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Islamic Republic of Iran

The present report is a compilation of the information contained in reports of the treaty bodies and special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned, in reports of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in other relevant official United Nations documents. It is presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints. For the full texts, please refer to the documents referenced. The report does not contain any opinions, views or suggestions on the part of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights other than those contained in public reports and statements issued by the Office. It follows the general guidelines adopted by the Human Rights Council in its decision 17/119. Information included herein has been systematically referenced in endnotes. The report has been prepared taking into consideration the periodicity of the review, and developments during that period.

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I. Background and framework

A. Scope of international obligations¹

International human rights treaties²

	<i>Status during previous cycle</i>	<i>Action after review</i>	<i>Not ratified/not accepted</i>
<i>Ratification, accession or succession</i>	ICERD (1968)	OP-CRC-AC (signature, 2010)	ICCPR-OP 2
	ICESCR (1975)		CEDAW
	ICCPR (1975)		CAT
	CRC (1994)		OP-CAT
	OP-CRC-SC (2007)		OP-CRC-AC (signature, 2010)
	CRPD (2009)		ICRMW CPED
<i>Reservations and/or declarations</i>	CRC (general reservation, 1994)		
	CRPD (declaration, art. 46, 2009)		
<i>Complaints procedures, inquiries and urgent action³</i>			ICERD, art. 14
			OP-ICESCR
			ICCPR, art. 41
			ICCPR-OP 1
			OP-CEDAW
			CAT
			OP-CRC-IC
			ICRMW OP-CRPD CPED

Other main relevant international instruments

	<i>Status during previous cycle</i>	<i>Action after review</i>	<i>Not ratified</i>
<i>Ratification, accession or succession</i>	Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide		Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (signature only)
	Conventions on refugees and stateless persons ⁴ except 1954 and 1961 Conventions		Palermo Protocol ⁵

<i>Status during previous cycle</i>	<i>Action after review</i>	<i>Not ratified</i>
Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 except Additional Protocols ⁶		ILO Conventions Nos. 169 and 189 ⁸
ILO fundamental conventions except Nos. 87, 98 and 138 ⁷		Additional Protocols I, II (signature only) and III to the 1949 Geneva Conventions ⁹
UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education		

1. CESCR encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran to withdraw its reservation to CRPD¹⁰ and CERD encouraged it to make an optional declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention.¹¹

B. Constitutional and legislative framework

2. The Secretary-General noted that the country's draft Charter on Citizens' Rights had been presented for public comments, but fell short of international human rights standards and failed to address concerns persistently raised by the United Nations human rights mechanisms.¹²

3. In 2013, several special procedure mandate holders sent a communication relating to allegations concerning the revised Islamic Penal Code (IPC), which came into force in June 2013. They noted allegations that the revised Islamic Penal Code provided for the use of the death penalty for some non-violent acts and discriminated against women and religious minorities. It retained stoning as punishment and provided for the death penalty for sodomy for the non-Muslim party in same-sex relations; insulting the Prophet Mohammad; possessing or selling illicit drugs; theft for the fourth time; *moharebeh* (enmity against God) and *Fisad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth). It also incorporated diverse corporal punishments such as amputation, flogging and crucifixion.¹³

4. The Human Rights Committee (HR Committee) noted with concern that certain religious tenets were referred to in the country's system as primary norms and urged that internal norms not be invoked as justification for the country's failure to fulfil its obligations under the Covenant.¹⁴

5. CERD reiterated its concern that the definition of racial discrimination in the Constitution does not explicitly cover the forms of racial and ethnic discrimination prohibited under the Convention.¹⁵ CESCR recommended the adoption of a comprehensive anti-discrimination bill.¹⁶

6. The HR Committee urged the Government to adopt legislation giving Iranian women the right to transmit their nationality to their children.¹⁷

C. Institutional and human rights infrastructure and policy measures

Status of national human rights institutions¹⁸

<i>National human rights institution</i>	<i>Status during previous cycle</i>	<i>Status during present cycle¹⁹</i>
Islamic Human Rights Commission		C (2009)

7. CESCR recommended that the Government establish an independent national human rights institution with a broad human rights mandate in line with the Paris Principles; and provide it with adequate human and financial resources.²⁰

II. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms

A. Cooperation with treaty bodies²¹

1. Reporting status

<i>Treaty body</i>	<i>Concluding observations included in previous review</i>	<i>Latest report submitted since previous review</i>	<i>Latest concluding observations</i>	<i>Reporting status</i>
CERD	August 2003	2008	August 2010	Twentieth to twenty-third reports overdue since January 2014
CESCR	May 1993	2009	May 2013	Third report due in 2018
HR Committee	July 1993	2009	November 2011	Fourth report due in November 2014
CRC	January 2005	2013		Third and fourth reports pending consideration in 2016. Initial OP-CRC-SC report overdue since 2009
CRPD	--	2013	--	Initial report pending consideration

