

ARCHITECTS OF ATROCITIES

STATE MACHINERY ORCHESTRATING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN IRAN'S 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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Cover illustration: *Artistic rendition combining images from Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, members of Iran's security forces, leaked official documents related to protest repression operations, and segments of organigrams mapping the chains of command examined in this report. The complete organigrams identify 87 officials named by Amnesty International as warranting criminal investigations. Officials depicted on the cover were selected from different national, regional, provincial and county levels solely for illustrative purposes. Their inclusion does not imply any particular level of responsibility compared with other officials named in the report. © Amnesty International*

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GLOSSARY

WORD		DESCRIPTION
1.	**ACTIVE BASIJIS**	A term used in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Recruitment Regulations Law, which divides the personnel of the IRGC entities into official guards and Basijis, and further divides Basijis into ordinary, active and special categories. Active Basijis are "ordinary Basijis who volunteer to be organized… after completing training courses… and collaborate with the IRGC in carrying out assigned missions." Active Basijis are given the option to take part in specific operations in return for financial renumeration. The Persian phrase is *basiji-ye fa'al.*
2.	**ANTI-RIOT BATTALIONS**	The oldest and most established section within the Special Cohorts of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA). Authorities and state media frequently use the umbrella term "Special Cohorts" to refer specifically to the Anti-Riot Battalions. The Persian phrase is *gordanha-ye zed-e shooresh.*
3.	**ARMED FORCES**	A term used by the Iranian authorities to refer to entities authorized to carry firearms either for military operations in armed conflicts or for domestic security operations. As such, the term does not solely denote military bodies as understood in a global context. In this report, except when quoting Iranian authorities directly, Amnesty International uses the broader term "security forces". The Persian phrase for "armed forces" is *nirooha-ye mossallah.*
4.	**ASSISTANCE COHORTS**	A branch of the security forces operating under the Prevention Police of FARAJA, tasked with providing additional support to Prevention Police officers, including during protest dispersal operations. The Persian phrase is *yegan-e emdad*.
5.	***BAGHI***	A sharia term meaning "armed rebellion against the state". Under Iran's Islamic Penal Code, *baghi* is a charge carrying the death penalty.
6.	**BASIJ**	A collective of structures within the IRGC that recruit, train and organize members of the public into Basij battalions and deploy them in security operations. Through these structures, the IRGC seeks to embed its security and ideological apparatus across communities and institutions. The Iranian authorities refer to Basijis as the "popular forces" or the "people's forces" of the IRGC, creating the impression that they are a voluntary paramilitary force. However, in fact, Basijis receive financial compensation for their activities. The term "Basij" in Persian means mobilization.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
7.	**BASIJ RESISTANCE BASE**	The smallest unit of the Basij structure in the IRGC. Most Basij Resistance Bases are established within neighbourhoods, often in mosques or their immediate vicinity serving as local centres for Basij recruitment, organization and mobilization. The Persian phrase is *paygah-e moghavemat-e basij*.
8.	**BASIJ RESISTANCE DOMAIN**	Basij units that oversee and coordinate several Basij Resistance Bases under the command of a Basij Resistance Sector Corps. The Persian phrase is *howzeh moghavemat-e basij*.
9.	**BASIJ RESISTANCE SECTOR CORPS**	A Basij structure which functions as the enforcement arm of the IRGC's provincial corps at the county level, implementing their policies and orders within cities and neighbourhoods, including in the repression of protests. Basij Resistance Sector Corps comprise various Basij battalions and are responsible for organizing, training and maintaining their operational readiness for security operations. The Persian phrase is *sepah-e nahiyeh-ye moghavemat-e basij*.
10.	**BASIJ-E MOSTAZA'FIN ORGANIZATION**	An organization within the IRGC comprising dozens of subsidiary sector-specific Basij organizations spanning educational, industrial, agricultural, administrative, judicial, medical and religious fields. The Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization and its subsidiary organizations promote the ideologies of the Islamic Republic system, oversee the ideological training of personnel within state institutions, and reinforce surveillance and compliance with the political system. They also seek to recruit Basij members from among employees of public sector institutions, state-owned enterprises, banks, municipalities and other entities. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e basij-e mostaza'fin*.
11.	**BATTALION**	An operational formation of FARAJA, the IRGC or the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army). It is smaller than a brigade, but larger than a company. The Persian word is *gordan*.
12.	**BOROUGH**	A subdivision of a city in Iran. The Persian word is *mantagheh*.
13.	**BRIGADE**	An operational formation of the security forces smaller than a division, but larger than a battalion. The Persian word is *teep*.
14.	**CENTRAL IMAM ALI HEADQUARTERS**	A national headquarters based in Tehran, overseeing the development of the IRGC's Imam Ali Battalions across the country, ensuring they are uniformly equipped and trained. The Persian phrase is *gharargah-e markazi-ye imam ali*.
15.	**COHORT**	Amnesty International has used "cohort" to translate the Persian term *yegan*, which does not have an equivalent in standard terminology in English for the names of units in a military organization. The term typically refers to an operational formation that is smaller than a brigade, but larger than a battalion.
16.	**COMBAT BULLET**	A term commonly used by the Iranian authorities as well as the public to refer to lethal ammunition fired from firearms. The Persian phrase is *goloule-ye jangi*.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
17.	**COMMAND CENTRE**	A term used in Iranian military and security structures to refer to a command headquarters responsible for directing and coordinating operations. The Persian word is *farmandehi*.
18.	**COMMAND STAFF OF THE SPECIAL COHORTS**	The command body of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, based in Tehran and headed by the national commander of the Special Cohorts, through which superior commanders communicate orders to subordinate units. Similar command staff exist at the provincial level, headed by the provincial commander of the Special Cohorts. The Persian phrase is *setad-e farmandehi yeganha-ye vijeh*.
19.	**COMPANY**	An operational formation of the security forces smaller than a battalion. The Persian word is *gorouhan*.
20.	**COMPULSORY VEILING**	The legal requirement imposed on women and girls to cover their hair with a headscarf. Under Article 638 of Iran's Islamic Penal Code, any act that is deemed "offensive" to public decencies is punished with an imprisonment term of 10 days to two months, or 74 lashes. An explanatory note to this article provides that women appearing in public without compulsory veiling may face imprisonment of 10 days to two months or a cash fine. The law applies to girls from the age of nine, though in practice authorities have imposed compulsory veiling on girls from the age of seven. The Persian word is *hijab-e ejbari*.
21.	**COORDINATION DEPUTY**	A deputy within FARAJA or the IRGC at the national or provincial level responsible for overseeing all FARAJA or IRGC units within their geographic area of responsibility. The Persian phrase is *moaven-e hamahang-konandeh*.
22.	**COUNTY**	A second-level administrative division in Iran, below a province. Counties generally comprise one city and several towns and villages and must have a population of at least 80,000. The Persian word is *shahrestan*.
23.	**COUNTY GOVERNOR**	A representative of the Ministry of Interior at the county level. They are appointed by the minister of interior upon recommendation of the provincial governor, who is their immediate superior. The Persian word is *farmandar*.
24.	**DISTRICT**	A third-level administrative division in Iran. It is a subdivision of a county, with a population of at least 20,000. The Persian word is *bakhsh*.
25.	**DIVISION**	An operational formation of the security forces typically larger than a brigade. The Persian word is *lashkar*.
26.	***DIYEH***	A sharia term meaning "blood money", which is financial compensation paid to the victim or their next of kin in the cases of murder or bodily harm, generally in exchange for the victim or their next of kin to forgo *qesas* (retribution in-kind).
27.	***EFSAD-E FEL ARZ***	A sharia term meaning "corruption on earth"; a charge carrying the death penalty under Iran's Islamic Penal Code.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
28.	FARAJA	Iran's police force, formally titled the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran. FARAJA is the Persian acronym of *farmandehi-ye entezami-ye jomhoori-ye eslami-ye iran*.
29.	GENERAL COMMAND STAFF OF FARAJA	The central command staff and headquarters of FARAJA, based in Tehran and headed by the general commander of FARAJA. The Persian phrase is *setad-e farmandehi-ye kol-e entezami*.
30.	GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES	The body that oversees and has command authority over the four entities collectively referred to under Iranian law as the "armed organizations" or "armed forces". These entities are the Army, the IRGC, FARAJA and the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Formerly named the Command Staff of All Armed Forces, it operates under the command of the Supreme Leader and is responsible for determining the overall policies and strategies of the armed forces. The Persian phrase is *setad-e kol-e nirooha-ye mossallah*.
31.	GROUND RESISTANCE FORCE	A force of the IRGC, consisting of units that operate primarily on land, including those deployed to repress street protests. Since 2008, the Ground Resistance Force has been organized through the IRGC's 32 provincial corps, which are overseen by 11 IRGC regional headquarters. The Ground Resistance Force also includes Special Forces units. In September 2009, the Basij Resistance Force was merged with the IRGC Ground Force to form the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC. It was previously known as the Ground Force (known by its Persian acronym, NAZSA). The Persian phrase for Ground Resistance Force is *niroo-ye moghavemat-e zamini-ye sepah*.
32.	GUARDIANSHIP OF THE ISLAMIC JURIST	A foundational principle of the Islamic Republic system in Iran, which grants absolute power to the Supreme Leader. The Persian phrase is *velayat-e faghih*.
33.	HONORARY GUARDS	Members of the Basij who possess the qualifications of official guards and, after completing required training, are organized and commit to being available full-time to the IRGC when needed. They undergo the same training and performance assessments as official guards and receive a monthly allowance based on rank and responsibilities. They are also referred to as special Basijis. The Persian phrase is *pasdaran-e eftekhari*.
34.	INTELLIGENCE OFFICE	An office embedded by Iran's Ministry of Intelligence within a civilian institution such as a university, hospital, bank, government agency, municipality or other public or private organization. A network of these offices monitor, control and ensure compliance with state policies and ideology and play a key role in enforcing the political ideology of the Islamic Republic system through surveillance and suppression of dissent. The Persian word is *herasat*.
35.	INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION OF FARAJA	An entity within FARAJA gathering and analysing intelligence and providing intelligence support for FARAJA operations. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e ettela'at-e faraja*. It is sometimes referred to as SAFA, the Persian acronym of this phrase.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
36.	**INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION OF THE IRGC**	An IRGC organization responsible for intelligence gathering. It is a parallel organization to the Ministry of Intelligence. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e ettela'at-e sepah-e pasdaran-e enghelab-e eslami.*
37.	**INTELLIGENCE PROTECTION ORGANIZATION OF FARAJA**	An entity within FARAJA responsible for intelligence protection and counterintelligence activities, including preventing dissent, diversion and espionage within FARAJA personnel. It is a different body to the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e hefazat-e ettela'at-e faraja*.
38.	**INTELLIGENCE PROTECTION ORGANIZATION OF THE IRGC**	The counter-intelligence organization of the IRGC. It is tasked with countering espionage within the IRGC, preventing the infiltration of those opposing the IRGC's policies, preventing the leakage of confidential information outside the IRGC and maintaining political and security oversight over the commanders and personnel of the IRGC. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e hefazat-e ettelaat-e sepah-e pasdaran-e enghelab-e eslami.*
39.	**INVESTIGATION POLICE**	A branch of Iran's police force, FARAJA. The Persian phrase is *polis-e agahi*.
40.	**IRGC**	The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the most powerful entity within the security apparatus of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its primary custodian. The Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps defines its purpose as "safeguarding the Islamic Revolution of Iran and its achievements" and its mandate includes "struggle against agents and movements" acting against the Islamic Republic system. The Persian phrase is *sepah-e pasdaran-e enghelab-e eslami*.
41.	**IRIB**	Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting is Iran's state-controlled media corporation. Amnesty International has previously documented how the IRIB has been implicated in human rights violations by recording and broadcasting statements obtained through torture and other ill-treatment and other coercive means from victims and their families. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e seda-o-sima-ye jomhoori-ye eslami-ye iran*.
42.	**JUDICIAL OFFICER**	An official permitted, under Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure, to take lawful action to uncover crimes, preserve and gather evidence, identify the accused and conduct investigations. Their actions must be carried out under the supervision and instructions of a prosecutor. They are divided into two categories: general judicial officer (*zabet-e ghazaiee aam* in Persian) and special judicial officer (*zabet-e ghazaiee khas* in Persian*).*
43.	**JUSTICE DEPARTMENT**	Provincial and county level judicial entities that serve as the local arms of the judiciary, overseeing the operations of both courts and prosecution offices. Their heads, appointed by the head of the judiciary, exercise administrative authority over all criminal courts, appeal courts and prosecution offices within their province or county. The Persian word is *dadgostari*.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
44.	**LEGAL MEDICINE ORGANIZATION**	State forensic institute working under the judiciary. The Persian phrase is *sazman-e pezeshki-ye ghanouni*.
45.	**MARFOUK**	A command and control centre, either at the national or provincial level. MARFOUK is the Persian acronym of *markaz-e farmandehi va control*.
46.	**MARTYR**	In the Iranian context, the term "martyr" has both official and unofficial meanings with significant legal and political implications. A state-recognized "martyr" is typically defined as someone whose death is attributed by the authorities to hostile non-state actors or seen as collateral damage incurred during security operations carried out to defend the Islamic Republic system. The designation can entitle victims' families to *diyeh* (blood money) and other welfare benefits. Victims' families may also use the term independently as an act of resistance, which authorities often suppress. The Persian word is *shaheed*.
47.	***MOHAREB***	A sharia term meaning "individual waging war against God". Under Iran's Islamic Penal Code, a person convicted of waging war against God is punishable by death.
48.	***MOHAREBEH***	A sharia term meaning "waging war against God", a charge carrying the death penalty under Iran's Islamic Penal Code.
49.	***MONAFEGHIN***	A sharia term meaning "hypocrites". Since the 1980s, it has been used by the Iranian authorities as a pejorative epithet to refer to members and supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI).
50.	**NATIONAL PROSECUTOR GENERAL**	The highest-ranking public prosecutor in Iran's judiciary, appointed by the head of the judiciary, with oversight of prosecution offices nationwide. The Persian phrase is *dadsetan-e kol-e keshvar*.
51.	**NOPO**	The section of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA responsible for "counterterrorism" operations. The Persian acronym NOPO stands for either *nirooha-ye vijeh pasdar-e velayat* (Guardians of the Islamic Jurist Special Forces) or *nirooha-ye vijeh pad vahshat* (Anti-Terror Special Forces). According to official statements, members undergo specialized training.
52.	**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY GOVERNOR**	The administrative office in a county, headed by the county governor, which falls under the Ministry of Interior and oversees the implementation of government policies and administration within a county. The Persian word is *farmandari*.
53.	**OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPALITY**	A local public administrative body headed by a mayor and responsible for managing municipal affairs and provision of municipal services within a city. The Persian word is *shahrdari*.
54.	**OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR**	The administrative office in a province, headed by the provincial governor, which falls under the Ministry of Interior and oversees the implementation of government policies and administration within a province. The Persian word is *ostandari*.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
55.	**OFFICIAL GUARD**	Personnel employed by the IRGC who, after completing the necessary training courses, attain one of the ranks specified in law and use military uniforms and insignia. Operational divisions or brigades of IRGC provincial corps are primarily composed of official guards. The Persian phrase is *pasdar-e rasmi*.
56.	**OPERATIONAL DIVISION**	A unit within each IRGC provincial corps, generally referred to by the authorities and state media as part of the combat or military forces of the IRGC Ground Resistance Force. Their specific mandate is not defined in any publicly available laws and regulations. However, official statements and state media reports indicate that the authorities define the mandate broadly, encompassing both combat functions in the context of armed conflict and security operations carried out in response to "threats" against "internal security". The Persian phrase is *lashkar-e amaliyati*.
57.	**OPERATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**	Subsidiary command centres within Iranian military and security structures, assigned to specific regions. The Persian phrase is *gharargah-e amaliyati*.
58.	**OPERATIONS DEPUTY**	A deputy within FARAJA or the IRGC at national or provincial level mandated with "directing all operational and mission-related areas" and ensuring the "timely implementation of command decisions and the successful execution of operations". The Persian phrase is *moaven-e amaliyat*.
59.	**ORDINARY BASIJIS**	A term used in the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law, which divides Basijis into ordinary, active and special categories. Ordinary Basijis are described as individuals from various segments of society who believe in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the goals of the Islamic Revolution and, after completing general training, are organized within the Basij. The Persian phrase is *basiji-ye adi.*
60.	**PEOPLE'S MOJAHEDIN ORGANIZATION OF IRAN (PMOI)**	A banned opposition group, also known as Mojahedin-e Khalgh (MEK), that advocates for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic system. Thousands of its members and supporters were subjected to enforced disappearance and summary, arbitrary or extrajudicial executions in the 1980s. The group is based outside Iran.
61.	**POLICE**	In policing contexts, the Iranian authorities use "police" to refer to FARAJA. The Persian word is *entezami*.
62.	**POLICE DISTRICT**	An area generally corresponding to a county. The Persian phrase is *mantagheh-ye entezami*.
63.	**POLICE SECTOR**	An area generally corresponding to a province. The Persian phrase is *nahiyeh-ye entezami*.
64.	**POLICE STATION**	A local FARAJA base at the district level. Districts may have one or several police stations, which operate under the Prevention Police of FARAJA. The Persian word is *kalantari*.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
65.	**PREVENTION POLICE**	The largest branch of FARAJA, responsible for regular policing functions across the country. It oversees the establishment and functioning of police stations and security posts, and comprises multiple sections, including the Assistance Cohorts. The Persian phrase is *polis-e pishgiri*.
66.	**PROVINCE**	Iran is geographically divided into 31 provinces, which vary in size and population and are further subdivided into counties. The Persian word is *ostan*.
67.	**PROVINCIAL CAPITAL**	The capital city of a province, typically its largest city. The Persian phrase is *markaz-e ostan*.
68.	**PROVINCIAL CORPS**	A provincial level unit of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force responsible for military and security operations within a province (or Greater Tehran, which has two corps). Each provincial corps is led by a commander, appointed by the general commander of the IRGC, and reports to a regional IRGC headquarters. Each provincial corps comprises county Basij Resistance Sector Corps and provincial operational divisions or brigades. Many provincial corps also include one or more units known as Security Cohorts. The Persian phrase is *sepah-e ostani*.
69.	**PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR**	A representative of the Ministry of Interior at the provincial level. They are appointed by the president on the proposal of the minister of interior, who is their immediate superior. The Persian word is *ostandar*.
70.	**PROVISION COUNCIL**	A subsidiary security council at the province or county level under Iran's State Security Council, headed by the provincial or county governor. Members include the respective provincial or county IRGC and FARAJA commanders and intelligence officials. Councils monitor security, political and social conditions, define the duties and powers of each organization in relation to the security of the province or county, and implement policies and directives from higher authorities through resolutions enforceable by the council head. The Persian phrase is *shoray-e ta'min*.
71.	**PUBLIC SECURITY POLICE**	A subdivision of Iran's police force, FARAJA. The Persian phrase is *polis-e amniyat-e omoumi*.
72.	**RANGER BRIGADE**	A Special Forces brigade within the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force. These brigades typically have a religious name, sometimes combined with a number, and, according to state media reports, undergo specialized trainings and primarily cover a specific geographic area. The Persian phrase is *teep-e takavar*.
73.	**RANGER COMPANY**	A ranger unit organized within an IRGC provincial corps. The Persian phrase is *gorouhan-e takavar*.
74.	**SECURITY BATTALION**	A term used in official statements to refer to battalions that carry out domestic security operations including protest dispersals. The Persian phrase is *gordan-e amniyati*.

WORD		DESCRIPTION
75.	SECURITY COHORTS	A security unit within an IRGC provincial corps. Official sources indicate that Security Cohorts are organized into several battalions and, in some cases, ranger companies and special operations teams. They are primarily composed of Basij agents but may also include official guards. According to official statements and state media reports, Security Cohorts are tasked with maintaining security in their province, including "countering riots" and protecting public figures and ceremonies. The Persian phrase is *yegan-e amniyati*.
76.	SECURITY POSTS	A FARAJA unit responsible for ensuring order and security typically in rural areas outside of cities and at the district level. The Persian word is *pasgah*.
77.	SEDITION	A term used by Iranian authorities to describe protests, demonstrations or acts of dissent perceived as threatening the Islamic Republic. Individuals or groups labelled as "seditionists" are depicted as acting against the state and linked to foreign actors, generally without any evidence. The term is used to justify repressive measures involving human rights violations. The Persian word for sedition is *fetneh*.
78.	SPECIAL COHORTS	A branch of FARAJA officially described as a specialized force trained to support and enhance regular police operations. Official statements describe its mandate as "combating riots and terrorism" and "confronting terrorists, saboteurs, hostage-takers, and disrupters of order and security." The Persian phrase is *yeganha-ye vijeh*.
79.	SPECIAL FORCE BRIGADE	An elite unit of the IRGC's Special Forces, organized as a brigade. These brigades typically have a religious name, sometimes combined with a number, and usually cover a specific geographic area. The Persian phrase is *teep-e niroo-ye makhsoos*.
80.	SPECIAL FORCES	Elite units within the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force. They consist of agents who undergo commando and special operations training, focusing on unconventional warfare, "counterterrorism" and high-risk missions. Some units reach the size of a division, while others are organized as brigades. Most units cover a specific geographic area. They primarily consist of IRGC military personnel, though state media reports suggest that Basij agents may also join some units. The Persian phrase is either *nirooha-ye makhsoos* or *nirooha-ye vijeh*.
81.	SPECIAL JUDICIAL OFFICER	A designation under Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure and the Law on Judicial Support of Basij allowing Basij agents and other non-judicial officials to exercise arrest powers, take actions to uncover crimes, gather evidence, identify suspects and conduct investigations within the scope of their institution's mandate. The Persian phrase is *zabetan-e ghazai-ye khas*.
82.	STAGING KILLINGS	A phrase consistently used by the Iranian authorities in the context of protest crackdowns to deny that any killings occurred, deny that security forces carried out killings of protesters and bystanders, or claim that protesters themselves, whom they refer to as "rioters" or unidentified "enemies", carried out the killings but attributed them to the security forces to influence public opinion and instigate further protests. The Persian phrase is *koshteh sazi*.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Iranian authorities unleashed an onslaught of atrocities between September and December 2022 when Iran was gripped by large-scale protests during what became known as the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The security forces deployed by the authorities unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders, including dozens of children, during this period. They subjected thousands more to arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detention, enforced disappearance and torture or other ill-treatment. They raped and committed other sexual violence against some of those arrested in connection with the protests. Those targeted included children. They also persecuted the bereaved families of those killed.

The Woman Life Freedom uprising erupted on 16 September 2022 after the death in custody of 22-year-old Kurdish woman Zhina Mahsa Amini at the hands of the country's "morality" police, which was responsible for enforcing discriminatory compulsory veiling laws. For the next three months, hundreds of thousands took to the streets peacefully, protesting against decades of repression, discrimination and impunity. Women and girls stood at the forefront, defying compulsory veiling laws that for decades enabled state violence, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and discriminatory exclusion from education, employment and public spaces. Images of women burning headscarves and protesting unveiled reverberated nationwide and globally. The slogan "Woman Life Freedom", first chanted in Kurdish as "Jen Jiyan Azadi", soon spread to other cities in Persian as "Zan Zendegi Azadi". From December 2022 onwards, protests began to die down following three months of deadly repression and amid a militarized environment across the country.

Amnesty International has concluded that the serious human rights violations committed by the Iranian authorities to crush the Woman Life Freedom uprising qualify as the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, rape, sexual violence, enforced disappearance, imprisonment, and persecution on political, gender, ethnic and religious grounds. These crimes were carried out as part of a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population, pursuant to and in furtherance of a state policy to crush the protests, silence and punish civilians who advocate a different political system respecting gender equality and other human rights, and create a climate of terror to deter future protests.

Amnesty International's research concludes that the two main security forces responsible for the crimes against humanity committed in the context of lethal dispersal of protests in 2022 were the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA), both of which operated under the General Staff of the Armed Forces. These forces implemented repressive strategies formulated by the Supreme National Security Council, the State Security Council and subsidiary councils at provincial and county levels known as provision councils.

Based on an in-depth analysis of the mandates, command structure and organization of these security bodies, as well as detailed documentation of crimes against humanity committed in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces, Amnesty International has identified 87 officials who it considers must be criminally investigated. They include 10 national officials, and 77 other officials

at regional, provincial and county level related to the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan.

Since the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022, the Iranian authorities have committed further widespread crimes under international law, culminating in unprecedented massacres of thousands of protesters and bystanders on 8-9 January 2026. The protest massacres of 8-9 January 2026 bear the same hallmarks as the crimes against humanity documented in this report, yet on an even deadlier and more staggering scale. This tragically illustrates the risks of not confronting impunity and other root causes of crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law in Iran.

On 28 February 2026, the USA and Israel launched unlawful attacks on Iran, in violation of the UN Charter, resulting in significant civilian harm caused by tens of thousands of air strikes. The strikes killed at least 1,469 civilians, including hundreds of children and women, between 28 February 2026 and 24 July 2026, according to official figures reported by the Iranian authorities. The strikes also resulted in extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure and environmental damage due to attacks on petrochemical and energy facilities.

In parallel, since the unlawful attacks began on 28 February 2026, senior Iranian officials have repeatedly made statements equating any form of dissent with siding with the "enemy" and have openly threatened further mass killings of people expressing dissent or peacefully advocating fundamental political change.

People in Iran remain at acute risk of crimes under international law across two fronts: violations of international humanitarian law, war crimes and humanitarian crisis in the context of the armed conflict between the USA/Israel and the Islamic Republic of Iran; and cycles of crimes against humanity in the context of protest crackdowns.

Amnesty International renews its calls for an enduring ceasefire and accountability for the unlawful US and Israeli attacks on Iran in violation of the UN Charter and all violations of international humanitarian law and possible war crimes committed during the conflict. The organization urges the UN General Assembly and Security Council to consider all possible avenues to deliver and ensure peace, security and justice.

At the same time, Amnesty International stresses that the crimes against humanity committed against protesters and others in Iran must not be sidelined, forgotten or overshadowed amid shifting global attention. The unlawful conduct and significant civilian harm by Israel and the USA must not deflect or obscure crimes against humanity committed by the Iranian authorities. Nor should the pain and suffering of victims of crimes against humanity in Iran be instrumentalized to justify unlawful attacks on Iran in violation of the UN Charter, breaches of international humanitarian law and civilian harm.

Amnesty International calls for a meaningful approach to prevent further atrocities by the Iranian authorities and advance justice for the crimes against humanity committed in the country. This should include the referral of Iran's situation to the International Criminal Court by the UN Security Council, as well as coordinated national-level criminal investigations and prosecutions pursuant to universal or other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction. In parallel, given the gravity and scale of crimes committed, the high risks of recurrence, and the political deadlock within the UN Security Council, Amnesty International urges the UN General Assembly to create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran.

Any further delay by the international community in pursuing international criminal justice for recurring and escalating atrocities in Iran dangerously contributes to the normalization of mass protest killings and risks emboldening Iranian authorities to carry out further atrocities without fear of consequences.

1.1 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Amnesty International interviewed 270 people as part of its investigations, including 221 who were in Iran at the time of the 2022 protests and, in most cases, at the time of the interview, and 49 based outside Iran. They included protesters, former detainees who were subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, relatives of those killed or detained, eyewitnesses, lawyers, human rights defenders, journalists and medical workers. In addition, Amnesty International received the testimonies of 19 other individuals, including injured protesters, rape survivors and relatives of those killed, from lawyers and human rights defenders based outside Iran who obtained consent to share the testimonies with Amnesty International.

The organization complemented these interviews with extensive review and analysis of audiovisual evidence. Overall, Amnesty International reviewed more than 2,000 videos recorded between 16 September and 31 December 2022 in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising in Iran. From this body of material, Amnesty International selected and verified 456 videos for detailed, in-depth analysis, primarily recorded in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. This geographical scope corresponds to the focus of Chapters 6-8 on the circumstances surrounding the unlawful killing of protesters and bystanders in these provinces during the uprising. In its video analysis, the organization focused on the conduct of security forces and their response to the protests, including the use of firearms.

Amnesty International also gathered and reviewed an extensive collection of state media reports and statements by officials, as well as leaked official documents, prosecution orders, court verdicts and forensic records.

The investigation focused on the security forces' response to nationwide protests that were taking place between September and December 2022, while also analysing the impunity that persists to date and the structural factors underpinning it within Iran's constitutional and legislative frameworks. This included investigating reports of protest-related killings, torture, imprisonment, rape and other forms of sexual violence, enforced disappearance and persecution.

With respect to reports of protest-related killings, the organization gathered and analysed an extensive body of evidence about the deaths of 377 protesters and bystanders, including 56 children, who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising in 26 of Iran's 31 provinces. They include 326 individuals killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces, 18 who died in state custody, 10 who died after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, and 23 who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. At a more in-depth level, the report presents a detailed timeline of events and the causes and circumstances surrounding the unlawful killings of 95 Kurdish protesters and bystanders across 17 counties in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces.

Amnesty International is publishing alongside this report a document that lists the names and details of these 377 protesters and bystanders together with information on the location and date of their deaths, as well as photographs where available.

