

# Inside the Women's Ward

Mistreatment of Women Political Prisoners at Iran's Evin Prison

June 2016



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

## **Inside the Women's Ward**

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# I ABOUT US

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The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of human rights in Iran.

The Campaign investigates and documents rights violations occurring throughout Iran, relying on first-hand accounts to expose abuses that would otherwise go unreported. We bring these violations to the attention of the international community through news articles, briefings, in-depth reports, podcasts, and videos, and work to build support for human rights inside Iran as well. The Campaign engages in intensive outreach and international advocacy aimed at defending the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Iranian people and holding the Iranian government accountable to its human rights obligations.

# **I TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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Executive Summary	2
Recommendations	3
Introduction	6
Methodology	8
The Prisoners	9
The Ward	18
Nutrition	20
Heating	22
The Infirmary	23
Treatment by Guards	26
Family Visitation and Telephone Calls	28
Furlough	33
Accountability	34
Conclusion	36
Endnotes	37
Appendix 1: Iranian Law	39
Appendix 2: International Law	45

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran seeks to shine a spotlight on the inmates of the Women's Ward at Iran's Evin Prison. It is based on testimonies and eyewitness accounts by prisoners in the ward, which were confirmed by recently released prisoners and family members of the ward's prisoners.

At least twenty-five women are known to be held in the Women's Ward at Evin. All of the women there are political prisoners or prisoners of conscience—sentenced for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, belief, and peaceful dissent, rights that are guaranteed in both Iranian domestic law and international rights covenants that Iran has signed. They have been convicted in judicial processes characterized by egregious denial of due process, including lack of access to full legal representation.

The women in this ward endure inhumane conditions, including the denial of proper medical care in a prison infirmary that is dirty and lacking in supplies and medical specialists, denied or delayed transfer to hospital and specialists for treatment of serious illnesses, inadequate nutrition, and intermittent lack of heat. Like all political prisoners in Iran, these women are subjected to harsher treatment than other inmates. They are routinely denied or subjected to limited family visits and telephone communication with family, and they are denied or subjected to limited furloughs, or temporarily leave, granted to most prison inmates in the Iranian penal system.

Because many of them are mothers, prison authorities often use their relationship with their children as a method of control and an avenue for additional punishment, withholding and dispensing visits and communication with their children at their whim. Thus the conviction, imprisonment, and treatment of the women in this ward at Evin violate multiple Iranian and international laws. The Iranian Judiciary has sole responsibility for prisoners in the Islamic Republic, and must use its authority to immediately address the plight of these prisoners. It should be held accountable for these rights violations by Iran's President, Hassan Rouhani, by United Nations human rights bodies, and by all Member State governments in their bilateral relations with Iran.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



Iranian president Hassan Rouhani, Head of Iran's Judiciary Sadegh Amoli Larijani and Head of Iranian Parliament Ali Larijani

### TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN:

1. Undertake the immediate judicial review of the cases of all prisoners held in the Women's Ward at Evin Prison, as they have been placed behind bars for beliefs and activities that are protected under Iranian and international law, and prosecuted in judicial proceedings in which there was credible evidence of the denial of due process. Facilitate the immediate release of all prisoners held solely for their peaceful beliefs and activities.
2. Comply immediately with all Iranian laws and regulations regarding the treatment of prisoners, most specifically, Iran's State Prison Procedures regarding the full and timely provision of medical care, proper nutrition, and standard visitation and communication rights for the inmates, as well as with all international obligations that the Islamic Republic has committed to regarding the treatment of prisoners, especially the imperative of full and timely medical treatment.



The UN Human Rights Council in Geneva

### TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES:

3. Call for a judicial review of the cases of all prisoners held in the Women's Ward at Evin Prison as they have been placed behind bars for beliefs and activities that are protected under international law, and prosecuted in judicial proceedings in which there was credible evidence of the denial of due process.
4. Call for Iran's immediate compliance with all international obligations the Islamic Republic has committed to regarding the treatment of prisoners, especially the imperative of full and timely medical treatment.
5. Call on the Iranian Government to allow visits by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, as well as by Thematic Rapporteurs, to visit Evin Prison and the Women's Ward specifically.





EU Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif

### TO MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS:

6. In all bilateral interactions with the Government of Iran, urge a judicial review of the cases of all prisoners held in the Women's Ward at Evin Prison as they have been placed behind bars for beliefs and activities that are protected under international law, and prosecuted in judicial proceedings in which there was credible evidence of the denial of due process.
7. In all bilateral interactions with the Government of Iran, urge immediate compliance with all international obligations regarding the treatment of prisoners, especially the imperative of full and timely medical treatment.
8. In all multilateral forums, including the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, call for an immediate judicial review of the cases of all prisoners held in the Women's Ward at Evin Prison, as they have been placed behind bars for beliefs and activities that are protected under international law, and prosecuted in judicial proceedings in which there was credible evidence of the denial of due process.
9. In all multilateral forums, including the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, call for the Government of Iran's immediate compliance with all international obligations Iran has committed to regarding the treatment of prisoners, especially the imperative of full and timely medical treatment.

## INTRODUCTION

Twenty-five women are known to be held in Evin Prison's Women's Ward as of this writing. Most are young, many are mothers. They are all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience—behind bars for expressing views, holding beliefs, or participating in activities with which the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran disagrees. There are dozens of female prisoners of conscience held across Iran; Evin's Women's Ward, known in Persian as *Band-e Nesvan*, is just one of the prisons in which they are held.

This report by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran aims to shine a spotlight on the women of this ward, and the harsh—indeed unlawful—conditions they endure. It is based on testimonies and eyewitness accounts, and confirmed by recently released prisoners of the ward and by family members of the ward's prisoners.

These women are kept behind bars for speaking out for women's rights, objecting to Iran's death penalty



Journalist Reyhaneh Tabatabaei entering Evin Prison to begin serving her one-year sentence.

policies, arguing against the politicized banning of students from university, criticizing government policy on social media, practicing a disapproved faith, participating in a peaceful demonstration, reporting on “forbidden” topics, or, in any way, dissenting—peacefully—from the political or social polices of the Islamic Republic.

Like all political prisoners in Iran, they have been arrested in violation of their rights under Iranian and international law to freedom of expression and belief and the right to peaceful dissent, and prosecuted and convicted in judicial proceedings lacking any semblance of due process.

Inside the ward, they endure conditions that include an egregiously substandard and dirty infirmary that lacks medical supplies and access to specialists, delayed or denied transfer to hospital or specialists for serious illnesses, inadequate nutrition, and intermittent heat in freezing conditions. These conditions leave the women with permanently broken health.

Like all political prisoners, they are subjected to harsher treatment than other prisoners. Rights and privileges afforded to other inmates are not afforded to them. Family visits and telephone communication—including with the young children of prisoners who are mothers—are often reduced or denied. Furloughs, the Iranian practice of allowing temporary leave to most inmates for medical reasons or for special familial events—are restricted or denied.

As this report will detail, the conditions of their incarceration violate multiple Iranian laws contained in the Islamic Republic’s constitution and in its State Prisons Procedures, and also violate multiple articles in international treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Iran has signed.

Not all of the women incarcerated there are known and for some of the women, the information is tentative and incomplete. Those who are public figures are known, but some of the families of others do not release any information out of fear of possible repercussions for their imprisoned loved ones. Thus this report does not present a comprehensive picture of the women held in this ward.

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Twenty-five women are known to be held in Evin Prison’s Women’s Ward as of this writing. Most are young, many are mothers.

Nevertheless, it aims to raise awareness of the women political prisoners and prisoners of conscience who are unjustly imprisoned in Iran, and the inhumane conditions they endure.

This report also seeks to put a spotlight on the Iranian Judiciary, which, under Iranian law and explicitly under Iran’s State Prison Procedures, has responsibility for the prisoners of the Islamic Republic.

As such, Iran’s Judiciary, and its Head, Sadegh Amoli Larijani, should immediately address the unjust imprisonment of these women and the unlawful conditions they are subjected to, and it should be held accountable for the violations of the rights of the inmates of Evin’s Women’s Ward by Iranian president Hassan Rouhani, who is the designated enforcer of Iran’s constitution, by United Nations bodies designated to address human rights, and by all individual Member States in their bilateral relations with the Islamic Republic.

## METHODOLOGY

This International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran report draws upon the testimony and eyewitness accounts of political prisoners of Evin's Women's Ward, as well as their family members, and firsthand testimony in letters from prisoners obtained exclusively by the Campaign. Former inmates and family members also provided testimonies through interviews with the Campaign.

Since 2005, no United Nations or other international monitoring body has been allowed to visit the Women's Ward at Evin Prison—or indeed any ward at Evin Prison.

Specifying the exact date of release of these former prisoners would facilitate their identification and thus pose a danger of retaliation against them or their families by the authorities for their testimony here. Consequently, the Campaign has, by necessity, kept release dates intentionally vague. The interviews with former inmates and family members were conducted during the period from January 2016 to May 2016.

The Campaign also drew on official government documents of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including its [constitution](#)<sup>1</sup> and its [State Prisons and Security and Corrective Measures Organization Procedures](#)<sup>2</sup>, on international treaties, including the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#)<sup>3</sup>, and on official documents of the United Nations, including the [Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#)<sup>4</sup>, the [Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders](#)<sup>5</sup> (known as the Bangkok Rules), and the [Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners](#)<sup>6</sup>. In addition, the report draws upon extensive previous research and articles published by the [International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran](#).

Since 2005, no United Nations or other international monitoring body has been allowed to visit the Women's Ward at Evin Prison—or indeed any ward at Evin Prison—to observe and report on conditions. This report therefore provides a rare glimpse into the conditions under which political prisoners and prisoners of conscience are kept in the Islamic Republic of Iran.



Evin Prison, built in 1972, is situated in northern Tehran.

# THE PRISONERS\*

All of the inmates held at the Women's Ward in Evin are political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. They have been put behind bars for holding and expressing views or beliefs, or participating in peaceful activities, with which the government of the Islamic Republic disagrees.

They have been imprisoned for "crimes" such as campaigning for political and cultural freedoms in Iran, participating in peaceful protests, reporting on events for reformist publications, speaking to foreign officials about human rights issues in Iran, defending basic human rights, and peacefully critiquing the policies of the Islamic Republic.