2. Responses to specific follow-up requests by treaty bodies

<i>Concluding observations</i>				
<i>Treaty body</i>	<i>Due in</i>	<i>Subject matter</i>	<i>Submitted in</i>	
CERD	2011	Discrimination of women of minority origin; racial discrimination in the media; and establishment of a national human rights institution. ²²	--	
HR Committee	2012	Inequality of women; death penalty; and independence of the judiciary. ²³	Reminders sent in 2013. ²⁴	

B. Cooperation with special procedures²⁵

	<i>Status during previous cycle</i>	<i>Current status</i>
<i>Standing invitation</i>	Yes	Yes
<i>Visits undertaken</i>	Freedom of opinion and expression (2003); Arbitrary detention (2003); Migrants (2004); Violence against women (2005); Adequate housing (2005)	
<i>Visits agreed to in principle</i>	Enforced and involuntary disappearances Extrajudicial summary or arbitrary executions Freedom of religion or belief	Enforced or involuntary disappearances, Freedom of religion or belief
<i>Visits requested</i>	Torture Independence of judges and lawyers Minority issues	Freedom of opinion and expression (2010) Food (2011) Independence of judges and lawyers (2011) Summary and arbitrary executions (reminders, 2010 and 2013) Islamic Republic of Iran (2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014)
<i>Responses to letters of allegations and urgent appeals</i>	During the period under review some 130 communications were sent. The Government replied to approximately 47 communications.	

8. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran regretted that it had been not possible for him to have a more cooperative and consultative relationship with the Government.²⁶

9. The Secretary-General regretted that, since 2005, no thematic mandate holders had been invited to visit the country despite a standing invitation issued to all thematic mandate holders in 2002 and a pledge to invite two such experts in 2012.²⁷

10. In 2013, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances noted that since its establishment it had transmitted 537 cases to the Government and that 518 remained outstanding.²⁸ It reiterated the hope that a date would be agreed in the near future for the visit agreed to in 2004.²⁹

III. Implementation of international human rights obligations

A. Equality and non-discrimination

11. The Secretary-General stated that laws that permit gender discrimination and promote violence against women continued to be introduced. The revised IPC retained provisions that were discriminatory towards women. For instance, it valued women's testimony as half that of a man's, and a woman's life half that of a man's.³⁰

12. The HR Committee was concerned about the absence of specific provisions on domestic violence within the IPC and the lack of investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators.³¹ CESCR recommended taking urgent legislative steps to specifically criminalize domestic violence, including marital rape.³²

13. The United Nations country team (UNCT) noted that the judiciary had recruited female lawyers who can act as advisers to the male judges in family courts, to influence their decisions. While women can be appointed to certain judicial positions, such as counsellors and investigators, they are barred from acting as sitting judges who issue verdicts.³³

14. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran noted gender-based disparities in economic participation and political empowerment: unsuccessful legislative attempts to reinforce polygamy and reduce work hours for women, and current policy proposals that discriminated against women in education had threatened recent achievements in education for women.³⁴

15. CERD was concerned at reports of racial discrimination, inter alia, directed against Azeri communities in the media, and statements of racial discrimination and incitement to hatred by government officials.³⁵ CERD recommended that the Islamic Republic of Iran take necessary steps to achieve effective protection from discrimination against, inter alios, Arab, Azeri, Balochi and Kurdish communities and some communities of non-citizens,³⁶ as urged by the HR Committee.³⁷

16. CESCR was concerned about discrimination against religious communities other than those belonging to Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism.³⁸ The HR Committee was concerned about discrimination against the Christian minority,³⁹ and Sunni Muslims.⁴⁰ CESCR was also concerned that members of the Baha'i community faced widespread and entrenched discrimination.⁴¹

17. The HR Committee was concerned that the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community faced discrimination with respect to access to employment, housing, education and health care, and social exclusion within the community; as well as harassment, persecution, cruel punishment and the death penalty.⁴² CESCR recommended the repeal or amendment of all legislation resulting in discrimination, prosecution and punishment of people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.⁴³

B. Right to life, liberty and security of the person

18. The Secretary-General noted that the revised IPC provided capital punishment for a wide range of offences that do not qualify as the "most serious crimes" under international law, including for drug-related offences, and retained stoning as a punishment.⁴⁴

19. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights deplored the fact that, since January 2014, the Government had already executed more than 200 individuals.⁴⁵
The Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of

Iran and on summary executions noted that the majority of executions were for drug-related offences, but a number of individuals were also executed for the crimes of *moharebeh* (“enmity against God”), or acting against national security.⁴⁶

