

**BAHÁ'Í**

*United Nations Office*

**INTERNATIONAL  
COMMUNITY**

866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 120, New York, NY 10017 USA

Phone: +212-803-2500, Email: [uno-nyc@bic.org](mailto:uno-nyc@bic.org), Web: <https://www.bic.org>

PRESS RELEASE

Baha'i International Community

18 November 2014

For Immediate Release

For more information, contact Bani Dugal in New York at (office) 212-803-2500 or (mobile) 914-329-3020 or Diane Ala'i in Geneva at (office) +41 (-22) -798-5400 or (mobile) +41 (-78) -60-40-100

### **UN sends strong signal to Iran on human rights**

UNITED NATIONS – The UN Third Committee today sent a strong signal to Iran, exhorting its government to live up to its international human rights obligations.

By a vote of 78 to 35, with 69 abstentions, the General Assembly's Third Committee approved a resolution expressing "deep concern at serious ongoing and recurring human rights violations" in Iran.

The six-page resolution listed the high frequency of executions, torture, restrictions on freedom of assembly and expression, the targeting of journalists, pervasive gender inequality, and religious discrimination – including against Iranian Baha'is – as among the Assembly's concerns.

"Passage of this resolution sends a strong signal to Iran that, despite international hopes for improved relations, the international community will not turn a blind eye to human rights violations in that country," said Bani Dugal, the principal representative of the Baha'i International Community to the United Nations.

"It also makes clear that the international community does not accept Iran's repeated assertions that human rights are improving.

"Certainly, for Iranian Baha'is, there has been no improvement, and the atmosphere of religious discrimination throughout the country has only grown worse," said Ms. Dugal.

The Third Committee's approval of the resolution follows strongly worded reports from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and Special Rapporteur Ahmed Shaheed, who both expressed alarm over broad and continuing human rights violations in Iran.

Mr. Ban's report noted for example that there have been no improvements in the human rights situation for religious and ethnic minorities. "Religious minorities such as Baha'is and Christians face violations entrenched in law and in practice," he wrote.

Dr. Shaheed, the UN's special investigator on human rights in Iran, also discussed a wide range of violations, from the lack of legal due process, especially for executions, and "continuing arbitrary arrests, detention and prosecutions of individuals for exercising their fundamental rights."

Dr. Shaheed devoted ten paragraphs to the ongoing persecution of Iranian Baha'is, noting that they face wide-ranging discrimination in education and work, and that more than 100 Baha'is are in prison.

Today's resolution noted "with concern" that Iran had a "poor record" of implementing the promises it made four years ago during its first Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council.

It specifically highlighted Iran's "continued discrimination, persecution, and human rights violations" against Baha'is, calling for the release of seven imprisoned Iranian Baha'i leaders, an end to the "criminalization of efforts to provide higher education to Baha'i youth", and the general "emancipation" of the Iranian Baha'i community.

Introduced by Canada, the resolution had 45 other co-sponsors, and was the 27<sup>th</sup> such annual resolution on human rights in Iran by the General Assembly since 1985.

Like previous resolutions, it called on Iran to allow international human rights monitors to visit Iran.

**For more information, go to <https://www.bic.org>**