Peaceful dissent is treated as a national security crime in Iran, in violation of the country's own laws. The constitution of the Islamic Republic guarantees freedom of belief ([Article 23](#)), press freedom ([Article 24](#)), privacy of communication ([Article 25](#)), freedom of association ([Article 26](#)), and freedom of assembly ([Article 27](#)).<sup>7</sup>

The denial of the right to expression and peaceful dissent also violates international treaties the Islamic Republic has signed, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees freedom of religion (Article 18), freedom of expression ([Article 19](#)), the right of peaceful assembly ([Article 21](#)), and freedom of association ([Article 22](#)).<sup>8</sup>

The judicial proceedings in their cases, from arrest to prosecution to conviction, also violate Iran's constitution. These women have typically been arrested without cause, held for lengthy periods under "temporary detention" during which time they are not charged and are denied access to counsel, and are convicted in brief and often closed trials where their lawyers are denied full and timely access to case files (and sometimes are not even present). The women are convicted on the basis of evidentiary standards well below

international standards. They are then sentenced by judges whose patterns of case assignments indicate they are hand-picked by the Judiciary to hand down harsh sentences to political prisoners.

Yet [Article 32](#) of Iran's constitution prohibits arbitrary arrest or detention, [Article 34](#) guarantees the right to a competent court, [Article 35](#) guarantees the right to legal counsel, [Article 36](#) guarantees the right to competent sentencing, and [Article 37](#) states the presumption of innocence.<sup>9</sup>

The ICCPR guarantees similar protections: [Article 9](#) prohibits arbitrary arrest or detention, and [Article 14](#) guarantees the presumption of innocence, the right to a fair trial and other due process protections including the right to counsel of choice.<sup>10</sup>

The harsh and punitive incarceration conditions in Evin's Women's Ward, described in this report through the testimonies of current and former prisoners, also violate both Iranian and international law. As this report will detail, these women are routinely subjected to conditions explicitly forbidden under Iran's constitution, its State Prison Procedures, the ICCPR, and other UN Standards, Rules and Principles regarding the treatment of prisoners.

As of this writing, the Campaign was able to confirm that there are at least 25 inmates currently held in Evin's Women's Ward; the exact number is not known and fluctuates. The following is a list of known (or, in a few cases, believed) inmates of the ward (the list names 27 individuals, two of whom were just recently released after the drafting of this report), with a brief summation of their cases.

*\*This list of prisoners was revised and updated on June 24, 2016 as the Campaign accessed new information.*



**BAHAREH HEDAYAT**, age 34, is a well-known women's, students' and human rights activist. She was arrested on December 31, 2009. On August 17, 2015, when she was due for release, a two-year suspended sentence from 2007 was enforced, even though its statute of limitations had expired. Her peaceful activism has included participation in the 2009 post-election protests; acting as women's and students' rights defender, serving as member of the central committee and cofounder of the women's commission of the *Daftar-e Tahkim Vahdat* nationwide student organization and as a leader in the One Million Signatures Campaign for the Change of Discriminatory Laws against Women, and making videos and giving interviews on the state of human rights in Iran. She was charged with "acting against national security and publishing falsehoods," "insulting the Supreme Leader," and "insulting the President." Hedayat's health has deteriorated severely during her imprisonment.



**NARGES MOHAMMADI**, age 43, is also one of Iran's well-known human and women's rights activists. She was sentenced in May 2016 to serve ten years of a sixteen-year prison sentence for "membership in the Step by Step to Stop the Death Penalty," "assembly and collusion against national security," and "propaganda against the state." She has been imprisoned several times over the last few years, most recently since May 5, 2015, after a six-year prison sentence originally issued in 2011 was enforced. She has been prosecuted for her outspoken support for women's and human rights, her activism against the death penalty, and for meeting with EU foreign officials to discuss human rights in Iran. Mohammadi was arrested in 2009 and sentenced to 11 years in prison in 2011 on national security-related charges, later reduced on appeal to six years. In 2013 she was released from Zanjan prison for medical reasons. Her May 2015 arrest, ostensibly on these older charges, was more accurately related to official displeasure with Mohammadi's visit with EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, and her continued activism. Mohammadi's health has deteriorated severely in prison.



**REYHANEH TABATABAEI**, age 35, is a reformist journalist. Originally arrested on November 30, 2014, she began her one-year sentence on January 12, 2016, for her journalism (including interviews with Iranian Sunni leaders), Facebook posts criticizing the government, and support for reformist political figures and presidential candidates. She was charged with “propaganda against the state.”



**ATENA FARAGHDANI\***, age 29, is an artist and human rights activist. She was arrested on January 10, 2015 and sentenced to 12 years and nine months imprisonment for posting a drawing she made depicting Iranian legislators as animals. She also provided support to the families of protesters killed during the 2009 post-election protests. She was charged with “assembly and collusion against national security,” “propaganda against the state,” and “insulting the Supreme Leader, the President, Members of the Parliament, and the [Revolutionary Guards’ Intelligence Organization’s Ward 2-A] agents” who interrogated her. *\*Faraghdani was released on May 3, 2016, after the drafting of this report.*



**AFARIN CHITSAZ**, 41, was arrested by the Revolutionary Guards' Intelligence Organization on November 1, 2015. She is a journalist who wrote on Iran's foreign policy and other subjects for the Iran daily, the official publication of the Rouhani administration. She was accused of being part of an "infiltration network" with links to western countries, and sentenced to ten years imprisonment for "collaboration with foreign governments" and "assembly and collusion against national security." Afarin Chitsaz was held inside the Revolutionary Guards' Intelligence Organization-controlled Ward 2-A at Evin Prison, in solitary confinement, for six months, but has since been moved to the Women's Ward.



**MAHVASH SHAHRIARI SABET**, age 64; is one of seven imprisoned Baha'i community leaders. Arrested on May 5, 2008, she was charged with "management of the Baha'i organization," "espionage for Israel," "insulting the sacred," and "propaganda against the state," and sentenced to 20 years in prison.



**FARIBA KAMALABADI**, age 53, is one of the seven imprisoned Baha'i community leaders. She was arrested on May 14, 2008, charged with "management of the Baha'i organization," "espionage for Israel," "insulting the sacred," and "propaganda against the state," and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

**TAHEREH JAFARI**, age 54, was arrested in November 2012 on charges of "propaganda against the state" for interviews with domestic and foreign media, in which she voiced alternative spiritual beliefs. She was released on bail in January 2013. In summer of 2014, she was sentenced to one year in prison and an appeals court subsequently upheld the sentence. She began serving her one-year prison sentence in September 2015.





**FARAN HESAMI\***, age 41, was a lecturer at the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education Online University, and provided support to young Baha'is barred from higher education for practicing their religion. She was arrested on July 15, 2012, charged with "propaganda against the state" and "acting against national security through membership in an illegal organization," and sentenced to four years in prison. \*Hesami was released on April 15, 2016, upon completion of her sentence, after the initial drafting of this report.



**AZITA RAFIZADEH**, age 35, was a lecturer at the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education Online University, and provided support to young Baha'is barred from higher education for practicing their religion. She was first arrested in June 2011, charged with "membership in the illegal and misguided Baha'i organization with the aim of acting against national security through illegal activities in the BIHE," and sentenced to five years in prison. She began serving her term in November 2015.



**NASIM BAGHERI**, age unknown, was a professor at the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education Online University. She provided support to young Baha'is who were barred from higher education due to their religion. She was arrested on April 27, 2014, charged with "propaganda against the state," and "acting against national security through membership in an illegal organization" (the Baha'i Online University), and sentenced to four years in prison.

**ELHAM FARAHANI**, age 34, practices the Baha'i faith and participated in Baha'i community activities. She was arrested May 11, 2014, charged with "membership in the Baha'i community organization," and sentenced to four years in prison.



**MARYAM NAGHASH ZARGARAN**, age 37, is a Christian convert who organized and conducted house-church (unofficial, home-based places of worship) activities and was involved in the orphanage of the formerly imprisoned Christian Pastor Saeed Abedini. (Abedini was just recently released from prison in Iran as part of the US-Iran prisoner exchange in January 2016.) She was arrested on July 15, 2013, charged with "propaganda against the state," and "assembly and collusion against national security," and sentenced to four years in prison.



**ZIBA POURHABIB**, age unknown, is a follower of Dr. Mohammad Ali Taheri, the imprisoned leader of the banned alternative peaceful spiritual group Erfan-e Halgheh. She was originally arrested on October 8, 2014, and surrendered herself to serve her three-year sentence on July 1, 2015 on charges of "insulting the sacred."



**ROYA SABERINEJAD NOBAKHT**, age 49, wrote posts and shared information on Facebook. She was arrested in October 2013, charged with "collecting information to act against national security" and "insulting the sacred," and sentenced to 20 years in prison.



**FAHIMEH A'RAFI**, age unknown, is a follower of Dr. Mohammad Ali Taheri, the imprisoned leader of the banned alternative peaceful spiritual group Erfan-e Halgheh. The open practice of unrecognized faiths in Iran is typically treated as a crime. She was arrested on August 25, 2015, charged with “insulting the sacred,” and sentenced to five years in prison.



**MARYAM AKBARI MONFARED**, age 41, was a homemaker and participated in the 2009 peaceful protests that followed the widely disputed results of the presidential election in Iran that year. She was also accused of making phone calls to family members inside the Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization’s (MEK) Camp Ashraf. (The MEK is an Iranian opposition group in exile that advocates the overthrow of the Islamic Republic.) She was arrested on December 31, 2009, charged with moharebeh (enmity with God), and sentenced to 15 years in prison.



**SEDIGHEH MORADI**, age 56, is an alleged Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization sympathizer and a former political prisoner. She was arrested on May 1, 2011, charged with “effective support of the Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization,” and sentenced to ten years in prison in exile.

**FATEMEH MOSANNA**, age 47, is an alleged former sympathizer of the Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization and a former 1980's political prisoner who served three years in prison with her mother and sisters at the age of 13. She was arrested on October 5, 2015, and charged with “effective cooperation with the Mojahedin-e Khalgh.” Her sentence is unknown. It is possible that she is being held at the Intelligence Ministry's Ward 209 at Evin Prison, rather than the Women's Ward.