20. The Secretary-General urged the authorities to fully abolish the death penalty for crimes committed by persons under 18 years of age, in accordance with the country’s obligations under the ICCPR and CRC.⁴⁷

21. On 26 June 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed concern about the imminent execution of Razieh Ebrahimi, who was convicted of killing her husband when she was 17 years old. She was married to him at the age of 14, gave birth to a child when she was 15, and says she was subjected to domestic violence. The High Commissioner expressed alarm at the large number of juvenile offenders who reportedly remained on death row.⁴⁸

22. UNCT noted that the revised IPC included provisions which promote alternatives to punishment for children who commit crimes under the category of *ta’zir*. As for children who commit crimes under categories of *hodoud* and *qisas*, if they do not understand the nature of the crime or its prohibition and/or there is a doubt regarding their mental maturity and ability to reason, they would be subject to *ta’zir* punishments (art. 91).⁴⁹

23. The Secretary-General expressed concern about alleged reprisals against individuals for their cooperation, or for establishing contacts with the United Nations human rights mechanisms or representatives.⁵⁰ The country mandate holder also stated that three Afghan nationals were reportedly tortured and threatened with hanging for allegedly submitting a list of executed Afghans to him.⁵¹

24. The HR Committee urged the Government to amend the draft Juvenile Crimes Investigation Act with the aim of abolishing the death penalty for crimes committed under the age of 18; and to commute all death sentences for juvenile offenders.⁵²

25. The HR Committee was deeply concerned at reports of widespread use of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in detention facilities, which in some cases had resulted in the detainee’s death, urging the Islamic Republic of Iran to open an inquiry into each case of alleged torture in detention facilities; prosecute perpetrators; and grant reparation, including compensation, to every victim.⁵³ Echoing the HR Committee’s concern, the country mandate holder emphasized that widespread impunity and allegations of the use of confessions solicited under duress as evidence continued to contribute to the prevalence of torture.⁵⁴ The Secretary-General urged the authorities to ensure that an inquiry is opened in each case of alleged torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in detention facilities, and that the perpetrators of such acts are prosecuted and punished appropriately. The Government should also ensure that effective reparation, including adequate compensation, is granted to every victim.⁵⁵

26. In 2013, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders expressed grave concern about the situation of human rights defenders, particularly about allegations of widespread use of torture and ill-treatment against human rights defenders while in detention, and the practice of detention in unknown locations and incommunicado detention and reported restrictions with regard to access to a lawyer.⁵⁶

27. The Secretary-General stated that the recurrence of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, such as amputation of limbs and flogging remained a cause for concern.⁵⁷ The HR Committee was also concerned about the imposition of corporal punishment by judicial and administrative authorities, particularly amputations and flogging for a range of crimes, including theft, enmity against God (*moharebeh*) and certain sexual acts.⁵⁸

28. The HR Committee was concerned about poor conditions in detention facilities, particularly in Evin Prison; and the use of solitary confinement, unreasonable limits on

family visits and denial of medical treatment to many prisoners. It urged for a regular and independent monitoring system of places of detention, and that detention conditions conform to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners.⁵⁹ The Secretary-General and the country mandate holder expressed similar concerns.⁶⁰

29. The HR Committee was concerned that corporal punishment of children was lawful at home, as a sentence of the courts and in alternative care settings. It urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to explicitly prohibit all forms of corporal punishment in child-rearing and education, including by repealing the legal defences for its use in the Civil Code, the Penal Code and the Law on the Protection of Children.⁶¹

C. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

30. The HR Committee was concerned that the independence of the judiciary was not fully guaranteed and was compromised by undue pressure from the executive power.⁶² The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed concern regarding the erosion of the independence of the legal profession and Bar Association. He cited the approval of the draft Bill of Formal Attorneyship, which increased Government supervision over the Iranian Bar Association as an example.⁶³

31. The HR Committee was deeply concerned about frequent violations of fair trial guarantees, especially in the Revolutionary Courts and the Evin Prison Court; and the invocation by judicial officials of the *mahdoor-ol-dam* (deserving of death) definition in their rulings.⁶⁴

32. Concerned at discriminatory treatment of foreign nationals in the justice system, CERD recommended ensuring due process and transparency for all persons in the justice system.⁶⁵ CERD was also concerned that language barriers might create an obstacle in access to justice for ethnic minorities.⁶⁶

33. The HR Committee was concerned about the use of general and blanket arrest warrants. It urged that arrest warrants contain the names of the accused and be based on a judge's review of material evidence; and detainees held on the basis of general and blanket arrest warrants be released.⁶⁷

34. The HR Committee was concerned about the length of pretrial detention and the absence in the Code of Criminal Procedure of a limit to the amount of time a court could order somebody to remain in detention.⁶⁸

