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Editorial

The year 2011 was the first time that the first lay to this claim is the start of the second round of Universal Periodic Review which shall continue to the end of 2016. This was the first experience of UN member states where in a four year period; one by one assessed each other's human rights conditions and by raising weak and strong points tried to promote the human rights of the countries under review, and in another dimension, at the international level. Although there are important criticisms directed at the UPR, but the fact that this first experience placed a vast and rich literature from the human rights shortfalls of states regardless of amount, international power or influence, in front of other countries, civil society institutions and public opinion, and this alone is very worthy. The second step that shall be taken in 2012 is the follow up on the implementation levels of the recommendations, and this is good news for the overall atmosphere of human rights at the international level.

The second reason for 2012 being a significant year is the follow up on the consequences of the Arab Awakening developments. The year 2011 was a very definitive year for Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. And now we must see what process these countries shall take to institutionalize infrastructures that are from the will and demand of the people of these countries in 2012 and what outcomes will come about; especially considering the release of Amnesty International's 2011 Annual Report which criticizes all these countries and states that human rights abuses continue unabated despite regime changes. The parliamentary seats won by Islamists in Egypt and Tunisia shows that the analysis of the roots in these developments and their achievements are not solely due to the violation of economic and social rights and or civil and political, but traditional cultures and religious attachments of these societies can in the peak of modernization be a determining factor in their fates.

In any event, we at the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence hope that 2012 will be a year full of improvements in the human rights structures for both human societies and the United Nations and its Bodies. In this year let us hope for the minimization of the political interference and political objectives of certain countries in supporting or ignoring of the human rights conditions of a particular country, and the true meaning of inalienability and universality of rights and fairness in the equal enjoyment of all of the human family of its rights to get closer to its realization.

Editorial



Iranian NGOs Steps towards the Accepted Recommendations of the UPR on Iran

The colloquium sitting on the Role of NGOs in the UPR was held on 1 February 2012 by the ODVV.

This sitting was designed with the aim of increasing the role of NGOs in the promotion of human rights based on the recommendations given in Iran's UPR. Subjects such as the Human Rights Council, the UPR mechanism, and also the role that Iranian NGOs can play in this process, were discussed and reviewed by experts and representatives of 25 NGOs from women, children, environment and human rights fields.

The sitting began with the welcoming speech of Mr. Siavash Rahpeik the director of the ODVV, which was followed by Dr. Mahmoudreza Golshanpazhooh who talked about the role of NGOs in the UPR. Then Mr. Rahpeik talked about the role of Iranian NGOs in the promotion of human rights.

The meeting finished with a Q&A by the participants with regards to

how the reports are prepared for the UPR.

In his speech Dr. Golshanpazhooh talked about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and its 30 Articles (Articles 3 to 21 being civil and political rights, and 22 to 27 being economic, social and cultural rights), of course with a stress on human dignity and free from fear and poverty. He then continued on and spoke about the transformation of the Commission on Human Rights to the Human Rights Council. The Commission on Human Rights had a life span of about sixty years. Throughout its existence, the Commission issued more than 80 international documents (declarations, conventions, resolutions, etc.). With the efforts of then UN Secretary General Kofi Anan for the reconstruction of the UN and through



three evaluation stages, ultimately the UN General Assembly replaced the Commission on Human Rights with the Human Rights Council. With this replacement a number of positive points could be seen in the change, such as the recognition of the right to development in the founding resolution of the Human Rights Council, and the creation of order in the holding of Council Sessions. The Universal Periodic Review mechanism, the ways for NGOs to play better roles, and the reporting system of the Council were other subjects that Dr. Golshanpazhooh discussed.

Next Mr. Rahpeik spoke about the ODVV's working agenda for the purpose of the effective role of NGOs in the UPR.

In the first approach the presentation report of conducted activities towards the accepted recommendations of the UPR is considered.

This is a collective move in which the reports can be submitted to the UN Secretary General, High Commissioner for Human Rights, Special Rapporteur on Iran, thematic

rappoteurs, and working groups and or even Iranian organizations and government departments.

The following points can be taken into consideration when preparing the report: 1 – The activities that the NGO has conducted based on the recommendations, 2 – Specific suggestions on the specialized activities of NGOs which can be the basis of the future activities, based on these recommendations.

Fifteen of the recommendations given to Iran have been split among thematic experts, in a way that the activities of a lot of NGOs falls under these fifteen instances.

In the second approach the drafting and implementation of various projects on the subject of the accepted recommendations in the UPR is considered that their implementation process become specified in colloquiums with other NGOs.

Overall this colloquium can be seen as a start for Iranian NGOs as part of the implementation of the accepted recommendations of the UPR on Iran.



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Meetings between NGOs and Authorities Gave Results:

Legislation of the establishment and activities of NGOs draft bill suspended



The draft bill on the establishment and activities of NGOs has been stopped by the Islamic Parliament. The proposed legislation at the Islamic Parliament brought about huge reactions of NGOs. These organizations held numerous technical sittings and meetings with members of parliament and relevant authorities to discuss the proposed legislation. While welcoming the advancements made towards the lawfulness of civil society activities in the form of a specific law for these organizations, NGOs also

saw several faults and problems in this draft bill, and made lots of efforts to convey these problems to relevant authorities, the outcome of which was the suspension of the bill from being legislated.

With the cooperation and assistance of a number of university academics and NGOs experts the ODVV held several technical sittings in which the proposed bill was reviewed and debated. According to these reviews, the problems and faults of the draft law was reviewed in two general and

specific levels, and the conclusions of these reviews were handed to relevant authorities. The ODVV along with other NGOs, shall continue in the future to help improve the contents of this bill. It must be said that Iranian NGOs welcome the legislation of a comprehensive and suitable NGOs bill which would replace the existing regulations the Islamic Parliament. Therefore they believe that the law must be in proportion to the dignity of the people of our beloved country, and to assist the development of the people and creation of necessary impetus.

Meanwhile the founder of the NGOs Faction in the Parliament Zohreh Elahian, and an opponent of the contents of the draft bill, believes NGOs are the technical participation of the people and must be strengthened. She believes that when word has been of shrinking the government, the basis for handing over matters must be provided. This point has been very marginal in the draft bill, but instead the supervision aspects on these participations has been highlighted.

Therefore we also agreed for the proposal to remain idle, so that it is reviewed and reassessed, and with the opinions of the NGOs themselves and with the focusing of the support of these organizations for the draft to be written and brought to the parliament. We believe that the

nation's house (parliament) which is the place where the representatives of the people come together who must be able to be bases for NGOs. Effective communication must be established to the extent that the technical link communication of NGOs with the parliament be witness to the promotion of the quality of laws. In fact NGOs are a communications bridge between the people and parliament and experts and parliament. We ask the Parliament's Research Centre to review this draft bill and the existing law and I hope that a draft will be ratified by the parliament that from the outset has been set with the viewpoints of NGOs.

Studying the process of this bill from its proposition in the Islamic Parliament till its suspension, it can be said that NGOs have an influential role in the highest sectors of society. The studying of this draft bill by NGOs, the holding of consultative sittings between governmental and nongovernmental organizations, the reflection of the views of these organizations in the media and ultimately the halt in the legislation of this bill, in order to make some amendments following pressures by NGOs, all indicate the capability of these organizations to express their views and implement their demands within the legal structure of society, which shows the continued development of NGOs.

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Strengthening or Undermining of the UPR?

By: Farzane Mostofifar
International Relations
Researcher

Following the founding of the Human Rights Council by the UN General Assembly (3 April 2006), according to Article 6 of the resolution, the Council was given the task to review the functions and mechanisms of the late Commission on Human Rights and to form the structure of the new Council accordingly. In the recommended structure of the Council which was raised during the 5th Session of the Council, a permanent procedure called the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was set up through which the human rights situation of all countries can get reviewed.

According to the Human Rights Council, Universal Periodic Review mechanism is for the purpose of providing countries with the

opportunity to express their human rights improvements and also the challenges in the way of their accessing human rights. Therefore the results of this process will have key effects on the human rights reputation of countries in the world public opinion. As the most important monitoring tool of the Human Rights Council, with the aim to monitor, promote and protect human rights in all countries the said mechanism is based on dialogue and cooperation and based on reliable information and equal treatment of all countries. The UPR mechanism procedure is such that in an interactive dialogue with the international community, countries under review get involved in their human rights debates.

The Islamic Republic of Iran

had its UPR in 2010, and from 189 recommendations Iran accepted 123. In the second round of the UPR on Iran which is due in 2014, the follow up of these recommendations are going to be the main focal points.

The Human Rights Council has brought about the opportunity to issue country resolutions and raise other monitoring procedures which takes place within the Council, such as new procedures in receiving complaints is also proposed alongside the UPR mechanism. But it is still not clear what process the Council pursues between the UPR and other procedures for raising country human rights situations. It can however be said that by the resolution that set up the Human Rights Council that the UPR is one of the most important mechanisms for dealing with country human rights conditions at the Council.

Following measures to encourage countries to cooperate with the UPR, if needed, the Council reviews cases where there has been no cooperation. And also in the event of the persistent lack of cooperation of a country with the UPR, the Council will deal with the human rights situation of the country within the framework of other mechanisms.

The question which is the real challenge here is: is or is not turning to other human rights mechanisms while the UPR is in progress – even in a short space of time since the country’s acceptance of the recommendations

– the undermining or impracticality of the UPR mechanism, instead of strengthening of it? And can political stances footprints also be seen in this approach? Where can the position of human rights be seen in these political classifications?

As we know the weakness of the Human Rights Commission in the strengthening and encouragement of respect to human rights and the monitoring of human rights situation of countries on one hand and the increasing discredit of the Commission with having members that violated human rights and also the use of this human rights body as a political tool were some of the important reasons for the demise of the Commission and its replacement with the Human Rights Council. The thing that adds to worries human rights activists is the concern of the Council falling into the same trap as its predecessor; concerns and problems that resulted in the Human Rights Council replacing the Commission on Human Rights.

Particular situation of the international community at the same time as the end of the first UPR, and the turning of the international community to other mechanisms such as releasing resolutions and appointment of country special rapporteur before even giving the first UPR a chance to work, and the appearance of human rights as a dialogue for peace and conflict in recent times, makes it necessary to review the UPR mechanism more than before.

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Human Rights Violation and outbreak of a conflict by Focusing on Egypt and Bahrain

By:
Mahsa Moghadaszadeh
Peace and Conflict MS
Student



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Ted Robert Gurr emphasizes the importance of social psychological factors in terms of relative deprivation and ideology as root sources of political violence

Introduction

Causal mechanisms in analyzing internal conflicts use different ways to find out how these types of conflicts occur. Although there are numerous different theories in causes of war which try to show this process, none of them specifically indicate human rights violations as a cause of internal conflict.

Since the Middle East is one of the most strategic regions in the world, the analysis of the recent uprisings are very important to prevent the subsequent events which may occur during peace process or later.

Moreover, although there is no specific theory about the direct relation between the human rights violations and the

outbreak of a conflict, and aside from huge amounts of debates on the concept of human rights itself, we can extract this relationship from the theories such as grievance theory, which focuses more on different aspects of grievances, like ethnic or religious hatred, economic inequality, lack of rights, recognition, government economic incompetence, etc (Gurr, 1970, 1993, Azar, 1993).

This paper tries to analyze the recent Middle East conflicts, by focusing on Egypt and Bahrain as the case studies, and find out how human rights violations lead to an intrastate conflict, both as a type of background and proximate reasons. To sum it up, find the importance of human rights violations in the outbreak of an intrastate conflict.

The position of human rights violations among different theories in peace and conflict studies

Internal system of governance that become discriminatory, exclusionary, or even generate some types of inequality in terms of their economic, political or in identity dimensions can lead to grievances which could motivate discontented people to uprising. Gurr's ethno-political action theory, and also Azar's theory in protracted social conflict both want to prove the grievance factor as the main motive in the outbreak of a conflict. The protracted social conflict theory focuses on the struggle by communal groups for basic needs, such as security, recognition and, nondiscrimination. Azar believes although for any of these to activate over conflict some kinds of trigger/s are needed, these factors can all influence the general grievances, and provoke dissatisfied people to revolt.

Ted Robert Gurr emphasizes the importance of social psychological factors in terms of relative deprivation

and ideology as root sources of political violence. Many scholars put "relative deprivation" as a potential cause of social movements, which leads to extreme situation to political violence. The risk of conflict will increase when the grievances of people who feel deprived of what they believe and perceive as being entitled to.

In general, when people revolt over issues of identity, such as ethnicity, religion, social class, etc., rather than over economics, scholars like Gurr and Azar accept these factors in the concept of grievance. The intensity and scope of relative deprivation strongly determine the potential for collective violence.

To find out some of the deprivation cases which are the basic and inalienable parts of human rights, and also the relation between these theories and human rights more precisely, we should refer to the UN charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and some other related treaties and documents.

Uprising in Egypt and Bahrain



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The authorities maintained curbs on freedom of expression and the media. Journalists and bloggers who criticized the government were harassed, even getting arrested and tried on defamation charges. Books and foreign newspapers were censored if they commented on issues that the government considered taboo or a threat to national security.

The Middle East and North Africa region has been remarkably resilient towards democratic influences, as the number of democracies increased worldwide between 1972 and 2002, the number of democracies in the Middle East and North Africa actually declined within that time period. The region seemed to be locked in a system of one party democracies, weak civil societies, poverty, and low levels of literacy.

Egypt has a tainted human rights record, achieved through violent suppression of democratic activists, Islamic groups, and other civilians. Egypt remained under a national state of emergency in force continuously since 1981 and most recently renewed in May 2008. In 2006, President Hosni Mubarak promised reforms including repealing the Emergency Law, replacing it with other measures. However, he then renewed the Emergency Law.

During the 2011 Egyptian revolution, a key demand by the protestors was to end emergency law. While then President Hosni Mubarak indicated he would repeal Emergency Rule, this was unsatisfactory. After Mubarak's

resignation on 11 February 2011, the military claimed they would remove the law when the streets finally were cleared of protesters.

This law is totally in conflict with articles 19 and 20 of the UDHR, which focus on freedom of expression and associations, and recognize them as the basic and fundamental human rights.

In freedom of assembly and association, legal restrictions and also other controls that limited the activities of NGOs, political parties, professional association, and some other related organizations are maintained by the authorities. For instance Members of the Muslim Brotherhood, which remained banned, and other opposition groups were harassed and arrested.

Here we can point to the 2005 parliamentary elections, in which the Brotherhood's candidates, who had to run as independents because of their illegality as a political party, won 88 seats, 20% of the total, (The legal opposition won only 14 seats.) This was despite electoral irregularities, including the arrest of hundreds of Brotherhood members. It is obviously in contrast to article 25 of the UN Charter and the article 2 and 19 of UDHR.

The authorities maintained curbs on freedom of expression and the media. Journalists and bloggers who criticized the government were harassed, even getting arrested and tried on defamation charges. Books and foreign newspapers were censored if they commented on issues that the government considered taboo or a threat to national security. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) disapprove the confinement of bloggers and journalists on charges of insulting or defamation state authorities as unequal and disproportionate, and eventually WGAD indicates all of these samples



reveal a serious restraint on freedom of expression. Freedom House, the “independent watchdog organization that supports the expansion of freedom around the world,” and rates countries “levels” of freedom on a scale of 1.0 to 5.0 (1.0 being lowest and 5.0 being most free), places Egypt’s “Political Rights and Civic Voice” at 2.7 (, “Autonomy, Security, and Freedom of the Person” at 2.8, and “Social and Cultural Rights” at 2.4.all these types of lack of freedom of expression and the media are certainly in conflict with articles 2 and 19 of UDHR.

