minorities for the performance of their religious ceremonies.
3. Provision, from abroad, of religious books and pamphlets needed by the religious minorities as requested by them.
4. Provision of the necessary facilities for the performance of their national and religious ceremonies on various occasions.
5. Facilitating the visit of the foreign leaders and personalities of the religious minorities to their Iranian coreligionists.

To sum up, this section has the duty to endeavour to establish a closer relationship between Muslims and Iranian religious minorities and their coreligionists abroad and the creation of understanding between Muslims and religious minorities, and that the religious minorities too, may enjoy Islamic justice and equity.

#### Statistics of the Religious Minorities

For the time being there are about 60,000 Jews, 20,000 Zoroasterians, 110,000 Armenians and 30,000 Assyrians living with their Muslim fellow-countrymen in Iran.

The population statistics of the country divided on the basis of sex and age in different urban and rural regions as well as the population of Iran divided on the basis of different religions are given in the following tables. As regards the activities of foreign workers in Iran, the attention of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is drawn to this fact that no racial discrimination is exercised as far as the employment of foreign specialists is concerned.

1. For the time being, there are 14,180 foreign nationals working in Iran who have work permits. Out of this number, 11,942 persons, because of the form of ownership of the workshop, work in the public sector, and 2,238 persons in the private sector, which are separately shown in Table No. 1.

2. Out of 14,180 foreign workers, 10,083 people are from Asia, 5,016 people from Europe, 31 people from America (the continent), 30 people from Africa and 21 people from Australia, as shown separately for each country, in Table No.2.

3. Out of the 14,180 foreign nationals working in Iran, there are 61 religious missionaries, 24 persons of whom are Roman Catholic, 29 persons are Chaldaic, 6 persons are Armenians and 2 persons are Zoroasterian missionaries.

The work permit of these persons have been issued and extended as confirmed by the Ministry of National Guidance.

Rural population			Urban population			Total population of the country			Age group
Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	
8 789 168	9 664 896	17 854 064	7 563 229	8 291 451	15 854 680	16 352 397	17 356 347	33 708 744	Total
1 538 111	1 701 342	3 239 453	1 066 658	1 236 011	2 190 259	2 604 769	2 824 943	5 429 712	4-0
1 455 155	1 584 934	3 040 089	1 086 388	1 150 056	2 236 444	2 541 543	2 734 990	5 276 533	9-5
1 072 014	1 160 565	2 232 579	972 469	1 098 070	2 070 539	2 044 483	2 258 635	4 303 118	14-10
891 744	792 919	1 684 663	889 982	1 025 620	1 915 602	1 781 726	1 818 539	3 600 265	19-15
710 297	551 799	1 262 006	741 150	789 059	1 530 209	1 451 357	1 340 858	2 792 215	24-20
550 024	440 558	990 582	551 366	569 637	1 121 003	1 101 390	1 010 195	2 111 585	29-25
444 236	385 355	829 591	420 308	457 098	877 406	86 544	842 453	1 706 997	34-30
424 108	408 187	832 295	377 171	417 153	794 324	801 279	825 340	1 626 619	39-35
423 734	476 603	900 337	349 750	410 598	760 348	773 484	825 201	1 668 685	44-40
344 542	412 855	757 398	293 896	338 171	632 067	638 439	751 026	1 389 965	49-45
326 591	407 893	734 484	270 785	322 880	593 665	597 376	731 673	1 329 049	54-50
157 764	212 425	370 189	149 418	184 280	333 698	307 182	391 452	703 807	59-55
152 405	168 525	320 930	129 337	132 877	262 214	282 742	301 402	584 144	64-60
297 532	360 036	657 568	264 551	263 451	528 002	562 083	624 387	1 186 470	65 years and more

Other religions	Christian			Zoroastrian	Jewish	Muslim	Total	
	Others	Assyrian	Armenian					
59 595	39 879	25 551	103 163	21 400	62 258	33 396 908	33 708 744	Total population
31 113	21 695	12 880	51 957	10 845	31 833	17 196 024	17 356 347	Male
28 472	18 184	12 671	51 206	10 555	30 425	884	16 352 397	Female
								Urban population
46 304	35 515	21 760	98 498	19 198	58 675	15 574 730	15 854 680	Male and female
24 002	18 829	10 871	49 337	9 664	30 035	8 148 633	8 291 451	Male
22 222	16 686	10 889	49 161	9 534	28 640	7 426 097	7 563 229	Female
								Rural population
13 281	4 364	3 791	4 665	2 202	3 583	17 822 178	17 854 064	Male and female
7 031	2 866	2 009	2 620	1 181	1 798	9 047 391	9 064 896	Male
6 250	1 498	1 782	2 045	1 021	1 785	8 774 787	8 789 168	Female

