

# MEMO

July 23, 2015

## Iran Continues Cruel Human Rights Abuses

The Iranian government, under Ayatollah Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani, remains one of the world's most oppressive regimes. On July 22, American citizen Jason Rezaian marked one year in prison, where he has been held without due process, and subject to harsh interrogation, and long periods of solitary confinement. He is one of four Americans currently held in Iran. An Amnesty International Report, released on July 23, shows that Iran has executed significantly more people, many without a lawful judicial process, than its official government statistics indicate. Last month, The State Department issued its annual Country Report on Human Rights, which provides a detailed account of Iran's harsh repression of its own people. The United States must continue to pressure Iran to end its horrific human rights abuses.

Below are excerpts from the State Department report:

### Iran denies basic freedoms and engages in torture, arbitrary arrests, and unlawful killings.

- **Unlawful Killings:** "There were numerous reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings. The government executed 721 persons during the year, according to the NGO Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC), which reported that many trials did not adhere to basic principles of due process."
- **Torturing Prisoners:** "Commonly reported methods of torture and abuse in prisons included prolonged solitary confinement, threats of rape, sexual humiliation, threats of execution, sleep deprivation, electroshock, burnings, the use of pressure positions, and severe and repeated beatings."
- **Arbitrary Arrests:** "Authorities commonly used arbitrary arrests to impede alleged anti regime activities. Plainclothes officers often arrived unannounced at homes or offices, arrested persons, conducted raids, and confiscated private documents, passports, computers, electronic media, and other personal items without warrants or other assurances of due process."



According to a June 25 State Department report, Iran remains one of the world's most repressive regimes.

## **The Iranian regime suppresses any form of dissent by persecuting journalists and political opponents.**

- **Harassment of Journalists:** “The government and its agents harassed, detained, abused, and prosecuted publishers, editors, and journalists, including those involved in internet-based media, for their reporting.”
- **Suppressing Political Opposition:** “The government maintained bans on several opposition organizations and political parties. Security officials continued to harass, intimidate, and arrest members of the political opposition and some reformists.”

## **Iran commits horrific rights abuses against women.**

- **Punishing Rape Victims:** “By law four Muslim men or a combination of three men and two women are required to have witnessed a rape for conviction. A woman or man found making a false accusation of rape is subject to 80 lashes.”
- **Discrimination of Women:** “Discriminatory laws against women continued to be introduced. The 2013 revised Islamic penal code, which came into force in June 2013, retains provisions that value a woman’s testimony in a court of law as half that of a man’s, and a woman’s life as half that of a man’s.”
- **Early and Forced Marriage:** “The legal minimum age of marriage for girls is 13, but girls as young as nine may be married with permission from the court. The law requires court approval for the marriage of boys younger than 15. According to UN statistics, at least 48,580 girls between the ages of 10 and 14 were married in 2011, all but 13 of whom reportedly had at least one child before they reached 15.”

## **Iran discriminates against LGBT individuals and ethnic minority groups.**

- **Violence and Discrimination against LGBT Iranians:** “The law criminalizes consensual same-sex sexual activity, which is punishable by death, flogging, or a lesser punishment. The law does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Security forces harassed, arrested, and detained individuals they suspected of being gay. In some cases security forces raided houses and monitored internet sites for information on LGBT persons.”
- **Targeting Ethnic Minorities:** “The government disproportionately targeted minority groups, including Kurds, Arabs, Azeris, and Baluchis, for arbitrary arrest, prolonged detention, and physical abuse. These groups reported political and socioeconomic discrimination, particularly in their access to economic aid, business licenses, university admissions, permission to publish books, and housing and land rights.”