



United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission
on the Islamic Republic of Iran

**Update on the situation of women and girls in the context of the September 2022 protests
and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement in the
Islamic Republic of Iran**

13 September 2024

The unlawful death in custody of Jina Mahsa Amini on 16 September 2022 in Tehran triggered nationwide protests in the Islamic Republic of Iran demanding accountability, human rights, an end to discrimination, and equality, all under the hallmark slogan of “Woman, Life, Freedom.” On the second anniversary of the death of Ms. Amini and the outbreak of the protests, meaningful institutional changes and accountability for gross human rights violations and crimes under international law, and crimes against humanity, remains elusive for victims and survivors, especially for women and children.

Instead, from the months preceding this anniversary of the September 2022 protests, State authorities have expanded repressive measures and policies to further deprive women and girls of their fundamental rights. The Government has enhanced surveillance of *hijab* compliance in both the public and private spheres, while increasing previously established patterns of violence against women and girls who flout the mandatory *hijab*. In parallel, State authorities have increasingly invoked the use of the death penalty against women activists and scaled up executions against others who had expressed solidarity with the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.¹ In the aggregate, such conduct is indicative of increased State efforts aimed at – yet again – silencing women’s and girls’ demands for equality, and, in turn, eradicating remaining initiatives of women’s rights activism that have kept the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement alive over the past two years.

Between July and September 2024, arrests and detention of family members of protesters killed in the context of the movement also intensified particularly in Iran’s minority provinces, including Sistan and Baluchestan, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan. These arrests appear to be part of a broader State effort to stifle any potential form of dissent and to harass, intimidate and prevent victims, families and others expressing solidarity, from marking the second anniversary of the protests and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.

The continued denial of women’s and girls’ access to fundamental human rights, coupled with the recurrent violence through which a legal discriminatory framework regulating a “proper” *hijab* is enforced on them, serves as a stark reminder that, without accountability, impunity prevails. With no deterrence for the State against the increasing violations against women and girls, and in the absence of meaningful institutional changes, there is no realistic hope that victims and survivors could fully and meaningfully access the fundamental rights and freedoms to which they are entitled, and which the Islamic Republic of Iran has obligations to respect and ensure.

On this day, the Mission reiterates its call to the Islamic Republic of Iran to investigate and prosecute crimes against protesters, including women and girls, committed in the context of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement, and punish those responsible, in accordance with international law standards. In light of ongoing persecutory acts against women and girls, coupled with the absence of meaningful justice and accountability for protesters and their families within Iran, States must continue to place the situation of women and girls in the Islamic Republic of Iran high on the international agenda. States must support

accountability and reparations for victims, their families and those acting in solidarity, and invoke universal jurisdiction in their own domestic courts over crimes committed in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Background

The Islamic Republic of Iran relies on a system – both in law and in practice – that fundamentally discriminates on the grounds of gender, with far-reaching impact on women and girls’ bodily autonomy and their right to freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief, and a wide range of economic, social and cultural rights, including access to education and work.

In its report presented to the Human Rights Council in March 2024, the Mission found that laws, policies and practices mandating the *hijab* are arbitrary in nature, and that they systematically discriminate against women and girls. Punishments imposed on the grounds of this discriminatory legal framework are equally arbitrary, and thus, not permissible under international human rights law. Such punishments include *inter alia* arrests, detention, fines, seizure of immovable property, travel bans, as well as prohibition to use social media and the undue restriction and denial of fundamental rights, including suspension from university or termination of employment.ⁱⁱ By continuing to enforce these laws, the State continues to violate women’s rights to equality; non-discrimination; to liberty and security of person; to be free from torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; freedom of expression; freedom of movement; and freedom of religion; as well as their rights to participate in public life, to bodily integrity and autonomy, to privacy, and to access to education, healthcare and work.ⁱⁱⁱ

