

PRESS RELEASE

Iran Observes Anniversary of Human Rights Covenant with Crack Down

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 26, 2009

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT - June 24, 2009 marked the 34th anniversary of Iran's ratification of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), a landmark human rights treaty that has been ratified by 164 countries. Upon ratification, Iran agreed to protect many rights of its citizens including the rights to life, to freedom of expression and assembly, to freedom from arbitrary detention, to freedom from torture, and to freedom from arbitrary execution.

Sadly, the Islamic Republic chose to recognize this anniversary by continuing to brutally crack down on peaceful protests after the presidential election. Since the June 12 election, the regime has stepped up its suppression of any expression of dissent, including the beating and killing of protestors, and the arrests and detention of hundreds of dissenters, political opposition figures, journalists, students and human rights activists.

On June 24, the anniversary, witnesses reported that demonstrators at Baharestan Square, in front of the Parliament building in Tehran, were beaten with batons and subjected to tear gas.

It has been reported that special courts have been created to try demonstrators and that the infamous Saeed Mortazavi is leading interrogations. Mortazavi played a critical role in the death of photojournalist Zahra Kazemi, and has continued to direct the torture and interrogation of journalists, including bloggers and cyber-journalists. Details on these can be found in the reports by the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center: [Impunity in Iran: The Death of Photojournalist Zahra Kazemi](#) and [Ctl+Alt+Delete: Iran's Response to the Internet](#).

The Islamic Republic is clearly violating its obligations under the ICCPR. This is not the first time. The regime continually arrests and detains people without charge, and subjects them to interrogation and torture. It has also historically dealt with its political opposition by executing people, both in Iran and abroad. The IHRDC has reported on these abuses of human rights by the regime, most recently in [Covert Terror: Iran's Parallel Intelligence Apparatus](#).

On this anniversary of Iran's ratification of the ICCPR, the IHRDC calls on the Islamic Republic, regardless of who is in power, to protect the human rights of its citizens.

IHRDC is a nonprofit organization based in New Haven, Connecticut that was founded in 2004 by a group of human rights scholars, activists, and historians. Its staff of human rights lawyers and researchers produce comprehensive and detailed reports on the human rights situation in Iran since the 1979 revolution. The Center's goal is to encourage an informed dialogue among scholars and the general public in both Iran and abroad. The human rights reports and an archive of documents are available to the public for research and educational purposes on the Center's website www.iranhrdc.org.

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