

# Annual Report 2014

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Organization for Defending  
Victims of Violence (ODVV)

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# FOREWORD

2014 ended, but the world continues with a wish for peace and nonviolence. In this year not only the did the observation of human rights not increase, but the people of the modern world witnessed the most heinous of crimes being committed.

The ignorance and extremism trend on one side and with the backing of domineering political power moves, committed crimes in front of the eyes of the world that makes the criminals of history look tame.

It seems that the concerned for Mankind and human rights defenders must be sensitive towards two event that occurred following these incidents, and put some effort into confronting them.

1 – The normalization of crime, (due to repetition, and the display of various mass crimes)

2 – The normalization of defamation of religion and insult to people's beliefs (events)

Both of these will be serious threats to the future of Mankind.

In an identification process, the ODVV has from several years ago showed reaction towards the dangers of extremism and Islamophobia, and the history of its activities and products and statements is indicative of this timely sensitivity. The terrorist crimes committed by ISIS, or IS or Daesh that are committed daily with the backing of some near and distant countries, is due to lack of timely attention towards confronting extremism and Islamophobic violence.

In the year that has passed not only extremist committed heinous crimes in the name of Islam in some African countries as well as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, crimes such as beheadings, immolation, kidnappings, slavery and etc., but Israel continued to commit crimes in the Occupied Territories, particularly the Gaza Strip and left countless number of women and children victims.

In the year that passed, while showing its effective and continued presence in the Human Rights Council sessions, the ODVV worked hard to empower NGOS and train them towards their effective presence in the UN mechanisms, particularly the UPR process.

Also the launching of ODVV's representative office in Geneva was the restart of cooperations and new activities in international gatherings, and shall continue so in the future too.

Let us hope for the future years to be witness to a world without violence, defamation, poverty and corruption, and filled with friendship, kindness and peace.

# Introduction

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-political organization in Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). The ODVV was established in 1988 in Tehran and has been active in the field of human rights and humanitarian activities. The ODVV is also associated to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), a participatory of the NGOs Coalition for an International Court (based in New York), and national coordinator of the Global March Against Child Labour (based in New Delhi) which cooperated in a variety of issues with international organizations and has working relations with many NGOs in Iran and around the globe. The ODVV is also member of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), Asia Youth Network, Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), and the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), and International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), and AMAN Network of Middle East and North Africa Rehabilitation Centres for Torture Victims.



# ODVV Mission Statement

## Being committed to its moral principles the ODVV's mission is:

- To respect high human values;
- To respect the rule of law and be committed to national values, moral principles and laws,
- To respect national interests and to avoid entering political groupings,
- To respect human dignity and status, and to recognise individual's rights and respect of society's public interests,
- To believe in justice, equality and observe everyone's rights (women and children in particular),
- To believe in being responsible, transparent, answerable, honest and virtuous;
- To accept the expansion and promotion of creativity;
- To respect knowledge, competence and experiences of individuals;
- To accept ideas, notions, recommendations and constructive criticisms;
- To be committed to collective unity and cooperation;
- To promote the spirit of service and voluntary campaigns;
- To promote and expand a culture of non-violence;

## For the purpose of reaching its goal which is to promote and expand a human rights culture the ODVV shall utilise the following practices:

- Hold educational, seminars, forums and workshops with the aim of information dissemination and raise the society's culture, preparation of articles and research in this regard;
- Protect and defend the rights of victims of violence and society;
- Promote and expand a culture of non-violence;
- Present advisory and counselling services for the rehabilitation of victims of society, and to refer these victims to the relevant centres to receiving care and services;
- Establishment and facilitation of links with national, regional and international organizations that follow similar objectives, and to facilitate the opportunity to exchange views, experiences and knowledge;

# Structure

## The ODVV conducts its activities and campaigns under the following structure

- Research and Education Department
  - International Relations Department
  - Communications Department
  - Rehabilitation Department (RAHA Rehabilitation Centre)
- The following is a brief narration of the activities that the aforementioned departments conducted in 2014



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# Research and Education Projects

For the purpose of releasing presentable researches to human rights scientific and official institutions on legal, economic, social and cultural issues, by forming experienced specialist teams on fields needed by society, the ODVV conducts general or thematic researches in the form of various projects. The researches conducted in these projects, bring about the basis to conduct practical projects such as education courses, workshops and scientific-educational sittings. What follows is a narrative of these projects and educational and research activities of the ODVV in 2014:

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## Prevention of Domestic Violence and Life Skills Education Workshop for Afghan Refugees Residing in Varamin - 2014

Through signing of a tripartite agreement between the ODVV, BAFIA and the UNHCR, this project began in seven stages from March 2014 for 480 Afghan refugees - that included 240 men and 240 women - with the aim of reducing domestic violence. The project is still ongoing.

Stage one: the project began with the initial drafting and studying of resources, preparation of an educational package, the determination of evaluation method, determination of education methods, coordination with trainers, preparation of a guidebook and invitation of the addressees. The training method was set for training of peers and workshop method. The evaluation method was set in the form of pre and post tests and a general survey at the end of the course. The addressees at first were identified (50 men and 50 women) by one of the Afghan refugees resident in Varamin and 80 out these were selected for direct training. These individuals trained 400 individuals in the form of peer education.

Stage two: in this stage the training of peer educators and the holding of pre and post tests and the documentations were done. This stage of the project concentrated on the ten life skills self help education via the workshop method. The subjects of discussion in this course were:

- 1 - Characteristics of a healthy family, (usual and acceptable judgement of power), existence of clear boundaries, function in the present, skills in dialogue, respecting individual's choice, expression of positive feelings.
- 2 - Life skills: expression of existence, self control feelings, compatible confrontation with stressful situations skills, tolerance in the family.
- 3 - Morality, common problems and stresses
- 4 - Mourning: definition of death, its stages, how to face mourning





5 - Self help: determining life's fundamental objectives, drawing a life plan for improvement of conditions, target setting, setting strategy and designing

6 - Sexually transmitted diseases: sexual relations, sexually transmitted diseases, prevention signs and treatment.

7 - Parental skills: main principles of child raising, strengthening of self respect and self confidence, establishment of order and discipline (correct raising general principles), raising methods and correction of the household structure.

Through the presentation of the education subjects by the facilitators via the workshop method, group plays and workgroups were also held. In order to prevent from the learned stuff being forgotten, while learning themselves, the educators started teaching others. These trainings took place in the homes or schools of the educators, and each individual according to commitment to the project was obligated to train 5 peers.

Stage three: in this stage the evaluation expert was sent to get answers to question and to evaluate the education process. Three observation and evaluation visits with trainers have been conducted to date in individual and group forms. In these visits, the trainers discussed their opportunities, threats and their needs for the better advancement of the project.

## Technical Workshop on Alfred Adler Approach Based Psychotherapy

The “Technical Workshop on Alfred Adler Approach Based Psychotherapy” , the showing of film and analysis of John Carlson’s psychotherapy sessions and counselling was held in June 2014 with the participation of 15 experts and psychologists for five hours. While describing the therapy process from Adler’s view, in this workshop, techniques from this approach such as evaluation of life style, evaluation of fundamental concepts such as feeling of humiliation superiority, motivation, encouragement and cognitive fundamental mistakes were also reviewed.