Notably, it is this deep-rooted structural discrimination against women and girls in the Islamic Republic of Iran that the Mission found constituted the root cause, or the “enabler,” for the commission of gross human rights violations and crimes under international law in the context of the September 2022 protests and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement that followed. Many of these gross human rights violations also amounted to crimes against humanity of murder, imprisonment, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, persecution, enforced disappearance and other inhumane acts, as committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against women, girls and others expressing support for human rights. The commission of these crimes, in the context of a severe deprivation of fundamental rights of victims, was inflicted with, and aggravated by, a discriminatory intent, as such amounting to the crime against humanity of persecution on the grounds of gender. The Mission also found that the crime against humanity of gender persecution intersected with discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity and religion.^{iv}

Chronic lack of accountability for human rights violations committed against women and girls in the context of the protests and their aftermath

Two years after nationwide protests swept the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Mission remains unaware of any meaningful or effective domestic criminal investigations being conducted against high-ranking officials for human rights violations committed against women and girls in connection with the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement. These include the credible figure of 551 people killed, including as many as 49 women and 68 children, as well as arbitrary arrests and detention, torture and ill-treatment, as well as rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence. While several investigations were announced by the State since September 2022, including through the “Special Committee to investigate the 2022 unrest,” the Mission found that these fall short of international human rights standards, and deny victims their rights to truth, justice and reparation.^v

The family of Jina Masa Amini is still waiting for answers regarding her death in custody. Information relating to her death remains hidden from them and the public, and no meaningful accountability measures have been taken by the State to uphold her family’s rights to justice, truth, and reparation. The Mission previously found that Ms. Amini was subjected to physical violence that had led to her death in the custody of the “morality police”, and that the State bears responsibility for her unlawful death.^{vi}

In the context of the systemic impunity that prevails in Iran, a legal framework that fundamentally discriminates against women and girls remains in place. It denies women’s and girls’ autonomy while

preventing them from obtaining even a modicum of justice for the violations and crimes they have been subjected to for demanding equality and rights in the context of the protests and the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.

Increased crackdown on women’s rights activism

The targeting of women and girls was particularly evident during the months preceding the two-year anniversary of the September 2022 protests. Concretely, beginning in April 2024, State authorities took harsher measures to silence women’s and girls’ demands for rights and equality and, in turn, eradicate any initiatives of women’s rights activism that have remained after the large-scale protests subsided. These measures included the recent increase in the use of the death penalty of women activists following their convictions for national security offenses, including some belonging to Iran’s ethnic and religious minorities.^{vii}

Women human rights defenders and women’s rights activists

On 28 April 2024, 12 women’s rights activists, including 11 women and one man, were convicted by Branch 3 of the Revolutionary Court in Rasht (Gilan province) on national security charges including “propaganda against the State”, “assembly and collusion against national security”, as well as for “membership in an “illegal group”. They were sentenced to imprisonment for periods ranging from three to six years and to (cumulatively) over 60 years for their activism. The women had been arrested in August 2023 in several cities in Gilan province, approximately one month before the first anniversary of the death in custody of Jina Mahsa Amini.^{viii} In August 2024, an additional five women activists were reportedly also cumulatively sentenced by Branch 3 of the Revolutionary Court in Rasht to 20 years in prison for “propaganda against the state” and “assembly and collusion against national security”.^{ix}

In May 2024, Zhina Modares Gorji, a Kurdish women’s rights activist, who was arrested by plainclothes agents in September 2022 in Sanandaj city (Kurdistan province), was sentenced to 21 years in prison and internal exile by the Revolutionary Court in Sanandaj. For her public support, including on social media, of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement, she was convicted of “forming illegal groups with the aim of overthrowing the state,” “collaborating with hostile groups and governments,” and “propaganda against the state.”^x

Many women's rights activists are continuously subjected to judicial harassment. Some face concurrent suspended sentences for opposing the mandatory *hijab*, leaving them at constant risk of being imprisoned, should they engage in any form of activism. Emblematic in this regard is the case of Sapideh Rashnu an Iranian writer and women’s rights activist, who was sentenced in late 2022 by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran for “assembly and collusion against national security through contacts with individuals abroad,” “propaganda against the Islamic Republic” and “encouraging (moral) corruption and prostitution”.^{xi} Ms. Rashnu had been arrested in July 2022, after an altercation with a woman *hijab* enforcer on a bus for not wearing a “proper *hijab*”. In detention, she was reportedly forced to confess on state television. Between July 2022 and July 2024, Ms. Rashnu had been ordered to begin her prison sentence of three years and 11 months on three occasions, all of which were postponed later. Meanwhile, in 2023, Ms. Rashnu received an additional sentence for appearing before court without the mandatory *hijab*.^{xii}