In identifying officials for criminal investigations, Amnesty International assessed whether the available evidence provided reasonable grounds to believe that the individuals concerned may bear criminal responsibility under international criminal law through one or more recognized modes of liability, including superior responsibility and aiding and abetting.

On 4 August 2026, Amnesty International wrote to the Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, detailing its findings and recommendations and seeking comments. It also wrote to the general commander of

FARAJA, Ahmadreza Radan; the general commander of the IRGC, Ahmad Vahidi; and the minister of interior, Eskandar Momeni, requesting that they notify the 87 officials named for criminal investigations and transmit any responses they may wish to provide in exercise of their right of reply. No responses had been received by the time of publication.

1.2 WIDESPREAD AND SYSTEMATIC ATTACK PURSUANT TO STATE POLICY

In eyewitness descriptions of the authorities' violent response to the overwhelmingly peaceful Woman Life Freedom uprising, words like war zone, battlefield, killing and shooting appear repeatedly. Shahram from Javanroud, Kermanshah province, described the crackdown to Amnesty International:

> **"The situation resembled a battlefield. We were pursued by uniformed IRGC [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] agents wielding Kalashnikov assault rifles… They unleashed continuous gunfire."**

His account is mirrored by that of Mahshid, a protester in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province:

> **"I had never seen such scenes before… The situation was very frightening and felt like a war zone. The security forces just kept shooting. They had no mercy towards anyone."**

The same pattern emerged in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, as Iman recounted:

> **"The agents would shoot anyone in their sight, not caring if they were women, children, passersby or protesters… Many people were injured by metal pellets striking their legs, bodies, chests and faces."**

Underscoring how brutality turned into a routine, Rojin from Saqqez, Kurdistan province, said: "Killing and injuring people became normal for the security forces."

The testimonies of Shahram, Mahshid, Iman and Rojin echo hundreds of eyewitness accounts gathered by Amnesty International since September 2022. The organization's investigations have revealed that the Iranian authorities extensively and unlawfully used assault rifles, machine guns, handguns and shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter others from exercising their right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International's investigations found that security forces opened fire in a broad array of situations, none of which involved an imminent threat of death or serious injury warranting the use of firearms under international law and standards. These included firing into peaceful assemblies; firing into assemblies where the majority of protesters were peaceful while some were engaging in non-peaceful acts, such as stone throwing or vandalism that posed no imminent threat of death or serious injury; chasing and shooting at fleeing protesters and bystanders; and the use of firearms in militarized areas involving armed patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks and vehicle chases. As a result, security forces unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders, including dozens of children, across the country and inflicted serious injuries amounting to torture or other ill-treatment on thousands more.

In addition, the authorities arbitrarily arrested tens of thousands of protesters and their real or perceived allies; subjected detainees, including children, to widespread and systematic patterns of enforced disappearance, incommunicado detention, torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence; imposed unjust prison sentences and death sentences following grossly unfair trials that bore no resemblance to legitimate judicial proceedings; and carried out arbitrary executions.

Authorities also waged a campaign of persecution against the families of those killed. They pressured bereaved families to accept false narratives about the causes and circumstances of their loved ones'

deaths and imposed severe restrictions on access to victims' bodies, funerals and memorials, enforced through surveillance and threats of death, rape and other harm. Those who resisted faced abusive interrogations, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, including through beatings and unlawful shootings causing injuries.

Under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), certain prohibited acts, including murder, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture and rape or any other form of sexual violence, qualify as crimes against humanity when "committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population". An attack refers to a course of conduct involving the multiple commission of prohibited acts pursuant to or in furtherance of a state or organizational policy to commit such attack.

Amnesty International considers that the unlawful killing of hundreds, the injuring of thousands, mass arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and torture, including rape and other sexual violence, form a "course of conduct" under Article 7 of the Rome Statute. This constitutes an "attack" for the purposes of crimes against humanity.

The targeted civilian population included protesters and their real or perceived allies. Among them were university students, schoolchildren, women and girls who removed their headscarves in public, journalists and other media workers, political dissidents, athletes, artists, writers, social media users and human rights defenders, including lawyers, women's rights activists, labour rights activists, minority rights activists from Iran's oppressed minorities, and civil society activists.

Amnesty International has found that the Iranian authorities' attack was both widespread and systematic. Its scale and the number of targeted individuals show its breadth, while consistent, coordinated patterns of repression carried out nationwide over months reveal its systematic nature.

Official statements and leaked official documents analysed by Amnesty International show that senior political and security authorities planned, directed, funded and celebrated the repression while demonizing protesters and issuing threats. They included the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, senior IRGC and FARAJA commanders, the minister of interior, provincial and county governors, as well as national, provincial and county security councils. This confirms that the crimes committed by the security forces were not spontaneous, but part of a systematic attack waged pursuant to and in furtherance of a state policy to crush protests.

Further evidence of the state policy includes:

- preparatory and planning meetings involving senior political, security and judicial officials across the security apparatus, during which strategic instructions were issued, as shown in leaked official documents from the State Security Council and Supreme National Security Council;
- leaked written orders from IRGC and FARAJA commanders and the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces;
- public statements by political, security and judicial officials, amplified by state media, urging security forces to "crush", "sweep" or "mop up" protesters;
- the use of public resources to recruit, train, arm and fund thousands of security forces, evidenced by leaked official documents, state media reports and official statements; and
- continued efforts by commanders and other authorities to shield perpetrators, destroy or conceal evidence, and silence victims' families and others seeking truth and justice.

Additional evidence that the attack was carried out pursuant to a state policy lies in the judiciary's crucial role in criminalizing dissent and enforcing impunity, which fuelled further crimes. Prosecution and judicial authorities arbitrarily detained protesters and relatives of those killed and authorized or

otherwise facilitated the routine use of enforced disappearance, torture and other-ill-treatment by members of the security forces acting as "judicial officers". They also ignored or dismissed complaints filed by victims, actively concealed crimes, and shielded perpetrators of crimes against humanity from criminal investigation and prosecution.

1.3 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OF MURDER

Iran's security forces unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders as part of their lethal crackdown on the Woman Life Freedom uprising. Following extensive research and investigations, Amnesty International has gathered a voluminous body of information and evidence about the deaths of 377 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The list compiled by the organization can be divided into four categories:

1. Killings during violent protest dispersals and in militarized areas: A total of 326 of the recorded victims were killed by security forces using firearms or other means of lethal force to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter other people from joining the protests. Of these recorded victims, most were killed during protest dispersals while some were killed by security forces in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces involving armed patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks, vehicle chases, stop orders or violent raids on people's homes or workplaces. The 326 victims comprise 264 men, 13 women and 49 children – 46 boys and three girls – killed in 69 counties across 23 of Iran's 31 provinces.

2. Deaths in state custody: A total of 18 of the recorded victims lost their lives in state custody after they were arrested in the context of protest crackdowns. They comprise 17 men and one woman, who died in 13 counties across 10 provinces. Under international law and standards, Iranian authorities should be presumed responsible for these deaths, and they have failed to rebut this presumption.

3. Post-custody deaths: A total of 10 individuals – five men, two woman and three children, comprising a girl and two boys – were recorded as having died after release from custody, with reports published by human rights defenders or journalists indicating that their deaths were prison-related. According to these reports, in five cases, physical injuries resulting from torture and other ill-treatment allegedly caused or contributed to the victims' deaths. In five other cases, individuals died by suicide shortly after release, with reports published by journalists or human rights defenders indicating that they took their own lives due to mental harm allegedly caused by torture or other ill-treatment in custody. These 10 victims died in nine counties across eight provinces.

4. Suspicious deaths, often following a period of disappearance: A total of 23 of the recorded victims went missing after participating in or supporting the protests, with no information available regarding the circumstances of their arrest or abduction and eventual death. Numerous indicators, including consistent patterns in the victims' disappearances, the types of injuries they sustained, the manner in which families were notified and the persecution families faced by the authorities, alongside the authorities' refusal to investigate and their swift attribution of deaths to suicide, illness or accidents, suggest that state agents killed the victims. They comprise 12 men, seven women and four children – two boys and two girls – who died in 12 counties across 10 provinces.

Amnesty International is publishing alongside this report a document that lists the names and details of these 377 protesters and bystanders together with information on the location and date of their deaths,

as well as photographs where available. The organization believes that the total number of victims is likely to be much higher.

For 323 of the 377 recorded victims, Amnesty International was able to obtain information about their exact or approximate age. Of this group, at least 17% (56) were children, highlighting their notable presence during the protests and the devastating impact of the authorities' lethal crackdown on children, their families and their communities. Among the youngest child victims were a two-year-old boy, a six-year-old girl and two nine-year-old boys. Eleven other child victims were between the ages of 11 and 14, while 41 others were between 15 and 17.

Teenagers aged 18 or 19 made up 9% (29) of the victims while young people in their 20s accounted for 38% (124) underscoring the prominent role of youth at the forefront of the protests and the tragic loss of young lives.

With respect to 233 of the 326 victims recorded as having been killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, Amnesty International was able to conduct investigations and gather sufficient evidence to support the legal conclusion that the killings were unlawful. This means that the security forces used firearms or other means of lethal force against the victims not to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury, but to disperse, intimidate or punish them and create a climate of terror and fear through a militarized presence.

With respect to the remaining 93 victims recorded as killed during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, Amnesty International considers it highly likely that further investigation and access to evidence would confirm that their killings were also unlawful, given the well-documented patterns of unlawful use of firearms against protesters across the country. Credible reports published by other human rights organizations and media outlets on many of the remaining killings further support this assessment.

With respect to the cases of unlawful killings recorded by Amnesty International, the organization has reasonable grounds to believe that such killings amount to the crime against humanity of murder. In all these cases, one or several members of the security forces either intentionally targeted the victim with lethal force to cause their death, or deliberately and unlawfully discharged lethal ammunition into crowds in proximity to the victim(s). In addition to the intent and knowledge requirements to commit the underlying offence of murder, members of the security forces were aware of the broader context in which their actions occurred, namely, the attack directed against a civilian population.

1.3.1 NATIONAL OVERVIEW OF KILLINGS IN PROTEST DISPERSALS AND MILITARIZED AREAS

Amnesty International has documented the names and details of at least 326 protesters and bystanders who were killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. They comprise 264 men, 13 women and 49 children – 46 boys and three girls.

Of these 326 recorded victims, 302 were fatally shot, in at least 45 cases with metal pellets fired from close range. Thirteen victims, one of whom was also stabbed, were subjected to fatal beatings at the hands of security forces. Five were fatally struck by tear gas canisters; one was fatally struck in the head by a kinetic impact projectile; three suffered complications from inhaling tear gas; one was rammed by security forces while riding a motorcycle, causing him to fall, hit a curb and sustain fatal head injuries; and one was deliberately run over by a security forces vehicle.

Of the 326 victims, 55% (178) were killed during the first two weeks of the protests, between 19 and 30 September 2022. This highlights how, from the outset, the authorities swiftly responded with lethal force in an effort to crush the protests immediately.

The pattern of unlawful killings began in Kurdistan province on 19 September 2022, which was gripped by protests marking the third day after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. On this day, four men were unlawfully killed by the security forces in Divandareh, Dehgolan and Saqqez, all in Kurdistan province. The next day, the security forces unlawfully killed at least seven other protesters and bystanders in Ghaem Shahr, Mazandaran province; Tabriz, East Azerbaijan; Kermanshah, Kermanshah province; and Piranshahr and Urumieh, both in West Azerbaijan province.

As the protests grew larger on 21 September 2022 and spread to many cities across the country, security forces intensified their lethal crackdown, killing at least 60 further protesters and bystanders in 30 counties across 12 provinces. They are Alborz, Gilan, Hamedan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Mazandaran, Ghazvin, Semnan, Tehran, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.

Throughout the three-month protest period, 21 September 2022 stands as the day on which the largest number of cities were affected by unlawful killings. The highest death toll was recorded on 30 September 2022, when authorities unlawfully killed at least 87 protesters and bystanders from Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority in a single city, Zahedan, in Sistan and Baluchistan province. Amnesty International has obtained a leaked copy of an official document which reveals that, on 21 September 2022, the General Staff of the Armed Forces issued an order to FARAJA commanders nationwide, instructing a "firm and severe response to any gathering, the dispersal of rioters and their arrest and transfer to bases for obtaining undertakings."

In October 2022, the authorities continued to use firearms and other means of lethal force to disperse ongoing protests, resulting in the killing of at least 49 additional protesters and bystanders. Over half of these recorded killings (26) took place in 10 counties located in three provinces that are home to Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority – Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. The remaining 23 victims were killed in 11 counties spread across 10 other provinces.

In November 2022, protests surged in the country, particularly between 15 and 22 November 2022, when protesters marked the anniversary of nationwide protests in 2019. The authorities intensified the use of lethal force, killing at least 95 protesters and bystanders. Once again, protesters and bystanders from Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces were among the most affected, with at least 47 recorded victims across 12 counties in these provinces. The remaining 48 victims were killed in 17 counties across 11 other provinces.

From early December 2022 onwards, protests began to die down amid a militarized environment throughout the country and after multiple waves of devastating violence perpetrated by security forces and mass arbitrary arrests of tens of thousands of protesters. Amnesty International recorded the killing of at least four other victims during violent protest dispersals or in militarized areas in December 2022 – one each in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province; Javanroud, Kermanshah province; Bojnourd, North Khorasan province; and Tehran, Tehran province.

1.3.2 UNLAWFUL KILLINGS IN SISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN PROVINCE

Amnesty International has recorded the names of 106 Baluchi protesters and bystanders who were killed by security forces in Sistan and Baluchistan province during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. They comprise 83 men, three women, and 20 children – 19 boys and one girl. These Baluchi victims represent 33% of the total number of recorded deaths.

Of these 106 identified Baluchi victims, 87 people – 69 men, three women, 14 boys and one girl – were unlawfully killed by the security forces during a single lethal crackdown on largely peaceful protesters after Friday prayers on 30 September 2022 in Zahedan. Iranians now refer to this day as "Bloody Friday".

On this day, after Friday prayers in the Great Mosalla of Zahedan, a large prayer site near the city's main mosque, a group of people gathered outside the police station across the road to protest and chant. Security forces responded by firing lethal ammunition, metal pellets and tear gas at them from the rooftop of the police station. Simultaneously, plain-clothes security forces fired at protesters and bystanders from the rooftops of several nearby houses. Security forces also unlawfully fired assault rifles, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas directly into the vicinity of the prayer site, where hundreds of people, including children and older people, were still performing Friday prayers.

Consequently, 84 people – 69 men, 14 boys and one woman – sustained fatal wounds from security forces unlawfully firing lethal ammunition at protesters, bystanders and worshippers. Two other women died from tear gas-related respiratory complications after security forces unlawfully fired tear gas into a confined space within the women's section of the prayer site while one six-year-old girl was unlawfully killed after a tear gas canister struck her head.

Eleven other Baluchi victims – nine men and two boys – were unlawfully shot and killed by security forces during a lethal crackdown on largely peaceful protests after Friday prayers in the city of Khash on 4 November 2022.

Of the eight remaining victims identified in Sistan and Baluchistan province, five were unlawfully shot and killed during protests that continued in Zahedan on 1 and 2 October 2022 in the aftermath of "Bloody Friday". Two others, aged 14 and 16 – were unlawfully shot and killed in further protests that took place following Friday prayers in Zahedan on 28 October 2022. Additionally, one man was shot and killed during further protests following Friday prayers in Zahedan on 4 November 2022.

1.3.3 UNLAWFUL KILLINGS IN KURDISTAN, KERMANSHAH AND WEST AZERBAIJAN

Amnesty International has documented circumstances surrounding the unlawful killings of 95 Kurdish protesters and bystanders who were killed by security forces in the provinces of Kurdistan (35 victims), Kermanshah (19 victims) and West Azerbaijan (41 victims) during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. They comprise 79 men, three women, 12 boys and one girl. These Kurdish victims represent 29% of the total number of recorded deaths, reflecting the disproportionate impact of the lethal repression on this persecuted community.

Of these 95 recorded victims, 90 were fatally shot, in at least 22 cases with metal pellets. Three other victims, all from Kurdistan province, were subjected to fatal beatings at the hands of security forces; one of these three victims was also stabbed. They were **Mohammad Keywan Darvishi** and 15-year-old **Sarina Saedi**, who were fatally beaten in separate incidents in Sanandaj on 26 October 2022, and 17-year-old **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar**, who was fatally beaten and stabbed in Sanandaj on 17 November 2022. Another victim, **Mohammadi Shariati**, was fatally struck by a tear gas canister while fleeing a violent protest crackdown in Sanandaj on 26 October 2022. A further victim, **Mohammad Hosseini**, was deliberately run over by a vehicle of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Saqqez on 12 October 2022 while he was loudly objecting to the use of shotguns and tear gas against protesters and bystanders.

Of the 95 victims, Amnesty International identified the cases of 16 victims who were unlawfully killed in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. Of those 16 victims, 12 were unlawfully killed after security forces deliberately opened fire on their vehicles while they attempted to drive away from intimidating security forces. The circumstances surrounding the deaths of the remaining four victims were as follows: **Ardalan Ghasemi** was fatally targeted while writing political slogans on walls; **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar**, aged 17,

was beaten and stabbed while simply walking through a militarized area; **Reza Kazemi**, aged 16, was shot after being stopped by security forces at a checkpoint while travelling with friends; and **Dastan Rasoul** was shot while walking through an unofficial but commonly used Iran-Iraq border crossing point near the village of Choman in Baneh county to attend the memorial ceremony of a relative who had been shot the day before.

In the context of lethal protest dispersals, security forces caused deaths by unlawfully firing both into crowds to force dispersal and at fleeing protesters and bystanders to intimidate and punish them and prevent them from regrouping. Illustrative examples include the deaths of the following individuals:

- **Minoo Majidi** was shot dead with metal pellets at close range in Kermanshah, Kermanshah province, on 20 September 2022 while fleeing from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA on motorcycles, who were chasing panicked protesters and bystanders and repeatedly firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets.
- **Amirhossein Basati**, aged 15, was shot dead in Kermanshah on 21 September 2022 by IRGC agents positioned on the rooftop of a mosque as he turned back to retrieve his slipper while trying to flee from mass shootings.

Unlawful shootings aimed at dispersing protesters resulted in the deaths of not only protesters but also bystanders. For example,

- **Armin Sayadi** was passing through a protest site in Kermanshah, Kermanshah province, on 12 October 2022 in his car when a bullet fired by an IRGC agent, who was shooting from a rooftop at a group of protesters, struck him.
- **Fereydoon Faraji** was shot dead in Baneh, Kurdistan province, on 27 October 2022 when a bullet struck him as he looked out of a window at his place of work to observe events unfolding.
- **Fereshteh Ahmadi** was shot dead in Mahabad on 27 October 2022 when a bullet struck her while she was standing on a rooftop observing the events unfolding.
- **Abdollah Mahmoudpour**, aged 16, was on his way home from work in Balou village near Urumieh on 21 September 2022 when he reached an area where a group of protesters came under fire. As he tried to flee the continuous gunfire, he was fatally shot.

Amnesty International's investigation also revealed a pattern of security forces approaching victims at close range and deliberately shooting them, often aiming for the torso or head, using assault rifles, shotguns or pistols. Illustrative examples include the deaths of the following individuals:

- **Kobra Sheikheh** was fatally shot as she was running towards her home. She was fleeing the security forces who were chasing her and other protesters and bystanders in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, on 27 October 2022. Before she could enter her home, one of the agents approached and deliberately shot her in the neck with an assault rifle.
- **Milad Maroufi** was fatally shot while he was similarly being chased by the security forces in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 17 November 2022. He and other panicked protesters had tried to take refuge in an alley.
- **Mohsen Niazi** was deliberately shot in the back and killed while attempting to escape arrest in Dehgolan, Kurdistan province, on 20 November 2022.
- **Zaniar Allahmoradi**, **Danial Pabandi** and **Foad Savari** had fallen to the ground while trying to flee when agents approached and deliberately shot and killed them from close range. Zaniar Allahmoradi was shot in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 15 November 2022. Danial Pabandi,

aged 17, was shot in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 16 November 2022. Foad Savari was shot in Divandareh, Kurdistan province, on 19 November 2022.

- **Hossein Abdpanah** and **Houman Abdollahi** were trying to hide from security forces patrolling the streets when they were spotted, approached and deliberately shot and killed. They were shot in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in separate incidents on 19 November and 7 December 2022, respectively.

Amnesty International also documented a pattern of members of the security forces exacerbating the risk of death by committing further serious violations after shooting victims. This included beating victims with kicks, batons, sticks and gun handles after they had already fallen to the ground from gunshot or metal pellet wounds.

In other cases, members of the security forces continued shooting to prevent people from approaching and aiding injured victims who had fallen to the ground. They also encircled injured protesters and deliberately left them to bleed without aid before either abandoning the scene or belatedly calling for medical assistance. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following individuals:

- **Danesh Rahnama** was fatally shot in Balou village near Urumieh, West Azerbaijan province, on 21 September 2022 while he attempted to aid and move Abdollah Mahmoudpour, who had been shot seconds earlier. Members of the security forces also fired at the pickup truck that carried the victims to the hospital, resulting in bullet holes on the vehicle, and subjected the driver of the pickup truck to beatings after he drove back from the hospital.
- **Shahou Bahmani** was fatally shot in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 17 November 2022. He was left on the ground bleeding for approximately 30 to 40 minutes while members of the security forces continued to shoot at protesters who attempted to reach him to urgently transport him to a hospital. It was only after the security forces departed the scene that protesters could belatedly transfer Shahou Bahmani to a hospital, where he died.
- **Hiva Janjan** was fatally shot while in a car in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 17 November 2022. Members of the security forces removed him and his friend from the car, covered the friend's head with a plastic sheet and beat him before taking him away. Meanwhile, Hiva Janjan was left bleeding until the agents finally called an ambulance.
- **Hossein Abdpanah** was fatally shot in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 19 November 2022. After he collapsed, residents attempted to gather around him, but they were forced to disperse as members of the security forces threatened to open fire on them. Members of the security forces threatened to shoot Hossein Abdpanah's son when he arrived after hearing his father had been shot. They retreated after he identified himself, allowing the family to belatedly take Hossein Abdpanah to a hospital.
- **Mohsen Niazi** was shot fatally in Dehgolan, Kurdistan province, on 20 November 2022. He was left bleeding for about 10 minutes as members of the security forces stood over him, preventing onlookers from approaching to help. Members of the security forces even fired shotguns at several medical professionals who attempted to intervene and provide first aid. It was only after the security forces finally departed that individuals could transport Mohsen Niazi to a hospital.

Amnesty International found that the widespread pattern of security forces carrying out arrests at hospitals deterred many from seeking care, forcing the injured into homes, businesses or ill-equipped clinics. This led to deaths from bleeding, infection or complications that timely specialized care could have prevented. Illustrative examples include the deaths of the following individuals:

- **Foad Ghadimi** was shot in Divandareh, Kurdistan province, on 19 September 2022. Fears of arrest prevented an immediate hospital transfer, so he was first taken to a hair salon and later

left outside Imam Khomeini Hospital. It is unclear how long he remained there unattended, but eventually two people took him inside the hospital, where he died shortly afterwards.

- **Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost**, aged 17, was shot in Urumieh, West Azerbaijan province, on 21 September 2022. Protesters first took him to a private residence, then to his uncle's house and later his family home. His family attempted to take him to a hospital but turned back after seeing a heavy presence of security forces at the hospital. Over the following days, he was intermittently treated at an ill-equipped private clinic. His condition worsened due to infection and on 5 October 2022 he was rushed to a hospital, where he died within 30 minutes of arriving there.
- **Milan Haghighi**, **Sadroddrin Litani** and 16-year-old **Amin Marefat** were shot in Oshnavieh, West Azerbaijan province, on 21 September 2022. Fearing arrests at hospitals, protesters took the three injured victims to a private home instead of a hospital. After about 90 minutes, as their conditions deteriorated from blood loss, they were transferred to a hospital, where they died shortly after arrival.
- **Hezhar Mamkhosravi** was shot in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 17 November 2022. Due to fear of arrest, Hezhar Mamkhosravi asked his family not to transfer him to a hospital. After several hours, his condition severely worsened, prompting his family to transfer him to a hospital despite the risks. He died shortly after arrival.
- **Milad Maroufi** was shot in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 17 November 2022. Due to fear of arrest, protesters first took him to a private home and then to an ill-equipped medical centre. He was later transferred to a hospital in Boukan, where he died in the early hours of 18 November 2022.

1.3.4 STATE NARRATIVE

The Iranian authorities' narrative about the scale, causes and circumstances of protest killings can be broadly grouped into three lines of argument. These are reflected in a report issued by the Special Committee to Investigate the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee) a body lacking independence and impartiality that was established on 7 May 2023 by the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, to "examine, clarify and redress any infringements upon citizens' rights during the riots". Based on its detailed monitoring and analysis, Amnesty International has concluded that the authorities created the Special Committee to create a façade of accountability for the international community, divert attention from the crisis of systemic impunity prevailing in the country and discourage member states of the UN Human Rights Council from establishing a UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and renewing its mandate.

First, the Special Committee only acknowledged 202 deaths during the protests, while attributing some other deaths, reported by human rights defenders and victims' families as having been caused by security forces, to causes unrelated to the protests, including illness, car accidents, drug overdoses, dog attacks, falls from heights and suicide. The Special Committee's report neither identifies the victims nor provides information on the specific circumstances of their killings or disaggregated data such as gender, age or ethnicity.

Second, the Special Committee attributed most deaths to non-state actors, claiming that, of the 202 people who "lost their lives during the protests", 112 were killed by "rioters and… armed terrorists".

Third, the Special Committee claimed that the remaining 90 victims were killed "while carrying or using weapons… in clashes and attacks on military and law enforcement headquarters, critical infrastructure or law enforcement personnel", suggesting that this justified the use of lethal force.

The Special Committee provided no evidence to substantiate the claim that the victims were armed. Moreover, while focusing the narrative on allegations of weapon possession and use, it did not even claim that those killed posed an imminent threat of death or serious injury that would have justified the use of lethal force, the applicable threshold under international law.

Additionally, the Special Committee alleged in its report that 54 members of the security forces were "martyred as a result of widespread violence by rioters and terrorists", but provided no details about the alleged incidents.

Amnesty International emphasizes that the deaths of state agents, like all deaths, must be subject to independent, impartial and effective criminal investigations. However, in investigating the killings of protesters and bystanders, Amnesty International did not identify any case in which a protester or bystander was shot dead in the same incident as the killing of a state agent. This is significant as it undermines the authorities' apparent attempt to invoke the deaths of state agents to justify the use of lethal force and create a veneer of legitimacy around the killings of some protesters. Under international human rights law, attacks by protesters against state agents can be relevant to assessing the threat faced by security forces in a specific incident. However, the authorities cannot rely on generalized claims that security personnel were killed elsewhere during the protests to justify or legitimize the killing of protesters and bystanders in unrelated incidents.

As noted earlier, the organization's in-depth investigations found that security forces opened fire in a broad array of situations, none of which involved an imminent threat of death or serious injury meriting the use of firearms. These included firing into peaceful assemblies; chasing and shooting at fleeing protesters and bystanders; using firearms in militarized areas involving armed patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks and vehicle chases; and firing into assemblies where the majority of protesters were peaceful while some engaged in throwing stones, vandalizing property or burning car tyres that posed no imminent threat of death or serious injury.

Amnesty International emphasizes that an assembly is considered "peaceful" unless serious violence is manifestly widespread within the assembly. Isolated acts of violence by some participants are insufficient to render an entire assembly "non-peaceful". Furthermore, under international law and standards, even if some protesters commit violent acts, security forces must ensure that those who remain peaceful can continue protesting without undue interference or intimidation. It is also important to recall that, even when a protester engages in non-peaceful conduct falling outside the protective scope of the right of peaceful assembly, they retain their other human rights, including the rights to life and to freedom from torture and other ill-treatment, which must be respected.

1.4 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OF TORTURE

Amnesty International's investigation has found that security forces intentionally inflicted painful injuries on protesters and bystanders through the unlawful use of lethal and less lethal force. This included the unlawful use of firearms, such as rifles, machine guns, sub-machine guns and handguns; prohibited weapons which should never be used in the context of policing protests, such as shotguns loaded with metal pellets, and less lethal weapons, such as batons, electric shock devices, kinetic impact projectiles and tear gas canisters, including in confined spaces. Security forces also unlawfully used physical violence, including punching, kicking, dragging and throwing individuals to the ground, stamping on them and pulling their hair.

Given the nationwide scale of the protests, their three-month duration, the participation of tens of thousands in them and Amnesty International's extensive documentation of security forces' widespread use of both lethal and less lethal weapons designed to inflict injuries in crowded protest areas across the country, Amnesty International believes that the number of injured is likely to be in the thousands.

