

2025

January-March

**IRAN:
A HUMAN RIGHTS
REPORT ON THE
AZERBAIJANI
TURKS IN IRAN**

Quarterly Report

www.inclusivevision.org

secretary@inclusivevision.org

About the Foundation for Inclusive Society

The foundation for Inclusive Society (FIS), a nonprofit based in the United States, is dedicated to studying and empowering minority groups. Through conducting analyses and publishing reports on human rights and environmental issues, FIS strives to meet the needs of marginalized communities. Visit our official website, www.inclusivevision.org, to access our latest reports and publications. For inquiries, feel free to reach out to us at secretary@inclusivevision.org.

Summary

This report provides a detailed overview of human rights violations committed against Azerbaijani Turks in Iran during the first quarter of 2025 (January–March). It documents a range of abuses, including arbitrary arrests, unfair sentencing, executions, physical assaults, and intimidation by security forces. The persistent and systematic nature of state repression targeting this community is recorded. By presenting these cases, this report aims to shed light on the ongoing denial of fundamental human rights and freedoms faced by Azerbaijani Turks in Iran. During this period, 8 individuals were detained and released, while 16 people received prison sentences for their activities. At least 16 individuals were executed by hanging, illustrating the persistent reliance on capital punishment despite growing international calls for its abolition. One case of assault and battery was reported, exemplifying the use of physical violence as a means to intimidate and punish activists. Additionally, 2 individuals were threatened and summoned by security forces, reflecting the persistent pattern of harassment and intimidation targeting activists. The reported executions, cases of assault and battery, and threats by security forces collectively illustrate the systematic repression faced by Azerbaijani Turks in Iran, undermining their safety, curtailing their freedoms, and restricting their access to basic rights. This report will delve into the details of each case and provide further evidence of these ongoing violations.

Contents

I

Part One

1	Introduction	9
1.1	Introduction	9
1.2	Objectives	11
1.3	Sources of Information and Data Collection	11
1.4	Data Analysis	12

II

Part Two

2	Detained and Released Individuals	15
2.1	Detained and Released Individuals	15

3	Sentenced Individuals	19
3.1	Sentenced Individuals	19
4	Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment	27
4.1	Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment	27
5	Assault and Battery	31
5.1	Assault and Battery	31
6	Threatened and Summoned Individuals	33
6.1	Threatened and Summoned Individuals	33
7	Recommendations	35



Part One

1	Introduction	9
1.1	Introduction	
1.2	Objectives	
1.3	Sources of Information and Data Collection	
1.4	Data Analysis	

Introduction


1.1 Introduction

This report sheds light on the ongoing human rights abuses affecting Azerbaijani communities in Iran, where access to independent human rights organizations remains severely limited. Despite clear and mounting evidence, Iranian authorities continue to deny the existence of such violations. By issuing these quarterly assessments, we aim to document the situation, raise awareness, and support those who endure systematic injustice.

This first section of the report examines the widespread practice of arbitrary arrests, frequently followed by conditional releases, and presents information on the experiences of individuals sentenced in Azerbaijani regions. Taken together, these cases reveal a persistent pattern of restricted legal access, denial of due process, and the broader absence of effective human rights protections.

A major focus is placed on the use of capital punishment in Iran, both as a judicial measure and a political tool. This report highlights growing international concern over the prevalence of executions, noting that organizations such as Amnesty International have consistently called for its abolition. Executions not only violate fundamental rights but are also frequently employed against individuals accused of political dissent or social activism, reinforcing their role as an instrument of repression.

The report also exposes illegal summoning practices by Iranian Intelligence agencies, which rely on threats, phone calls, and informal orders to pressure and intimidate activists. In addition, it documents government-imposed suspensions targeting students, professionals, and civil society actors, as well as the persistent use of harassment and threats to silence dissent.



In this report, we offer a set of targeted recommendations aimed at ending these practices and fostering a society where fundamental freedoms are protected. Implementing these measures would help strengthen the rule of law, protect vulnerable groups, and advance respect for basic rights in Iran. Contact details are provided for those seeking further information or wishing to engage with the findings.

This section outlines the methodology used in compiling this human rights report on Azerbaijani Turks in Iran for the period of January to March 2025, detailing the approaches applied in collecting and analyzing the information presented.

1.2 Objectives

The primary aim of this report is to draw attention to specific instances of human rights violations experienced by the Azerbaijani Turks in Iran. It sheds light on a spectrum of violations, including arrests and subsequent releases, forced exile cases, and instances where punitive measures, such as executions, were disproportionately severe.

