

Doc\_Number: GDE0007

**AMNESTY**  
**INTERNATIONAL**



In your country:



> [Home](#)

> Iran: One year on crackdown on dissent widens with hundreds unjustly imprisoned

---

## IRAN: ONE YEAR ON CRACKDOWN ON DISSENT WIDENS WITH HUNDREDS UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED

9 June 2010

AI Index: PRE01/182/2010

"It's essential that we stand up for the unjustly imprisoned and be their voice. The prisoner's worst nightmare is the thought of being forgotten. But knowing that your plight is in the hearts and minds of people across the world, brings you a great sense of hope.", Maziar Bahari, the Iranian-Canadian journalist for Newsweek, released after four months detention in Iran following the election.

One year on from Iran's disputed June 2009 presidential election, Amnesty International has documented a widening crackdown on dissent that has left journalists, students, political and rights activists as well as clerics languishing in prisons.

Lawyers, academics, former political prisoners and members of Iran's ethnic and religious minorities have also been caught up in an expanding wave of repression that has led to widespread incidents of torture and other ill-treatment along with politically motivated execution of prisoners.

This repression is documented in the new Amnesty International report *From Protest to Prison – Iran One Year After the Election* which reviews a year of arrest and detention of those who have spoken out against the government and its abuses. The publication of the report marks the launch of a one-year campaign calling for the release of prisoners of conscience in Iran held since the disputed 2009 presidential election and ensuing repression and fair trials without recourse to the death penalty for other political prisoners.

"The Iranian government is determined to silence all dissenting voices, while at the same time trying to avoid all scrutiny by the international community into the violations connected to the post-election unrest," said Claudio Cordone, Amnesty International's interim Secretary General.

"The government has taken the absurd stand that virtually no violations have occurred in Iran when it presented its national report to the Universal Periodic Review by the Human Rights Council, who will adopt its final report this week. We ask them to accept recommendations relating to the treatment of

prisoners and to let UN human rights experts visit the country.”

Hundreds of people remain detained for their part in the protests of June 2009 or for otherwise expressing dissenting views and the imprisonment of ordinary citizens has become an every day phenomenon in an expanding ‘revolving door system’ of arbitrary arrest and detention. Those with only tentative links to banned groups as well as family members of former prisoners have been subjected to arbitrary arrest in the past year.

Examples include:

- Banned student Sayed Ziaoddin Nabavi serving a 10-year prison sentence in Evin Prison. A member of the Council to Defend the Right to Education, his sentence appears to be linked to the fact that he has relatives in the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran, a banned group, which the authorities claim was responsible for organizing demonstrations.
- Around 50 members of the Baha’i faith have been arrested across Iran since the elections - continuing to be unjustly cast as scapegoats for the unrest.
- Iran’s ethnic minority communities have faced arrest and detention, during and following the election. Four Kurds were among five political prisoners executed in May without the notifications required by law, in what was a clear message to anyone considering marking the anniversary with protest.

“What we are calling for is very simple: the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience and for others to be tried promptly on recognizably criminal offences, without recourse to the death penalty, in proceedings which fully meet international standards for a fair trial,” said Claudio Cordone.

Detainees have been held incommunicado for days, week or even months while relatives remain unable to find out where they are being held or on what charges.

The secrecy surrounding these arrests makes it easier for interrogators to resort to torture and other ill-treatment, including rape, and mock executions, in order to extract forced “confessions” which are used later as evidence in trial.

One woman said of a women’s rights activist held with her that: “She told us that her interrogators had attached cables to her nipples and given her electric shocks. She was so ill she would sometimes faint in the cell.”

The mother of another human rights defender, Shiva Nazar Ahari, detained without charge or trial whose case is

highlighted in the report, said "I hope your daughters grow up to get married – mine grew up to be thrown into jail," illustrating the journey taken by an increasing number of Iranians, from political and civil activism to the cells of Evin Prison and other prisons in the provinces.

Politically motivated executions, recently taking place prior to key anniversaries when mass protests are expected, continue, with the justice system used as a lethal instrument of repression by the Iranian authorities. At least six people remain on death row charged with 'enmity against God' for their alleged involvement in demonstrations and membership of banned groups.

Iran has one of the highest rates of executions in the world. To date in 2010, Amnesty International has already recorded over 115 executions.

"The Iranian authorities must end this campaign of fear that aims to crush even the slightest opposition to the government," said Claudio Cordone. "They are continuing to use the death penalty as a tool of repression, right up to the eve of the anniversary of the election. The Iranian authorities blame everyone but themselves for the unrest but they are failing to show any respect for their own laws which prohibit the torture and other ill-treatment of all detainees."

#### **Note to Editors**

12th of June 2010, first anniversary of last year's disputed elections in Iran, will be marked by a Global Day of Action across the world, sponsored by Amnesty International and others. For more details visit: <http://12june.org/>

[اللغة العربية](#) | [Français](#) | [Español](#)