35. The HR Committee was concerned that coerced confessions had been used as the primary evidence to obtain convictions in court.⁶⁹

D. Right to privacy, marriage and family life

36. The Secretary-General noted that the Civil Code provided for the marriage of girls at age 13. However, with the permission of a competent court, girls can be married at the age of 9. The 2013 Family Protection Law reportedly allowed for full or temporary marriage and legalized polygamy.⁷⁰

37. The HR Committee was concerned about forced, early and temporary marriages of young girls.⁷¹ It was also concerned about persistent trafficking in women and children, particularly young girls from rural areas, often facilitated by temporary marriages (*siqeh*).⁷² CESCR called on the Government to ensure the free consent of the intending spouses.⁷³

38. The HR Committee recommended that the Islamic Republic of Iran, inter alia, abolish the requirement for a father's or paternal grandfather's approval to legalize a

marriage; grant women equal rights to divorce; award equal custody rights to the mother; award guardianship of a child to the mother in the case of the father's death; grant women the same inheritance rights as men; remove the legal obligation for a woman to be obedient to her husband; and prohibit polygamy.⁷⁴ CESCR similarly recommended amending the Civil Code and the Family Protection Law.⁷⁵

39. According to UNCT, only men have unilateral and unconditional divorce rights. Minor reforms have been introduced to divorce legislation, such as a clause in the marriage contract which has to be signed by the husband giving the women the right to divorce. However, that right needs to be confirmed by a court.⁷⁶

40. CESCR was concerned that consensual same-sex sexual activity was criminalized and that convicted persons might receive the death penalty.⁷⁷

E. Freedom of movement

41. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that a married woman could not obtain a passport or leave the country without her husband's written permission.⁷⁸ Women's human rights activists were reportedly subject to travel bans and other forms of suppression for protected activities.⁷⁹ UNCT added that sex segregation in certain public spaces also limited women's freedom of movement.⁸⁰

F. Freedom of religion or belief, expression, association and peaceful assembly, and right to participate in public and political life

42. The HR Committee noted with concern that individuals converted from Islam had been arrested.⁸¹ It was also concerned that members of the Baha'i community continued to be denied their right to freedom of religion or belief⁸² and that Sunni Muslims were prevented from fully exercising their right to freedom to manifest their religion.⁸³

43. The Secretary-General stated that the new administration had not made any significant improvement in the promotion and protection of freedom of expression and opinion, despite pledges made by the President during his campaign and after his swearing-in. Both offline and online outlets continued to face restrictions, including closure. Individuals seeking to exercise or promote freedom of expression and opinion through dissenting views or beliefs continued to face arrest, prosecution and sanctions by the State.⁸⁴ The country mandate holder remained concerned over the continued arrest, detention and prosecution of dozens of journalists and Internet users under provisions of the 1986 Press Law.⁸⁵

44. The HR Committee was concerned that many journalists, newspaper editors, filmmakers and media workers had been arrested and detained since the 2009 presidential elections. It urged the Government to fully guarantee the right to freedom of expression and opinion of independent media; ensure that journalists could exercise their profession without fear; and release and provide judicial redress and compensation for journalists imprisoned.⁸⁶

45. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) encouraged a review of existing laws including the Press Law 1991/2000 to ensure freedom of expression and introduction of a freedom of information law in accordance with international standards. UNESCO recommended decriminalizing defamation and blasphemy. UNESCO further recommended that the Government ensure that journalists are able to work in a safe and free environment.⁸⁷

46. In 2014 the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders welcomed positive steps taken by the Government in releasing prisoners of conscience but remained concerned that a number of lawyers and human rights defenders were currently serving lengthy sentences due to their work.⁸⁸

47. The Secretary-General noted that the two former presidential candidates, Mehdi Karoubi and Hossein Mossavi remained under house arrest urging the President to consider the immediate release of the two opposition leaders and to facilitate their urgent and adequate access to medical care.⁸⁹ Similarly, he urged the Government to release human rights lawyers and human rights defenders and allow them to exercise their activities without risk to their physical and psychological integrity or any other form of restriction, harassment and intimidation.⁹⁰

48. In 2012, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention noted that the provisions of the Security Laws prohibited various forms of speech, assembly and expression, allowing the State subjectively to judge them as being “against” the nation or its security.⁹¹ The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders renewed her concerns regarding information received at the Government’s alleged use of charges including “national security” and propaganda against the system to restrict the peaceful work of human rights defenders.⁹²

49. CESCR was concerned that the Government prevented the formation of independent trade unions and that labour rights activists faced harassment, arrests and detention based on vaguely worded charges, such as “harming state security”, “acting against national security” or “spreading propaganda against the system”; as well as that workers who participated in strikes faced reprisals from the authorities.⁹³