Overall, the political freedoms didn’t seem to have decent situation in this country. The Press Law, Publications Law, and the penal code regulate and govern the press. According to these, criticism of the president can be punished by fines or imprisonment. Freedom House supposes Egypt not to have a free press, although mentions they have a diversity of sources. In its 2006 report Reporters without Borders indicates continued harassment and, in three cases, imprisonment, of journalists. They place Egypt 143rd out of 167 nations on press freedoms. Some other significant prohibitions are in contrast to many articles in the UN Charter, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Moreover, there are some other issues such as youth bulges in Egypt which is definitely an important factor in this revolt. Egypt ranked 113 out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index presented by the 2011 Human Development Report Wednesday, slipping 12 spots from its 101 ranking in 2010 . Besides, 65 percent of the population in the region is under the age of 35, and many of them are poor and frustrated, with part-time work or no work at all. It is also known that, in recent decades, 80 percent or more of all conflicts, internal and external, occurred



in countries in which 60 percent of the population was under the age of 30. Different scholars, such as Fearon and Laitin (2003:86) argue that the likelihood of a political violent conflict is increased by a large presence of youth bulges relative to the total adult population size. The age in consideration varies between 15-24 or 15-29 year-olds, yet the main discussion considers male cohorts between 15-24 years (Urdal 2006: 615; Fearon&Laitin 2003: 86).”Huntington argues in Urdal (2004: 14) that societies are particularly war prone when the number of young people aged 15 to 24 reaches a critical level of 20% of the overall population in a country”.

Bahrain is a Constitutional monarchy headed by the King. It’s composed of two religious factions, about 70 percent are Shi`a Muslims; most of these are the original Arab people of the islands, known as Baharna. There is also a small community, descendants of Iranian Shi`a migrants. The Sunnis, approximately 30 percent of the total, include the descendants of the tribes that accompanied the Al Khalifa family conquest of the island in 1783, after nearly two centuries of Persian rule. The

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Overall, the political freedoms didn’t seem to have decent situation in this country. The Press Law, Publications Law, and the penal code regulate and govern the press. According to these, criticism of the president can be punished by fines or imprisonment



Therefore the most notable factor in Bahrain is ethnic and religious discrimination, between Shiites and Sunnis. Although the Shiites are a majority exceeding 70%, they occupy less than 18% of total top jobs in government establishments. In several government ministries and corporations no Shiite is appointed in leading jobs

remarkable fact is that the power is in the hands of Sunnis. It should be noted that the human rights situation in Bahrain has deteriorated since the early 1990s, and particularly with the escalation of social and political unrest (since late 1994). The pattern of violations and the categories of abuse, however, are consistent with policies and practices that extend back at least to the 1975 decision of the ruling family to abrogate those portions of the constitution relating to the National Assembly and elections. Many of these practices, furthermore, derive from the policies used by Great Britain prior to Bahrain's independence in 1971. It seems human rights violations relates to the broad denial of such civil and political rights as freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, and the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Many political activists refer to different aspects of discrimination in Bahrain and its adverse and pernicious effects on all political, economic and security

levels. In spite of the constitution being against discrimination, and guaranteeing equality and equal job opportunities, the policy of discrimination based on family status and sectarianism however, has for decades been a common and institutionalized practice. Hence it is obvious that the policies of existing government are based on superiority and favoritism. Regarding freedom of speech and political restrictions which political activists are faced with in Bahrain, it must be said that individuals active in the petition movement calling for elections and restoration of the National Assembly have been dismissed from civil servant jobs and in some cases blacklisted from finding other employment. Media broadcasting is controlled directly by the government, and a combination of state censorship and self-censorship rules out serious discussion of internal politics in any print media. It is remarkable the government maintains that its policies do not in any way violate international human rights standards

Therefore the most notable factor in Bahrain is ethnic and religious discrimination, between Shiites and Sunnis. Although the Shiites are a majority exceeding 70%, they occupy less than 18% of total top jobs in government establishments. In several government ministries and corporations no Shiite is appointed in leading jobs. It is worth mentioning that these percentages would have been even less if remaining establishments were added. Whilst article 16B, in the constitution says that (citizens are equal in taking up public jobs) we find that in reality, assuming jobs in the army and police are not based on qualification and capability, but on discriminatory appointment policy. The Shiite citizens are forbidden from occupying such posts due to their sectarian origins. This led to an increase in the number of unemployed Shiites, who form more than 95% of those

unemployed in the kingdom. The policy of discrimination based on family status and sectarianism has for decades been a common and institutionalized practice. This is obviously opposed to article 25 of the UN Charter. Therefore it seems that grave human rights violations continue to take place in Bahrain, especially in political freedoms and religious equality.

Conclusion

All these types of human rights violations lead to a sense of deprivation. People feel they are deprived of their basic rights which are proven and approved by international society. As many scholars, such as Azar and Gurr, indicate the sense of deprivation might lead to some types of grievances and outbreak of a revolt is expected subsequently. This paper tries to prove whenever these grievances have been more connected to human rights issues the risk of outbreak of a conflict will increase, because of the nature of these rights. The two case studies, Egypt and Bahrain, also demonstrate this point. Although it is more believed these types of human rights violations are more background reasons, and outbreak of a conflict needs more accelerations factors, it seems they can be considered as both background and proximate reasons, which both are essential and necessary in the outbreak of the recent revolts in these two countries. Hence, we can extract a direct relation between human rights violation and incidence of a conflict.

In Egypt the political rights, such as the freedom of expression and assemblies, highlight the procedure of incidence of recent revolts. The situation of Egypt in political rights was obviously opposed to international documents which were accepted previously by the state.

Bahrain has been more involved in ethnic and religious discrimination. Although the rights of different ethnic

and religious sects have been specified in international documents, Bahrain's government does not care and continues its discriminatory treatment of the Shiite majority. Shiites are deprived from their fundamental rights, and this sense leads them to high level of grievances.

Therefore, human rights violation is the key cause of outbreak of recent revolts in Egypt and Bahrain. According to these facts, it seems we can forecast the occurrence of a conflict in those countries where the situation of human rights is not in acceptable position. Deprived people will rise up against authority once they find an opportunity to obtain their fundamental rights which international society has recognized as human rights.



Review of Bahrain Independent Commission for Inquiry's Report

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Bahrain Independent Commission for Inquiry (BICI) was established by king of Bahrain in July 2011 to investigate human rights violations during the country's February to March 2011 street protests. The commission, which was headed by the Egyptian-American lawyer, Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni, offered its final report at one of the king's palaces on November 23, 2011.

The report starts with a review of major human rights violations during Bahrain protests and continues with such issues as deaths during protests, torture of protesters by Bahrain's security forces, the response of security forces to protests, attacks on foreign nationals, military arrests, allegations about Iran's role in the country's uprising and measures taken by military forces of (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council in that country.

Despite reporting on multitudes of human rights violations during Bahrain's uprising, Bassiouni's report has done nothing to identify and introduce the culprits. There is no charge of criticism in the report aimed at King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Prince Salman, the crown prince and Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman, the prime minister of Bahrain, or other levels of executive decision-makers. Quite on the contrary, the Commission has allocated the lion's share of its report to the proposed "dialogue initiative" of the country's crown prince noting that rejection of the plan

was the biggest mistake made by protesters. The Commission has also noted that the plan could have prevented further deterioration of the situation in Bahrain, though it falls short of explaining how this could have possibly happened when it was offered just 12 hours before Saudi tanks invaded the island country. How such prevention could have been possible?

On the other hand, the Commission has noted that Bahrain's defense forces have played direct role in violating human rights norms when dealing with street protests, including by killing protesters, torturing prisoners, holding martial court trials for the civilians and destroying mosques. At the same time, the report adds, "The Commission has not found evidence establishing a purposeful practice of excessive use of force by Bahrain Defense Forces units." This phrase has been apparently included in the report to exonerate the defense forces of all charges and direct all charges at domestic security forces.

Apart from that, the most important finding of the report, which has been highlighted by many analysts, is that Iran has played no part in inciting protests in Bahrain. If granted, the proposition will lead to one question: "On what basis, then, the decision to send in (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council's Peninsula Shield Force has been made?" It was announced before dispatching the Force that the measure aimed to protect Bahrain against foreign threats. Therefore, it would be logical to expect the Commission's report to, at least, criticize presence of the Peninsula Shield Force in Bahrain. However, this does not happen in practice and the Commission has continued by denying human rights violations by those forces.

Despite having access to all state documents and having the right to pose questions to all officials (according to the decree which led to the establishment of the Commission), it has questioned no official authority at any level and has only pointed to the name of Bahrain's interior ministry and national intelligence agency. Asked why no authority has been named, Bassiouni noted that the victims have named no state official

in their interviews. This claim cannot be accepted because many victims have clearly mentioned the names of their torturers.

Bassiouni's report also falls short of investigating the role of plainclothesmen (locally known as Baltageyya) in suppressing Bahraini protesters. Although the report has owned up to their presence, the Commission members have shown no willingness to go through heaps of evidence in order to identify and introduce such forces. Instead, a large part of the report has been filled with "attacks on Sunni community." Bahrain's opposition figures have noted that such alleged attacks were, in fact, clashes between protesters and plainclothesmen. Such awful oversight in identifying and introducing plainclothesmen has occurred at a time that the Commission has attributed a number of killings of Bahraini civilians to other "citizens" without making any effort to introduce "civilian" perpetrators of those murders.

More importantly, the report fails in exploring root causes of the unrest and street protests. The Commission has pointed to role of discriminatory sectarian policies purposefully adopted by the government, especially, such procedures as Tajnees (which means granting citizenship to foreign followers of the Sunni faith). Meanwhile, many of such people have been employed by the country's security and police forces and have been incriminated with many cases of human rights violations.

More surprising is that the Commission, despite its admission of many cases of torture and mistreatment of detainees, has not asked for the immediate and unconditional release of detainees and prisoners. Such an oversight, again, seems to be unjustified and in stark contrast to moral and professional duties of the Commission members. Despite emphasizing on the people's right to engage in peaceful protests and advising government to avoid of unnecessary and excessive use of force, the Commission has not urged the government to stop such measures against protesters and has merely asked state officials to improve training of police and security forces and organize more in-depth


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investigation in this case.

Given the above facts, it seems that Bassiouni's report has diminished widespread, systematic, and institutionalized violations of human rights in Bahrain to a simple "problem in police training" and has only asked for "correction" of police structure and procedures. Ignoring structural and institutional problems and sufficing to such approaches will, in practice, promote "a culture of impunity." Under conditions that Bahrain's public opinion expected the Commission members to emphasize on the necessity for identification and punishment of human rights violators to put an end to this culture, it seems that the report has been practically unable to meet people's demands.



Fair Peace, Lasting Peace Seminar in Commemoration of the International Day of Peace

Introduction

On Wednesday 21 September the ODVV held the “Fair Peace, Lasting Peace” seminar in commemoration of the International Day of Peace. This seminar was held with the cooperation of the Peace Museum in Tehran, ICRC, Red Crescent and UNIC in Tehran, Victims of Chemical Weapons Support Association and UNA Iran. The participants included university science groups’ members and 40 representatives from governmental and nongovernmental organizations. The ceremony started with the welcoming speech of Mr. Siavash Rahpeik the director of the ODVV followed by the reading of UN Secretary General’s message for the day by UNIC representative Mr. Mohammad Ali Rajaee Moghadam, and the speech of ICRC coordinator in Tehran. A number of university lecturers presented speeches on the “role of international law in international peace and security”, the “position of international crimes in international peace”, “peace and justice in Persian culture and literature”, “determination of the status of peace and justice from Islamic jurisprudence”, and “rights of Palestinians in Jerusalem and the fair peace paradigm”.





Siavash Rahpeik – ODVV Director

The welcoming speech was given by the ODVV Director, Mr. Siavash Rahpeik:

“In the age of globalization concepts such as peace, which is an age old concern, has more than ever before become the focus of attention within domestic and international communities. In simple terms, peace is the amicable relations of people on one hand and governments on the other hand which legal systems pursue for its realization and preservation.

Furthermore, peace which is an abstract, multi-dimensional and supra-legal concept, the stress of international organizations, the United Nations in particular, is on the two sided relationship of peace and human rights; and also the new approach of international law towards peace which deems human rights as one of its subjects, it is therefore expected that those NGOs that are active in human rights, to deal with the subject of peace so that they can find out the influence and role of human rights in

the realization of peace.

For this purpose, as a nongovernmental human rights organization, the ODVV decided to hold a commemoration ceremony on the International Day of Peace, with the cooperation of other NGOs and international organizations.



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Referring to ICRC representatives Mr. Strick said: “this committee was established 150 years ago in direct connection with war, and its founder was one of the first winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, and this is while that the nature of this organization is directly related to war

John Strick – ICRC Representative in the Islam and Humanitarian Law Program

The ICRC representative said that the most important humanitarian law issue of today’s world is violence against the sick and health and medical carers. He said that a project entitled “Medical Care Under Threat” had been launched by the ICRC and is to run from 2011 to 2015.

Pointing to the upcoming 31st ICRC and Red Crescent that is to be held on the 28th of November in Geneva and is on “Medical Care Under Threat” he said: “this conference is one of the executive bodies that is held every four years with the “Our world needs your action” slogan. Presently severe unlawful violence prevents medical services to reach those that are in need and the sick, and many medical health carers are killed in conflicts.”

One of the closest humanitarian issues is the lack of access to medical treatment in prolonged wars, Mr. Strick said and continued, “the ICRC believes that in order to have peace

humanitarian issues must be swiftly reviewed and specific laws be adopted towards lasting peace.”

Referring to ICRC representatives Mr. Strick said: “this committee was established 150 years ago in direct connection with war, and its founder was one of the first winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, and this is while that the nature of this organization is directly related to war. The ICRC has many offices in countries where there are no wars, and the main objective





of this organization is the protection of victims and treatment of their pains and injuries.

Giving order to the way conflicting sides behave is one of the duties of the ICRC and when this objective is fulfilled the damages of war become minimum, and by giving them a heavy responsibility to conflicting parties, human dignity can be preserved. The ICRC, the Red Cross Federation and the Red Crescent are the three pillars of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, who are partners in the protection of the humanity principle and promotion of mutual understanding for lasting peace so that the effects of violence are minimized.”

Mohammad Rajae Moghadam – Representative from UNIC in Iran

Mr. Moghadam read the following message of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon for the day: Every year on the International Day of Peace, people around the world commit to non-violence and to

harmony among all peoples and nations. Peace is our mission; our day-to-day quest. This year’s theme focuses on the timely issue of peace and democracy. Democracy is a core value of the United Nations. It is crucial for human rights. It provides channels for resolving differences. It gives hope to the marginalized and power to the people. But democracy does not just happen; it has to be nurtured and defended. The world needs you to speak out: for social justice and freedom of the press; for a clean environment and women’s empowerment; for the rule of law and the right to a say in one’s own future.

This year, young people have been on the frontlines for freedom. I salute the activists and ordinary people for their courage and determination to build a better future.

We at the United Nations will work in common cause to realize our shared aspirations for dignity, security and opportunity for all. To all those seeking peace, this is your day, and we are with you.



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The Following are abstract of the articles

The Role of International Law in the Provision and Establishment of International Peace and Security



By: Dr. Seyed Ahmad Tabatabaee - Assistant professor in international law Tehran University

International law plays a notable role in the provision and establishment of international peace and security, but this however must not be exaggerated. Just as in national societies the rule of law and justice is appealing to mankind, in the international community too the existence and application of international law is ideal and will be an effective help in the establishment of international peace and security. Although in comparison to domestic laws the implementation guarantee of international law seems weaker, but overall the worthiness of international law in the establishment of peace must not be ignored.