Many protesters and bystanders died from their injuries, in some cases, because security forces obstructed access to medical treatment. Victims who survived injuries were left with severe physical trauma including permanent vision loss; wounds to the head, face, neck and torso; fractures of the ribs, skull, facial bones, teeth and limbs; traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries; damage to internal organs, including the kidneys, diaphragm and intestines; nerve and vascular injuries, and internal bleeding. Many of these injuries caused lasting health complications or disabilities, including chronic pain, mobility or speech impairments, recurring infections, debilitating headaches and the need for ongoing specialist medical care, multiple surgical operations and prolonged rehabilitation. In numerous cases involving metal pellets, doctors could not remove embedded fragments, leaving victims in pain and at risk of infection, brain damage or organ failure.

The infliction of such injuries caused victims severe pain and suffering, both physical and mental. Amnesty International considers that the threshold of severity required for establishing torture is clearly met in these cases.

Based on the types of weapons repeatedly used and how they were employed, Amnesty International has concluded that security forces either intended to cause severe pain and suffering or acted knowing that this was a virtually certain consequence of their conduct in the ordinary course of events.

In addition to torture during protest dispersals, authorities tortured individuals in state custody for the purposes of intimidation, punishment and humiliation, for reasons based on discrimination, and/or to extract forced "confessions" later used as a basis for indictments and convictions.

Common physical torture methods included beatings with batons and chains; slapping, kicking and punching; flogging; prolonged solitary confinement; electric shocks; exposure to extreme temperatures; hair pulling; forced administration of chemicals; painful stress positions with blindfolding or head-covering; denial of medical care for injuries; and prolonged deprivation of food and water. Other reported methods included the submersion of victims under water, the insertion of needles into sensitive areas of the body, the forcible removal of nails, the use of pepper spray, including on eyes, mock executions and the suspension of victims from their neck or wrists.

Common psychological torture methods included threats of further torture, killing or life imprisonment; threats to arrest, kill, harm, rape or forcibly disappear family members; the exposure of victims to sustained light or sound, including at night; the compulsion of victims to perform humiliating acts; persistent degrading insults and profanities; and the exposure of victims to the screams of other detainees being tortured.

Given the extreme physical and mental harm caused by these methods of torture, and their deliberate use by members of the security forces, Amnesty International has concluded that the mental element of the crime against humanity of torture is satisfied.

1.5 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OF IMPRISONMENT

Iranian authorities arbitrarily arrested tens of thousands of men, women and children, some as young as 10, during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. Amnesty International's evidence shows these arrests were overwhelmingly for acts protected under international human rights law, including peaceful protest, chanting, dancing, removing headscarves, writing slogans, sounding car horns, showing solidarity online and, in the case of bereaved families, seeking truth and justice. Journalists were detained for investigating protest-related human rights violations, and lawyers for representing protesters or families of those killed.

In many cases, security forces arrested people without warrants, violently forced them into unmarked vehicles and took them to undisclosed locations where they were tortured, including through rape and

other sexual violence. Some victims were abandoned in remote areas after hours or days. Others were eventually registered at detention facilities run by the security forces, where they faced further torture and were coerced into writing false "confessions" which were then used to issue convictions and harsh sentences, including lengthy prison terms and the death penalty.

Across all documented cases, arrests and detentions violated due process and fair trial rights. Detainees were denied access to lawyers, protection from torture, timely information on charges, the right to silence, presumption of innocence, and the ability to challenge detention or prepare a defence. Trials lacked impartiality, transparency and defendants were denied meaningful appeal.

Given the violent circumstances, lack of legal basis and systematic denial of due process, Amnesty International has concluded that the elements of the crime against humanity of imprisonment are met.

1.6 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OF RAPE AND OTHER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Amnesty International has documented in detail the cases of 16 individuals who were subjected to rape while arbitrarily under arrest in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising. They comprised six women, seven men, a 14-year-old girl and two boys aged 16 and 17. Six of them – four women and two men – were subjected to forced sexual penetration by multiple male state agents. State agents penetrated women and girls vaginally, anally and orally, while men and boys were penetrated anally. Victims were penetrated with wooden and metal batons, glass bottles, hosepipes and/or the sexual organs and fingers of agents.

Amnesty International documented the cases of 29 other individuals who were subjected to forms of sexual violence other than rape while arbitrarily arrested in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

In the cases of women and girls, acts of sexual violence routinely involved male members of the security forces putting their hands under the victims' clothing and into their underwear; grabbing, groping, beating, punching or kicking their breasts, genitals or buttocks; stripping them of their clothes, including in front of male detainees; conducting intrusive body searches; holding them naked for hours or days in detention, including in front of video cameras and in freezing conditions; and threatening to rape them or their female relatives.

In the cases of men and boys, documented forms of sexual violence included members of the security forces threatening to rape them or their relatives; forcing them to undress; subjecting them to cold temperatures while naked; administering electric shocks to their genitals; inserting needles into their genitals; touching, pressing, kicking or beating their testicles or buttocks; and putting ice on their testicles for prolonged periods.

Based on the above, Amnesty International has concluded that the elements of the crimes against humanity of rape and sexual violence are met and that the modalities and circumstances in which rape and other sexual violence were committed show that the perpetrators acted with the required mental element of intent and knowledge.

1.7 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Security forces and prosecution authorities worked together to frequently subject detainees from the Woman Life Freedom uprising to enforced disappearance for days or weeks by withholding all information from families about their fate or whereabouts. Some were held in official detention centres; others in unofficial sites such as warehouses, schools and residential buildings colloquially referred to by the security forces as "safe houses".

Relatives interviewed by Amnesty International described visiting police stations, prosecution offices, Revolutionary Courts and prisons in search of loved ones. Officials often concealed information despite knowing detainees were in custody, or admitted they were detained but refused to disclose their location or the charges against them.

Enforced disappearance removed detainees from legal protection, enabling torture and other ill-treatment and the extraction of forced "confessions" later used in grossly unfair trials to secure indictments and convictions. The uncertainty caused psychological harm to families, leaving them in anguish over whether loved ones were dead or alive amid reports of protest-related killings.

Amnesty International has concluded that these acts meet the elements of the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance.

1.8 CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OF PERSECUTION

According to the Rome Statute, persecution as a crime against humanity occurs when a perpetrator severely deprives, contrary to international law, one or more persons of their fundamental rights and such targeting is conducted by reason of the identity of a group or collectivity to which they belong; based on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other prohibited grounds; and in connection with prohibited acts, such as murder, torture, enforced disappearance and imprisonment, or any other crime within the ICC's jurisdiction.

Amnesty International has concluded that the elements of the crime against humanity of persecution, on intersecting political, gender, religious and ethnic grounds, are met for multiple targeted groups. All protesters and their supporters were persecuted on political grounds; women and girls defying compulsory veiling faced persecution on political grounds intersecting with gender and religious grounds; Kurdish and Baluchi protesters faced persecution on political grounds intersecting with ethnicity; and families of those killed faced persecution on political grounds.

1.8.1 PROTESTERS

Protesters and their supporters constituted a nationwide group or collectivity targeted for prohibited acts such as murder, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence that inherently amount to severe deprivations of fundamental rights. This targeting was conducted on discriminatory political grounds, based on victims' real or perceived opposition to the Islamic Republic's theocratic system.

Evidence of discriminatory intent on political grounds is clear from official statements, laws and policies. During and after the crackdown, authorities repeatedly branded protesters and their supporters as "enemies of the state", used hate-filled and discriminatory language, misrepresented protests as "hybrid warfare" and celebrated the deadly repression. They presented the Islamic Republic system as the embodiment of "divine ideals" and "God's law", ordered security forces to

crush anyone "attempting actions against the Islamic Revolution" and insisted on absolute allegiance to the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Supreme Leader).

1.8.2 WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women and girls who joined the protests and defied discriminatory compulsory veiling constituted another identifiable group targeted nationwide. Authorities viewed them as challenging a system of gender-based oppression and domination, justified in the name of Islamic law and enforced through numerous laws and policies and a vast state apparatus. Security forces committed murder, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, rape and other sexual violence against women and girls not only to suppress political opposition but also to enforce gender discrimination and punish transgression of state-enforced gendered roles and behaviours rooted in strict interpretations of Islamic law. This targeting was, therefore, based on gender grounds intersecting with political and religious grounds.

Evidence of discriminatory intent on gender grounds is clear from the context and official rhetoric surrounding the repression of women and girls. Authorities repeatedly portrayed protesters' demands for gender equality as a "conspiracy", incited violence against women and girls who defied compulsory veiling and labelled them and their supporters as "enemies of Islam". They praised security forces as "heroes" defending "Islamic sanctities" while framing women's "chastity" as a matter of national security and the survival of the Islamic Republic.

1.8.3 KURDISH AND BALUCHI PROTESTERS

Baluchi protesters in Sistan and Baluchistan province and Kurdish protesters in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces constituted other distinct targeted groups or collectivities. Kurdish protesters initiated the protest movement after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, herself Kurdish, and both Kurdish and Baluchi communities sustained protests despite lethal crackdowns.

Kurdish and Baluchi victims account for 62% of the total number of those recorded as having been killed during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. Amnesty International has found that this disproportionately high toll cannot be explained by protest size alone; patterns of intentional lethal force against these communities were distinct and markedly more severe.

In Sistan and Baluchistan, security forces carried out the deadliest crackdown of the entire protest period, killing 87 protesters and bystanders in Zahedan in a single day on 30 September 2022 through mass shootings. In the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, security forces adopted a far more militarized response than elsewhere, frequently deploying military-grade firearms immediately after protests began. These included assault rifles such as AK-pattern models; SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and G-3 rifles; sub-machine guns such as Uzi-pattern and MP5-pattern guns models, and DShK heavy machine guns mounted on top of pickup trucks.

Amnesty International has concluded that prohibited acts, including murder and torture, were committed against Kurdish and Baluchi protesters with discriminatory intent on political and ethnic grounds. Iranian authorities persistently portrayed Kurdish and Baluchi protesters as "terrorists" and "separatists" and framed their peaceful assemblies as a threat to Iran's territorial integrity and as "enemy plots" pursuing "ethnic and religious conflicts". Authorities distorted facts, either misrepresenting Kurdish and Baluchi victims as armed militants or falsely claiming that they were killed by armed Kurdish and Baluchi opposition groups. In parallel, authorities praised security forces for "preventing sabotage by separatists" fostering a climate that enabled the unlawful use of lethal force and impunity. The extreme patterns of repression against Kurdish and Baluchi protesters did not occur

in isolation; they stemmed from decades of systemic discrimination and a history of lethal force and arbitrary executions disproportionately targeting Iran's oppressed ethnic minorities.

1.8.4 FAMILIES OF THOSE KILLED

Families of those killed constituted another distinct group or collectivity targeted by reason of their real or perceived efforts to speak out, expose the circumstances of the killings and seek truth, justice and accountability. Security forces subjected families of those killed to prohibited acts, including imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture and sexual violence, that inherently amount to severe deprivations of fundamental rights. These involved subjecting families to beatings and metal pellets fired from shotguns during funerals and memorial ceremonies, causing injuries amounting to torture; arbitrary arrest and detention; threats of death, rape and sexual violence; and unfair trials leading to unjust imprisonment.

In addition, security forces subjected families to a catalogue of human rights violations that collectively constitute a severe deprivation of fundamental rights. These included denying information about the whereabouts of victims' bodies; concealing victims' bodies in unidentified locations without families' knowledge or consent; conditioning the return of victims' bodies on families accepting false official state narratives about the circumstances of the deaths of their loved ones and/or agreeing to arbitrary restrictions on funeral and memorial ceremonies; denying victims' families the right to perform cultural burial rituals, such as washing the bodies and saying farewell by kissing, hugging or touching their loved ones before burial; denying victims' families the right to fully view the bodies of their loved ones before burial, including to observe and photograph signs of injury; forcing victims' families to bury loved ones quickly during irregular hours at night or dawn and in the presence of security forces; forcing victims' families to bury loved ones in locations not of their choosing, sometimes in remote areas far from their home towns; preventing memorial ceremonies; coercing victims' families to sign false statements and appear in state propaganda videos; threatening to destroy victims' graves and/or exhume victims' bodies and re-bury them in unidentified locations; subjecting families to surveillance, threatening calls or intimidating visits; subjecting families to abusive interrogations and threats of death, rape and other sexual violence and other harm; forcing family members to sign undertakings not to participate in further protests or memorial ceremonies; denying families access to vital evidence including autopsy reports and CCTV footage; issuing burial or death certificates that contain inaccurate or incomplete information or failing to issue a burial or death certificate altogether; and refusing to conduct independent, transparent and impartial investigations to establish the truth about the causes and circumstances surrounding victims' deaths and the identities of those responsible.

Amnesty International has concluded that families of those killed were subjected to a severe deprivation of fundamental human rights on political grounds. Authorities targeted bereaved families as a means to suppress demands for truth, justice and reparation and enforce a political system steeped in repression and impunity for serious human rights violations. Families were also targeted based on the perception that they might share or support the political beliefs and activism of their deceased relatives and must therefore be suppressed and coerced into submission and silence.

1.9 SYSTEMIC IMPUNITY

Amnesty International's investigation has concluded that Iran's current criminal justice system is neither willing nor able to deliver justice for the crimes against humanity committed in the country. Impunity is intentional and built into the country's judicial, legal and constitutional system. This entrenched impunity gives perpetrators the confidence to continue their crimes, enforcing a state

policy of crushing dissent through the commission of serious human rights violations and crimes under international law.

1.9.1 LACK OF INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIARY

Iran's justice system lacks independence and impartiality, functioning as an arm of state repression rather than a body for justice. This is rooted in constitutional provisions and appointment processes that embed judicial and prosecution authorities within the security apparatus, eliminate separation between prosecution, judicial and executive functions, and place executive, legislative and judicial authority under the Supreme Leader's control.

Key constitutional provisions shaping the architecture of impunity include the following:

- Articles 110 and 157 empower the Supreme Leader to appoint the head of the judiciary and dismiss them at any time.
- Article 162 empowers the head of the judiciary to appoint the head of the Supreme Court, the national prosecutor general as well as all provincial and county prosecutors.
- Article 176 identifies the head of the judiciary as a member of the Supreme National Security Council.
- Article 158(3) grants the head of the judiciary extensive powers, including the authority to appoint and dismiss judges, define their roles, manage promotions and transfer judges, without any involvement from independent judicial councils or commissions that are typically established to ensure impartial, merit-based appointments.
- Articles 157 and 162 require that the head of the judiciary, the head of the Supreme Court and the general prosecutor all be a *mojtahed* (a person learned in Islamic law), entrenching discrimination on the grounds of religion and political opinion by excluding non-Muslims, individuals with differing interpretations of Islam and those who uphold secular principles such as the separation of religion and judicial authority.

Judicial independence is further undermined by appointment criteria. Under the Law on the Selection of Judges and related guidelines, judges must be male and show "practical commitment to Islamic principles", "loyalty to the Islamic Republic" and "adherence to the principle of absolute guardianship of the jurist".

The prospect of impartial investigations and trials into crimes by members of the security forces become even more remote as such cases fall under the jurisdiction of military prosecutors and courts. A decree issued by the Supreme Leader requires at least 50% of judges, prosecutors and staff in military prosecution offices and courts to be members of the armed forces, including the IRGC, FARAJA and the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army).

1.9.2 LEGALIZED IMPUNITY FOR LETHAL REPRESSION OF PROTESTS

The architecture of impunity in Iran is reinforced by a set of laws that criminalize the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly; authorize the use of firearms to disperse protests; and grant state agents legal immunity for unlawful killings and injuries resulting from such use of force.

Under the Law on the Use of Firearms by Armed Forces in Necessary Incidents (Law on Firearms), security forces are permitted to use firearms to disperse "illegal demonstrations" if protesters ignore orders to disperse and suppression is deemed impossible without the use of firearms.

The term "illegal" applies to all assemblies except those pre-authorized by the Ministry of Interior, and such authorization is only available to registered political parties. The Law on the Activities of Political Parties and Groups (Law on Parties) ensures no group critical of the Islamic Republic or the Supreme Leader can register. This framework excludes dissenting voices from seeking authorization, making any protest outside the Islamic Republic's ideology automatically "illegal". This circular design criminalizes peaceful assembly and creates a permanent legal pretext for using force and firearms against protesters.

Article 12 of the Law on Firearms exempts state agents from civil or criminal liability when using firearms in line with the law. Article 13 adds that, if a military court rules that the use of firearms was lawful and that "innocent" individuals were killed or injured as a result, the security body to which the agent belonged must only pay *diyeh* (blood money) to victims' families. The article requires the government to allocate an annual budget for these payments. Neither the Law on Firearms, nor the Law on the Punishment of Crimes by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Law on Crimes by Armed Forces) defines "innocent". In practice, military prosecutors and courts rely on security bodies' information and hold that peaceful refusal to disperse or engagement in acts like stone-throwing can render victims "guilty", disqualifying families from receiving even *diyeh* (blood money) let alone justice.

An illustrative case is that of **Mehdi Babrnejad**, killed during protests in Ghouchan, Khorasan Razavi province, on 21 September 2022. The authorities reduced the criminal case to a matter of *diyeh* (blood money) and denied the family other forms of redress, such as holding individual perpetrators to account, after concluding that the security forces were authorized to use firearms to disperse protests despite the absence of any threat of death or serious injury warranting the use of firearms. In a ruling on 18 September 2023, Branch 1 of Military Court One of Khorasan Razavi denied his family even *diyeh* (blood money), stating that Mehdi was "not innocent and bore fault". For this determination, the court relied on reports from FARAJA and the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Khorasan Razavi, the very security forces implicated in the killing. On this basis, the court stated:

> **"Many rioters were throwing stones and other objects towards military and police forces, causing damage to public property. It appears that there was no alternative but to use firearms to disperse the rioters. The deceased, Mehdi Babrnejad, was participating in the unrest and was observed causing damage and confronting military and police agents through throwing stones… The shootings carried out by police, Basij and IRGC agents were therefore consistent with Articles 2, 4, 7 and 8 of the Law on Firearms and no criminal offence has been established."**

Mehdi Babrnejad's family appealed against the verdict. On 29 April 2024, Branch 1 of the Military Appeal Court of Khorasan Razavi amended the decision. It granted the family 30% of the *diyeh* (blood money) for a Muslim man, citing the manner of the shooting, the body part struck and the fact that the shooter was a FARAJA or IRGC agent. It denied the remaining 70%, claiming Mehdi "participated in riots, filmed rioters and instigated them."

The case of Mehdi Babrnejad is, however, exceptional, given that the vast majority of criminal complaints filed by victims' families have not even reached this stage.

First of all, Amnesty International found that victims' families overwhelmingly refrained from filing complaints, citing the futility of seeking justice from a judiciary integrated into the same security apparatus responsible for crimes against humanity. The sense of futility was reinforced by the fact that prosecution and judicial authorities routinely issued public statements within hours or days of killings, exonerating security forces and blaming deaths on accidents, suicides or non-state actors. Families also feared reprisals and reported harassment and intimidation from security forces aimed at deterring them from filing complaints.

According to Amnesty International's findings, in the few cases where families pursued complaints, prosecution officials either refused to process complaints – leaving cases dormant while denying families information – or formally dismissed complaints without conducting meaningful investigations. In dismissing complaints, prosecution officials claimed, among other reasons, that they had "insufficient evidence" to prove the responsibility of the security forces for the shooting, were unable to identify the shooter or considered that the use of firearms had been lawful under the Law on Firearms. Illustrative examples include the following cases:

- **Mohammadreza Sarvari**, a 14-year-old boy of Afghan origin, and **Mohammad Javad Farmani**, were both fatally shot during protests in Shahr-e Rey, Tehran province, on 21 September 2022. A prosecution official dismissed complaints from the families concerned, citing a lack of CCTV footage and the inability of complainants to present any eyewitnesses.
- **Abolfazl Adinezadeh**, a 17-year-old boy, was killed during protests in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province, on 8 October 2022. A prosecution official dismissed a complaint from the victim's family, citing the "absence of sufficient evidence of shotgun use by military or police forces." The official relied on statements from the FARAJA commander of Khorasan Razavi province, who admitted FARAJA agents carried shotguns but claimed they were not used, and from the IRGC, which asserted that none of its agents at the scene were armed with shotguns.
- **Fereydoon Mahmoudi** was killed during protests in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 19 September 2022. A prosecution official concluded that, "although shootings by agents of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA were confirmed, it was not possible to identify the individual perpetrator." As a result, he dismissed a complaint from the victim's family seeking individual criminal accountability and referred the case to a military court solely to determine whether the Special Cohorts should pay *diyeh* (blood money), contingent on findings about Fereydoon Mahmoudi's "guilt" or "innocence".
- **Pedram Azarnoush** was killed during protests in Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, on 22 September 2022. A legal document reviewed by Amnesty International indicates that a prosecution official dismissed a complaint from the victim's family after the prosecution official "made inquiries to an official in charge of the Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA and the IRGC to identify the individual perpetrator, but they took no action with respect to this judicial order."

Amnesty International is aware of only three complaints that advanced to trial and resulted in convictions. However, these limited successes were swiftly undermined by interventions from senior judicial and security officials, which ultimately served to exonerate perpetrators, limit redress to the payment of *diyeh* (blood money) by the state, block proportionate punishments and exclude commanders from liability.

For example, in the case of **Mohammad Jameh Bozorg**, the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, submitted a request to the head of the judiciary to annul the verdict against the agent convicted of his killing on the grounds that it was "in blatant contravention of Islamic law" and to refer the case back to the Supreme Court. Mohammad Jameh Bozorg had been killed in Malard, Tehran province, on 24 September 2022. An agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions, Shahram Bazrbouy, was convicted of his murder and sentenced to death under the Islamic principle of *qesas* (retribution in kind). The head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, subsequently granted Hossein Salami's request. Without any regard for the evidence filed, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i reclassified the killing as unintentional, simply based on Shahram Bazrbouy's own statement. He also stated that, as Shahram Bazrbouy had not received proper training in the use of shotguns and their ammunition, the fault lay with the IRGC as an institution rather than with the defendant individually; therefore, *diyeh* (blood money) had to be paid by the IRGC. In a verdict issued on 11 October 2025, Branch 1

of the Supreme Court convicted Shahram Bazrbouy of "quasi-intentional homicide" instead of murder, sentenced him to three years' imprisonment and ordered the IRGC to pay the family *diyeh* (blood money).

Amnesty International's previous research found that the majority of victims of torture, including victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence, were similarly hesitant to file complaints, referring to the futility of seeking justice through the Islamic Republic judiciary.

Out of the 45 victims of rape and other sexual violence whose cases were documented by Amnesty International, all but three refrained from filing complaints because they feared further harm from the authorities and believed the judiciary to be a tool of repression rather than redress. Amnesty International found that their fears were justified as the judicial authorities not only consistently dismissed or covered up evidence of sexual violence, but also relied on forced "confessions" extracted under sexual violence and other torture and other ill-treatment to unjustly prosecute and convict the victims. The three victims who filed complaints with police and prosecution authorities were subjected to further human rights violations. They were eventually forced to withdraw or stop pursuing their complaints after repeated threats by security forces or months of inaction by the prosecution authorities.

1.10 COMMAND STRUCTURES OF SECURITY FORCES

The General Staff of the Armed Forces in Iran oversees four entities which are collectively referred to as the "armed organizations" or "armed forces" of the Islamic Republic of Iran under Iranian law. The four entities are the Army, the IRGC, FARAJA, which is the country's police force, and the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Ministry of Defence). The General Staff of the Armed Forces in turn falls under the command of the Supreme Leader. As the commander-in-chief, the Supreme Leader appoints and dismisses the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the general commanders of the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA, and exercises command over them. The minister of defence is appointed by the president, with the approval of the Supreme Leader and after receiving a vote of confidence from the parliament.

The term "armed forces", as used by Iranian authorities, refers to entities authorized to carry firearms either for military operations in armed conflicts or for domestic security operations. Except when quoting Iranian authorities directly, Amnesty International uses the broader term "security forces".

The mandates of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the IRGC and FARAJA, as set out in the decrees of Iran's Supreme Leader and various laws, such as the Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Law), the Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC Statute) and the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law, include the "sacred defence of Islam", "protecting the achievements of the Islamic Revolution", "expanding the rule of God's law, and "combating elements and movements that disrupt national security". These broad, vaguely defined mandates fail to distinguish between violent acts and peaceful dissent, investing security forces with vast powers to suppress freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly and use force and firearms against peaceful protesters and others who criticize the ruling establishment, challenge the authority of the Supreme Leader and peacefully advocate alternative sociopolitical visions and systems.

1.10.1 FARAJA

The general commander of FARAJA holds authority over the police force nationwide. They appoint a FARAJA commander for every province and county.

FARAJA is a complex entity that consists of numerous branches, including the Prevention Police and the Special Cohorts.

The Prevention Police carries out regular policing functions, including first response to protests. The general commander of FARAJA appoints the national head of the Prevention Police. Each province has a provincial head of the Prevention Police, also appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.

The Prevention Police oversees police stations across counties and neighbourhoods. It comprises nearly two dozen specialized sections, including the Assistance Cohorts, which provide backup to police stations when extra support is needed, including for repressing protests.

The Special Cohorts, described by authorities as the "system's iron fist for critical situations", are deployed when protests escalate beyond the capacity of police stations and Assistance Cohorts to disperse. The national commander of the Special Cohorts at the time of the 2022 protests, Hassan Karami, has stated that, since their establishment in 2012, the Special Cohorts have played an "exemplary" role in suppressing "riots". The general commander of FARAJA appoints the national commander of the Special Cohorts.

Communication, coordination and implementation of FARAJA's operations are facilitated through command and control centres (known by the Persian acronym MARFOUK) operating at national and provincial levels.

FARAJA is institutionally linked to the minister of interior at the national level and to provincial governors and county governors, who are the local representatives of the minister of interior.

The minister of interior is integrated into the FARAJA command structure through two interconnected roles. First, they head the Ministry of Interior, which is responsible for domestic security; their orders to FARAJA regarding the fulfilment of the ministry's security responsibilities are binding. Second, they hold a concurrent appointment by the Supreme Leader as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, which places them above the general commander of FARAJA within the FARAJA chain of command.

Additionally, the authority of the minister of interior over security operations is reinforced through a third concurrent role as the head of the State Security Council. Under Iranian law, the council's resolutions become binding orders only when communicated for implementation by the minister of interior. In this capacity, the minister of interior exercises significant power not only over FARAJA but also the IRGC.

1.10.2 IRGC

The IRGC is a complex entity with its military personnel organized into four forces: the Navy Force, the Ground Resistance Force, the Aerospace Force and the Qods Force, which leads the operations of the IRGC abroad. The Supreme Leader appoints the IRGC's general commander as well as the commanders and deputy commanders of each force.

The Ground Resistance Force consists of units that operate primarily on land, including those deployed to repress street protests. Since 2008, the Ground Resistance Force has been organized through the IRGC's 32 provincial corps. In Tehran province, there are two such corps, one for the city of Greater Tehran and another for the rest of the province. Above the 32 provincial corps, there are 11 IRGC regional headquarters, each responsible for overseeing several provincial corps. The General Commander of the IRGC appoints the commanders and deputy commanders of provincial corps and regional headquarters.

Each IRGC provincial corps comprises provincial-level operational divisions or brigades and county-level Basij Resistance Sector Corps, which are the enforcement arm of the provincial corps at the

county level. Additionally, many provincial corps include units known as Security Cohorts.

The Basij Resistance Sector Corps of each county consists of various Basij battalions, including the Imam Ali Battalions and the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions. These Basij battalions are deployed to suppress street protests when provision councils at county and provincial levels determine that FARAJA forces require additional support. The Iranian authorities refer to Basijis as the "people's forces" of the IRGC, creating the impression that they are a voluntary paramilitary force. In reality, Basij members receive financial compensation for their activities, and processes related to their recruitment, training, mobilization, and remuneration are governed by the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law.

Imam Ali Battalions are tasked with "confronting riots" and, according to official statements, since their establishment after the mass protests of 2009, they have played a significant nationwide role in protest suppression. The Central Imam Ali Headquarters in Tehran oversees the nationwide development, training and equipping of Imam Ali Battalions. Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are described in official statements as "rapid response battalions" standing ready to "confront security and defence threats and protect local neighbourhoods."

1.10.3 SECURITY COUNCILS

The Supreme National Security Council sets Iran's overall defence and security strategies, including protest response. Article 176 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (the constitution) tasks it with "safeguarding national interests, the Islamic Revolution, territorial integrity and sovereignty." Members include the heads of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the state; the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces; two Supreme Leader appointees; the ministers of foreign affairs, interior and intelligence; and the general commanders of the Army and the IRGC. The head of the Supreme Council is the president of the Islamic Republic.

The State Security Council is a subsidiary body of the Supreme Council, the responsibilities of which include, as per Article 1 of the Law Regarding the Determination of Duties and the Organization of the State Security Council (State Security Council Law), "determining domestic security policies… clarifying the duties and authorities of each institution regarding domestic security… and monitoring and evaluating the consequences of implementing the Council's decisions".

The State Security Council is headed by the minister of interior, who typically appoints their deputy for police and security as the secretary of the State Security Council. Other members include the general commanders of the IRGC and FARAJA.

The State Security Council Law provides for the establishment of subsidiary councils known as provision councils at provincial and county levels. The law provides that the State Security Council must "establish communication with the provincial provision councils and receive periodic reports on the security, political and social conditions of each province". County provision councils have analogous responsibilities to the provincial provision councils at the county level. This means that they must monitor and report on the situation of the county to the respective provincial provision council, and define, in coordination with the provincial provision council, the duties of various state entities in relation to the county's security.

