Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)

Ahwaz Human Rights Organization (AHRO)

Balochistan Human Rights Group (BHRG)

Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI)

Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan

*Joint submission to the UN OHCHR*

Universal Periodic Review, 34th session: Islamic Republic of Iran

The **UNPO** is an international association of nations and peoples denied equal representation in the institutions of national or international governance. Our membership includes representatives of over 250 million unrepresented people worldwide, including the Ahwazi Arab, Azerbaijani Turk, Kurdish and Balochi people in Iran. We are working for a world where every citizen can take part in the conduct of public affairs at any level and where all peoples can freely pursue their political, economic, social and cultural development.

The **AHRO** is a Virginia-based international human rights advocacy organisation officially registered as a non-profit, whose goal is to support and to advocate for the rights of Ahwazi Arabs.

The **BHRG** is a non-profit and non-governmental, Sweden-based organisation focussed on the human rights situation in Balochistan. It prepares up-to-date data and analysis on the situation of human rights in Balochistan for the attention of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran as well as to other UN agencies, media, fellow human rights groups, governments and for the public.
The **PDKI** is a social democratic party and a member of the Socialist International, founded in Mahabad, Iranian Kurdistan. It seeks a democratic and federal Iran and struggles to attain Kurdish national rights within a federal and democratic Iran.

The **Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan** is a social democratic party led by Abdullah Mohtadi, its Secretary-General. It is affiliated with the Socialist International and has headquarters in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and branches and representatives in several countries in Europe and in North America.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was prepared by the UNPO, the AHRO, the BHRG, the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan and the PDKI as a joint submission to the OHCHR ahead of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s 3rd review in the framework of the UPR process. It focuses on the situation facing non-Persian communities in Iran and, more particularly, on the rights of the Ahwazi Arabs, Balochi and Kurdish people. The report looks first at civil and political rights, then at economic, social and cultural rights. It concludes with an examination of Iran’s respect for the cross-cutting right to self-determination. A document, put together with the support of the University of Aix-Marseille’s Law Clinic, is annexed to this report, which outlines some of the recommendations made by UN bodies to Iran since 2014 and the subsequent developments (if any).

The report is prepared in a context of widespread international concern for the situation of human rights in Iran. As demonstrated by the European Parliament’s adoption of a resolution thereon on 14 March 2019, and the summary of international findings annexed to this report, there have been no significant signs of improvement in the past five years regarding the general human rights situation in Iran. What distinguishes the situation facing the Kurdish, Ahwazi Arab or Baloch communities compared to that of the Persian community in Iran is that these abuses are carried out at a greater scale and with greater impunity against these people. In addition, these people face human rights abuses specific to them.

Ahwazi Arabs

The Ahwazi Arabs are an indigenous people of the southwestern Iran province of Al-Ahwaz (officially known as “Khuzestan”), also known as Khuzestan or Arabistan. An autonomous emirate in the past, the region has experienced on-and-off autonomy and independence. One of this people’s main concerns has to do with the government policies used to destabilise the community and change the ethnic composition of the region, with practices of cultural and language rights suppression, land grabbing and forced migration. Ahwazi Arabs have also found themselves discriminated against and severely affected by a deliberate lack of support from the State for their socio-economic development.

Baloch

The indigenous Baloch people, the majority of whom reside in the Balochistan region in southeast Iran, have experienced vast marginalisation since the division of their nation by the British and Persian Empires. Successive government-led demographic manipulations have aimed at reducing the Baloch community to a minority in their own region and discrimination has been institutionalised. Because of these policies, the province is one of Iran’s poorest and the Baloch are effectively becoming a minority in their homeland. Also in the Balochistan region, repression and physical violence have become an everyday reality, with the Baloch being systematically subjected to persecution, imprisonment, torture and arbitrary executions.