The report goes beyond documentation by advancing recommendations to address the identified human rights violations, with the aim of promoting accountability, justice, and the protection of fundamental freedoms. By exposing these violations and proposing concrete measures, it seeks to contribute to efforts to rectify the injustices faced by Azerbaijani Turks in Iran and emphasizes the urgent need for action to safeguard their rights and dignity.

1.3 Sources of Information and Data Collection

The information presented in this report is the result of collaborative efforts by a network of Azerbaijani human rights activists operating both inside and outside Iran. In particular, sixteen activists working within Iran played a central role in gathering and transmitting evidence of human rights violations in Azerbaijani regions. Their contributions form the foundation of this report and provide invaluable insight into the lived realities of Azerbaijani Turks facing systemic repression.

A wide range of sources was consulted to ensure the comprehensiveness of the report. These included eyewitness testimonies, accounts provided by victims' families, published reports, and statements from protesters themselves. Such firsthand materials were complemented by additional documentation collected by activists, reflecting diverse perspectives and experiences. Together, these sources provide both personal narratives and contextual evidence, enabling a fuller understanding of the patterns of abuse documented in Azerbaijani regions.

To guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the information, a rigorous verification process was applied. All testimonies and reports were cross-referenced with credible news outlets, public records, and other reputable sources. This multi-layered approach not only served to corroborate individual accounts but also helped establish the overall authenticity of the findings. By triangulating evidence from multiple, independent sources, the report seeks to ensure that its conclusions are well-substantiated and reflective of the broader human rights situation affecting Azerbaijani Turks in Iran.

1.4 Data Analysis

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the human rights violations faced by Azerbaijani Turks in Iran, the collected information underwent a structured process of examination and classification. The data was organized into distinct categories, each corresponding to a specific type of violation, ensuring a clear and systematic presentation of the documented abuses.

The analysis process emphasized both breadth and depth. Testimonies, reports, and other forms of evidence were carefully reviewed and categorized to highlight patterns of repression and their broader impact. This approach allowed for a coherent overview of the violations while also capturing the nuances of individual experiences, offering an in-depth perspective on the scale and nature of the abuses.

To guarantee authenticity and reliability, the Foundation for Inclusive Society applied rigorous verification methods. All data was cross-referenced with multiple independent sources, including credible news outlets, public records, and information from activists, to establish consistency and accuracy. The collaborative efforts between the Foundation and Azerbaijani human rights defenders, combined with this stringent verification process, enhance the credibility and integrity of the findings. As a result, the report presents a reliable and comprehensive account of the systemic violations affecting the Azerbaijani Turkish community in Iran.



Part Two

2	Detained and Released Individuals . . .	15
2.1	Detained and Released Individuals	
3	Sentenced Individuals	19
3.1	Sentenced Individuals	
4	Individuals Subjected to Capital Punish- ment	27
4.1	Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment	
5	Assault and Battery	31
5.1	Assault and Battery	
6	Threatened and Summoned Individuals	33
6.1	Threatened and Summoned Individuals	
7	Recommendations	35