**BEHNAZ ZAKERI ANSARI**, age 51, is a dual citizen of Denmark and Iran and a resident of Sweden. She was arrested in 2012 when she was returning home from visiting Iran and charged with “effective support of the Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization.” She was sentenced to ten years in prison in exile.



**RAYHANEH HAJ EBRAHIM DABBAGH**, age unknown, is alleged to be a Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization sympathizer. She was arrested on December 26, 2009 in the aftermath of the disputed 2009 election, charged with mo-harebeh (enmity with God) and sentenced to death, which was subsequently commuted to 15 years in prison at the appeals level.

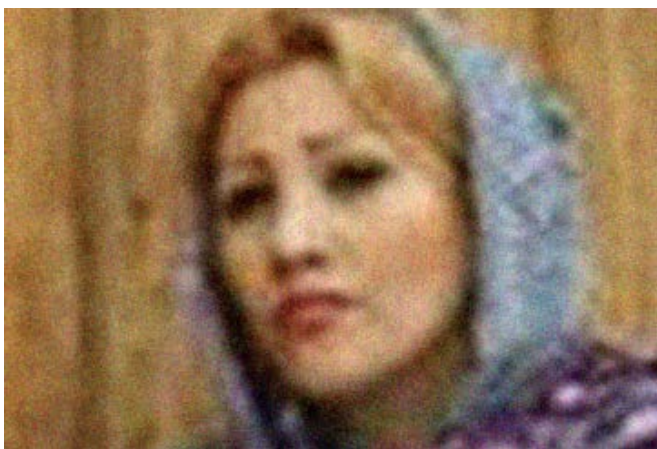


**ZAHRA ZEHTABCHI**, age 46, was arrested on October 16, 2013. She is a social sciences researcher. Zehtabchi was charged with “effective support of the Mojahedin-e Khalgh Organization” and sentenced to 12 years in prison.

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**ELHAM (ELAHEH) BARMAKI**, age unknown, is a dual citizen of Iran and Cyprus. She was arrested in August 2012 on charges of “espionage” for the United Kingdom and sentenced to five years in prison.

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**LEILA JAFARI**, age unknown, is a supporter of the banned alternative spiritual group Erfan-e Halgheh, and was arrested following a peaceful gathering in 2015. She was later released on bail. Branch 26 of Tehran Revolutionary Court under Judge Masha’allah Ahmadzadeh sentenced her to two years in prison. She began serving her two-year prison sentence on June 7, 2016.

**PANIZ AZIMI**, age unknown, was arrested for her postings on Facebook, and was sentenced to one year in prison on the charge of “propaganda against the state.” At press time, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran was unable to gather additional information on her judicial case.

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**ZAHRA SHARIFI (TEHRANI)**, age unknown, is an Internet activist who was arrested earlier in 2016 for her spiritual beliefs and is currently being held inside the Women’s Ward at Evin. At press time, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran was unable to gather additional information on her judicial case.

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**NAZILA HAMIDOVA**, age unknown, is a Republic of Azerbaijan citizen from Baku, and is currently held inside Evin’s Women’s Ward, allegedly on national security-related charges. At press time, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran was unable to gather additional information on her judicial case.

## THE WARD

Located in northwestern Tehran, at the foot of the Alborz Mountains, Evin Prison itself dates from 1972. It was a prison under the former Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, where opponents of his rule were kept. The prison was far smaller at that time, housing some 320 prisoners initially, later expanded to hold about 1500 inmates.<sup>11</sup>

Evin was significantly expanded under the Islamic Republic of Iran, to house approximately 15,000 prisoners.<sup>12</sup>

In July 2012, the authorities moved most of the female prisoners from Evin Prison and Rajaei Shahr Prison to Gharchak Prison in Varamin, east of Tehran. The only women left at Evin now are the female political prisoners and prisoners of conscience; the Women's Ward at Evin is reserved for them.

The Women's Ward is under the authority of Iran's Judiciary, which is headed by Sadeq Amoli Larijani.

The number of inmates varies, but as of this writing, the Campaign was able to confirm 25 current prisoners in the ward. As the preceding list shows, it holds journalists, activists, artists, Baha'is, Christian converts, Kurdish activists, Sunni Muslims, and members of alternative spiritual groups, as well as women alleged to be sympathizers of the Mojahedin-e Khalgh (MEK) Organization.

The Women's Ward is variously described by current and former inmates as cramped, relatively windowless, cold and dirty.

The following description was made by one of the inmates:

*Evin Prison's Women's Ward consists of three halls. Two of the halls are 12 square meters and the other is 18 square meters. They are connected by narrow hallways.*



The Women's Ward is variously described by current and former inmates as cramped, relatively windowless, cold and dirty.



A view of Evin Prison's Main Gate."

*All openings and windows towards the courtyard have been blocked. The sun's rays can only get through the windows that are toward Evin hills. But it's not enough, especially for inmates who prefer to stay inside because they are too sick or have bone or back pain and it is hard for them to go up and down the steps to go outside. These inmates develop additional diseases because they don't get enough sunshine. Lack of sunlight has also helped the spread of insects. Last summer the authorities had to disinfect the ward after inmates repeatedly complained about bedbugs.*

*The walls around the halls are lined with metal beds. The beds, which are covered with army blankets, cause back and joint pain and exacerbate flu symptoms during cold winter months.*

*The kitchen and wash area, located in Hall Number 1, often cause headaches and make inmates sick*

*because of the cooking smell and the effects of the detergents. The cooking oil and detergents are of the worst quality, which makes matters worse.*

*The pots and pans and other basic kitchen utensils, which have been purchased by the inmates themselves, have been worn out over time and are no longer in sanitary condition. Utensils are replaced one at a time only after numerous pleas and follow-ups with the prison officials.*

This testimony indicates violations of standards set by the United Nations for all Member States. The [UN's Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#) state that all prison wards "shall meet all requirements of health, with due regard being paid to climatic conditions and particularly to cubic content of air, minimum floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation."<sup>13</sup>

It continues, "In all places where prisoners are required to live or work, (a) The windows shall be large enough to enable the prisoners to read or work by natural light, and shall be so constructed that they can allow the entrance of fresh air whether or not there is

artificial ventilation; (b) Artificial light shall be provided sufficient for the prisoners to read or work without injury to eyesight." It adds, "All parts of an institution regularly used by prisoners shall be properly maintained and kept scrupulously clean at all times."<sup>14</sup>

## NUTRITION

The food at Evin's Women's Ward is consistently described by inmates as insufficient and unhealthy. The prison rations in particular are inadequate, with the availability of even basic staples necessary for health fluctuating. For example, meat and dairy were often not provided as part of the rations. What is available is of such poor quality and dubious freshness that many of the inmates refuse to eat it. Most of the women supplement (or, if able to, completely replace) the meals provided in the ward with food they purchase from the prison store, but this puts a burden on families without the financial means to funnel funds to inmates for this purpose. In addition, the food that is available for purchase at the prison store, while more varied and (sometimes) including items such as red meat and other staples, was also consistently described as of poor quality, and sold at inflated prices by the prison authorities.

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"It's been about a year now that red meat and dairy products have been eliminated from prison rations."

One inmate reported:

*It's been about a year now that red meat and dairy products have been eliminated from prison rations. In the past, the [prison] store stocked what the prisoners needed on an irregular basis and with*

*a 15% bump in price for fewer products that were lower in quality. But in the past few months those products have not been available in the store either.*

Another inmate reported:

*In recent years, Women's Ward inmates have refused to accept food prepared by the prison kitchen because of its poor quality. Instead they have been receiving food rations, which vary from month to month. [A typical month's rations might include] five eggs; one-and-a-half chickens; four or five potatoes, onions and eggplants; ten single servings of yogurt; ten single servings of cheese; occasionally 160 grams of red meat; some lentils, split peas, or beans; and half a packet of whey (kashk).*

*Since the month of Ramadan of last year (July 18, 2015), red meat and dairy have been eliminated all together [from the prison rations]. The ward's small shop is almost empty.*

*There have been many written requests to make meat and dairy available in the shop but the officials don't comply very often. This sort of diet over time causes serious health problems for the inmates. Women inmates are in dire need of calcium in their diet, which some cannot afford to get as their families are in hardship.*

*Just in the past few months the shop has been selling milk, fresh dairy products, and vegetables*



*on an irregular basis. Also, every ten days, the shop is stocked with a few kinds of fresh fruits. The prison food rations are small and not very good, so the prisoners have no choice but to buy and store their needs by purchasing them from the shop.*

A former prisoner reported:

*Because the prison food is of very poor quality, the [inmates of the] Women's Ward cook their own food. The prison supplies rations of dry foods every month, whose use-by date has expired or is very limited...The inmates themselves were responsible for buying meat, fish, vegetables, vegetable oil, and many other things from the [prison] store. The inmates refuse prison food. We had a kitchen ourselves and cooked our meals ourselves.*

*prison store], and they are able to purchase meat once every two weeks.*



"In the past, the [prison] store stocked what the prisoners needed on an irregular basis and with a 15% bump in price for fewer products that were lower in quality."

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"In recent years, Women's Ward inmates have refused to accept food prepared by the prison kitchen because of its poor quality."

Another former prisoner who has kept in touch with the current inmates reported:

*Once every two weeks they give out food rations for vegetables such as eggplants, onions, and potatoes. But when I was inside, they gave rations for chicken, eggs, cheese, and butter only once a month. You can order fruits and pay for them once every two weeks. There are some minimum staples you can also buy from the ward store, such as long-life milk, tuna cans, etc. When I talked to prisoners out on furlough recently, they said that it is now easier than before to buy meat [from the*

As these testimonies demonstrates, the nutritional standards at Evin's Women's Ward are well below the requirements of both Iranian and international law. The regulations contained in Iran's State Prison Procedures are explicit. Article 93 states that prisoners are to be given "foods that have sufficient calories and vitamins," and Article 95 stipulates that the "minimum menu includes: Bread, cheese, and tea for breakfast, lunch or dinner, fresh or dried vegetables, rice, potatoes, onions, legumes, various dairy products, eggs, and seasonal fruits and each week, [and] the convicts will be served meat with their lunch or dinner at least three times per week." Additionally, Article 98 of the Procedures state that in all prisons "stores will be established and...their prices will be based on the fair going rate."<sup>15</sup>

In the [UN's Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#), it states "Every prisoner shall be provided by the administration at the usual hours with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength, of wholesome quality and well prepared and served."<sup>16</sup>



Major issues raised by the prisoners in Evin's Women's Ward included denial of medical care, denied family visits, telephone calls and furlough, inadequate nutrition, insufficient heat, and abusive behavior by guards.