Iranian Kurds

The Kurdish region is located in the northwest region of Iran and holds a majority Kurdish population. Some of the main issues faced by Iran’s Kurds include political persecution and marginalisation. The Kurdish regions are neglected by the Iranian government and suffer military repression and economic hardship, leading to increasing levels of poverty and growing inequality. Forced evictions and a lack of access to housing have led many to resort to living in precarious and unsafe conditions. Kurds also
suffer from cultural, religious and political repression. They currently make up the majority of Iran’s political prisoners of conscience.

The human rights concerns of non-Persian communities are often drowned out by broader concerns with human rights in Iran more generally. The authors of this report urge that the final document adopted by the Human Rights Council reflects the specific situation facing non-Persian communities in Iran.

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

While the Iranian government should ensure citizens’ entitlement to participate to civil and political life without repression nor discrimination, Iranians as a whole are struggling to do so, and non-Persian communities have these rights denied at an even greater scale on both national and international stages. Their individual freedoms are constantly infringed by the government.

A. Death Penalty and Extrajudicial Killings

Iran remains one of the most prolific users of death penalty in the world and consistently violates the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions.

i. Death Penalty

The UN Special Rapporteur for Iran, in his March 2018 report, highlighted that “some ethnic minority groups in Iran constitute a disproportionately large percentage of persons executed or imprisoned.” Of the 252 executions conducted that year, at least 61 concerned Kurdish citizens in 2018.

On 25 January 2016, two young Baloch were executed after seven years in prison. Both were arrested under thirteen years old.

ii. Extrajudicial Killings

In 2018, at least 4 members of the PDKI were killed by the regime and Kurdish Kolbars (porters) continue to be subject to extrajudicial killings. Kolbars carry goods on their backs across the border regions between Iraqi, Turkish and Iranian Kurdistan as a means of survival, due to the economic underdevelopment of the Iranian Kurdish region. In 2018, 231 Kurdish Kolbars were either killed or seriously wounded in Iranian Kurdistan (Rojhelat), due to indiscriminate shootings from the regime’s paramilitary forces and border security forces or to landmine explosions. The amount of Kolbars killed or injured almost tripled since 2014. For example, Hadi Amini died at the Baneh border in

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1 See A/HRC/37/68, para. 13
2 Data collected by the Association for Human Rights in Kurdistan of Iran-Geneva (KMMK-G): http://kmmk-ge.org/sd/
3 Newsletter Balochistan Human Rights Group April 2016
December 2018 and Yaqoub Kamynana, 19 years old\(^8\), died at the Urmia border in January 2019. Both were killed as a result of Iranian forces’ indiscriminate shootings. This situation raised protests, that either ended up violently stopped by security forces\(^9\) or by forced disappearances of those calling them\(^{10}\).

Iranian Kurdistan isn’t the only region facing indiscriminate killings: both the Balochi people and Al-Ahwaz Arabs deplored an important number of extrajudicial killings of their people.

For instance, on Saturday 9 February 2019, Davood Zahroozahi, a Balochi, was killed by security forces. They opened fire toward his car without prior warning to stop him. He lost control of the car and died on the spot. Security forces fled from the place of the accident right after\(^{11}\). Similarly, on 12 February 2019, Iranian Security Guards in Iranshahr shot at and killed a young Balochi, Muhammad Kurd, while he was driving and transporting fuel\(^{12}\).

Children are not spared by these killings: a three-year-old Ahwazi girl was shot during her father’s arrest because he didn’t comply with orders to stop his vehicle\(^{13}\).

### iii. Landmines

Despite international and domestic efforts, Iran refuses to cooperate with international NGOs and entities on this matter and to ratify the Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty. This refusal is directly impacting non-Persian communities. In 2018, at least 41 Kurdish citizens have been the victims of landmine explosions, 11 Kurdish civilians were killed and 30 were wounded due to landmines explosions and unexploded remnants of the Iran-Iraq war\(^{14}\). The majority of the victims were Kolbars. Two children aged 10 and 12 are among the injured victims. On 8 April 2017, a landmine, remnant of the 1980-1988 war, killed a boy aged 15 in Al-Ahwaz\(^{15}\). In the same region, Saida Chnany, a 15-year-old teenager, was victim from a landmine on 2 March 2019.

