



Human Rights Concerns in Iran

- At least **52 people killed**, including five women and at least five children, by Iran's security forces between 19 September and 25 September, during protests sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini. Reported death toll continues to grow.
- Protesters subjected to **ill treatment** such as the severely harmful use of Birdshot, repeated beatings and sexual assault.
- Leaked documents reveal **top-level orders** to armed forces to 'mercilessly confront' protesters.
- British nationals Morad Tahbaz and Mehran Raof remain arbitrarily detained in Iran

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UK GOVERNMENT

Amnesty International is calling on the UK government to;

- Help end the crisis of systemic impunity in Iran by:
 - **Supporting** calls for the UN Human Rights Council to urgently establish an international investigative and accountability mechanism to collect, consolidate, preserve, and analyse evidence of the most serious crimes under international law committed in Iran, including accountability for Mahsa Amini's death in custody.
 - **Committing** to exercise universal jurisdiction to criminally investigate and prosecute Iranian officials suspected of criminal responsibility for crimes under international law.
- Secure the immediate and unconditional release of British nationals Morad Tahbaz and Mehran Raof and meet with their families to outline the government's plans for achieving this.

"The global outpouring of rage and empathy over Mahsa Amini's death must be followed by concrete steps by the international community to tackle the crisis of systemic impunity that has allowed widespread torture, extrajudicial unabated executions and other unlawful killings by Iranian authorities to continue both behind prison walls and during protests,"

Diana Eltahawy, Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK ADVOCACY OFFICE

For more information on any of the issues contained in this briefing, please contact parliament@amnesty.org.uk or call **020 7033 1557**

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THE CONTEXT

On 13 September 2022, Iranian Kurdish woman Mahsa Amini was arrested in Tehran by Iran's so-called "morality" police for not complying with [discriminatory forced veiling laws](#). Eyewitnesses reported seeing her being violently beaten in a police van. Within hours, she was taken to hospital in a coma, and three days later the 22-year-old died.

Mahsa Amini's [mistreatment and subsequent death in custody](#) sparked protests across Iran. These protests quickly expanded to broader grievances against the political establishment and encompassed demands for the end of the Islamic Republic system and the establishment of a secular democratic system respecting human rights. As outlined below, the crackdown of these protests has been draconian and a clear violation of International law.

The bravery of protesters, who face a spiralling deadly response by the Iranian security forces, demonstrates the extent of outrage in Iran over abusive compulsory veiling laws, [unlawful killings](#), and [widespread repression](#).

A WEEK OF UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

Amnesty International has so far recorded the names of **52 people killed** by Iran's security forces since the eruption of nationwide protests in Iran on 16 September 2022¹. Among the recorded victims are five women, one girl, and five boys.

The organization believes the real death toll, including the number of children killed, is higher and it is continuing its investigations to identify victims. Of these recorded victims, most were killed by security forces firing live ammunition. At least three men and two women were killed due to security forces firing metal pellets, including birdshot, at close range.

On the 20 September, **Farjad Darvishi** was one of the victims killed by security forces in Urumieh. An eyewitness told Amnesty International that riot police fired birdshot at Farjad Darvishi from a distance of about four or five meters and that after he fell to the ground, several security officials kicked and severely beat him with batons until he died.

On the night of 21 September, as protests grew larger across the country and after the General Headquarters of Armed Forces ordered armed forces to "severely confront" protesters, security forces intensified their use of firearms, including live ammunition that resulted in the death of dozens of protesters and bystanders. Amnesty International has to date recorded the names of **34 men, women and children** killed by security forces during the deadly night of 21 September in 19 cities in the provinces of Alborz, Gilan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Mazandaran, Semnan, Tehran, and West Azerbaijan.

For the nights of 22 September to 25 September, Amnesty International has recorded the names of **eight victims** including at least two children killed by security forces in the provinces of Alborz, Esfahan, Kohgiluyeh and Bouyer Ahmadmad, Ghazvin and Tehran provinces. According to information received from a primary source in Iran, a 16-year-old girl **Sarina Esmailzadeh** was killed during the protests in Gohardasht, after security forces struck

¹ The 52 recorded deaths cover a seven-day period from Monday 19 September to Sunday 25 September.

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her head with batons. According to the same source, security and intelligence agents have subjected the girl's family to intense harassment to coerce them into silence.

CRISIS OF SYSTEMIC IMPUNITY IN IRAN

The death toll in Iran continues to climb. On 30 September in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, Iranian security forces unlawfully killed at least 66 people, including children, and injured hundreds of others after firing live ammunition, metal pellets and teargas at protesters, bystanders and worshippers during a violent crackdown. Widely referred to by Iranians as "bloody Friday", the onslaught on 30 September marked the deadliest day on record since protests started spreading across Iran nearly three weeks ago.

The circumstances of Mahsa Amini's death, alongside the brutal crackdowns of the protests which continue to follow, exemplify the crisis of impunity in Iran. Iranian authorities have repeatedly ignored the calls of the UN Secretary General, multiple UN Special Procedures and the UN General Assembly to cease the unlawful use of force, including lethal force, against protesters and bystanders.

"The Iranian authorities have repeatedly shown utter disregard for the sanctity of human life and will stop at nothing to preserve power. The callous violence being unleashed by Iran's security forces is not occurring in a vacuum. It is the result of systematic impunity and a lacklustre response by the international community," Agnes Callamard, Amnesty International's Secretary General.

ARBITRARY DETENTION OF BRITISH NATIONALS

Morad Tahbaz, 66, a British national, is a wildlife conservationist who was jailed - along with seven other conservationists - in January 2018. In 2019, he was given a ten-year prison sentence after an unfair trial. He suffers from a number of serious health conditions, including a history of cancer, and the Iranian authorities have prevented him from receiving important medical care. The UK government promised Morad's family that he would be released alongside Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Anoosheh Ashoori in March 2022, however, this did not happen. Morad is currently on furlough but is being forced to wear an electronic ankle tag and could be recalled to jail at any time.

Mehran Raoof, 65, also a British national, was arrested in October 2020 for his work as a labour rights activist. He has been held in solitary confinement in Iran's Evin prison for months at a time and denied contact with his family. In August 2021 he was convicted on national security-related charges in a grossly unfair trial and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.

For more updates on the human rights situation in Iran: [Latest - Amnesty International](#)

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