

(Video) UNSG Condemns Systematic Impunity in Iran Under Mullahs' Regime

Growing International Calls for Investigating the 1988 Massacre in Iran, the UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearances joined the call for an investigation.

PARIS, FRANCE, September 3, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres submitted a report to the General Assembly today on the situation of Human rights in Iran. The UNSG also referred to [the 1988 massacre](#) of political prisoners in Iran. The report contains information on the patterns and trends with regard to the situation of human rights in Iran under the mullahs' regime.



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres submitted a report to the General Assembly today on the situation of Human rights in Iran. The UNSG also referred to the 1988 massacre of political prisoners in Iran.

“Some political prisoners have been in prison for years without a single day of furlough. Maryam Akbari Monfared, sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for participating in protests in 2009, has

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NCRI

remained imprisoned for the past 12 years. Harassment against her increased after she filed a formal complaint, seeking an official investigation into the executions of political prisoners, including her siblings, in 1988,” the report reads, raising concern about the situation of Maryam Akbari Monfared, who has called for justice for her loved-ones executed during the 1988 massacre.

In another part of his report, The UNSG refers to a mass grave in Khavaran, where thousands of the 1988 victims are buried. The reports condemn the regime's attempt to destroy this mass grave.

"Impunity also prevails in relation to past violations. In April 2021, the authorities issued an order denying members of the Baha'i community the right to bury their deceased in their dedicated space in Golestan cemetery, forcing them instead to use space between existing graves or at the Khavaran mass grave site, 54 which is believed to contain victims of enforced disappearances and summary executions in the summer of 1988," the report reads.

In his recent report to the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Javid Rehman, Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iran, expressed concern about the regime's attempts to destroy evidence of the 1988 massacre. He also underlined that how the regime authorities involved in human rights violations enjoy systematic impunity.

"The Special Rapporteur is concerned at reported attempts by the authorities to continue to destroy evidence of past violations, including the reported mass extrajudicial executions of political dissidents in 1988," read the report.

The selection of Ebrahim Raisi, one of the perpetrators of the 1988 massacre as Iran's new president is a clear sign of systematic impunity of human rights violators in Iran.

Following Raisi's presidency, Amnesty International's Secretary General Agnès Callamard said: "That Ebrahim Raisi has risen to the presidency instead of being investigated for the crimes against humanity of murder, enforced disappearance and torture, is a grim reminder that impunity reigns supreme in Iran."

In December, seven UN human rights experts, including Mr. Rehman and Ms. Callamard, asserted that the 1988 massacre may amount to "crimes against humanity."



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): Attention to the genocidal impulses behind the 1988 massacre, they can help to foster the international will that would be necessary for initiating the prosecution of Raisi and others at the International Criminal Court.



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): Geoffrey Ronald Robertson, QC, is a Human Rights Barrister, Academic, Author, and Broadcaster.

The international community should investigate the 1988 massacre as holding the regime to account for this crime against humanity, is an important step toward ending the systematic impunity in Iran which has resulted in systematic human rights violations.

In the summer of 1988, the Iranian regime summarily and extra-judicially executed tens of thousands of political prisoners held in jails across Iran. The massacre was carried out on the basis of a fatwa by the regime's then-Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini.

This report is an excerpt of the second edition of a book titled "A Crime Against Humanity". The book was published in August 2017 by [the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran \(PMOI-MEK\)](#).

[UN Working Group](#) on Enforced Disappearances joined the call for an international investigation into the 1988 massacre.

"The Working Group reiterates the concerns expressed about the ongoing concealment of burial sites of those forcibly disappeared and allegedly executed between July and September 1988 across the country. The Working Group recalls that an enforced disappearance continues until the fate and whereabouts of the individuals concerned are established and joins the call for an international investigation into the matter," the report reads.

In the summer of 1988, over 30,000 political prisoners were executed. Most of the victims were the members and supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK).

Recently the Iranian Resistance held a conference that focused equal attention upon details of that massacre as recalled by its survivors and upon legal issues relating to it.



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): The 1988 massacre did not just happen. It was rooted in a fundamental conflict between the people of Iran, demanding freedom, democracy, and economic and social development after the overthrow of the Shah.



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): The authorities had already paved the way to massacre all the prisoners defending the Mojahedin-e-Khalq, MEK, and their causes. One day, Mortazavi came into the ward, and the prisoners asked him to resolve a series of issues and problems.

The conference was attended by more than 1,000 former political prisoners and eyewitnesses to the regime's mass executions, many of whom addressed a global audience via the live video stream.

They were accompanied by various European policymakers and legal scholars, who offered insight regarding the role that Western governments and judicial systems might play in bringing major perpetrators of the massacre to justice, including the regime's current president Ebrahim Raisi.

While the estimated number of victims of the 1988 massacre is above 30,000, one eyewitness to the massacre who provided a video testimonial to the NCRI before Friday's conference even suggested that this is a conservative estimate.