50. The HR Committee was concerned that the right to freedom of assembly and association was severely limited, noting that public gatherings and marches as well as the establishment of associations were conditional upon compliance with “principles of Islam”.⁹⁴

51. The HR Committee was concerned about reports of harassment or intimidation, prohibition and forceful breaking up of demonstrations; arrests and arbitrary detentions of human rights defenders, including large number of women’s rights activists; and the fact that human rights defenders and defence lawyers often served prison sentences based on vaguely formulated crimes such as *moharebeh* or the spreading of propaganda against the establishment.⁹⁵

52. The Secretary-General welcomed the Government’s efforts to appoint women to senior-level government positions. However, no woman had been named to the Cabinet, thereby continuing women’s underrepresentation at the highest decision-making levels. He encouraged the Government to adopt laws and policies that promote the participation of women in public, political, economic and professional life.⁹⁶

53. In 2013, a group of special procedure mandate holders indicated that unreasonable limitations placed on the right of citizens to stand for Presidential office, discrimination against women candidates for elections and ongoing restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, constituted a serious violations of rights guaranteed by international law. They noted that, in May, the Guardian Council, which vets presidential candidates, approved only 8 individuals out of the 686 people registered as candidates for the June presidential elections. Several key political figures and all the 30 female candidates were disqualified, raising serious concerns about the fairness and transparency of the vetting procedures.⁹⁷

54. According to UNCT, only 73 women out of 2,700 Members of Parliament have ever been elected over the course of nine Parliamentary terms. The number of women Members has significantly decreased since 2004, and is currently 2.4 per cent.⁹⁸

55. The HR Committee and CESCR were concerned about the low number of women in decision-making positions in the public sector.⁹⁹

56. CERD expressed concern at the low level of participation of persons from Arab, Azeri, Balochi, Kurdish, Baha'i and certain other communities in public life. It urged the Government to take action to combat racial discrimination relating to all areas of public life.¹⁰⁰

G. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

57. The Secretary-General noted that women's economic participation and employment had decreased. Only 14.5 per cent of the female population was economically active, of which 16.8 per cent were either unemployed or seeking jobs.¹⁰¹

58. CESCR was concerned about the high unemployment rate, particularly for women and youth, despite employment stimulation measures, and the disproportionately high unemployment rate in areas with ethnic minorities.¹⁰² The HR Committee recommended that the power of a man to prohibit his wife from entering employment be removed.¹⁰³

59. CESCR was concerned that the minimum wage level was determined at a level insufficient to provide workers with a decent living; and that Afghan workers were often paid less than the minimum wage or faced with non-payment of wages.¹⁰⁴

60. CESCR was concerned that labour laws did not apply to workplaces with fewer than five workers or in export processing zones.¹⁰⁵

61. CESCR was concerned that the *gozinesh* process under the 1995 Selection Law based on Religious and Ethical Standards impaired equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation for persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, as well as laypersons, seeking employment in the public sector and organizations receiving State funding.¹⁰⁶ CERD had similar concerns.¹⁰⁷

62. CESCR was concerned that child labour was prevalent, particularly in rural areas, and was permitted in agriculture, domestic service and some small businesses; and that domestic legislation did not consistently determine the minimum age for employment.¹⁰⁸

H. Right to social security and to an adequate standard of living

63. The Secretary-General noted that the access of the poor to basic services had substantially increased: during 1991–2009 access to electricity by the poorest in rural areas increased from 66.6 per cent to 93.2 per cent and to piped water from 55.1 per cent to 83.6 per cent.¹⁰⁹ He also noted that equitable access to food, sanitation, health, education, information and services continued to be a challenge, as did sustained provision of social services. At the end of 2010, the country implemented drastic cuts to State subsidies on fuels, utilities and basic foodstuffs.¹¹⁰

64. CESCR was concerned about poor living conditions in regions inhabited by ethnic minorities, in some cases completely lacking basic services,¹¹¹ being particularly concerned that the province of Sistan and Baluchestan was characterized by the country's worst indicators for life expectancy, access to water and sanitation, and infant and child mortality.¹¹²

65. CESCR was concerned that many families remained without a formal ownership title over their house and land, particularly in rural areas. It recommended preventing arbitrary interpretations of article 49 of the Constitution, which had led to arbitrary property confiscations; and providing access to an adequate remedy, restitution of their property and compensation for persons affected by such confiscations.¹¹³

66. CESCR was concerned about land expropriation and forced evictions caused by some development projects, disproportionately affecting minority groups, including the Kurdish and Baloch communities.¹¹⁴