On 4 July 2024, Sharifeh Mohammadi, a labour activist originally from East Azerbaijan province and residing in Rasht city (Gilan province), was sentenced to death by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court in Rasht for “armed rebellion against the state” based on allegations of membership in an opposition group. Ms. Mohammadi had been active with the Coordination Committee to Aid the Formation of Labor Unions in Iran but had ceased her involvement in this union years ago. Ms. Mohammadi had previously been arrested by intelligence officers in December 2023 in Rasht city. According to reports, prior to receiving the death sentence, she was held in solitary confinement, tortured, and denied contact with her family and access to a lawyer.^{xiii} Her death sentence was handed down against the backdrop of increased pressure

upon, and harsh prison sentences against, human rights defenders in Gilan province as noted above, and against labor rights activists and trade unionists more generally.

Pakhshan Azizi, a Kurdish activist, was the second woman sentenced to death in July. On 17 July 2024, Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran sentenced Ms. Azizi on charges of “armed rebellion against the state” for her alleged membership in the Kurdistan Free Life Party. She was subsequently sentenced to death including for *inter alia* her role in organizing protests and visiting families of protesters killed in the context of the September 2022 protests in Iran.^{xiv} Reportedly, on 15 August 2024, Branch 3 of the Evin Prosecutor’s Office charged Ms. Azizi with “rioting in prison”, following her participation in protests inside Evin prison, where she remains to date.^{xv} She has also been denied family visits and meeting a lawyer.

As of mid-September, Varisheh Moradi and Nasim Gholami Simiyari, two women activists, remain at serious risk of the death penalty, having been charged with the same national security offenses of “armed rebellion against the state” as Ms. Azizi and Ms. Mohammadi. Though the two cases differ in terms of the circumstances surrounding their arrests and detention, Ms. Moradi and Ms. Sumiyari have both supported the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement. Concretely, Ms. Moradi had travelled to Iran to advocate for women’s rights after the protests began, while Ms. Sumiyari participated in the movement.^{xvi}

Women’s rights activism continues unabated even in prisons in Iran. In Evin prison (Tehran), Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Narges Mohammadi continues to advocate for equality and freedom as part of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement despite her seriously deteriorating health. In doing so, she is joined by an equally courageous group of women prisoners, who continue to advocate – on a weekly basis - for the halting of executions of those involved in the protests, as well as justice and equality more generally. As a result of their voicing such concerns, these women have suffered numerous reprisals from prison authorities, which include denial of visitation rights and credible allegations of ill-treatment and torture.

Continued crackdown on women and girls in the context of mandatory hijab enforcement

Though large-scale protests have by now subsided, women and girls’ demand for equality and to end discrimination – which sparked the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement – remain unaddressed. Acts of defiance by women and girls have continued, however, keeping the spirit, aspirations and hope of the movement alive. Their unabated defiance is a continuous reminder that women and girls still live within a system that relegates them to the status of “second class citizens”, which State authorities continuously reinforce through both enacting new measures or exacerbating existing discriminatory policies to suppress and silence their demands.

Indeed, as acts of defiance continue to mount, efforts by State authorities to force women and girls into compliance with the mandatory *hijab* laws and regulations have escalated further. Beginning in April 2024, State authorities increased repressive measures and policies through which they encouraged, sanctioned and endorsed human rights violations against women and girls flouting the mandatory *hijab*. Such measures included the launch of the so-called “Noor” plan in April 2024 (see below) by the Law Enforcement Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FARAJA) which led to increased arrests and violence against women and girls who refused to comply. In parallel, State authorities sought to expand existing restrictions on women’s and girls’ access to fundamental rights, including the rights to health and education, and enhanced surveillance to monitor *hijab* compliance, including through the use of drones.