The head of the provincial provision council is the provincial governor while the head of the county provision council is the county governor. Provincial and county governors typically appoint their respective deputy governors for political, security and social affairs as the secretaries of the relevant provision councils.

The decisions of security councils become binding only when communicated for implementation by their respective heads. This structure gives the minister of interior and governors significant control over

security operations, including the ability to authorize the intervention of the IRGC to assist FARAJA in repressing protests or obstruct implementation.

1.11 OFFICIALS WARRANTING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

The planning, direction, organization and execution of the crimes against humanity committed during the Woman Life Freedom uprising was made possible by a vast, coordinated security apparatus characterized by hierarchical command structures. The security forces leading on deadly protest dispersals included FARAJA and the IRGC.

According to information and evidence gathered by Amnesty International, including official statements and leaked official documents, IRGC and FARAJA forces implemented repressive strategies, which were devised by the Supreme National Security Council, the State Security Council, and provincial and county provision councils. The strategies were enforced through orders from the minister of interior and his representatives at the provincial and county levels, namely provincial and county governors.

Based on its in-depth documentation of the circumstances surrounding the unlawful killing of 95 Kurdish protesters and bystanders across 17 counties in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan between 19 September and 7 December 2022, as well as injuries to many more, Amnesty International has been able to identify multiple branches or units of FARAJA and the IRGC as involved.

The FARAJA branches involved include the Prevention Police, including its Assistance Cohorts, as well as the Special Cohorts. The Special Cohorts of FARAJA used shotguns loaded with metal pellets and firearms, including AK-pattern rifles, while both the Prevention Police and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA resorted unlawfully to the use of tear gas and beatings with batons, sticks and kicks, to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.

The IRGC units involved include the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, known as the Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps; the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, known as the Nabi Akram Corps; and the 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, known as the Shohada Corps. In all 17 counties across the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, Basij battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the relevant counties, including the Imam Ali Battalions and the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions, were also involved. In Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, all the IRGC units involved operated under the authority of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, while, in Kermanshah, they fell under the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters. In connection with the crackdown in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade, a unit of the IRGC's Special Forces based in Javanroud, was also likely involved.

Based on detailed documentation of the security forces involved in the commission of crimes against humanity and in-depth analysis of their command structures, Amnesty International has identified 87 individuals – 62 commanders of security forces and 25 Ministry of Interior officials – and found reasonable grounds to believe that that the elements required to establish the modes of liability of superior responsibility or aiding and abetting under international criminal law are met in their cases.

Amnesty International's analysis focused on elements relevant to the mode of liability of superior responsibility in relation to commanders and aiding and abetting in relation to Ministry of Interior officials. These modes of liability were selected as they were most readily applicable based on the evidence currently available to the organization.

Of the 87 officials, at least six have since died. Amnesty International calls for criminal investigations to be initiated against those who are alive, including under universal or other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction, and for arrest warrants to be issued, where sufficient evidence exists, regardless of the accused's absence or presence in the territory of the jurisdiction concerned. Deceased individuals cannot be subjected to criminal investigation or prosecution. Nevertheless, investigation of their alleged conduct remains important for truth-seeking, establishing historical records and understanding chains of command and the possible criminal responsibility of other individuals.

In its analysis, Amnesty International has applied a "reasonable grounds to believe" standard of proof. This means that the organization has decided to call for an individual to be criminally investigated only when, based on the available evidence, it was reasonable to believe that the person was allegedly responsible for the crimes against humanity the organization has documented under one or more recognized modes of liability.

In naming individuals for criminal investigations, Amnesty International has considered the following elements, which are relevant to the modes of liability of superior responsibility and/or aiding and abetting:

- the position held by the individual within the hierarchy of Iran's security apparatus and the specific role they played in the lethal repression of the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising based on their position;
- the authority and control exercised by the individual as a superior over subordinates responsible for the crimes against humanity documented by Amnesty International;
- the acts carried out by the individual to assist, encourage or lend moral support to the perpetration of the crimes against humanity documented by Amnesty International, and the substantial effect that this assistance had on the commission of the crimes;
- public statements made by senior commanders of security forces and Ministry of Interior officials that encouraged or demonstrated support for agents who perpetrated crimes against humanity on the ground;
- leaked official orders that authorized or facilitated crimes against humanity; and/or
- the individual's link to the crimes against humanity documented.

Amnesty International emphasizes that only independent and impartial criminal investigations and, if sufficient evidence exists, prosecutions carried out in line with international human rights standards on fair trials can establish individual criminal responsibility beyond reasonable doubt, based on evidence specific to each individual and in relation to the incidents underlying the charges.

The 87 individuals listed include 10 national officials and 77 regional, provincial and county officials covering the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan and the 17 counties within them. Amnesty International's findings are in no way exhaustive and should not preclude consideration of the role – whether direct or indirect – of officials it has not named in the commission of crimes. The organization examined the roles of numerous other officials but named those for whom the strongest body of evidence was available.

Amnesty International has selected the regional, provincial and county officials based on its in-depth documentation of lethal protest dispersals in seven counties across Kurdistan province, five counties across Kermanshah province and five counties across West Azerbaijan province. This documentation included detailed accounts allowing it to establish the timeline of events, evidence of the unlawful killing of 95 protesters and bystanders and injuries to others, and a thorough review of official statements made by three provincial FARAJA commanders, 10 regional and provincial IRGC

commanders and deputy commanders and six provincial governors and deputy governors in these areas.

Despite this limited geographic scope, the evidence presented on the nationwide commission of crimes against humanity, including hundreds of unlawful killings in other provinces, alongside detailed information on chains of command consistently structured at national, regional, provincial and county levels, can guide future investigations by other actors seeking to identify additional officials who may allegedly bear criminal responsibility.

1.11.1 SUPERIOR RESPONSIBILITY

Amnesty International analysed the alleged criminal responsibility of 62 commanders under the mode of liability of superior responsibility: the commander-in-chief of all armed forces (Supreme Leader), the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, 33 IRGC commanders and 27 FARAJA commanders.

The mode of liability of superior responsibility is codified in Article 28 of the Rome Statute of the ICC. Under customary international law, holding a superior criminally liable for crimes committed by their subordinates requires proof of effective control by the superior over the subordinates; that the superior knew or had reason to know that the criminal act was about to be or had been committed; and that the superior failed to take necessary and reasonable measures to prevent the criminal act or punish the perpetrator, or submit the matter to competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe these elements are met with respect to the 62 commanders.

1.11.1(I) EFFECTIVE CONTROL

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International demonstrates a range of powers collectively indicative of the effective control exercised by the commanders. These include powers to:

- issue orders to undertake operations to repress protests and ensure compliance with orders through national and sub-national channels that require consistent surveillance, reporting, coordination, assessment of implementation and suppression of deviations;
- control logistical resources, including through the allocation and use of equipment, weapons or ammunition and the standardization of forces through consistent mobilization and tactical and ideological training programmes;
- control financial resources, including through the commanders' membership of decision-making bodies such as the State Security Council, which allocate budget required for the expenses of deployed security forces;
- hold public profiles, manifested through public appearances and statements that concern the operations aimed to repress protests; and
- exercise control over appointments, performance evaluations, promotions, or removals of subordinate FARAJA and IRGC agents and commanders, as well as the authority to initiate investigations and disciplinary proceedings.

Further indicators of effective control can be found in official statements made by commanders of security forces during and after the September-December 2022 crackdown. These statements consistently emphasized that operations were being orchestrated and carried out in strict compliance with the commands of the Supreme Leader and under his "absolute" and "wise leadership". Commanders portrayed a cohesive, well-functioning chain of command, with no suggestion of deviation, highlighting their "prudent and decisive management". Subordinate agents were consistently

described as “soldiers of the Supreme Leader” and “warriors”, and praised for disciplined conduct as “commendable”, “praiseworthy”, “vigilant”, “selfless”, “intelligent” and “honourable”.

This portrayal is significant in light of the international jurisprudence on superior responsibility, which indicates that non-compliance or a weak chain of command indicates a lack of effective control, whereas projecting awareness and discipline, such as publicly claiming that commanders are “well conversant with the situation” and that subordinates are obedient, indicate the exercise of effective control.

Further evidence that commanders exercised effective control over their subordinates and were able to issue orders is provided by leaked official documents containing or referring to six orders issued by the following authorities:

- the General Staff of the Armed Forces, which issued an order on 21 September 2022;
- the then FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province, Morteza Mirzaee, who issued an order on 23 September 2022;
- the then commander of the IRGC Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, who issued an order on 9 October 2022 and another on 12 October 2022;
- the then minister of interior and deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, Ahmad Vahidi, who issued, in his capacity as the then head of the State Security Council, an order on 18 September 2022 and another on 26 September 2022.

At the top level, the General Staff of the Armed forces set the overall tone and strategic direction, calling for a “firm and severe” response, the dispersal of protesters and arrests. The minister of interior likewise directed FARAJA and the IRGC to prioritize the prevention of assemblies, ordering nationwide surveillance and singling out Kurdistan for intensified action. Orders from FARAJA and IRGC commanders extended to operational details, including specifying the number and types of forces to be deployed, precise deployment locations, and weapons and ammunition to be used.

Evidence obtained by Amnesty International shows that the 21 September 2022 order from the General Staff of the Armed Forces was transmitted through FARAJA’s MARFOUK system down to the county level, logged in local police records and enforced by FARAJA county forces, demonstrating implementation through the chain of command from the national level to the local level.

The leaked official documents also show how State Security Council resolutions were converted into binding orders by the minister of interior, transmitted via cover letters from the deputy minister of interior for police and security to multiple security bodies, requesting implementation and reporting. This further demonstrates a well-functioning chain of command through which commanders were able to execute orders across institutions.

1.11.1(II) KNOWLEDGE

Amnesty International considers that commanders’ roles and powers within Iran’s security hierarchy imply that they were continuously informed of events on the ground and their subordinates’ actions. Numerous other interrelated factors further provide reasonable grounds to believe that commanders knew, or had reason to know, that subordinates had committed or were about to commit crimes.

Well-functioning internal reporting and monitoring systems are evidenced by leaked official documents, official statements and court documents. When analysed as a whole, these documents show that officials across the security apparatus, spanning various entities and levels, were closely monitoring and communicating the situation on the ground and the status of operations. These documents also

demonstrate a high level of awareness including about the types of weapons and the quantities of bullets used and the incidents where protesters were shot dead.

Amnesty International considers that the commanders were also aware that crimes against humanity were or were about to be committed by their subordinate forces through media coverage, human rights reporting and public protests by victims' families, protesters, activists, public figures and others in Iran and abroad.

Between September and December 2022, a large number of statements were issued by human rights organizations and UN authorities, including the UN Secretary-General, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Special Rapporteur on Iran) and other special procedures, raising grave concerns about the lethal repression of the protests and urging the authorities to cease the use of unnecessary or disproportionate force against protesters.

The security forces' consistent use of lethal force, as reported by human rights groups and media outlets and evident in videos emerging from the country, triggered widespread public outrage both within Iran and around the world. Inside Iran, shopkeepers, merchants and factory workers across the country staged hundreds of strikes in protest at the lethal crackdown, while many celebrities, including artists and athletes, expressed outrage and solidarity. Around the world, large rallies took place, attracting extensive media attention.

Governments around the world also reacted to the violent protest crackdown in Iran, issuing statements and imposing sanctions. Furthermore, on 24 November 2022, member states of the UN Human Rights Council convened a special session and passed a resolution to establish the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) to investigate serious human rights violations related to the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

Leaked documents and official statements reviewed by Amnesty International provide evidence that the Iranian authorities were aware of the media coverage, human rights reports and global pressure about the unlawful conduct of the security forces, and were compelled to respond. In their public statements and reports circulated to member states of the UN Human Rights Council, officials, including those named in this research, repeatedly rejected reports of unlawful killings carried out by their forces, attributing them to "non-state actors" without any evidence. Simultaneously, they continued to warn of a harsh response, promising ultimate victory over the protests, which they described as "hybrid warfare", and encouraged their forces to continue their actions.

Leaked documents further reveal that, from the early days of the protests, high-ranking officials within Iran's security apparatus were systematically monitoring and planning repressive responses to silence individuals and groups reporting and raising public awareness about the crimes perpetrated by the security forces. In official discussions recorded in the leaked documents, such individuals and groups are described as "hostile celebrities", "embassies", "international offices and associations" and "NGOs", as well as "athletes, artists, actors, singers, bloggers, political figures, families of the deceased, and foreign media".

The authorities' efforts to suppress reporting extended beyond Iran's borders. On 25 September 2022, state media announced that Iran's foreign ministry had summoned the UK ambassador in Iran the previous day to protest against what it described as "a hostile atmosphere created by London-based Persian-language media outlets". This was in reference to Iran International and BBC Persian, whose satellite broadcasts exposing serious human rights violations by security forces during the protests were being watched by millions inside Iran.

A leaked official letter from the then secretary general of Iran's Supreme Council to the then Iranian president, dated 8 November 2022, further highlights that awareness of international concerns

regarding the crimes committed by the security forces extended to the highest levels of the chain of command. The letter outlines strategies to control the narrative about the violations committed by the security forces and block the establishment of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran.

1.11.1(III) FAILURE TO PREVENT AND PUNISH

The commanders named by Amnesty International, who held the highest positions within the chain of command at national, provincial and county levels, had a duty to prevent and punish the criminal conduct of their subordinates, as well as the material ability to fulfil this obligation. The duty to prevent continued throughout the entire protest period.

The officials have a duty to ensure that their forces are adequately trained in international law. However, the content of official statements and state media reports reviewed by Amnesty International reveals that the training of security forces demonstrates a complete disregard for international law and standards governing the use of force and firearms in protest situations. The trainings emphasize shooting drills and violent repression designed to forcibly disperse crowds.

Two leaked official orders from the early days of the protests – one issued by the General Staff of the Armed Forces to FARAJA forces nationwide on 21 September 2022, and another issued by the FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province to the forces under his command on 23 September 2022 – reflect a stark breach of the duty to issue orders aimed at ensuring security forces act in accordance with international law. Instead of instructing lawful conduct, the order from the FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province instructed security forces to "respond mercilessly and go as far as causing death", while the one from the General Staff of the Armed Forces mandated a "firm and severe response to any gathering, the dispersal of rioters, and their arrest and transfer to bases for obtaining undertakings."

Leaked documents detailing discussions and directives of the State Security Council show that commanders at no point considered initiating investigations or preventing unlawful use of force and firearms by forces under their control. Instead, they were focused on measures aimed at crushing the protests.

Hundreds of official statements reviewed by Amnesty International show that, despite mounting evidence of crimes by their forces, commanders consistently did the exact opposite of what international law required of them. Instead of condemning criminal conduct, halting operations, imposing disciplinary measures or referring the matter to competent judicial authorities, they praised FARAJA and IRGC forces for their "bravery", "steadfastness", "intelligence" and "effective performance" in "countering enemy seditions" and "combating hybrid warfare", language routinely used to delegitimize the protests.

Moreover, commanders actively ordered the continuation of the crackdown, framing it as a mission to protect "the country's security, greatness and glory", "the Islamic Revolution", "Islam" and "the Supreme Leader". Instead of taking measures to reduce the risk of the commission of crimes, they escalated such a risk by consistently using violent, dehumanizing rhetoric, branding protesters as "enemies of God's religion", "infidels", "seditionists", "conspirators", "chaos makers", "hired terrorists", "mercenaries", "anti-revolutionary elements" and "mosquitoes". Such language emboldened subordinates and contributed to an environment of brutality and impunity.

Considering the above and the evidence of crimes against humanity presented earlier and given that the criminal conduct of FARAJA and IRGC forces persisted for three months with widespread notoriety, Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that the 62 commanders named failed to take any necessary and reasonable measures to prevent crimes against humanity within their areas of responsibility.

Likewise, there is no evidence they took any necessary and reasonable measures to punish perpetrators, despite a steady stream of alarming reports about the widespread crimes committed by their subordinates against protesters and bystanders.

As stated previously, Iranian authorities at all levels completely failed to secure any form of accountability. Instead, state entities, including those under the command of the named commanders, actively worked to conceal evidence, obstruct investigations, shield suspects from prosecution, persecute bereaved families seeking truth and justice, and prevent justice from being served.

1.11.2 AIDING AND ABETTING

Amnesty International analysed the alleged criminal responsibility of 25 Ministry of Interior officials under the mode of liability of aiding and abetting. The organization examined the roles of numerous other Ministry of Interior officials but has only named those for whom the strongest body of evidence was available.

The 25 officials are the minister of interior, who also served as the head of the State Security Council and deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs; the deputy minister of interior for police and security, who also served as the secretary of the State Security Council; the provincial governors of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, who also served as the heads of the provision councils of their respective provinces; the deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, who also served as the secretaries of the provision councils of their respective provinces; and 17 county governors who presided over the counties of Sanandaj, Saqqez, Divandareh, Baneh, Dehgolan, Kamyaran and Mariwan in Kurdistan province, the counties of Kermanshah, Javanroud, Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Salas-e Babajani and Ghasr-e Shirin in Kermanshah province, and the counties of Boukan, Mahabad, Piranshahr, Oshnavieh and Urumieh in West Azerbaijan province, each also serving as the head of their respective county provision council.

With respect to Ministry of Interior officials, Amnesty International focused its analysis on aiding and abetting as the stronger theory of liability because it captures their essential coordination and facilitation role in the commission of crimes, without requiring proof of effective control over forces, which is needed for superior responsibility. The organization faced evidentiary challenges in establishing effective control for Ministry of Interior officials due to lack of access to official records, which remain classified, as well as a May 2015 State Security Council resolution that appears to limit tactical interference by Ministry of Interior officials in security operations. However, these challenges should not preclude future investigations from examining whether Ministry of Interior officials may also bear criminal responsibility under superior responsibility should additional evidence become available.

The mode of liability of aiding and abetting is codified in Article 25(3)(c) of the Rome Statute of the ICC. Under customary international law, aiding and abetting requires proof that the accused carried out acts specifically directed to assist, encourage or lend moral support to the perpetration of a crime, and this assistance had a substantial effect on the commission of the crime; that the accused knew that their acts assisted the commission of the crime by the principal perpetrator, or was aware of the substantial likelihood that their acts would assist the commission of such crimes; and that the assistance was specifically directed towards criminal conduct.

Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that these elements are met with respect to the 25 Ministry of Interior officials.

1.11.2(I) ASSISTANCE

Based on leaked official documents, official statements and detailed analysis of the roles of the above Ministry of Interior officials, Amnesty International has found reasonable grounds to believe that they

substantially assisted the commission of the crimes against humanity it has documented. Their acts of assistance included the coordination and facilitation of violent operations through the State Security Council and its subsidiary provision councils, which ensured that operations by various security forces proceeded in a coordinated and systemic manner across the country for months. Their assistance also involved the provision of administrative and logistical support through the Ministry of Interior and its subsidiary provincial and county governance structures, the communication of directives, the transmission of orders, the allocation of resources, and public expressions of moral support to the security forces committing crimes on the ground.

Firstly, the positions of the minister of interior, provincial governors and county governors encompassed multiple sources of authority over security operations. They respectively presided over the State Security Council and the provincial and county provision councils, which formulated security policies and strategies. Under Iranian law, the resolutions of these councils became binding orders only when communicated for implementation by the minister of interior, provincial governors and county governors.

Secondly, these authorities were integrated into the FARAJA command structure and had extensive involvement in coordinating, facilitating and supporting FARAJA operations. They also had administrative oversight of FARAJA affairs across domains including organizational structure, recruitment, training, budgeting, weapons and equipment, performance evaluation, promotion, disciplinary procedures, and reporting of field situations and intelligence.

In the case of the minister of interior, he was also appointed by the Supreme Leader as deputy commander-in-chief for police, granting him superior authority over the general commander of FARAJA within the command structure.

Additionally, provincial and county governors can authorize the use of firearms under the Law on Firearms, which permits the use of firearms when dispersal of an assembly cannot be achieved by other means.

The deputy minister of interior for police and security served as the secretary of the State Security Council during the September-December 2022 period. In this capacity, he was the operational link between the State Security Council's resolutions and their implementation by security forces. In a similar vein, deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs were secretaries of their respective provincial provision councils. In this capacity, they served as the operational link between the resolutions of the provincial provision councils and their implementation by security forces.

Two leaked resolutions of the State Security Council, dated 18 and 26 September 2022, reveal that, from the outset, the minister of interior and other authorities prioritized crushing the protests. The documents reveal coordinated and systematic response planning through directives issued under the leadership of the minister of interior and transmitted to key state institutions, including FARAJA, the IRGC, provincial and county provision councils, the Ministry of Intelligence and the judiciary. Cover letters signed by the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, transmitted the resolutions to various senior officials, instructing them to implement the orders and report back.

A leaked letter from the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, to the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, dated 8 January 2023, reveals that on 13 October 2022, the State Security Council ordered the allocation of 9 trillion rials (22 million US dollars) to the Ministry of Interior to cover "heavy security costs" amid prolonged protests. Additionally, Ahmad Vahidi noted that the Ministry of Interior and offices of provincial and county governors were actively managing the significant financial costs arising from the prolonged deployment of thousands of security forces across the country, including transportation, food and accommodation costs.

Official statements and established procedures indicate that provincial provision councils issued resolutions enabling the crimes against humanity documented by Amnesty International. For example, on 21 September 2022, Esmail Zarei Kousha, the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, confirmed that the Provision Council of Kurdistan was issuing instructions to the security forces in relation to the protests and claimed that these instructions were being followed. On 11 October 2022, the then head of the Office of the Deputy for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah, Mohammad Pourhashemi, acknowledged that the Provision Council of Kermanshah province was actively "managing" the protest response through resolutions. On 21 November 2022, the then head of the Ministry of Intelligence office in West Azerbaijan province revealed that the resolutions of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province addressed the use of firearms by security forces during protests.

State media reports and official statements also highlight that sustained operations required coordination between provincial and county governors and councils and that such coordination efforts intensified during periods where killings increased.

For example, on 20 November 2022, as Mahabad was gripped by mass protests met with unlawful shootings, state media reported that provincial governor of West Azerbaijan and other provincial provision council members convened a meeting with members of the Provision Council of Mahabad county, during which "emphasis was placed on ensuring maximum security by using the capabilities of the police force."

On 7 December 2022, the then head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan, Reza Ebrahimi, stated:

> **"The measures taken at the provincial level and the efforts of county governors… have played a crucial role in neutralizing the enemies' conspiracies. County governors, in coordination with provincial authorities, must be prepared to defeat the enemy."**

The sustained, systemic operations over more than three months demonstrate that their actions had a substantial effect, consolidating security forces towards a unified repressive purpose.

Throughout and after the September-December 2022 protests, the minister of interior, his deputy for police and security, provincial governors and deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs repeatedly provided public encouragement and moral support to the security forces. They demonized the protesters as "rioters", "enemies", "heartless terrorists" and even "mosquitoes" pursuing "evil schemes", "ideological and cultural sedition" and "a widespread conspiracy against the people". In parallel, they legitimized the criminal conduct of security forces by praising them for their "coordination, synergy and unwavering determination" and dismissing concerns about violations as "rumours spread by anti-revolutionary media outlets." They also encouraged the continuation of the crackdown by warning of "firm" action against "enemies" or declaring that they "will deepen their surveillance of… rioters, and… neutralize their conspiracies".

Amnesty International considers that provincial and county governors should also be investigated for alleged involvement in the crime against humanity of persecution against the families of those killed. These officials were frequently involved in withholding bodies, imposing restrictions on burials and silencing families, thereby helping to conceal the crimes committed, suppress evidence and obstruct public exposure of unlawful killings. Amnesty International considers that such conduct contributed to the cover-up of the unlawful killings committed and the climate of impunity that fuelled their continuation.

1.11.2(II) KNOWLEDGE AND NEXUS

Drawing on the same evidence presented in the section above on superior responsibility regarding knowledge, including extensive reporting mechanisms, widespread media and human rights reporting, and systematic responses through denial and distortion, Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that the continued facilitation of security operations by the named Ministry of Interior officials demonstrates sustained awareness and knowledge that their actions were enabling crimes against humanity.

The nexus between assistance and criminal conduct is established by the fact that these officials' coordination through security councils and the Ministry of Interior, along with their provision of material, administrative and moral support to the security forces, was specifically aimed at implementing operations to suppress protests, with a clear link to the resulting killings and injuries during violent dispersals.

1.11.3 LIST OF OFFICIALS WARRANTING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

The following table lists the 87 officials whose responsibility was analysed by Amnesty International. The six individuals who have since died are marked by an asterisk. Amnesty International calls for criminal investigations to be initiated against those who are alive, including under universal or other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction, and for arrest warrants to be issued, where sufficient evidence exists, regardless of the accused's absence or presence in the territory of the jurisdiction concerned. The titles listed reflect the positions held by the individuals at the time of the September-December 2022 protests.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF	
1.	Ali Khamenei, commander-in-chief of all armed forces (Supreme Leader)*
GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES	
2.	Mohammad Bagheri, head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces*
IRGC COMMANDERS	
NATIONAL LEVEL	
3.	Hossein Salami, general commander*
4.	Mohammad Pakpour, commander of the Ground Resistance Force*
REGIONAL LEVEL	
5.	Mohammad Taghi Osanlou, commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces
6.	Majid Arjmandfar, deputy commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces
7.	Mohammad Nazar Azimi, commander of the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces

8.	Kourosh Asiabani, deputy commander of the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces
KURDISTAN PROVINCE	
9.	Sadegh Hosseini, commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
10.	Alireza Madanifar (Madani), deputy commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
11.	Jamshid Rezayee, commander of the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
12.	Morteza Miraghayee, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj county
13.	Yousef Maroufi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez county
14.	Ali Ahmad Safizadeh, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh county
15.	Abbas Amri, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county
16.	Sadegh Jamali, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan county
17.	Hossein Maleki, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kamyaran county
18.	Mansour Valy Yee, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county (until 29 October 2022)
19.	Gheisar Omidi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county (after 29 October 2022)
WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE	
20.	Habib Shahsavari, commander of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
21.	Taleb Rahimi, deputy commander of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
22.	Yadollah Abroushan, commander of the 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
23.	Samad Mohammad Alizadeh, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Boukan county
24.	Akbar Norouzi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mahabad county
25.	Jalil Naghshi Ghareghbagh, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Piranshahr county
26.	Yaghoub Rashidi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Oshnavieh county
27.	Ghahreman Eyvazlou, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh county
KERMANSHAH PROVINCE	
28.	Bahman Reyhani, commander of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
29.	Masoud Ghanbari, deputy commander of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
30.	Mojtaba Karami, commander of the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah*
31.	Abouzar Anvari, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah county

32.	Bahram Mirzaee, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Javanroud county
33.	Arsalan Soltangholi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county
34.	Ma'ref Olfati, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salas-e Babajani county
35.	Mohsen Darabi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county

FARAJA COMMANDERS

NATIONAL LEVEL	
36.	Hossein Ashtari, general commander
37.	Hassan Karami, national commander of the Special Cohorts
38.	Mehdi Masoum Beigi, head of the Prevention Police (until 14 November 2022)
39.	Reza Baniasadifar, head of the Prevention Police (after 14 November 2022)
KURDISTAN PROVINCE	
40.	Ali Azadi, commander of Kurdistan province
41.	Mohammad Alizamani, commander of the Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province
42.	Alireza Moradi, commander of Sanandaj county
43.	Ali Safari, commander of Saqqez county
44.	Alireza Karaji, commander of Divandareh county
45.	Rasoul Karami Chegini, commander of Baneh county
46.	Yousef Darvishi, commander of Dehgolan county*
47.	Behrouz Jalilian, commander of Kamyaran county
48.	Kambiz Rostamnia, commander of Mariwan county
WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE	
49.	Rahim Jahanbakhsh, commander of West Azerbaijan province
50.	Reza Faraji, commander of the Special Cohorts of West Azerbaijan province
51.	Salman Heidary, commander of Boukan county
52.	Mohammad Tohidi, commander of Mahabad county
53.	Hessam Salahi, commander of Piranshahr county
54.	Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh, commander of Oshnavieh county
55.	Hassan Sheikhnejad, commander of Urumieh county
KERMANSHAH PROVINCE	

56.	Ali Akbar Javidan, commander of Kermanshah province
57.	Mohsen Panahi, commander of the Special Cohorts of Kermanshah province
58.	Alireza Daliri, commander of Kermanshah county
59.	Behrouz Fakhri, commander of Javanroud county
60.	Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour), commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county
61.	Shahram Kasani, commander of Salas-e Babajani county
62.	Mohammad Mohammadi, commander of Ghasr-e Shirin county

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIALS

NATIONAL LEVEL	
63.	Ahmad Vahidi, minister of interior, deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, and head of the State Security Council
64.	Majid Mir Ahmadi, deputy minister of interior for police and security and secretary of the State Security Council
KURDISTAN PROVINCE	
65.	Esmail Zareie Kousha, provincial governor of Kurdistan
66.	Mehdi Ramezani, deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan
67.	Hassan Askari, county governor of Sanandaj
68.	Jafar Tavan, county governor of Saqqez
69.	Taher Hosseini, county governor of Divandareh
70.	Kamal Khedry, county governor of Baneh
71.	Hamid Motasami, county governor of Dehgolan
72.	Keyvan Shafeyee, county governor of Kamyaran
73.	Esmail Ahmadi, county governor of Mariwan
WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE	
74.	Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, provincial governor of West Azerbaijan
75.	Reza Ebrahimi, head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan
76.	Babakhan Eskandari, county governor of Boukan
77.	Amir Ghaderi, county governor of Mahabad
78.	Khezr Kak Darvishi, county governor of Piranshahr
79.	Ali Torabi, county governor of Oshnavieh

80.	Gholam Hossein Ammari, county governor of Urumieh
KERMANSHAH PROVINCE	
81.	Bahman Amiri Moghaddam, provincial governor of Kermanshah
82.	Mohammad Pourhashemi, head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah
83.	Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh, county governor of Kermanshah
84.	Sa'di Naghshbandi, county governor of Javanroud
85.	Hamidreza Karami, county governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb
86.	Faramarz Bavandpouri (Bavandpour) Gilan, county governor of Salas-e Babajani
87.	Mohammad Heidary, county governor of Ghasr-e Shirin

1.12 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International has long warned that failure to address systemic impunity for crimes under international law during successive lethal protest crackdowns, including in December 2017-January 2018, November 2019 and September-December 2022, will fuel further atrocities in Iran. These warnings have been tragically borne out. Four years after committing crimes against humanity to crush the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September to December 2022, the authorities perpetrated another wave of atrocities bearing the same hallmarks, but on an even deadlier and more staggering scale, in January 2026. Over just two days, on 8 and 9 January 2026, they massacred thousands of protesters and bystanders during the January 2026 protests.