Afterwards clips of a number of John Carlson’s psychotherapy and counselling sessions, and students of the school of Adler were shown and analysed by the exeperts.

## Education Workshop on Practical Guidelines for Acquiring Consultative Status from ECOSOC

With the aim of increasing international reputation and negotiations position of NGOs at international levels and in line with the UN and ECOSOC objectives regarding increased participation, consultation and influence of NGOs in international conferences, in November 2014 the ODVV held the



Education Workshop on Practical Guidelines for Acquiring Consultative Status from ECOSOC for one month.

The participating NGOs of this workshop, scientifically and practically were introduced to the ECOSOC NGOs Committee and its duties, NGOs Liaison Office, NGOs Communications Services, the concept and how consultative status is acquired. Also all the stages of registration, creation of a profile, filling application forms and preparation of documents required for submission, and throughout holding the course they undertook all the tasks online. Due to the insistence of ODVV on the effectiveness of the course and the necessity to limit the number of participants in order to achieve the targeted objectives, only 10 NGOs were accepted in this course.

# International Conferences and Coalitions

As a nongovernmental organization, the ODVV conducts part of its activities in the international arena, and by acquiring a special consultative status from ECOSOC the ODVV has managed to have the opportunity to participate in the former Commission on Human Rights and its substitute the Human Rights Council periodic sessions, and by issuing statements the ODVV presents its official positions.

The ODVV also endeavours to by participating in international conferences to create new opportunities and capacities in the international scene.

## 25th Session of the Human Rights Council

The 25th Session of the Human Rights Council was held from 2-28 March 2014 in Geneva Switzerland. The Session began, just as the previous sessions, the ODVV began its work six months before the session. The activities included, the writing of written statements for submission to the Council, writing of oral statements to be read during the session, organization of activities related to the holding of 3 sidelines panels, links with NGOs in consultative status to ECOSOC for participation in the session, preparation of medial products to distribute at the session, designing a programme for increasing the capabilities of participating NGOs in the 25th Session.

The result of the activities of these six months came into fruition in this session and they are as follows:

### *- Empowerment and Increasing Capacity of NGOs*

Towards the empowerment and increasing capacity of NGOs at the international level, the ODVV facilitated the presence of 11 Iranian NGOs in the 25th Session of the Human Rights Council, four of them having consultative status at ECOSOC. The presence of these NGOs in the 25th Session took place with two separate objectives. The first: with aim of increasing capacity, NGOs in consultative status through practical introduction, were introduced to statement writing, statement registration, interaction with rapporteurs and NGOs at the Council. And second: with aim of increasing capacity, NGOs not in consultative status through practical introduction to the Human Rights Council and the UPR mechanism, participation in the main hall where the session is held, participation in sidelines sittings, introduction to the benefits of having consultative status, introduction to how to acquire consultative status, how to write and read statements. The achievement of these two objectives has been one of the most important achievements and initiatives of the ODVV with regards to the empowerment and increasing capacity of Iranian NGOs.

### *- Writing and Submission of Statements*

Two weeks prior to the start of the Session, the ODVV submitted 11 written statements which were: Item 3: Right to Development, Item 4: the Role of the West in the Violation of Human Rights as a Result of Sanctions, Item 6: A Review of the UPR Mechanism, Item 7: Violation of Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, and Item 9: Islamophobia. All the submitted statements are documented in the Human Rights Council website. The selection of the focal points and the contents of the statements had begun six months previously in scientific sessions at the ODVV, the outcome of which was the preparation of statements with stronger and up-to-date content. The titles of the statements were as follows: Negative effects of sanctions against Iran, obstacle in the way of achieving the MDG, women; development and prevention causes; necessity for further attention to international mechanisms for the rights of Shia minorities; review of the UPR mechanism; necessity for respect for cultural diversity of Muslims in the fight against the spread of Xenophobia.

### *- Writing and Reading Oral Statements*

Five NGOs in special consultative status to ECOSOC read 21 statements on Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9, four of which were read specifically following the submission of the Special Rapporteur on Iran's report.



### *- Holding Sidelines Panels*

Concentration on two debates: Islamophobia and the violation of the rights of the Shia minority, are some of the illustrative activities of the ODVV at the Council and to show the double standard behaviour of western countries in defending human rights. Which over the recent years and due to the global spread of this phenomenon over the recent years, it has turned into one of the focal points of the ODVV's mission statement. On this basis two sidelines panels were held in the 25th Session on the subject of "Islamophobia and Violation of Human Rights" and "Violation of the Rights of the Shia Minority". The ODVV also benefited from the cooperation of the Khaiim Centre and Law Centre from Lebanon, and the Afagh Jahani Studies Institute.



### **Islamophobia and Violation of Human Rights:**

This sidelines panel was held on 13 March 2014 at the Human Rights Council during the 25th Session. This sitting was held with the cooperation of

St. Joseph University of Lebanon alongside lecturers from this university in Room VI. The following subjects were discussed in the panel: "Western Islamophobia and its Connection to Eastern Extremism", "Islamophobia Worldwide, the Real Causes of the Increasing Threat against Peaceful Coexistence", "Prophet of Islam (PBUH) the Embodiment of Human Compassion and Dignity". The sitting continued with a Q&A segment between the audience and panellists, and finished with the summation of the panel moderator.

### **Shia Minority: Victims of Extremism and Violence:**

This panel was held on 14 March 2014 by the ODVV and at the same time as the 25th Session of the Human Rights Council. The experts and speakers discussed the following subjects: "Violation of the Rights



of Shia Minority in the Middle East”. “Review of the Violation of the Rights of Shia Minority in South-East Asia”. “Transparency of Violated Rights of the Shia Majority in Bahrain”. Coexistence”, “Prophet of Islam (PBUH) the Embodiment of Human Compassion and Dignity”. The sitting continued with a Q&A segment between the audience and panellists, and finished with the summation of the panel moderator. One of the successes of this sitting was the participation and speech of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief, which was fulfilled with the efforts and follow ups of the ODVV.

**Islamophobia and the Violation of Human Rights (joint with AMAN Network and Khaiim Centre of Lebanon):**

In following its overall policies for awareness raising with regards to the fight against Islamophobia and violation of human rights, the ODVV supported the sidelines panel held by AMAN Network and Khaiim Institute of Lebanon. The panel was held during the 25th Session of the Council on 17 March 2014 in Room XXV. In this sitting various aspects of Islamophobia and confronting the problem were discussed by the speakers.



***- Meetings with those involved on various issues***

With an aim to play a key role in the promotion of human rights in Iran and reduction of international pressures against Iran, the ODVV has held meetings with various figures involved in the review of



the human rights situation in Iran. In line with this the ODVV team had a meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Iran and his assistants in this Session of the Council

#### *- Preparation and distribution of ODVV products*

With the aim of expanding its international links through publication of media products and its activities reports, the ODVV produced various products such as books, newsletter, annual report, multimedia CDs and books of collective of speeches made in sidelines panels and distributed in the 25th Session of the Council

### **26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**

In continuation of their international activities, the representatives of the ODVV participated in the 26th Session of the Human Rights Council (10-27 June 2014) in Geneva, Switzerland. ODVV representatives conducted various activities such as reading statements, meeting with thematic rapporteurs, distribution of newsletters, books, and CDS. In this Session 9 oral statements were read on Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9.