Table No. 1

The present status of foreign nationals working in Iran,  
in accordance with the form of workshop ownership

Major employment groups	Form of the ownership of the workshop	
	Private	Public
Specialized, technical and professional employments	1 034	8 718
Employment as sellers	418	24
Governmental and industrial management	301	1 408
Secretarial affairs	85	5 184
Employment in the field of agriculture, fishing, hunting and forestry	15	433
Employment in the field of mines and extracting metals and ores	17	48
Employment in the field of transportation and communication	24	156
Technicians and workers in the field of production not classified elsewhere	284	767
Workers in different sections of sports and recreation	42	184
Total	2 238	11 942
General total	14 180	

2 : Condition of employed alien nationals in the country  
according to nationality

No. of persons employed presently	Nationality
ASIAN CONTINENT	
3 583	India
1 700	Soviet Union
1 219	Pakistan
797	Japan
717	Philippines
626	Iraqi Refugees
475	Bangladesh
398	South Korea
170	Afghanistan
70	Malaysia
62	Lebanon
57	Taiwan
41	Thailand
33	Indonesia
29	Sri Lanka
30	Syria
21	Singapore
16	Nepal
10	Jordan
7	People's Republic of China
5	Hong Kong
5	Kuwait
6	Saudi Arabia
4	Bahrain
1	Yemen
1	Burma
10 083	TOTAL



2 : Condition of employed alien nationals in the country  
according to nationality

No. of persons employed presently	Nationality
<b>EUROPEAN CONTINENT</b>	
1 485	Italy
598	West Germany
246	Romania
164	France
222	Yugoslavia
192	Poland
173	England
130	Czechoslovakia
110	Greece
95	Austria
109	Spain
81	Switzerland
69	Sweden
53	Bulgaria
52	Turkey
53	Belgium
44	Portugal
34	Hungary
32	Netherlands
23	East Germany
24	Denmark
12	Ireland
6	Finland
3	Norway
3	Luxembourg
2	Cyprus
1	Malta
4 016	<b>TOTAL</b>

2 : Condition of employed alien nationals in the country  
according to nationality

No. of persons employed presently	Nationality
<b>AMERICAN CONTINENT</b> 7 5 5 4 3 4 2 1 1	United States of America Uruguay Argentina Peru Canada Brazil Chile Jamaica Colombia
32	TOTAL
<b>AFRICAN CONTINENT</b> 4 3 2 3 2 4 4 1 1 1 1 1 1	Egypt Mauritania Morocco Ghana Algeria Mauritius Tanzania Tunisia Kenya South Africa Zaire Ethiopia Somalia
28	TOTAL

2 : Condition of employed alien nationals in the country  
according to nationality

No. of persons employed presently	Nationality
AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT	
14	Australia
7	New Zealand
21	TOTAL
14 180	GRAND TOTAL

OUTLINE OF PROPOSED PAPER FOR SUBMISSION TO MEMBERS OF CERD

Author's note: CERD is primarily concerned with examining the legal aspects of any discriminatory situation rather than the humanitarian aspects, and the outline is drafted with this in mind. It also tries to anticipate the points likely to be raised by Iran's representative in response to questions about the Bahá'ís and to nullify them in advance.

1. Iranian government has stated in its report to CERD that there is no discrimination of any kind in Iran and that, in particular, religious minorities enjoy full protection, rights and freedoms.
2. We would like to draw attention of CERD to plight of Bahá'í community of 300,000 who have suffered discrimination for over a century, have absolutely no rights or legal status under present Constitution of Iran, and who are victims of discriminatory practices/legislation affecting every area of their lives.
3. Situation arises because of omission of Bahá'ís from Constitution. Explain whole legal system based on Islamic law - civil rights and liberties all depend on religious affiliation. Denial of recognition means not just denial of freedom to practise religion but denial of all or any rights/protection under Constitution.
4. Principle 13 of Constitution (quoted by Iran in its report) identifies "sole recognized religious minorities". They are only ones to enjoy freedoms/privileges enumerated on page 3 of Iran's report.
5. Principle 14 (also quoted) states that Muslims must deal with non-Muslims with justice and equity and respect their human rights. Might appear to offer some protection to Bahá'ís but is negated by rider stating that principle applies only to those who "do not conspire against Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran".
6. Bahá'ís regarded, de facto, as enemies of/conspirators against Islam. Explain - rebut.
7. Principle 19 (quoted) covers only ethnic groups and not (as stated by Iran) religious groups. In any case, Bahá'ís have no rights under any principle of Constitution, as explained above.
8. Bahá'ís not listed as a religious minority in Iran's report and not included in "Other Religions" total of under 60,000. Iran's 300,000 Bahá'ís (Iran has sometimes claimed 30,000, but this not so) presumably included in "Muslim" total. Cite representative of Iran at Commission on Human Rights stating that Bahá'ís considered to be part of Muslim majority. Might imply Bahá'ís therefore enjoy same constitutional rights as Muslims. Emphatically not so - see below.
9. Iran has frequently claimed Bahá'ís excluded from Constitution because political group, not religious. Rebut (along with other false charges).
10. Briefly describe persecutions, noting discriminatory legislation on basis religion, fact that denial of faith will secure education/employment, summary arrests, torture to force recantation, summary executions on false charges - all charges dropped/lives spared if recant, etc. etc. Also mention non-recognition Bahá'í marriage, confiscation properties etc.