In the absence of accountability, authorities have been emboldened to treat protesters and dissidents as "enemies" and militarize public spaces to maintain a political system grounded in fear and repression. Civilians remain exposed to gunfire, injury and death whenever they exercise their right to peaceful protest to demand fundamental change and respect for human rights.

Iran's criminal justice system is neither willing nor able to investigate and prosecute the crimes against humanity committed by the authorities. Impunity is built into the country's constitutional, legislative and political framework. The constitution, reinforced by numerous laws and policies, fuses the judiciary with the security apparatus, ensuring they operate in unison to wipe out dissent and enforce impunity. Under the constitution, the judiciary falls under the control of the Supreme Leader, who is also the commander-in-chief of the security forces which carry out crimes against humanity. The legislative framework not only excludes definitions of international crimes but also contains provisions that place a seal of legality on unlawful killings, the use of firearms to disperse protests and the criminalization of peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International's analysis of the systemic and deliberate nature of impunity in Iran is reinforced by the findings of the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, who has likewise concluded:

> **"The form of government, known as *velayat-e faqih* [Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist], consolidates executive, legislative and judicial authority in the position of the Supreme Leader… This system of governance establishes a particular relationship between individuals and the State, where the maintenance of the system of governance and the political ideology takes precedence over protecting**

and respecting the rights of individuals. Within this configuration, there is no meaningful way by which the population can… hold decision makers accountable… Conditions for ensuring accountability are missing at the legislative and executive levels, and the judiciary acts as a repressive organ instead of an independent body towards which individuals can seek recourse."

The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran has similarly stated:

"There has been long-standing impunity with respect to human rights violations committed against protesters… The domestic legal framework is set to prevent and obstruct any efforts of victims and their families to obtain a remedy and reparation. The lack of independence of the judiciary and prosecutors… and the lack of transparency and accountability of the judicial system… create further impediments for victims of human rights violations to access justice."

Victims of crimes against humanity in Iran should not be made to wait for justice until a new, independent justice system is formed through constitution-making and legislative reform, processes that depend on profound change in the county's situation. Nor can the people in Iran be left exposed to further massacres for exercising their human rights. Iranian officials responsible for crimes against humanity must not remain immune from prosecution and punishment.

In the absence of domestic avenues for justice for crimes against humanity, Amnesty International calls on the Iranian authorities to ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC and submit a declaration to the ICC accepting retroactive jurisdiction pursuant to Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute. This step is essential to enable the ICC to address the major accountability gap in line with its complementarity principle.

Amnesty International's calls on the international community include the following:

1.12.1 UN SECURITY COUNCIL

- Refer the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

1.12.2 UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran. To facilitate this, consider mandating the UN Secretary-General to propose context-specific legal options for an international criminal justice mechanism, and then identify the most suitable option to enable its implementation.

1.12.3 PROSECUTION OFFICES OF THIRD STATES

- Undertake criminal investigations, based on universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction, against Iranian officials allegedly responsible for crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law, including the officials named in this report, with a view to issuing arrest warrants, where sufficient evidence exists, irrespective of the absence or presence of the accused in the territory of the state concerned.
- Open structural investigations into crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in Iran, including those documented in this report, especially where victims may be present on the territory of third states, with a view to establishing command and decision-making structures and identifying and grouping potential perpetrators with a view to pursuing criminal accountability.
- Establish joint investigation teams to investigate crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in Iran, including those that are linked to repeated cycles of

deadly protest crackdowns.

2. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 SCOPE AND FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 MATERIAL SCOPE

In the research it conducted for this report, Amnesty International investigated reports of human rights violations committed by Iranian authorities against protesters and their supporters during the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising. Its investigation focused primarily on three areas of concern: violations committed during protest dispersals involving the use of force and firearms resulting in killings and injuries; violations against the families of those killed; and systemic impunity including state cover-ups and the denial of access to justice through the domestic system.

In examining the broader patterns of repression, Amnesty International drew and built on previously published findings concerning other violations committed during the uprising, including arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and other ill-treatment in custody, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and enforced disappearance. For the purposes of analysis, the organization placed the violations investigated within the broader context of recurring cycles of deadly protest crackdowns since 2017, including the most recent unprecedented protest massacres of 8-9 January 2026 and the ongoing risk of further atrocities in the absence of accountability.

Amnesty International also investigated the command structures and organization of the security bodies involved in the violations committed during the dispersal of protests. It further examined the constitutional, legal and institutional frameworks governing their conduct, including their role in enabling the violations and patterns of impunity investigated in this research. On this basis, it sought to map the relevant chains of command, identify commanders and other officials implicated in violations and assess the available evidence for the attribution of individual criminal responsibility.

2.1.2 TEMPORAL SCOPE

In investigating reported violations during protest dispersals resulting in killings and injuries, as well as subsequent violations against the relatives of those killed, Amnesty International primarily focused on events occurring between 16 September and 31 December 2022. This time period was chosen because it corresponds to the phase of the Woman Life Freedom uprising characterized by widespread street protests. However, in examining patterns of impunity, the temporal scope of the research extended beyond the September-December 2022 period, as developments related to complaints filed by victims' families continued in the months and years that followed.

Similarly, in examining both state cover-ups and the role of individuals in positions of command and authority, the research primarily focused on official statements and documents from the September-December 2022 period. However, following the identification of officials implicated in protest dispersal operations, the organization tracked changes in their positions in subsequent years and updated this information, where available, up to the time of publication.

In investigating the command structures and organization of the security bodies involved in violations committed during the dispersal of protests, the investigation examined a wide range of sources spanning several decades to trace the establishment, mandates, organizational evolution and transformation of these bodies up to their configuration at the time of the September-December 2022 protests.

2.1.3 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

Amnesty International's investigation into the violations falling within the material scope of this research was national in scope and comprehensive in nature, with a view to providing a nationwide overview of the violations concerned.

Accordingly, the organization investigated reports of killings of protesters and bystanders, as well as subsequent violations against many of their families, from 26 provinces of Iran's 31 provinces, following the methodology described in detail further below. Similarly, in drawing and building on previously published findings relating to other violations, including arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and other ill-treatment in custody, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and enforced disappearance, the organization gathered testimonies from across the country.

In addition to this broad scope, Amnesty International selected the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan for in-depth investigation, focusing on 17 counties in these provinces where protest-related killings were reported. Through detailed case studies, the organization sought to reconstruct the circumstances, sequence and timing of the killings of protesters and bystanders in these locations, identify the branches of the security forces involved and illustrate the patterns of violations against families of those killed. It also gathered and analysed official statements made by individuals holding positions of command and authority over the security forces responsible for protest dispersal operations in these provinces.

In line with this scope, for the analysis relating to the attribution of individual criminal responsibility, Amnesty International focused on national officials at the top of the chain of command and officials exercising command and authority over protest dispersal operations in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces.

The provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, which are home to Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority, were selected because Kurdish protesters and bystanders from these provinces accounted for the highest number of victims killed across multiple separate incidents between September and December 2022. Baluchi protesters and bystanders in Sistan and Baluchistan province recorded the highest overall death toll. The majority were killed during a single incident in Zahedan on 30 September 2022, commonly known as "Bloody Friday", which Amnesty International had previously documented, publishing its findings during the height of the uprising in October 2022.

2.1.4 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND EVIDENTIARY THRESHOLD

Amnesty International first investigated the violations concerned within the framework of international human rights law and standards. The organization then analysed the evidence in light of international criminal law to assess whether individual incidents and broader patterns of conduct meet the legal

elements of crimes against humanity, including the crimes of murder, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, rape and other sexual violence, and persecution.

Amnesty International applied the standard of proof of "reasonable grounds to believe" in reaching its findings. This standard requires the existence of sufficient, credible and reliable information to support a reasonable belief that an alleged fact occurred. It is widely used in human rights investigations to assess state responsibility for violations. The reasonable grounds to believe standard is lower than the criminal law standard of "beyond reasonable doubt" for establishing individual criminal responsibility. However, it requires more than mere suspicion and necessitates a sufficiently strong and corroborated evidentiary basis to support a reasonable belief that the alleged facts are true.

2.2 KEY RESEARCH METHODS

2.2.1 INTERVIEWS

Amnesty International researchers conducted interviews with 270 individuals, including 221 who were in Iran at the time of the 2022 protests and, in most cases, at the time of the interview, and 49 based outside Iran. They included protesters, former detainees who were subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, relatives of those killed or detained, eyewitnesses, lawyers, human rights defenders, journalists and medical workers.

In addition, Amnesty International received the testimonies of 19 other individuals, including injured protesters, rape survivors and relatives of those killed, from lawyers and human rights defenders based outside Iran who obtained consent to share the testimonies with Amnesty International. In some instances, Amnesty International relied on these intermediaries to transmit follow-up questions to interviewees and convey their responses, which were relayed in the interviewees' own words.

In interviews with protesters and eyewitnesses, the organization gathered information not only about the specific incident leading to a victim's death, but also about the security forces' response to the relevant protest, from its commencement through to its dispersal, including the types of weapons and force used, the uniforms and identifying features of security forces, the threats they uttered, the manner in which protesters and bystanders were targeted, and the circumstances surrounding the use of firearms and other means of force.

Amnesty International explained the purpose of the research to interviewees and sought their informed consent before conducting interviews. It conducted all interviews in Persian through secure instant messaging applications and, with the interviewees' consent, audio recorded most of them. The majority of the interviews were conducted during the protest period between September and December 2022 and over the following year. However, as additional sources were identified or complementary information was required, Amnesty International conducted further interviews with newly identified individuals and follow-up interviews with previously interviewed individuals.

Amnesty International has disclosed the identities of interviewees only where it assessed that doing so would not place them at risk. In such cases, interviewees are identified by their first and last name. In all other cases, the organization has used pseudonyms consisting of a single name.

Amnesty International has also withheld or removed identifying details relating to specific cases where necessary to protect the privacy, safety and security of victims, survivors, witnesses and their families. Where it was assessed to be safe and appropriate to do so, the organization has identified victims and provided details of their cases.

Amnesty International assessed the credibility and reliability of information by considering factors including the interviewee's proximity to events, internal consistency and consistency with audiovisual,

documentary and forensic evidence.

2.2.2 VERIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF AUDIOVISUAL EVIDENCE

Amnesty International conducted an extensive review and analysis of audiovisual evidence to generate new findings and corroborate witness testimony and other evidence cited in this report. The audiovisual evidence included videos depicting the conduct of security forces during protest repression operations; videos capturing incidents in which protesters and bystanders were shot and/or the immediate aftermath of those incidents; and videos or photographs depicting victims' injuries or bodies in hospitals or morgues.

The organization analysed this material to identify the circumstances in which security forces used force and firearms and the causes and circumstances of specific killings and injuries. The analysis considered any threats visible in the footage, alongside contextual information obtained from witness testimony and other available evidence, to assess whether the use of firearms and force was in line with international law and standards governing the use of force and firearms. The audiovisual analysis also supported the identification of security force units through visible insignia, uniforms, equipment and vehicles.

Amnesty International's weapons experts analysed videos depicting firearms and other weapons, as well as images of recovered cartridges and other ballistic evidence, to identify the weapons and ammunition used by the security forces. Additionally, the organization commissioned an independent forensic pathologist to examine injuries visible in relevant photographs and videos and provide expert assessments on the nature of the injuries and their likely causes. The pathologist, together with Amnesty International researchers, further examined the consistency of photographs and videos depicting injuries with witness accounts and other available evidence.

Overall, Amnesty International reviewed more than 2,000 videos recorded between 16 September and 31 December 2022 in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising in Iran. From this body of material, Amnesty International selected and verified 456 videos for detailed, in-depth analysis; they were primarily recorded in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. This geographical scope corresponds to the in-depth focus of this research on the causes and circumstances surrounding the killing of protesters and bystanders in these provinces during the September-December 2022 protests.

Amnesty International used a range of discovery, collection, organization, preservation, digital analysis and verification methods. Its Digital Verification Corps, Amnesty International's network of university students trained in digital fact-finding, assisted in the discovery and verification of videos, with final analysis conducted and reviewed by Amnesty International staff. Students from the University of Cambridge (UK), the University of Essex (UK), the University of California, Berkeley (USA), the Ibero-American University (Mexico), Bard College Berlin (Germany), the Hertie School of Governance (Germany) and the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights (Switzerland) were involved in this investigation.[1]

In accordance with its standard methodology, the organization began its research process with the discovery and collection of relevant visual content. The organization conducted extensive online searches on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, X and YouTube and reviewed videos posted by civil society and media organizations, both inside and outside Iran. As part

1. Amnesty International, "The Digital Verification Corps: Amnesty International's volunteers for the age of social media", 6 December 2019, https://citizenevidence.org/2019/12/06/the-digital-verification-corps-amnesty-internationals-volunteers-for-the-age-of-social-media/

of the collection process, Amnesty International also received videos and other digital material from protesters, witnesses, journalists, human rights defenders and other civil society actors. Amnesty International also acknowledges with appreciation the collaboration of journalist Farzad Seifikaran, who shared with the organization a log he had compiled containing videos from the protest period.

The organization made every effort to identify the original source of each video or photograph by identifying where it was first published. The organization then organized, catalogued and preserved all evidence, both for immediate research and for future accountability and justice mechanisms. It catalogued videos in CODEC, an open-source tool developed by SITU Research and adapted by Amnesty International.[2] All videos mentioned in this report are referenced in footnotes. Each relevant footnote provides the video's unique identifier in CODEC (an alphanumerical code beginning "IRN"). It also provides a reference to the public location of the video if Amnesty International identified that it had been posted on a social media platform. The organization intends to make many of the videos in CODEC publicly available later in 2026. Once it does so, anyone will be able to search for and view these videos in CODEC. It will exclude videos whose content, if disclosed, could place the person who recorded it, or individuals visible in the footage, at risk. It has noted in relevant footnotes that such a video has been withheld.

The organization subjected each video and photograph to a series of verification procedures. As a preliminary step, it used reverse image and video search tools to determine when the video or photograph appeared online and to verify whether it had been correctly attributed to the event under investigation or had been misattributed and actually related to another context.

The organization then sought to determine where each video had been taken, a verification procedure known as geolocation. This was done by cross-referencing the footage with satellite imagery, ground-level photography and other publicly available information. Any visible landmarks, terrain, building architecture, street signs or trees were analysed to see if they matched street views or other photographs from known locations. In most cases, it was possible to geolocate the positions of the camera operators for the videos referenced in this report.

In instances where video quality was poor or recordings were made in the evening with limited geolocation clues, the organization was able to determine only the street or broader area where the video was taken. In some cases, geolocation findings were corroborated by witnesses, human rights defenders and journalists interviewed by Amnesty International.

Due to the context-specific situation in which the Iranian authorities imposed internet shutdowns periodically during the protest period, many videos were uploaded when internet access was available, rather than when they were actually recorded. According to the Open Observatory of Network Interference, Iran experienced a complete network shutdown for 13 days and continuous service-level blocking of specific applications, such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Viber, and Skype, for 102 days between 16 September until 31 December 2022.[3] For methodological purposes, Amnesty International used the upload date of each video as a reference point. Where possible, Amnesty also sought to determine the actual recording date through a verification procedure known as chrono-location. In some cases, the time could be estimated based on the analysis of the sun's position and shadows. In other instances, the quality of the video or photograph did not allow for such an estimate. Additionally, the date of certain events was established through the analysis of other evidence, including witness testimonies, media reports and other documentation.

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2. SITU, "SITU research merges data and design to create new pathways for justice", https://situ.nyc/research/profile (accessed on 18 August 2026).
3. Ooni, *Technical Multi-Stakeholder Report on Internet Shutdowns: The Case of Iran amid Autumn 2022 Protests*, 29 November 2022, https://ooni.org/post/2022-iran-technical-multistakeholder-report See also Ooni, Iran, https://explorer.ooni.org/country/IR?since=2026-07-14&until=2026-08-14 (accessed on 14 August 2026).

2.2.3 EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

As part of its extensive investigations, Amnesty International also gathered and analysed a vast body of documentary evidence, including 10 leaked official documents, hundreds of official statements made by state authorities, copies of the death certificates of 61 victims, copies of the burial certificates of 56 victims, photographs of the gravestones or grave sites of 257 victims, funeral posters of 173 victims, medical records related to 12 deceased victims and judicial documents related to 12 deceased victims.

The organization further reviewed relevant laws, regulations, government publications and state media reports, as well as statements and reports issued by UN bodies, human rights organizations and credible independent media outlets, concerning the events under investigation and the role of security bodies involved.

2.3 APPLICATION OF RESEARCH METHODS TO KEY CONCERNS

2.3.1 KILLINGS

In the context of its investigation, Amnesty International researched cases of protesters and bystanders who were killed across the country. The research covered 26 provinces where killings were reported.

From the outset of the protests on 16 September 2022, Amnesty International systematically collected reports of killings from a wide range of sources, including protesters, victims' relatives, human rights defenders, media outlets, medical workers and other informed sources. The organization then undertook extensive efforts to gather and analyse information relating to each reported case. The process involved first confirming whether the individual had been killed by security forces in the context of protest crackdowns. If confirmed, the organization then sought to obtain additional information on the circumstances of the killing, including the branches of the security forces involved, the nature of the injuries sustained and the weapon or ammunition used where known.

For each reported killing, Amnesty International created a case file and conducted systematic internet and social media searches. It reviewed relevant media reports, social media posts and other publicly available information, and made extensive efforts to identify and interview informed sources, including witnesses, relatives of the victim, human rights defenders, journalists and medical workers. Amnesty International assessed the reliability of the information collected by corroborating it across the sources reviewed and interviewed wherever possible.

Through this process, Amnesty International compiled a database of killings, enabling the organization to establish patterns relating to the use of force and firearms by security forces and the circumstances surrounding the deaths of protesters and bystanders.

Based on information gathered about the circumstances surrounding the deaths, Amnesty International divided them into four categories: killings during violent protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces; deaths in state custody; post-custody deaths linked to torture or other ill-treatment; and suspicious deaths with substantial indications that state agents killed the victims.[4]

4. For detailed descriptions of these categories and the number of cases recorded under each category, see section 5.3.

For 135 of the 377 recorded victims, whose deaths occurred in a total of 14 provinces,[5] Amnesty International conducted interviews with one or more sources directly affected by the fatal incident, including relatives, protesters and other witnesses present at or near the scene of the fatal incident.

In relation to a further 184 victims, whose deaths occurred in a total of 18 provinces,[6] the organization interviewed human rights defenders, journalists and other informed sources who had gathered information directly from one or more individuals affected by the fatal incident. Due to fears of reprisal or other restrictions, Amnesty International was unable to communicate directly with the individuals affected. However, the human rights defenders and journalists shared detailed accounts they had received, including contemporaneous notes and/or screenshots of communications with affected individuals.

In the case of the remaining 58 victims, whose deaths occurred in a total of 15 provinces,[7] Amnesty International recorded the deaths in its database based on credible reports published by human rights defenders, journalists and other reliable sources. However, the organization was unable to interview sources to complement this evidence.

The organization has on file over 150 additional names reported online as individuals who were killed by the security forces in connection with the protests. However, it was unable to confirm their names and identities or gather sufficient information indicating that they were killed by security forces in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

As part of its investigation and corroboration process, Amnesty International undertook efforts to obtain, where available, verified photographs and videos of the fatal incident and/or the injuries sustained by the victim; official statements setting out the state narrative of the circumstances of the killing; death and burial certificates recording the victim's date of birth, date of death and cause of death; funeral posters featuring the victims' names and pictures; and photographs of the victim's gravestone recording their names, date of birth and date of death.

Overall, Amnesty International obtained and reviewed funeral posters relating to 165 victims; photographs of the gravestones or grave sites of 257 victims; copies of burial certificates for 56 victims; copies of death certificates for 61 victims; verified videos of the fatal incident or its immediate aftermath relating to 78 victims; and verified videos or photographs showing the injured bodies of 66 victims at hospitals or morgues.

Amnesty International is publishing alongside this report a companion document that lists the names and details of 377 recorded protesters and bystanders, together with information on the location and date of their deaths, where available.[8] Profile photographs were available for inclusion for 335 of the victims and photographs of gravestones or grave sites for 257.[9]

For 42 of the 377 recorded victims, Amnesty International was unable to find profile photographs. All but one of these 42 victims belonged to Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority.

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5. These provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Fars, Qhazvin Gilan, Kerman, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Kurdistan, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchestan, Tehran and West Azerbaijan.
6. These provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Ghazvin, Gilan, Golestan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Semnan, Sistan and Baluchestan, Tehran, West Azarbaijan and Zanjan.
7. These provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Gilan, Hamedan, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, Khuzestan, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchestan, Tehran, West Azarbaijan and Zanjan.
8. Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en
9. Of these photographs of grave sites, 235 depict gravestones bearing the victim's name and dates of birth and death. For 22 victims, the photographs depict burial sites before a gravestone had been erected. In some cases, the photographs show either a memorial poster bearing the name and a photograph of the deceased or a small marker placed at the burial site recording the deceased's name and date of death.

For 120 victims of the recorded 377 victims, Amnesty International was unable to find photographs of their gravestones. Most of these 120 victims (88) similarly belonged to Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority.

The underrepresentation of Baluchi victims in the photographs available for inclusion reflects the marginalization of the Baluchi community. Amnesty International faced particular challenges in its efforts to identify Baluchi victims killed in Sistan and Baluchistan province and verify their legal names through official documents such as burial or death certificates, or photographs of gravestones or funeral posters. First of all, accessing sources for interviews through secure messaging applications was more challenging in the case of Sistan and Baluchistan because higher levels of poverty meant that many sources lacked reliable access to the internet and electronic devices.

Secondly, while for victims from other parts of Iran, funeral posters often provided a means of verifying their names, this was generally not possible in Sistan and Baluchistan because funeral practices in the province do not typically involve the publication of funeral posters.

For the vast majority of victims in Sistan and Baluchistan, Amnesty International was not able to obtain burial or death certificates either. Under Iranian laws and regulations, no burial may take place until a burial certificate has been issued. However, Amnesty International understands that, due to entrenched discrimination and marginalization in Sistan and Baluchistan province, burials are frequently carried out informally and without burial certificates.

The lack of access to death and burial certificates for Baluchi victims should be understood in the broader context of systemic discrimination against Iran's Baluchi minority, including the authorities' failure to ensure equal access to civil registration services in Sistan and Baluchistan province. Consequently, many members of Iran's Baluchi minority do not possess a national identification booklet and their births and deaths go unregistered.

Photographs of gravestones were also frequently unavailable, not only because no photographs of the gravestones could be obtained, but also because, in some cases, financial hardship had prevented the deceased's family from installing a gravestone at all.

The aforementioned challenges were further compounded by the fact that, in Sistan and Baluchistan, individuals may be known by different surnames: a formal surname under which their birth is registered and a tribal name which may be shared by multiple individuals.

Due to all these challenges, Amnesty International collaborated extensively with Haalvsh, a Baluchi human rights organization, spending considerable time repeatedly reviewing and cross-checking information gathered through its sources on the ground to compile as comprehensive and accurate a list of victims as possible based on the available information, and to avoid duplicates.

In Sistan and Baluchistan, individuals may be known by different surnames: an official surname under which their birth is registered and a tribal name which may be shared by multiple individuals. In listing the names of Baluchi victims, Amnesty International has included, in brackets at the end, the name believed to be the victim's tribal name. The organization has also included alternative first names or surnames reported for the same victim in brackets, where relevant.

Individuals from Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority may be known by different first names: an official first name under which their birth is officially registered and a Kurdish name preferred by the individual or their family. This reflects discriminatory civil registration practices that have historically prevented the registration of many Kurdish names. To facilitate future tracing in official records Amnesty International has used the officially registered first name when identifying Kurdish victims. Where relevant, the organization has also included the victim's preferred Kurdish first name in brackets.

In the case of Zhina Mahsa Amini, Amnesty International has listed her Kurdish first name first, followed by her officially registered first name. Given that her name is widely known, the rationale for prioritizing the officially registered first name does not apply in her case.

In a few instances, victims from other communities across the country were also known by a first name other than their officially registered name. In such cases, the alternative name is included in brackets.

Amnesty International's findings on killings of protesters and bystanders are structured at two geographical levels. Drawing on the organization's database of recorded victims, Chapter 5 provides a national overview of the killings of protesters and bystanders across Iran during September-December 2022, when street protests were taking place, and features illustrative cases of protesters who were killed in different parts of the country.

Chapters 6-8 then present detailed case studies of 95 protesters and bystanders killed during violent protest dispersals or in militarized areas in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces. For these chapters, Amnesty International undertook more extensive evidence-gathering and corroboration efforts, enabling a detailed reconstruction of events, the circumstances surrounding the killings and the identification of the security forces involved.

2.3.2 VIOLATIONS AGAINST RELATIVES

Amnesty International's investigation into killings, including interviews with informed sources, focused not only on gathering information about the causes and circumstances surrounding victims' deaths, but also on documenting the treatment of their relatives by security bodies in the aftermath of the killings.

While the research conducted by Amnesty International encompassed gathering information on violations committed against victims' relatives from across Iran, the 42 illustrative cases presented in Chapter 9 focus on violations against families in Kurdistan, West Azerbaijan and Kermanshah provinces. This geographic scope mirrors that of Chapters 6-8, which document the circumstances surrounding the unlawful killings of 95 protesters and bystanders in these provinces.

In documenting violations against victims' relatives, Amnesty International focused mainly on the period from September to December 2022, in line with the primary time period covered by this report. However, Amnesty International's examination of the authorities' responses to complaints filed by victims' families to seek truth and justice extended beyond this period, as related developments continued in the months or years that followed.

2.3.3 RAPE AND OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Amnesty International has included in this report a summary of the findings on rape and other sexual violence that it presented in its previous report entitled *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising*, published on 6 December 2023. However, it complemented its prior analysis of these violations under international human rights law by an analysis under international criminal law.

As explained in detail in the previous report, between January 2023 and August 2023, Amnesty International gathered testimonies from 45 individuals on the commission of rape and other forms of sexual violence against protesters while they were arbitrarily detained between September and December 2022 in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The individuals were selected on the basis of their willingness to share their accounts and included those who reached out to Amnesty International in response to a public call the organization made on 13 February 2023 on its

Iran-focused social media channels encouraging people to share information related to torture and other ill-treatment in detention in the context of the uprising.

The 45 individuals whose testimonies were obtained included five victims of rape, 22 victims of sexual violence other than rape, five family members of rape victims, five family members of victims of sexual violence, a close friend of one victim of sexual violence and three mental health professionals – one clinical psychologist and two psychotherapists – who treated victims of rape and other sexual violence. The remainder of those interviewed were four former detainees who were not themselves subjected to sexual violence in detention but who witnessed or learned about the commission of rape and/or other forms of sexual violence against other individuals detained alongside them. Based on the accounts of these 45 individuals, the organization documented in detail the cases of 45 survivors of rape or other forms of sexual violence – 26 men, 12 women, six boys and one girl – whose ages ranged from 12 to 48.

These 45 victims were from 17 of Iran's 31 provinces.[10]

The organization also reviewed a leaked official document written by a prosecution official in Tehran province on 13 October 2022 concerning complaints by two women who they were subjected to rape and/or other sexual violence by two Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) agents. The document was first published by Iran International, a Persian-language media outlet based outside Iran, on 8 February 2023.