## HEATING

Evin Prison is situated in northern Tehran, where in the winter months, the temperature averages 4° Celsius (39° Fahrenheit), and frequently drops below freezing. As such, sufficient heat in the Women's Ward is a necessity.

One prisoner revealed the lack of heat in the ward:

*We had an electric heater that had been purchased with money collected from the prisoners themselves. You couldn't survive Evin Prison's*

*winter without them. This year, the authorities have given those heaters to the guards and the prisoners are shivering from the cold. The heating system is so weak that it can't provide enough hot water for the showers, let alone the radiators. Plus, there aren't enough radiators in the cells. Instead on average there are four closed-circuit cameras in each cell in addition to a night-vision camera.*

A former prisoner released two years ago confirmed that heating issues were long-standing:

*We had no limitations for clothes, except that there are regulations that forbid clothes with lining; but they were more lenient towards political prisoners and allowed it. We could pay to get warm blankets. The heating system and warm water were cut off for long periods of time.*

However, another prisoner, who was released a year ago, reported she had not experienced a problem with heat in the ward, which suggests the heating in the ward may be at best inconsistent. She said:

*We didn't have problems with cooling or heating. The coolers worked fine and the central heating worked during the winter.*

Even if heating problems are intermittent in the ward (although multiple prisoner reports indicated there were issues with extremely cold and unheated quarters), any period during which heat was withheld explicitly violates [United Nations' Standard Minimum](#)

## THE INFIRMARY

Violations regarding the standards of medical care provided by the prison infirmary were consistent and perhaps the most serious of the abuses reported by the inmates of the Women's Ward, as such violations have the potential, in the cases of inmates who are severely ill, to ultimately impact the prisoners' right to life.

The infirmary was uniformly described as filthy and lacking in medical supplies and specialists. Referral to medical specialists outside the prison or to hospital in the case of clearly severe illness was often delayed or denied. The dispensing of critically needed prescriptions was often delayed, and non-specialist physicians in the infirmary at times dispensed the wrong medication.

[Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#) which state, "All accommodation provided for the use of prisoners and in particular all sleeping accommodation shall meet

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"We had an electric heater that had been purchased with money collected from the prisoners themselves. You couldn't survive Evin Prison's winter without them. This year, the authorities have given those heaters to the guards and the prisoners are shivering from the cold."

all requirements of health, due regard being paid to climatic conditions and particularly to cubic content of air, minimum floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation."<sup>17</sup>

The [UN's Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#) state, "...Where hospital facilities are provided in an institution, their equipment, furnishings and

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"Because they did not have female staff, for Sharia-based reasons, they did not perform injections and electrocardiograms (ECG) for women."

pharmaceutical supplies shall be proper for the medical care and treatment of sick prisoners, and there shall be a staff of suitable trained officers...."<sup>18</sup>

Iran's State Prison Regulations are also explicit regarding the medical care of prisoners: Article 118 states, "Examination, and when necessary treatment, of sick convicts is the responsibility of the prison or

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As a result [of the denial of medical care], multiple prisoners in the Women's Ward have suffered grave deterioration in their health, and, for some, permanent damage.

training facility."<sup>19</sup> Yet the grossly inadequate nature of this "treatment" was described in the following testimonies.

According to one prisoner's testimony:

*Sanitary and health conditions are a disaster. The infirmary has dispensed wrong medications with total impunity. Transfers for medical treatment have been canceled. [Prisoner name withheld<sup>20</sup>]... staged a sit-in in front of the head of the infirmary for two or three weeks until her request to see a dentist was finally approved seven or eight months later [this prisoner was recently released from the Women's Ward]. The infirmary is an extremely filthy area without any pharmaceutical or treatment facilities. There's no specialist physician.*

*The average age [of the prisoners in Evin's Women's Ward] is more than 40 and every person is suffering from some sort of illness because of the years in prison. There's no justification for their present condition. It only shows that they are being treated too harshly.*

*Sometimes in addition to giving the wrong medication to [prisoner name withheld], they did the same to [the names of two prisoners withheld].*

*There are prisoners in the Women's Ward who have been there for eight years or so, without the right to leave on furlough for even a minute, and as a result have developed all sorts medical issues. Digestion, bone and skin diseases are among the most common in this ward.*

*The female political and ideological inmates are the only women kept at Evin and therefore a target for additional abuse. These women can visit the infirmary and receive emergency medical care only with permission from the prison authorities. Also a security officer is always present when a female inmate goes to the infirmary. Visits to the infirmary by female inmates is possible only at a certain time of the day. If they need medical attention after that time, they have to wait until the next day, unless it's an emergency.*

*Evin's infirmary has one general practitioner and a few basic pharmaceuticals. The pharmacy is closed on Thursdays and Fridays and therefore anything prescribed by doctors cannot be obtained on those days. Since the beginning of the year (March 21, 2015), the infirmary has often dispensed the wrong medication to patients, sometimes causing dangerous complications. Prisoners have complained about this but it still goes on.*

*Those prisoners who need to get prescription drugs from outside prison with the help of their families must wait to get permission from the head of the infirmary who accepts visitors once a week. For those who run the prison or the judicial officials, it's not important how urgently the prisoners may need certain medications or treatments. The process for transferring patients to outside medical facilities can take nine months to a year, depending on how critical their condition is. Even then the officials often break their promises or cause delays.*

The violations of Iran's Prison Procedures reflected in the above testimony are severe and numerous. Article 103 states, "...when necessary, the convict's transfer

for treatment must be confirmed by the prison infirmary and permitted.... In emergencies, the sick convict will be transferred to a hospital....” Article 111 states, “the prisoner must be given the required medical tests, and proper steps should be taken to either treat him or transfer him to [a better equipped] hospital.” Article 112 states, “If the prisoner’s life depends on [a prescription] drug, it must be given to him immediately after the doctor examines and prescribes the drug for him.” And Article 113 states, “The prisoner should inform the guard as soon as he feels ill. After acquiring a permit, the prisoner must be sent to the infirmary of the penal institution or prison in order to receive the needed drugs and medical instructions.”<sup>21</sup>

This testimony, which refers to the experiences of multiple prisoners, also reflects violations of the [UN’s Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#). These standards, which all UN Member States are expected to abide by, state the following: “...Sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals.”<sup>22</sup>

This standard is also cited in the [United Nations Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners](#), which stipulates: “Prisoners shall have access to the health services available in the country without discrimination on the grounds of their legal situation.”<sup>23</sup>

A former prisoner reported a similarly dismal picture of the prison’s infirmary:

*They wouldn’t allow us [access to] treatment and transfer to the infirmary, and because of Sharia-related issues, we were denied even the scant facilities of the infirmary. If someone felt poorly inside the ward, under no circumstances would a doctor come to visit her, and because there were no stretchers or wheelchairs, other prisoners would have to carry the sick inmate to the ambulance. They never kept any female prisoners inside the Evin infirmary for further observation. Because they did not have female staff, for Sharia-based*

*reasons, they did not perform injections and electrocardiograms (ECG) for women.*

*[The infirmary] did not have any female nurses. There were only female administrative staff of the infirmary, one of whom knew how to do injections and take ECGs. She would give shots to those who needed it during office hours. But myself and [patient name withheld], who had chest pains at night and an irregular heartbeat were not given the needed ECGs due to the absence of female staff and Sharia-based issues. There was also a female OB/GYN specialist who only came to the prison infirmary for visits once a month.*

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“Sanitary and health conditions are a disaster. The infirmary has dispensed wrong medications with total impunity.”

*After the issue of [denied] access to telephones, the issue of the infirmary was [the most important to inmates] ...in addition to the lack of treatment and the absence of female staffers, [the infirmary] also repeatedly dispensed the wrong medication, and put the inmates’ lives at risk. The infirmary would make mistakes in sending meds to inmates who had to take them every night. They won’t allow a sick inmate to keep her own medication, and the infirmary throws all the medications and pills of each sick person without a [marking] cover into a box and the meds were often dispensed incorrectly. The inmates tried to determine their medications through the color, size, and shape of their pills, and this is how they knew that they had been given the wrong pills. The medicines the families provided would get lost in the infirmary, or they would dispense them to inmates from other wards.*

According to another former prisoner who is still in close touch with the current inmates,

*One of the biggest problems with the Women's Ward is that it has a paltry infirmary to which prisoners are transferred no matter what ailments they have. Its physicians are either no good, or they don't have the tools they need for proper examination, tests, and treatment. But they don't allow you to be transferred to a hospital or a doctor's office outside the prison. There is no trust. For example, I had a dental problem, but I didn't want them to work on my teeth at the prison infirmary. I didn't believe it was hygienic in the infirmary.*

A former prisoner released two years ago confirmed the long-standing nature of the problems with the Women's Ward infirmary:

*When a prisoner got sick, she was sent to the prison infirmary, but more often than not, there was a shortage of specialists. It would take a long time before we could be seen by a specialist. In the case of [prisoner name withheld] who was severely ill, her family bought her medicine from outside sources, but it would take weeks before they would reach her.*

The above testimonies corroborate the violations of Iran's State Prison Procedures Articles 103 and 111

requiring the transfer of ill inmates to hospital, and the UN's Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

Iran's State Prison Procedures state in Article 120 that "The head of prison's infirmary is required to ... [ensure] that they receive adequate care from doctors and nurses, [and] he must supervise the patients' proper diet and recovery completely and continually."<sup>24</sup> Yet adequate care is not being delivered, nor is their recovery allowed.