Amidst this marked escalation, the “Hijab and Chastity” Bill is in the final stages of approval before Iran’s Guardian Council, and it is likely to be finalized imminently. The Mission has previously expressed concerns over the far-reaching scope of the Bill as its framework deepens entrenched discrimination against women and girls and provides for harsher penalties for violations of the mandatory *hijab*. These penalties include exorbitant financial fines, longer sentences of imprisonment and restrictions on work and educational opportunities as well as bans on travel and on public activities on the Internet.^{xvii} Despite the Guardian

Council having rejected the Bill four times, Government authorities have been continuously calling for the implementation of the Bill's provisions, even before its adoption.^{xviii}

Reinforcing policing of women and girls defying the mandatory hijab laws and regulations

On 24 March 2024, a member of Parliament reportedly announced on State television that the Iranian government was “determined” to penalize women who do not comply with the mandatory *hijab* laws.^{xix} The next day, on 26 March 2024, another member of Parliament noted that what women essentially ask for when demanding freedom and removing their *hijab*, was to “walk around naked” and “act like animals”.^{xx}

In a subsequent speech on 3 April 2024, the Supreme Leader underscored that the Government and the Judiciary have a legal obligation to enforce the mandatory *hijab* laws, and women and girls, irrespective of their religion, or lack thereof, or beliefs, have a legal obligation to comply with these laws.^{xxi}

A week later, on 13 April 2024, the Commander of Tehran's police force, Abbas Ali Mohammadian, announced the launch of the so-called “Noor” plan (“noor” meaning “light” in Persian). Reminiscent of a large-scale police operation, Mr. Mohammadian emphasised that the “Noor” plan would comprise the deployment of police officers across all Iranian provinces, to “confront individuals promoting social anomalies by appearing without the *hijab*.” These individuals, he noted, would first receive a warning from the police for non-compliance with the mandatory *hijab* and then be informed of possible legal action against them, if warnings were ignored.^{xxii} Supporting this, Hassan Hassanzadeh, IRGC Commander for Tehran, announced on 21 April 2024, the establishment and deployment of the so-called “*ambassadors of kindness*” whom he described as a “trained group” whose members would support enhanced monitoring and compliance with the mandatory *hijab* laws in public spaces, including at markets, parks and in public transport. ^{xxiii}

On 23 April 2024, the FARAJA Commander-in-Chief, Ahmad Reza Radan, confirmed that the “Noor” plan has been endorsed by the Parliament, Judiciary, and the Government.^{xxiv} On the next day, 24 April 2024, FARAJA issued another statement equating women and girls flouting the mandatory *hijab* to “members of organized criminal gangs, involved in prostitution and pornography.”^{xxv} On 6 August 2024, the head of the Traffic Police, Taimur Hosseini, confirmed that the traffic police, as with all police units, would also be responsible for monitoring and enforcing the mandatory *hijab*.^{xxvi}

Arbitrary arrests and criminal prosecution of women and girls defying the mandatory hijab

Immediately after the “Noor” plan was launched on 13 April 2024, video footage circulated on social media depicting the increased presence across cities in Iran of security forces and the “morality police”. Iranian media reported that, allegedly, around 500 women and girls had been arrested for non-compliance with the mandatory *hijab* on that day alone, as soon as the “Noor” plan became operational.^{xxvii}

Since the “Noor” plan began, one legal service provider had received an estimated “75 to 120” requests for legal assistance per month from women countrywide who were found to have violated the mandatory *hijab* laws. The Mission reviewed a number of these requests which demonstrated that, in most cases, women had been arrested for alleged violations of the mandatory *hijab* laws by members of the “morality police” and security forces while on the street, or in a public park, or inside their vehicles. According to the information reviewed, women and girls not wearing the *hijab* reported having been photographed by unknown individuals and subsequently receiving a warning on their phones from the police, reminding them to comply with the mandatory *hijab* laws.^{xxviii}