### **Participation in the UNHCR Annual Consultation with NGOs**

The Annual UNHCR Annual Consultation with NGOs took place close to the International Refugees Day 17-19 June in Geneva Switzerland. Participating in this meeting were around 460 delegates from more than 240 various NGOs, international organizations and the UN. Ten NGOs active on refugees issues also took part from Iran. The thematic concentration of this sitting was "women's leadership and participation" which was the focal point of all sidelines panels. The sitting began with the speech of Antonio Guterres the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. While stressing on the colourful and important role of NGOs and civil society in the expression of truths and problems and also going forward with humanitarian objectives, avoidance of political look at NGOs, as important and deemed the role of these organizations and UN agencies in the facilitation of the participation



and leadership of women as undeniable.

This consultation sitting was host to thematic meetings and sideline panels with a focus on income and self reliance, internally displaced persons, GBV prevention, support for juveniles and youths, mental health and social psychological support, resettlement, detention and etc.

With the backing of education cooperation with the UNHCR in Tehran, the ODVV took part in this sitting. While distributing ODVV products and brochures and magazines, that had been prepared for the sitting, the ODVV took part in some of the sideline events, with taking into consideration of its own activities and objectives. This sitting was also a good opportunity to build a network and create interaction and links with participating organizations, which the ODVV representatives benefited from, and foresaw a sidelines panel for the 2015 sitting.

### **ODVV's Effective Presence in the Advisory Committee**

ODVV representative in Geneva took part in the Advisory Committee which took part on 11-15 August.

In its final statement, this Committee, on the recommendation of the ODVV, for the first time the Committee made it obligatory to have a meeting with NGOs before meeting countries' representatives.

Also the ODVV placed in its agenda the subject of unilateral forced measures and the violation of human rights as a result of these unilateral measures; and has continuously raised the issue at the Human Rights Council Sessions. To this aim and at the end of the 27th Session of the Human Rights Council, an important resolution entitled "Unilateral Forced Measures" was ratified. This resolution will result in the Human Rights Council to permanently review the negative effects of economic sanctions in all its sessions. According to this resolution, an "annual roundtable, "members of the Advisory Committee" and one "special rapporteur" will continually discuss and study the negative effects of sanctions on human rights.

### **58th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

The ODVV took part in this Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the theme of which was the right to education for girls and women. This session was held on 18-30 July 2014 in Geneva by the Committee Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which monitors the implementation of the contents of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. The organization of this session was done by the UNHCHR and with the support of UNICEF. The main subject of discussion of the session was

"women's rights during education" and "women's rights following education" and recommendations that were given in this regard, and also that it is necessary for a recommendation to be given that sends this message. Representatives of UN agencies, NGOs and GOs were other speakers of the session and the ODVV submitted its statement in this sitting.

### **Participation in the 27th Session of the Human Rights Council**

The 27th Session of the Human Rights Council was held on 8-26 September 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland, under the ten items that the sessions are always held in, with new sub-subjects; subjects such as the human rights situation in Syria, Ukraine, Palestine and Iraq alongside many other human rights issues from around the world such as minorities rights and people of African origins. As in the past, with its extensive and effective efforts, the ODVV used all its abilities to achieve its objectives in the international arena. A summary of the activities are as follows:

#### *- Holding sideline panels*

For the first time by holding a sideline panel on "Crimes against Humanity in the Middle East" the ODVV reviewed the crimes of ISIS and Israel side by side under the heading of crimes against humanity. At the start



of the panel a documentary was played called, "What the Western Media Won't Tell You", which had been produced by the ODVV. The documentary centred on the suffering and resistance of the people of Gaza, and some Israeli action cases which are tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. In this sitting, Ms. Rania Madi, legal consultant of Badil Organization, Palestinian rights activist, talked about the recent Gaza conflict and the continuation of Israel's crimes in occupied Palestinian territories. The director of the international Fight against Terrorism Organization who had recently been in Iraq, gave alarming figures of the crimes committed by ISIS in Iraq and the conditions in the country. At the end ODVV's permanent representative in Geneva who is an expert in international law, legally proved these crimes and reviewed the legal reasons that make it necessary for these crimes to be referred to the ICC.

### *- ODVV's Human Rights Concerns*

The written and oral statements that the ODVV submitted to the 27th Session raises the human rights concerns of the Organization and the values that it believes in. Using the opportunity of its presence in the Human Rights Council, the ODVV tries to reflect the voices of oppressed people who do not have the opportunity to be present in the Council and demand their rightful rights. Also by using the views of consultants and experts in the field and the experiences that continued presence in the Council has been accomplished, the ODVV expressed its human rights concerns within the framework of Council literature. To this aim, subjects and issues were raised in the ODVV statements and sideline panels some of which are as follows: Shedding light on Israel's crimes committed against the defenceless people of Gaza which had clearly been censored in the Western medias, and ISIS crimes committed in Iraq and Syria in the name of Islam, the financial backing of this terrorist group by certain countries such as Qatar, and America's double standard actions against this group, meaning the initial support and symbolic fight against ISIS, the violation of privacy of the people by the United States in the cyber media, the fall of the family unit in the West, particularly in America, violation of the human rights of the people of the world and Iran as a result of illegitimate economic sanctions, necessity to prevent crimes and dealing with it before it spreads leaving countless numbers of victims. The UPR mechanism and the necessity for adopting new measures for the prevention of ever increasing violence around the world and particularly in the Middle East, the unlawfulness of targeted murders with the use of drones, the necessity to prevent violence against children and conducting of terror attacks in the name of Islam prepares the basis for discrimination against Muslims and the violation of their rights.

### *- Preparation and Submission of Written Statements*

Two weeks prior to the start of the Session the ODVV submitted 4 written statements under Items: 4, Violation of Human Rights in Occupied Territories, economic sanctions that violate the human rights of people, particularly vulnerable sectors of society, promotion of Islamophobia due to the West's support for groups such as ISIS.

### *- Preparation and reading of Oral Statements*

The ODVV submitted 12 oral statements under Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 on subjects such as the Iraq crisis, Gaza crimes, economic sanctions, Islamophobia, UPR, importance of the preservation of the family unit, targeted murders through the use of drones and the importance of the protection of children's rights.



### *- Preparation and distribution of ODVV products*

With the aim of expanding its international links through publication of media products and its activities reports, the ODVV produced various products such as a book on the violation of the rights of the Shia in Pakistan and Iraq,



Defenders Newsletter with a scientific content focused on human rights, ODVV annual report, multimedia CDs that contained a documentary on Gaza entitled "What the Western Media Won't Tell You". These products were extensively distributed in this Session.

### **ODVV Representative's Presence in the 19th UPR Working Group Session and its Pre-session in UPR-INFO**

The UPR of countries which has been defined in the form of working groups and documented by the Human Rights Council. To get further introduced to the working groups working process, the ODVV representative in Geneva participated in the the Working Group 19th Session which was held from 28 April to 9 May 2014 and as an example conducted studies on the review of Portugal, North Korea and Qatar. The aim of this study was to identify the working group's working process during the review of the human rights situation of a country, how countries produce their own human rights situation report, replies that are given to the recommendations given, interaction with countries and recommendations that they give, determination of the connection between recommendations and the lobbies of NGOs.

