

Briefing

Silencing the Streets, Deaths in Prison

The December 2017 Crackdown in Iran



Center for
**HUMAN
RIGHTS**
in Iran

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About us

The **Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI)** is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of human rights in Iran. CHRI 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 and videos, and work to build support for human rights inside Iran as well. CHRI 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.

Executive Summary

The unrest that erupted throughout Iran in late December 2017 was met with a state response that was notable for its harshness and disregard for the law. While street protests critical of the state are typically suppressed in Iran and its leaders likely to be jailed, the violence of the state response and the proportion of arrests to protesters was singularly high during this recent unrest. According to Iranian official estimates, some 4,970 people were arrested during the weeklong protests, out of a number of protestors estimated at 42,000 by the authorities. Officials openly spoke of “preventative” arrests, undertaken to preempt further disturbances. Detainees were denied access to attorneys and threatened with more serious charges if they sought counsel. Detainees were kept in overcrowded prisons and deprived of food for 24-hour periods, and there is credible evidence that some were beaten. There are also reliable reports that detainees were administered pills of an unknown substance, as well as methadone, without the presence of a doctor, in what appears to be a concerted attempt to depict the detainees as drug addicts. Most disturbingly, at least two detainees died between December 2017 and January 2018. In February, a third detainee, whose arrest was unrelated to the protests, also died in custody. Their quick burial without an investigation or autopsy and official claims that the deaths were “suicides,” as well as pressure by state authorities on family members not to speak publicly, all suggest a concerted attempt to cover up egregious ill-treatment of the prisoners.

Taken together, this state response to the unrest that erupted in towns and cities across Iran in late December 2017 suggests that the space for permissible protest and dissent is narrowing in Iran, and that state security, judicial and prison officials are willing and able to act with increasing disregard for the law with complete impunity. It is the responsibility of the State Prisons Organization, and the Judiciary to which it reports, to safeguard the well-being of all detainees in Iran. It is the responsibility of the Judiciary to guarantee due process in all aspects of the prosecutorial process, and the responsibility of the Rouhani administration to protect the rights of the citizens of Iran. The international community should hold the authorities in Iran accountable for these rights violations, by directly raising credible evidence of violations with their Iranian counterparts, and stressing in their broader dialogues with the Iranian authorities the imperative of the fundamental rights of due process, peaceful dissent, and freedom of assembly and expression in the Islamic Republic.

Recommendations

To the authorities in Iran

- > Administration and judicial officials should state and defend the permissibility of peaceful protest, which is a fundamental right protected by Iranian and international law, and the authorities should not engage in excessive force if crowd control is necessary.
- > All detainees should be publicly charged within 24 hours and should have full and immediate access to the counsel of their choice, regardless of suspicion or charge, as these rights are integral to their fundamental right to due process.
- > Detainees should be protected from any physical coercion during interrogations or harm during detention; doctors should be present during the administration of any medicines to detainees; and any injury or illness that occurs during detention should be immediately and properly treated by the prison medical facilities or, if necessary, by hospital.
- > Families should be able to visit any detainee according to regular visitation rights as delineated in Iran's State Prisons Organization Regulations.
- > Any death that occurs in custody should require a publicly available report by the medical examiner, and, if requested by the deceased's family or lawyer, an independent autopsy, the results of which should be released to the family and the public. This requirement should be codified in Iran's State Prisons Organization Regulations, which currently do not provide for accountability into deaths that occur during detention.
- > Burials and funerals are the right and prerogative of the families and the authorities should not dictate the terms of funerals or carry out burials before making sure the families have exercised all their rights to determine the cause of death.
- > The authorities should mount independent investigations into the death of any protestors on the streets or in detention.
- > The authorities should allow the UN special rapporteur to enter Iran, visit and investigate the prisons in the country, and report on the conditions therein.

To the international community

- > Governments worldwide, especially EU member states which are involved in substantive dialogue with the authorities in Iran, should raise directly with their Iranian counterparts their concerns over the repression of peaceful dissent in Iran, and their expectations regarding protections for peaceful protest in Iran, the provision of full due process during arrest and prosecution, and the protection of detainees' safety and well-being.
- > The UN high commissioner for human rights should press the Iranian authorities to cooperate fully with the UN special mechanisms, in particular, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran.



The protests that erupted throughout Iran in December 2017 were met with a state response notable for its severity and disregard for judicial procedure. The intensity of the crackdown indicates that the band of permissible dissent in Iran is narrowing.