With the drawing up and development of international relations in various aspects of international habitation such as, seafaring, aviation, communications, trade, diplomatic and consular, international law has brought about the basis of participation and cooperation of states directly or indirectly help to establish peace in a general term. The expansion and development of human rights over the last few decades also plays a similar role with a difference that most of these principles are commitments that states have made by adopting them, and makes them to be committed in observing them for their own populations. Among these commitments, minorities, ethnicity, racism ban rights prepare a good basis for the establishment of peace in national societies.

In this regard with the role of international law in the establishment of peace in a specific meaning (i.e. the lack of war) it must be said that the historical development of international law has been positive and is indicative of the restriction of war. Before the League of nations (before WWI) Jus ad bellum had not been prohibited by nations, although

the principle of self defence had been accepted as inherent and customary. During the League of Nations according to its covenant countries could resort to war if they had taken their dispute for arbitration to the permanent International Justice Tribunal and or the Executive Council of the League of Nations and three months had passed from the verdicts of the aforementioned. For the first time signatories to the Kellogg– Briand Pact (also called the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War or the World Peace Act), and the right to self defense was deemed legitimate. The Charter of the United Nations not only prohibited war but even prohibited the threat to resort to war. Nevertheless, the Charter foresaw the permit to be given to self defense as well as other military measures by the Security Council for the preservation of international peace and security.

The role of international law in the compilation and adoption of humanitarian law (rules of war Jus in bello) is very significant. These principles have existed from a long time ago in a customary form; and over the last few decades notable efforts have been made to compile them in the form of thematic principles, with their main focal point being the Geneva Four Conventions and their Additional Protocols. Even in an age where resorting to war had not been prohibited in international law, principles such as the treatment of prisoners of war and the wounded existed. States are committed to observe these principles whether the conflict is legitimate or aggressive.

In spite of the abovementioned explanations, the existing restrictions and challenges with regards to the role of international law must not be ignored. Some of these challenges are as a result of the nature and structure of international



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law, and some as a result of states' interests and policies and the role of power in international relations. International law is fundamentally based on the agreement and participation of states. This law is set through the interests of states and due to lack of supra-national power, states cannot be forced to adopt international commitments, if they do not show any interest in them. This is why that several principles may seem fair and acceptable but some states may not show inclination to adopt them. In comparison to the development of the arms industry, international law has not developed proportionately. For example despite the serious threats and dangers of the use of nuclear weapons, there are not treaties that ban the use of these weapons. This is why that in some instances there might be legal vacuums, or in the case of the production of nuclear weapons some countries such as India, Pakistan and Israel have not joined the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Another important challenge is the implementation guarantee problem where with the assumption of the existence of necessary principles there are not enough implementation guarantees for them. The Security Council has the main task of preservation of international peace and security. But we are faced with several challenges such as double standards in this regard. Against this, we see instances of improvement and development, such as the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to prosecute those that commit war crimes and crimes against humanity and peace. On the other hand due to the speed in communication, public consensus plays a better role in the application of international law especially in confronting wars and conflicts.

Therefore the existence of international law must be seen as a golden opportunity and efforts made to develop and complete it. The development path of international law in helping towards accomplishment of peace overall has not been enough.



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The main problem is the weakness in the implementation guarantee which in view of the nature of international law and the structure of the international community is unavoidable. Despite these weaknesses it's better to have international law than not to have. At least in scientific circles and atmosphere of logical reasoning, there is a level based on which the conducts of states can be assessed and judged, and states' misconducts are brought to the attention of public opinion. If this criteria and common languages is omitted this opportunity will be lost and no other common and basic language can ever replace it. The interests, policies and beliefs of countries differ from each other, and there is no common international culture to fill this void. Another significant note is the justice and fairness principle international law has closer relationship to them. If peace is based on justice and peace then it shall be lasting. A clear example of this claim is the Palestinian situation where influential western governments ignore the rights of Palestinians and as a result seven decades on and the crisis continues unabated.



Population Engineering in Jerusalem and the Fair Peace Paradigm



By: Dr. Ghadir Nasri -
Political sociology
researcher

The issue In its 63 years of existence Israel stressed on the three following factors:

- The return law and the gathering of all Jews in Occupied Palestinian Territories
- Housing of Jews in the form of 145 scattered settlements in occupied territories
- Occupation of East Jerusalem through expulsion of Palestinians.

As it can be observed by the attached maps since 1948 the population of Jews in occupied territories has continued to increase, and the number of Palestinians in sensitive Palestinian territories have decreased. Under these circumstances the question is how does the tuning of the population and its density in the Occupied Palestinian Territories affect the fair peace paradigm?

In the event of the pursuit of the fair peace paradigm, what conditions will the settlements constructions and their occupants in the West Bank, East Jerusalem in particular have?

Towards the end of 2009, Jerusalem's mayor while providing details of upcoming municipal programs announced that according to the ten year plan leading to 2021, fifty thousand new homes will be constructed in the city. This policy is

in the framework of de-Arabification of Palestine and housing Jewish settlers instead. This policy began in West Jerusalem in 1949 and extended to East Jerusalem in 1967 in a more extensive way and it has fully affected the demographics of the region. The Arabs call the policy "Settlements Disorder" or occupation through settlements construction and see that as the nature of the Israeli Zionist regime. Now through the forced settlement of Jews in Palestinian lands the question arises that how do the persistent pursuit of this policy by Israel and particularly the far right extremist government of Benjamin Netanyahu make the contents of fair peace meaningless. The fair peace paradigm, refers to a model according to which a decision is mutually taken with the clear conscience of parties.

This paradigm observes the satisfaction and approval of the future generations also, and the moral connection and coexistence of the disputing parties. According to this process, when each party does not accept, force, deceit and lies, then it cannot accept the lasting of this agreement by the future generation.

After the analysis the concepts and prerequisites of the said paradigm, this research describes its violations cases



committed by Israel in Palestinian settlements – particularly Jerusalem. Thus the comprehensive index of the article is as follows:

- Vital area of Jerusalem that include:
 - a) Identity giving credibility of Jerusalem
 - b) Methodical position of Jerusalem
- The function mechanism of the fair peace paradigm which include:
 - a) Concepts and prerequisites of fair peace paradigm
 - b) Paradigm violation cases by Israel
 - c) The consequences of the violation of fair peace paradigm
- Jerusalem’s demographics in 2011 that include:
 - a) Ethnic/religious combination of the population
 - b) Geographic population distribution
 - c) Extent of security in Jerusalem
- The failure of the peace strategy and internationalization of Jerusalem

To describe the aforementioned four discussions, while reviewing documents and texts we shall conduct deep interviews with expert researchers on the Arab-Israeli developments in the region and following the review of the recent development tunes we then predict future scenarios. In the most enduing scenario, the “resistance tradition” has a place. According to this scenario, the unilateral and bullying policies of the Israeli

government are not possible because of the following phenomena:

- Democratic technology (particularly military and IT)
- Changes and developments in the views and stances of Israel and USA allies in the region
- Deligitimisation of ethnic/religious nationalism
- Transformation of the fair peace paradigm to an in command legal pattern and norm
- Multi culturalism and cultural diversity.

In the shelter of these political and legal developments the era of big wars comes to an end and the invasion of other countries policy loses its legitimacy. These studies are conducted to test the credibility of the following theories:

- 1 – Israel’s 63 year policy (particularly the last 25 years) has been negative and damaging to the fair peace paradigm.
- 2 – The determined resistance mechanism has worked better than the conciliation process and blocked the expansion of settlements constructions.
- 3 – Settlements constructions and expansionism through the housing of migrants, are intertwined with the Zionist nature of the Israeli regime.
- 4 – Jerusalem is the example of ethnic/religious genocide and exile of its local population.



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Peace and Justice in Persian Literature and Culture



By: Dr. Abdolreza
Seif - Professor-Tehran
University

The literature and culture of each nation is an indication of that nation's intelligence, character and mentality in the human community. Literature and culture is the reflection of all the identity and civilization facets of nations. Important subjects such as peace and justice have roots in the literature and culture of any land which throughout history has shown itself as a civilized nation. On principle literature is seen as a form of conciliation and peace within mankind, so that during his life as well as recognizing his own identity he recognizes society and the world around him. In the definition for literature interaction, reconciliation and friendship within and without or in other words along with the body and soul in the existence of mankind has been referred. And they deem the objective of literature to distance outwardly hopelessness and despair, and when it has been used as a tool to introduce religion, it has taken the gnosis label which has cured the deep inward despairs of mankind. Literature has been unique in creating reconciliation and peace between the body and soul by benefiting from inward and outward tools. His inner tool has been imagination which swiftly has fulfilled the immortal and timeless soul's demands, and guided through the cosmos, and as Rumi says:

We come from above and we go above

We come from the sea and we go to the sea (Masnavi)

And in his outward tools for the body, it is the arts elevate the restricted and unable body to a time and a place, and prepared for the accompaniment

of the soul.

Art which originates from imagination endears a collective of language, text and civilization, and has recorded human civilization's history. And researches deem the literature and arts view of religion and theology as mysticism which gives mankind identity, and turns him friendly with himself and ultimately with God.

Anyone who is distanced afar from his origins

Shall again seek the day of his arrival at it (Vol. 1 – V. 4)

The history of mankind's civilization is indicative of peace and reconciliation in human societies, which has taken him to heights and advancements and peaks of science and discoveries of the unknown.

A nation that is in peace and tranquility has been so because of the fair and justness of its rulers. The people have moved under the shadows of wisdom of just rulers. Persian literature which formed in post-Islamic Iran, and has continually and fully been handed down to us from generation to generation, carries deep and great human messages which have been given life through the words of greats such as Ferdowsi, Nezami, Attar, Rumi, Saadi and Hafez have taken on life.

This short article is based on two great human culture letters, or Iranian wisdom's culture letter, Ferdowsi's *Shanameh* and Iranian mysticism culture letter, Rumi's *Masnavi* on the two subjects of peace and justice. Let us diffuse flower and pour wine in goblets

And pierce the roof of sky and establish a new system (Divan of Hafez)

The body of the text of Ferdowsi and Rumi pay attention to I the human which has no limits or bounds. These greats distance themselves from the personal me which results in selfishness and self-centeredness and ultimately autocracy; and also the group and collective me which has the interests of the minority at heart and result in exploitation.

In Shahnameh which truly is the Shahnameh of the identity of Iranian wisdom, peace and justice is always spoken and hates chaos, war and conflict. In Shahnameh's mythology and heroism, Fereydoon is the symbol of peace and forgiveness, who eradicated the world of his era from evil, oppression and chaos. Ferdowsi sees mankind as Fereydoon for whom justice can raise him to the pinnacle of humanity and greatness.

Rostam is introduced in Shahnameh as the symbol of seeker of peace and justice who has never been a warmonger, and calls all to dialogue and thought. The Seven Khan (labours) of Rostam is evidence to the claim of his braveries in Keyghobad, Keykavos and Keykhosro's periods to the period Gashtasb.

Even during the face off with the prince of Iran Esfandiyar, Rostam is not prepared for war and chaos, and is only unwontedly drawn into a war in the defence of the name and honour of Iran.

In the history period both Ashkhan and Sasanid kings pursued the establishment of peace, welfare and justice in the country faced the aggression and looting of foreign enemies and had to defend their country.

In Rumi's Masnavi, the flute is the symbol of a complete human who deals with recognizing himself to reach God, and removes separations and with the



language of the parable deems the reconciliation of humanity with himself as the precursor to reconciliation and peace with society, and deems kindness and friendship as the precursor to lasting peace and justice.

In the universal culture the pillars of correctness and respect to each other and away from violence and equal human rights and solidarity and fraternity have roots in Shahnameh's and Rumi's Masnavis which were written down centuries before the formation of the League of Nations and United Nations, and have been prescribed to solve mankind's problems.

When we follow this beautiful story in Saadi's Golestan we see how he uses the Prophet of Islam's words in such a beautiful way:

The sons of Adam are limbs of each other, having been created of one essence.

When the calamity of time afflicts one limb, the other limbs can not remain at rest.

If thee hast no sympathy for the troubles of others, thou art unworthy to be called by the name of a man.

“

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By: Dr. Seyed Fazlollah Mousavi - Professor of international law and Director of Law and Political Science Faculty

Islam: the Harbinger of Peace and Friendship

One of the meanings of Islam is to “bring peace about”, which means whoever turns to Islam he or she has entered peace. In the Arabic language the word “salam” is a derivation of the word peace, which Arabs today use the word for the meaning of peace. In every country and language when people meet up they use a word to greet each other which usually doesn’t mean anything. In the past when people met they used words such as hello, hi, bon jours, etc. and they still use these terms. But when Muslims meet Muslims or non-Muslims they use the words Salam Aleykom, which means peace be upon you, and it means you are safe from me and my tongue. One of God’s names in the Koran is Peace. This is why none of the prophets and monotheist religions were/are warmongers, and their first message to mankind is that they are all the Creations of One God. All humans are equal like the teeth on a comb, there is no superiority due to a specific language, colour or race. Human values are based on the actions, behaviours, strengths and goodness of humans.

But sadly the bullies, autocrats and dictators, kings and emperors of history do not like this religion and take positions against them; Abel against Kane, Nimrod against Abraham, the Pharaoh against Moses, Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab and Abo Safian against the Prophet of Islam all waged war and did their utmost to destroy these individuals and their religion and torture and hurt their followers.

It is natural that God is not happy that these good, peace loving human beings that want equality and freedom to be destroyed and be replaced by oppressors. Therefore because greatness belong to God and the prophets and the faithful, after they spoke the message of friendship, kindness, equality and servitude to God and stood up to the oppressors who tried to destroy them resisting and defending, and reply their force with force and war, so that instead of force and discrimination peace, friendship and conciliation governs the world, and in fact Islam and peace to be established and spread.

All God’s prophets have been Muslims. They have all endeavoured towards the establishment of peace, friendship, kindness and equality.

This movement has continued on throughout history and still continues on. Bullying and powerful, occupying and exploiting states throttle the voice of freedom, independence seeking and peace loving of other states for the sake of their material, economic and political interests. And through wars and occupations across the world spill the blood of innocent men, women, children and elderly, and call those who fight for their freedom and destiny terrorists. In their view peace only exists when nations remain silent towards their crimes, aggressions and discriminations. In their view if nations are like that then they are peace lovers, if not they are terrorist stats. They speak of peace, but what kind of peace? A peace where they do as they please and violate the rights of nations to get their illegitimate interests, and no one raises their voice against this.

It is clear that this type of peace is not fair, and it’s a cruel peace and naturally this type of peace will not be lasting. Therefore this kind of peace is corrupt and criminal in the clothing of peace. Imam Ali says: “the kind of peace which is with corruption and crime, in fact is not peace and right”. Therefore in these situations not only peace is not worthy but it is destructive and war is necessary to establish peace. Therefore Imam Ali says: “Maybe a war that is more beneficial than peace.” The worthiness of peace is when it does not cause oppression against Muslims and the oppressed. In other words war is better than such a peace, a war that results in the establishment of real and fair peace. This is why Imam Ali says: I saw peace which does not weaken Islam as more beneficial than war and killing”. We must pursue fair peace, therefore a peace where all nations attain their rights, a peace where peace and conciliation which is based on freedom and equality and nondiscrimination and

non-aggression, something that all God's religions and prophets have been in pursuit of. To clarify further it is necessary to point to a number of verses from the Koran and sayings by the Prophet of Islam and the 12 Imams: as mentioned earlier one of the meanings of Islam is to bring about peace. Some narrations that exist by the Imams describe the link between peace and Islam. Imam Ali says: Thanks and worship the God who revealed the Shariat of Islam and made it safe for those that want to scratch it and for those that want to embrace it provides peace and for those that speak through it gives reason". He also says: "God specifically gave Islam to you, and chose you for it, because Islam is the name of health and a collective of dignities and greatnesses."