### **Request from the ICC to Investigate the Crimes Committed by ISIS & the ICC Prosecutor's Reply**

Six NGOs jointly prepared a petition , and requested ICC prosecutor Ms. Fatou Binsouda to investigate crimes committed by ISIS. In this petition which was prepared by the German-Iraqi Society, Council in Support of Fair Trials and Human Rights, the ODVV, International Organization for the Fight Against Terrorism and Religious Extremism, Zahra Human Rights Institute and Muslims Rights Association of Belgium, while pointing out the history and background of this terror group, stressed on the leaders and members of this group being international criminals.

Some examples of the crimes committed by ISIS was pointed out in this petition that included kidnappings, torture, destruction of religious sites, rape, slavery, mass and extrajudicial executions, arbitrary and extrajudicial detentions, and murder of individuals. In view of the crimes associated to

ISIS, the reports of institutions and international figures positions, the contents of Security Council Resolution 2170 as the highest decision making authority on international peace and security, the crimes committed by this terror group clearly fall under the category of crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

At the end of the petition in accordance with Article 13(c) of the ICC Statute, these six NGOs have called upon the ICC prosecutor to personally investigate ISIS crimes and issue arrest warrants for the leaders and members of this terrorist group. The petition received a reply from the ICC prosecutor who said that she would follow up on the subject.

### **Participation in the 7<sup>th</sup> Forum on Minorities**

The representatives of the ODVV participated in the 7th Minorities Session, which was held on 25-26 November 2014 in the European Headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland and read some statements.

The main subject of the Forum was "Prevention and Investigation of Brutal Crimes against Minorities" under four sub-subjects of: 1 - Recognition of the root causes of violence and brutal crimes against minorities, 2 - Ways to improve the prevention of violence and brutal crimes against minorities, 3 - Main methods for solving violence (after the start of brutal crimes), protection of minorities and establishment of security, 4 - Avoidance of the reoccurrence of these types of crimes, establishment of peace and management of ethnic diversity. In this Session which took place with the participation of NGOs, six items, the approval of the programme and organizational work, legal framework and key concepts, support for the existence of religious minorities and prevention of violence against them, promotion and protection of religious minorities' identity, promotion of fair reciprocal dialogue and summation. The ODVV presented two statements in two of the two items in support of the protection of the right to existence and prevention of violence against religious minorities and promotion and protection of the identities of religious minorities, participation in information meetings of other NGOs, and participation in the 20th Session of the UPR Working Group.

### **20<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR Working Group**

The 20th Session of the UPR Working Group was held from 27 October to 7 November 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland and reviewed the human rights files of 14 countries.

The final output of this Session will be ratified by the Human Rights Council General Assembly during the 28th Session of the Council which will be held from 2 to 27 March 2015.

Some of the activities of the ODVV in this Session include the holding of 8 consultation meetings, selecting subjects of speeches, preparation of articles, preparation of articles brochures, invitation of countries permanent representatives in Geneva, holding an information meeting on UPR process in Iran,



### ***- Information Meeting on UPR Process in the Islamic Republic of Iran***

Alongside its main activities in the UPR Working Group's 20th Session, on 3 November 2014 the ODVV held an information meeting on the UPR process in Room XXII of Palais de Nations. The sitting whose addressees were solely governments, was held on 4 pivotal points with the moderation of Dr. Fartousi and the presence of a number of university lecturers.

Dr. Parichehreh Shahsavand spoke on the subject of women's conditions in the Islamic Republic, Dr. Mohammad Javad Javid on the subject of minorities rights in Iran, Dr. Safieh Shahriari Afshar on the subject of human rights and health in Iran, and Dr. Alireza Deihim on the subject of the threshold of the punishment of drugs trafficking from international law aspects. Also a package that contained the articles of these lecturers published in English was distributed to the audience.

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# Commemoration of International Days and Sittings

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International and universal days on various human rights subjects will bring about good opportunities to bring to attention the results of campaigns and achievements in the form of scientific sittings and conferences. The reflection of this activity in national and international levels will shed more light on human rights issues.

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## Commemoration of the International Day of Families

The Systemic Family Therapy technical sitting was held by the ODVV in May 2014 on the occasion of the International Day of Families. Twenty psychotherapists and family counsellors participated in this sitting. The sitting commenced with the reading of the UN Secretary General's message for the day by Maria Dotensko the UNIC in Iran Resident Coordinator.



In this workshop the Iranian couples and families relationships and the presentation of suitable models for family therapy were reviewed. At the end of the workshop, with the presentation of a therapy model for counsellors, psychologists and social workers active in the field of the family, systemic family therapy model based on interaction between members of Iranian families was presented.

## Commemoration of the International Day in Support of Torture Victims of Torture

On the occasion of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the workshop on the Rehabilitation of Victims of Sexual Abuse. This workshop was held in June 2014 with the participation of 30 mental health experts. Following the reading of the UN Secretary General's message for the day by the representative of UNIC in Iran, the principles of diagnostic interviews with the victims, and the three fundamental evaluation principles (medical and physical problems- psycho oriented problems 1 and Suicidal thoughts) were reviewed. Also in this workshop the meaningful effective behavioural-anxiety-cognitive interventions in the treatment and rehabilitation of torture victims were reviewed and discussed in a group.





## **Commemoration of the International Day in Support of Torture Victims**

The technical sitting on the "Treatment of Victims of Torture" was held in June 2014 by the ODVV with the cooperation of UNIC in Iran on the occasion of the International Day in Support of Torture Victims and the reading of the UN Secretary General's message for the day. Participating in the workshop were 30 experts and psychotherapists. In this sitting the short and long term therapy approach in the rehabilitation and treatment of victims of torture was reviewed and while determining and defining the therapy procedures, stress was also made on the necessity to adopt successful therapy methods in support of torture victims. Also the characteristic indicators of the torturers and the cognitive dimensions of individuals that torture the victims was analysed, determined and discussed.

## **Commemoration of the International Day of Non-Violence**

The technical sitting on "Prevention of Violence" was held in September 2014 on the occasion of the International Day of Non-Violence in the presence of 30 psychologists and therapists at the ODVV conference hall.

Following the reading of the UN Secretary General's message by the representative from UNIC in Tehran, as well as the reviewing of types of violence, stress was made on the importance of the definition of violence as a guideline issue. Types of violence, getting life and communications skills, importance of education for victims of violence, and intervention methods for the protection of people at risk of violent relationships were also reviewed in this sitting.

At the end of the sitting, communications skills, determination skills, problem solving, resolving disputes and anger control were defined and briefed as the five fundamental and necessary skills for victims of violence and how to have violence free relationships.