2.3.4 ARRESTS, ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES, TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

Amnesty International has included in this report a summary of the findings on other patterns of human rights violations against individuals detained in connection with the protests that it presented in the aforementioned report, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising*. These include arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment and violations of fair trial rights. However, it complemented its prior analysis of these violations under international human rights law by an analysis under international criminal law.

As explained in the previous report, Amnesty International gathered and analysed the testimonies of 84 individuals on the commission of torture and other ill-treatment against protesters while they were arbitrarily detained between September and December 2022. In addition to the aforementioned 45 individuals whose testimonies specifically included accounts of rape and other sexual violence, the organization interviewed 39 other individuals including former detainees and relatives of detainees.

The 84 testimonies provided the organization with extensive information about the profiles of individuals arbitrarily detained in the context of the Woman Life Freedom uprising and the circumstances of their arrests; the widespread use of torture and other ill-treatment against detained men, women and children, including the most commonly used methods of torture; the conditions of prisons and detention centres in various provinces across the country; and the security and intelligence bodies involved in the arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment of protesters and others arrested in connection with the uprising.

Amnesty International also reviewed official statements by the authorities related to arrests during and in the aftermath of the protests, which were published in state-owned and state-affiliated media outlets

10. These were the provinces of Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Gilan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Tehran, Sistan and Baluchistan, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.

in Iran, and searched for and analysed videos that were broadcast on state television showing detainees making what were presented as "confessions".

2.3.5 IMPUNITY

Amnesty International's research into impunity involved extensive documentary, legal and institutional analysis. This included examining how complaints filed by victims' families were processed by prosecution and judicial authorities; official statements concerning both individual victims and the protest crackdown as a whole; and patterns in the appointment, promotion and continued tenure of officials in positions of power and authority.

The research also entailed a detailed analysis of Iran's legal framework, including constitutional provisions, laws and regulations governing the use of force and firearms, and the mandates and powers of security forces. In addition, Amnesty International examined the institutional and legal links between the judiciary and the security apparatus, and assessed how these affected victims' access to justice and accountability.

Amnesty International also reviewed and analysed reports issued by the Special Committee to Investigate the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), an official body established on 7 May 2023 by the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, assessing them against international standards for independent, impartial, thorough, effective and transparent investigations. The organization also examined the Special Committee's institutional characteristics, composition, mandate, methodology and relationship to other state institutions in order to assess its capacity to conduct a credible investigation.

2.4 ATTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

2.4.1 IDENTIFICATION OF SECURITY FORCES

Amnesty International identified the security forces involved in violent protest dispersals primarily through the analysis and corroboration of witness testimony and verified audiovisual evidence. When available, the organization analysed official statements, leaked official documents, court judgments and prosecution orders containing information on the forces deployed and their roles in specific incidents.

The organization also reviewed applicable laws and regulations, official statements, state media reports and promotional videos produced by the security bodies to understand the formation, mandates, command structures and uniforms of different security bodies.

Factors considered in attributing incidents to specific branches of the security forces included the uniforms, insignia and security forces vehicles observed during the incidents. Where the available evidence was insufficient to support a reliable attribution, Amnesty International did not attribute responsibility to a specific security force.

The identification of security forces in the report is generally limited to the two key security bodies involved in protest dispersals; namely, the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) and the IRGC. Where evidence was available, Amnesty International identified specific subdivisions such as the Special Cohorts and the Prevention Police of FARAJA, including its Assistance Cohorts, and the operational divisions, Basij battalions and Security Cohorts of the IRGC. Generally, the available evidence was insufficient to identify, at a more granular level, the name or numerical designation of the operational unit involved in a specific incident.

2.4.2 ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY

For security forces identified as having committed violations in the context of protest dispersals, Amnesty International sought to map chains of command and identify the positions, responsibilities and authority of commanders and other officials who controlled or facilitated the operations carried out by these forces. For this, the organization analysed a range of sources, including relevant laws and regulations, appointment decrees, leaked official documents, state media reports, official statements and official websites. The organization examined these materials to identify evidence relevant to the attribution of criminal responsibility to senior officials within these forces.

The organization analysed the potential individual criminal responsibility of senior officials identified within the relevant command structures under one or more recognized modes of liability, including superior responsibility and aiding and abetting. Amnesty International did not focus its analysis on the potential individual criminal responsibility of individuals alleged to have directly perpetrated the crimes on the ground. This is because the information regarding their alleged involvement was based on individual allegations and could not be corroborated through official documentation. Nonetheless, the organization holds information received about several such individuals on file. By contrast, the potential criminal responsibility of senior officials could be analysed on the basis of their positions and authority within relevant chains of command and institutional structures, alongside other evidence. The methodology for this legal analysis is described in detail in Chapter 13.

Amnesty International emphasizes that only independent and impartial criminal investigations and, if sufficient evidence exists, prosecutions carried out in line with international human rights standards on fair trials can establish individual criminal responsibility beyond reasonable doubt, based on evidence specific to each individual and in relation to the incidents underlying the charges.

2.5 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Research into the human rights situation in Iran is fraught with challenges due to the authorities' refusal to grant requests for access, the opacity and secrecy surrounding the country's system of governance, repeated deliberate internet shutdowns that hinder communication with victims and witnesses and result in the loss of audiovisual evidence, and a pervasive climate of fear and reprisals against individuals who speak out or share information about human rights violations and their relatives.

Despite repeated requests for access, most recently made by the organization in January 2026, the Iranian authorities have not allowed Amnesty International to visit Iran for research purposes since 1979. As a result, the organization had to rely on remote methods, including interviews conducted through secure messaging applications. This posed challenges in reaching victims and witnesses from marginalized or economically disadvantaged communities who lacked access to electronic devices, secure applications or reliable internet connections, particularly in Sistan and Baluchistan province.[11]

The pervasive climate of fear and reprisals meant that many witnesses and victims were afraid that they or their family members would face harm if they spoke to Amnesty International. As a result, some declined to speak directly with the organization, while others participated in initial interviews but were unwilling to engage in subsequent follow-up interviews.

Research into chains of command and command structures presented particular challenges. Information about the structure, hierarchy and internal functioning of Iran's security forces is not

11. See section 1.3.1.

readily available and is deliberately obscured by the authorities. The opacity surrounding the organization, reporting lines and division of responsibilities within security bodies limited access to official information and required Amnesty International to piece together chains of command from a wide range of sources.

2.6 ENGAGEMENT WITH IRANIAN AUTHORITIES

On 4 August 2026, Amnesty International wrote to the Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, detailing its findings and recommendations in relation to the crimes against humanity documented in this report, and seeking comments.

Additionally, on 4 August 2026, Amnesty International sent separate letters to the general commander of FARAJA, Ahmadreza Radan; the general commander of the IRGC, Ahmad Vahidi; and the Minister of Interior, Eskandar Momeni. In these letters, the organization informed them of its intention to publish its findings and to call for criminal investigations into 87 individuals who held senior positions within their respective institutions at the time of the September-December 2022 protests. The organization requested that they notify the individuals listed in the table annexed to the letters that they would be named in the organization's forthcoming publication and to seek and transmit any response that they might wish to provide in exercise of their right of reply to the information set out.

No response to any of these letters had been received by the time of publication.

2.7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Amnesty International extends its deep gratitude to all protesters, victims' relatives, witnesses, human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, medical workers and other individuals who shared information, testimony and evidence for this report, including by contacting the organization through a dedicated hotline announced during and in the aftermath of the Woman Life Freedom uprising. Their courage, resilience and commitment to truth and justice made this investigation possible. The hundreds of messages received through the hotline from people inside Iran, sharing information and seeking global attention, strengthened the organization's resolve.

Amnesty International is particularly grateful to those who agreed to recount traumatic experiences despite ongoing risks and fears of reprisals. Amnesty International recognizes the emotional burden of participating in such investigations and is indebted to all those who placed their trust in the organization.

Amnesty International also expresses its deep appreciation to the Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) and the Kurdpa Human Rights Organization, two Kurdish human rights organizations, and Haalvsh, a Baluchi human rights organization, for their sustained cooperation throughout the years of investigation. Their tireless efforts to connect the organization with sources on the ground and to share information and evidence were invaluable to this work.

Amnesty International honours the memory of the protesters and bystanders whose lives were brutally cut short during cycles of deadly protest crackdowns and their aspirations for a future of dignity, freedom and equality in Iran. The organization also pays its tribute to the memory of Zhina Mahsa Amini and all women and girls in Iran who have been killed, tortured or otherwise harmed through decades of enforcement of discriminatory and degrading compulsory veiling laws and other discriminatory laws, policies and practices. Amnesty International stands in solidarity with women and girls, the families of those killed, and all survivors in pursuing truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

People in Iran have been subjected to decades of severe repression and discrimination by the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran with impunity. Amnesty International's research shows that Iran's constitutional structure enables widespread crimes under international law and discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion and political opinion, entrenches impunity, denies people the right to participate in public affairs, and impermissibly restricts the rights to freedom of religion or belief, expression, association and peaceful assembly.

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section provides an overview of Amnesty International's extensive research into successive waves of brutal protest crackdowns since December 2017-January 2018, which reveals a widespread pattern of security forces unlawfully using force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, against protesters and bystanders. The second section provides a background to long-standing patterns of impunity for widespread and systemic crimes under international law and serious human rights violations in Iran.[12] The third section addresses the constitutional roots of repression, impunity and discrimination in Iran, including the entwinement of the judiciary and the security apparatus. The fourth and fifth sections describe well-documented patterns of discrimination and other human rights violations against women and ethnic and religious minorities in Iran. The sixth section provides an overview of the significant civilian harm caused by the USA and Israel since they launched unlawful attacks on Iran in violation of the UN Charter on 28 February 2026 and renews the organization's calls for an enduring ceasefire and accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and possible war crimes committed during the conflict.

3.1 CYCLES OF PROTESTS MET WITH BLOODSHED

Iran has been gripped by successive waves of anti-establishment protests since December 2017, as protesters have repeatedly taken to the streets demanding human rights, dignity, freedom, the end of

12. Chapter 11 examines, in greater detail, the patterns of impunity surrounding violations committed during the repression of the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising and the legislative framework that has prevented criminal complaints filed by victims' families from leading to justice. These include laws that criminalize the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly; authorize the use of firearms to disperse protesters, including peaceful protesters; exempt security forces from criminal liability for unlawful killings resulting from such use of force; entrench the entwinement of the judiciary and security forces; and grant jurisdiction over serious human rights violations by security forces to military prosecutors and courts.

the Islamic Republic system and transition to a new rights-respecting system of governance.[13] Alongside these cycles of protests, civil society actors, dissidents and others have also repeatedly spoken out through written statements and other peaceful acts against the systematic denial of human rights in Iran, including the right to participate equally and without discrimination in public affairs.[14]

For years, public discontent has been growing over the Islamic Republic of Iran's domestic and foreign policies, including its nuclear programme and support of various armed actors in the Middle East and North Africa region, policies seen as contributing to extensive socio-economic decline, including through the impact of US and other sanctions, and leaving people struggling with high inflation, high unemployment and low or unpaid wages.[15] This context, along with chronic mismanagement of resources, severe political repression and violence, entrenched discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion, ethnicity and political opinion, and entrenched impunity,[16] sparked successive cycles of nationwide protests in December 2017-January 2018,[17] November 2019,[18] September-December 2022 and January 2026, which demanded the downfall of the Islamic Republic system and the establishment of a new rights-respecting system of governance.

Meanwhile, the Iranian authorities have maintained an iron grip on power through an omnipresent and expansive security apparatus embedded in all aspects of public life from education, healthcare and the media to the economy, telecommunications and digital infrastructure. The system is buttressed by a base among segments of the population, which includes individuals integrated within or connected to the vast security apparatus. The size of this base cannot be reliably estimated given the lack of independent polling and non-discriminatory electoral processes as well as suffocating restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and association.

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13. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Massacre of protesters demands global diplomatic action to signal an end to impunity", 14 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-massacre-of-protesters-demands-global-diplomatic-action-to-signal-an-end-to-impunity; Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 82 Baluchi protesters and bystanders killed in bloody crackdown", 6 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-82-baluchi-protesters-and-bystanders-killed-in-bloody-crackdown; Amnesty International, "Iran: More than 100 protesters believed to be killed as top officials give green light to crush protests", 19 November 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/11/iran-more-than-100-protesters-believed-to-be-killed-as-top-officials-give-green-light-to-crush-protests-2

14. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 82 Baluchi protesters and bystanders killed in bloody crackdown", 6 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-82-baluchi-protesters-and-bystanders-killed-in-bloody-crackdown; Amnesty International, "Iran: Security forces use ruthless force, mass arrests and torture to crush peaceful protests", 11 August 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/08/iran-security-forces-use-ruthless-force-mass-arrests-and-torture-to-crush-peaceful-protests; Iran Wire, خانواده امضاکنندگان بیانیه ۱۴ امضا: عزیزان و یارانمان را آزاد کنید ["Families of signatories of 14-signature statement: Free our loved ones and companions"], 9 June 2021, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/49647 (in Persian); Iran International, چهارده کنشگر زن طی بیانیه‌ای خواهان استعفای خامنه‌ای و گذار از جمهوری اسلامی شدند ["Fourteen female activists, in a statement, call for Khamenei's resignation and transition away from the Islamic Republic"], https://old.iranintl.com/-ایران/چهارده-کنشگر-زن-طی-بیانیه‌ای-خواهان-استعفای-خامنه‌ای-و-گذار-از-جمهوری-اسلامی-شدند (in Persian).

15. See Iran Wire, فعال سیاسی و فرهنگی: خامنه‌ای مسوول کشتار مردم ایران است ۱۷ ["17 political and cultural activists: Khamenei is responsible for the massacre of the Iranian people"] 28 January 2026, https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/148319-۱۷-فعال-سیاسی-خامنه‌ای-مسوول-کشتار-مردم-ایران-است (in Persian); Iran Wire, "Nobel winner among 17 Iranian activists seeking democratic alternative to Islamic Republic", 18 August 2025, https://iranwire.com/en/features/144107-nobel-winner-among-17-iranian-activists-seeking-democratic-alternative-to-islamic-republic; The Dial, "Letters from inside Iran's Evin prison", 9 January 2024, https://www.thedial.world/articles/news/issue-12/iran-evin-prison-women-inmate-letters

16. See Amnesty International, "Human rights in Iran: Review of 2025/2026" (Index: MDE 13/0658/2026), 21 April 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0658/2026/en

17. Amnesty International, "Iran: Stop increasingly ruthless crackdown and investigate deaths of protesters", 4 January 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/iran-stop-increasingly-ruthless-crackdown-and-investigate-deaths-of-protesters

18. Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity: Mass Arrests, Disappearances and Torture Since Iran's 2019 November Protests* (Index: MDE 13/2891/2020), 2 September 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2891/2020/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Details released of 304 deaths during protests six months after security forces' killing spree", 20 May 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/05/iran-details-released-of-304-deaths-during-protests-six-months-after-security-forces-killing-spree; Amnesty International, "Iran: Thousands arbitrarily detained and at risk of torture in chilling post-protest crackdown", 16 December 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/12/iran-thousands-arbitrarily-detained-and-at-risk-of-torture-in-chilling-post-protest-crackdown-2; Amnesty International, "Iran: More than 100 protesters believed to be killed as top officials give green light to crush protests", 19 November 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/11/iran-more-than-100-protesters-believed-to-be-killed-as-top-officials-give-green-light-to-crush-protests

The Iranian authorities have on every occasion sought to suppress these cycles of protests and crush dissent with bloodshed, increasing brutality and militarized measures. Entrenched impunity for crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations, including those committed in the context of deadly protest crackdowns, have emboldened the authorities to escalate mass violence and add further cruelties to their toolbox of repression.

Amnesty International's extensive research into the authorities' responses to successive waves of protest since December 2017-January 2018 reveals a widespread pattern of security forces unlawfully using force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, without any regard for the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality and when protesters posed no imminent threat of death or serious injury to security forces or others that warranted the use of firearms.

During the nationwide protests of December 2017-January 2018 when thousands of people in over 100 cities across Iran took to the streets to speak out against poverty, corruption, political repression and authoritarianism, security forces unlawfully killed dozens of protesters and bystanders, including children.[19] The authorities also subjected protesters to mass arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearance, unjust prosecutions, unfair trials and imprisonment.[20] Over the course of 2018, more than 7,000 protesters, students, journalists, environmental activists, workers and human rights defenders, including lawyers, women's rights activists, minority rights activists and trade unionists, were arrested, many arbitrarily.[21] Hundreds were sentenced to prison terms or flogging. At least nine people arrested in connection with protests died in custody under suspicious circumstances.[22]

During the November 2019 nationwide protests, which were sparked by a sudden increase in the price of fuel amid deteriorating economic conditions but quickly evolved into calls for an end to the Islamic Republic, the authorities escalated their use of unlawful lethal force, quashing the protests in under five days.[23] In parallel, the authorities implemented a near-total internet shutdown.[24] Under the cover of darkness, Iran's security forces used assault rifles, shotguns loaded with metal pellets, tear gas and water cannon against unarmed protesters and bystanders, leading to the unlawful killing of hundreds of men, women and children, as well as injuries to thousands of others.[25] The vast majority of those killed died from gunshot wounds to their heads, necks, chests and hearts.[26] Thousands more, including

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19. Amnesty International, "Iran: Stop increasingly ruthless crackdown and investigate deaths of protesters", 4 January 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/iran-stop-increasingly-ruthless-crackdown-and-investigate-deaths-of-protesters
20. Amnesty International, "Iran: Investigate reports of protester deaths in custody", 9 January 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/iran-investigate-reports-of-protester-deaths-in-custody
21. Amnesty International, "Iran's 'year of shame': More than 7,000 arrested in chilling crackdown on dissent during 2018", 24 January 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/01/irans-year-of-shame-more-than-7000-arrested-in-chilling-crackdown-on-dissent-during-2018
22. Amnesty International, "Iran: End persecution of families seeking truth and justice for detainees who have died in detention (joint public statement)" (Index: MDE 13/8049/2018), 13 March 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8049/2018/en
23. Amnesty International, *Iran: Details of 321 Deaths in Crackdown on November 2019 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/2308/2020), 29 July 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2308/2020/en This document was originally published on 20 May 2020 and was subsequently updated with new information on 16 November 2021 and, more recently, on 29 July 2022. See also Amnesty International, *'They Shot Our Children': Killings of Minors in Iran's November 2019 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/1894/2020), 4 March 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1894/2020/en
24. Amnesty International, *A Web of Impunity: The Killings Iran's Internet Shutdown hid*, November 2020, https://iran-shutdown.amnesty.org; Ooni, " Iran's nation-wide Internet blackout: Measurement data and technical observations", 23 November 2019, https://www.ooni.org/post/2019-iran-internet-blackout
25. Amnesty International, "Iran: Details released of 304 deaths during protests six months after security forces' killing spree", 20 May 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/05/iran-details-released-of-304-deaths-during-protests-six-months-after-security-forces-killing-spree; Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 23 children killed by security forces in November protests – new evidence", 4 March 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/iran-at-least-23-children-killed-by-security-forces-in-november-protests-new-evidence; Amnesty International, "Iran: More than 100 protesters believed to be killed as top officials give green light to crush protests", 19 November 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/11/iran-more-than-100-protesters-believed-to-be-killed-as-top-officials-give-green-light-tocrush-protests
26. Amnesty International, *Iran: Details of 321 Deaths in Crackdown on November 2019 Protests* (previously cited), pp. 7-9.

children, were subjected to violations including arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment, and grossly unfair trials leading to imprisonment and death sentences.[27]

In January 2020, security forces used unlawful force against peaceful protesters who had gathered across Iran following the authorities' admission that they had shot down a Ukrainian passenger plane on 8 January 2020, killing all 176 people on board.[28] During protests that took place in Tehran on 11 and 12 January 2020, security forces fired metal pellets from airguns at peaceful protesters, causing bleeding and painful injuries. They also used rubber bullets and pepper spray to disperse protesters, kicked and punched them, and beat them with batons.

In July 2021, security forces once again used unlawful force, including through firing deadly automatic weapons, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas, to crush protests that took place in Khuzestan province over severe water shortages in the province. Security forces unlawfully killed at least 11 protesters and bystanders, including a teenage boy, and injured scores of others.[29] The authorities also subjected scores of people to arbitrary arrest and detention, including in Kermanshah province where people had protested in solidarity with those in Khuzestan province.

In August 2021, security forces resorted to unlawful use of force, including the firing of shotguns loaded with metal pellets, the deployment of tear gas and beatings with batons, to ruthlessly crack down on anti-establishment protests that erupted in various locations across Iran.[30] In the city of Naghadeh, West Azerbaijan province, security forces unlawfully fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets against protesters from Iran's Kurdish ethnic minority, leaving dozens of people injured. One man was fatally shot in the pelvis with a pistol by a plain-clothes agent. The authorities swept up activists, protesters and bystanders, including children, in mass arbitrary arrests, and subjected many of them to violations including enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment.

In November 2021, security forces in Esfahan, Esfahan province, violently quashed protests attended by thousands of people, including farmers, against water shortages and the drying up of the famous Zayandeh Rood River that runs through the city. Security forces unlawfully fired weapons, including shotguns loaded with metal pellets, and deployed tear gas at protesters who had gathered in the dry riverbed to express their grievances. Dozens of people, including children, sustained multiple metal pellet injuries to their bodies and were blinded or suffered other serious eye injuries.[31]

In May 2022, the authorities adopted a militarized response to protests in the provinces of Khuzestan and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari in the south-west of Iran through the deployment of heavily armed forces. At the beginning of May 2022, widespread protests over rising food prices erupted in the Khuzestan province and then spread to Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province. Further widespread protests took place between 23 and 31 May 2022 in Abadan, Khuzestan province, following the deadly collapse of an unfinished building, which killed 43 people. Iran's security forces resorted to unlawful force to ruthlessly crush these protests against the backdrop of localized internet shutdowns and mobile network disruptions by the authorities, concealing their crimes and limiting peoples' access to information and ability to communicate with each other and the outside world. The violent crackdown

27. Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity* (previously cited).
28. Amnesty International, "Iran: Scores injured as security forces use unlawful force to crush protests", 15 January 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/01/iran-scores-injured-as-security-forces-use-unlawful-force-to-crush-protests
29. Amnesty International, "Iran: Security forces use live ammunition and birdshot to crush Khuzestan protests", 23 July 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/07/iran-security-forces-use-live-ammunition-and-birdshot-to-crush-khuzestan-protests-2
30. Amnesty International, "Iran: Security forces use ruthless force, mass arrests and torture to crush peaceful protests", 11 August 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/08/iran-security-forces-use-ruthless-force-mass-arrests-and-torture-to-crush-peaceful-protests
31. Amnesty International, "Iran: Human rights in Iran: Review of 2021/2022" (Index: MDE 13/5366/2022), 29 March 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5366/2022/en

by the authorities involved the use of firearms, tear gas and water cannon, and led to the killing of at least four people in the context of the protests. Others, including children, sustained serious injuries resulting from birdshot.[32]

The international community's muted responses to the widespread unlawful killings committed during the nationwide protests of November 2019, combined with persistent impunity, facilitated the lethal repression of nationwide protests during the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022, which is extensively documented in this report.

In late December 2025, mass protests once again erupted in Tehran following a sharp currency collapse amid soaring inflation and chronic state mismanagement of essential services. Protests quickly spread nationwide, evolving into large-scale street demonstrations calling for the downfall of the Islamic Republic system. In response, the authorities once again subjected protesters to mass atrocities under the cover of a communications blackout and internet shutdowns,[33] this time on an even more devastating scale.[34] On the evenings of 8 and 9 January 2026, the authorities carried out protest massacres on an unprecedented scale, unlawfully killing thousands of protesters and bystanders and injuring tens of thousands.[35] By the authorities' own admission, over 3,000 people were killed.[36] The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Special Rapporteur on Iran) estimated that more than 5,000 women, men and children were killed, noting that according to information she received from medical sources inside Iran, the death toll might be as high as 20,000.[37]

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, security forces positioned on streets and the rooftops of residential buildings, mosques and police stations, among other structures, repeatedly fired assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets, targeting unarmed protesters and frequently striking their heads and torsos. Medical facilities were overwhelmed with the injured while distraught families searched for their missing loved ones in body bags near overflowing morgues and witnessed bodies piled up in pickup trucks, freight containers or warehouses. In the aftermath of the unprecedented protest massacres, the authorities imposed a militarized clampdown, marked by sweeping arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, bans on gatherings and attacks to silence families of victims.[38] The authorities also increasingly used broadly worded national security charges, including espionage and collaboration with hostile states, to convict and sentence to death individuals arrested in the context of the January 2026 protests. As of 28 July 2026, they had arbitrarily executed at least 26 people convicted of offences in connection with the January 2026 protests, following grossly unfair torture-tainted trials by Revolutionary Courts. At least 60 others, including three arrested as

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32. Amnesty International, *They Are Shooting Brazenly: Iran's Militarized Response to May 2022 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/5789/2022), 3 August 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5789/2022/en
33. Amnesty International, "Iran: Internet shutdown hides violations in escalating deadly crackdown on protesters", 9 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/internet-shutdown-in-iran-hides-violations-in-escalating-protests
34. Amnesty International, "Iran: Deaths and injuries rise amid authorities' renewed cycle of protest bloodshed", 8 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-deaths-injuries-authorities-protest-bloodshed
35. Amnesty International, "Iran: Massacre of protesters demands global diplomatic action to signal an end to impunity", 14 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-massacre-of-protesters-demands-global-diplomatic-action-to-signal-an-end-to-impunity
36. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities unleash heavily militarized clampdown to hide protest massacres", 23 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-authorities-unleash-heavily-militarized-clampdown-to-hide-protest-massacres; Khabar Online, ["Analytical statement by National Security Council regarding recent terrorist actions / 3,117 people lost their lives, of whom 2,427 were innocent victims"], 21 January 2026, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/2171790/بیانیه-تحلیلی-شورای-امنیت-کشور-درباره-اقدامات-تروریستی-دی-ماه (in Persian).
37. ABC News, "VIDEO: The UN special rapporteur discusses allegations of crimes against humanity in Iran", 19 January 2026, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-01-20/un-rapporteur-on-allegations-of-crimes-against-humanity-in-iran-/106247870, minute 1:00-1:44.
38. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities unleash heavily militarized clampdown to hide protest massacres", 23 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-authorities-unleash-heavily-militarized-clampdown-to-hide-protest-massacres

children, remained at risk of execution after being sentenced to death, while many others were facing prosecution on capital charges in relation to the protests.[39]

3.2 IMPUNITY

Consistent with long-standing patterns of systemic impunity, the Iranian authorities have refused to conduct any effective, independent, transparent and thorough investigations into the crimes under international law and other grave human rights violations that have been committed in the context of cycles of protest bloodshed.

To sustain this impunity, Iranian authorities have constructed a machinery of denial and state cover-up that activates as soon as reports of unlawful killings or torture emerge. The authorities consistently praise security forces for swiftly ending successive protests, smear protesters as "rioters" and "counter-revolutionaries", and propagate false narratives and propaganda videos to deny or distort the truth about the nature and scale of violations committed by security forces against protesters and bystanders.

This state cover-up is subsequently reinforced by a judiciary structured to collaborate with security forces in silencing and punishing dissent, rather than delivering truth, justice or accountability.

At the constitutional level, the justice system is characterized by a complete lack of independence and impartiality, with a set of provisions and appointment procedures designed to integrate the judiciary into the security apparatus and place the judiciary under the control of the Supreme Leader and commander-in-chief.

At the legislative level, the architecture of impunity is founded on a set of laws that further entrench the entwinement of the judiciary and security forces; criminalize the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly; authorize the use of firearms to disperse protests; exempt security forces from criminal liability for unlawful killings resulting from such use of force; and grant jurisdiction over serious human rights violations by security forces to military prosecutors and courts.[40]

The entrenched impunity has also enabled the recurrence of ongoing crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations in Iran, including widespread torture and other ill-treatment, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, the systemic denial of fair trial rights, and hundreds of arbitrary executions every year. The impunity also extends to past and ongoing crimes against humanity stemming from the mass extrajudicial executions and enforced disappearances of thousands of political dissidents in the 1980s.[41]

UN experts and bodies, including the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances,[42] the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran,[43] the

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39. Amnesty International, "Iran: End escalating campaign of arbitrary executions and death sentences against protesters", 28 July 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/07/iran-end-escalating-campaign-of-arbitrary-executions-and-death-sentences-against-protesters

40. See section 11.2.

41. See Amnesty International, *Blood-Soaked Secrets: Why Iran's 1988 Prison Massacres Are Ongoing Crimes Against Humanity* (Index: MDE 13/9421/2018), 4 December 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/9421/2018/en

42. UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Report, 12 August 2022, UN Doc. A/HRC/51/31; UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, *Communications, Cases Examined, Observations, and Other Activities Conducted*, 24 April 2017, UN Doc. A/HRC/WGEID/111/1.

43. UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Special Rapporteur on Iran), Report, 9 February 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/62; UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Report, 24 August 2023, UN Doc. A/78/326; UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Report, 13 January 2022, UN Doc. A/HRC/49/75.

UN Secretary-General[44] and, most recently, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran),[45] have persistently reported and documented patterns of structural impunity in Iran.