Not only the term Islam is associated to peace but Muslims who follow it must base their relations with each other and other people on this principle. Mohammad the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) says: "A Muslim is one that others are safe from his hand and tongue." In another hadith Imam Sadegh (6th Imam) says: "A Muslim is one that others are safe from his hand and tongue, and a believer is one that others feel safe and protected by." The thing that causes war and aggression is that in which people are not satisfied with their rights and wish to dominate others. The Prophet of Islam hence says: "Muslims are each other's brothers, no one is superior to anyone, except in avoidance." A real Muslim is one that rushes to help the oppressed. The Prophet says: "anyone that hears the pleas for help of a person and does not rush to his help, he is not a real Muslim."

As well as the overall meaning of Islam which is associated to peace and security, loving people and refraining from hurting others there are a number of verses from the Koran and hadiths which encourage the establishment of peace and friendship among people. Verse 85 of Al-Nisa Surah states: " whoever joins himself (to another) in a good cause shall have a share of it, and whoever joins himself (to another) in an evil cause shall have the responsibility of it, and allah controls all things." Verse 1 of Al-Anfal Surah states: "...so be careful of

(your duty to) allah and set aright matters of your difference, and obey allah and his messenger if you are believers." Verse 10 of Al-Hujraat Surah states: "the believers are but brethren, therefore make peace between your brethren and be careful of (your duty to) allah that mercy may be had on you." Verse 114 of Al-Nisa Surah states: "there is no good in most of their secret counsels except (in his) who enjoins charity or goodness or reconciliation between people; and whoever does this seeking allah's pleasure, we will give him a mighty reward."

In a hadith the Prophet of Islam says: "Do you want me to introduce to something better than Nimaz and fasting and charity? That thing is the establishment of people among people. Because the tarnishing of relations between people is going against religion." Also Imam Sadegh (6th Imam) says: "Establishing peace among people when they are in conflict and animosity and bringing them together when they are apart, is a charity that God likes."

The establishment of peace between people and nations is so important that Islam's Imams have strongly stressed on its sustainability and endeavours towards this end. Imam Ali says: "Stand for the path of peace between the faithful and those that avoid." He also saw efforts to establish peace and conciliation among people as good fortune. The establishment of peace and friendship among people is so important that the Prophet of Islam only permits lies to be said in this instance and he says: "there are three types of words that are spoken: truth, lies and for the sake of establishment of peace among people, in this manner that if you hear something said about someone that if hearing them will hurt this person, when you meet him you tell him other than that you heard said about him. Not only the establishment of peace among people is important, but if we have peace and amicability with people, it will increase the number of our friends and decrease the number of our enemies. This is something that has come in the words of Imam Ali. This article tries to review peace from Islam's point of view.



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Bahrain

Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review
Thirteenth Session of the UPR Working Group of the UN
Human Rights Council



Promotion and protection of human rights

Extensive violation of fundamental rights: member of the World Conference for the Protection of Human Rights of the People of Bahrain, Ghasem Al-Hashemi saying that the rule of the Al-Khalifa has violated all human rights principles added: “to-date over 20,000 cases of human rights violations has been recorded in Bahrain”. This human rights activist revealed reports of rapes committed against women protestors by Bahraini security forces and added, “The number of examples of human rights violations in Bahrain’s recent developments is far more than the abovementioned statistics. But in view of the brutal crackdown of Al-Khalifa’s military and the unit known as the Island’s Shield, we only managed to record and register 20,000 cases of human rights violations in the form of images, video clips and documents. This is because most human rights violations take place in detention

centres and away from public eye, reporters and journalists.” This activist who’s been forced into exile in London by the Manama government added, “We have approximately over one thousand documents on human rights violations, which leave no doubts or the objections of Bahraini officials, some of these include the killing of innocent people with no reason, mental and physical torture, seizing of citizens, indiscriminate shooting into the people, sexual rape, forcing people to migrate, and arrests and detentions of people without proof of crime.

Violation of the rights of doctors: One of the most extensive forms of human rights violations in Bahrain are the grave violation of the rights of doctors in the country, which causes Organization for Defending Victims of Violence and human rights defenders in various countries serious concern. Richard Sollom deputy director of the



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Physicians for Human Rights says in this regard: “in two decades of study on human rights violations in more than 20 countries, I have never witnessed such extensive and systematic violations that take place in Bahrain.” Ambulances, hospitals, clinics, doctors, nurses and medical staff are all targeted, and this is very extensive and continues to take place. These attacks seriously violate the neutrality of physicians principle and international law.

While observing their code of ethics in fair and unprejudiced treatment of injured protestors and civilians, the rights of doctors and nurses in Bahrain themselves are violated, and not only we’ve witnessed their dismissal from medical treatment centres, but in instances these humanitarian acts of theirs has resulted in their arrest and detention. At least 22 medical experts were grabbed by security forces and sent to solitary confinement.

Unfortunately even in some instances doctors have been assaulted and battered in their place of work. According to reports published by Sollom, 6 severe cases of assault and battery of doctors in Salmanieh Hospital committed in the hospital staff room by security forces have been registered. In another cases, Bahieh Al-Aradi died as a result of being shot in the head for participating in the treatment of the injured on Low-Low square. This is while not only doctors but even their families are at risk of being arrested and mistreated, and in instances security forces have entered their homes and arrested them and transferred them to unknown locations, which is blatant violation of Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

These types of blatant attacks, has



caused fear among many medical experts in Bahrain. Many are so scared that they cannot go to work. Going to a hospital most times means passing through many road blocks and checkpoints where identity papers must be produced, and might get attacked. Reaching a hospital or clinic does not necessarily mean reaching safety, because the police and security forces enter these places all the time.

Military intervention by other countries:

The independent decision making of a nation with regards to internal issues is a value. Thus in Article 2, the UN Charter mentions the objectives and principles of the United Nations with regards to the self determination of nations. Article 2.4 also stresses: “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”. This is while the military intervention of Saudi Arabia is a blatant violation of the aforementioned paragraphs. The philosophy behind the clear military support of Bahrain by Saudi Arabia is for the crackdown of the Bahraini Shia and preventing them from



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religion and belief and holding of religious ceremonies in public or private. Furthermore, over 1300 Shia citizens have been sacked from work.

Women have not been immune or exempt from arrests, abuse and torture. More than 25 Bahraini women have been arrested during various protests in the country, and some have even been raped. Children and youths have also been other victims of the recent crisis in Bahrain. The arrest of a nine year old girl and the killing of a 15 year old youth in one of the residential districts of Manama which was in the path of military special units, are instances that can be highlighted.

Recommendations

While respecting democracy, the Bahrain government must respect the maximum participation of the people of the country for self determination and facilitate the necessary conditions for this. International organizations such as the United Nations can be observers in this process.

People's political, civil, religious, cultural, social and economic freedoms must be guaranteed.

The destruction of places of worship, prevention of religious ceremonies from taking place and also the abuse of the free will of the people to choose their own system of governance are all contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Charter, and they must immediately stop this process and compensations must be made for the rights that have been violated, and all the centres and properties that have been destroyed must be reconstructed.

All the people of the country must

getting political power. This is a clear violation of Article 1.2 of the Charter.

Gender, racial and religious discrimination

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence is deeply concerned over the attacks on mosques and destruction of holy Islamic property and also banning the Shia to hold religious ceremonies and also attacks on mourners over the recent months in the country which are all grave violations of international laws with regards to the protection of places of worship, and also Articles 18 and 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with regards to freedom of

enjoy equal protection of the law. The rights of various groups that include human rights defenders and doctors that have been violated in the recent unrests must be compensated in accordance with international laws, and these individuals have a right to complain against the abuse of their rights in national courts as stated in Article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

According to Article 1.2 of the UN Charter one of the purposes of the United Nations is: "To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace." Also Article 2.4 of the Charter states: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations."; therefore it is expected for other countries, such as Saudi Arabia to while respecting human rights laws to refrain from military intervention in Bahrain.

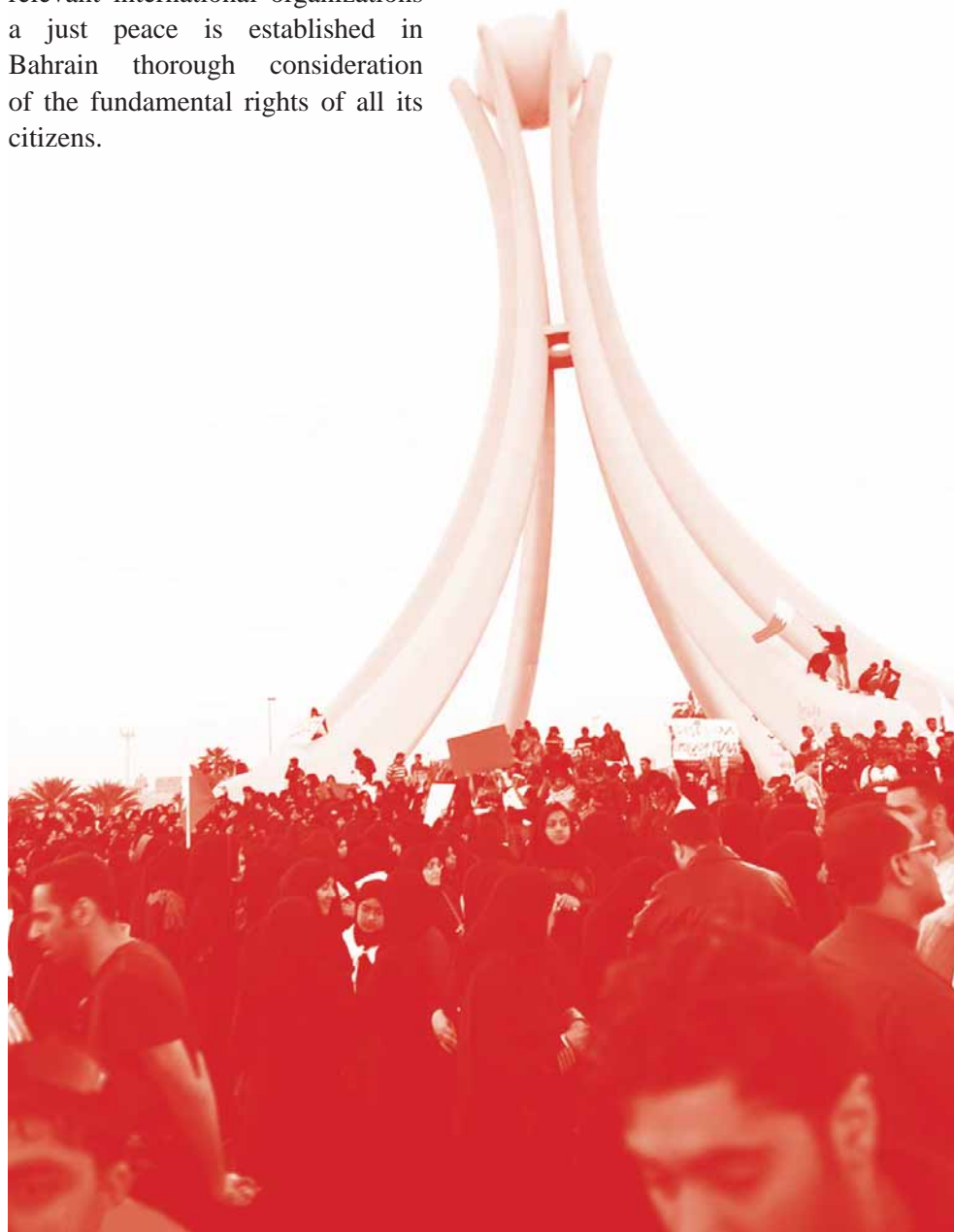
We call upon the Bahrain government to provide clear answers to world public opinion regarding its cases of human rights violations, as quickly as possible.

We call upon big power nations to avoid using double standards approaches in the regions revolutions and to take steps to give them legal support.

Conclusion and perspective

As the highest international institution the United Nations, international organizations and NGOs can by monitoring the situation in Bahrain prevent the expansion of human

rights violations in the country. It is also expected from these institutions to work towards the rights of individuals whose rights have been violated for the sake of their wishes to have fundamental and civil rights as stated in human rights laws and the UN Charter; and for their rights be fulfilled through referral to national courts as stated in Article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We hope that with the cooperation of all relevant international organizations a just peace is established in Bahrain thorough consideration of the fundamental rights of all its citizens.



Britain

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review
Thirteenth Session of the UPR Working Group of the UN
Human Rights Council



Human Trafficking in the UK

Human Trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world. The United Kingdom is a destination and, to a lesser extent, transit country for women, children, and men trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor. Some victims, including minors from the UK, are also trafficked within the country. Migrant workers are trafficked to the UK for forced labor in agriculture, construction, food processing, domestic servitude, and food service. Some official figures come from the UK Human Trafficking Centre, part of the Serious Organized Crime Agency. It says that in the two years until the end of March 2011, it received 1,481 reports of suspected trafficking. The top three nationalities of victims were Nigerian, Chinese and Vietnamese. British citizens were also in the top 10. Women made up almost three quarters of the suspected victims - and half of all the cases related to allegations of sexual exploitation. The other half all related to forced labor. Anti-Slavery International, a charity, says its best guess is that there are 5,000 people in some form of forced labor in the UK.

British police estimate that up to 4,000 human trafficking victims, mostly women, are being exploited in the UK at any given time. Law enforcement operations increasingly reveal a large percentage of the trafficking problem in the UK occurs hidden in residential areas throughout the country. While the government continued to provide care for adult women trafficked for

sexual exploitation, not all identified trafficking victims received necessary care and protection. Conditions are that victims must be over 18; involved in prostitution within 3 months of referral; willing to cooperate in the prosecution of their traffickers; and must have been trafficked into the UK from abroad. Complex international operations are moving people across continents. A family in south-east Asia could pay up to £40,000 to get a family member into Western Europe, believing that they will be able to send back riches. But that individual will often find themselves paying back a vast debt to the gang - with threats against the family back home if they do not comply.

While the UK government stipulates that victims are not inappropriately incarcerated, fined or penalized for unlawful acts as a direct result of being trafficked, some victims reportedly have been charged and prosecuted for immigration offences. One victim who managed to escape from her trafficker during the reporting period was repeatedly imprisoned on immigration violations, according to media sources. The UK provides foreign victims with legal alternatives to their removal to countries where they face hardship or retribution. This process continues to be cumbersome and inconsistent for victims seeking such alternatives. By filing asylum, humanitarian protection or extraordinary relief claims on a case-by-case basis, such victims may obtain residency.

In the business of slavery, there are

cases of child human trafficking, within the UK, where victims have been rescued from slavery only to go missing from UK care systems. It is believed that in such cases victims are tracked down by their traffickers and rarely resurface.

A recently release report compiled by the NSPCC NI and Barnardos



NI suggests that Northern Ireland is being used by human traffickers as a gateway to both Britain and the Republic of Ireland. The report states; “There is evidence that human traffickers are using Belfast International Airport as a port of entry to the UK and some media reports state that Northern Ireland has been identified as a key gateway for criminal gangs involved in people trafficking to the Republic of Ireland

ODVV welcomes the United Kingdom Government’s work to tackle human trafficking. The government has signed up to international conventions against trafficking, and published its own national strategy. ODVV urges the United Kingdom to continue to



In the business of slavery, there are cases of child human trafficking, within the UK, where victims have been rescued from slavery only to go missing from UK care systems. It is believed that in such cases victims are tracked down by their traffickers and rarely resurface



Reports show that an estimated 30,000 detainees are held without trial in Iraq, many of whom are instances of enforced disappearance. Thousands of these detainees continue to be detained despite judicial orders issued for their release

address this issue. Some measures as temporary residence permits have been taken by the UK government, which are granted on the condition that the victims cooperate with law enforcement authorities. ODVV further urges the UK government to provide a report of the tangible results of the Government's action plan around violence against women and girls, and explain the type of help, legal redress and compensation that is available to them.