Mahmoud Royaei noted that "in some prisons, there were absolutely no survivors to give their testimonies about the events," meaning that Tehran would have been free to underreport the number of people who were detained in those prisons prior to the massacre. At the same time, the deputy intelligence minister at the time of the massacre, Reza Malek, referred to the death commissions on at least one occasion as having targeted 33,700 people, almost all of whom were members of the MEK.

The Iranian Resistance has long urged the international community to ascertain the exact scale of the massacre by launching a formal United Nations commission of inquiry. Such an investigation would no doubt establish the identities of major participants in the massacre, as well. But the eyewitness testimony from Friday's conference and the preceding videos underscores the fact that leading participants have long since been identified.

The last push for accountability has been motivated in large part by Ebrahim Raisi's ascension to



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): In July 1988, Ruhollah Khomeini, issued a decree, stating that all the political prisoners who remain steadfast in their support for the Iranian opposition movement, the People's Mojahedin Organization MEK.



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): Upon Khomeini's fatwa, 'Death Commissions' were formed in Tehran and across Iran. The prisoners were brought before the Commission (three to four members), and their fates were decided in a few minutes.

the presidency, and many speakers at the conference duly emphasized the notion that Western nations have a stronger responsibility than ever to bring such figures to justice.

Just prior to the massacre, Raisi was serving as a deputy prosecutor for Tehran when he was tapped to serve on the Tehran death commission that would oversee the implementation of Ruhollah Khomeini's fatwa targeting the PMOI. Eyewitnesses recall him taking a leading role in many of the proceedings, during which he routinely passed death sentences in the span of just a few minutes, closing one political prisoner's file and moving swiftly to the next one. His commitment to the mass executions eventually led to Khomeini extending his jurisdiction beyond Tehran to several other cities, as a means of correcting so-called "weakness in the judiciary."

Friday's conference served to reinforce international recognition of Raisi's criminal background by underlining that his enthusiastic embrace of the massacre made him a party not just to crimes against humanity but also to genocide. UK barrister and human rights expert Geoffrey Robertson QC, for one, used the conference as an outlet for his argument that the religious motives behind Khomeini's fatwa lent support to the idea of labeling the massacre as genocide and prosecuting its perpetrators accordingly.

Robertson explained that an incident rises to the level of genocide if it involves "killing or causing serious mental or physical harm to members of a racial or religious group" with the intention of destroying or comprehensively displacing that group. "The religious group which the Iranian regime intended to destroy were those who held a different view of Islam," Robertson added.

Eric David, a professor of international law from Belgium, agreed. The 1988 massacre, he argued, "is indeed a crime of genocide because these people were killed because they belonged to a current of Islam that the mullahs' regime contested." While it has been reported that 90 percent of the massacre's victims were affiliated with the PMOI, the 1988 massacre was a part of a broader strategy of enforcing the fundamentalist view of Islam which underlay the regime's theocratic dictatorship.

The Iranian opposition president, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi highlighted that ominous strategy in her speech before Friday's conference. "Khomeini's fatwa was an explicit decree to execute all the Mojahedin who remained steadfast," she said. "[But] the goal of the regime goes far beyond the



(PMOI / MEK Iran) and (NCRI): "We urge the international community to recognize the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in 1988 as genocide and a crime against humanity,"

execution of several thousand. It is the obliteration of a generation, an ideology, and men and women who rejected religious extremism under the guise of Islam and stood up for human freedom and dignity.”

Robertson, David, and others indicated that if that suppressed ideology – the ideology of moderate and apolitical Islam – can be identified as a religious category unto itself, then it will be easy to make the case that Raisi, other leading officials, and ultimately the entire Iranian regime are guilty of genocide as well as more generic crimes against humanity. What’s more, the legal experts emphasized that once that case has been successfully presented to the international community, it is incumbent upon all nations that have ratified the Genocide Convention to take actions supporting accountability and deterrence for those suspected of the crime.

Friday’s conference naturally continued to urge the formation of a UN commission of inquiry as something that would fulfill that international responsibility and would set the stage for prosecution of leading perpetrators at the International Criminal Court. As an alternative, it highlighted the principle of “universal jurisdiction,” which allows for any judiciary to initiate prosecution within its own jurisdiction for anyone who stands accused of committing serious international crimes in another jurisdiction where they are unlikely to face accountability.

This principle is currently being put to the test in Sweden, where a lower-level participant in the 1988 massacre is being prosecuted on charges of war crimes and mass murder. It is the first trial of its kind, but it will set the stage for other nations to execute arrest warrants similar to that which led to Noury’s detention in 2019.

Many human rights defenders and survivors of the 1988 massacre were, of course, distressed to learn that Ebrahim Raisi would be taking control of the presidency. Amnesty International described it as a “grim reminder that impunity reigns supreme in Iran.” But the discussion of universal jurisdiction raised the possibility of a silver lining within this development, namely the fact that Raisi’s pending state visits will put him within easy reach of whatever Western authorities decide to utilize the legal principle and bring him to justice after more than three decades for a series of killings that arguably amount to genocide.

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