As a result, multiple prisoners have suffered grave deterioration in their health, and, for some, permanent damage. For example, [Bahareh Hedayat](#) faces possibly irreversible reproductive system damage due to chronic and improperly treated conditions that may prevent this 34-year-old woman from bearing children.<sup>25</sup> The 43-year-old [Narges Mohammadi](#), who has young children, has been denied proper treatment for worsening neurological problems that cause muscular paralysis, and has suffered seizures during her imprisonment.<sup>26</sup> [Atena Faraghdani](#), age 29, who has just recently been released, had developed signs of lymphatic disease during her imprisonment in the ward.<sup>27</sup> Another prisoner who was recently released from Evin's Women's Ward, 27-year-old [Atena Daemi](#), was diagnosed with symptoms of multiple sclerosis, but was unable to receive specialized treatment for over eight months while she was in the ward.<sup>28</sup>

## I TREATMENT BY GUARDS

A number of the women in the ward reported abusive behavior on the part of female prison guards, which included verbal abuse, rough handling, and inappropriate and unnecessary physical contact that the inmates felt was aimed at humiliating them.

One prisoner reported:

*The guards have become really rough and insulting. It's obvious that's how they've been trained.*

*They want to humiliate female prisoners. For instance, when [prisoner name withheld] wanted to go on furlough, two female guards did a complete strip search on her. Or when they were bringing [prisoner name withheld] from the [Revolutionary*



Imprisoned human and women's rights activist Bahareh Hedayat visits through the glass

*Guard's Intelligence Organization-controlled] 2-A security ward, where she had already been completely checked over, they again stripped her. They would run their hands on her bare skin. Obviously you can't hide anything under your skin. They just want to humiliate you.*

*Initially, [prisoner name withheld] wrote about this stuff in an indirect way. Other prisoners... complained to the prosecutor, which got nowhere. This is a systematic effort to humiliate the prisoners. They want to tell the women that not even their body is safe from abuse. You don't own your own body.*

*There was one crude agent who pinched younger prisoners and laughed at them during body searches. These behaviors have very negative effects in the long term. If you try to resist, other prisoners will not back you up. In fact, they will complain to you. It's so painful in there that no one is in the mood for more trouble.*

A former prisoner released two years ago revealed such behavior was not new nor was it an isolated incident:

*We had no problems with toilettes and showers. There were sufficient toilette and shower stalls. But our problem was that sometimes they planned to install cameras there, which really upset us, and we would mobilize to have them removed.*

*Body searches were some of the most abusive things the prison guards could routinely carry out. When they carried out body searches under normal conditions, it wasn't too infuriating. But sometimes during a visitation, they would touch the [visiting] children's underwear in an annoying way, to the point that the children would object. They really bothered young children. They brought some [scanning] equipment, but they said that the equipment [scanners] did not detect paper and toilette paper, and when they did the inspection by hand, it was very upsetting. The body searches*

*were carried out to make sure no written notes on paper or toilette papers were passed to visitors.*

This above testimony indicates a direct violation of United Nations standards. The UN's Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (known as the

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“The process for transferring patients to outside medical facilities can take nine months to a year, depending on how critical their condition is. Even then the officials often break their promises or cause delays.”

Bangkok Rules) state in [Rule 21](#): “Prison staff shall demonstrate competence, professionalism and sensitivity and shall preserve respect and dignity when searching both children in prison with their mother and children visiting prisoners.”<sup>29</sup>

A family member of a current prisoner reported:

*They are always playing games to upset the prisoners through taking away privileges. For*

*example, the women had created a library with their own money, but one day they raided the ward and took away the books.*

That the behaviors described in the above testimonies violate both Iranian and international law binding upon the Islamic Republic is clear. [Article 39](#) of Iran's constitution states: “[All] affronts to the dignity and repute of persons arrested, detained, imprisoned, or banished in accordance with the law, whatever form they may take, are forbidden and liable to punishment.”<sup>30</sup>

More specifically, Article 169 of Iran's State Prison Procedures explicitly prohibits verbal and physical abuse, as well as violent or degrading forms of punishment. It states: “Imprecations, utterance of indecent words, and ill temper toward the accused or prisoner violate the law. All physical, violent, agonizing and insulting punishments are entirely forbidden in penal institutions and prisons.”<sup>31</sup>

Article 7 of the ICCPR similarly stipulates that no one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and [Article 10](#) states that all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.<sup>32</sup> The [UN's Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners](#) echoes this, declaring “All prisoners shall be treated with the respect due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.”<sup>33</sup>

## **FAMILY VISITATION AND TELEPHONE CALLS**

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The behavior consistently cited by the inmates as the most distressing of all was the denial or limitation of visits and telephone communications with family. This is in keeping with the Islamic Republic's punitive treatment of political prisoners throughout the country's prisons.

As a number of the prisoners of the Women's Ward are mothers, this provides prison authorities with an additional opportunity to inflict pain, given the unique bond between mother and child.

In a July 2015 [letter](#) from prison, Narges Mohammadi (who was at that time imprisoned in Evin's Intelligence



Ministry-controlled Ward 209) wrote about the anguish such denial brings: “The entire time I was inside 209, they neither allowed me to hear their voices, nor did they allow me to see [my children]. The bitterness and the sting of this ‘deprivation,’ which barred me from seeing those I hold dear, was no different than dying a slow death. I keep remembering my interrogator’s words, ‘You will pay with even more deprivations.’”<sup>34</sup>

Under Iran’s State Prisons Procedures, weekly visits with family members is a right to which all prisoners are entitled, not a privilege. Yet as the following testimonies show, these rules regarding visitation are frequently flouted—including between inmates who are mothers and their young children.

Moreover, in contrast to most other wards and prisons throughout Iran, where the placement of telephones for use by inmates is standard, there are no telephones in Evin’s Women’s Ward.

“In practice,” Iranian human rights lawyer Mahnaz Parakand said in a March 17, 2016 interview with the Campaign, “almost all prisoners can use public telephones inside their wards to contact their friends and family. Prisoners are able to purchase telephone cards inside prison in order to make their calls. But political prisoners are not offered the same public phones and access to telephones.”

The denial of this vital means of communication between prisoners and their families, especially between mothers and young children, is another example of the punitive conditions inflicted upon the prisoners of the Women’s Ward.

One former prisoner reported:

*There’s no telephone there. Mothers are always very worried. They only allow small children to visit every two weeks. Mothers were allowed to make phone calls to their children abroad three or four times a year. Now apparently it’s a lot less. And absolutely no domestic phone calls. When we*

*were in prison we were very careful not to organize any group protests that would affect the mothers*

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“They would run their hands on her bare skin. Obviously you can’t hide anything under your skin. They just want to humiliate you.”

*because they were the first ones to get punished by cutting visits with their kids. It was a cruel way of silencing the Women’s Ward.*

Another former prisoner reported:

*We were not allowed to make phone calls, and there were no telephones inside the ward. Only inmates whose immediate families lived outside the country, with agreement from the Prosecutor’s Office, were allowed to go to the prison’s Sentence Enforcement Unit or to the Prison’s Intelligence Unit to make phone calls.*

*The women themselves consider [lack of access] to phone calls as their most important issue. We really pursued the issue of access to phone calls, but we received no answers. We even wrote group letters, but they never responded.*

*Each inmate had one weekly visitation through the booth, which lasted a maximum of half an hour. Each person also received an in-person visit every 35 days, but each time the family had to go and file a request. As punishment, the Prosecutor’s Office would refuse visitation authorization...Some mothers were allowed a weekly visit with their under-18 children. The in-person visits generally lasted only 40 minutes.*

The variable conditions relayed in the above two testimonies indicate that again, similar to many other issues such as the provision of food rations and heat,

the actual practice of visitation was subject to the whim of the prison officials.

Another former prisoner also spoke about the denial of phone calls and visits, with her report also indicating that the exact terms of phone usage could vary, and indeed did fluctuate. The arbitrary nature of such allowances reflects the lack of clear and transparent rules regarding issues such as phone usage.

*The other big problem is lack of access to a telephone. Those who have relatives outside Iran may be allowed to call their families once a month, after much pursuit of the matter.*

*But this is not offered to everyone. It all depends on the prison officials' mood. They allowed me to call my family on my birthday one time. It is possible*

*that even when there is a medical or other type of emergency with [an inmate's] relative, a prisoner is not allowed to call them [and find out about them] between prison visits.*

*There was a lot of issues and stress around visitations. They only allow inmates to visit for half an hour through a glass wall each week. If your visitor forgets to bring his/her birth certificate, they are not allowed to visit. Several times, when the mother of [prisoner name withheld], who lives in the U.S., came [to Iran] to visit with her in prison, because she had left her birth certificate in the U.S., she was not allowed to have a visit with her.*

*For the past five years, they have not allowed the inmates in this ward to make phone calls. They don't allow prisoners with children to make calls,*



On days that visitors are allowed at Evin Prison, hundreds of family members, including those of the prisoners of the Women's Ward, line up outside the walls.

*either. If women who have children outside the country pleaded, they would be allowed to make phone calls once a month.*

*Prisoners with children under the age of nine are allowed in-person weekly visits. But the kids get a lot of stress for this. When they were still in prison, the children of [prisoner name withheld] and [prisoner name withheld] had to get transported from school to prison in a rush, which was very stressful for the kids.*

A former prisoner released two years ago confirmed the long-standing nature of denied phone use and visitation issues:

*For inmates who had children under the age of 18, they allowed an extra hour-long, in-person visit per week in addition to the weekly visitations, but sometimes it wasn't enough. It was precious, but sometimes, for young children, spending one hour per week with their mothers was too little—imagine how it would be for a woman with multiple children. Some prisoners were allowed to make calls, and some prisoners were denied access to telephones. The Women's Ward does not have telephones inside. But sometimes they allowed the women to make phone calls from the landline in the ward's office.*

The husband of Narges Mohammadi, Taghi Rahmani, corroborated these testimonies regarding the denial and fluctuating nature of phone usage in an earlier [interview](#) with the Campaign. “Narges has also not been allowed telephone calls to her children for the past three months. Ever since the children came to stay with me [in France] three months ago, prison officials have not allowed Narges to contact her children....”<sup>35</sup>

Iran's State Prison Procedures specifically detail prisoners' visitation rights. Article 182 states inmates are entitled to weekly visits with immediate family (spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, children and spouse's parents). Article 183 states that inmates who

have demonstrated good behavior can, upon approval by head of the institution or the facility's supervising



Narges Mohammadi, who has young children, has been denied proper treatment for worsening neurological problems that cause muscular paralysis, and has suffered seizures during her imprisonment.

judge, have in-person visits with the above family members, while a prison guard is in attendance, and Article 185 adds that in certain cases, private visits with spouses and children, without the presence of a supervisor, are allowed. Article 188, Note 2 stipulates that each inmate has at least one visitation per week, not to last less than 20 minutes.<sup>36</sup>

“...we were very careful not to organize any group protests that would affect the mothers because they were the first ones to get punished by cutting visits with their kids. It was a cruel way of silencing the Women's Ward.”