Minority Rights and Islamophobia

The term Minority Rights embodies two separate concepts: first, normal individual rights as applied to members of racial, ethnic, class, religious, linguistic or sexual minorities, and second, collective rights accorded to minority groups. The term may also apply simply to individual rights of anyone who is not part of a majority decision. The United Kingdom has had racism, from medieval times, through years of the slave trade to the modern day. Recent years have witnessed incidents of hatred or irrational fear of Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia has led to the practice of discrimination against Muslims by excluding them from the economic, social, and public life of the nation. It includes the perception that Islam has no values in common with other cultures, is inferior to the West and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion.

A perceived trend of Islamophobia over the last few months has been recognized by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence. Particularly, ignorance of

governments to pay more attention to this form of intolerance is the ruling sentiment across nations with Muslim minorities. In the UK, the Barnabas Fund began campaigning, in August 2011, against what it said was the growing "Islamisation" of Britain.

When accused of terrorism, Muslims in the UK are Muslims; when killed by looters, they become Asian. Muslims in this country bravely defended shops and communities during riots in August 2011. Their example of outstanding civic duty in support of neighbors is worth highlighting- especially when sections of the UK media are so quick to print negative headlines about Muslims on the flimsiest of pretexts. According to the surveys, British people are most likely to blame the media for Islamophobia in the UK.

In January 2010, a report from the University of Exeter's European Muslim research centre noted that the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes has increased, ranging from "death threats and murder to persistent low-level assaults, such as spitting and name-calling," for which the media and politicians have been blamed with fueling anti-Muslim hatred. The Islamophobic incidents it described include: "Neil Lewington, a violent extremist nationalist convicted in July 2009 of a bomb plot; Terence Gavan, a violent extremist nationalist convicted in January 2010 of manufacturing nail bombs and other explosives, firearms and weapons; a gang attack in November 2009 on Muslim students at City University;

the murder in September 2009 of Muslim pensioner, Ikram Syed ul-Haq; a serious assault in August 2007 on the Imam at London Central Mosque; and an arson attack in June 2009 on Greenwich Islamic Centre.” Other Islamophobic incidents include “Yasir, a young Moroccan,” being “nearly killed while waiting to take a bus from Willesden to Regent’s Park in London” and “left in a coma for three months”; “Mohammed Kohelee,” a “caretaker who suffered burns to his body while trying to prevent an arson attack against Greenwich Mosque”; “the murder” of “Tooting pensioner Ekram Haque” who “was brutally beaten to death in front of his three year old granddaughter” by a “race-hate” gang; and “police officers” being injured “during an English Defence League (EDL) march in Stoke.”

While the focus of contemporary counter-terrorism policy remains fixed on rooting out extreme ideas, it encourages the public to treat Muslims as potential ‘suspects’ or legitimate objects of abuse. Internet crusaders target all Muslims, not just extremists.

UK armed forces in Iraq

Reports show that an estimated 30,000 detainees are held without trial in Iraq, many of whom are instances of enforced disappearance. Thousands of these detainees continue to be detained despite judicial orders issued for their release. There are also reports illustrating the UK involvement in the mistreatment of detainees held abroad.

What happened to Baha Mousa and the other detainees at the hands of British soldiers was a clear instance of human rights crimes by the UK armed forces in Iraq. Senior officers should have been aware of the abuse Mousa was enduring. Mousa and his fellow detainees endured repeated beatings and hooding. Hooding is one of the “five techniques” that the British government said 40 years ago it would never use again and is prohibited by the Geneva



conventions. There has been gross failure of the senior officers, who allowed the ill-treatment of the men to continue, as well as the “corporate” and “systemic failure” of the Ministry of Defence to provide clear and consistent guidelines about the proper treatment of detainees. The killing of Baha Mousa

illustrates some key problems with military detention, among which is the general lawlessness around detention by the British army. By denying that international human rights law applied to the British army, the then government authorised British forces to detain Iraqis when they wanted, for almost any reason, and for as long as they wanted. The government denied there was any requirement to bring all detainees

provide transparency and the inquiry is supposed to be highly secretive, with much of the proceedings held behind closed doors and any new disclosures requiring the government's approval.

Media reports said the government decided to make the payments in order to avoid possible disclosures about the activities of the intelligence services in court cases involving by former detainees. To date the rights to access to justice for these former detainees have been obstructed by persistent efforts on the part of the UK government to prevent disclosure of evidence relevant to these allegations.

Violation of human rights following the UK riots

Following the riots over the recent months, which resulted in the spreading of the unrest to other parts of the capital, and other British cities, the behaviour of the British Government, particularly the violent treatment of the detainees, mass arrests, and the handing down of heavy sentences to the criminals in the riots, violation of fair trial standards, blatant violation of freedom of expression and information, and inattention to poverty and social-economic discriminations as the root cause of these protests are all clear cases of blatant and grave violations of human rights in the country.

Recommendations

ODVV calls on the UK to ensure that effective measures are in place to allow for quick and accurate identification of trafficked victims,



in British custody before a judge, a critical step to ensure the legality of detention and avoid abuse.

The need for full and public disclosure of the truth about human rights violations and the duty of states to hold those responsible to account remains essential and must not be swept aside. The UK torture inquiry should not be secretive and flawed. Reports, however, say that the government does not intend to

drawing attention to incidents where victims have been identified as irregular migrants. In such cases, victims are often deported and therefore unable to seek redress. When a safe return to the country of origin was not guaranteed victims must be offered temporary or permanent residence permits.

ODVV urges the UK government to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to enable quick and accurate identification of trafficked persons to prevent any misidentification of trafficked persons as irregular migrants, which often leads to detention and deportation, effectively precluding a chance to seek compensation.

United Kingdom should ensure that trafficked persons are equipped with access to information, free legal aid and other necessary assistance such as interpretation services, and regular residence status during the duration of any legal proceedings.

It is feared that the London 2012 Games could become a magnet for prostitutes trafficked from Eastern Europe by criminal gangs. ODVV believes that these issues need to be addressed as a matter of urgency, and that working with other countries to combat human trafficking will be key to help respond quickly and appropriately to any potential increased risk of trafficking.

ODVV calls for the UK Government to introduce general anti-discrimination laws. Future policies must ensure they do not undermine the trust Muslim communities have in state institutions nor their sense of

belonging in Britain.

ODVV calls all people of faith to “challenge Islamophobia”. People from all sections of the societies have a crucial role to play in helping to dispel myths about Muslim communities. There is a common misconception that Islam is a religion of Violence. There is no basis for this in Islam. Islam is a religion of peace. Accordingly, ODVV invites nations to improve understanding among all Abrahamic faiths and cultures and avoid incitement to hatred and violence, in order to reach a world of peace and security.

Recommendations on human rights violations and by UK armed forces in Iraq

UK authorities must deliver justice over abuse cases in Iraq; payment is only a part of the remedy to the victims.

UK must comply with Geneva Conventions on torture.

An inquiry into allegations of human rights crimes and the respective legal proceedings should be accompanied with sufficient transparency.

The United Kingdom should urgently ensure a full, transparent and credible accounting of the circumstances in these and other cases.

We urge the United Kingdom continue to remain committed to its national, regional and international commitments: i.e. not to abolish the Human Rights Act, nor withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights. We urge the British Government to investigate the behaviour of the police in the recent riots in the country, and take steps to ensure this kind of behaviour is not repeated.



United Kingdom should ensure that trafficked persons are equipped with access to information, free legal aid and other necessary assistance such as interpretation services, and regular residence status during the duration of any legal proceedings

Human Rights News

Bush greeted with torture complaint



Lawyers in Canada have asked a Canadian court to consider a torture complaint by four Guantanamo detainees against former US President George W. Bush.

Matt Eisenbrandt, of the Canadian Center for International Justice, filed the four-count complaint and received a January 9 hearing date at the British Columbia Provincial Court in Surrey.

Three of the prisoners are free but one is still being held in Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba.

One of the four prisoners, a former German Guantanamo detainee Murat Kurnaz, explained about the prosecution, saying, "I believe George Bush is a criminal, and he has to pay for this, what he did."

"After that I got proof that I'm innocent, they kept me five more years, and they never stopped the torture," he added.

Kurnaz was arrested in Pakistan in late 2001 and spent the next half-decade imprisoned on US military bases in Afghanistan and Guantanamo.

The other three men whose claims of torture were cited in the complaint are Hassan Bin Attash, a Yemeni still held in Cuba; Muhammed Khan Tumani, a Syrian whom the US resettled in Portugal; and Sami al-Hajj, a Sudanese al Jazeera employee now based in Doha, Qatar.

Amnesty International and the New York Center for Constitutional Rights also called on the Canadian government to arrest Bush and either prosecute or extradite him for the torture

of prisoners.

Bush made a visit to Canada on Thursday despite the torture complaint case.

He, however, was forced in February to cancel a plan to speak at a gala fundraiser in Geneva ahead of a similar torture complaint.

Press TV

Calvin Gibbs, Leader of 'Thrill Kill' Soldiers, Guilty of Murder



Staff Sgt. Calvin Gibbs was found guilty in a military court Thursday of being the leader of a U.S. Army thrill kill team that murdered three Afghan civilians for sport.

He was sentenced to life in prison, but will be eligible for parole in nine years. Gibbs was also found guilty of 12 related charges, including taking body parts as trophies from corpses.

Three soldiers who have already pled guilty in the case testified against Gibbs, who was accused of masterminding a scheme to kill unarmed civilians and then plant weapons to make the deaths appear justified.

"Sergeant Gibbs had a charisma, he had a 'follow me' personality," prosecutor Maj. Robert Stelle said in closing arguments Wednesday. "But it was all a bunch of crap. He had his own mission: murder and depravity."

Gibbs's defense attorney, Phillip Stackhouse, had argued that the other witnesses had framed Gibbs for the deaths, and that some admitted they had been under the influence of hashish while serving in Afghanistan.

Gibbs, who testified in his own defense, denied murdering civilians, but did admit to taking trophies from Afghans he said were killed legitimately. He compared cutting fingers from his human kills to "keeping antlers" from deer he'd shot.

The five-member jury at the Army's Joint Base Lewis-McChord south of Seattle deliberated for four hours before finding Gibbs guilty.

Twenty-six-year-old Gibbs, of Billings, Montana was among five soldiers from Lewis-McChord charged with taking part in the thrill kills in 2010 in a case that included allegations of widespread drug use, the collection of body parts and photos of the U.S. soldiers holding the Afghan bodies like hunter's trophies.

ABC News

UN Expert Urges Full Policy Review After Regional Body Finds United States Responsible for Rights



The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo, urged the United States Government to reexamine its current policies on dealing with violence against women. Her call follows a landmark decision by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights finding the US government responsible for human rights violations against Jessica Lenahan (Gonzales), a survivor of domestic violence, and her three deceased children.

"Violence against women is the most pervasive

human rights violation which continues to challenge every country in the world, and the US is no exception," Ms. Manjoo stressed. "The US Government should reassess existing mechanisms for protecting victims and punishing offenders, and establish meaningful standards for enforcement of protection orders and impose consequences for a failure to enforce them."

www.unog.ch

West Bank Demolitions and Attacks against Palestinians Must



Three United Nations independent experts called for an immediate end to the demolitions of Palestinian-owned houses and other structures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which have seen a dramatic increase since the beginning of the year. They also urged the Israeli authorities to prevent attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and Palestinian property.

"The impact and discriminatory nature of these demolitions and evictions is completely unacceptable. These actions by the Israeli authorities violate human rights and humanitarian law and must end immediately," said the three Special Rapporteurs working on the rights to adequate housing, water and sanitation, and food.

Palestinian property is not only destroyed by the Israeli Civil Administration authorities and military but also by Israeli settlers. "In some places, there are nearly weekly burnings of Palestinian villagers' land, trees and crops by Israeli settlers," the independent experts said.

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“With no effective action by the police and security forces, there is neither accountability for nor effective protection against these serious crimes, which further encourages the perpetrators to continue committing them.”

www.unog.ch

Italy: Decrees that discriminated against Roma are ruled unlawful



Amnesty International has called on the Italian authorities to end discriminatory measures against Roma after the country's 'Nomad Emergency' decrees were declared unlawful by the country's highest administrative court.

The Italian Council of State has ruled to end the "Nomad Emergency", which has exposed Roma communities to serious human rights violations since it was introduced three years ago.

"Ending the 'Nomad Emergency' is a step in the right direction - it was unlawful and should have never been declared," said Nicola Duckworth, Amnesty International's Director for Europe and Central Asia.

"The Italian government now has a responsibility to provide effective remedies to all the Roma families who suffered forced evictions and other human rights violations during the 'Nomad Emergency'."

In May 2008, the Italian government declared a state of emergency around settlements of nomad communities in the regions of Lombardy,

Campania and Lazio.

This was supposedly to address a "situation of grave social alarm, with possible repercussions for the local population in terms of public order and security".

The emergency was later extended to the regions of Piedmont and Veneto.

Under the "Nomad Emergency", government representatives in the regions were given authority to deviate from legislation that protects human rights and forced evictions of Roma communities became more frequent and were carried out with greater impunity.

"The 'Nomad Emergency' has exposed thousands of Roma to human rights abuses and aggravated discrimination against them," said Nicola Duckworth.

"The new Italian government must now end discriminatory policies and practices that have targeted Roma for years. This is certainly not the end of the story, but may well be a new beginning."

AI Niqab women fined by French court



A judge in Meaux has fined two French women for wearing the niqab – the first sanction since France banned Islamic full-face veils in April.

Hind Ahmas, 32, a single mother from a Paris suburb, and Najate Nait Ali, 36, were handed fines of €120 and €80 (£105 and £70) respectively. The judge is expected to hand out a full ruling explaining his decision.

The fines mark the first time a French court has pronounced on the niqab ban, the controversial law backed by Nicolas Sarkozy that bans women wearing full-face veils from all public places. More than 90 women have been stopped by police but until now, no one had been punished by a court for wearing a face veil.

The two women were stopped in the street on 5 May near the town hall in Meaux, east of Paris, where the mayor is Jean-François Copé – an architect of the ban and head of Sarkozy's ruling rightwing UMP party.

The date was Copé's birthday and the women had arrived carrying a birthday cake for him made of almonds. Their action was intended as a play on the word "almond" in French – amande, which is close to the word "fine" – amende. The women said they wanted to expose the absurdity of a law that discriminated against Muslims and made a mockery of the justice system. They were supported by the group Don't Touch my Constitution, which has led protests at the ban.

Gilles Devers, a lawyer for the women, said the pair would immediately appeal to France's supreme court and to the European court of human rights if necessary. Devers argued the French niqab ban contravened European human rights legislation on personal liberties and freedom of religion.

Ahmas was not allowed into court during the initial court hearing in June because she was wearing a niqab and refused to remove it at the request of a police officer, offering instead to lift it for an identity check.

The Guardian

Saudi Arabia: Stop Arbitrary Arrests of Shia



Clashes in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Provinces show the urgent need for Saudi officials to stop arbitrary arrests of peaceful protesters, relatives of wanted persons, and human rights activists, Human Rights Watch said today.