Beginning in the northwestern city of Mashhad with a crowd chanting slogans against the government of President Hassan Rouhani—demonstrations which supporters of Rouhani say were organized by the president’s adversaries—the protests quickly spread to dozens of other towns and cities across Iran and took on a far broader anti-government tone.

The swift and violent suppression of the unrest, and the casualties that have accumulated so far amongst the protestors taken into custody suggests that freedom of assembly and expression and the rule of law are deteriorating in the country. In particular, there is grave concern for the remaining detainees in Iran—several hundred of whom may still be in custody from the thousands that were initially arrested during the weeklong protests.



The state crackdown that crushed the protests that erupted across Iran in late December 2017 was marked by an unusually high degree of violence and disregard for the law.

The unrest ultimately involved an estimated 42,000 protestors, according to Iran's minister of the interior.¹ Even if this is an underestimate, it is significantly smaller in scale than the 2009 protests that followed the disputed re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, when several million came out into the streets to protest peacefully.

Yet the nature of the recent unrest has been far more intense: The “where is my vote?” and calls for reform that characterized the 2009 protests were replaced with a more fundamental rejection of the entire political system in Iran and its leaders, whether reformist or conservative, including calls for the ouster of the normally untouchable Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

This rejection has been driven by poor economic conditions, especially unemployment; state corruption, which has been increasingly uncovered and shared via social media in Iran; and environmental mismanagement so severe that it has left many towns bereft of water and uninhabitable, its residents forced to move to cities where they join the ranks of the unemployed.

State response to unrest quickly turns violent

The protests, which began on December 28, 2017, were quickly met with state violence.

“In the beginning, the protests were peaceful and the slogans were about high prices and economic corruption,” an eyewitness in Nishabour, 80 miles south of Mashhad, told CHRI on December 28. “But towards the end, baton-wielding police attacked the crowd from both sides of the street and arrested some people.”²

Initially, police forces responded to the unrest by physically trying to disperse the crowds with tear gas and water cannons, but soon after they began making arrests, the confrontation between the police and the protestors grew violent.

“The police violently attacked us with batons, fists, and kicks, and we threw stones at them. We did everything we could. It was an uprising. It’s just the beginning. We cannot hold back because we cannot feed our families with silence,” a protester in Kermanshah told CHRI on December 29.³

Number of arrests skyrockets

The scale of arrests made by the police was also far above the norm for Iran. There were an estimated 4,972 arrests in the course of the week-long unrest, according to Iranian officials.⁴ This represents well over 10 percent of the protestors. Most of the individuals arrested were released within a few days, yet this is still a far higher proportion arrested than in 2009. While there were some protestors who were violent, the majority of the protestors during the recent unrest were demonstrating peacefully.

The authorities also spoke openly of “preventative arrests” during the recent state crackdown. In other words, many individuals (typically student activists) were not breaking any law but were arrested so that they—or others—would not do so in the future.

“As my duty, I followed up the case of detained students. The authorities said that the detentions were generally a preventive measure. They promised many of the detainees will be released tomorrow. I hope that the officials will show tolerance and this trend will continue.”

--Tweeted by MP Farid Mousavi on January 5, 2018⁵

This is a blatant violation of Iranian law and international standards, and the authorities' willingness to speak openly of it suggests an unusually flippant disregard for the rule of law.⁶

Deaths in custody

The treatment of the detainees is especially troubling. Iran has a long and documented history of detainee abuse but there are disturbing signs that the ill-treatment of detainees has significantly worsened.⁷ Two known deaths occurred among detainees in Iran between December 2017 and January 2018. While deaths have occurred before in Iranian prisons, it is exceedingly rare to have two deaths occur in custody in the course of roughly one week. Another death occurred in custody a month later, in February 2018, but the third victim's arrest was unrelated to the protests.

Vahid Heydari, 22, died in detention at the 12th Police Station in the city of Arak, Central Province, sometime between the closing days of December 2017 and the beginning of January 2018. The authorities claimed he was a drug addict who committed suicide—a claim that the family has vehemently denied and for which there is little credible evidence.