In a report published in January 2022, the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran characterized Iran's "institutional legal and political apparatus, which in itself is not compliant with the State's obligations under international law",[46] as an impediment to accountability, concluding that, within this "system of governance, it is clear that obtaining accountability for human rights violations becomes arbitrary at best and impossible at worst."[47]

In a report issued in October 2023, the UN Secretary-General stated: "Domestic avenues for accountability remain weak and ineffective, particularly in addressing violations in the context of recent protests."[48]

In its detailed findings published in March 2024, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran stated:

> **"There has been long-standing impunity with respect to human rights violations committed against protesters. Most notably, no senior official has ever been held to account in Iran for the gross human rights violations committed in the context of the protests that have taken place in Iran over the last 45 years, feeding into the cycle of impunity."[49]**

The mission further referred to "historic impunity for gross human rights violations in Iran systematically documented and reported by human rights mechanisms."[50] The mission found "no evidence of effective domestic remedies for victims of human rights violations."[51]

3.3 CONSTITUTIONAL ROOTS OF REPRESSION AND IMPUNITY

Cycles of protest bloodshed in Iran targeting protesters, dissidents and others demanding human rights, dignity, democracy and fundamental political change are rooted in Iran's constitutional structure. As detailed below, this structure gives rise to several interrelated patterns:

- **Systemic impunity:** The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (the constitution) entrenches the entwinement of the judiciary and the security apparatus. It places the judiciary under the direct control of the Supreme Leader and commander-in-chief, who appoints the head of the judiciary for a period of five years. It also makes the head of the judiciary a member of the Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council). This undermines judicial independence and contributes to entrenched impunity.
- **Discriminatory denial of the right to take part in public affairs:** The constitution vests ultimate authority over all branches of the state – legislative, executive and judicial – in a male Shia Islamic cleric, the Supreme Leader, and requires that the most powerful state institutions in the country be headed by male Shia Islamic clerics. As a result, women, members of religious

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44. UN Secretary-General (UNSG), *Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 30 October 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/53/23; UNSG, *Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 6 October 2023, UN Doc. A/78/511.
45. UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1; UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, Report, 2 February 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/67.
46. UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Report, 13 January 2022 (previously cited), para. 49.
47. UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Report, 13 January 2022 (previously cited), para. 58.
48. UNSG, *Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 30 October 2023 (previously cited), para. 53.
49. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 98.
50. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1829.
51. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1850.

minorities and individuals from other professions, belief systems and faiths are systematically excluded from the highest levels of public office, while all laws and electoral process are subject to discriminatory religious and ideological vetting.

- **Impermissible restrictions on fundament freedoms:** The constitution imposes impermissible restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in the name of protecting "Islamic principles", thereby enabling dispersal of peaceful protests and repression of dissent. Numerous provisions impose religious conformity, undermining the rights to freedom of religion or belief, and conditioning the enjoyment of human rights on individuals "not conspiring or taking action against Islam or the Islamic Republic".
- **Prohibition of peaceful advocacy for rights-respecting change:** The constitution shields its core discriminatory and repressive tenets, such as the absolute rule of the Supreme Leader and the requirement that all laws be based on Islamic law, from amendment.

Taken together, these fundamental flaws ensure that repression and impunity are not incidental, but structurally embedded. The constitutional order generates grievances, blocks peaceful advocacy for rights-respecting change and prioritizes preserving its discriminatory and repressive nature over respecting and protecting human rights.

In his January 2022 report to the UN Human Rights Council, the then UN Special Rapporteur on Iran concluded that Iran's constitutional framework systematically subordinates human rights to the preservation of an ideological religious system, leaving people without meaningful avenues to participate in public affairs or to hold those in power accountable. He stated:

> **"The Constitution… entrenches an Islamic political ideology as both the foundation for and the aim of governance… The ideology of the State features as a precondition for any form of political participation, is foundational for the policies of the State and its various bodies, and is further used for the interpretation of individual rights. It is clear that this system of governance establishes a particular relationship between individuals and the State, where the maintenance of the system of governance and the political ideology takes precedence over protecting and respecting the rights of individuals. Within this configuration, there is no meaningful way by which the population can freely participate in decision-making mechanisms, including legislative processes, or hold decision makers accountable."[52]**

3.3.1 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF IMPUNITY

Article 156 of the constitution describes the judiciary as "an independent power, the protector of the rights of the individual and society, responsible for the implementation of justice". Despite this general constitutional provision affirming judicial independence, the constitutional framework governing the appointment of Iran's judicial and prosecutorial authorities severely undermines that independence and is entirely inconsistent with the principles of checks and balances and the rule of law.

Under this framework, the judiciary and prosecution services fall under the control of the Supreme Leader, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, who exercises ultimate control over all three branches of the state – the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, thereby undermining the principle of separation of powers, facilitating the arbitrary exercise of power, eroding the rule of law and ultimately leading to human rights violations.

52. UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Report, 13 January 2022 (previously cited), para. 49.

3.3.1(I) APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

International standards require that judicial appointments be grounded in merit, independence and non-discrimination.

The UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary provide that judges must be individuals of integrity and ability with appropriate legal qualifications, and that selection processes must safeguard against improper motives and discrimination. Principle 10 states:

> **"Persons selected for judicial office shall be individuals of integrity and ability with appropriate training or qualifications in law. Any method of judicial selection shall safeguard against judicial appointments for improper motives. In the selection of judges, there shall be no discrimination against a person on the grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or status, except that a requirement, that a candidate for judicial office must be a national of the country concerned, shall not be considered discriminatory."[53]**

Similarly, the UN Human Rights Council has underscored that judicial selection procedures must be non-discriminatory, transparent and based on objective criteria, while actively promoting diversity within the judiciary, including the representation of women and minority groups. A resolution adopted in July 2020 makes the following call on states:

> **"[P]romote diversity in the composition of the members of the judiciary, including by taking into account a gender perspective and by actively promoting the balanced representation of women and men from various segments of society at all levels, and of persons belonging to minorities and other disadvantaged groups, and to ensure that the requirements for joining the judiciary and the selection process thereof are non-discriminatory, public and transparent, and based on objective criteria, and guarantee the appointment of individuals of integrity and ability with appropriate training and qualifications in law, based on individual merit and under equal working conditions".[54]**

The UN Human Rights Committee has further clarified that the competence, independence and impartiality of tribunals under Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is an absolute requirement, dependent in part on appointment procedures that ensure freedom from political interference and are governed by clear objective criteria. In its General Comment No. 32 concerning the right to fair trial, the committee stated:

> **"The requirement of competence, independence and impartiality of a tribunal in the sense of article 14, paragraph 1, is an absolute right that is not subject to any exception. The requirement of independence refers, in particular, to the procedure and qualifications for the appointment of judges, and guarantees relating to their security of tenure until a mandatory retirement age or the expiry of their term of office, where such exist, the conditions governing promotion, transfer, suspension and cessation of their functions, and the actual independence of the judiciary from political interference by the executive branch and legislature. States should take specific measures guaranteeing the independence of the judiciary, protecting judges from any form of political influence in their decision-making through the constitution or adoption of laws**

53. UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary, adopted 6 September 1985, Principle 10.
54. UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 44/20, adopted on 16 July 2020, UN Doc. A/HRC/RES/44/9, para. 2.

establishing clear procedures and objective criteria for the appointment, remuneration, tenure, promotion, suspension and dismissal of the members of the judiciary and disciplinary sanctions taken against them."[55]

According to Article 157 of the constitution, the Supreme Leader appoints the head of the judiciary for a period of five years. Article 110 of the constitution allows the Supreme Leader to dismiss the head of the judiciary at any time. No clear procedures are established to govern such appointments and dismissals, which are left entirely to the discretion of the Supreme Leader without the involvement of entities that are typically established to ensure impartial, merit-based appointments such as independent judicial councils or commissions. Nor does the constitution grant any role to the legislature, which in many systems plays a key part in confirming or overseeing judicial appointments.

According to Article 158(3) of the constitution, the head of the judiciary holds extensive powers, including the authority to appoint and dismiss judges, define their roles and manage their promotions and transfers.

The discriminatory and flawed constitutional framework governing the appointment of top judicial and prosecution authorities is further reinforced by the Law on the Selection of Judges. This law mandates that judges must be male and demonstrate a "practical commitment to Islamic principles and loyalty to the Islamic Republic system."[56] Additionally, Article 13 of the Guidelines for the Recruitment, Selection and Apprenticeship of Applicants for Judgeship and Employment of Judges requires candidates to demonstrate "belief and practical commitment to Islam", as well as "practical commitment to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to the principle of the absolute guardianship of the jurist."

Furthermore, as per the Law on the Selection of Judges, formal legal qualifications are not the primary criterion for holding high judicial office. Instead, religious expertise is the key requirement, with holders of theology degrees and seminary graduates who have completed advanced religious studies eligible for judicial positions. This is in breach of international standards, which provide that judicial appointments should be guided primarily by merit and based on criteria set out in law, having regard to the following elements: (a) integrity and/or honourability; (b) professional competence, adequate legal qualifications, and independence; (c) ability, aptitude and/or skills; (d) political impartiality; and (e) principles of equality and non-discrimination.

The processes for appointing judicial and prosecutorial officials do not include vetting mechanisms to exclude individuals reasonably suspected of involvement in crimes under international law and other serious violations of human rights.[57] Instead, the vetting processes exclude those whose background may give rise to suspicions about their loyalty to the Islamic Republic and adherence to state-

55. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 32: Right to equality before courts and tribunals and to a fair trial (Article 14), 23 August 2007, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/32, para. 19.
56. It should be noted that, following amendments introduced in 1995, women have been allowed to hold certain judicial positions which do not possess decision-making authority, such as a limited number of assistant prosecutor roles and advisory judges in family courts. However, positions that carry the power to issue binding court decisions are reserved exclusively for men.
57. The entwinement of the security forces and the judiciary is exemplified by the long-standing practice of appointing senior individuals in security forces to top judicial positions. For example, Iran's current head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, was the minister of intelligence from 2005 to 2009. He subsequently became the national prosecutor general from 2009 to 2014, the first deputy head of the judiciary from 2014 and 2021, and the head of the judiciary from 2021.

sanctioned political and religious ideologies. Judges may also face dismissal based on vaguely worded and broadly defined grounds, exposing them to improper pressure and interference.[58]

In its Concluding Observations on Iran in 2023, the UN Human Rights Committee expressed concerns in this regard, stating:

> **"[T]he vetting process for the recruitment of judges allows the judiciary to exclude any individual who fails to adhere to State-sanctioned political and religious ideologies and that women are precluded from certain positions in the judiciary… The State party should take all measures necessary to safeguard the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, including by ensuring that the procedures for the selection, appointment, promotion and removal of judges are transparent and impartial and comply with the Covenant and relevant international standards, including the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary. The State party should ensure the full and equal participation of women, as well as of citizens of diverse political or religious ideologies and members of minorities, in the judiciary at all levels. The State party should also ensure that the appointment of prosecutors and the exercise of their functions follows the Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors."[59]**

3.3.1(II) LACK OF SEPARATION BETWEEN JUDICIAL AND PROSECUTION FUNCTIONS

According to Article 162 of the constitution, the head of the judiciary also holds the authority to appoint the head of the Supreme Court and the national prosecutor general, as well as all provincial and county prosecutors. This erodes the separation that must exist between judicial and prosecution functions and reinforces the subordination of both institutions to the Supreme Leader and commander-in-chief.

The constitutional consolidation of judicial and prosecution powers in the hands of the head of the judiciary and his superior, the Supreme Leader, is further reinforced through the legislative framework governing provincial and county entities known as justice departments. These entities function as the judiciary's local arms, overseeing the operations of both courts and prosecutors. The head of the judiciary appoints the heads of both provincial and county justice departments.

According to the Law on the Establishment of Public and Revolutionary Courts, the head of the provincial justice department presides over Branch 1 of the respective provincial appeal court and exercises "supervision" and "administrative authority" over all the appeal courts, criminal courts and prosecution offices within the province. In a similar vein, the head of the county justice department presides over Branch 1 of the General Court[60] of the respective county and exercises "supervision"

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58. Amnesty International, *Flawed Reforms: Iran's New Code of Criminal Procedure* (Index: MDE 13/2708/2016), 11 February 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2708/2016/en, pp. 66-67.
59. UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations: Islamic Republic of Iran, 23 November 2023, UN Doc. CCPR/C/IRN/CO/4, paras 39-40.
60. Since the adoption of a new Code of Criminal Procedure in April 2014, criminal courts previously known as General Courts are called Criminal Court Two. Iran's criminal courts are listed under Article 294 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. They include Criminal Court One, Criminal Court Two, the Revolutionary Court, the Court for Children and Adolescents and the Military Courts. Criminal Court One, which replaces the Provincial Criminal Court, is located in the capital of each province and in the counties if deemed necessary by the head of the judiciary. Criminal Court One has jurisdiction to hear the following cases: 1) crimes punishable by death; 2) crimes punishable by life imprisonment; 3) crimes punishable by amputation and cases of physical assault punishable by payment of half or more of a full *diyeh* (blood money); 4) *ta'zir* crimes of degree three and higher; 5) political and press crimes. The Revolutionary Court has jurisdiction over the following offences: 1) crimes against national and external security, *moharebeh* (waging war against God), *efsad-e fel-arz* (corruption on earth), *baghi* (armed rebellion against the state), "gathering and colluding against the Islamic Republic", armed activities, arson and "destruction and plunder of resources with the purpose of opposing the system"; 2) "insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic and the Supreme Leader"; 3) all drug-related offences as well as trafficking of arms and ammunition and other restricted items; 4) all other offences whose investigation falls under the Revolutionary Court by dint of special laws. Criminal Court Two is formed in the judicial district of each province and consists of one presiding judge. Criminal Court Two has jurisdiction to hear all cases falling outside the jurisdiction of other courts. For more information, see Amnesty International, *Flawed Reforms* (previously cited), pp. 62-64.

and "administrative authority" over all the courts and prosecution offices within the county.[61]

3.3.1(III) ENTWINEMENT OF JUDICIARY AND SECURITY APPARATUS

The independence and impartiality of judicial and prosecution structures in Iran is also undermined by Article 176 of the constitution, which makes the head of the judiciary a member of the Supreme National Security Council.[62]

Note 1 to Article 3 of the State Security Council Law provides that the minister of interior has the authority to invite the national prosecutor general to attend State Security Council meetings. In a similar vein, the Note to Article 6 of the State Security Council Law adds that provincial governors have the authority to invite the respective provincial prosecutor to attend the meetings of the respective provincial provision councils.

This arrangement conflates judicial and executive functions and entrenches the entwinement of judicial authorities with the security apparatus directly involved in ordering, planning and committing serious human rights violations and crimes under international law.[63]

The blurring of the distinctions between the functions of the security forces and prosecution and judicial authorities is further facilitated by provisions in the Code of Criminal Procedure that designate agents from the Ministry of Intelligence and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), including its Basij forces, as "special judicial officers" and authorize them to conduct arrests, detentions and investigations under the supervision of the prosecutor.[64]

The constitutional integration of political, judicial and security powers under the authority of the Supreme Leader ensures that the judiciary, prosecution services and security forces operate not as independent and impartial institutions but as instruments of power and repression. This makes it impossible for the judiciary to play any independent oversight role, or to hold to account members of the executive. This power structure thereby promotes impunity for perpetrators, denies victims access to justice or effective remedy, which in turn facilitates the commission of crimes under international law for politically motivated reasons.

3.3.2 DISCRIMINATORY DENIAL OF RIGHT TO TAKE PART IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran entrenches discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion and political opinion, and undermines equal enjoyment of the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs.

The constitution mandates that the most powerful state institutions in the country be led by male Shia Islamic clerics and excludes from high levels of public office women, non-Muslims, people from other professions, belief systems and faiths, and individuals with dissenting beliefs or secular worldviews who uphold principles such as the separation of religion and the state.

The preamble to Iran's current constitution explicitly grounds the "cultural, social, political and economic order of Iran in Islamic principles". The preamble vests ultimate authority in a Shia Islamic

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61. See Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون تشکیل دادگاه‌های عمومی و انقلاب [Law on the Establishment of Public and Revolutionary Courts (1994), https://www.ekhtebar.ir/قانون-تشکیل-دادگاه‌های-عمومی-و-انقل/ (in Persian), Article 12. See also Article 7 in amendments introduced in 2003, at Mizan News Agency, آیین‌نامه اصلاحی قانون تشکیل دادگاه‌های عمومی و انقلاب ["Amended Implementing Regulation of the Law on the Establishment of Public and Revolutionary Courts"], 24 December 2023, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4750947 (in Persian).
62. See section 10.4.
63. See UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1834; Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7480/2023), 6 December 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7480/2023/en, pp. 98-102.
64. See Amnesty International, *Flawed Reforms* (previously cited), pp. 27-29.

cleric charged with ensuring that all state institutions "do not deviate from their essential Islamic duties" and defines the people as a Muslim *ummah* (collective).

Article 1 states that "Iran's system of government is an Islamic Republic" established on the basis of "the nation's… long-held belief in the rule of the Qur'an [embodying] justice". Article 2 adds: "The Islamic Republic is a system founded on belief in one God… divine revelation and its foundational role in defining laws... continuous religious leadership, and its fundamental role in sustaining the Islamic Revolution…"

Article 4 stipulates that "all civil, criminal, financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamic principles". Articles 4, 94 and 96 assign responsibility for enforcing this requirement to six Shia Islamic clerics on the Guardian Council, who are appointed by the Supreme Leader, as per Article 110.

Articles 5, 107, 109 and 110 stipulate that supreme authority over the state and leadership of the people shall be vested in a Shia Islamic cleric, the Supreme Leader. Article 110 grants the Supreme Leader broad and unchecked authority, including overseeing the implementation of state policies; commanding the armed forces; declaring war and peace; ordering referendums, appointing and dismissing key state officials, including the head of the judiciary, the head of the state broadcasting corporation, the commanders of security and military forces, and the clerics of the Guardian Council; and resolving disputes and regulating relations between the three branches of government.

Articles 157 and 162 require that the head of the judiciary and the national prosecutor general both be a *mojtahed* (a person learned in Islamic law). Since the status of *mojtahed* has, in practice, been restricted to men, this requirement has resulted in the exclusion of women from these judicial positions.

Article 115 requires that the president be "religious" and have belief in the foundations of the Islamic Republic, as well as in the state's official religion and sect.

Another powerful state institution defined by discriminatory exclusion on religious grounds is the Guardian Council. Article 91 defines the composition of the Guardian Council as consisting of six Islamic clerics appointed directly by the Supreme Leader and six Muslim law experts nominated by the head of the judiciary and selected by parliament.

The Guardian Council has decisive authority over lawmaking. Under Article 94, all legislation passed by the parliament must be submitted to the Guardian Council for review, to ensure compliance with "Islamic criteria" and the constitution, and returned to parliament for reconsideration if found non-compliant. Article 96 provides that the six clerical members are responsible for determining compliance with Islamic law, while all 12 members assess conformity with the constitution.

Based on Article 99, the Guardian Council also exercises exclusive authority to vet and approve candidates for presidential and parliamentary elections, as well as elections to the Assembly of Experts, the body tasked with appointing the Supreme Leader.

This arrangement fundamentally undermines the equal enjoyment of the right to take part in public affairs, including standing for election and involvement in lawmaking; limits participation and representation; excludes dissenting, secular or pluralistic views by subjecting all laws and electoral processes to discriminatory religious and ideological vetting; and consolidates the Supreme Leader's control over legislative and electoral processes.

3.3.3 RESTRICTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Numerous provisions of Iran's constitution impose religious conformity, impermissibly restrict fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression, association

and peaceful assembly, in the name of protecting "Islamic principles", and condition the enjoyment of human rights on individuals "not conspiring or taking action against Islam or the Islamic Republic of Iran".

"Islamic principles" are not defined elsewhere in the constitution. The authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran have vested themselves with exclusive power to define the content and scope of these principles, using this authority to entrench their rule and suppress peaceful dissent. In practice, the authorities have equated "Islamic principles" with the ideological foundations and laws of the Islamic Republic system, thereby repressing any peaceful expression of dissent that diverges from official state ideologies or challenges the interests of those in power.

Examples of provisions that impermissibly restrict the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly include Articles 24, 26 and 27.

Article 24 states "publications and the press are free to express views except where such expression is detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam".

Article 26 states: "Political parties, groups, associations... trade unions, and recognized religious minorities are free [to operate], provided that they do not violate... Islamic principles, or the foundations of the Islamic Republic."

Article 27 states that "public gatherings and marches may be freely held… provided that they are not detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam."

Examples of provisions that undermine the right to freedom of religion or belief include Articles 12-14.

Article 12 establishes Islam and the Twelver Ja'fari school as the official religion and sect of Iran, respectively, and stipulates that this "principle cannot be altered until eternity".

Article 13 impermissibly restricts the right to freedom of religion or belief and the right of religious minorities to profess and practice their religion in community with others. It provides:

> **"Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians are recognized as the only religious minorities who, within the limits of the law, are free to perform their religious rites and ceremonies and to act in accordance with their own canon in matters of personal status and religious education."**

This provision excludes other religious groups and belief systems that do not adhere to officially recognized faiths from constitutional protection. Moreover, the vague qualifier "within the limits of the law" enables arbitrary restrictions, even in the case of recognized religious minorities, on the exercise of the right to profess and practise one's religion in community with others.

Article 14 provides that the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is obliged to respect the human rights of non-Muslims, but then limits this protection by stipulating that it applies to those who refrain from engaging in "conspiracy or action against Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran". As such, the constitution excludes from the protection of human rights those deemed to challenge the Islamic Republic or "Islam" as interpreted by the authorities.

3.3.4 PROHIBITING ADVOCACY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Under Iran's constitutional structure, only the Supreme Leader can trigger the process of introducing amendments to the constitution, and its central discriminatory tenets are explicitly shielded from revision, effectively foreclosing meaningful constitutional change.

Article 177 stipulates:

"The contents of the principles relating to the Islamic character of the system, the requirement that all laws and regulations be based on Islamic criteria and on the foundational beliefs and objectives of the Islamic Republic of Iran… and the *velayat* (guardianship) and *imamat* (leadership) of the *ummat* (Muslim community) and the administration of the country's affairs based on public opinion and Iran's official religion and sect are unchangeable."

The article states that the process of constitutional revision can only be initiated through a decree issued by the Supreme Leader directing the president to convene a "revision council", the majority of whose members are appointed by the Supreme Leader directly or indirectly. The article adds that any proposals made by this council must also be approved by the Supreme Leader.

By protecting the constitution's central discriminatory tenets from amendment and effectively criminalizing peaceful advocacy for constitutional change, the constitution leaves no avenue for people to peacefully express themselves about the institutions of their own government and to seek changes. Peaceful advocacy for constitutional change to ensure human rights are respected or for the adoption of a new rights-respecting constitution is protected conduct under international human rights law and may not be criminalized, suppressed or treated as a threat to national security simply because it challenges existing institutions and the status quo.

Such advocacy falls squarely within the protected exercise of the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs and is intrinsically linked to the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Where calls for constitutional transformation seek to challenge discriminatory religious or ideological frameworks imposed by the state, they are also protected under the right to freedom of thought, conscience and belief.

3.4 DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Iranian authorities treat women and girls as second-class citizens, denying them their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, and subjecting them to systematic discrimination and violence.

Iran is not a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Iran formally refused to accede to CEDAW in February 1998 when the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution issued a resolution rejecting accession.[65] In 2003, Iran's parliament passed a bill to implement CEDAW, but the Guardian Council refused to approve the bill, citing inconsistencies with Islamic law and the constitution.[66]

3.4.1 CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Iran's constitution appears, at first glance, to enshrine the principle of equality through Article 3, which provides that "the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has the duty of directing all its resources to… the abolition of all forms of undesirable discrimination and the provision of equitable opportunities for all" and to "securing the multifarious rights of all citizens, both women and men, and providing legal

65. Islamic Republic of Iran, درباره عدم الحاق جمهوری اسلامی ایران به کنوانسیون رفع هرگونه تبعیض علیه زنان ["On the non-accession of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women"], 3 February 1998, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/100552 (in Persian).

66. Amnesty International, "Iran: Rejecting Women's Convention undermines Iran's commitment to international human rights standards" (Index: MDE 13/029/2003), 12 August 2003, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/029/2003/en

protection for all, as well as the equality of all before the law".[67]

However, this commitment is undermined by other constitutional provisions that qualify such rights within the framework of Islamic law and allow discrimination on the grounds of conformity with Islamic principles.

Examples of provisions that facilitate discrimination and violence against women and girls are Articles 20 and 21. These provisions fail to guarantee equal rights for women and men, but rather condition equal enjoyment of rights on "conformity with Islamic principles".

Article 20 states that "all members of the nation, both men and women, are equally protected by the law and enjoy all human, political, economic, social and cultural rights, in conformity with Islamic principles". The clause "in conformity with Islamic principles" introduces a significant legal caveat, allowing for the interpretation and implementation of rights in a manner that can, and often does in practice, prioritize the state's interpretation of Islamic law over the principle of equality and non-discrimination under international human rights law.

Article 21 states that "the government is obliged to guarantee women's rights in all respects, in accordance with Islamic principles." The repeated requirement of conformity with Islamic principles undermines the guarantee of equality, allowing discriminatory treatment whenever authorities and state institutions, dominated by male Shia clerics, deem such treatment consistent with their interpretation of "Islamic principles".

The constitution further institutionalizes gender inequality by requiring that all laws comply with the state's interpretation of Islamic law, as determined by the six Shia clerics of the Guardian Council who are appointed by the Supreme Leader. This underpins discriminatory practices, including compulsory veiling, and denies women equal rights and protection under the law and safeguards against gender-based violence.

In effect, while Iran's constitution nominally affirms gender equality, it embeds within its text a religious qualifier that renders this equality conditional. This framework not only permits but legitimizes systemic discrimination against women and girls under the guise of religious conformity.

3.4.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Iran's civil laws also deny women equal rights with men, including with respect to marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance.[68] Under Iran's Civil Code, the legal age of marriage for girls is 13 years (Article 1041) but fathers or paternal grandfathers can obtain judicial permission from a court to subject their daughters and granddaughters to forced marriage at a younger age.

According to the Civil Code, the husband is the head of the family (Article 1105) and consequently a woman is obliged to obey her husband. If a woman refuses to comply with the "duties of marriage" without a legitimate reason, she is not entitled to spousal maintenance (Article 1108).

Moreover, under the Civil Code, men have the exclusive right to determine their wives' place of residence (Article 1114). A wife will be considered "disobedient" and not entitled to alimony if she leaves her husband's place of residence (Articles 1005 and 1108).

Article 1108 enables sexual violence, including rape, by providing that husbands are entitled to engage in sexual conduct with their wives without their consent. Men also have the exclusive right to have at

67. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون اساسی جمهوری اسلامی ایران [Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran], 1979, http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/content/iran_constitution (in Persian), Article 3.
68. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون مدنی [Civil Code], 1935, http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778 (in Persian).

least two permanent wives in polygamous marriages and as many wives as they wish in "temporary" marriages (Articles 1075-1077).

Article 1117 entitles men to prevent their wives from taking employment if it is deemed "incompatible with the interests of the family or with his or his wife's dignity."

Article 1133 empowers men to divorce their wives without reason, while women seeking divorce must prove in court that they are living in conditions of severe hardship that make the continuation of marital life intolerable. According to Article 1180, guardianship of children belongs primarily to the father or paternal grandfather of a minor child.

The 2013 Islamic Penal Code also assigns women a subordinate status relative to men.[69] For example, Article 550 instructs courts to value the testimony of a woman at half that of a man in legal proceedings, and sets the amount of *diyeh* (blood money) to be paid as reparation for criminally causing the death of a woman at half that payable for causing the death of a man.

Article 147 sets the age of criminal responsibility lower for girls than for boys, the former at nine lunar years (8.7 solar years), the latter at 15 lunar years (14.6 solar years).

The Penal Code fails to criminalize marital rape. Husbands who assault or even kill their wives are excluded from the punishments ordinarily applied to such crimes if they prove that they did so while their wife was involved in adultery (Article 630).

3.4.3 COMPULSORY VEILING

Following the establishment of the Islamic Republic system in the wake of the 1979 Revolution, the Iranian authorities imposed strict dress codes for women and girls through a complex web of draconian laws and regulations designed to police and heavily control their bodies in public spaces.

Compulsory veiling is the most potent symbol of the system of oppression against women and girls and of gender-based discrimination in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It impinges on nearly every aspect of the lives of women and girls, impacting their access to education, employment, health and other public services, as well as their participation in cultural and recreational spaces, resulting in the widespread and systematic violation of their rights.

Amnesty International has long considered that the enforcement of compulsory veiling inflicts severe pain and suffering amounting to torture or other ill-treatment on women and girls and violates their rights to equality and non-discrimination; liberty and security of person; freedom of expression; freedom of religion or belief; freedom of movement; participation in public life; personal and bodily integrity and autonomy; privacy; and equal access to education, healthcare and work.

Compulsory veiling laws apply to girls as young as nine, which is the minimum age of criminal responsibility for girls in Iran. In practice, the authorities impose compulsory veiling on girls from the age of seven when they start primary school.

