



Iranische Liberale Frauen e.V. (ILF)

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Ending Systematic Violence Against Women in Iran

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, we—the people of Iran, human rights organizations, and advocates—call on the global community to take decisive action against the systemic gender-based violence and oppression of women under the Islamic Republic.

While the world is making strides to combat gender apartheid—exemplified by the recent UN General Assembly’s Sixth Committee resolution to end gender apartheid—Iranian women are still denied their most basic human rights. The Islamic Republic systematically strips women of freedoms as fundamental as choosing what to wear. Instead of progress, Iranian women face the looming enforcement of the “**Family Support Bill through the Promotion of Chastity and Hijab Culture,**” a law designed to tighten surveillance and further curtail their rights.

This legislation, set to become law, mandates businesses, public institutions, and private entities to monitor individuals, report violations, and enforce strict Islamic dress codes and lifestyles. It erodes personal freedoms, violates privacy, and disproportionately targets women, creating an environment of fear, marginalization, and vulnerability to violence.

The dangers of this bill cannot be viewed in isolation. The Islamic Republic’s legal framework has long fostered violence against women and girls. Article 301 of the Islamic Penal Code exempts fathers and grandfathers from capital punishment for murdering their children. Similarly, Article 630 allows husbands to kill their wives without consequence if they are caught in adultery. Article 1041 of the Iranian Civil Code permits child marriage, allowing girls as young as 13 to marry—and in some cases even younger with judicial consent and parental approval. This practice, widely criticized as sanctioned rape, perpetuates institutionalized child abuse and exposes young girls to exploitation under the guise of legality. These laws, rooted in the Islamic Republic’s misogynistic policies, have had devastating real-life consequences.

In 2024 alone, at least 170 femicides have been reported, with women often murdered by close male relatives such as fathers, brothers, or husbands. This figure, while alarming, is an underestimation, as cultural and institutional barriers prevent many cases from being reported. The Islamic Republic actively conceals data on gender-



based violence to deflect attention from the entrenched structural inequalities and patriarchal ideology that underpin its governance. By perpetuating a system that prioritizes family honor over justice and institutionalizes impunity for perpetrators, the regime normalizes these crimes and fosters an environment in which violence against women remains pervasive and unchallenged. The sheer frequency and brutality of these killings underscore the systemic failure to protect women.

According to a 2019 report by ISNA, a state-affiliated media outlet in Iran, between **375 and 450 honor killings occur annually in Iran**, comprising approximately **20% of all murders** and 50% of family-related murders in the country. This statistic underscores the deeply rooted and systemic nature of gender-based violence in Iran. Additionally, Stop Femicide Iran reported a **60% increase in femicides** in the first half of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023.

We appeal to the global community and international human rights bodies to prioritize and implement **concrete actions** to protect Iranian women and prevent further violence:

- **Condemn the “Family Support Bill through the Promotion of Chastity and Hijab Culture” as a violation of international human rights standards.** This bill institutionalizes gender discrimination and surveillance, further marginalizing women and exposing them to heightened risks of violence and oppression. International pressure is necessary to repeal this law.
- **Impose targeted sanctions on individuals and entities responsible for systemic gender-based violence and oppression**, including members of the morality police, judiciary, lawmakers, and others directly involved in drafting, implementing, and enforcing laws such as the “Family Support Bill. These sanctions must hold accountable those facilitating institutionalized violence against women.
- **Support accountability mechanisms**, such as the UN’s Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, to investigate and document human rights violations and ensure those responsible for gender-based violence face international justice. Such mechanisms are essential for addressing impunity and securing justice for victims.
- **Secure and empower activists already in exile and ensure protection for those seeking asylum.** The international community must prioritize the safety and empowerment of exiled women’s rights activists through funding, opportunities, and



platforms to amplify their advocacy. Simultaneously, mechanisms must be established to protect those still at risk within Iran, ensuring safe pathways to asylum and safeguarding their ability to continue their vital work.

• **Ensure the Islamic Republic does not regain membership in international bodies like the UN Commission on the Status of Women.** In March 2023, the global community expelled the Islamic Republic for its anti-women policies. Safeguarding these platforms from the regime's propaganda and lobbying efforts is essential to protecting the integrity of these bodies.

The struggle of Iranian women is the struggle of all humanity. It is a fight for justice, equality, and the right to live free from fear and violence. The international community must act now to end systemic oppression under the Islamic Republic's rule. The time for solidarity is now.

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