### B. Arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances

For the last four years, Iran has been violating the Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Article 32 of the Iranian Constitution states that all people arrested should be arrested in accordance with the law. Thus, if someone is detained, the subject matter of the charge, with reasons for bringing it, must immediately be communicated and explained in writing to the

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\(^{8}\) “A Kolbar was killed by direct firing of Iran’s armed forces at the Urmia border”, Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, https://hengaw.net/en/news/a-Kolbar-was-killed-by-direct-firing-of-iran’s-armed-forces-at-the-urmia-border


\(^{11}\) https://www.hra-news.org/?p=191487


\(^{13}\) “Ahwazi: Iranian Forces Shoot 3 Year Old and Arrest Her Father”, Unrepresented Nations and peoples organization, https://unpo.org/article/19603


\(^{15}\) “Ahwazi Arab Boy killed by wartime landmine”, Ahwaz Monitor: http://www.ahwazmonitor.info/new/ahwazi-arab-boy-killed-by-wartime-landmine/
accused. Within at most 24 hours the file on the case and preliminary documentation must be referred to the competent legal authority. Legal procedures must be initiated as early as possible. Anyone infringing this principle should be punished in accordance with the law.  

Yet, despite these legal protections non-Persian communities are regularly and systematically subjected to arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearances. In December 2018 alone, at least 54 Kurdish citizens have been arrested without grounds by Iran’s regime, 32% more than the previous month, of whom three were women’s rights activists, 38 political activists, seven workers’ rights activists, three civil rights activists, two kolbars (porters) and one a media activist.  

Since 2014, the IRGC has arrested more than 14 dual and foreign nationals whom authorities allegedly perceived to have links with “western” academic, economic and cultural institutions. They are still detained under vague charges such as “cooperating with a hostile state”. All of them were deprived of due process and their families were not informed about their whereabouts and current status. Since June 2018, authorities intensified their crackdown on human rights defenders and lawyers  . On 5 March 2019, Kurdish political activist Mokhtar Zarei had been sentenced to three years behind bars for “conspiracy” and “propaganda against the Supreme Leader”.

C. Torture and ill-treatment in prison

Article 38 and 39 of the Iranian Constitution forbids torture, of any kind, in order to obtain confessions or information is forbidden. It is not permissible to force someone to testify, confess or swear an oath. Such a testimony, confession or oath is worthless. Anyone who deviates from this article shall be sentenced in accordance with law. All forms of violations against the honour and dignity of any person who is legally arrested, detained, imprisoned or sent into exile is prohibited and is subject to prosecution 

Yet, Iranian authorities continue to flout the law and to systemically use torture to extract forced confessions from members of non-Persian communities.

In August 2018, two Iranian Kurds were forced to confess live on television without any prior access to legal counsel and more recently, in January 2019, Iranian Channel 2 broadcasted the forced confession of the co-founder of the Haft-Tappeh Syndicate and other supporters of the protests at the Haft-Tappeh sugarcane mill, incriminating themselves as members of communist currents.

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19 “Iran sentences prominent Kurdish political activist to 6 years in prison”, Rudaw, http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iran/05032019
On 25 September 2018 a young Kurd activist, named Ramin Hosseini, was killed under torture while detained by the Hamedan intelligence services department of the Islamic Republic in Hamadan city after what they threatened his family saying they should not inform the media about the murder.  

In February 2019, two Ahwazi political prisoners were tortured after they went on a hunger strike. On 7 April 2018, Ahwazi poet Abdul-al Duraqi who was arrested during an Ahwaz protest was transferred to Ahwaz's Sepidar hospital due to deterioration in his physical condition after severe torture in the Ahwaz intelligence centre. In November 2018, Ahwazi political activist Mohammad Hattab’s family members were imprisoned and faced torture and ill-treatment, such as plying of fingernails or denial of medical care.

D. Freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and the right to participate in public and political life

Articles 19, 21 and 22 of the ICCPR ensure freedom of expression, of association and peaceful assembly. Iran is also a party to the ICESCR, in which the right to strike is enshrined (article 8). Articles 24 and 27 of the Constitution of Iran guarantee the right to freedom of expression, while article 26 guarantees freedom of association. However these rights can still be restricted when they violate security laws or the values of Islam or of the Islamic Republic, which are instrumentalized to severely restrict activities of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression.

i. Prisoners of conscience

Iranian authorities use security restrictions to control freedom of expression, systematically and arbitrarily imprisoning or killing intellectuals and protesters from non-Persian communities. For instance, on 3 March 2019, Mokhtar Zarei, a Kurdish activist, was sentenced to three years of prison because he shared a video promoting the civil rights of Kurdish. Kurdish activist Ramin Hussein Panahi was executed in September 2018. Panahi’s conviction was based on claims he was a member of the armed Kurdish opposition group despite no evidence being presented linking him to any crimes.

30 “Iran sentences prominent Kurdish political activist to 6 years in prison”, Rudaw, http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iran/05032019
Similar to previous years, the number of imprisonments of Kurdish political prisoners remained dramatically high in the first ten months of 2018. According to findings of the Association for Human Rights in Kurdistan of Iran-Geneva (KMMK-G), they represent almost half of the total number of political prisoners in the country. 749 Kurdish citizens were detained/arrested from 1 January to 31 October 2018, many of whom were sentenced to several years of imprisonment and were charged with crimes related to civic activism and belonging to Kurdish political parties.

ii. Public protests

Iranian authorities also use security considerations as an excuse to brutally crackdown on members of non-Persian communities when they seek to redress economic, social and cultural rights issues that they are faced with.

For example, in October 2018, Al-Ahwaz region witnessed extensive and systematic arrests of a large numbers of Arab youth by the Iranian security forces and Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) during protests focussed on pressing demands on issues such as expensive and scarce drinking water, unemployment and dust storms. On 19 October 2018, the Iranian authorities arrested about 28 people engaged in these protests. As of 2 November 2018, 178 people were arrested. These actions were predicated by the attack, claimed by ISIS, on an Iranian Military parade in the region in September 2018. Using this attack as a pretext, the authorities have been carrying out a massive campaign of intimidation in the province, which has been occurring since the beginning of the year following the peaceful protests in Al-Ahwaz.

Similarly, in December 2018, 41 workers from Ahwaz Steel, suffering unstable wage payments and oppression when demanding their rights, were arrested while peacefully striking during Iran’ security forces’ crackdown on the strike. Ismail Bakhshi, a labour activist and representative and member of the Sugarcane Workers’ Syndicate (Haft Tapeh), remained in jail for 25 days and upon his release, was expelled from work and kept isolated at home, prohibited from public speaking. In addition to Ismail Bakhshi and Ali Najati, several students and writers for a student journal (“طوره‌نگری” – GAM, or


“step”) have been arrested for covering workers’ strikes in articles. They had previously interviewed Ismail Bakhshi and there is a fear that they may also be subjected to similar torture. Sepideh Gholian and Maziar Seyyednejad are among the other people who were subjected to torture and compulsory confessions. In addition to these two students, four other civil right activists are under the same risk. After her son’s detention, Bakhshi’s mother was attacked along with other family members following a stunt in front of Khuzestan governor’s office.

iii. International affairs

Iran non-Persian communities also face difficulties when engaging the UN Human Rights mechanisms. Members of these communities face intimidation and reprisals for trying to raise international awareness of their situation. For example, when Sheyma Silavi of the Ahwaz Human Rights Organisation stated in her oral intervention to the ninth Forum on Minority Issues that “the Ahwazi Arab minority lives in the province of Khuzestan, or [as] also called by its indigenous name Al-Ahwaz or Arabistan…” she was interrupted by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran rapping his name plate on his desk. In being given the floor, the Iranian diplomat appealed to the Chair that Sheyma should “refrain from using the fabricated names regarding the Iranian territories”.