11. All this demonstrates ~~Bahá'ís not regarded as Muslims~~ and that persecution springs from religious prejudice.
12. Explain persecution inspired by religious fanaticism on part of certain elements among fundamentalist Muslim clergy - some of them now in power and determined eradicate Bahá'í community/obliterate all traces Faith land its birth.
13. Underlying rationale is assertion that, since Muhammad is the last of the Prophets, the Bahá'í Faith cannot be considered a religion and that, in claiming to be a religion, it is either concealing its true nature or is attempting to set itself up in opposition to Islam. This is clearly ridiculous.
14. Point out that no Christian country persecutes its Muslim minority simply because majority of population doesn't believe in Muhammad.
15. Bahá'í Faith is an independent world religion with own Founder, Scriptures, teachings. Bahá'ís in Iran (all indigenous Iranians) constitute a distinct religious community. Simply wish to be recognized as such as accorded the right (to which entitled under international law) to have and to follow their own beliefs.

[Appropriate documentation will, of course, accompany the report]

#### Query

Committee member Mrs. Sadiq Ali of India said (in 1980) that "she knew that between 30,000 and 40,000 Sikhs were treated with tolerance in Iran". The Sikhs, of course, are not named in the Constitution as an officially-recognized religious minority. They are thus in exactly the same position as the Bahá'ís although (if Mrs. Sadiq Ali is correct) they are not suffering for it. Perhaps other, even smaller, unrecognized religious minorities exist and are allowed to practise their religion in peace.

We appreciate that the Iranian government does not have the same religious reasons for persecuting the Sikhs (or others) as it does for persecuting the Bahá'ís. Nevertheless, if the question comes up in the Committee - and it may well do so, since Mrs. Sadiq Ali is still a member - it might tend to cloud the whole issue. The representative of Iran could, for instance, draw an analogy between the Sikhs and the Bahá'ís and use it to support the argument that all religious minorities are protected in Iran, whether or not they are specifically named in the Constitution. He could also argue from this that (as Iran has frequently claimed in the past) any punishment meted out to the Bahá'ís is because of their criminal misbehaviour and has nothing to do with their religious beliefs.

We would be most grateful for any comments or guidance from the Universal House of Justice on this point.

25 January 1983

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION  
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

1982-1983

<u>Name of member</u>	<u>Country of nationality</u>	<u>Term expires on 19 January</u>
Mr. Jean-Marie APIOU	Upper Volta	1986
Mr. Eugenio Carlos José ARAMBURU	Argentina	1984
Mr. Yuli BAHNEV	Bulgaria	1984
Mr. Pedro BRIN MARTINEZ	Panama	1984
Mr. André DECHEZELLES	France	1984
Mr. Silvo DEVETAK	Yugoslavia	1984
Mr. Dimitrios J. EVRIGENIS	Greece	1986
Mr. Oladapo Olusola FAFOWORA	Nigeria	1986
Mr. Abdel Moneim GHONEIM	Egypt	1986
Mr. José D. INGLES	Philippines	1984
Mr. George O. LAMPTEY	Ghana	1986
Mr. Erik NETTEL	Austria	1984
Mr. Karl Josef PARTSCH	Germany, Federal Republic of	1986
Mrs. Shanti SADIQ ALI	India	1984
Mr. Agha SHAHI	Pakistan	1986
Mr. Michael E. SHERIFIS	Cyprus	1986
Mr. Gleb Borisovich STARUSHENKO	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	1984
Mr. Luis VALENCIA RODRIGUEZ	Ecuador	1986