Interior Ministry officials said that the clashes, which broke out in 'Awwamiyya, a Shia town, on October 3, 2011, and continued into the next day, injured 11 security personnel and three citizens, two of them women. Sources on the ground told Human Rights Watch that the likely trigger was the arrest on October 2 of two elderly residents of 'Awwamiyya – Hasan Al Zayid, in his 70s, and Sa'id al-'Abd al-'Al, in his 60s – to pressure their sons to give themselves up to the police. The sons were wanted in connection with peaceful demonstrations from February to June in the Eastern Province.

"Seizing the elderly and infirm father of a wanted man to force him to surrender is thuggish through and through," said Christoph Wilcke, senior Middle East researcher at Human Rights Watch. "Even more so when the state was pursuing the man for nothing more than peaceful activism."

The Interior Ministry said that it would respond to the recent clashes with an "iron fist" against what it called "radicalized or hired instigators." The statement blamed an unnamed foreign

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country, understood to be Iran, for instigating the strife.

Al Zayid collapsed shortly after his arrest and was taken by ambulance from 'Awwamiyya to a nearby hospital. Fadhil al-Manasif, a local human rights activist who had been detained from May 1 until August 22 without charge for his alleged role in the peaceful demonstrations, went to the 'Awwamiyya police station around 7:30 p.m. to protest the arrests of Al Zayed and al-'Abd al-'Al, saying they were illegal. When he followed Al Zayed's ambulance to the hospital, security forces at a checkpoint arrested him.

Some hours later, officers transferred al-Manasif to Dhahran police station, where he remains. Inquiries by local activists revealed that he had been charged with "breaking the glass of a police vehicle" and "resisting security officers." Police have not allowed al-Manasif's family to visit him. A friend of al-Manasif's, who asked not to be named, inquired about al-Manasif at Dhahran police station early on the morning of October 3, but was himself arrested. He has since been released, as has al-'Abd al-'Al. Al Zayid remains in the hospital, and it is unclear whether he is still being detained. The previous week, security forces arrested the father of another man wanted in connection with the peaceful demonstrations by Shia Saudis in the Eastern Province. The police released the father after several days, although the son did not turn himself in.

Article 14 of the Arab Charter for Human Rights, to which the kingdom is a party, prohibits arbitrary arrest. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions says detentions are arbitrary if there is no clear legal basis for the arrest or if the person is arrested for exercising the human rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, among others.

A Shia Saudi activist told Human Rights Watch that about 40 Shia Saudis remain in detention in the wake of peaceful demonstrations in the

Eastern Province over the past few months.

"Saudi authorities should immediately stop arbitrary arrests of relatives, rights activists, and peaceful protesters," Wilcke said.

HRW

Yemen: Urgent Need to Address Dire Humanitarian & Human Rights Situation – UN Human Rights



A report published Tuesday by a United Nations human rights assessment mission to Yemen calls for immediate action to protect civilians, respect the right to peaceful demonstration and to address the "deteriorating humanitarian situation" in the country. The report by the United Nations human rights office also stressed the need for "international, independent and impartial investigations" into allegations of human rights abuses related to the peaceful protest movement in Yemen since the beginning of this year. A delegation from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights visited Aden, Sana'a and Ta'izz between 28 June and 6 July this year. The team met many key officials, including the Vice-President, leaders of political parties and members of Parliament as well as non-governmental organization representatives, lawyers, journalists, doctors, human rights defenders, victims of violations and their relatives.

www.unog.ch

Israeli Supreme Court Upholds Ban on Family Unification



11 January 2012, at 9 pm, the Israeli Supreme Court in a 6-5 decision, delivered a 232-page judgment upholding the constitutionality of the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law – 2003 (as amended 2007). This law severely restricts Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel from living together in Israel with their Palestinian spouses from the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) or from “enemy states” defined by the law as “Syria, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq”. Thousands of Palestinian families are affected by this law, forced to move abroad, or live apart or to live together illegally in Israel.

In Adalah’s view: “The Supreme Court approved a law the likes of which do not exist in any democratic state in the world, depriving citizens from maintaining a family life in Israel only on the basis of the ethnicity or national belonging of their spouse. The ruling proves how much the situation regarding the civil rights of the Arab minority in Israel is declining into a highly dangerous and unprecedented situation.”

The Supreme Court panel of 11 justices was deeply divided in the case. It was decided by a vote of 6-5, with six justices voting to uphold the law – Justices Rivlin, Grunis (the new Chief Justice as of March 2012), Naor, Rubinstein, Melcer, and Hendel - and five justices dissenting - Chief Justice Beinish, and Justices Hayut, Jubran,

Levy, and Arbel. The majority of the court ruled that even if the law harmed the constitutional rights of citizens of Israel such as the right to equality, this infringement was proportional and did not violate Israel’s Basic Laws.

With this decision, the Supreme Court was ruling on a series of petitions submitted by Adalah, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and others. Adalah Attorneys Hassan Jabareen and Sawsan Zaher petitioned the court in May 2007 on behalf of two Arab families against the Interior Ministry and the Attorney General (AG), demanding the cancellation of the 2007 amendment to law. The 2007 amendment expanded the scope of the existing law to include not only Palestinian residents of the OPT but also citizens of “enemy states”, namely Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Iran and also “anyone living in an area in which operations that constitute a threat to the State of Israel are being carried out”. Following this amendment, the Israeli government ordered a full ban on all residents of Gaza from receiving any legal status in Israel.

The decision banning family unification between Palestinians was first taken by the Interior Ministry in May 2002, and the Knesset later enacted this policy into law in July 2003. The Supreme Court rejected petitions filed against the original law in August 2003 by human rights organizations, including Adalah, in May 2006 (HCJ 7052/03, Adalah et al. v. The Interior Ministry, et. al).

Adalah argued in the petition that the law creates three tracks of naturalization in the State of Israel. The first, the highest track, is for Jewish people, who can gain citizenship immediately and automatically under the Law of Return (1950). The second track is for foreigners, to whom the graduated procedure of naturalization applies, allowing them to obtain Israeli residency or citizenship status over a four-year period from the date of submitting the application. The third, the lowest track, is for the spouses of

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Palestinian Arabs citizens of Israel from the OPT, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Iraq. Adalah stressed that the creation of these tracks, which is based essentially on the nationality of the applicant, constitutes racial discrimination, and contradicts the principle of equality and prior decisions of the Supreme Court.

In March 2009, Adalah submitted three expert opinions from international legal experts in the UK, South Africa and the Open Society Justice Initiative, who argued that the Citizenship Law violated the right to family life, and is discriminatory and unconstitutional

www.adalah.org

Continuation of the high number of civilian deaths in Iraq



A human rights advocacy group which monitors the death tolls of Iraqi civilians announced that for over two years now there has not been noticeable reduction in Iraqi civilian deaths. In its annual report, the Iraq Body Count reports that recent statistics show that conflicts continue in Iraq and for years to come will kill more civilians. The figures that this group publishes are higher than official figures.

The group says that since the US led attack against Iraq nine years ago, in total 162 thousand

people the majority of which were civilians have been killed. The number of fatalities in 2011 was 4059, which is a little higher than 2010.

www.iraqbodycount.org

US arms sale to Bahrain raises eyebrows



Shipping weapons to the tense emirate, a key American ally that hosts the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet currently keeping watch over Iran's threat to close the vital Straits of Hormuz, won't, the Obama administration says, help Bahrain's Al Khalifa ruling family crack down on pro-democracy protestors planning to mark the anniversary of Bahrain's brutally-crushed Arab Spring.

But rights groups in America and the Middle East are outraged by what they regard as Washington's double-standard.

Unlike Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria, where Mr. Obama backed Arab opponents of dictators and, in the case of Libya, launched an air war that was crucial in ousting Moammar Gadhafi, Washington's handling of Bahrain has been very different.

A year ago, tens of thousands of Bahrainis – most of them from the poor, ill-treated, Shia underclass – challenged the ruling Sunni royal family. Their pro-democracy uprising was crushed by Bahrain's own security forces backed by Saudi Arabia, which sent an armoured column across the causeway into Bahrain. The message

was brutally clear that there would be no ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings in the Gulf.

It will be scant solace for Bahrain’s battered pro-democracy activists to know the Obama administration said the weapons shipments won’t “include internal security items, such as small arms or tear gas.” Spare parts for helicopters and new fast patrol boats are included, in a deal deliberately kept under the \$1-million threshold that triggers Congressional oversight.

American policy is torn over Bahrain. The city state is both a bulwark against Iran and – many fear – the first domino that could set off a cascade of collapsing regimes all along the Gulf, including the most powerful and oil-rich of them all, Saudi Arabia, if its rulers are swept aside in a pro-democracy uprising.

“It was much easier for the U.S. to cut loose (former Egyptian President Hosni) Mubarak than it would be with any of the Gulf states,” Christopher Davidson, a Gulf expert at Durham University in Britain told the Associated Press. “The Arab Spring is definitely weighing heavily on the minds of Gulf rulers and their Western partners.”

It’s not just worry about a Shia-majority democracy in Bahrain that creates the dilemma. It’s fear that Iran’s Shia theocracy can foment uprisings among the Shia in Arab Gulf states and topple the Sunni ruling families that form a reliable pro-western bloc.

If the threat Iran poses to the region is as “dramatic and destabilizing” as Canada’s Foreign Minister John Baird claims, then worries about Tehran’s expanding influence may trump western support for Arab democracy.

So maintaining a powerful military alliance with Saudi Arabia at its core to confront Iran remains a key strategic part of western foreign policy.

Some see double-standard in holding only some Arab regimes accountable for brutally repressing innocent and unarmed protesters.

In Bahrain, “Protesters remain jailed on criminal

charges for peacefully speaking out and there has been little accountability for torture and killings – crimes in which the Bahrain Defense Force is implicated,” said Maria McFarland, deputy Washington director at Human Rights Watch, who denounced the resumption of arms sales.

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US: Number of Aging Prisoners Soaring



Aging men and women are the most rapidly growing group in US prisons, and prison officials are hard-pressed to provide them appropriate housing and medical care, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. Because of their higher rates of illness and impairments, older prisoners incur medical costs that are three to nine times as high as those for younger prisoners.

Long sentences mean that many current prisoners will not leave prison until they become extremely old, if at all. Human Rights Watch found that almost 1 in 10 state prisoners (9.6 percent) is serving a life sentence. An additional 11.2 percent have sentences longer than 20 years.

Among its recommendations, Human Rights Watch urges state and federal officials to:

Review sentencing and release policies to determine which could be modified to reduce the growing population of older prisoners without risking public safety;

Develop comprehensive plans for housing,

Human Rights News

medical care, and programs for the current and projected populations of older prisoners; and

Modify prison rules that impose unnecessary hardship on older inmates.

HRW

Amnesty slams Bahrain use of tear gas



Amnesty International has warned about the Bahraini government's misuse of tear gas against anti-regime protesters, calling for an investigation into the teargas-related deaths.

In a statement released on Thursday, Amnesty said that Bahrain's misuse of tear gas against protesters had become "increasingly deadly," adding that it has evidence suggesting security forces use tear gas inappropriately and indiscriminately.

"The rise in fatalities and eyewitness accounts suggest that tear gas is being used inappropriately by Bahraini security forces, including in people's homes and other confined spaces," said Amnesty.

The organization has also called on Manama to instruct its security forces on "how to use tear gas in line with international policing standards."

Bahraini troops heavily rely on tear gas and stun grenades to disperse peaceful anti-government protests. Several Bahraini civilians, mostly senior citizens and kids, who had not participated in protest rallies, have also died from asphyxia

after regime troops fired tear gas in residential areas and into houses in violation of international standards that Bahrain has signed up to.

Hajj Ali Al-Sukari, 65-years-old, the latest victim of the toxic tear gas used by Bahraini troops collapsed after a tear gas was fired near his home in a village outside the capital on Tuesday.

Amnesty International has also called on the US government to suspend export of tear gas and other riot control equipment to Bahrain.

Bahrain has been hit by a wave of anti-regime protests since mid-February, which was immediately met with a brutal crackdown by the ruling Al Khalifa family.

Scores of demonstrators have been killed and hundreds wounded in the popular uprising in the Persian Gulf nation.

PressTV

French prisons claim hundreds of lives

According to Le Monde, of the 263 deaths registered in French prisons in 2010, some 121 were suicide cases.

While under-18 juveniles accounted for most of the deaths, 60 percent of the dead inmates had been arrested for felonies and not major crimes such as homicide. Research carried out in 2006 showed that 35 to 42 percent of the detainees had visible symptoms or were seriously ill.

Last week, the International Prison Observatory condemned France's penal system for failing to rectify problems such as overcrowding, the highest suicide rate in Western Europe and a widespread neglect of human rights.

The report revealed that 20 percent of inmates have psychological problems and 33 percent are drug addicts, but treatment is substandard. French media aired video footage of Paris jails in 2009, caught on camera by prisoners, which showed the dreadful condition of the cells. The footage also showed prisoners having separated restrooms and their beds with a curtain made out of toilet paper.

PressTV

ODVV

Activities



Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

According to United Nations statistics each day countless numbers of women around the world are subjected to violence and abuse. World Bank figures indicate that rape and domestic violence are bigger threats than cancer, road accidents, wars and malaria for women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the world. Violence against women is not restricted to particular social class or culture and exists in all social classes of every country of the world. According to the UN one out of three women in the world has at least been hit once in her life time, or in one form or another been subjected to abuse by her husband or partner. In view of the seriousness of the issue, the elimination of all forms of violence against women became one of the main focal points of United Nations' activities and the 25th of November was named the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

To this aim, as a human rights NGO, the ODVV pursues to have a share in the realization of all human rights, from human dignity teachings. For the purpose of the expansion of a culture of non-

violence, in all its forms, with the cooperation of UNIC in Iran, the ODVV held a commemoration ceremony for the day.

The commemoration ceremony of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was held on 23 November 2011 at the ODVV conference hall with the participation of 50 experts and academics and governmental and nongovernmental experts.

The ceremony began with the welcoming speech of the conference secretariat. This was followed by the reading of the UN Secretary General's message for the day by UNIC National Information Officer, Mr. Mohammad Rajae Moghadam. The message read as follows:

“Violence against women and girls takes many forms and is widespread throughout the globe. It includes rape, domestic violence, harassment at work, abuse in school, female genital mutilation and sexual violence in armed conflicts. It is predominantly inflicted by men. Whether in developing or developed countries, the

pervasiveness of this violence should shock us all. Violence – and in many cases the mere threat of it – is one of the most significant barriers to women’s full equality.

The right of women and girls to live free of violence is inalienable and fundamental. It is enshrined in international human rights and humanitarian law. And it lies at the heart of my UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign. Since its launch in 2008, the campaign has galvanized governments, civil society, the corporate sector, athletes, artists, women, men and young people around the world. The social mobilization platform “Say NO-UNiTE” has recorded more than 2 million activities worldwide – from protest marches to public awareness campaigns, from legislative advocacy to help for victims.

Many of these activities have received support from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Since it was founded 15 years ago, the Fund has delivered grants worth \$77 million to 339 initiatives in 126 countries and territories. We would like the Fund to be able to do even more, but demand for support continues to outstrip resources. This year alone, the Fund has received more than 2,500 applications requesting nearly \$1.2 billion. I appeal to all our partners to help us meet this vast unmet need.

Our challenge is to ensure that the message of “zero tolerance” is heard far and wide. To do that, we must engage all of society – and especially young people. In particular, young men and boys must be encouraged to become the advocates we need. We need to promote healthy models of masculinity. Too many young men still grow up surrounded by outmoded male stereotypes. By talking to friends and peers about violence against women and girls, and by taking action to end it, they can help break the ingrained behaviour of generations.

On this International Day, I urge governments and partners around the world to harness the energy, ideas and leadership of young people to help us to

end this pandemic of violence. Only then will we have a more just, peaceful and equitable world.”

