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Institute

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Oral Statement by the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) during the Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran - 17 March 2021

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report and expresses deep concern over ongoing human rights violations in Iran.

We condemn the widespread pattern of judicial harassment of human rights defenders and lawyers through arbitrary imprisonment following unfair trials, adjudicated by vaguely worded charges. We would like to draw your attention to the cases of human rights lawyers Nasrin Sotoudeh and Amirsalar Davoodi who have been exposed to judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest, and detention in extreme and concerning circumstances. Such action has created a chilling effect on the independence of the legal profession.

In 2021, at least 365 people were executed, including 4 juvenile offenders and 16 women.<sup>1</sup> The serious shortcomings in Iran's legal framework and justice system regarding due process and fair trial render most, if not all, executions in Iran an arbitrary deprivation of life.

We strongly condemn Iran's non-compliance with international standards on detention conditions and reports of torture of those critical of the regime,<sup>2</sup> as well as authorities' systematic refusal to investigate suspicious deaths in custody and the use of unlawful force by security forces in the context of peaceful assemblies.

These violations, combined with an atmosphere of impunity and a lack of judicial independence severely limit any prospect of accountability.

**We urge the Iranian authorities to:**

- **Immediately and unconditionally release** all human rights defenders, including lawyers and political prisoners imprisoned following an unfair trial;
- **Ensure** that lawyers can carry out their profession free from undue interference, including judicial harassment;
- **Respect judicial independence**, particularly with the appointment of the head of the Judiciary and the harassment of judges,
- **Conduct prompt, independent, impartial, effective, and transparent investigations** into all reported human rights violations; and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://iran-hrm.com/2022/01/06/iran-prisoners-executed-in-2021-one-death-penalty-carried-out-every-day/>

<sup>2</sup> A great number of crimes carry the death penalty in Iran and are facilitated by a growing legislative framework, often based on vaguely defined criminal provisions that depend on subjective or discretionary considerations. For example, the 2013 Iranian Penal Code expanded the number of crimes subject to the death penalty and includes provisions that reject the presumption of innocence with respect to crimes punishable by death.

- **Immediately establish a moratorium** on the death penalty, with a view to abolition.

*This statement was delivered by:*

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