



Impact Iran applauds Germany's initiative for a Special Session on human rights in Iran and calls for the swift establishment of an investigative accountability body

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Impact Iran applauds the German Government's recent [announcement](#) of its decision to support a Special Session of the UN Human Rights Council on the grave human rights situation in Iran, with a view to "*establish[ing] a UN mechanism*" to ensure that "*evidence can be collected and documented.*"

We welcome German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock's words that "*the brutal violence and repression cannot be without consequences for those responsible.*" They exhibit Germany's leadership in taking concrete steps toward addressing the crisis of systemic impunity in Iran, which has fueled successive cycles of violence and bloodshed, and working as a member of the UN Human Rights Council to fulfill the preeminent body's role in addressing gross human rights violations.

As the Iranian authorities continue to show their deadly resolve to crush the ongoing protests at any cost, including by unlawfully killing, arresting, detaining, and torturing protestors and bystanders and subjecting them to enforced disappearances, Impact Iran urges Germany and other states to treat these pressing, dire developments with the sense of urgency they deserve and promptly convene a Special Session. Time is of the essence. As we speak, more lives, including children's, are taken as a result of state violence. Only within the course of 24 hours, Iranian security forces [unlawfully killed](#) at least several protesters when on 26 October, tens of thousands of people in Iran commemorated the 40th day of mourning for the death in custody of Mahsa Jina Amini.

Impact Iran reiterates [its urgent call, endorsed unanimously by 43 civil society organizations](#), on the Human Rights Council to use this Special Session to adopt a resolution and establish an independent international mechanism with investigative, reporting, and accountability functions. The call for the urgent establishment of an international investigative and accountability mechanism was echoed on 26 October by [ten UN Special Procedures](#), including the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran. Such a mechanism should have the mandate to investigate and to gather and preserve evidence related to all alleged serious human rights violations and crimes under international law committed in Iran in recent years, including in the context of the successive waves of protest crackdowns since late 2017 and in relation to the causes and circumstances leading to the death in custody of Mahsa Jina Amini and other gross violations against women and girls who have similarly been victimized simply for having exercised their fundamental rights.

The establishment of such a mechanism would signal the Council's resolve to finally tackle the Iranian authorities' longstanding refusal to hold perpetrators of human rights violations and crimes under international law accountable. By establishing a strong investigative and accountability body, the Human Rights Council will take a concrete step to support victims of state repression in Iran and their families, and to put an end to what the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran has called a "*culture of impunity that perpetuates the cycles of violence since violations of human rights have no consequences for the State or for individual perpetrators.*"

Context

Over the past six weeks, people in Iran, including youth, have courageously taken to the street to demand justice, accountability, and change. The protests were sparked by outrage at the death in custody of Mahsa Jina Amini after she was arbitrarily arrested by the "morality police" for allegedly wearing her headscarf "inadequately." The focus of the protests soon expanded from calls to put an end to Iran's repression of women's rights to demands for fundamental political and social change toward protecting and realizing human rights for all persons in the country. From the start of the protests, and as per its modus operandi, Iran's authorities and security forces have engaged in violent crackdowns on protestors, which has involved the unwarranted and widespread use of lethal force and live ammunition, resulting in unlawful killings, including against children, [arbitrary arrests and detentions](#), gender-based and sexual violence, torture and other ill-treatment and enforced disappearances.

The Iranian authorities have shown nothing but contempt for repeated calls by the UN Secretary-General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, many UN Special Procedures, UN Member States, and the UN General Assembly to cease the unlawful use of force against protesters and bystanders and to effectively investigate and prosecute those responsible.

The unrelenting brutal crackdown on ongoing protests in Iran follows the same patterns of killings and commission of other gross violations of human rights and crimes under international law documented in previous waves of protests, including in December 2017-January 2018, November 2019, July 2021, November 2021, and May 2022. These protest crackdowns have become emblematic of Iran's long-standing and persistent impunity for violently quashing its people's voices and undeniable proof that the absence of any prospects for accountability has emboldened Iran's authorities and security forces to launch violent campaigns of repression every time they are faced with protests.

Signatories:

- Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights in Iran
- All Human Rights for All in Iran
- ARTICLE19
- Association for the Human Rights of the Azerbaijani People in Iran (AHRAZ)
- Baloch Activists Campaign
- Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort (ECPM)
- Human Rights Activists (in Iran)
- Impact Iran
- Iran Human Rights
- Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC)
- Kurdistan Human Rights Association - Geneva (KMMK-G)
- Kurdpa Human Rights Organization
- Rasank
- Siamak Pourzand Foundation (SPF)
- United for Iran