The next speaker was psychiatrist Dr. Mahdiah Moeen spoke about the “psychoanalysis of domestic violence, while concentrating on the psychoanalysis of the aggressor, stressed that aggression and domestic violence is an individual mater, and linked to the character of the individual, and his developments levels which can be targeted and applied from any members of the family against others. She also referred to the dark half of the violence against women debate and said, “victims of violence and their effects, faults or roles in the appearance of violence, maintenance and spread of the violence phenomenon, is the dark half of the violence against women debate, while our minds are not used to see the victim as the cause. The similar child dependency towards the mother relationship phenomenon (which at times results in the expression of violence) takes place in relation with humans and particularly women in such a way that first of all the weight of the needs and dependency which is enforced on men by dependent women is very high, and the nuisance feeling that appears is the instigator of frustration and anger. Secondly dependent individuals, when being distanced from the dependency source, feel destroyed and therefore tolerate violence, humiliation and degradation. On this basis no incentive comes about for the perpetrator of violence to control himself, his violence. Thirdly is the type of violence which is not in physical and practical form, but its application can be worse than the other types, just like in international relations during the Cold War. profiling of victims and perpetrators of violence

This was followed by a workshop entitled “Education of Avoiding Violent Behaviour Strategies”. The workshop dealt with the psychosocial profiling of violence against women, different types of violence, upbringing strategies, recognition strategies, and how to confront with the violent individual.



Strengthening of the Family Institution and Prevention of Violence Project

The “Strengthening of the Family Institution and Prevention of Violence” project for Afghans in Semnan’s Afghan refugee camp was held from July till November 2011.

The project was held by the ODVV with the cooperation of UNHCR in Iran and the BAFIA and with the aim of strengthening of the family institution for Afghan refugees, in four stages and with the participation of 236 men and women. The following is a brief report of the project.

Following the success of the “Promotion of Community Based Awareness in the Prevention of GBV” project among Afghan residents of Shahr-e-Rey which was held with the support of UNHCR and BAFIA in 2010, the “Strengthening of the Family Institution and Prevention of Violence” project for Afghans in Semnan’s Afghan refugee camp began in July 2011.

As a continuation and completer of the valuable movement that had been created among Afghan refugees of Shahr-e-Rey, this

project intended to through education and culture building among the influential groups in the Afghan community that include, the elders, teachers, parents, care workers and the vulnerable groups (children) to fight against domestic violence and child abuse.

The first stage of the project was the evaluation and assessment of the existing conditions through group discussions with 25 women, and 30 members of the camp assembly representatives on 11 July 2011. Four key questions were raised in this meeting:

- 1 – Does child abuse exist in Afghan families in the camp?
- 2 – Which abuses are more common in the camp?
- 3 – What repercussions does child abuse have for the family and the community?
- 4 – What must be done to reduce child abuse?

Also in this meeting individuals were selected for the next stage of the project which was the “training of observers”. The second stage of



the project began on 2 September in which 10 men and 20 women began training as the project observers (48 hours of training). The third stage of the project which was considered the main part of the project was the training of peer trainers according to which 100 children under 15, boys and girls between 15-18 and men and women between 18-45 were to receive necessary training on the following subjects, which due to the noticeable response by the Afghan refugees the number of attendees increased to 263, therefore the training hours for the workshops increased. In this stage the training hours increased from 64 to 88 hours.

The first phased of this stage was the training of 10 boys and 10 girls under the age of 15, which increased to 47 girls and 34 boys. The second phase was the training of 10 boys and girls between 15 and 18, which increased to 39 girls and 20 boys. The third phase was the training of 10 men and 20 women between 18 and 45, which increased to 25 women and 18 men. The fourth phase of was the training of 10 men and 20 women between 18 and 45, which increased to 28 women and 52 men. The training subjects which were taught to all in workshop and participation method were as follows:

- Definition of the basic concepts of violence against women and child abuse
- The necessity to prevent violence against

women and child abuse on the basis of Islamic texts.

- The necessity for implementation of prevention of violence against women and child abuse select programmes.
- The roots and influential factors in the occurrence of violence against women and child abuse.
- Repercussions and effects of violence against women and child abuse.
- Fundamental rights and life skills (being daring and saying no, confronting violence, facing up to anxieties and stresses and communications skills and expressing feelings).
- Parental skills education for the prevention of occurrence of violence against women and child abuse.

Peer trainers received the necessary trainings from 10 September till 5 October and the transference of the things that the peer trainers learned to the target community began on 5 October and finished on 21 November. During this period the project observers began their work, and in a coordinated and parallel way the peer trainers and observers continued their activities. The trainers were split into groups and each observer was responsible to observe the activities of a number of trainers. The stages of the observers' and trainers' activities were as

follows:

- Identification and selection of the target community addressees
 - Determination of the time and place of training
 - Announcing the number of trainees, time and place to the observers
 - Holding of training under the supervision of the observers
 - Evaluation of the observers and recommendations in refreshing sessions
- After the training of peer trainers which were done under the supervision of the observers, two

refreshing sessions were held, during which the trainers and observers gave their reports and exchanged views with the project facilitator, the implementing officials of the project and UNHCR representative in Iran.

The details of the implementation of the project are as follows:

- First stage: Evaluation of location and situation assessment meeting
- Second stage: Training of local representatives (observers)
- Third stage: Training of peer trainers
- Fourth stage: Refreshing sessions.

18th Session of the Human Rights Council

The 18th Session of the Human Rights Council was held in 12-30 March 2011 at the Council headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

In this session 23 subjects were reviewed in the form of the Items on the Agenda. Some of these subjects were: The resumption of Libya's membership in the Human Rights Council, promotion and protection of freedom of expression on the internet, death penalty, reduction of mortality rates among mothers and infants, access to safe drinking water, exploitation and servitude as violation of human rights, right to self determination, human rights and international solidarity, human rights and minorities, Human rights and issues related to terrorist hostage-taking,

and climate change.

The Council also adopted decisions and mandates for: Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order, Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence, Human rights in the administration of justice, in particular juvenile justice, Advisory Services and technical assistance for Burundi Advisory services and technical assistance for Cambodia, the working group for the people of Africa, migrants rights, racism, racial discrimination, Islamophobia and religious intolerance. The Council also introduced the members of the Fact finding Mission for human rights violations in Syria.

ODVV written and oral statements

The ODVV submitted 4 written and 2 oral statements to the 18th Session. The 4 written statements were submitted before the start of the session and were on the following subjects: Islamophobia, refugees, Denmark UPR, and human rights concerns, all of which were documented and are readily available in the Human Rights Council website. Also 2 oral statements on Palestine and Islamophobia were read in the session, which shows the highlighted presence of the ODVV.

Statements Written: Denmark UPR

While thanking the Danish government for all its efforts in observing and strengthening human rights, the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) would like to raise a number of points which it thinks will help further improve the human rights situation in the country:

Although Denmark has joined many international human rights treaties, nevertheless they have not been institutionalized within the country's laws and regulations. While calling upon the Danish government to adopt appropriate policies, to integrate its international commitments with its domestic laws, legislation and justice systems.

Also like many other European countries, Denmark has refrained from joining the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers. We believe that the feeling of the enjoyment of human rights must not only be limited to the citizens of a country, but individuals who are migrants from other countries and join the work force in the economy cycle to also benefit and enjoy these rights, and not feel discriminated against.

Furthermore, Denmark still lacks an executable nationwide plan of action for the promotion and protection of human rights. We call upon the Danish government to prepare and implement programmes with the help of human rights NGOs

such as the Danish Institute for Human Rights, to organize the improvement and promotion of the human rights of the country.

Also recently contrary to asylum seeking and granting of nationality laws codified by the United Nations, the Danish government has refused the granting of citizenship to Palestinian children. On this basis the Danish government has failed to inform Palestinian families the international laws with regards to their children born in Denmark would get citizenship. According to UN's directive children whose lands are occupied and are born in other countries without prolonged process they can become citizens of those countries.

Although following the disclosure of this fact, with a 10 year delay the Danish government sent the families of nearly 500 Palestinian children born in the country letters asking the parents to take action in getting citizenship for their children, but the ODVV sees this as a bad treatment of Palestinians by the government, and urges the government to adopt methods to give back the dignity of Palestinian families.

The existence of cases of Islamophobia which has spread under the cover of freedom of expression is one of the major causes for concern of the ODVV, and urges the Danish government to set a distinction between defamation of religion and civil liberties when presenting its views and stances, and set the atmosphere for all the citizens of the country from any religion or ethnicity to observe and respect human rights.

Item 3: The Conditions of Afghan Refugees in Iran

Introduction:

The refugee phenomenon in Iran – Afghan refugees in particular – due to their sheer number and diversity and also their income and basic problems, are issues that dealing with which require special measures and specific executive approaches. On one hand the prolonged stay of Afghan refugees in Iran and the existence of social, cultural and economic problems in proportion with the general conditions of the country are deliberative and on the other hand the continuation of the unstable conditions in Afghanistan who is still not ready to repatriate its refugees (according to released figures), have openly and secretly made refugees problems more complex.. in a way while deepening past issues, the emergence of other social realities which are linked to the greater policies of the country such as the removal of subsidies have escalated the refugees problems.

According to published figures from the Afghan refugees registration programme Amayesh 6 by the Interior Ministry's Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA), the number of registered Afghan refugees in Iran is over one million. Also according to the Iraqi refugees registration programme there are approximately 42,000 Iraqis in Iran. This is while nearly 2 million Afghan nationals are illegally residing in Iran.

Refugees' Repatriation:

For a long time the repatriation of refugees as a lasting solution has been in the working agenda of the Iranian and Afghan governments and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. To this aim and following the improvement of security in Afghanistan and the formation of the world recognized Afghan government, and Afghan refugees from various countries that included Iran showed interest in repatriation, in 2002 the first trilateral agreement was signed between the UNHCR, the Iranian and Afghan governments. According to this

agreement all three provide services in support of the voluntary repatriation of refugees from Iran, and these assistances still continue on. But gradually in view of the failure in the fulfillment of the expectations of the returnees, this process has slowed down to an extent where in 2010 only 10,000 refugees repatriated to their country.

From the start of the voluntary repatriation programme to date 1.8 million Afghan refugees have voluntarily returned to Afghanistan with the assistance of UNHCR. Approximately 880,000 of these returned with the assistance of the UNHCR in Iran and also 22,000 Iraqi refugees returned to Iraq with the assistance of UNHCR.

Refugees Income Situation in Iran

One of the challenges in the way of the income of refugees in Iran is the lack of approved jobs for them. Although in comparison with countries from which refugees have flooded into Iran, Iran has better employment conditions, nonetheless with the existence of different laws and regulations, refugees' lack of awareness of the laws and regulations in obtaining temporary work permits, high costs and employment restrictions, the Afghan refugees are struggling with their income in the country. Furthermore livelihood assistance provided by donor countries is not enough, and these assistances haven't been able to solve refugees' problems.

Education Situation of Refugees

Undoubtedly in view of the stress of international laws that include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the subject of education in planning and policy setting of support services for refugees is one of the pivotal and determining indicators, and therefore education of refugees children in particular must be top priority in the activities of member states and national and international organizations.

By paying a part of their education costs, presently legal Afghan refugees in Iran can register in Iranian schools and study. Although the fees compared to the paid share of the government may be trivial, and in some instances the Iranian government gives exemptions from payment for vulnerable refugees, but overall there are refugees that have great difficulties

in paying the low costs and are not included in the exemptions list of the government. In the long run this affects the education situation of the refugees, therefore further participation of international organizations in assisting refugees and the Iranian government for the provision of free education is very necessary.

Health and Medical Care Situation of Refugees in Iran:

Currently refugees that suffer from three particular sicknesses of hemophilia, Thalassemia, and diabetes, are covered by the Islamic Republic of Iran's Social Security Organization with the support of the UNHCR. Although considering that the majority of refugee families are not able to provide the medical bills for their members who suffer from other chronic diseases, therefore with the initiative of the UNHCR and the backing of the Iranian government in the current year the commendable supplementary medical insurance programme has been put into effect. This programme which the UNHCR provides 42% of the cost of refugees insurance cards, can solve a lot of the medical treatment problems that refugees face due to financial difficulties. In this programme vulnerable individuals can receive free insurance services.

This programme following the cutting of energy and necessary goods subsidies which had a negative effect on the social and economic situation of vulnerable refugees, was a positive step towards the protection of refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Recommendations:

While valuing the worthy services of the Islamic Republic of Iran as one of the biggest host countries to refugees, international organizations, the UNHCR in particular and particularly donor countries that include Japan, the EU and the positive steps that these institutions have taken to solve refugees' problems in Iran, we recommend the following:

1 – In view of the existence of some sanctions against Iran which has affected the income situation of Iranians as well as refugees, it is necessary for humanitarian measures to replace political actions and for international organizations to react towards pressures that result in the violation of citizen's rights and rights of refugees directly or indirectly.

2 – It is necessary for self-sufficient projects to be implemented extensively for further support for refugees, particularly the vulnerable ones during their stay in Iran.

3 – Support for refugee producing countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq for the purpose of repatriation of refugees to their countries and furthering assistance for the returnees can be a sustainable solution. In spite of all the problems that refugees face in Iran, their repatriation has not been successful because they have had better access to welfare, security and health systems than their own countries.

Item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Despite the fact that in this current year there have been developments and changes in the Middle East and North Africa region, which shows the strengthening of democracy and life based on dignity and the true wish of the citizens of a number of Arab countries, nonetheless the violation of human rights continue unabated not just in the region but in all parts of the world. This had an inappropriate facet in some western countries who see themselves the protectors and promoters of the universal human rights system, and was cause for concern of human rights activists.

By highlighting a number of cases the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence hopes that the attention of the international community to be equal towards all parts of the world, just like the objective behind the

establishment of the Human Rights Council, and the open and hidden human rights violations in the west to be reviewed in proportion with developing countries.

The United States of America

While still running for presidency Barak Obama had promised he would shut down Guantanamo Bay Detention centre for good, recently White House officials have been preparing a draft presidential directive which if approved by the President, would keep a number of Guantanamo inmates locked up indefinitely. Although the US government has said that this will only apply to those detainees that have been involved in terrorist campaigns and US officials deem them as threats to national security, nevertheless the US political and judicial system's approach to Guantanamo detainees and the deprivation of their most basic human rights that are stated in international instruments, the slightly brighter prospects of an end to this human rights violation by America has once again been tarnished.

The high rates of women military personnel rapes and sexual abuse are twice as high as abuses within the American society. This has worried the majority of human rights activists and organizations. According to Pentagon's annual report on sexual abuse cases in three military academies which was published in mid-December of 2010 out of 3 women military personnel one has been raped while serving in the Army. The report shows that unfortunately in 2010 the number of women's rape and sexual abuses cases in the US Army have increased by 64 percent.

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence believes both of these problems is a reflection of America's improper policies with regards to its self declared war on terror and the ignoring of the fundamental rights of countries under attack and occupation, and also the negative effects of these measures on the American nation itself, and the ODVV urges the American government, just as the recommendations that were presented to the government during the USA Universal Periodic Review, to provide answers to the concerns of a vast part of the international community and also its domestic public opinion

with regards to its military policies.

Canada

Over the recent years the forms of policy settings and the communications principles of this country with the international community have been increasingly been the disregard of universal human rights obligations. Canadian leaders hesitation in signing UN human rights resolutions, refusing to provide answers for Canada's treatment of prisoners in Afghanistan, cutting the budget of Canadian organizations that campaign for the rights of Palestinians, restricting allocated budgets for the fight against mothers' mortality in underdeveloped countries, refusing to sign the NPT, and also the lessening of the government's support for the rights of asylum seekers are all instances which show Canada's human rights movements are at a stand still and in some instances backtracked.