As such, the denial of visitation detailed in these prisoners' accounts is in direct violation of Iran's own laws.

Prisoners of the Women's Ward who have been hospitalized have also been denied their family visitation rights. Article 190 of Iran's State Prison Procedures state, “Under guidance from a physician, the Head

Warden can facilitate visitations with sick inmates who are hospitalized and unable to move.”<sup>37</sup> Yet in the above-mentioned interview with Narges Mohammadi’s husband, [Taghi Rahmani](#), he reported that his wife had

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“There’s no telephone there. Mothers are always very worried.”

been denied her full visitation rights while hospitalized as an inmate for months.<sup>38</sup>

“Family contact” is also considered a prisoner’s right—not a privilege—by the United Nations. In the UN’s Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (known as the Bangkok Rules), [Rule 23](#) states: Disciplinary sanctions for women prisoners shall not include a prohibition of family contact, especially with

children, and [Rule 26](#) stipulates that “Women prisoners’ contact with their families, including their children...shall be encouraged and facilitated by all reasonable means.”<sup>39</sup>

Moreover, [Rule 28](#) states “Visits involving children shall take place in an environment that is conducive to a positive visiting experience, including with regard to staff attitudes, and shall allow open contact between mother and child. Visits involving extended contact with children should be encouraged, where possible.”<sup>40</sup>

Indeed, the United Nations explicitly urges the careful consideration of imprisonment of mothers given the unique bond between mother and young child. In [Rule 58](#) of the Bangkok Rules, it states “women offenders shall not be separated from their families and communities without due consideration being given to their backgrounds and family ties. Alternative ways



Inmates of the Women's Ward reported that the authorities would often use prisoners' weekly visitation rights as a punitive tool, withholding them as collective punishment.

of managing women who commit offences, such as diversionary measures and pretrial and sentencing alternatives, shall be implemented wherever appropriate and possible.”<sup>41</sup>

The Rules goes on to say (in [Rule 64](#)), that “Non-custodial sentences for pregnant women and women with dependent children shall be preferred where possible and appropriate, with custodial sentences being

considered when the offence is serious or violent or the woman represents a continuing danger....”<sup>42</sup>

Given that none of these women were convicted of violent crimes, but rather for peaceful dissent (which the Islamic Republic has chosen to treat as a national security crime), alternatives to incarceration—let alone full and generously interpreted visitation rights—are clearly called for under United Nations standards.

## FURLOUGH

Denial of furlough (temporary leave granted to most inmates in the Islamic Republic’s prison system for medical reasons or for special familial events) is another tool used to punish political prisoners, and this includes the inmates of the Women’s Ward at Evin. While furlough is regularly afforded to most prisoners, including common criminals, it is routinely denied to the women in this ward.

Iran’s State Prison Procedures stipulate that furlough is a privilege, not a right. According to Article 213, “Granting furlough to prisoners is not considered a right and access to it is subject to the prisoner’s compliance with the prison rules and earning the required points.”<sup>43</sup> This provides prison authorities with an open door to deny political prisoners such temporary leave, keeping in line with the harsh and punitive behavior typically meted out to political prisoners.

A former prisoner reported:

*Female prisoners were shattered when for the most important occasions of their lives they were not allowed furlough. Fariba Kamalabadi was not allowed to attend her daughter’s wedding and Mahvash Shahriari was not allowed to visit her sick father.*

Moreover, Article 221 of Iran’s State Prison Procedures states that individuals convicted of “acting against

national security”<sup>44</sup> are to be excepted from receiving furlough. Given that the majority of political prisoners are convicted under vague, catchall national security-related charges (since authorities in the Islamic Republic view any expression of peaceful dissent as a national security crime), political prisoners are doubly punished: they are imprisoned for views and actions



Women’s Ward prisoner Fariba Kamalabadi recently received 5 days of furlough after eight years in prison.

that are ostensibly protected under Iranian and international law, and then they are denied standard inmates’ privileges such as furlough due to their “national security” crimes. For the inmates of the Women’s Ward, many of whom are mothers, this is an extraordinarily painful injustice.

For the prisoners of the Women's Ward who were not convicted under national security charges, the denial of furlough is a violation of Iran's State Prison Procedures.

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“Female prisoners were shattered when for the most important occasions of their lives they were not allowed furlough.”

Article 214, Note 4 states: “All convicts, except those included in Article 221, are allowed one instance of furlough leave...in the case of marriage or death of one of their first degree relatives (father, mother, child, wife, brother, sister).”<sup>45</sup>

Indeed, Iran's Prison Procedures explicitly state that any denial of furlough is to be extremely limited even when used as punishment. Article 175 stipulates: “Permissible punishment includes suspension of a maximum of three visitation rights, denial of furlough for up to three months, denial of recommendation for conditional pardon or release for up to six months, and solitary confinement for no more than 20 days.”<sup>46</sup>

The UN's Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules) echoes this in its prohibition against the denial of family contact, especially with children, even as a “disciplinary sanction” ([Rule 23](#)).<sup>47</sup>

## I ACCOUNTABILITY

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The [UN's Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners](#) states, “Except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”<sup>48</sup>

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Iran's Judiciary, headed by Sadegh Amoli Larijani, is responsible for the Islamic Republic prisoners and the conditions under which they are incarcerated.

It is clear from the above testimonies, which reflect the experiences of numerous prisoners over an extended period of time, that these rights are being systematically violated in the Women's Ward at Evin Prison.

Moreover, according to prisoner testimony, prison and judicial officials were notified about a number of these violations through repeated group letters sent from the inmates of the Women's Ward.

A former inmate said:

*The group letters [we wrote] were about the issue of [denied] access to telephone calls and the issue of the infirmary's dispensing the wrong medications, as well as the inappropriate handling [of the inmates] by female prison guards during transfers. The letters were addressed to the Prosecutor Mr. [Jafari] Dolatabadi, the Head Warden, and the Head of the Intelligence Unit.*

Iran's Judiciary, headed by Sadegh Amoli Larijani, is responsible for the Islamic Republic's prisoners and the conditions under which they are incarcerated. As such, the Judiciary should be held accountable for the violations of international and Iranian



Sadegh Amoli Larijani, who heads Iran's Judiciary, is responsible for the Islamic Republic's prisoners and the conditions under which they are incarcerated.

law in the Women's Ward and it should take direct responsibility for immediately addressing these violations.

As the prominent Iranian human rights lawyer Mehrangiz Kar wrote in a September 16, 2010 [article](#):<sup>49</sup>

*The executive regulations of "State Prisons and Security and Corrective Measure Organization" which were published...on December 14, 2005 after being approved by the Judiciary's head, make the Judiciary the sole body responsible for responding to the complaints by prisoners,*

*lawyers and prisoners' families... These regulations stress the country's Judiciary as the only authority responsible for the life, health, security and, on the whole, human dignity of prisoners.*

*[A]lthough the rights of prisoners are predicted in the law, the individuals who should enact and protect these rights do not believe in them and consider them as privileges...the Judiciary shrinks from performing the responsibilities that are entrusted to it... This is the people's right to demand that the Judiciary be accountable.*

## CONCLUSION

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The inmates of the Women's Ward at Evin Prison have been placed behind bars for beliefs and activities that are protected under Iranian and international law, and following judicial proceedings that violated Iranian and international guarantees of due process. Inside the ward they endure inhumane conditions that violate Iranian and international law, as well as the rules detailed in Iran's State Prison Procedures. These conditions include an unhygienic medical infirmary lacking supplies and specialists, the denial of proper medical care and timely transfer to hospitals, inadequate nutrition, insufficient heat, humiliating and at times abusive behavior by guards, and the limitation or denial of telephone calls, family visitation rights (including with the young children of inmates), and furlough privileges.

The Iranian Judiciary, headed by Sadeqh Amoli Larijani, has explicit authority over prisoners in the Islamic Republic. As such it should be held accountable for these violations and must take responsibility for addressing them. These testimonies indicate that officials have been made aware of the violations occurring in the Women's Ward. The Judiciary must take the lead in immediately investigating the conditions detailed in this report, improving them, ensuring that such violations are not continued, and instituting formal mechanisms whereby conditions can be monitored and violations formally reported. It is the Campaign's hope that this report will facilitate and prompt the immediate and thorough investigation into the incarceration of these women and the conditions they endure.

It is incumbent upon President Hassan Rouhani, as chief enforcer of Iran's constitution, United Nations forums that address human rights in all its Member States, and all individual Member States in their bilateral relations with Iran, to directly address the plight of these women. All parties should urge the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to conduct an immediate judicial review of the cases of all the inmates of Evin's Women's Ward, and, while this review is underway, to immediately bring the standards of incarceration in the ward up to the those required by Iranian and international law. Civil society and independent media in Iran can and should play a vital role in observing, monitoring, and reviewing this urgently needed corrective.