Detained and Released Individuals

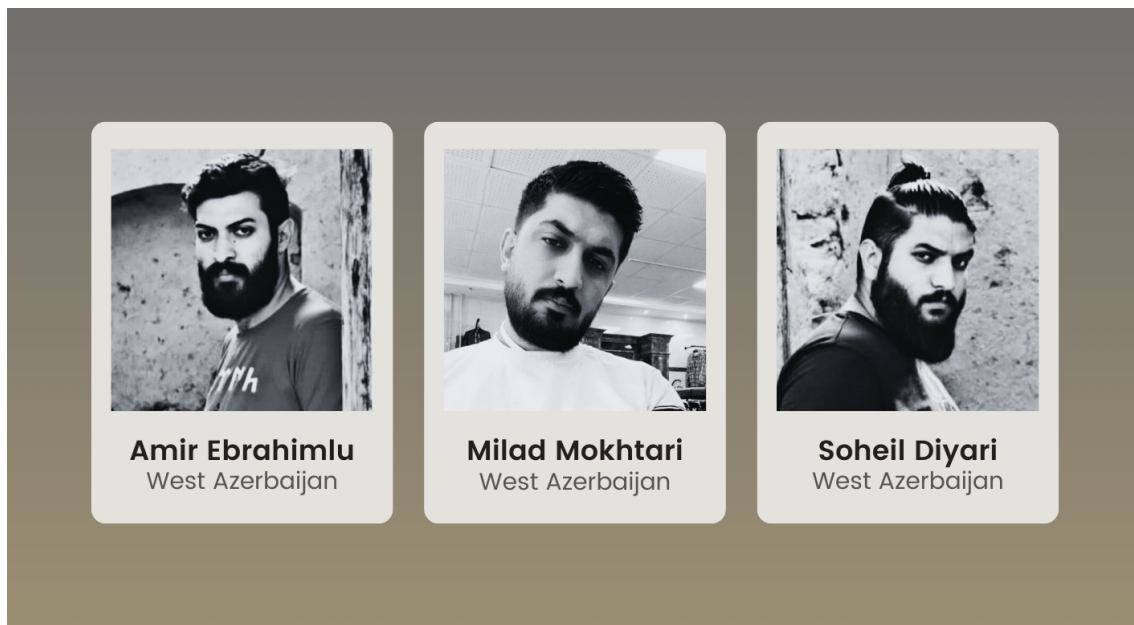
2.1 Detained and Released Individuals

In Iran, the practice of arbitrary arrest and conditional release has become a recurring feature of state repression. These detentions frequently target human rights activists, journalists, religious minorities, and members of marginalized communities whom the authorities perceive as threats. Individuals are often subjected to interrogations, coercive questioning, and an array of charges ranging from peaceful activism to espionage, many of which lack credible evidence. Extended periods of detention without formal indictment or access to fair legal proceedings remain common, in violation of internationally recognized standards of due process.

While some detainees are eventually released—either due to insufficient evidence, political expediency, or international pressure—many remain imprisoned under harsh conditions. Those who remain in custody frequently report ill-treatment, including solitary confinement, physical abuse, and torture aimed at extracting false confessions. These practices undermine fundamental protections enshrined in Articles 9 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a State Party, and contravene the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment as recognized under customary

international law and the UN Convention against Torture (CAT).

The repetition of these arrests and releases reflects deeper structural obstacles to the realization of fundamental freedoms in Iran. This pattern erodes the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, all of which are guaranteed under international law. The UN Human Rights Council and successive UN General Assembly resolutions on the human rights situation in Iran have repeatedly urged the government to cease the practice of arbitrary detention, release individuals held for exercising their fundamental rights, and ensure accountability for those responsible for abuse. Despite these calls, the cycle of detention and release continues to function as a tool of intimidation, silencing dissent and reinforcing a broader climate of fear.



On March 23, 2025, Azerbaijani activists **Amir Ebrahimlu**, **Ali Valizadeh**, **Soheil Deyri**, **Milad Mokhtari**, **Hossein Alizadeh**, and **Tahir Gheybi** were arrested by security forces in Urmia. For a period following their detention, their families and associates were unable to establish contact, leaving their condition and whereabouts unknown. No official explanation was provided regarding the grounds for their arrest, though observers believe the detentions are linked to the March 21 anti-terrorism gathering in West Azerbaijan–Urmia.

Rahim Jahanbakhsh, the police commander of West Azerbaijan Province, later confirmed the arrest of 22 individuals in connection with the protest. He accused the detainees of “separatism” and “hate speech,” though no evidence has been presented to substantiate these allegations. Independent news sources, however, report that the number of those detained is significantly higher than the official figure, and comprehensive information on all detainees remains unavailable.

On March 25, 2025, the six named activists were released on bail from Urmia Central Prison. They had been charged with “assembly and collusion with the intent to disrupt national security.” Their arrests and subsequent prosecution reflect broader concerns regarding the Iranian government’s treatment of Azerbaijani civil activists and its continued efforts to suppress the peaceful expression of ethnic and national identity.

On January 24, 2025, **Samad Heydari** and **Reza Salimi** were beaten and detained by security forces in Tabriz. Since their arrest, their families have been unable to obtain any information regarding the charges, the location of their detention, or their condition. Visits to the police intelligence center and judicial authorities have been met with obstruction and contradictory statements. There are growing concerns that Heydari and Salimi may have been subjected to physical abuse and torture. The uncertainty has taken a particularly severe toll on Salimi’s mother, whose health has deteriorated due to stress. In response, activists in Tabriz staged protests on January 25, 2025, posting posters throughout the city demanding the release of Heydari and Salimi.