“One of his relatives who had seen his body told me that there was a deep gash on the top of the left side of his head,” civil rights activist Ali Bagheri told CHRI on January 11. “It was as if he had been struck with an ax. Nobody commits suicide like this.”⁸

Heydari's lawyer, Mohammad Najafi, told CHRI that the authorities were trying to cover up the real reason for Heydari's death by claiming he committed suicide. “This young man was a protester,” said Najafi. “They arrested him and then they beat and killed him. Now they want to destroy his reputation.”⁹

Another detainee who officials claimed committed suicide, Sina Ghanbari, 23, was arrested on December 31, 2017, during protests in Tehran and taken to Evin Prison. A week later, judicial officials claimed he hung himself in the bathroom of the prison's quarantine unit on January 6, 2018. His body was delivered to his family on January 9.

Questioning how a person could kill himself in the overcrowded quarantine unit, where new detainees are held before being transferred to their assigned ward, the Iranian reformist journalist Issa Saharkhiz told the New York Times on January 14, “There is so much traffic in those latrines, it almost seems impossible for any detainee to go inside the latrines and hang himself.... This must be investigated.”¹⁰

These prison deaths and their subsequent depiction as suicides appear to be

part of an intensifying trend. Officials also claimed that Kavous Seyed-Emami, a 63-year-old Iranian-Canadian academic and environmentalist who was arrested on January 24, 2018 along with several other current and former staff members at the Persian Heritage Wildlife Foundation which he managed, committed suicide in Evin Prison by hanging himself on February 9. His detention was unrelated to the protests. His family was pressured not to speak to the media and he was buried on February 13.

So high are concerns inside in Iran for the detainees that a lawyer in Iran's Kurdistan Province felt compelled to declare his client healthy before allowing him to be examined by state medical staff. "His life is in the hands of the State Prisons Organization and he has no intention of committing suicide," Hossein Ahmadianiaz told CHRI on January 20, 2018.¹¹

Denial of counsel

In addition, CHRI has learned of numerous denials of due process regarding the detainees. CHRI has spoken directly to three attorneys representing arrested individuals and to the family members of many detainees, together representing dozens of detainees who have since been released.

During these discussions, CHRI was informed that the authorities were preventing lawyers from meeting with the detainees and that the detainees were repeatedly told that they should not seek legal counsel, or their situation "will be worse." CHRI learned of multiple occasions where the detainees were directly warned that they would "get harsher sentences" if they sought counsel.

CHRI has also learned from released detainees, family members of the detainees, and activists and lawyers inside Iran that in a number of towns in provinces such as Hamedan and Khuzestan, authorities have threatened detainees with the severest of charges such as moharebeh (an "enemy of God") which can carry a death sentence.¹² While such charges may well end up being dropped, this appears to be part of a larger pattern to frighten detainees and families of detainees into silence and to stop them from seeking counsel and legal recourse.

A campaign of intimidation against the families

CHRI has learned that the families of the detainees who died in custody have also been subjected to what can only be described as an intense campaign of intimidation aimed at maintaining their silence. They have been told not to speak to media and not to seek counsel and threatened that the detainee will be given a harsher sentence if they do.

Some family members of protesters killed during the street protests have relayed directly to CHRI that intelligence agents were present at the funerals. In the past, videos of politically sensitive funerals have gone viral on Iranian social media, as family and community members use the occasion to speak out against the deaths.¹³ The current state security presence at the funerals appears to be an attempt to monitor what is being said and recorded to preempt this.

In addition, when a number of families gathered at the prisons, demanding more information on detainees still being held, the charges under which they were being detained, and the ability to visit them, they were threatened with arrest.

Ill-treatment in the prisons

Meanwhile, evidence of ill-treatment inside the prisons has mounted. The prisons are severely overcrowded. Sources inside Evin Prison in Tehran and Rajaei Shahr Prison in Karaj told CHRI in early January 2018 that existing inmates were transferred to different wards in order to make room for the huge influx of detainees, and that inmates were sleeping on the floors due to overcrowding.

There have also been reports that detainees were subjected to periods of food deprivation. For example, the Committee to Follow Up on the Arrests, a group of local journalists and activists inside Iran who have been reporting on the treatment of the detainees through a series of tweets, stated:

"Another problem was the lack of food for the detainees at law enforcement agencies, to the extent that some of the detainees reported missing [food for] 24 hours."

--Tweeted by Mehdi Mahmoudian, Committee to Follow Up on the Arrests¹⁴

There were also multiple reports of detainees emerging from the prisons with visible bruises and other signs of physical abuse. For example, Mahmoudian wrote in a tweet:

"Police in most detention centers did not behave properly with the detainees, and most detainees report the abusive behaviors...some of the detainees have been severely beaten."

