



Bahá'í International Community

Brussels Office

52 – 54 rue Henri Evenepoel, 1030 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 6446463 • Fax: +32 2 6462277 • E-mail: brussels@bic.org

H.E. Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission

Brussels, 12th April 2016

Dear High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission,

As you are preparing to visit Iran, the Bahá'í International Community would like to raise the human rights situation and in particular the situation of the Bahá'í community in that country.

In a resolution passed at the United Nations General Assembly in December 2015, the government of Iran was urged "to eliminate, in law and in practice, all forms of discrimination, including the closure of businesses, and other human rights violations against persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities". Amongst those minorities seeking their rights in Iran is the Bahá'í community, who constitutes the country's largest non-Muslim religious minority and who has been the subject of a relentless state-sponsored campaign of persecution, including its youth being debarred from entering institutions of higher education, for at least the last thirty-five years. In its 14th of March 2016 statement addressed to the 31st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, the European Union expressed "serious concern at the situation of religious minorities in Iran, in particular the continuous systematic discrimination of persons belonging to the Baha'i community."

Iran's sincerity in its engagement with the international community and in desiring the wellbeing of its population can be measured by the government's willingness to bring the treatment of its citizens into line with the requirements of the international conventions of which it is a signatory.

We are confident that you share the view that no society can hope to thrive if large sections of its population are prevented from contributing to its life and progress. You will also agree that without respect for the human rights of every citizen being soundly established, measures taken

in other areas of human affairs - ranging from the economy to the environment - as commendable as they might be, ultimately fail.

We therefore very much hope that during your visit, you will find ways to address - alongside plans for Iran's economic development - the issue of human rights, including those of the Bahá'ís, in such a way that Iran's authorities are again reminded of the importance of this question for the people of Europe and their representatives and will be encouraged to take concrete and palpable measures to remedy the situation.

Sincerely yours,

Rachel Bayani
Representative
Bahá'í International Community - Brussels office

Enclosed:

- Overview of the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Iran
- Report prepared by the Bahá'í International Community entitled: "Their Progress and Development are Blocked: The economic oppression of Iran's Bahá'ís".