Sentenced Individuals

3.1 Sentenced Individuals

Following judicial proceedings, certain individuals are formally convicted and sentenced by Iranian courts. These sentences may include imprisonment, fines, probation, community service, or other penalties imposed under domestic law. However, in contexts where systemic human rights concerns are well-documented, such convictions often raise serious doubts regarding the fairness and transparency of the proceedings.

Concerns consistently reported by international observers include limited or denied access to independent legal representation, reliance on coerced confessions, and the absence of impartial and competent tribunals. Such deficiencies violate core protections guaranteed under Articles 9 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a State Party, including the right to liberty, the presumption of innocence, and the right to a fair and public hearing.



Abdolaziz Azimi
Tehran



Morteza Parvin
Tehran



Ayaz Seyfkah
Tehran



Saeed Minaie
East Azerbaijan



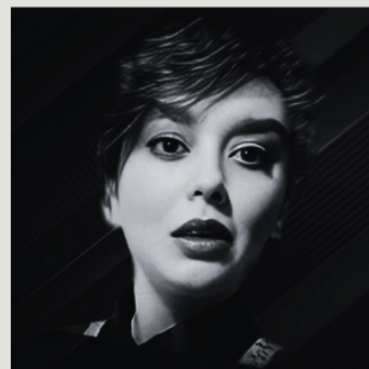
Taher Naghavi
Tehran



Vadud Asadi
Gilan



Mohammadreza Faghihi
Tehran



Armita Pavir
East Azerbaijan



Soheil Diyari
West Azerbaijan

The imposition of these sentences, despite procedural flaws, underscores the wider pattern of judicial repression in Iran. Both the UN Human Rights Committee and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran have repeatedly emphasized that convictions handed down after trials lacking due process cannot be considered valid under international law. The continuation of such practices not only undermines domestic rule of law but also places Iran in direct breach of its international obligations.

Branch 15 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court, in a one-sided trial marred by serious legal deficiencies, handed down a total of 90 years of prison sentences to 15 Azerbaijani political activists. The charges included "propaganda against the regime" and "assembly and collusion to commit a crime against national security." Reports indicate that several defendants were denied access to legal representation or the right to appoint counsel of their choice. Azerbaijani lawyer and human rights defender **Sina Yousefi**, writing on the social media platform X, noted that the case file spanned more than 50 volumes and involved 29 defendants, yet the Appeals Court concluded its review in less than a week—an unprecedented pace that has raised widespread criticism and underscored the lack of fairness and transparency in the judicial process.

Several Azerbaijani activists have received lengthy prison sentences on charges widely regarded as politically motivated. **Araz Aman Zeinabad**, **Bagher Hajizadeh**, and **Ayaz Seyfkhah** were each sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment, while **Abdolaziz Azimi Ghadim** and **Taher Naghavi** received six years. **Hossein Piri**, **Salar Taher Afshar**, **Morteza Parvin**, and **Karim Mardaneh Mostali Beyglu** were each sentenced to five years, and **Vadood Asadi** received four years. **Kamal Nouri**, **Saeed Minaei**, **Soleiman Mohammadi**, and **Hassan Ebrahimi Shiran** were handed sentences ranging from three to five years. The charges brought against them—such as supporting Azerbaijan in the Karabakh war, protesting the deliberate drying of Lake Urmia, and alleged propaganda against the Islamic Republic—lack substantiating evidence and are widely seen as baseless. The detainees themselves have categorically rejected these accusations.

For over a year, Azerbaijani activists have remained in detention without trial or due process, amid complete silence from so-called Iranian human rights institutions. Abdolaziz Azimi Ghadim, Araz Aman Zeinabad, Taher Naghavi, Morteza Parvin, Hossein Piri, Bagher Hajizadeh, and Ayaz Seyfkhah were arrested in February 2024 in various cities across South Azerbaijan and subsequently transferred to a security detention facility in Evin Prison.

Abdolaziz Azimi Ghadim went on a dry hunger strike from early March 2025 to protest judicial and security pressures on civil activists in Azerbaijan. In a released audio message from prison, he outlined the goals of his strike, recounted past hunger strikes, described the handling of his case, and criticized the unjust charges and court rulings against Azerbaijani activists. He also called on fellow activists, both inside and outside prison, to join him in protesting these verdicts and supporting the referral of the activists' cases to the Supreme Court.