# ENDNOTES

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- 1 <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>
- 2 <http://tinyurl.com/hwjf34> (see English translation of the Procedures by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran in Appendix 1.2 of this report).
- 3 <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>
- 4 [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/UN\\_Standard\\_Minimum\\_Rules\\_for\\_the\\_Treatment\\_of\\_Prisoners.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/UN_Standard_Minimum_Rules_for_the_Treatment_of_Prisoners.pdf)
- 5 <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-16.pdf>
- 6 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/BasicPrinciplesTreatmentOfPrisoners.aspx>
- 7 <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>
- 8 <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>
- 9 <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>
- 10 <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>
- 11 Abrahamian, Ervand (1999), Tortured Confessions: Prisons and Public Recantations in Modern Iran, University of California press, p.105
- 12 Ibid. p.135-6
- 13 [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/UN\\_Standard\\_Minimum\\_Rules\\_for\\_the\\_Treatment\\_of\\_Prisoners.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/UN_Standard_Minimum_Rules_for_the_Treatment_of_Prisoners.pdf)
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 See Appendix 1.2
- 16 [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/UN\\_Standard\\_Minimum\\_Rules\\_for\\_the\\_Treatment\\_of\\_Prisoners.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/UN_Standard_Minimum_Rules_for_the_Treatment_of_Prisoners.pdf)
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 See Appendix 1.2.
- 20 The names of inmates or former inmates mentioned in the testimonies are withheld when necessary to protect the individuals named from possible repercussions.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/UN\\_Standard\\_Minimum\\_Rules\\_for\\_the\\_Treatment\\_of\\_Prisoners.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/UN_Standard_Minimum_Rules_for_the_Treatment_of_Prisoners.pdf)
- 23 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/BasicPrinciplesTreatmentOfPrisoners.aspx>
- 24 See Appendix 1.2.
- 25 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2014/01/bahareh-hedayat/>
- 26 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/10/narges-mohammadi-8/>
- 27 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/08/atena-farghadani/>
- 28 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/12/atena-daemi-4/>
- 29 <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-16.pdf>
- 30 <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>
- 31 See Appendix 1.2.
- 32 <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

- 33 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/BasicPrinciplesTreatmentOfPrisoners.aspx>
- 34 <https://persian.iranhumanrights.org/1394/07/narges-mohammadi-10/>
- 35 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/10/narges-mohammadi-8/>
- 36 See Appendix 1.2.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/10/narges-mohammadi-8/>
- 39 <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-16.pdf>
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 See Appendix 1.2.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-16.pdf>
- 48 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/BasicPrinciplesTreatmentOfPrisoners.aspx>
- 49 Mehrangiz Kar, "The Prisoners' Rights," September 16, 2010, in Gozaar, <http://www.gozaar.org/english/articles-en/The-Prisoners-Rights.html>

# APPENDIX 1: IRANIAN LAW

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## APPENDIX 1.1: CONSTITUTION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Iran's constitution contains numerous guarantees that are directly relevant to political prisoners. The following excerpts from selected articles confirm the unlawful imprisonment of the women at Evin's Women's Ward for their peaceful expression of dissent or beliefs.

- **ARTICLE 23** (Freedom of belief): The investigation of individuals' beliefs is forbidden, and no one may be molested or taken to task simply for holding a certain belief.
- **ARTICLE 24** (Press freedom): Publications and the press have freedom of expression except when it is detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam or the rights of the public. The details of this exception will be specified by law.
- **ARTICLE 25** (Privacy of communication): The inspection of letters and the failure to deliver them, the recording and disclosure of telephone conversations, the disclosure of telegraphic and telex communications, censorship, or the willful failure to transmit them, eavesdropping, and all forms of covert investigation are forbidden, except as provided by law.
- **ARTICLE 26** (Freedom of association): The formation of parties, societies, political or professional associations, as well as religious societies, whether Islamic or pertaining to one of the recognized religious minorities, is permitted provided they do not violate the principles of independence, freedom, national unity, the criteria of Islam, or the basis of the Islamic republic. No one may be prevented from participating in the aforementioned groups, or be compelled to participate in them.
- **ARTICLE 27** (Freedom of assembly): Public gatherings and marches may be freely held, provided arms are not carried and that they are not detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam.
- **ARTICLE 32** (Prohibition of arbitrary arrest or detention): "No person may be arrested except according to and in the manner laid down in the law. If someone is detained, the subject matter of the charge, with reasons (for bringing it), must immediately be communicated and explained in writing to the accused.
- **ARTICLE 34** (Right to a competent court): It is the indisputable right of every citizen to seek justice by recourse to competent courts. All citizens have right of access to such courts, and no one can be barred from courts to which he has a legal right of recourse.
- **ARTICLE 35** (Right to legal counsel): Both parties to a lawsuit have the right in all courts of law to select an attorney, and if they are unable to do so, arrangements must be made to provide them with legal counsel.

- **ARTICLE 36** (Right to competent sentencing): The passing and execution of a sentence must be only by a competent court and in accordance with law.
- **ARTICLE 37** (Presumption of innocence): Innocence is to be presumed, and no one is to be held guilty of a charge unless his or her guilt has been established by a competent court.

In addition, Iran's constitution contains an article directly relevant to the degrading and abusive treatments experienced by the prisoners in Evin's Women's Ward.

- **ARTICLE 39** (Prohibition of affronts to the dignity of an arrested or imprisoned person): [All] affronts to the dignity and repute of persons arrested, detained, imprisoned, or banished in accordance with the law, whatever form they may take, are forbidden and liable to punishment.

Source: <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>

## **APPENDIX 1.2: IRAN'S STATE PRISONS AND SECURITY AND CORRECTIVE MEASURES ORGANIZATION**

Numerous articles pertaining to the treatment of prisoners in the Procedures of Iran's State Prisons and Security and Corrective Measures Organization, which operates under the authority of Iran's Judiciary, confirm the violations regularly committed against the prisoners of Evin's Women's Ward.

### **SLEEPING QUARTERS**

- **ARTICLE 71:** Each inmate will be issued the following essentials for sleeping: a bed, a mattress, a pillow, two blankets, and bed linens for blanket, mattress and pillow.

### **NUTRITION**

- **ARTICLE 93:** Prisoners are given three daily meals, breakfast, lunch, dinner, and foods that have sufficient calories and vitamins. According to approved menus, suitable for the climate in each location, tea and healthy drinking water will be made available to the prisoners. Relevant authorities must work sufficiently and continually to provide the necessary appliances to prevent food items from spoiling and to clean the dishes and the kitchen.
- **ARTICLE 95:** The minimum menu includes: Bread, cheese, and tea for breakfast, lunch or dinner, fresh or dried vegetables, rice, potatoes, onions, legumes, various dairy products, eggs, and seasonal fruits each week, [and] the convicts will be served meat with their lunch or dinner at least three times per week.
- **ARTICLE 98:** Inside institutions or prisons, as necessary...stores will be established and the Head of the Institution or Prison will be responsible for their oversight according to his responsibilities. Note 1: Choosing the permissible items and staples for sale inside the prison stores, with consideration for prison hygiene and safety, will be done by the Head of the Prison and their prices will be based on the fair going rate. Note 2: Items and staples inside the prison stores must not be priced higher than the fair going rate and if necessary, items offered in the coop must be sold at coop rates.

### **MEDICAL CARE**

- **ARTICLE 102:** The institution or prison's infirmary is obligated to conduct at least once-a-month medical tests on all convicts.
- **ARTICLE 103:** To the extent possible, measures should be taken to meet the sick convict's medical treatment needs inside the prison, so that it would not be necessary to transfer the convicts outside of the prison. Nevertheless, when necessary, the convict's transfer for treatment must be confirmed by the prison infirmary and permitted by the institution or prison head and with permission of the supervising judge. In emergencies, the sick convict will be transferred to a hospital with the prison infirmary's or the physician's orders and by permission of the head of

the institute or prison or his deputy, and the situation must be reported in writing to the supervising judge as soon as possible.

- **ARTICLE 111**, The infirmary of the penal institution or prison must give complete medical check-ups to a new prisoner. If necessary, the prisoner must be given the required medical tests, and proper steps should be taken to either treat him or transfer him to [a better equipped] hospital; all medical actions must be noted down in the prisoner's file.
- **ARTICLE 112**: Whenever a new prisoner carries a prescription or drug, it will be taken by the prison's infirmary so the infirmary's doctor can prescribe the prisoner's needed dosage. If the prisoner's life depends on the drug, it must be given to him immediately after the doctor examines and prescribes the drug for him.
- **ARTICLE 113**: The prisoner should inform the guard as soon as he feels ill. After acquiring a permit, the prisoner must be sent to the infirmary of the penal institution or prison in order to receive the needed drugs and medical instructions.
- **ARTICLE 115**: After diagnosing the prisoner's illness, the doctor of the penal institution or prison decides whether the prisoner should be placed under medical care in the prison's infirmary. The doctor's written decision must be put in the patient's file.
- **ARTICLE 118**: Examination, and when necessary treatment, of sick convicts is the responsibility of the prison or training facility.
- **ARTICLE 120**: The head of prison's infirmary is required to visit all prisoners who are held under care in the infirmary every morning. After inquiry into the conditions of prisoners and making certain that they receive adequate care from doctors and nurses, he must supervise the patients' proper diet and recovery completely and continually.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION:**

- **ARTICLE 169**: Imprecations, utterance of indecent words, and ill temper toward the accused or prisoner violate the law. All physical, violent, agonizing and insulting punishments are entirely forbidden in penal institutions and prisons.
- **ARTICLE 175**: Permissible punishment includes suspension of a maximum of three visitation rights, denial of furlough for up to three months, denial of recommendation for conditional pardon or release for up to six months, and solitary confinement for no more than 20 days.

### **VISITATION:**

- **ARTICLE 69, NOTE 1**: Female inmates can have their children next to them in prison until the age of 2, and Prison Heads and Wardens are authorized to make decisions about establishing day care centers in a separate space to hold children from 2 until 6 years of age, or to transfer the children to the Iranian Welfare Organization.

- **ARTICLE 182:** The spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, and children of a convict or suspect, as well as his/her spouse's parents are entitled to have weekly visits with the convict based on circumstances, and other relatives and friends of the convict can also meet with him/her if granted permission by the head of the institution or prison facility or the supervising judge at the facility.
- **ARTICLE 183:** Convicts who have demonstrated good behavior can, upon approval by head of the institution or the facility's supervising judge, have in-person visits with their spouse, children, father, mother, brother, and sister, as well as their spouse's parents, while a prison guard is in attendance.
- **ARTICLE 185:** In certain cases, convicts or suspects can have private visits, without the presence of a supervisor, with their spouse and children.
- **ARTICLE 188:** Note 2: The public visitation schedule should be organized in a way that each inmate has at least one visitation per week, not to last under 20 minutes.
- **ARTICLE 190:** Under guidance from a physician, the Head Warden can facilitate visitations with sick inmates who are hospitalized and unable to move.