This information also indicated that, upon arrest, women alleged to have violated the mandatory *hijab* laws were ushered to local police stations, including to the Morality Security Police, where they were forced to sign a pledge committing them to wear the mandatory *hijab* to secure their release. Court documents obtained and reviewed by the Mission confirmed that women arrested for violating the mandatory *hijab* laws were sentenced for appearing in public without the *hijab* based on evidence referred to in court

documents as “reports provided by security forces.” Most women had to pay a fine and in one case, a woman’s bank account was closed.^{xxxix}

Though many women and teenage girls were reported to have decided not to wear the *hijab* any longer, others noted that the increased presence of the security forces and the “morality police”, especially in more traditional communities, created an atmosphere of palpable fear and anxiety, effectively terrorising many and preventing some from walking outside. In one case, a woman described how, after the “Noor” plan was launched in one city in Tehran province, she noticed that security officers had multiplied “like an army against women,” and that the “morality police was snatching women and girls off the street due to *hijab* non-compliance.^{xxx}

Open-source material reviewed, verified, and analysed by the Mission also confirmed numerous instances of arbitrary arrests of women and girls flouting the mandatory *hijab* laws. For example, Aida Shakarami, the elder sister of 16-year-old Nika Shakarami who died after attending a protest on 20 September 2022 in Tehran,^{xxxix} was arrested on 17 April 2024 for violating the mandatory *hijab* laws. Ms. Shakarami was detained in both Evin and Shahr-e-Rey prisons (commonly known as Garchak prison), before being released on bail on 23 April 2024. On 24 June 2024, her lawyer confirmed that Ms. Shakarami was charged with “inciting immorality and indecency” and “disobedience to officers” for refusing to wear the *hijab*.^{xxxii}

Physical violence during arrests and in detention of women and girls found to be in violation of the mandatory hijab laws

After the Noor plan began, patterns of physical violence during arrests, including beatings by the “morality police” of women and girls found to have violated the mandatory *hijab* laws (previously established by the Mission), were further exacerbated.

Shooting

Against the backdrop of the “Noor” plan, on 22 July 2024, a police officer in Noor city (Mazandaran province) shot at a moving vehicle in which 31-year-old Arezou Badri, a shopkeeper and a mother of two, was travelling as a passenger. The shooting caused serious injuries to Ms. Badri’s spinal cord and lung, reportedly leaving her paralysed. The vehicle had been flagged to the police for prior violations of the mandatory *hijab* laws (see below).^{xxxiii}

On 22 August 2024, State media (Tasnim) announced that this incident was “not related to the *hijab*”. Instead, it claimed that the shooting occurred after the driver “disobeyed police orders to stop”, thus “fleeing the scene”. State authorities also noted that the car had tinted windows and was spotted in a “crime-ridden” area. State authorities also announced that the police officer who shot at the car had been detained, pending the results of an investigation initiated into the events.^{xxxiv}

Ms. Badri was reportedly transferred to Vali-e-Asr hospital in Tehran, where she remains guarded by security forces, with officers constantly present in her hospital room, including during family visits. Moreover, authorities have reportedly exerted pressure on Ms. Badri, her family, and her lawyer, forcing her and her father to give an interview to State media from her hospital bed confirming that she was doing well.^{xxxv} The Mission’s investigations into this case are on-going.

Physical violence during arrests and in detention

In one case investigated by the Mission, a woman and her close relative were arrested by the “morality police” in mid-April 2024, for not wearing the mandatory *hijab* in public in a city in Tehran province. Upon their arrest, the victims were taken to a white van belonging to the “morality police,” where officers held them pinned down to the ground to restrain their movement. One of the victims suffered a leg injury after a “morality police” officer violently shoved her into the van. They were then transferred to a Morality Security Police station in the same city, forced to sign a pledge committing to wear the mandatory *hijab* in public, and released shortly thereafter on the same day.^{xxxvi}