Despite repeated appeals by their families and hunger strikes initiated by the detainees themselves, Iranian security and judicial authorities have failed to provide any clear explanation regarding their status over the past nine months. Meanwhile, families of the detainees have been subjected to threats and intimidation by security forces, aimed at silencing them and preventing them from informing the public about the situation.

According to statements by Abdolaziz Azimi Ghadim, the detainees have been subjected to torture, insults, and degrading treatment at the hands of interrogators, judicial officers, and prison authorities. Since their arrests, they have been denied fundamental legal rights, including access to independent legal counsel, specialized medical care, and temporary release on bail. Security agencies continue to interfere in the judicial process, further delaying any formal legal proceedings.

Azimi Ghadim cited one reason for his hunger strike as demanding a meeting with Mohseni Eje'i to address the rulings issued by Judge Salavati. He criticized Salavati, questioning how a judge whose rulings are often overturned by the Supreme Court remains a leading judge in Iran. He also protested that individuals arrested in Azerbaijani cities like Tabriz and Ardabil are being tried in Tehran's Revolutionary Court, and requested clarification from the head of

the judiciary on why, as a cleric, he was not sent to the Special Clergy Court. In September 2024, Abdolaziz Azimi Qadim was sentenced to six years' imprisonment by Branch 15 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Abolghasem Salavati.

Nevertheless, efforts by Iranian intelligence agencies to pursue heavy prison sentences against these individuals are ongoing. According to sources familiar with the case, Judge Abolghasem Salavati, infamous for issuing harsh and politically motivated verdicts, has returned the indictment prepared by intelligence interrogators, citing it as incomplete. However, the Ministry of Intelligence continues its efforts to persuade the prosecutor's office to move forward with issuing severe sentences.

On March 17, 2025, Azerbaijani activist **Araz Aman Zeinabad** was transferred from solitary confinement to the general ward of Evin Prison. Since his arrest, he had been held in isolation, where he was reportedly subjected to severe torture intended to coerce confessions to charges he denies. His family has expressed grave concern over his health, reporting significant weight loss and broken teeth as a result of mistreatment. Although his relatives were prepared to post bail set by Branch 5 of the Prosecutor's Office, the presiding judge extended his detention order for an additional month, thereby prolonging his imprisonment without trial.

On March 23, 2025, Evin Prison authorities suspended Zeinabad's phone privileges after the circulation of a Nowruz message he had recorded. In the message, he spoke of the challenges facing the Azerbaijani people, underscored the need for unity, and reaffirmed the persistence of their struggle for national rights. He also drew attention to regional developments, including activities in Urmia that he characterized as posing a threat to Azerbaijanis.

Morteza Parvin has been serving a six-year prison sentence in Evin Prison since September 2024. His communications have been increasingly restricted, with phone contacts reduced to fewer than five individuals from the seven previously permitted. Despite suffering from a herniated disc, he continues to be denied specialist medical treatment, receiving only basic painkillers and anti-inflammatory medication—an issue that has caused mounting concern for his family.

Parvin was convicted by Branch 15 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Abolghasem Salavati, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against internal/external security" and one year for "propaganda against the Islamic Republic," in addition to two years of social and political restrictions. He has publicly rejected the ruling as unlawful, describing it as a fabrication by the Ministry of Intelligence intended to ensure the long-term imprisonment of Azerbaijani national movement activists.

On January 17, 2025, Branch 36 of the Appeals Court upheld Parvin's sentence, along with those of other detainees held in Evin Prison, despite procedural irregularities and without reviewing the full 81-volume case file. The decision has been widely criticized as further evidence of systemic violations of fair trial standards and due process.

On January 21, 2025, lawyer **Mohammadreza Faghihi** was arrested to begin serving a five-year prison sentence and transferred to Evin Prison in Tehran. He had been convicted by Branch 15 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court in October 2024 on charges of "assembly and collusion to commit a crime against national security." In addition to the custodial sentence, the court imposed supplementary punishments, including a two-year ban on leaving the country, practicing law, and joining political parties or groups.

The proceedings leading to Faghihi's conviction have raised serious concerns regarding due process. His trial was held in September 2024, following an earlier summons in October 2023 on accusations of "assembly and collusion" and "disturbing public order." These charges were built on a history of state harassment: Faghihi was first arrested on October 12, 2022, alongside two other lawyers, during a protest by attorneys outside the Tehran Bar Association in Argentina Square. The demonstration was organized to oppose violations of protesters' rights and the state's disregard for Article 27 of the Iranian Constitution, which guarantees freedom of assembly.