--Tweeted by Mehdi Mahmoudian, Committee to Follow Up on the Arrests¹⁵

Campaign to discredit the victims

There is also significant evidence that the authorities have been trying to discredit the protesters by claiming they are drug addicts. For example, the Committee to Follow Up on the Arrests revealed in a series of tweets that prison authorities gave

detainees pills containing unknown substances and also improperly administered methadone, and that interrogators told detainees that if they asked for methadone they would be released sooner.¹⁶

Apart from the issue of unlawful coercion, under the State Prisons Organization Regulations, methadone is only to be dispensed under medical supervision. Yet in this case, the detainees were reportedly encouraged to ask for the methadone and then immediately given it, potentially endangering their lives. These reports were corroborated by other sources.

Mahmoud Sadeghi, a reformist MP representing Tehran, tweeted after Sina Ghanbari had died that the young man had told his parents that protesters were being forced to take pills.

“Based on statements by the relatives of one of the detainees who died in prison, he had contacted them from prison several times to say that he and the detainees were being forced to take some pills that made them sick,” Sadeghi said on January 16.¹⁷

Prominent human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh told CHRI, in a phone interview on January 17 from Tehran where she resides, that her conversations with several detainees in Evin Prison had led her to suspect a systematic attempt to “paint the protesters as addicts.”¹⁸

“Before meeting a prison official in one of the rooms, security agents talked to the detainees in advance and recommended that if the official asked if they needed anything, they should say they are addicts and ask for methadone so that they would be freed sooner,” she added. “One of the prisoners told me that he did not fall for it but some of the others did agree to say it [that they are addicts].”

Sotoudeh noted that officials are legally responsible for the health and well-being of detainees regardless of their medical condition:

“It must be emphasized that the law does not care if detainees are addicts or not.... They are in the hands of judicial authorities, who are responsible for their lives. In other words, whether the addiction branding project is true or not, the judiciary is responsible for what happens to detainees in custody.”

Sotoudeh, who spent three years in prison after being convicted on national security charges for defending political prisoners, called for an independent investigation of the cases involving detainees who died in custody.

“An independent committee should investigate the veracity of these claims because such acts are clear violations of basic human rights,” Sotoudeh said.

No accountability or effective grievance mechanisms

For all of the above violations—unlawful arrests, denials of due process, ill-treatment and deaths in the prisons—there are few effective grievance mechanisms in Iran.

Regarding deaths in custody, the regulatory framework for Iran's State Prisons Organization, which is responsible for prisoners and reports to the Judiciary, is deeply lacking in terms of accountability for deaths in custody. There is no mandatory investigation or autopsy, or requirement that a medical examiner's report be available for review, when a death occurs in custody.¹⁹

Families can try to press their cases in court, but with the Iranian Judiciary's demonstrated lack of independence from the country's security and intelligence agencies, accountability through the courts is an unpromising course. In cases where intelligence officials, interrogators or prison guards are subjected to investigation or charges, the judiciary typically protects their own. For example, there was little if any accountability for the well-documented torture and deaths that occurred in custody in the wake of the mass detentions that followed the 2009 protests against the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.²⁰

Iranian legal experts have noted that an autopsy may be carried out with the permission of a judge to determine the cause of death. This may be undertaken at the request of the victim's parents or without, if it is in the public interest; if this is determined to be necessary by the judge, then the medical examiner is required to carry it out.²¹ However, this requires either the family taking the case to the courts, or a judge acting on his own initiative in the "public interest," both of which are undermined by the above-mentioned issue of the lack of independence of the Judiciary.

Families can also ask the Iranian Parliament's Article 90 Commission, which is charged with investigating public complaints regarding Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary, and which can send inspectors to conduct investigations to deal with such complaints, to investigate the deaths.²² However, the efficacy of the Article 90 Commission as a public grievance mechanism is limited by the fact that it has no real enforcement capabilities. Moreover, its track record has been mixed; while at times it has served in an investigative capacity, its activities are dependent upon the political proclivities of its members at any given time. The Judiciary has not proven to be particularly responsive to the Article 90 Commission's questions or criticism in the past.²³

Prominent Iranian human rights defenders ask for an end to the culture of impunity

The violent suppression of the protests, unlawful arrests, numerous reports of due process violations and mounting evidence of egregious prisoner ill-treatment have resulted in growing concerns among the Iranian public, MPs and human rights activists.