## **Holding of Sittings and Confernces**

### **National NGOs Conference Held in the Presence of the President and ODVV's Director's Speech**

The National NGOs Conference was held in the presence of the President in the Interior Ministry's Conference Hall. Six NGOs activists and directors made speeches on their views and their requests from the President. ODVV director, Mr. Siavash Rahpeik made a speech the text of which is as follows: "Mr. President, We want the government voted by the people to be knowledgeable, strong, manager, observer and agile, participation of the Minister with the least levels of being in charge in all various dignities of society.

Of course if we want mature NGOs that are experts, sympathetic, criticising and away from politicisation and sensationalisation, and seek participation. One of the issues related to NGOs is a lack of clear



definition and consensus regarding national security and national interests, opportunities and threats must clearly be distinguished from each other, even in categorization. This fault is one of the most important causes for the reduction or lack of participation and participation seeking. With regards to the international participation of NGOs debate, we suffer from the damages of the poverty of decision makers both in the theoretic and practical areas towards general diplomacy and diplomacy from two paths, and we lose opportunities one after another. Why aren't we strong Iranian NGOs in the top ten reputable international NGOs?

This is not due to our incapability, but it's as a result of the indifference and restrictive views of others. In our somewhat limited areas we have experienced that we can be influential players in the international level. We work with knowledge and awareness and professionally, and the government must first believe us and then facilitate matters for us, and of course accept for us to be ourselves."

### **Review of the Human Rights Violations Dimensions in the Gaza Conflict Technical Sitting**

This sitting was held by the ODVV on 6 August in the ODVV Conference Hall, with the presence of Khaled Qodumi, Hamas representative in Tehran and two university experts with an emphasis on Israel's war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against Palestinians.

In this sitting figures for the barbaric attacks of Israel against the people of Gaza, destruction of mosques and schools, violation of the Geneva Four Conventions, particularly the Fourth Convention with regards to targeting of civilians, particularly women and children, continued punishment of the

people and denial of aid and assistance, as examples of war crimes and crimes against humanity was stressed.

Experience has shown that since the founding of Israel, political solutions such as talks, setting up fact finding committees and etc. have not been able to prevent Israel from continuing to commit its crimes. Also the issuing of numerous resolutions by various international bodies in condemnation of Israel have never been able to play a preventive role, and reduce the pressures felt by the people of Palestine."Israel's justification for these actions has been it is carrying out these attacks in response to the launching of rockets against Israel by Hamas, and is just responding to attacks." He continued, "This reasoning is not acceptable by International Law, because in article 2 of humanitarian principles, distinction and proportion are very important/ The main principle of distinction is that in any given situation there should be a distinction between civilians and civilian targets with military individuals and targets, and it is not right that eve if there is a possibility that a rocket is launched fro near a hospital, that hospital can be targeted. It is not acceptable.

The proportion principle is also based on the point that the attack must be in proportion to the attack. Nevertheless the thing that Israeli officials announce, from the realities on the ground indicate violation of international law. According to Israeli officials 67 Israelis 3 of which are civilians were killed in the conflict, and the killing of



these three civilians gives no justification for the firepower level unleashed against civilians, women and children especially, in Gaza."

This researcher went on to say: "also attacking civilians in reprisal attacks is prohibited and reputable organizations such as Human Rights Watch have accused Israel of war crimes. Intentional killings, intentional guidance, attacks against civilians, targeting civilian buildings, aid workers etc are all examples of war crimes and continued and intentional harming of individuals and their denial of access to aid and assistance which are crimes against humanity. In view of these examples, this war is a war cime and crimes against humanity "

The next speaker was Mr, Khaled Qodumi, the Hamas representative in Tehran. Referring to the membership of the PA in the Rome Statute, he said: "Unfortunately in 2008 and 2009 the PA



opposed our request to file a complaint against Israel at the ICC, because this was going against America's wishes. In this current war too we've asked the PA to file a complaint against Israeli committed crimes against humanity, but they are stalling."

"We also need experts so that by using existing openings

in international laws, to be able to prosecute Israel." He continued on. Reiterating that Israel has committed crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip he said: "the most clear characteristics of these crimes are the targeting of children, mosques and schools, including attacking UN schools."

At the sitting was opened to a Q&A session between the experts and the attendants.

### **Technical Sitting on the Review of the Dimensions of Human Rights Violations Committed by ISIS**

This sitting was held by the ODVV with the attendance of the director and the board of directors of the ODVV and NGOs and university representatives from Iraq in September 2014. In this sitting some of the problems that the Iraqi people are faced with such as the grave violation of women and children's rights by the ISIS terrorists that are committed in the name of Islam, the high number of victims (approximately 1 million) in the tensions of the recent years in Iraq after America's invasion of the country was reviewed. Stressing that the Iraqi government alone cannot handle the terrorists and the problems, the Iraqi delegation stressed on the necessity for the cooperation of Iraqi NGOs with the government, and called for ODVV's support to assist Iraqi NGOs and the people.

In view of the dire conditions of the victims of the attacks of ISIS that include Christians and Yezidis who are wandering in the mountains of Iraq and with a stress on the objective of ISIS which is the tearing apart of Arab countries, and throwing into chaos of the population composites of these countries and access to oil wells, the necessity for the cooperation of Iraq's neighbouring countries and particularly Iran as a regional power for the confrontation with ISIS was stressed. While stressing on peace and permanent friendship of Iran, the director and board of director members of the ODVV presented solutions practical recommendations for the cooperation of the ODVV with Iraqi NGOs for their empowerment in Iraq and also their effective presence in international conferences.

## Technical Sitting on the Introduction to Human Rights Mechanisms of the UN and the Review of the Human Rights Case of Iran

This technical sitting was held in joint cooperation of the ODVV and Public Diplomacy and the Medias of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for Iran and other Countries Friendship associations and a number of active NGOs active at the international level.

This sitting was held on 2 September 2014 with the participation of the Friendship Association of Iran and Other Countries, and a number of NGOs active at international level , with the aim of raising awareness of the target community towards UN human rights mechanisms and playing a more effective role in the UPR on Iran, at the Iranian Organization of International Conferences.

The sitting began

The sitting was opened by director of the Third Office of Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While welcoming the audience, he said the holding of this sitting within the framework of cooperation with NGOs and friendship associations.

Member of the ODVV board of directors, while giving a history of the formation of the modern human rights order, explained

the structure and function of the Human Rights Council as one of the most important human rights bodies in the international order. He stressed on the importance of the newly founded UPR mechanism and stressed that the role playing in this mechanism towards the national interest of countries is very necessary.

The director of the ODVV, while categorising the general atmosphere dominant in the subject of human rights in Iran, he referred to the two parts of implicative and privative: “One of the most serious damages in the human rights area of Iran, which makes the human rights situation more difficult is the lack of correct distinction between various implicative and privative subjects which requires the careful attention of the authorities.

At the end of the sitting there was a Q&A session by the participants of the sitting, and there were repeated calls for the holding of similar sittings.





مرکز  
مشاوره‌ها

# Rehabilitation Centre

With a wish to mend and end mankind's pains and sufferings, and expansion of humanitarian campaigns, the ODVV Rehabilitation Department provides advisory and educational services.

