

UPR of Islamic Republic of Iran – advance questions submitted by Norway

1. How has the Islamic Republic of Iran involved the civil society organisations in the elaboration of the national report and why has a number of NGOs been excluded?
2. The Centre for Human Rights Defenders has been closed by the Iranian Authorities since December 2008, and several of its members have been subject to arrests and intimidations. What will Iran do to improve the conditions for Human rights Defenders in Iran?
3. The Iranian Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of speech, association and assembly through articles 23 to 28. However, both regulations in the Constitution, national legislation and practise limit citizens' right to freedom of expression, association and assembly. How can Iran ensure the right to freedom of speech, association and assembly for its citizens?
4. Iran has repeatedly protested against the disproportional and excessive use of force against the civilian population in different conflicts around the world. How does the Iranian government explain the disproportional and excessive use of force displayed by Iranian police and governmental sponsored militia against the Iranian civilian population during the unrest following the June 2009 Presidential Elections?
5. Following the unrest in Iran in 2009 there have surfaced numerous accounts of extreme sexual violence towards detainees, both men and women. What is the Iranian Government doing to protect its citizens against sexual abuse while in the authorities' custody and to prosecute the perpetrators and persons responsible for such crimes?
6. In Iran, a number of rights for women such as the right to education, employment and free movement are conditional of their husband's approval. Women's access to divorce is also limited, while men have free access to divorce. Which steps is Iran taking to ensure equal rights for men and women in line with its obligations according to ICCPR and ICESCR?
7. Norway has taken note of annex V to the national report where it is stated that close to 60 % of University admissions are engaged by young girls and women. However, approximately 1/3 of Iranian women in employable age are unemployed, while the general unemployment rate by the end of 2009 was 12, 8%. What is the Iranian Government doing to ensure equal access to employment for women as for men?
8. Norway has also taken note of Iran's voluntary pledge and commitment to consider accession to the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), the convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment (CAT) and the optional protocol to the convention on the rights of the child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OP-CRC-SC). Norway welcomes Iran's accession to OP-CRC-SC.

Which concrete steps has been taken in relation to the accession of CEDAW and CAT?

9. Despite the moratorium on stoning given by the Head of Judiciary in 2002, and the following request from the same in 2008 to the country's courts, there has been handed down several new sentences of stoning the last years and at least three persons was executed by this method only in 2008-2009. Does Iran have any plans to abolish this cruel and inhuman punishment?
10. Iran has as a signatory state to the ICCPR committed itself to impose the death penalty only for the most serious crimes. Can the Iranian government explain why it considers adultery as a serious crime?
11. Which steps will Iran take to publish national statistics on death sentences imposed and executions carried out?
12. Norway takes note of annex VI to the national report where Iran states that religious minorities are absolute free to practise their religious rites and customs. Further, Norway notes that Iran defines religious minorities as Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. In the light of the much wider definition of religion that follows ICCPR art 18, may Iran explain on which grounds it has limited the definition of religious minorities? How can Iran ensure that also other religious minorities can enjoy religious freedom?
13. In the concluding observations of the 1610th meeting of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, CERD observed that certain provisions of the Iranian legislation appeared to be discriminatory on both ethnic and religious grounds, and that certain minorities, including the Bahá'ís, faced discrimination and was deprived of certain rights. The committee recommended that the Iranian government ensured that all persons enjoy their right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, without any discrimination based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, and that Iran permit students of different origins to register in universities without being compelled to state their religion. Which concrete steps has been taken to comply with the committee's recommendation?
14. In conflict with both the Convention on the Rights of the child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Iran is one of very few countries in the world who still execute juvenile offenders. Most of these executions take place in cases of qesas (retribution according to sharia). According to our knowledge, the Iranian Parliament is working on a new Juvenile Justice Bill. Which specific measures is Iran planning to implement in this bill to avoid that juvenile offenders in the future will be condemned to qesas?