On January 3, Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi and five other prominent Iranian human rights lawyers called for the prosecution of state officials who encouraged violence against the protesters.²⁴

“We demand the immediate termination and independent prosecution of officials whose statements have had a critical impact on inciting emotions and violence during the people’s lawful and peaceful demonstrations,” said the lawyers in a joint statement.

The human rights defenders also called for the release of demonstrators arrested for exercising their right to peaceful assembly, which is guaranteed by Iran’s Constitution.²⁵

On January 22, 155 lawyers in Iran, including Sotoudeh and fellow human rights defenders Abdolfattah Soltani, who is currently serving a 13-year prison sentence for defending political prisoners, and former political prisoner Mohammad Seifzadeh called on Iran’s Judiciary Chief Sadegh Larijani to stop restricting the detainees’ access to legal counsel.²⁶

While the right to counsel is ostensibly protected under Article 35 of the Iranian Constitution,²⁷ the Note to Article 48 of Iran’s Criminal Procedure Regulations states: “If a person is held in custody on suspicion of committing ... a crime against the internal or external security of the country... he shall not meet a lawyer for a week from the time of his arrest.”²⁸

Detainees suspected of committing such crimes are also prevented—before the charge is proven—from choosing a lawyer of their choice. The Note to Article 48 continues: “In cases of crimes against internal or external security...during the investigation phase, the parties to the dispute are to select their attorneys from a list approved by the Head of the Judiciary.”

In the letter to Iran’s head of the Judiciary, the 155 lawyers wrote:

“To help attorneys implement the law and protect the rights of every detainee,

which should certainly be your concern as well, and to resolve past and present problems arising from the Note to Article 48 of the Criminal Procedure Regulations, it is our expectation that you take the necessary steps to help lawyers accept requests to represent the detainees.”

Three days later, 40 MPs wrote to President Rouhani and Judiciary Chief Larijani urging them to immediately release university students detained in the protests.²⁹ More than 40 students were detained in Tehran alone.

The letter came a week and a half after a request by MPs to visit the prisons where detainees were held was denied by the Judiciary and the Intelligence Ministry. However, the judiciary did agree to an inspection of the prison by the Parliamentary Legal and Judicial Affairs Committee. More than a month after thousands of people were arrested during the protests that erupted across the country, 11 MPs were allowed to visit Evin Prison in Tehran for three hours on January 30, 2018. MP Allahyar Malekshahi stated that the parliamentary committee would make a report of findings available to the public.³⁰ No report has of yet been released.

Conclusion

The exact number of detainees from the recent protests remaining in Iranian prisons as of this writing is unknown; as of February 1, Iranian officials put the number at 438.³¹ For those that remain, the charges under which they are being held have not been made public—if they have been made at all, and their well-being and safety is of grave concern. Accountability and justice for those who have fallen victim to state violence during the unrest—either in the streets or in detention—seems a long way off. From arrests to burials, the authorities in Iran have demonstrated a refusal to allow peaceful protest, a willful disregard for due process, a reckless abandonment of their responsibility to respect the safety of citizens and detainees, and a concerted effort to undermine transparency and accountability and cover up rights violations. President Rouhani delivered a Citizens' Rights Charter to great fanfare in 2016, yet the most basic human right, that to life, is being violated with apparent impunity in Iran. Supporters of the rule of law in Iran and the international community must persist in standing with the people of Iran to defend these most fundamental rights.