### **FURLOUGH:**

- **ARTICLE 213:** In order to help consolidate the foundations and family and social relationships of prisoners, to rehabilitate them socially and to prepare the foundation for their return to the society, as well as their active participation in correction, education, and culture and sports, training, and employment, prisoners are granted furlough within the framework of this section. Note: Granting furlough to prisoners is not considered a right and access to it is subject to the prisoner's compliance with the prison rules and earning the required points.
- **ARTICLE 221:** Exceptions for Granting Furlough: Individuals convicted of the following crimes are excepted from receiving furlough: A: Armed robbery convicts; stealing property belonging to others through snatching purses; espionage; acting against national security; kidnapping; gang-related and organized crimes; rape; establishing corruption and prostitution centers; acid throwing; disrupting the country's economic system; importing, manufacturing, distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages; armed or wholesale smuggling of narcotics and psychedelic drugs. B: Convicts with three previous instances of convictions of the same crime. C: Convicts known for thuggery. D. Qisas [retribution] Law convicts and individuals sentenced to death.
- **ARTICLE 214:** Covering Conditions for Receiving Furlough: Note 4: All convicts, except those included in Article 221, are allowed one instance of furlough leave without meeting the conditions reflected in this article in the case of marriage or death of one of their first degree relatives (father, mother, child, wife, brother, sister).

*Source: Iran State Prisons and Security and Corrective Measures Organization  
(as translated by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran)*

<http://goo.gl/XttewP>

And: [https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2011/08/kar\\_analysis\\_2/](https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2011/08/kar_analysis_2/)



# APPENDIX 2: INTERNATIONAL LAW

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Articles relevant to political prisoners and the conditions of their incarceration in international covenants to which the Islamic Republic is a signatory and UN Standards, Rules and Principles:

## 2.1. THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (ICCPR):

- **ARTICLE 7:** No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- **ARTICLE 9:** 1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law. 2. Anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him. 3. Anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release.
- **ARTICLE 10:** 1. All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.
- **ARTICLE 14:** 1. All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. 2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law. 3. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, everyone shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality: (a) To be informed promptly...of the nature and cause of the charge against him; (b) To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence and to communicate with counsel of his own choosing; (c) To be tried without undue delay; (d) To be tried in his presence, and to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing; (e) To examine, or have examined, the witnesses against him; (f) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court; (g) Not to be compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt.
- **ARTICLE 17:** 1. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honor and reputation.
- **ARTICLE 18:** 1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

- **ARTICLE 19:** 1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference. 2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
- **ARTICLE 21:** The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
- **ARTICLE 22:** 1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
- **ARTICLE 26:** All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- **ARTICLE 27:** In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

## **2.2. UNITED NATIONS STANDARD MINIMUM RULES FOR THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS**

### **PART I. RULES OF GENERAL APPLICATION**

#### **ACCOMMODATION**

10. All accommodation provided for the use of prisoners and in particular all sleeping accommodation shall meet all requirements of health, due regard being paid to climatic conditions and particularly to cubic content of air, minimum floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation.

11. In all places where prisoners are required to live or work, (a) The windows shall be large enough to enable the prisoners to read or work by natural light, and shall be so constructed that they can allow the entrance of fresh air whether or not there is artificial ventilation; (b) Artificial light shall be provided sufficient for the prisoners to read or work without injury to eyesight.

14. All parts of an institution regularly used by prisoners shall be properly maintained and kept scrupulously clean at all times.

## FOOD

20. Every prisoner shall be provided by the administration at the usual hours with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength, of wholesome quality and well prepared and served.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

22. (1) At every institution there shall be available the services of at least one qualified medical officer who should have some knowledge of psychiatry. The medical services should be organized in close relationship to the general health administration of the community or nation. They shall include a psychiatric service for the diagnosis and, in proper cases, the treatment of states of mental abnormality. (2) Sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals. Where hospital facilities are provided in an institution, their equipment, furnishings and pharmaceutical supplies shall be proper for the medical care and treatment of sick prisoners, and there shall be a staff of suitable trained officers. (3) The services of a qualified dental officer shall be available to every prisoner.

Source: [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/UN\\_Standard\\_Minimum\\_Rules\\_for\\_the\\_Treatment\\_of\\_Prisoners.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/UN_Standard_Minimum_Rules_for_the_Treatment_of_Prisoners.pdf)

## 2.3. UNITED NATIONS RULES FOR THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN PRISONERS AND NON-CUSTODIAL MEASURES FOR WOMEN OFFENDERS (THE BANGKOK RULES)

### I. Rules of General Application

#### 1. Basic Principles

**RULE 2:** 1. Adequate attention shall be paid to the admission procedures for women and children, due to their particular vulnerability at this time. Newly arrived women prisoners shall be provided with facilities to contact their relatives; access to legal advice; information about prison rules and regulations, the prison regime and where to seek help when in need in a language that they understand; and, in the case of foreign nationals, access to consular representatives as well. 2. Prior to or on admission, women with caretaking responsibilities for children shall be permitted to make arrangements for those children, including the possibility of a reasonable suspension of detention, taking into account the best interests of the children.

#### 4. Allocation

- **RULE 4:** Women prisoners shall be allocated, to the extent possible, to prisons close to their home or place of social rehabilitation, taking account of their caretaking responsibilities...

#### 5. Personal Hygiene

- **RULE 6(C):** The health screening of women prisoners shall include comprehensive screening to determine primary health care needs....

## 7. Safety

### (a) Searches

- **RULE 21:** Prison staff shall demonstrate competence, professionalism and sensitivity and shall preserve respect and dignity when searching both children in prison with their mother and children visiting prisoners.

### (b) Discipline and Punishment

- **RULE 23:** Disciplinary sanctions for women prisoners shall not include a prohibition of family contact, especially with children.

## 8. Contact with the outside world

- **RULE 26:** Women prisoners' contact with their families, including their children, their children's guardians and legal representatives shall be encouraged and facilitated by all reasonable means. Where possible, measures shall be taken to counterbalance disadvantages faced by women detained in institutions located far from their homes.
- **RULE 28:** Visits involving children shall take place in an environment that is conducive to a positive visiting experience, including with regard to staff attitudes, and shall allow open contact between mother and child. Visits involving extended contact with children should be encouraged, where possible.

## II. Rules applicable to special categories

### A. Prisoners under sentence; 3. Pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and mothers with children in prison:

- **RULE 49:** Decisions to allow children to stay with their mothers in prison shall be based on the best interests of the children. Children in prison with their mothers shall never be treated as prisoners.
- **RULE 52:** 1. Decisions as to when a child is to be separated from its mother shall be based on individual assessments and the best interests of the child within the scope of relevant national laws. 2. The removal of the child from prison shall be undertaken with sensitivity, only when alternative care arrangements for the child have been identified and, in the case of foreign-national prisoners, in consultation with consular officials. 3. After children are separated from their mothers and placed with family or relatives or in other alternative care, women prisoners shall be given the maximum possible opportunity and facilities to meet with their children, when it is in the best interests of the children and when public safety is not compromised.

## III. Non-custodial measures

- **RULE 58:** Taking into account the provisions of Rule 2.3 of the Tokyo Rules, women offenders shall not be separated from their families and communities without due consideration being

given to their backgrounds and family ties. Alternative ways of managing women who commit offences, such as diversionary measures and pretrial and sentencing alternatives, shall be implemented wherever appropriate and possible.

- **RULE 61:** When sentencing women offenders, courts shall have the power to consider mitigating factors such as lack of criminal history and relative nonseverity and nature of the criminal conduct, in the light of women's caretaking responsibilities and typical backgrounds.

## 1. POST-SENTENCING DISPOSITIONS

- **RULE 63:** Decisions regarding early conditional release (parole) shall favourably take into account women prisoners' caretaking responsibilities, as well as their specific social reintegration needs.

## 2. PREGNANT WOMEN AND WOMEN WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

- **RULE 64:** Non-custodial sentences for pregnant women and women with dependent children shall be preferred where possible and appropriate, with custodial sentences being considered when the offence is serious or violent or the woman represents a continuing danger, and after taking into account the best interests of the child or children, while ensuring that appropriate provision has been made for the care of such children.

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-16.pdf>

## 2.4. UNITED NATIONS BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

1. All prisoners shall be treated with the respect due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.
2. Except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and, where the State concerned is a party, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, as well as such other rights as are set out in other United Nations covenants.
3. Prisoners shall have access to the health services available in the country without discrimination on the grounds of their legal situation.

Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/BasicPrinciplesTreatmentOfPrisoners.aspx>

**INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN**  
**FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN**

[www.iranhumanrights.org](http://www.iranhumanrights.org)

## INSIDE THE WOMEN'S WARD: MISTREATMENT OF WOMEN POLITICAL PRISONERS AT IRAN'S EVIN PRISON

is a new International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran report that reveals, through testimony obtained from the inmates themselves, the brutal conditions female political prisoners in Iran face. Some twenty-five women are known to be held in this ward—all convicted in sham trials for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and belief. The report shines a spotlight on the conditions inside the ward: deplorable medical care that leaves these women with permanently broken health, the denial of family visitation and telephone rights, even for inmates who are mothers of young children, substandard food, and lack of heat. The report also presents extensive excerpts from Iran's State Prison Procedures, showing these conditions violate Iran's own laws. Inside the Women's Ward breaks the silence surrounding the unlawful imprisonment and inhumane incarceration conditions of these women.

From *Inside the Women's Ward*:

"When we were in prison we were very careful not to organize any group protests that would affect the mothers because they were the first ones to get punished by cutting visits with their kids. It was a cruel way of silencing the Women's Ward."

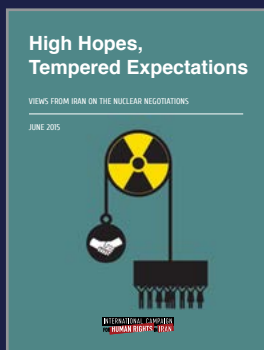
"Sanitary and health conditions are a disaster. The infirmary has dispensed wrong medications with total impunity."

"The process for transferring patients to outside medical facilities can take nine months to a year, depending on how critical their condition is. Even then the officials often break their promises..."

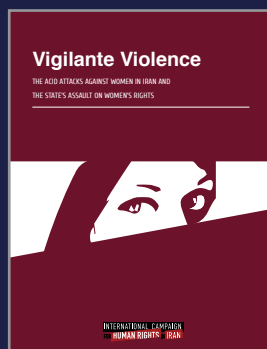
*Inside the Women's Ward: Mistreatment of Women Political Prisoners at Iran's Evin Prison* reveals the terrible price these brave women are paying for expressing views the authorities disapprove of, and what the criminalization of peaceful dissent truly means.

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