Credible information received by the Mission also indicated that “morality police” officers continued to beat women and girls arrested and detained for allegedly violating the mandatory *hijab* laws. In one case, a woman who was arrested in one province in May 2024, was beaten by a “morality police” woman officer inside a “morality police” white van to which she was taken after her arrest. After the victim explained that she was on her way to undergo a breast surgery, the woman officer mocked, ridiculed, and kicked the victim’s breasts. The victim was then brought to the Public Security Police station, where the same officer continued beating her. Reportedly, the victim was beaten so severely that she was later transferred to a medical facility.^{xxxvii}

The Mission reviewed, verified and analysed pictures and video footage which showed “morality police” and security officers violently arresting women and girls alleged to have violated the mandatory *hijab* laws. Video footage showed women and girls being violently arrested while being hit, kicked, or slapped by security forces as well as by men and women “morality police” officers for allegedly violating the mandatory *hijab* laws while on the street, near metro stations, or in a public park, in several cities, including Rasht, Borujen, and Tehran. Video footage also showed how after the arrest, women and girls were violently shoved into police cars or “morality police” white vans, with some fighting back against the arrests.

State response

Implicitly acknowledging the violence against women and girls during arrests for alleged violations of the mandatory *hijab* laws, the Government announced investigations into two cases, about which information had been largely circulated on social media. First, in a video published on 6 August 2024, two girls were violently arrested and beaten by women “morality police” officers for not wearing the mandatory *hijab* while on a street in Tehran city.^{xxxviii} On 7 August, the FARAJA information centre announced that this case was under investigation.^{xxxix} Reports indicated, however, that, in the course of this investigation, the mother of one of the child victims was threatened not to file a complaint for the beating endured by her daughter, aged 14 years at the time of the arrest.^{xl} Iranian media reported on 21 August 2024 that a judicial case has been filed by one of the “morality police” women officers before a juvenile court against one of the girls, thus also criminalizing the child victim. The “morality police” officer claimed that she had suffered an injury to her finger during the incident.^{xli}

Second, in a video published on 14 May 2024, a police officer was shown violently beating a woman without a *hijab* and shoving her into a police car while the woman is heard screaming “let go off me, you can break my neck”.^{xlii} After the video went viral, the Government announced that the police officer alleged to have inflicted the beating had been suspended pending further investigation.^{xliii} The next day, 15 May 2024, Iran’s former Interior Minister, Ahmad Vahadi, made a statement in which he blamed the victim for “getting naked,” and noted that the events had “apparently occurred differently”.^{xliiv}

Sedigheh Vasmaghi

On the morning of 16 March 2024, Dr. Sedigheh Vasmaghi, a prominent Iranian Islamic scholar critical of the mandatory *hijab*, was arrested by four security police officers and a woman officer in her home in Tehran city. During her arrest, officers confiscated her phone and laptop, and forced her to wear the *hijab*, which she refused. Prior to her arrest, Dr. Vasmaghi had received a summons to appear before the Evin prosecutor’s office, though the legal grounds or reason for why proceedings were initiated against her were not made clear.

During interrogations in detention, Dr. Vasmaghi was told by an interrogator that she was being charged with violating the mandatory *hijab* laws (without further explanation), and for “propaganda against the state” for posting earlier on social media that the “election ballots do not belong to the people” in relation to the June 2024 Presidential elections in Iran.

Dr. Vasmaghi suffers from retinis pigmentosa -a genetic eye disorder, characterised by the progressive degeneration of the photoreceptor cells in her retina. This condition has gradually led to her experiencing vision loss. During her detention, Dr. Vasmaghi refused to wear the mandatory *hijab* and as a result, prison

authorities denied her family visitations and access to medical care she required for her eye condition. The lack of appropriate care and treatment hindered Dr. Vasmaghi's ability to access services while in detention and rendered her increasingly vulnerable by aggravating her health condition. To protest how the authorities tethered compliance with the mandatory *hijab* to access medical care, Dr. Vasmaghi organized a sit-in in the Evin prison yard on two occasions, during which she was joined by others, including Narges Mohammadi.