Following nearly two weeks in detention, Faghihi was released on bail on November 3, 2022, only to face renewed prosecution in subsequent years. His imprisonment underscores the broader pattern of judicial repression targeting lawyers and human rights defend-

ers in Iran, where legal professionals are frequently punished for defending fundamental rights and exercising freedoms protected under international law.

Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment

4.1 Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment

While state-controlled news agencies frequently justify executions by citing charges such as drug smuggling or murder, human rights organizations have consistently challenged both the fairness of these trials and the legitimacy of capital punishment itself. Amnesty International has condemned Iran's extensive use of the death penalty, characterizing it as cruel, inhuman, and degrading, and continues to call for the complete abolition of executions. Defendants charged with capital crimes are routinely denied fair trial guarantees, including access to independent legal counsel, protection against coerced confessions, and impartial judicial review—violations that contravene Iran's obligations under Articles 6 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

The discriminatory application of the death penalty compounds these concerns. National minorities including Baloch and Azerbaijanis are disproportionately targeted, reflecting broader systemic discrimination. Research by Iran Human Rights (IHR) documented that in 2023 alone, at least 171 Baloch prisoners were executed, representing 21 percent of all recorded executions despite Baloch people constituting only a small percentage

of the national population. This pattern suggests not merely judicial overreach but structural inequities that heighten the vulnerability of minority groups to state violence.

International standards and resolutions underscore the severity of these violations. The UN General Assembly's resolution 77/222 (December 2022) calls upon all States "to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty" and emphasizes that capital punishment should not be applied in a discriminatory manner or following proceedings that fall short of international fair trial standards. Iran's continued reliance on executions particularly against minorities in flawed judicial processes stands in direct contradiction to these international norms.

The persistence of such practices highlights the urgent need for sustained international scrutiny and accountability. Iran's actions not only undermine its commitments under the ICCPR but also contravene the spirit of successive UN General Assembly resolutions urging the progressive restriction and eventual abolition of capital punishment. In this context, the role of international monitoring mechanisms, UN Special Procedures, and civil society advocacy remains essential in pressuring Iranian authorities to halt executions, address systemic discrimination, and uphold the rights and dignity of all communities, particularly ethnic minorities most at risk.

On March 30, the Iranian authorities carried out the execution of **Morteza Saadatpour Zeini** in Tabriz Central Prison. He had previously been sentenced to death by the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran on drug-related charges.

On March 15, 2025, the death sentences of two prisoners, **Heydar Safdari** (28) from Zanjan and **Sohrab Niazi** (30) from Qazvin, were carried out in Choobindar Prison in Qazvin. Both individuals had been sentenced to death in separate cases on drug-related charges.

On March 16, 2025, the death sentence of **Hamed Faraji**, a 28-year-old prisoner from Urmia convicted of murder, was carried out in Urmia Central Prison.

On March 16, 2025, the executions of two women prisoners, **Mojgan Azarpisheh** from Urmia and **Kosar Baghernejad** from Bonab, were carried out in Urmia Central Prison. Both had been convicted of ‘premeditated murder’ in separate cases. One day before their executions, they were transferred to solitary confinement in preparation for the sentence. Azarpisheh had been in detention for six years, and Baghernejad for four years, before the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran handed down their death sentences.

On March 11, 2025, the execution of **Hojjat Torkaman**, a prisoner from Malayer in Hamadan Province, was carried out in Malayer Central Prison. He had been convicted of murder and, according to Hengaw, was arrested four years earlier before being sentenced to death by the Iranian judiciary. This case is part of a broader escalation: with Torkaman’s execution, at least ten prisoners have been executed in Iran since the beginning of Ramadan, highlighting the alarming pace at which the death penalty is being applied during this period.

On March 5, 2025, the death sentence of 28-year-old prisoner **Saeed Karimkhani Alqalandis** from Tabriz was carried out in Tabriz Central Prison. He had been arrested three years earlier for the murder of four people over honor-related issues and sentenced to death.

On March 1, 2025, the death sentences of three prisoners—**Hassan Fathi** from Hashtrood, and **Ramin Alaei** and **Mohammad Araqi** from Tabriz—were carried out in Tabriz Central Prison. Fathi and Alaei had been arrested three years earlier on drug-related charges, while Araqi had been arrested for murder. All were subsequently sentenced to death.