Reprisals are sometimes meted out by the government to family members. Monireh Shirani, based in Europe, described how after a trip she made to the UN in 2010 the Iranian Government called both her and her father in Iran. She was able to ignore their calls, but they asked her father why she had been at the UN, telling him that “she isn’t supposed to do this”.

E. Freedom of Religion

Article 12 of the Iranian constitution states: “the official religion of Iran is Islam and the Twelve Ja’fari School of Thought and this principle shall remain eternally immutable”. This explicit endorsement of a school of Shia Islam alienates the Kurds, Turkmen, Baloch and Ahwaz, who practice Sunni Islam and make up for a considerable part of Iran’s Sunni(227,418),(438,435) minority. Post-1979 Iran is indeed founded upon opposition to Sunni Muslims and the authorities view belief in Shia Islam as an essential element in preserving “Iranian identity” and “national unity”.

Iran has repeatedly denied permissions to build Sunni mosques or schools and destroyed some who were already built, as they are considered an unpardonable crime. As they are deprived of a mosque, Iran’s Sunni minority members use quasi-secret worship rooms to gather and pray. However, Iranian authorities closed Tehran’s secret prayer room on 29 July 2015, months after demolishing another one, the Pounak prayer room, in January 2015, with the backing of law enforcement.

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40 Interviewed by Iona Liddell, 4 October 2016.
Other religions, such as Judaism, Christianity or Zoroastrianism, experience such discrimination to a lesser degree\textsuperscript{47}. Buildings still exist but are under close monitoring. Those who try to speak out on this issue face systematic arrests by authorities. In 2018, at least 171 Christians were arrested in 2018 solely for peacefully practising their faith. Some received sentences of up to 15 years in prison\textsuperscript{48}.

\textsuperscript{47} Balochistan Human Rights Group Report February 2019 www.bhrg.info
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Non-Persian communities are facing an existential threat, being slowly deprived from their identities and livelihoods by Tehran’s authorities. They are perpetually denied their freedom of belief and their right to practice their religion peacefully. Furthermore, they are being targeted as non-Persian speaking people, deprived from their right to freely speak and to be educated in their own languages. In addition to that, they are forced to live in an environment overwhelmed by man-made disasters. Those direct threats to their livelihood could be eased if representatives of those communities could have a say in national politics but Iran never assembled a government truly representative of all the peoples in Iran.

A. Language, cultural and educational rights

Iran systematically violates the cultural and linguistic rights of non-Persian peoples including Kurds, Azeri Turks, Turkmen, Arabs and Baloch, by violating their cultural and linguistic rights. Arabic is the language most often under scrutiny by the Iranian authorities. Cultural gatherings, such as poetry events held in private premises, are regularly targeted with surprise raids and arrests. For example, members of the Iranian security forces arrested Mohammad Bamm, a poet, on 31 December 2017 while on his way home from an event in the city of Abadan, Iran. Bamm was arrested on politically motivated charges of “blasphemy”.

On 3 April 2018, 13 Ahwazi Arabs died and 14 were injured in a fire in café Nawares, known as a meeting spot for Ahwazi Arab activists and intellectuals. Locals suspect connivance between official media Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) and the government after the company broadcasted what some observers have interpreted as a forced confession of a young Ahwazi Arab, drunk, whose alleged motive for the fire was a personal feud.

ii. Education

According to article 15 of the Constitution of Iran, “Persian is the official and common language and script of the people of Iran. The documents, correspondence, official texts, and schoolbooks must all be in this language and script. However, use of regional and ethnic languages in the press, the mass media, and the teaching of their literature at schools, alongside the Persian language, is freely permitted.” Yet, despite these legal protections, non-Persian language education is restricted and/or persecuted.

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For example, in February 2019, the authorities in Bukan city forcibly closed the Zriyan civil institute in Iranian Kurdistan, which had been launched by cultural activists. The institute’s aim was to teach children in Kurdish.