Endnotes

- 1 “Interior Minister: A Maximum of 42,000 People Participated in the Protests,” Entekhab News, January 4, 2018 <https://tinyurl.com/ya6gp22q>
- 2 “Protestors Shout ‘Death to High Prices’ as Demonstrations Break Out in Three Iranian Cities,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, December 28, 2017 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/12/>
- 3 “Hardline Officials Blame Wave of Protests in Iran on Rouhani Government and Foreign Powers,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, December 29, 2017 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/12/hardline-officials-blame-wave-of-protests-in-iran-on-rouhani-government-and-foreign-powers/>
- 4 “4,972 People were Arrested in the Events of December,” Entekhab, February 2, 2018 <https://tinyurl.com/yazus8oy>
- 5 Tweeted by Farid Sayed Mousavi, January 5, 2018 <https://twitter.com/sfaridmousavi/status/949361610681921538>
- 6 For example, Article 32 of Iran’s Constitution states, “No one may be arrested except by the order and in accordance with the procedure laid down by law” and Article 9 of the ICCPR, to which Iran is a signatory, states, “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.”
- 7 See, for example, the beating death in prison of Sattar Beheshti <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2013/11/sattar-beheshti-2/> and the cancer left untreated in prison of journalist Alireza Rajaei <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/09/journalist-loses-eye-and-part-of-his-face-to-cancer-untreated-while-in-prison/> and physicist Omid Kokabee <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/04/imprisoned-physicist-loses-kidney/>
- 8 “Iran Should Launch Independent Investigation of the Deaths of Two Protesters in Prison,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, January 11, 2018 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/01/iran-should-launch-independent-investigation-of-authorities-claims-that-protesters-committed-suicide/>
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Thomas Erdbrink, “In Iran, Protester ‘Suicides’ Stir Anger and Calls for Accountability,” New York Times, January 14, 2018 <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/14/world/middleeast/iran-protests-deaths.html>
- 11 “Lawyer Worried About Detained Iranian Protesters After Officials Claimed Two Committed Suicide,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, January 22, 2018 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/01/lawyer-worried-about-detained-iranian-protesters-after-officials-claim-two-committed-suicide/>
- 12 “Detainees Arrested in Iranian Protests facing Charges That Carry Death Penalty,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, January 26, 2018 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/01/detainees-arrested-in-iranian-protests-facing-charges-that-carry-death-penalty/>
- 13 See for example, this video of the funeral of Sohrab Arabi, who

was murdered during the 2009 protests in Iran against the disputed re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8qCbgFni3M>

14 Tweeted by Mehdi Mahmoudian, January 21, 2018 <https://twitter.com/MahmoudianMe/status/955159699195822080>

15 Tweeted by Mehdi Mahmoudian, January 21, 2018 <https://twitter.com/MahmoudianMe/status/955159693516853249>

16 For example, see tweet by Mehdi Mahmoudian, January 21, 2018 <https://twitter.com/MahmoudianMe/status/955159702924660737>

17 Tweeted by Mahmoud Sadeghi, January 16, 2018 https://twitter.com/mah_sadeghi/status/953345094215720960

18 “Detained Iranian Protesters Told To Admit to Being Drug Addicts to Speed Up Release,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, January 18, 2018 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/01/detained-iranian-protesters-told-to-admit-being-drug-addicts-to-speed-up-release/>

19 Article 121 of the State Prisons Organization’s regulations states: “When a prisoner dies, the prison’s director is required to immediately inform the relevant local judicial authorities, the medical examiner and the presiding judge. After permission is granted by the judicial authorities, the corpse should be delivered to the family or buried after a funeral. ...”

20 See for example, “Seven years Later No Official Held Accountable for 5 Deaths and Torture of Dozens at Kahrizak,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, October 12, 2016 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/10/mortazavi-kahrizak/>

21 Yousef Mojtahedi, PhD student in criminal law, Mehdi Mojtahedi, Head of Branch 106 of Zanjan Criminal Court, Mehdi Forouzesh, Zanjan medical examiner’s office director, “Armed Forces Judicial Organization,” October 30, 2010 <https://tinyurl.com/yalc7c9g>

22 For the regulations regarding the Article 90 Commission, see: <http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/news/features/3558-internal-regulation-on-the-commission-of-article-90-of-the-constitution.html>

23 See for example the Human Rights Watch report, “Like the Dead in Their Coffin: Torture, Detention and the Crushing of Dissent in Iran,” June 2004 <http://pantheon.hrw.org/reports/2004/iran0604/iran0604.pdf>

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25 See Article 27 of Iran’s Constitution which states, “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.” <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>

26 “155 Lawyers Call on Iran’s Judiciary to Stop Restricting Detainees’ Access to Counsel,” Center for Human Rights in Iran, January 23, 2018

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/01/155-lawyers-call-on-irans-judiciary-to-stop-restricting-detainees-access-to-counsel/>

27 Article 35 of Iran's Constitution states: "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." <http://fis-iran.org/en/resources/legaldoc/constitutionislamic>

28 <http://www.rrk.ir/Files/Laws/Ghanoon%2093.02.03.pdf>

29 "40 Iranian MPs Call for Immediate Release of Detained University Students," Center for Human Rights in Iran, January 26, 2018 <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/01/40-iranian-mps-call-for-immediate-release-of-detained-university-students/>

30 "Parliamentary Delegation Visiting Evin Prison Told 4,534 Were Arrested in Iranian Protests," Center for Human Rights in Iran, February 1, 2018, <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2018/02/parliamentary-delegation-visiting-evin-prison-told-4534-were-arrested-in-iranian-protests/>

31 Ibid.