On February 27, 2025, the death sentence of **Ali Vatankhah** from Parsabad, Ardabil, was carried out in Ardabil Central Prison. He had been arrested three years earlier for murder during a group conflict and sentenced to death.

On March 4, 2025, the death sentence of **Ezzat Zeinali**, from Qazvin convicted on drug-related charges, was carried out in Ahar Central Prison. According to informed sources, he had been arrested three years earlier on drug-related charges and sentenced to death by the Iranian judiciary.

On February 23, 2025, the death sentence of Kaveh Asadbeigi, who had previously been convicted on drug-related charges, was carried out in Zanzan Central Prison.

On February 16, 2025, the death sentence of Bahram Almasi, a prisoner from Tabriz convicted of murder, was carried out in Tabriz Central Prison. He had been arrested nine years earlier in connection with a dispute-related murder and had twice been moved to solitary confinement for execution before receiving temporary reprieves from the victims' family.

On April 5, 2025, the executions of two prisoners, Hossein Molazadeh and Mohsen Hedayat, were carried out in the central prisons of Zanzan and Tabriz. Molazadeh, 29, from Zanzan, had been arrested three years earlier on drug-related charges, while Hedayat had been convicted of murder.

Assault and Battery

5.1 Assault and Battery

Assault and battery have been systematically employed by Iranian authorities as instruments of intimidation, punishment, and repression against political activists, journalists, human rights defenders, and members of marginalized communities. Reports indicate that physical violence is routinely inflicted during arrests, interrogations, and periods of detention. Such practices are designed not only to cause immediate physical and psychological harm but also to instill fear and deter individuals from exercising their rights to political participation, advocacy, and expression.

The use of physical violence by state agents constitutes a deliberate tactic to maintain control, silence dissent, and discourage public criticism of government policies. These actions directly undermine the rights to security of person, freedom of expression, and peaceful assembly, all of which are guaranteed under Articles 9, 19, and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a State Party. Furthermore, the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)—although not ratified by Iran—represents a binding international stan-

dard prohibiting such practices, reflecting norms of customary international law.

The systematic use of violence against detainees has been repeatedly condemned by UN bodies. The UN General Assembly, in resolution 77/222 (2022), urged all States to ensure that no one is subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, and emphasized the duty of governments to investigate allegations of abuse by security forces. Similarly, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently documented and denounced the use of physical violence against activists and minority groups. Such practices not only contravene Iran's international obligations but also highlight the urgent necessity for accountability, independent investigations, and structural reforms to end the culture of impunity.

In the case of political prisoner Armita Pavir, the complaint filed by her family is currently being reviewed by Prosecutor Iraj Hemmati. According to information published by lawyer Sina Yousefi, Hemmati previously served as Deputy Prosecutor of Branch 11 for the execution of sentences in security-related cases during the nationwide protests two years ago. He has since been promoted to the position of Prosecutor, reportedly due to his prominent role in the suppression of demonstrators. During the early stages of the protests, Hemmati voluntarily acted as the on-duty judge, issuing rulings against those arrested.

Writing on the X platform, Yousefi drew attention to Hemmati's direct involvement in Pavir's case, stating:

"Iraj Hemmati and Somayeh Ghafoori – one is the commander, the other the subordinate. The commander gave the order for the subordinate to beat Armita Pavir, the political prisoner in Tabriz Prison, nearly to death, and then he himself (Iraj Hemmati) handled the family's complaint and issued a ruling of non-prosecution."

Threatened and Summoned Individuals

6.1 Threatened and Summoned Individuals

The Iranian intelligence agencies frequently employ unlawful methods to summon activists. While Iranian law requires that summonses be issued through formal, written orders, security agents often rely on informal approaches such as phone calls, text messages, or verbal instructions. These practices lack any legal basis and fall outside the procedural safeguards established under domestic law.

The use of such methods is widely regarded as a form of intimidation. By circumventing legal procedures, authorities place activists in a position of uncertainty and vulnerability, making them more susceptible to arbitrary detention, harassment, or coercion. This tactic particularly targets political and social activists, human rights defenders, and members of minority groups, obstructing their ability to engage in civic, cultural, and advocacy-related activities.

These actions contravene both Iranian law and international human rights standards. Under Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a State Party, no one may be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention, and all individuals

are entitled to due process of law. Successive UN General Assembly resolutions on the situation of human rights in Iran have also condemned such practices, emphasizing the state's obligation to respect legal safeguards and protect individuals from harassment and intimidation.