Iran also excluded some students from non-Persian communities from university because of their activism, ethnicity or faith. Those students are called “starred students”. In January 2016, Dana Lanjabadi, a Kurdish student activist who was released from prison in September 2018, has been deprived of the right to continue his higher education, although he has already paid the tuition fees for the on-going semester. Farhad Shafizadeh, a former Kurdish student activist, was deprived of the right to continue his education at a Master’s level in the field of Western Philosophy at Tabriz University, despite his excellence, due to being a “starred student”.

Alongside the concerns, some students also face poor educational infrastructures. According to the “Khuzestan” education board, the province is short of 3,500 classrooms, listed 3rd in the list of provinces with the highest rates of illiteracy, and is in need of 6,000 new teachers. In the Balochistan region, over 7,900 schools do not have walls. Cold areas, especially, bear this burden, as because of the low amount of budgets they can’t afford decent warming devices. In December 2018, 3 schoolgirls died because of a faulty stove in Zahedan in the Balochistan region. 6 years ago, a similar blaze already killed two and burned 26 in Shinabad.

Progress was made on certain topics, however. In August 2018 participants in the national entrance examinations for universities in Iran were allowed to choose Kurdish and Turkish languages as their majors at the bachelor level. Last year, the University of Kurdistan reportedly accepted 40 students to study the Kurdish language at the bachelor level.

B. Environmental rights

As enshrined in UN General Assembly resolution 64/292, access to clean drinking water and sanitation is an essential precondition vis-à-vis other human rights. Yet Iran’s tendency to exploit


56 Khuzestan Education Board Report 2017

57 “Terrible Condition Of Schools In Sistan Balochistan Region Of Iran”, Reddit, https://www.reddit.com/r/iran/comments/9lsctp/terrible_condition_of_schools_in_sistan/


natural resources in the country’s peripheries, further exacerbated by the deliberate lack of State support for the socio-economic development of primarily minority-inhabited areas, hinders non-Persian communities’ environmental rights. Moreover, as Iran’s minorities are traditionally unrepresented at the national and international levels, they do not have a say in environmental affairs.

A clear-cut example of this is the Balochistan region, where the authorities have no water supplement plans, neither short nor long term. Coupled with the increasing frequency in the number of droughts, the situation has deprived Baloch farmers of their livelihoods and the ability to support themselves or their families adequately. The drought is currently affecting two million people.

The Al-Ahwaz region also suffers from water scarcity. In July 2018, the region witnessed its own protests, often met with police violence. That same month, 11 were wounded and dozens arrested while protesting against water shortage in the city of Abadan. In the clashes between protesting farmers and the police on July 12 in a village in Kazeroun, province of Fars in southern Iran, one person was killed and a number of protesters injured.

Droughts are mainly caused by the construction of dams, diverting the water to the center provinces. In February 2019, the opening of a dam caused a flood that destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of Ahwazi farmers, forced to flee their homes without any sort of financial compensation.

The Iranian government is also directly impacting the environment by agreeing to the construction of these dams: by holding the water behind the dam for so long before opening it, the Karun river, several lakes and marshlands are being left to dry, which is the source of high dust particles which sweep the region of Al-Ahwaz following each storm.

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68 “Ahwazi: Man-Made Floods Lead Families to Flee their Homes”, Unrepresented nations and Peoples organization, available at: https://unpo.org/article/21357
RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Iran’s non-Persian populations are insufficiently involved in the decision-making processes for what concerns, for instance, the development of infrastructures such as dams or water management plans, which particularly affect these populations.

While non-Persian populations make up roughly 40 to 50 percent of Iran’s population, experts underline that the dominant trend in Iran has remained the centralisation of political life and dominance of Persians. This is to a point where attempts to increase minority representation have been considered as secessionist, and therefore strongly resisted by the government. This is well demonstrated by the already-mentioned resistance to the promotion of minority languages.