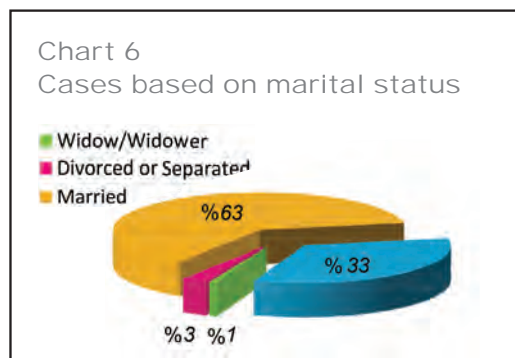
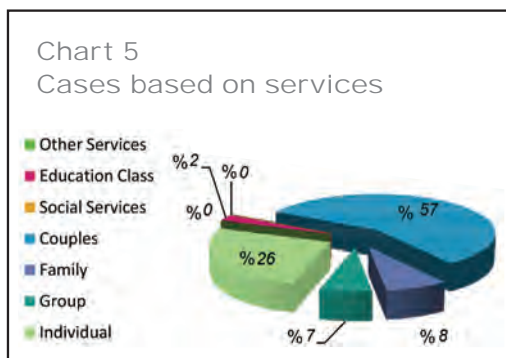
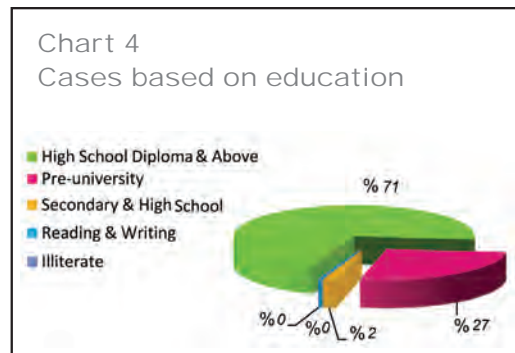
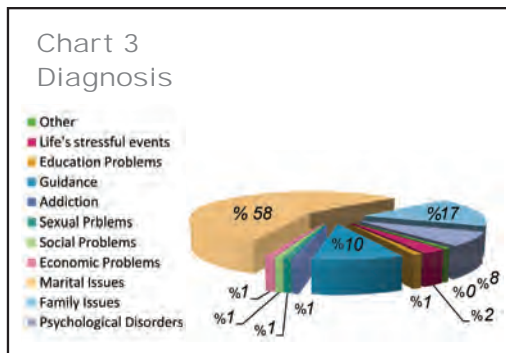
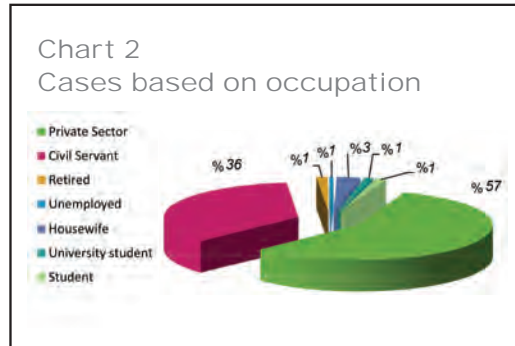
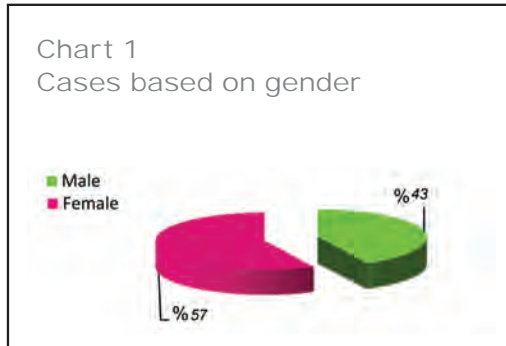
For the protection of victims of domestic and social violence, the department presents counselling and therapy in legal, family, marriage, psychological disorders at the Rehabilitation Centre .

With the cooperation of 40 mental health experts and lawyers the Centre provides pre-marriage, education and legal counselling. The statistics of the cases is determined on the basis of gender, age, occupation, marital status, education levels and the reason for coming to the Centre. The ODVV uses the results of the statistics to set appropriate programmes and projects. In 2014, 3691 cases benefited from the Centre's services. 2118 of them were women and 1513 were men. According to the statistics most of the cases were married and the majority of them had family problems.

The Rehabilitation Centre also provides telephone hotline counselling services for psychological, marital, family and education issues.

The monthly statistics for the hotline cases are worked out through variables such as, gender, occupation, age, marital status, education, and reason for call. In 2014, 944 people benefited from the telephone hotline services, 549 women and 395 men. According to statistics the majority of cases had family problems.

## Statistics of Cases in the Centre for 2014



## Statistics of Telephone Hotline Calls for 2014

Chart 1  
Cases based on gender



Chart 2  
Cases based on education

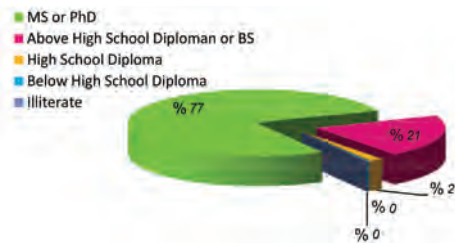


Chart 3  
Cases based on marital status

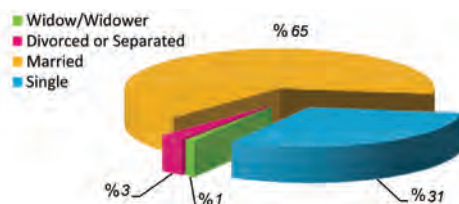


Chart 4  
Cases based on occupation

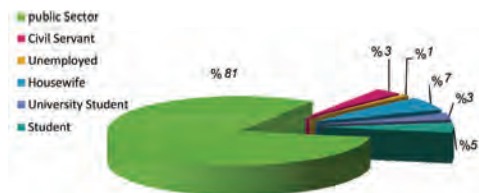


Chart 5  
Callers based on problem

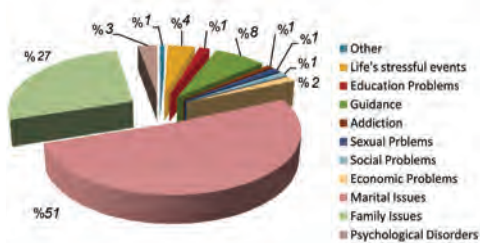
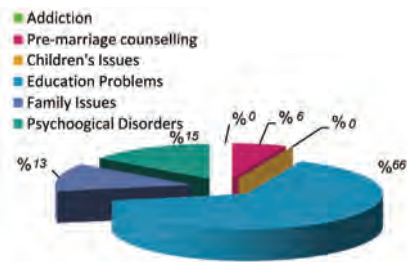


Chart 6  
Callers based on Type of Service





It must be said that the Rehabilitation Department of the ODVV as an active member of the Employment and Education Committee in the compiling of the "Domestic Violence Prevention Document", has always worked towards prevention of violence and continues to do so. For the purpose of the realisation of the objectives of this Committee, with presence in all meetings, with a practical activities definition the Rehabilitation Department has a number of important actions at hand, the most important ones of which are:

- 1 Identification of victims of violence who come to the Raha Counselling Centre.
- 2 Review of effective approaches of counselling and psychotherapy in the prevention of violence.
- 3 Identification of suitable headings for technical workshops on the prevention of violence and treatment of the victims of violence to hold in the Raha Counselling Centre.
- 4 Drafting of a suitable research method for the review of the link between violence and unpractical schema-therapy, depression and anxiety in victims of violence.
- 5 Identification of counselling problems of relevant governmental institutions staff with the Raha Counselling Centre to conduct treatment and counselling intervention towards raising the mental health of the target community.