United Kingdom

The British police and government's reaction to the recent street protests in London and a number of other cities, are instances where the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence suffer from grave human rights shortfalls. Even a number of British MPs and human rights activists have criticized the excessive heavy sentences handed out to individuals that were involved in the unrest. The fact that British leaders used the term phony human rights when facing human rights claims, shows that unfortunately Europe pays importance to human rights only until when it does not feel the tiniest threat to national security. We believe that it is the leverage use of a holy concept which must be carefully studied by the British governmental and nongovernmental civil sectors.

Germany

The rise in Islamophobia in Germany alongside the rise in the number of rightwing extremists are two cases which cause concern for the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence. The numbers of attacks against mosques and Islamic centres in Berlin over the last few months has drawn a picture of natural preplanned series of actions. Explosion in front of the Iranian Cultural Centre, attack on the Al-Noor Mosque, and four attacks

against Sehitlik Mosque last summer to date are examples of these sorts of acts. These behaviours take up a meaning when the report of the General Bureau of Protection of the German Constitution shows that the number of rightwing extremists read for violent acts has clearly risen. We call upon the German government who is host to one of the largest Muslim communities in Europe to pay particular attention to Islamophobia and rightwing extremism, and to find practical and sustainable solutions in this regard.

Italy

Daily intolerances, racist violence and xenophobia are issues that have fast increased in Italy.

Evidence gathered recently by nongovernmental organizations shows that the practical investigations of these instances in Italy are very rare and limited, and Italian officials try to portray the issue as insignificant, and how this approach in practice has resulted in the spread of these types of crimes. Furthermore, the tone of the officials of the country, politicians and the media add fuel to the fire of these intolerances by sticking negative cliché labels against migrants and the Roma community.

Sadly the Italian government has to date not made serious efforts to collect, analyse and publish information and data on racist crimes, something that makes it difficult to draw a real picture of the Italian society.

Alongside other NGOs active in the field, the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence recommends the Italian government by changing its views on the important racism and xenophobia problem, to amend its criminal justice laws with the aim of fighting this social problem, and to set up mandatory training courses for the officers of the law and judiciary, and with the serious support of the National Bureau for Combating Racism, to increase the capacities of this Bureau for the fight against racist crimes.

Item 9: Islamophobia and Anti-Multiculturalism

Recent years have witnessed incidents of hatred or irrational fear of Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia has led to the practice of discrimination against Muslims by excluding them from the economic, social, and public life of the nation. It includes the perception that Islam has no values in common with other cultures, is inferior to the West and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion.

A perceived trend of Islamophobia over the last few months has been recognized by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence. Particularly, ignorance of governments to pay more attention to this form of intolerance is the ruling sentiment across nations with Muslim minorities.

A warning beyond mere “responsibility of the individual” is the heinous attack of the Norwegian gunman, an anti-Islamic extremist deeply influenced by a small group of American bloggers who have warned for years about Islam’s supposed threat to Western civilization. Norwegians, along with all people of conscience, have questions that will require straight answers: “Why didn’t authorities pay more attention to the threat of domestic terrorism?” According to Mr. Breivik’s 1,500-page manifesto, he spent a decade planning his attacks.

In the first 48 hours after the attack, media sources clamored to denounce “Muslim extremism”. Media rush to blame Muslims for Norway attacks shows Islamophobia. Their blind assumptions, in the face of a vicious attack by an anti-Muslim terrorist, reflect how deeply rooted Islamophobia has become.

There is a broader issue: A disturbing, and growing, intolerance across Europe for Muslims and other immigrants from Africa, Asia and the

Middle East. Even mainstream politicians in Europe have sown doubts about the ability or willingness of Europe to absorb newcomers. Multiculturalism has utterly failed!

The tendency to paint law-abiding Muslims with the same brush as extremists is repugnant. Media is responsible for the depiction of Islam and Muslims as a threat to Western security and values. Expressions used in the media such as "Islamic terrorism", "Islamic bombs" and "violent Islam" have resulted in a negative perception of Islam. Routine anti-Muslim incidents consist of verbal abuse, blaming all Muslims for terrorism, forcibly removing women's hijabs, spitting on Muslims, and random assaults. Inherent negativity, stereotypical images, fantastical representations, and exaggerated caricatures are all identified examples of portrayals of Muslims in media. A greater receptivity towards anti-Muslim and other xenophobic ideas and sentiments has, and may well continue, to become more tolerated. Ignorance of the religion's true nature has made the media to inspire and strengthen the supposed image that Islam imposes harsh regimes which deny the most basic human rights.

Notwithstanding the above, as the public sphere shifts to provide a more prominent place for Muslims, Islamophobic tendencies amplify.

In the course the past few months, the following incidents have been noticed by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence:

In the United Kingdom The Barnabas Fund began campaigning, in August 2011, against what it said was the growing "Islamisation" of Britain. When accused of terrorism, Muslims in the UK are Muslims; when killed by looters, they become Asian. Muslims in this country bravely defended shops and communities during riots in August 2011. Their example of outstanding civic duty in support of neighbors is worth highlighting- especially when sections of the UK media are so quick to print negative headlines about Muslims on the flimsiest of pretexts.

In the Netherlands

Dutch Parliamentarian Geert Wilders was cleared of all five charges in June, for his insulting remarks against Islam, the Holy Quran

and Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). A court in Amsterdam acquitted Wilders who had, among other humiliating remarks, described Islam as "fascist" and the "sick ideology of Allah and Mohammad", so done under the pretext of "freedom of expression", and the "rule of law". What Wilders did was to endanger the peace and harmony of civilizations by spreading hate against Islam and Muslims in his own country as well as in other European countries. Here's where politicians fuel rise in hate crimes against Muslims, with their inflammatory remarks which lead to intimidation of Muslims in their own country, social rejection and alienation across society.

The Dutch government's bill to ban halal meat is a further violation of the rights of Muslims in this country. In Islam, the term haraam, as the opposite of halal, is applied, among other things, to forbidden substances which are considered as harmful for humans to consume and, therefore, forbidden as per various Quranic verses. The ban on halal meat totally ignores the Muslim needs and the foods that conform to regulations of their religion. Pleasing to those who believe "multiculturalism and democracy cannot co-exist", this xenophobic measure seems unlikely to face any serious opposition.

The issue of Muslim women threatened or banned is not of a completely new nature and history. Hijab is a cause of hate crime, with the veil ban in Italy, France or Belgium as its manifestations. Very often, Muslim women are denied a job because they wear a hijab. Prohibitions not only apply to face-covering clothing, but also to any clothing with an Islamic religious symbolism.

There is a tendency to a Europe-wide ban on Muslim immigrants, and passing parliamentary bills closing Muslim schools, banning the Quran, and forbidding the construction of any new mosques. The politics behind incidents of Islamophobia is quite obvious.

Here and now, outraged at the Norwegian attacks, and saddened by the unfair anti-Muslim atmosphere across the globe, we at the ODVV share the grief and pain of the Norwegians and mourn the people killed in Breivik's and other

similar rampages. In our view, the best way to punish perpetrators of such crimes and honor the victims of this clear instance of religious intolerance is to ensure that the world never becomes the xenophobic place they envision.

The ODVV calls all people of faith to “challenge Islamophobia”. People from all sections of societies have a crucial role to play in helping to dispel myths about Muslim communities. There is a common misconception that Islam is a religion of Violence. There is no basis for this in Islam. Islam is a religion of peace. The very first verse of the Quran reads: “In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the most Compassionate”. This verse, which is repeated in the Quran 115 times, clearly shows that the God of Islam is the God of Mercy and Compassion, and the book of Islam too is the book of mercy.

According to Verse 159, Chapter 3 of the Holy Quran:

It was by some mercy of God that thou [O Prophet] wast gentle to them; hadst thou been harsh and hard of heart, they would have scattered from about thee. So pardon them, and pray forgiveness for them, and take counsel with them in the affair; and when thou art resolved, put thy trust in God; surely God loves those who put their trust.

In the end, we invite nations to improve understanding among all Abrahamic faiths and cultures and avoid incitement to hatred and violence, in order to reach a world of peace and security.

Oral Item 7: Palestine

Madam President;

The excitement that was shown by the majority of member states of the United Nations General Assembly over the presentation of a formal request for the recognition of Palestine

as a State shows that the resolute condemnation of the philosophy of force and occupation and disregard of numerous United Nations adopted resolutions, alongside the heavy pain and suffering of a people that for 63 years have been under oppression, suppression and suffered from apartheid because of construction settlements buildings and unjust security barrier, these people have not bowed their heads in defeat.

Madam President;

Nevertheless, this international excitement must not prevent the Council from pursuing the rightful demands of Palestinians that have been pertinent for several decades. Demands that include:

1 – To recognize the most basic human rights that the UN Charter states, which is the right of self determination for the Palestinian people.

2 – Taking necessary measures for the return and housing of millions of Palestinian refugees.

3 – Putting an end to the imprisonment of more than 1.5 million people in the Gaza Strip.

4 – Putting an end to the policy of settlements constructions, eviction of Palestinians and overall creation of hatred and a violent atmosphere in the occupied territories.

5 – And finally a fair and comparative investigation of the findings of the UN fact finding committee regarding the Aid Flotilla incident.

Madam President;

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence believes that the start of the wave of Islamic Awakening and Arab Spring, has brought about an atmosphere and opportunity for the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people to be pursued in a more logical and just basis. An opportunity that our organization hopes the Council does not ignore.

Thank you.

Item 9: Islamophobia

Madam President;

Islamophobia is a mixture of exclusion, discrimination, intolerance and specially fear which stems from lack of respect for other traditions and values, enshrined in various human rights conventions and unfortunately it is expanding its shadow to more and more regions.

In past few months, the heinous attack of the Norwegian gunman which led to a humanitarian disaster, and specially the way that media reported it at first, as a terroristic attack made by Muslims, was a warning: warning on the steady increase of xenophobic acts in Europe and warning for vast and still alive prejudice and deep rooted Islamophobia against Islamic communities.

And when it mixes with growing intolerance across Europe against immigrants from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, it seems Multiculturalism has utterly failed!

Madam President;

The tendency to paint Muslims with the same brush as extremists is repugnant. Media is responsible for the depiction of Islam and Muslims as a threat to other civilizations. Expressions used in the media such as "Islamic terrorism", "Islamic bombs" and "violent Islam" have resulted in a negative perception of Islam.

Also, the promulgation of certain laws concerning the ban of hijab is the flagrant violation of the basic human rights principles. We invite the European court of human rights to review the compatibility of such national laws with the principles embodied in the European convention of human rights. The ODVV believes that European civil societies have a crucial role to play in helping to dispel myths about Muslim communities. Islam is not a religion of Violence. That's a religion of peace. The very first verse of the Quran reads: "In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the most Compassionate". This verse, which is repeated in the Quran 115 times, clearly shows that Islam is the religion of Mercy and Compassion.

Thank You

ODVV Rehabilitation Centre Activities



Psychoanalysis with Object Relations Approach Education Course

With the aim of increasing the scientific and functional skills of mental health experts, the ODVV rehabilitation centre held this education course in November 2011 in twenty hours, with the participation of psychologists, psychiatrists and counselors.

The principles of psychoanalysis with a stress on the experience of first attachment, definition of the individual from self and others' boundaries, and how to preserve them were taught in this course. This therapy approach deals with the individual's link with subjects, and their ability to change and individual objectives.

Manifested Behavior Disorders in Children and Juveniles Education course

With the aim of increasing the scientific and functional skills of mental health experts, the ODVV rehabilitation centre held this education course in November 2011 in twenty hours, with the participation of psychologists, psychiatrists and counselors.

In this course children's anxiety disorders, phobias, autism, hyperactivity, depression, and parental techniques, and communication with problem children skills were some of the subjects that were discussed.

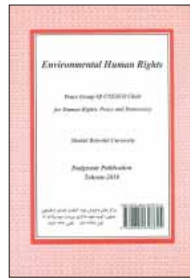
Publications

The reflection of the activities of NGOs in international circles can be seen as one of the positive active human rights functions. With this reason the ODVV is introducing five books in this issue that were published by the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights, Peace and Democracy at Shahid Beheshti University.



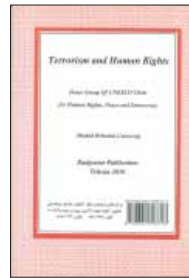
The Theoretical Bases of the Right to Legal Security with Emphasis on Legal System of the Islamic Republic of Iran

This book has been published in two parts of legal security in its specific concept, and judicial security in 144 pages. The book tells us that in legal systems, a collective of set laws are not dominant over people's relations, but these laws are in a solid dynamic framework and continually develop. While being dynamic, by governing people's relationships these laws must also pursue the stability of legal relations. This is why the legal security principle, is the moving force of expansion and the promotion of legal systems.



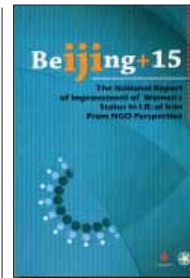
Environmental Human Rights

This book was published in five chapters and 390 pages. The book tells us that human rights cannot turn a blind eye on mankind's challenges that lie ahead of his normal living. This is why that with environmental concerns becoming more serious, in the 1970s the right of access to a healthy environment for mankind was taken into consideration. Furthermore environmental rights which is another aspect of humanity's social relations, is influenced by the humanization of environmental rights and been accepted as a background and the subject of human rights.



Terrorism and Human Rights

This book was published in 271 pages and two chapters of international anti-terror measures, and human rights and preventive measures in the fight against terror and human security. The book tells us that terrorism is a destructive measure which grossly violates human rights. Another facet of terrorism is the formation of an organized process from human rights violations particularly in unequal conditions between societies and social groups. The thing that became the "war on terror" in 2001, although at first was for the preservation of peace and security, but it soon turned into gross and extended violation of human rights particularly the establishment of the battle against Islam and Arabs trend, which endangered human rights with international peace and security, and also dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions.



Beijing + 15

This 263 page book was published coinciding with the International Women's Day (8 March). This book which is the national report on the improvement of women in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is from women's NGOs perspective, was compiled with the cooperation of the Communications Network of Women's NGOs and the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence. Parts of the book include which a review by women's NGOs in Iran states: women in the world particularly in developing countries are suffering pains which are as a result of conflicts between their individual role in the family and society, the result of this situation is not necessarily instability in daily lives and normal relations, but the existing interaction between multiple identities from one hand and cultural clashes resulted by globalisation, bring about new crises for women, the solutions for which can only be found in morality and religion. We hereby declare that the establishment of stability among multiple identities and confrontation with damages and crises that are caused by economic and cultural globalisation can be fulfilled by getting incentive from religious and natural laws.



Sidelines Sitings

The ODVV published a 156 page book of collective of articles in two parts of Human Rights and Islamophobia, and Violation of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law on the Pretext of the War on Terror. The subjects of the book include the Media and its role in the promotion of Islamophobia, American Islamophobia as a Cultural Ideology, Right to Implication and Islamophobia in the West, the Impact of Counter-terrorism on the Criminal Justice System, Analyzing of Legislative Functions of the United States War against Terrorism, and War on International Terrorism within International Humanitarian Law.



**Organization for Defending Victims of Violence
is holding a**

Panel on

“Violation of Human Rights on the Pretext of Sanctions”

Date: 9 March 2012

Time: 10am – 12pm

Place: Room XXVII

Panelists:

Dr. Seyed Mohammad Kazem Sajadpoor

Dr. Alireza Dehim

Dr. Alexander Frederick Gaines

Dr. Gari Donn

Commercial airline Captain Hooshang Shahbazi

Panel moderator: Dr. Alireza Dehim



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