Today 5 seats are reserved in the Iranian Parliament for recognised religious minorities: two for Armenians and one for each other minority: Assyrians, Jews and Zoroastrians. Sunni Muslims do not have specific seats but, in theory, are able to take part in the ordinary election process at all constitutional levels. But this only concerns religious minorities and not ethnic minorities. Indeed, if the Iranian Constitution recognises the formation of political parties in its article 26, those require a prior permit from governmental authorities, based on the country’s Law on the Activities of Parties, Societies, Political and Corporate Organisations, Islamic Associations and Associations Founded by Recognised Religious Minorities. But permits are often denied to ethnic minorities.

The Iranian Constitution, in its article 100, creates Village, Division, City, Municipality and Provincial Councils to be elected by the population of the locality, but candidates are always examined and are required to “preserve national unity, territorial integrity, the system of the Islamic Republic, and the sovereignty of the central government”. Besides, the Councils’ decisions should “not be contrary to the criteria of Islam and the laws of the country”, in accordance with article 105.

Some structures are currently in place that can serve as a basis for consultative processes, including the Council of Minority Religious Schools and the National Committee for the Promotion of the Rights of Religious Minorities, but those need to be expanded in membership, in terms of activities and be actually used as a means of conflict resolution and prevention. When it comes to self-governance and autonomy for non-Persian groups in the country, much progress still needs to be made Iran continues to consider any efforts towards self-administration and autonomy as separatist tendencies.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, UNPO, AHRO, the BHRG, the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan and PDKI, make the following recommendations to the Islamic Republic of Iran:

1. Put an end to the targeted attacks and disproportionate and discriminatory use of security rules against those working for the rights of non-Persian communities, including those operating internationally.

2. Safeguard the existence of non-Persian communities through environmental protection and legal and practical guarantees related to freedom of religion, cultural expression and language, including through guarantees to religious education and minority language education in Iran.

3. Ensure that the existence of a multicultural Iran is recognized both in law and in practice, guaranteeing political structures that enable all of the peoples of Iran to freely control their economic, social and cultural development and to participate in public life at all levels.
## ANNEX 1: STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issuer</th>
<th>Month and year</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Developments following recommendation?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committee on the CRC (CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4)</td>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>Repeal its laws and policies that are discriminatory against girls and religious and ethnic minorities and ensure that all children enjoy equal rights and freedoms as guaranteed under the Convention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Committee on the CRC (CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4)</td>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>Review hijab laws and regulations and ensure that right of girls to wear it or not is fully respected</td>
<td>Women who gathered to protest against compulsory hijab were arrested at the end of 2017 (<a href="https://www.unhcr.org/uk">United Kingdom</a>), July 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee on the CRC (CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4)</td>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>Take effective measures, including accountability, to put an end to discrimination against religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities, children born out of wedlock and asylum-seeking and refugee children, and that it ensure that those responsible for any forms of discrimination against such groups are held accountable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Secretary-General (A/72/562)</td>
<td>October 2017</td>
<td>Introduce a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, halt the sentencing of children to the death penalty, unconditionally stop all executions of persons sentenced to death for crimes committed when they were children</td>
<td>During the first month of 2018, three people have been executed for crimes they committed when they were 15 or 16 years old. Other juvenile offenders are also in danger of imminent execution with a total of some 80 such individuals reported to be on death row, for crimes they committed when they were under</td>
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<td>UN Secretary-General (A/72/562)</td>
<td>October 2017</td>
<td>Release the 7 Bahá’í leaders</td>
<td>Baha’i faced a new wave of arrests and raids on their homes since 2017 (Bahá’í International Community, May 2018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Secretary-General (A/HRC/37/24)</td>
<td>February 2018</td>
<td>Ensure that human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists are able to exercise their peaceful activities safely and freely, and release political prisoners, including human rights defenders and lawyers, detained for exercising their right to freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly</td>
<td>The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran indicated numerous reports of the violent crackdown by security forces, which led to the death of at least 22 people during the protests in January 2018. As of June, there were at least 12 journalists as well as 14 bloggers and social media activists in detention (A/HRC/37/24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSR on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran (A/RHC/37/68)</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
<td>Respect the right to freedom of religion and belief, release of all imprisoner on the basis of their religion, belief or identity</td>
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