Also towards capacity increasing of mental health experts, psychiatrists and towards prevention of social damages and domestic violence, rehabilitation and treatment of patients and with the aim of expanding human rights culture, strengthening of family institution and protection of mental and social health of individuals, the Raha Counselling Centre has conducted special psychotherapy and education activities under the following titles.

- Technical Workshop on the medical and physical causes of sexual dysfunctions
- Technical and education workshop on paraphilia, homosexuality, trans sexualis and sex addiction.



# Public Relation

In view of its objectives, activities and programmes, the ODVV has several publication activities. As a nongovernmental organization, these activities can be a positive international reflection for the ODVV of its activities and campaigns. For this purpose the Defenders Newsletter is published quarterly, as a human rights newsletter. The ODVV also publishes various informative and educational books and booklets on various subjects. The following is a brief description of ODVV's publications in 2014:

## International Last Leaf Theatre

With the support of the ODVV and UNA Iran, in May and June 2014 the Last Leaf play with the performance of Simorgh International theatre Group designed, written and directed by Mohammad Boroomand, an international play on peace and friendship went on stage in the Andisheh Culture Centre in Tehran, Mashhad, Neishaboor, Behbahan, Khoramshahr and Ilam. This theatre is modern work with the combination of various theatrical techniques alongside media, which has actors from the United States, Canada, Afghanistan and Iran, which is supposed to be the harbinger of peace and friendship in various parts of the world, and following a number of shows in Iran it is due to tour the world for two years. Each night the ODVV presented an appreciation plaque to artists that in one way or another have cooperated and worked with the project. Some of the important characteristics of this international project are:

- 1 - There being no dialogue in the work and its universality
- 2 - It's subject being the rejection of violence and war and the promotion of peace and friendship and the protection of the environment.
- 3 - Inclusion of artists from different countries.
- 4 - The project being nonpolitical, nongovernmental and nonprofit.
- 5 - The partnership of artists from various fields (theatre, cinema, photography, drawing and graphics and etc.)
- 6 - It's inclusiveness: following the performance of the play by the international group, the group then will give the play, puppets and music to a group of performers in the host country, so that the Last Leaf play will be performed for all the people of the country. The aim is for the whole



population of the world to see this play.

The Last Leaf play is on stage for six nights from 8 to 13 May at 8 pm and from 15 to 31 May it will tour provincial towns and forest regions (Mashhad, Neishabour, Behbahan, Khoramshahr and Ilam), and then the group will set off to other destinations. The tour began in Turkey and will travel the world for the next two years.

### - Film Entry in the Human Rights Film Festival in Geneva

Following the actions of the Communications Department in the preparation of a list of human rights film and arts festivals last year, with the follow up of this Department and following the holding of expertise sittings and review of the subject by a number of domestic artists and documentary makers and coordination of producers of these works, 8 various human rights themed films called: Journey to the Land of Pashtuns, Mysteries of Abu-Salim Prison, The Motherland, Birth in Scorched Earth, Orange Memories, Yarmouk, Hidden War, The Ahl-Sunnah of Iran and were sent to the secretariat of this festival in Geneva. In the event of the acceptance of these films, the ODVV will play the role of the distributor of these works, and facilitate the presence of the makers of these documentaries in the festival.

### - Creation of ODVV Social Network Accounts

For the purpose of strengthening ODVV's communications with other international sister organizations and other addressees, ODVV accounts were created in Twitter, Aparat in these networks. This was done with the aim of utilization of new communication tools, identification and creation of a network of organizations and human rights activists to influence public opinion and to show multiple voices regarding human rights in Iran and information dissemination of activities and drawing further participation by the ODVV. Currently these web pages continually publish human rights news and contents. The addresses are as follows:

1 - <https://twittercom/ngoodvv>

2 - <http://www.aparat.com/ordvvir>

3 - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/the-organization-for-defending-victims-of-violence/606657292784043?ref=bookmarks>



### CDs

#### - Production and Publication of the Shia Minorities Book on CD

The CD of this book was published in English by the ODVV and made readily available to interested parties, This CD is the digital copy of the "Shia Minorities: Victims of Violence and Extremism".



## Production and Publication of Multimedia CDs of ODVV Products

These multimedia CDs contain ODVV books, Defenders Newsletters, pictures, annual reports documentaries and ODVV projects. The CD was produced in 2014 by the Communications Department of the ODVV. All ODVV products with good quality and in colour are available in this CD available.



## Documentaries

*- Prevention of Domestic Violence and Life Skills Education for Afghan Refugees in Varamin Project - 2014*

*- What the Western Media do-not Tell You documentary on Israel's war crimes committed against the people of Gaza*

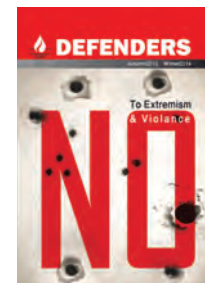
This documentary was made at the same time as the Gaza conflict and the slaughter of innocent Palestinian children and citizens, and the silence and censorship of the western media with regards to these tragedies. While collecting images of these inhuman killings, the ODVV prepared the said documentary and distributed it in the 27th Session of the Human Rights Council.



## Defenders Newsletter

*- Defenders Autumn 2013 - Winter 2014*

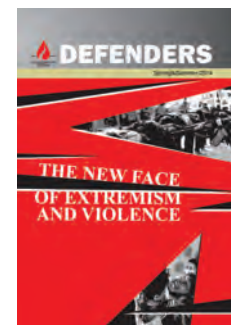
This issue of Defenders was published in 64 pages with the main theme of extremism and violence. Islamophobia and violation of human rights, Shia minorities, victims of extremism and violence, the 6th Minorities Forum at the Human Rights Council, Violation of Palestinians rights in Israel, and the launching of the International Solidarity against Inhuman Sanctions campaign are all a collective of articles and reports of this issue of Defenders. Also a report of the activities of the ODVV, human rights news and developments and the written and oral statements submitted in the 24th Session of the Human Rights Council are included in this issue.



*- Defenders Spring-Summer 2014*

This issue of Defenders was published in 53 pages with the main theme of a new face of extremism and violence.

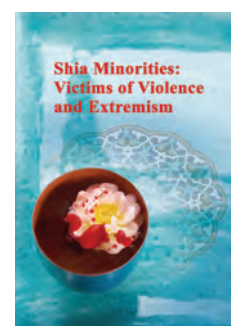
The opening of ODVV Representative Office in Geneva, ICC must investigate Israel's war crimes, world against extremism and violence, new face of extremism, continuation of the blockade of Gaza a crime against humanity, ODVV statements submitted to the 25th Session of the Human Rights Council were subjects covered in this issue. The presence of the ODVV in the 26th Session of the Council and the UNHCR Annual Consultation with NGOs, report of the UPR on Iran, ODVV domestic and international news, holding of exhibit and publication of books and CDs were some of the ODVV activities also reflected in this issue.