67. CESCR recommended that the Government provide all street children with access to health services and education.¹¹⁵

I. Right to health

68. CESCR was concerned that a significant portion of the population was not covered by any health insurance scheme, recommending that the Government ensure universal access to health insurance on a non-discriminatory basis, including access to reproductive, maternal and child health care.¹¹⁶

69. UNCT expressed concern about large nutritional disparities, particularly noticeable in the provinces of Hormozgan, Sistan and Baluchistan.¹¹⁷

70. The Secretary-General stated that sanctions had severely disrupted the distribution of medical and pharmaceutical supplies. Insurance companies faced difficulties covering Iranian importers and exporters, and that in turn had diminished the availability of medical equipment and foreign-made drugs.¹¹⁸ Similarly, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran noted reports of drug shortages used in the treatment illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, haemophilia and multiple sclerosis, despite “humanitarian exemptions” under the current sanctions regime.¹¹⁹

J. Right to education

71. UNCT stated that challenges existed in primary education of children of poorer families living in disparity rural areas with linguistic backgrounds different from the official language of the country. Those challenges were mainly caused by factors such as poverty, inadequate educational measurement methods, low quality of education in rural areas, inflexibility of the curriculum and cultural barriers.¹²⁰

72. CESCR was concerned about high dropout rates of girls in rural schools and of indigenous Arab children; the high illiteracy rates among Ahwazi Arabs and Azeris; and the stark differences between schools in urban and rural areas.¹²¹

73. CESCR was concerned about restrictions on access to university education, particularly affecting women.¹²² The Secretary-General noted that women were significantly affected by the economic downturn resulting from sanctions as girls risked being withdrawn from school and women pushed out of the job market.¹²³ UNCT noted that, in 2012, 36 Iranian universities banned women from enrolling in 77 academic subjects, including nuclear physics, computer science, electrical engineering, industrial engineering and business management.¹²⁴ UNESCO encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran to take steps to improve action on discrimination in education, especially to raise restrictions on access to university education.¹²⁵

74. The country mandate holder noted limitations placed on access to education for women and religious minorities, as well as reports that students engaged in political activities were being deprived of their education.¹²⁶

75. CESCR was concerned about the lack of access to primary education of children with disabilities and children of nomadic communities, as well as about the imposition of enrolment fees.¹²⁷

K. Cultural rights

76. CESCR was concerned that ethnic minorities, including Kurds, Arabs, Azeris and Baluch, did not fully enjoy their right to take part in cultural life recommending that the Government ensure favourable conditions for members of those minorities to preserve, develop, express and disseminate their identity, history, culture, language, traditions and customs.¹²⁸

77. CESCR was concerned that ethnic minorities faced severe restrictions regarding education in their mother tongue, including Azeri, Kurdish and Arabic, despite policies protecting the use of non-Persian languages.¹²⁹

L. Minorities

78. The Secretary-General stated that there had been no improvements in the situation of religious and ethnic minorities, which continued to suffer severe restrictions in the enjoyment of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Religious minorities such as Baha'is and Christians faced violations entrenched in law and in practice. Harassment, home raids and incitement to hatred were reportedly commonly applied by the authorities to suppress the Baha'i community. In that connection, the Secretary-General renewed his call on the Government to release the seven Baha'i community leaders who were serving 20-year sentences for managing the religious and administrative affairs of their community after trials which did not meet the guarantees for fair trial established by international law.¹³⁰

79. The country mandate holder expressed deep concern about the human rights situation facing religious minorities, including Baha'is, Christians, Sunni Muslim communities, as well as Dervishes. In particular, he noted that members of the Baha'i community were reported to continue to be systematically deprived of a range of social and economic rights, including access to higher education.¹³¹

M. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

80. The Secretary-General noted that some Afghan refugees reportedly experienced physical mistreatment and confiscation of property during deportation. Families were reportedly often separated, leaving children more vulnerable to physical and mental abuse.¹³²

81. UNCT recommended issuing birth certificates to refugee children: children born to refugees in Iranian hospitals could only receive delivery certificates issued by the hospitals. A lack of a birth certificate had a negative impact on many spheres of children's life, from *Amayesh* registration, access to education, benefits upon return.¹³³

N. Right to development, and environmental issues

82. The Secretary-General noted that the country was on track to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals, notably Goal 1 (eradicating extreme poverty), Goal 2 (achieving universal education), Goal 4 (reducing child mortality) and Goal 5 (reducing maternal mortality).¹³⁴ He also stated that, although the main components of human development had improved significantly in economic terms, the country still faced challenges of unemployment, low labour productivity growth rates and sustained income inequality.¹³⁵

83. The Secretary-General noted that domestically produced gasoline was increasing being used but it was of lower quality than imported gasoline, causing a decline in air quality, especially in Tehran.¹³⁶ He also noted that sanctions had diminished the export of agricultural products and had decreased agricultural revenue, forcing rural populations to harvest more natural resources, putting further pressure on biodiversity and the environment.¹³⁷

84. CESCR was concerned about the adverse environmental effects of the river diversion programme, sugar-cane farming and industrial pollution in Khuzestan province and their negative impact on Ahwazi Arabs' rights to an adequate standard of living and health.¹³⁸

Notes

¹ Unless indicated otherwise, the status of ratification of instruments listed in the table may be found on the official website of the United Nations Treaty Collection database, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, <http://treaties.un.org/>. Please also refer to the United Nations compilation on the Islamic Republic of Iran from the previous cycle (A/HRC/WG.6/7/IRN/2).