On 2 April 2024, and only after her health condition became critical, Dr. Vasmaghi, still not wearing the mandatory *hijab*, was transferred to a hospital, before being sent back to Evin prison, despite her pleas to remain under medical care for a longer period. On 29 April, amid mounting concerns over her health, she was released on bail. The health condition of Dr. Vasmaghi diminished in detention, impacting her eyes, heart, and blood pressure.^{xlv}

Expanding restrictions to women and girls' access to fundamental rights

Government authorities also escalated their repressive measures and policies around structural discrimination against women and girls by suppressing their access to fundamental economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCR) rights – which they tethered to compliance with the mandatory *hijab* laws and regulations.

Right to health

On 6 May 2024, the Food and Drug Administration of Iran announced that the quota of medicine would be reduced in pharmacies in situations where employees or patients were found to be in violation of the mandatory *hijab* laws and regulations.^{xlvi} The Mission found that the Government previously shut down pharmacies in Tehran and Amol in late January 2024 after women employees were reported to be working without the mandatory *hijab*.^{xlvii}

Meanwhile, on 6 June 2024, the Head of the *Hijab* and Chastity Secretariat in the Ministry of Health, Majid Mohammadian, announced a new directive enforcing an “Islamic dress code” for patients and medical staff.^{xlviii}

Right to education

A new software facial recognition had been reportedly installed on 20 April 2024 at the entrance gate of the Amirkabir University of Technology to monitor women students' compliance with the mandatory *hijab* laws. Reportedly, security forces stationed at the gate of the University denied access to around 200 women students who did not wear the *chador*, and men students who wore T-shirts or sports attire for “un-Islamic attire”. Around.^{xlix} On 21 April 2024, students gathered at the University to protest these increasingly repressive measures and the targeting of student attire in universities, which they deemed to have intensified after the launch of the “Noor” plan.¹ Following this, on 27 April 2024, the Director-General of Cultural and Artistic Affairs of the Ministry of Education reportedly announced 16 forthcoming “*hijab* and chastity plans” to be implemented in 600,000 girl schools across Iran.¹

The Government also continued its practice of closing private businesses, including cafes, restaurants, and commercial offices for not adhering with the mandatory *hijab* laws. On 15 April 2024, the bookstore of Zhina Modares Gorji, a Kurdish women's rights activist, was shut down in Sanandaj for non-compliance with the mandatory *hijab* laws.^{lii} Moreover, on 8 July 2024, Iranian authorities closed the office of Turkish Airlines in Tehran for the same.^{liii}

Use of technology to monitor mandatory hijab compliance of women and girls both online and offline, and inside vehicles

The Islamic Republic of Iran has previously resorted to the use of surveillance, including through expanding coverage of closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV) in public spaces to monitor women and girls' compliance with mandatory *hijab* laws in public places and in their cars. Women not wearing the mandatory

hijab while driving, or being driven in cars, received text messages warning them of penalties for non-compliance, including the impounding of their vehicles or fines.^{lv}

This practice has continued, with vehicles being continuously impounded in sizeable numbers. On 23 June 2024, Iran's police information centre announced that 8,000 vehicles, previously impounded for *hijab*-related violations, had been released to their owners.^{lv} Credible information obtained by the Mission also indicated that confiscation of vehicles for violations of the mandatory *hijab* laws has continued, with cases reported in Tehran, Isfahan, Markazi, Hamedan, and West Azerbaijan provinces.^{lvi}

State authorities also resorted to aerial surveillance to monitor women and girls' compliance with the mandatory *hijab*. Video footage analysed by the Mission showed a drone equipped with a camera which was deployed on 10 May 2024, to identify women and girls not wearing the mandatory *hijab* during the 35th Tehran International Book Fair in Tehran.^{lvii} Likewise, on 16 May 2024, State media (Mehr news) published video footage showcasing the use of drones in the island of Kish (southern coast of Iran) to monitor women and girls' compliance with mandatory *hijab* laws in the context of the "Noor" plan.^{lviii}

Online activities

The Government of Iran also sought to suppress women and girls engaged in the 'Women, Life, Freedom' movement through monitoring and surveillance of their activities online.