Kazem Safabakhsh, an Azerbaijani civil activist and former political prisoner, has been summoned for the fourth time in 2025 on charges of "propaganda against the Islamic Republic." He reported that throughout the year he has received four separate summonses from the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Offices in Meshgin Shahr and Evin, Tehran. In the most recent instance, on February 27, 2025, he was formally notified via the judiciary's Sanasystem to appear within five days before Branch 1 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office in Meshgin Shahr.

Yousef Kari appeared before Branch 10 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office in Ardabil after his guarantor, Vodo Saadati, was repeatedly threatened by the investigating judge with the seizure of his property. During the hearing before Judge Karimi, head of Branch 10, Kari stated that he rejected the charges and refused to defend himself, citing the performative and non-public nature of the proceedings. He emphasized that, given the lack of a fair and independent judiciary in Iran, the case against him was unlawful and directly initiated by the Intelligence Department, and therefore he would not participate in what he described as a show trial.

Kari has previously served a two-year prison sentence in Ardabil and Evin prisons. He was most recently arrested on October 29, 2024, at Imam Crossroad in Ardabil following a physical assault by security forces. He was charged with "disturbing public order through creating unrest" and "insulting sacred beliefs." After 23 days in detention, he was released on November 22, 2024, upon posting bail set at 300 million tomans.

Recommendations

Fundamental rights, such as the right to a fair trial, freedom of expression, and freedom from torture, are systematically violated by the Iranian government's harsh tactics, including arbitrary detentions, physical abuse, and mistreatment, as demonstrated in recent cases. While some detainees have been released on bail or due to international pressure, many still endure ongoing legal battles, harsh detention conditions, and constant threats. The repeated pattern of arrest and release highlights the pervasive atmosphere of fear and repression faced by political activists in Iran. International pressure must be intensified to urge the Iranian government to respect its citizens' rights, release political prisoners, and end the cycle of arbitrary detention and mistreatment.

Governments and international organizations must pressure Iranian authorities to end the use of exile as a punitive measure and restore the rights of those exiled, allowing them to return to their homes without fear of further persecution. The international community must also continue providing support to those affected by these abuses and hold the Iranian regime accountable for its systematic persecution of activists and human rights defenders.

The global community must urgently act to pressure Iran to cease executions, especially

for non-violent crimes such as drug-related offenses. The application of the death penalty in Iran constitutes a grave human rights violation, compounded by procedural abuses such as forced confessions, unfair trials, and inadequate legal representation. Special attention should be given to the execution of women and ethnic minorities, as these cases further highlight the government's discriminatory policies and its use of capital punishment as a tool for political repression.

In addition, the international community should demand transparent and independent investigations into executions, stronger sanctions against the judiciary, and accountability for those directly involved in carrying out death sentences. Solidarity with victims' families and advocacy for comprehensive reforms in Iran's legal and judicial systems are crucial to ensuring justice and accountability.

The systemic persecution and harassment of cultural and national activists, such as **Peyman Ebrahimi Dinvar**, for expressing their cultural identities and engaging in peaceful activities like Azerbaijani dancing must end immediately. Such repression violates international laws that protect essential rights, including freedom of expression and assembly. The Iranian government must release all detained cultural activists, safeguard their rights, and allow cultural expressions to flourish without fear of intimidation or violence.

International human rights organizations must continue monitoring the treatment of detainees in Iran and holding the government accountable. Pressure should be applied to ensure transparency in the treatment of prisoners, the right to medical care, and the establishment of independent monitoring systems to protect the well-being of incarcerated individuals, particularly those suffering from serious health conditions exacerbated by violence, torture, or hunger strikes.

The Iranian government must urgently end the practice of denying identification certificates to children, particularly those from marginalized communities like **Azerbaijanis, Baluch**, and other ethnic minorities. This denial of basic rights perpetuates cycles of poverty, exploitation, and social exclusion, constituting a clear violation of international human rights agreements. Legislative and regulatory reforms are necessary to guarantee that all children,

regardless of social or ethnic background, have access to identification documents. Providing these documents will not only protect their right to basic services such as healthcare, education, and social protection but also promote equity and social inclusion. The international community must monitor this issue, pressure the Iranian government to address it, and support activists and civil society organizations advocating for the rights of these underrepresented groups.

Contact Information

www.inclusivevision.org

Email: secretary@inclusivevision.org



 FOUNDATION *for*
INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

www.inclusivevision.org

secretary@inclusivevision.org