## Books

### *Shia Minority: Victims of Extremism and Violence*

This book was published in English which includes a collective of articles on the subjects of the violation of the civil rights of the Shia in the world; a permanent problem, clarification on the violated rights of the Shia majority in Bahrain, a review of the violation of Shia rights, western Islamophobia and its link with eastern extremism. This book was published in 94 pages by the ODVV.



### *- Report of the Human Rights Situation of the Shia*

With the cooperation of Afagh NGO, the ODVV undertook to review the situation of the Shia in a number of Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Syria, Iraq, Indonesia, Pakistan and Malaysia, and prepared a report in two parts with a concentration of the situation of Shia minorities in the said countries, and also the violation of the Shia majority in Bahrain. Parts of this book state:

The Shia are one of the largest religious minority groups in the world, but sadly despite the existence of conventions and protocols that have been ratified for the protection of minorities, unfortunately the Shia minorities still are faced with violence, injustice and religious discriminations. In this regard some of the highlighted examples can be seen in the situation of the Shia in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan and even some countries where the Shia are in the majority such as Iraq and Bahrain. The Shia in these countries are under pressure either by the governments or violent extremist groups. This pressure has not reduced since the start of the Arab Spring back in 2011, and it has even increased.



***- Report of the Human Rights Situation of the Shia Minorities in Iraq and Pakistan Book***

This book was published in English in 58 pages by the ODVV with the cooperation of the Afagh Institute. This subject in two international subjects that include Iraq under the tragic shadow of religious extremism, useful report on the latest situation in Iraq and the Shia minorities in Pakistan, victims of religious extremism.



**Exhibits**

***- ODVV's Achievements on Refugees Issues Exhibit***

Since participation and interaction as principles of the moral pledge of the ODVV has always been centre of attention, we have tried to have highlighted presences in participatory activities. The holding and participation in various exhibits as one of the arenas of participation, gives each organization a very good opportunity to provide information dissemination on its objectives, activities and programmes, and also have the opportunity to interact and establish links with other governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

For this reason the ODVV has included in its activities the participation in exhibits, and the participation in exhibits.

***- Participation in the Islamic Republic of Iran's Services towards the Empowerment of Refugees for their Sustainable Repatriation and Reconstruction Exhibit***

This Exhibit was held on 26-27 June in the Milad Tower exhibit centre.

The ODVV participated in and presented its accomplishments and activities products and reports and films of its Afghan refugees projects that included: Prevention of GBV and Life Skills Education for Afghan Refugees in Varamin (2014); Prevention of GBV and Life Skills Education for Afghan Refugees in Kan (2013); Promotion of the Mental and Social Health of Afghan Refugees in Shahr-e-Rey (2012); Strengthening of the Family Institution



and Prevention of Violence for Afghan Refugees in Semnan Refugee Camp (Autumn 2011); and Community Based Awareness Raising for the Prevention of GBV for Afghan Refugees in Shahr-e-Rey (2010) and a booklet on the activities of the ODVV regarding refugees.

***- Participation in the 27th International Book Exhibit in Tehran***

This exhibit was held in May 2014 and the participation of the ODVV with the aim of information dissemination of its objectives, activities and programmes and creation of interaction and links with other GOs and NGOs.

One of the achievements of the ODVV in this exhibit include the 400 plus visitors that visited ODVV's stall and the registration of 115 honorary members, establishment of interaction and links with some NGOs present in the exhibit, the visit of some government officials that included the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Islamic Culture and Guidance Ministry, some members of parliament. And ultimately the distribution of ODVV products that included the Shia Minorities: Victims of Extremism and Violence; Islamophobia; Beijing Report; Collective of Articles on the Reduction of GBV; Istanbul Protocol; ODVV annual reports 2010 through 2013; Defenders Newsletters from 2010 to 2013; documentary videos of activities conducted in Semnan, Shahr-e-Rey, Kan, and also documentaries produced by the ODVV on international events.



***- Holding of ODVV Exhibit on the Sidelines of the "International Seminar on the Review of the Effects of Financial and Economic Sanction in the Enjoyment of Human Rights"***

With the cooperation of a number of Iranian NGOs, the ODVV held an exhibit on the sidelines of this seminar at the Studies and International Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While introducing and reflecting its activities in the field of human rights, the ODVV produced its products in this regard. This Seminar was





held with the presence of the Secretary of the Judiciary's High Council for Human Rights, and the legal deputy of the President and experts from the IOC and with the aim of recognition of obstacles in the way of the right to development and the legal review of the basis of sanctions in international law. The discussed subjects in this Seminar were presented in the form of a collective of recommendations to the Human Rights Council. The Seminar ended with a final statement that stated the necessity for the appointment of a special rapporteur to confront sanctions and the establishment of a monitoring and assessment system.

### *Foreign Internship*

For the purpose of promoting and gaining further experience in its research and education field, and also expanding links and interaction with students, the ODVV provides an opportunity for internal and external interns. To-date a number of students from other countries have spent internship periods at the ODVV over the last few years. A number of Tehran University students upon completing a 3 month internship received their certificates.

### *Links with honorary members*

As part of the realisation of its objectives and its activities, depending on their field of expertise, the ODVV benefits from the cooperation of its honorary members. Interested parties in the field of human rights that include legal and private individuals can fill in the honorary membership application form either in person at the ODVV or the organization website: [www.odvv.org](http://www.odvv.org).

After becoming members, the honorary members can benefit from the following facilities:

- Use of the ODVV library
- Access to reports and researches available
- Access to the internet, website and subscription to electronic newsletters (English and farsi)
- Benefit from ODVV publications and links
- Participation in meetings, conferences, seminars, sittings and education courses

### *Information Dissemination*

Information dissemination is among the activities of the Public Relations Department, which is part of the ODVV general objectives. The ODVV uses the following applications and tools to fulfil the aforementioned goals:

#### *- Links with the media*

Establishing links with the mass media, the press and national and international news agencies is one of the effective activities of the Public Relations Department. In view of this the Public Relations

Department has placed the following in its agenda:

- Reflection of ODVV activities in the mass media, press and news agencies
- Publishing of various workgroups articles in the press
- Hold interviews for the purpose of publicising ODVV objectives and activities reports
- Releasing statements on various national and international developments and occasions and their reflections in the press

To-date the ODVV Public Relations has managed to get a good reflection of the organization's activities and events within the press and news agencies, and established good links with these groups, and new materials are released to the media approximately every two weeks.

### *Statements*

- ODVV statement in condemnation of the inhuman actions of the Boku Haram terrorist group
- ODVV statement in condemnation of Israel's attack and war crimes committed against the people of Gaza
- Writing and reading of the statement of the Iran and Other Countries Friendship Associations and international NGOs in support of the people of Gaza.
- Oral and written statements in the 25th, 26th and 27th Sessions of the Human Rights Council

### Library

The ODVV is equipped with a specialist library which contains 2300 books in Farsi and 3000 books in English on various human rights issues and subjects. Honorary members, students and researchers can access books from the library as well as documents and reports of the ODVV







ODVV