For example, on 23 April 2024, Kyomars Aziti, FARAJA commander of western Tehran province, announced that the police had blocked 21 Instagram accounts of users who had a large following, for publishing "inappropriate images" and "breaking the norms." Likewise, the mobile phone service of 12 women from Tehran, Karaj, Arak and Tabriz had reportedly been disconnected shortly after they expressed criticism over social media regarding the "morality police" and the imposition of the *hijab*. The suspension was reportedly done at the request of the Organization for Regulation of Communications.^{lix}

Conclusion

On the second anniversary of the nationwide protests, the Mission reiterates its calls to the Iranian authorities to halt all protest-related executions and to put in place a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, with a view to its abolition.

It further urges the Government to repeal all laws and policies relating to the mandatory *hijab* and ensure women and girls' rights to freedom of expression and autonomy. The Mission also urges the Government to cease, prevent and punish all violence associated with the enforcement of the mandatory *hijab* rules, including by disbanding the "morality police" and upholding the rights to freedom of expression, of peaceful assembly and to religion and belief or opinion.

The Mission also urges the international community to stand in solidarity with the women, men and children who are steadfast in their support to those whose fundamental rights continue to be so egregiously violated. Such support could be amplified through among others, ensuring protection of Iranian nationals on their territory who are at risk of retaliation for their solidarity with the protests, and explore avenues for accountability, the provision of reparations to victims, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction (e.g. commemorations and tributes to the victims) and guarantees of non-repetition, as outlined in the Mission's March 2024 report, and accompanying conference room paper.

The Mission is continuing its investigation into these and other incidents and will present its next report to the Human Rights Council at its 58th session in March 2025.

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- ⁱ See “Iran: Sharp spike in use of death penalty”, Statement by United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 24 January 2024.
- ⁱⁱ Punishments for transgressing the mandatory *hijab* laws and policies, may additionally include prohibition to use social media, ban on entry into public spaces, such as government offices, as well as parks, cinemas, public transport. See A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1246-1305.
- ⁱⁱⁱ A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1298-1305.
- ^{iv} A/HRC/55/67, paras. 105-110.
- ^v A/HRC/55/CRP.1, Section XI. F.
- ^{vi} A/HRC/55/67, paras. 18-20. See also A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 248-260.
- ^{vii} See *generally* “They have dehumanized us: Minority rights violations during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran”, August 2024.
- ^{viii} “Iranian women’s rights activists sentenced to long prison terms”, Radio Farda, 28 March 2024.
- ^{ix} Instagram post on file.
- ^x FFM-IRAN-D-002536.
- ^{xi} Reply by the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Joint Communication of UN Special Procedures No. AL IRN 5/2024 dated 21 March 2024 regarding the case of Ms. Sapideh Rashnu.
- ^{xii} A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 376.
- ^{xiii} FFM-IRAN-D-002535.
- ^{xiv} FFM-IRAN-D-002541. See also “FEMENA Strongly Condemns the Unjust Death Sentence against Kurdish-Iranian Activist Pakhshan Azizi and Calls for Her Immediate Release”, Femena, 25 July 2024.
- ^{xv} “Evin prison: new case opened against Pakhshan Azizi on charges of prison chaos”, Kurdpa, 16 August 2024.
- ^{xvi} FFM-IRAN-D-002939.
- ^{xvii} For the Mission’s detailed analysis of the “Hijab and Chastity” Bill, see A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras. 1227-1245
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- ^{xxix} FFM-IRAN-D-002306- FFM-IRAN-D-002335 (Submission).
- ^{xxx} FFM-IRAN-D-002549 (Submission).
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- ^{xxxii} “Aida Shakarami charged with inciting immorality and indecency”, HRANA, 30 May 2024.
- ^{xxxiii} FFM-IRAN-D-002938; FFM-IRAN-D-002941.
- ^{xxxiv} FFM-IRAN-D-002920 (Video); See also “An important point about Arezoo Badri and not paying attention to the order to stop by the police”, Tasnim, 22 August 2024.
- ^{xxxv} FFM-IRAN-D-002941.
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- ^{xxxix} “Police reaction to the video of the fight between several female officers and two girls”, ISNA, 7 August 2024.
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