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In Draft Resolution, United Nations Rebukes Iran for Rights Violations Since Election

By NEIL MacFARQUHAR

[UNITED NATIONS](#) — The United Nations criticized [Iran](#) on Friday for numerous human rights abuses in the wake of the disputed presidential election in June, including the arrests, intimidation and mass trials of members of the political opposition.

[A draft resolution detailing the criticism was approved](#) by a vote of 74 to 48, with 59 countries abstaining.

Although a resolution rebuking Iran for domestic oppression has been an annual event for about 15 years, the latest version expressed particular concern about the “rise in human rights violations” after the election.

In Iran, the fallout from the election protests continued, with more opposition figures sentenced to prison terms. A nationwide campaign of arrests was reported by student Web sites, with the government apparently focusing on student leaders before protests expected on Dec. 7, known as Student Day.

The violations listed in the United Nations’ draft resolution included the death and injury of opposition members and other citizens trying to exercise their right to freedom of expression; the use of violence and intimidation by the government-run [Basij](#) militia forces; the abuse of prisoners, including rape and torture as well as forced confessions; and severe restrictions on media coverage of the events.

The resolution also singled out the arrests of foreign embassy employees, which it called inconsistent with international agreements.

The Iranian ambassador, Mohammad Khazaei, called the resolution politically motivated. He lashed out at the human rights record of Canada, the main sponsor of the resolution, and defended Iran’s performance.

“The election was another display of the democratic nature and openness of the political system,” he said.

A number of countries said they had voted against the measure or abstained because they did not think the [General Assembly](#) should be the venue for criticizing individual countries. Many diplomats noted in their speeches that they were concerned about [human rights issues in Iran after the election](#).

The measure was approved Friday in the special committee of all 192 United Nations members that forwards draft resolutions on human rights issues to the General Assembly, virtually assuring its passage by the main body.

Meanwhile in Iran, Ali Behzadiyan-Nejad, a political activist whose uncle was the campaign manager for the opposition presidential candidate [Mir Hussein Mousavi](#), was sentenced to six years in prison, his

lawyer reported. He had been charged with endangering national security, spreading propaganda against the government and “disturbing the public order.”

On Wednesday, Iran’s judiciary issued verdicts for more than 80 people charged during the post-election protests. Most of the sentences were prison terms and lashings, but they included five death sentences against unidentified individuals convicted of carrying out what the government called terrorist attacks.

Among those sentenced was Abdullah Momeni, the spokesman for a reformist student group, who received eight years in prison.

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