² The following abbreviations have been used for this document:

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD
CPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

³ Individual complaints: ICCPR-OP 1, art 1; OP-CEDAW, art. 1; OP-CRPD, art. 1; OP-ICESCR, art. 1; OP-CRC-IC, art.5; ICERD, art. 14; CAT, art. 22; ICRMW, art. 77; and CPED, art. 31. Inquiry procedure: OP-CEDAW, art. 8; CAT, art. 20; CPED, art. 33; OP-CRPD, art. 6; OP-ICESCR, art. 11; and OP-CRC-IC, art. 13. Inter-State complaints: ICCPR, art. 41; ICRMW, art. 76; CPED, art. 32; CAT, art. 21; OP-ICESCR, art. 10; and OP-CRC-IC, art. 12. Urgent action: CPED, art. 30.

- ⁴ 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
- ⁵ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.
- ⁶ Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (First Convention); Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Second Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Convention); Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Convention); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III). For the official status of ratifications, see Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, at www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intla/intrea/chdep/warvic.html.
- ⁷ International Labour Organization Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour; Convention No. 105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour; Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise; Convention No. 98 concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively; Convention No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value; Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation; Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment; Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
- ⁸ International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries and Convention No. 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
- ⁹ Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II); Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III).
- ¹⁰ Concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 33.
- ¹¹ Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 21.
- ¹² Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/HRC/25/26, para. 6.
- ¹³ Communications report of special procedures, A/HRC/25/74, p. 30.
- ¹⁴ Concluding observations of the Committee on Civil and Political Rights, CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 5. See also CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 7, and E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 4.
- ¹⁵ CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 8.
- ¹⁶ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 31.
- ¹⁷ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 9.
- ¹⁸ According to article 5 of the rules of procedure of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC) Sub-Committee on Accreditation, the classifications for accreditation used by the Sub-Committee are: A: Voting Member (fully in compliance with each of the Paris Principles), B: Non-Voting Member (not fully in compliance with each of the Paris Principles or insufficient information provided to make a determination), C: No Status (not in compliance with the Paris Principles).
- ¹⁹ For the list of national human rights institutions with accreditation status granted by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC), see A/HRC/23/28, annex.
- ²⁰ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 5. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 7, and CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 11.
- ²¹ The following abbreviations have been used in the present document:

CERD Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
 CESCR Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
 HR Committee Human Rights Committee

- ²² CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 24.
- ²³ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 32.
- ²⁴ Letters from HR Committee to the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, dated 24 May and 2 December 2013, available from http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/IRN/INT_CCPR_FUL_IRN_15884_E.pdf and http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/IRN/INT_CCPR_FUL_IRN_15883_E.pdf.
- ²⁵ For the titles of special procedures, see www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Themes.aspx and www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Countries.aspx.
- ²⁶ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/HRC/22/56, para. 2. See also report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/68/503, para. 5.
- ²⁷ A/HRC/25/26, paras. 37–38.
- ²⁸ Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, A/HRC/22/45, para. 193.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 195.
- ³⁰ A/HRC/25/26, para. 22, and report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, A/68/377, para. 11.
- ³¹ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 11. See also E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 17.
- ³² E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 17. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 11.
- ³³ Submission of UNCT for UPR, p. 2.
- ³⁴ A/HRC/22/56, para. 36.
- ³⁵ CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 10.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 15.
- ³⁷ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 30.
- ³⁸ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 6.
- ³⁹ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 23.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 25.
- ⁴¹ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 8. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 24.
- ⁴² CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 10. See also E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 7.
- ⁴³ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 7. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 10.
- ⁴⁴ A/HRC/25/26, para. 7, and A/68/377, para. 4. See also A/HRC/25/26, para. 8, and A/68/377, para. 15.
- ⁴⁵ Opening statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the twenty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council, p. 4. Available from www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14674&LangID=E.
- ⁴⁶ Press release, “Stop the executions” – UN rights experts alarmed at the sharp increase in hangings in Iran”, 22 January 2014. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14190&LangID=E.
- ⁴⁷ A/68/377, para. 17.
- ⁴⁸ Public statement of the High Commissioner for Human Rights “Iran: Execution of juvenile offenders breaches international law”, 26 June 2014. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14780&LangID=E.
- ⁴⁹ UNCT submission, p. 3.
- ⁵⁰ A/68/377, para. 13.
- ⁵¹ A/HRC/22/56, para. 5.
- ⁵² CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 13.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, para. 14. See also A/HRC/22/56, paras. 25–33.
- ⁵⁴ A/HRC/22/56, para. 23.
- ⁵⁵ A/68/377, para. 19.
- ⁵⁶ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, A/HRC/22/47/Add.4, para. 218. See also paras. 206–217.
- ⁵⁷ A/HRC/25/26, para. 10.
- ⁵⁸ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 16.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 19.

- ⁶⁰ A/HRC/25/26, para. 11, and statement of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran dated 10 April 2014.
- ⁶¹ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 16.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, para. 22.
- ⁶³ A/HRC/22/56, para. 20. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 22.
- ⁶⁴ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 21.
- ⁶⁵ CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 13.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 13.
- ⁶⁷ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 17.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 18.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 14.
- ⁷⁰ A/HRC/25/26, para. 22.
- ⁷¹ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 28.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, para. 20.
- ⁷³ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 18.
- ⁷⁴ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 9.
- ⁷⁵ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 10. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 9.
- ⁷⁶ UNCT submission, p. 2.
- ⁷⁷ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 7. See also A/HRC/22/56, paras. 65–67.
- ⁷⁸ A/HRC/22/56, para. 44.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 47.
- ⁸⁰ UNCT submission, p. 4.
- ⁸¹ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 23.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, para. 24.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, para. 25.
- ⁸⁴ A/HRC/25/26, para. 12.
- ⁸⁵ A/HRC/22/56, paras. 15.
- ⁸⁶ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 27.
- ⁸⁷ UNESCO submission, p. 13.
- ⁸⁸ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, A/HRC/25/55/Add.3, para. 2017.
- ⁸⁹ A/HRC/25/26, paras. 17–18.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 20.
- ⁹¹ Opinion adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, A/HRC/WGAD/2012/48, para. 18.
- ⁹² A/HRC/25/55/Add.3, para. 2015. Also paras 2010–2014. See also A/HRC/22/47/Add.4, para. 221.
- ⁹³ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 15.
- ⁹⁴ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 26.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 26. See also E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 15.
- ⁹⁶ A/HRC/25/26, para. 21. See also A/68/377, para. 10.
- ⁹⁷ Press release, “Iran: UN experts concerned at barring of women presidential candidates and freedom restrictions”, 29 May 2013. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13373&LangID=E. See also A/68/377, para. 7; A/HRC/22/56, paras. 11–12; and A/HRC/25/26, para. 6.
- ⁹⁸ UNCT submission, p. 4.
- ⁹⁹ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3 para. 8, and E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 10.
- ¹⁰⁰ CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 17.
- ¹⁰¹ A/HRC/25/26, para. 31.
- ¹⁰² E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 11.
- ¹⁰³ CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 9.
- ¹⁰⁴ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 14.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 13.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 12.
- ¹⁰⁷ CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 16.
- ¹⁰⁸ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 20.
- ¹⁰⁹ A/68/377, para. 24.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 28.

- ¹¹¹ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 23.
¹¹² Ibid., para. 25.
¹¹³ Ibid., para. 22.
¹¹⁴ Ibid., para. 24.
¹¹⁵ Ibid., para. 19.
¹¹⁶ Ibid., para. 16.
¹¹⁷ UNCT submission, p. 5.
¹¹⁸ A/68/377, para. 37.
¹¹⁹ A/HRC/22/56, paras. 72–75.
¹²⁰ UNCT submission, p. 6.
¹²¹ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 27.
¹²² E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 9.
¹²³ A/68/377, para. 36.
¹²⁴ UNCT submission, pp. 6–7.
¹²⁵ UNESCO submission for UPR, p. 13.
¹²⁶ A/HRC/22/56, paras. 68–71.
¹²⁷ Ibid., para. 28.
¹²⁸ Ibid., para. 30. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 30.
¹²⁹ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 29. See also CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 12.
¹³⁰ A/HRC/25/26, para. 23. See also press release, “UN human rights experts urge Iran to release Baha’i community leaders”, 13 May 2013. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13321&LangID=E.
¹³¹ A/HRC/22/56, paras. 56–64. See also CCPR/C/IRN/CO/3, para. 30. See also CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19, para. 15.
¹³² A/HRC/25/26, para. 24.
¹³³ UNCT submission, p. 8.
¹³⁴ A/HRC/25/26, para. 25.
¹³⁵ A/68/377, para. 25.
¹³⁶ Ibid., para. 39.
¹³⁷ Ibid., para. 40.
¹³⁸ E/C.12/IRN/CO/2, para. 26.
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