Under Article 638 of Iran's Islamic Penal Code, anyone who publicly commits an act that is deemed as "sinful" and/or "offensive to public decency" is punished with an imprisonment term of 10 days to two months, or a flogging sentence of 74 lashes. The Note to Article 638 states that women who appear in public unveiled will be punished with an imprisonment term of 10 days to two months or a monetary fine.

69. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون مجازات اسلامی [Islamic Penal Code], 2013, http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/845048 (in Persian).

The authorities have also used Article 639 of the Islamic Penal Code, which punishes with a prison sentence of up to 12 years anyone who "incites corruption and prostitution", to prosecute and punish women defying compulsory veiling and/or engaging in peaceful efforts to oppose or campaign against it.[70]

For decades, the abovementioned legal provisions, which are reinforced by an extensive set of additional regulations and policies, have empowered security forces to subject millions of women and girls in public spaces to verbal harassment and threats, violence for showing strands of hair under their headscarves or wearing clothing that is short in length or short-sleeved. This has included targeting women and girls for random stops in the street, ordering them to pull their headscarves forward to hide their hair, handing them tissues to wipe off their make-up, slapping them in the face, hitting them with fists and batons, grabbing them by the arms and dragging them away, and handcuffing and throwing them violently into police vans. These acts amount to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, which is absolutely prohibited under international law, including the ICCPR to which Iran is a state party.

Women and girls defying compulsory veiling laws are also subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment, abusive interrogations, forced "confessions", unjust prosecution, unfair trial and sentences of imprisonment, fines, flogging and/or other humiliating and degrading judicial punishments.[71]

Compulsory veiling enables not only state agents but also pro-government thugs and vigilantes who feel they have the right to enforce the Islamic Republic's values to harass and assault women and girls in public. Consequently, on a daily basis, women and girls face random encounters with such strangers, who beat, slap and pepper-spray them; call them "whores" and other abusive, degrading and vulgar insults; and force them to pull their headscarves down to completely cover their hair.

Ever since the introduction of compulsory veiling in Iran in 1979, women and girls have courageously resisted it. In December 2017, a new public movement against compulsory veiling was sparked when a young woman, Vida Movahedi, climbed onto a utility box on Enghelab (Revolution) Street in Tehran, removed her headscarf and waved it like a flag at the end of a stick.[72] This peaceful act resulted in Vida Movahedi's arbitrary arrest and detention, but she became known as the first "Girl of Revolution Street" and her peaceful solo protests inspired women and girls across the country to hold similar acts of protest against compulsory veiling laws in public spaces.

In the years that followed, the women's rights movement challenging compulsory veiling laws gained momentum through various high-profile online campaigns, including those initiated by an Iranian

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70. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: Release women's rights defenders detained for peacefully protesting against forced veiling", 18 April 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/04/iran-release-womens-rights-defenders-detained-for-peacefully-protesting-against-forced-veiling-2; Amnesty International, "Iran: 38 years and 148 lashes for women's rights defender: Nasrin Sotoudeh" (Index: MDE 13/0024/2019), 14 March 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0024/2019/en

71. See Amnesty International, "Iran: New compulsory veiling law intensifies oppression of women and girls", 10 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/iran-new-compulsory-veiling-law-intensifies-oppression-of-women-and-girls; Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities doubling down on punishments against women and girls defying discriminatory veiling laws" (Index: MDE 13/7041/2023), 26 July 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7041/2023/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Cruel campaign to extract propaganda 'confessions' from protesters against compulsory veiling", 15 July 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/07/iran-cruel-campaign-to-extract-propaganda-confessions-from-protestersagainst-compulsory-veiling/; Amnesty International, "Iran: Release women's rights defenders detained for peacefully protesting against forced veiling", 18 April 2019, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/04/iran-release-womens-rights-defenders-detained-for-peacefullyprotesting-against-forced-veiling; Amnesty International, "Iran: Compulsory veiling is abusive, discriminatory and humiliating; end the persecution of women for peacefully protesting against it" (Index: MDE 13/7783/2018), 24 January 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7783/2018/en

72. Amnesty International, "Iran: Release women's rights defenders detained for peacefully protesting against forced veiling", 18 April 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/04/iran-release-womens-rights-defenders-detained-for-peacefully-protesting-against-forced-veiling-2

journalist Masih Alinejad, based in the USA. These included My Stealthy Freedom, a Facebook page where women in Iran were encouraged to post photographs of themselves without headscarves, and White Wednesdays, a campaign which first called on women to protest compulsory veiling by wearing white headscarves every Wednesday and then involved women from inside Iran sharing videos of themselves walking in public without a headscarf, expressing opposition to compulsory veiling and discussing their hopes for women's rights.[73] Another campaign was My Camera My Weapon, which aimed to raise awareness of the constant harassment and assault that women and girls face in Iran's streets as a result of compulsory veiling laws.

Between 2018 and 2022, in response to the growing women's rights movement against compulsory veiling, the Iranian authorities arbitrarily arrested scores of women and girls, who campaigned against compulsory veiling, subjecting many to unjust prosecutions in unfair trials and lengthy prison terms or other unjust punishments.[74] Authorities used incommunicado detention, prolonged solitary confinement and threats against family members in order to extract forced video "confessions" from women's rights defenders detained for campaigning against compulsory veiling.[75] Family members of women's rights activists were also targeted for arbitrary arrest and detention as a tactic to coerce them into ending their opposition to compulsory veiling.[76]

The authorities also subjected women's rights activists protesting compulsory veiling to smear campaigns. State media and officials routinely called these women and girls "morons", "infantile", "deceived", "perverted" and "wicked" and accused them of association with "foreign enemies", "acting under the influence of "synthetic drugs" or receiving instruction from "organized criminal groups".[77]

The authorities also made hateful statements referring to unveiling as a "virus", "social illness" or "disorder" and equating the choice to appear without a headscarf with "sexual depravity". They also orchestrated the production of propaganda videos to coerce women and girls who appeared unveiled in public to express "regret" and retract their opposition to forced veiling; accused them of being "incited" by "anti-revolutionary opposition agents" outside the country; and threatened them with death.[78]

In mid-2022, the authorities mobilized security forces to enforce compulsory veiling more strictly and violently, aiming to crush ongoing defiance and instil fear. This culminated in the death in custody of Mahsa Zhina Amini on 16 September 2022, days after her violent arrest by Iran's "morality" police, amid credible reports of torture and other ill-treatment.

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73. Stealthy Freedom, Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/StealthyFreedom
74. Amnesty International, "Iran: Cruel campaign to extract propaganda 'confessions' from protesters against compulsory veiling", 15 July 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/07/iran-cruel-campaign-to-extract-propaganda-confessions-from-protesters-against-compulsory-veiling
75. Amnesty International, "Iran: Cruel campaign to extract propaganda 'confessions' from protesters against compulsory veiling", 15 July 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/07/iran-cruel-campaign-to-extract-propaganda-confessions-from-protesters-against-compulsory-veiling
76. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Dozens of women ill-treated and at risk of long jail terms for peacefully protesting compulsory veiling", 15 July 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/07/iran-cruel-campaign-to-extract-propaganda-confessions-from-protesters-against-compulsory-veiling-2; Amnesty International, "Iran: Dozens of women ill-treated and at risk of long jail terms for peacefully protesting compulsory veiling", 26 February 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/02/iran-dozens-of-women-ill-treated-and-at-risk-of-long-jail-terms-for-peacefully-protesting-compulsory-veiling
77. Amnesty International, "Iran: Dozens of women ill-treated and at risk of long jail terms for peacefully protesting compulsory veiling", 26 February 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/02/iran-dozens-of-women-ill-treated-and-at-risk-of-long-jail-terms-for-peacefully-protesting-compulsory-veiling
78. Amnesty International, "Iran: Compulsory veiling is abusive, discriminatory and humiliating; end the persecution of women for peacefully protesting against it" (Index: MDE 13/7783/2018), 24 January 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7783/2018/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Women's rights activists treated as 'enemies of the state' in renewed crackdown", 10 August 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/08/iran-womens-rights-activists-treated-as-enemies-of-the-state-in-renewed-crackdown

Her death sparked an evolutionary turn in the women's movement against compulsory veiling in Iran. Long-simmering anger, especially among the youth, erupted into an unprecedented nationwide movement, with hundreds of thousands of women and girls boldly appearing unveiled in public spaces. During the uprising, women and girls burned their headscarves by throwing them into bonfires. Schoolgirls as young as seven removed their headscarves and chanted "Woman Life Freedom" in schools and public spaces.

While the uprising was brutally crushed by the end of December 2022, widespread defiance of compulsory veiling persisted in public spaces, as many women and girls continued to refuse to wear the headscarf; the increasing presence of unveiled women in public space became an enduring achievement of the Woman Life Freedom protest movement.

To reassert their control and power, the Iranian authorities, who treat compulsory veiling as a core pillar of the Islamic Republic and view its widespread public rejection as an existential threat to the political establishment, mounted a renewed assault on the human rights of women and girls. This escalation was dubbed the "war on women" by Iranian human rights defenders and social media users.[79]

In April 2023, the authorities began waging an intensified nationwide crackdown, enforcing compulsory veiling across the country and threatening legal action against women and girls who "insist on breaking the norms".[80] The announcement coincided with disturbing reports and videos circulating on social media of security forces violently assaulting women in the streets while attempting to arrest them and throwing them into police vans, as well as firing tear gas into crowds of people helping some of these women escape arrest.[81]

In July 2023, the authorities announced they had sent more than a million text messages to women warning that their vehicles could be confiscated after they were captured on camera without their headscarves, issued 133,174 SMS messages requiring the immobilization of vehicles, confiscated 2,000 cars and referred more than 4,000 "repeat offenders" to the judiciary across the country. Additionally, countless women were suspended or expelled from universities, barred from sitting final exams and denied access to banking services and public transport. Meanwhile, hundreds of businesses were forcibly closed for not enforcing compulsory veiling on their premises.[82]

In April 2024, the authorities announced the implementation of a new nationwide campaign to intensify enforcement of compulsory veiling called the "Noor (light) Plan", following which there was a visible increase of security patrols in public spaces enforcing the policy through surveillance of women's hair, bodies and attire.[83] Members of the security force agents carried out the patrols on foot, on motorcycles, in cars and in police vans. Disturbing videos emerged on social media showing members of the security forces physically assaulting and arbitrarily arresting women and girls by violently throwing them into police vans in a manner resembling abductions. The videos show the distressed women and girls screaming while being attacked and dragged away by members of the security forces.

79. Amnesty International, "Iran: Women and Girls Facing Violent Crackdown" (Index: MDE 13/8029/2024), 7 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8029/2024/en
80. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities doubling down on punishments against women and girls defying discriminatory veiling laws" (Index: MDE 13/7041/2023), 26 July 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7041/2023/en, p. 4.
81. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities doubling down on punishments against women and girls defying discriminatory veiling laws" (Index: MDE 13/7041/2023), 26 July 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7041/2023/en, p. 4.
82. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities doubling down on punishments against women and girls defying discriminatory veiling laws" (Index: MDE 13/7041/2023), 26 July 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7041/2023/en
83. Amnesty International, "Iran: Women and girls facing violent crackdown" (Index: MDE 13/8029/2024), 7 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8029/2024/en

Women also reported that members of the security forces used electric shock devices during arrest and that they themselves were subjected to unjust prosecutions, confiscations of their cars and fines.[84]

The crackdown intensified after the then Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Khamenei, issued a statement on 3 April 2024 that compulsory veiling was a "religiously mandated decree and obligatory for women" and calling for non-compliance to be addressed.[85] Following this, the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) issued a statement equating defiance of compulsory veiling with "organized criminal gangs… involved in corruption, prostitution, pornography"; the head of FARAJA in Greater Tehran, Abbas Ali Mohammadian, announced that legal action would be taken against women and girls appearing in public without a headscarf; and the commander of the IRGC Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, announced the formation of trained groups called "ambassadors of kindness" to enforce compulsory veiling in public spaces, without specifying their exact composition and institutional affiliation.[86]

In September 2024, the Guardian Council approved a bill on "Protecting the Family Through the Promotion of the Culture of Chastity and Hijab".[87] The judiciary and executive had introduced the bill to parliament in May 2023 following widespread defiance of compulsory veiling laws by women and girls. The bill, containing 74 articles, imposes the death penalty, flogging, lengthy prison sentences, exorbitant fines, travel bans, property seizures and restrictions on education and employment on women and girls who defy compulsory veiling laws. It also penalizes private entities that fail to enforce compulsory veiling on behalf of the state, while providing impunity to officials and vigilantes who violently attack women and girls defying it. According to state media reports, the law was due to come into force on 13 December 2024, but, after intense public criticism and backlash, the promulgation of the law has been temporarily paused.

In its March 2024 report, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran found that punishments under compulsory veiling laws violate multiple rights, are arbitrary in nature and, as such, are not permissible under international human rights law. The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran concluded that these cumulative violations amount to a severe deprivation of rights amounting to the crime against humanity of gender persecution."[88]

3.5 DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST ETHNIC MINORITIES

Iran is a highly diverse society, characterized by a wide range of religious, ethnic and cultural identities. Ethnic minorities in the country include Ahwazi Arabs, Armenians, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluchis, Gilaks, Kurds, Lurs, Mazanis and Turkmens.

According to the last National Census of Iran, which took place in 2016, the population of Iran that year was 79,926,270. The Iranian authorities do not publish official data on the country's ethnic

84. Amnesty International, "Iran: Women and girls facing violent crackdown" (Index: MDE 13/8029/2024), 7 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8029/2024/en
85. Amnesty International, "Iran: Women and girls facing violent crackdown" (Index: MDE 13/8029/2024), 7 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8029/2024/en
86. Amnesty International, "Iran: Women and girls facing violent crackdown" (Index: MDE 13/8029/2024), 7 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8029/2024/en
87. Amnesty International, "Iran: New compulsory veiling law intensifies oppression of women and girls", 10 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/iran-new-compulsory-veiling-law-intensifies-oppression-of-women-and-girls
88. UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1725.

composition. As a result, there are multiple estimates provided by unofficial sources on the Kurdish population in Iran ranging from 8 million (10%) up to 12 million (15%).[89]

The Kurdish population in Iran is primarily concentrated in the western and north-western provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Ilam and West Azerbaijan. According to the 2016 census, the population in Kurdistan province was 1,603,011, that in Kermanshah province was 1,952,434 and that in Ilam province was 580,158. The vast majority of those living in these provinces are Kurdish. Additionally, according to the 2016 census, West Azerbaijan province had a population of 3,265,219.[90] This province is home to significant communities of both Kurds and Azerbaijani Turks.[91] Members of the Kurdish community also reside in other provinces, including North Khorasan, Mazandaran, Ghazvin and Tehran.

Although Iran is a state party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Iran's ethnic minority populations have historically been subjected to discrimination, marginalization, linguistic and cultural repression, unlawful use of force and firearms, and disproportionate use of the death penalty.[92]

Systemic economic underinvestment and underdevelopment by the authorities in regions populated by ethnic minorities has led to higher poverty and unemployment rates than national average, inadequate infrastructure and limited access to education, employment, housing, political office and healthcare and other essential services, exacerbating marginalization among these communities and perpetuating barriers limiting their socio-economic mobility.[93]

Provinces with large ethnic minority populations, including West Azerbaijan in the north-west, Khuzestan with its large Ahwazi Arab population in the south-west, and Sistan and Baluchistan province in the south-east with its large Baluchi population, have some of the highest poverty rates in the country, exceeding the national average,[94] with Sistan and Baluchistan being the most impoverished.

Widespread unemployment and poverty have pushed individuals from the Kurdish and Baluchi minorities to take on dangerous work as cross-border couriers transporting goods through unofficial routes along Iran's north-western and south-eastern borders. These Kurdish cross-border couriers (*kulbars*) and Baluchi fuel porters (*soukhtbar*) are exposed to significant risks, include unlawful use of lethal force by Iranian security forces along Iran's borders, leading to scores of unlawful killings and injuries every year.[95]

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89. See UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Special Rapporteur on Iran), Report, 18 July 2019, UN Doc. A/74/188, para. 86; Fondation-Institut kurde de Paris, The Kurdish population, 12 January 2017, https://www.institutkurde.org/en/info/the-kurdish-population-1232551004 (accessed 18 February 2026); Abbas Vali, "Reflections on Kurdish society and politics in Rojhelat: An overview", *The Kurds and the State in Iran: The Making of Kurdish Identity*, 2011, p. 285.

90. Statistical Centre of Iran, Population and Housing Census, https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census#52276 (accessed on 18 August 2026).

91. Amnesty International uses the names of the official administrative divisions of Iran when referring to the aforementioned provinces. The organization acknowledges the political sensitivities surrounding these divisions and recognize that some provinces, such as West Azerbaijan, have ethnically diverse populations, including significant Kurdish and Azerbaijani Turkic communities.

92. Iran signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on 8 March 1967 and ratified it on 29 August 1968.

93. Amnesty International, "Iran: Human rights in Iran: Review of 2023/2024" (Index: MDE 13/7972/2024), 24 April 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7972/2024/en; UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 106.

94. World Bank Group, *Iran Poverty Diagnostic: Poverty and Shared Prosperity,* November 2023, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099110623175541902, pp. 30-31

95. Amnesty International, "Iran: Unlawful killings of destitute fuel porters must be independently investigated", 2 March 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2021/03/iran-unlawful-killings-of-destitute-fuel-porters-must-be-independently-investigated

One of the grievances repeatedly voiced by Iran's ethnic minorities concerns the lack of opportunities to learn, promote and use their own language freely and without any interference or discrimination. Despite repeated calls for linguistic diversity, under Article 15 of Iran's constitution, Persian remains the sole official language of the country, limiting cultural expression and hindering the full participation of ethnic minority communities in social, economic and political life. Persian is the sole medium of instruction permitted in primary and secondary education, contributing to disproportionately low levels of learning and high dropout rates in provinces populated by ethnic minorities and perpetuating their socio-economic marginalization.[96] Persian is also the only official language for the delivery of administrative and judicial services, creating a systemic barrier in peoples' ability to access justice and essential government services.

Article 15 confines the use of "local and ethnic languages" to media and the teaching of literature, while entrenching Persian as the exclusive language of "official documents and educational textbooks". In practice, this framework restricts the equal enjoyment of cultural and linguistic rights by non-Persian communities in Iran, including Ahwazi Arab, Azerbaijani Turkic, Baluchi, Kurdish and Turkmen communities, particularly in access to education and participation in the conduct of public affairs, and falls short of international standards protecting minority language rights.

Other related grievances noted by ethnic minority rights activists include the scarcity of publications in minority languages and the lack of culturally and linguistically inclusive local programming by state radio and television.[97]

Minority rights activists in Iran who speak out against the monolingual and monocultural vision of the state and its exclusion or marginalization of minority communities face harassment and intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and other ill-treatment, unjust prosecutions, unfair trials, leading to sentences of imprisonment and/or flogging.[98]

The authorities frequently associate proponents of ethnic minority rights with "separatist currents" and accuse them of inciting tensions to undermine national unity and Iran's territorial integrity.[99] State media and officials often use hateful and stigmatizing speech against ethnic minorities, using labels such as "separatists", "terrorists" and "foreign agents" to describe them.[100] In Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces, the authorities often accuse Kurdish individuals, including activists, of membership in banned Kurdish political opposition groups, which have armed wings based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and subject them to arbitrary detention and unfair trials leading to lengthy prison terms or even the death penalty.[101]

This politically motivated marginalization not only silences dissent but also restricts the ability of ethnic minorities to peacefully advocate for political changes that could lead to a more equitable distribution of power and resources.

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96. Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression: Iran's Human Rights Defenders Under Attack* (Index: MDE 13/6446/2017), 1 August 2017, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6446/2017/en, pp. 46-47.
97. Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression* (previously cited), pp. 47.
98. Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression* (previously cited), pp. 46-47.
99. Amnesty International, "Iran: Release Azerbaijani Turkic minority rights activists detained for peaceful cultural gatherings" (Index: MDE 13/8889/2018), 10 August 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8889/2018/en; Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression* (previously cited), pp. 47-49.
100. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Release Azerbaijani Turkic minority rights activists detained for peaceful cultural gatherings" (Index: MDE 13/8889/2018), 10 August 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8889/2018/en; Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression* (previously cited), pp. 47-49.
101. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent global action needed to halt imminent execution of Kurdish humanitarian worker", 6 February 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/03/iran-chilling-execution-spree-with-escalating-use-of-death-penalty-against-persecuted-ethnic-minorities; Amnesty International, "Iran: Chilling execution spree with escalating use of death penalty against persecuted ethnic minorities", 2 March 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/03/iran-chilling-execution-spree-with-escalating-use-of-death-penalty-against-persecuted-ethnic-minorities

The authorities often use the heightened security atmosphere around protests as a pretext to arbitrarily arrest and detain minority rights activists and members of ethnic minority groups, even when they have not taken part in protests, a pattern documented by Amnesty International in the course of its investigations into violations carried out by security forces during the November 2019 nationwide protests.[102] In a similar pattern during the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022, the authorities again used the protests as a pretext to carry out a wave of arrests in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan.[103] State media also broadcast numerous videos smearing protesters in Kurdish-populated provinces as "terrorists" belonging to or supporting banned Kurdish opposition groups and showed the forced "confessions" of detainees before their trials had taken place.[104]

Ethnic minorities are also disproportionately impacted by death sentences and executions, particularly Baluchis and Kurds, including for drug-related offences and overly broad and vaguely worded charges such as *efsad-e fel arz* (corruption on earth), *moharebeh* (waging war against God) and *baghi* (armed rebellion against the state), which do not meet the principle of legality under international law and which are often used by the authorities for political repression.[105]

For example, between 2021 and 2023, the Baluchi ethnic minority consistently accounted for around 20% of the recorded executions despite making up only 5%of Iran's population. The Iranian authorities' use of the death penalty for drug-related offences has contributed to a cycle of poverty and systemic injustice, disproportionately impacted the human rights of these poor and marginalized communities, deepened existing structural inequalities and further entrenched discrimination. Those arrested and prosecuted for drug-related offences are often unaware of their rights and cannot afford independent legal representation. Their families frequently struggle with the dire economic consequences of losing breadwinners.[106]

Iranian authorities also have a long-standing history of forcibly disappearing and secretly executing members of ethnic minority groups, and refusing to reveal their fate and the whereabouts of their remains for years.[107]

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102. Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity* (previously cited), pp. 18-21, 57-59; Amnesty International, "Iran: Release Azerbaijani Turkic minority rights activists detained for peaceful cultural gatherings" (Index: MDE 13/8889/2018), 10 August 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8889/2018/en

103. Kurdistan Human Rights Network, یک هفته اعتراضات مردمی به قتل مهسا امینی در شهرهای کردستان؛ کشته شدن دست‌کم ۱۷ معترض، زخمی شدن حداقل ۴۳۵ نفر و بازداشت دست‌کم ۵۷۰ نفر ["One week of public protests over the killing of Mahsa Amini in cities of Kurdistan: At least 17 protesters killed, at least 435 injured, and at least 570 arrested"], 25 September 2022, https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/fa/news-fa/freedom-fa/freedom-of-expression-fa/2022/09/25/p19215 (in Persian).

104. See, for example, Mashregh News, فیلم/ اعترافات دستگیرشدگان اعضای حزب دموکرات کردستان ["Video: Confessions of arrested members of the Kurdish Democratic Party"], 24 September 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1420801/فیلم-اعترافات-دستگیرشدگان-اعضای-حزب-دموکرات-کردستان (in Persian).

105. Amnesty International, '*Don't Let Them Kill Us': Iran's Relentless Execution Crisis Since the 2022 Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7869/2024), 4 April 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7869/2024/en, pp. 12-14, 22-24.

106. Amnesty International, "Iran: Prisons turned into killing fields as drug-related executions almost triple this year", 2 June 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/06/iran-prisons-turned-into-killing-fields-as-drug-related-executions-almost-triple-this-year

107. See Amnesty International, '*Don't Let Them Kill Us'* (previously cited), pp. 12-14, 22-24; Amnesty International, "Iran: Four Ahwazi Arab men secretly executed" (Index: MDE 13/3864/2021), 18 March 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/3864/2021/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Forcibly disappeared prisoner feared 'executed by firing squad'", 30 June 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/06/iran-forcibly-disappeared-prisoner-feared-executed-by-firing-squad; Amnesty International, *Broadcasting Injustice, Boasting of Mass Killing: A Case Study of August 2016 Execution of 25 Sunni Men in Iran* (Index: MDE 13/5079/2016), 17 November 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5079/2016/en

3.6 CIVILIAN HARM AND RISKS OF WAR CRIMES

Since 28 February 2026, when the USA and Israel launched unlawful attacks on Iran, in violation of the UN Charter, the risks of crimes under international law against people in Iran have multiplied. In addition to facing escalating crimes under international law and serious human rights violations by the Iranian authorities, people in Iran are now also at acute risk of violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes from attacks carried out by US and Israeli forces.

Tens of thousands of air strikes by the USA and Israel have resulted in significant civilian harm. The strikes killed at least 1,469 civilians, including hundreds of children, between 28 February 2026 and 24 July 2026, according to official figures reported by the Iranian authorities.[108] The strikes also resulted in extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure and environmental damage due to attacks on petrochemical and energy facilities.

Civilians bore the brunt of the armed conflict from the outset. On 28 February 2026, at approximately 9.45am local time, an unlawful US strike on an elementary school in Minab, Hormozgan province, killed 156 people, including 120 children. Amnesty International's investigation into the attack found that the school was directly hit with precision-guided munitions and that the USA failed to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian harm, particularly to do everything feasible to verify that the intended target was a military objective.[109]

Amnesty International's research into air strikes on the Niloufar, Resalat, and Javadieh neighbourhoods of Tehran between 1 and 13 March 2026 found evidence that explosive weapons with wide area effects were used in densely populated areas, killing and injuring civilians and causing extensive damage to homes, a school, businesses and other civilian buildings.[110] In Resalat, air strikes hit a facility belonging to one of the Basij battalions of the IRGC, as well as three adjacent buildings, which killed 16 civilians, including 12 members of one family. In Niloufar and Javadieh, at least 25 civilians were killed when air strikes apparently targeting police stations caused widespread damage to nearby homes and other civilian structures.

The attacks were carried out in neighbourhoods where a large presence of civilians was foreseeable. The civilian death toll, the scale of destruction, the timing of the attacks, the impact on nearby civilian structures and the lack of effective advance warnings point to alarming failures by the US-Israeli coalition to abide by the fundamental obligations under international humanitarian law to distinguish between civilian objects and military objectives, and to take all feasible precautions to spare civilians and civilian objects. In none of the three attacks was an effective advance warning given to the civilian population, despite the heightened obligation to take feasible precautions when conducting attacks in densely populated areas.

Between 28 February and 7 April 2026, air strikes near prisons and the targeting of security facilities where detainees are held also put prisoners in danger of death or serious harm. The Iranian authorities refused to release all those arbitrarily detained and grant humanitarian release to others imprisoned.

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108. Tasnim News Agency, آمار شهدای جنگ رمضان؛ ۳۵۱۹ شهید، ۵۱۷ زن و ۲۷۰ دانش‌آموز ["Ramadan War death toll: 3,519 people killed, including 517 women and 270 schoolchildren"], 9 August 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1405/05/18/3666987/ (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, مصدومیت ۶۶۶ نفر و شهادت ۵۹ نفر در حملات آمریکا به کشور ["666 people injured and 59 killed in US attacks on the country"], 24 July 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1405/05/02/3655252 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, شهادت ۳ هزار و ۴۶۸ نفر در جنگ رمضان؛ ۴۵ درصد از شهدا غیرنظامی بودند ["3,468 people killed in the Ramadan War; 45% of those killed were civilians"], 26 April 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6811614 (in Persian).

109. Amnesty International, "USA/Iran: Those responsible for deadly and unlawful US strike on school that killed over 100 children must be held accountable", 16 March 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/03/usa-iran-those-responsible-for-deadly-and-unlawful-us-strike-on-school-that-killed-over-100-children-must-be-held-accountable

110. Amnesty International, "USA/Israel/Iran: Deadly US-Israeli strikes on densely populated Tehran neighbourhoods must be independently investigated" (Index: MDE 13/1393/2026), 25 August 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1393/2026/en/

Amnesty International reiterated its call for the release of all those arbitrarily detained.[111]

On 7 March 2026, US-Israeli air strikes targeted multiple fuel storage and distribution facilities in Iran, including in the neighbourhoods of Shahran, Sohanak and Kouhak in Tehran and the city of Shahr-e Rey in Tehran province and Fardis in Alborz province.[112] Video footage of the aftermath of the 7 March 2026 US-Israeli attacks on the fuel depots in Tehran shows a huge amount of flames and plumes of thick black smoke rising, as well as large uncontrolled fires in residential areas. Eyewitnesses also described to Amnesty International scenes of oil-tainted rainfall, which according to medical warnings, were a result of the release of hazardous materials and toxic substances into the air, putting millions of people at risk of serious health complications, including cancer, lung and respiratory diseases and skin burns.

On 21 March 2026, US President Donald Trump issued a 48-hour ultimatum to the authorities in Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, warning that the USA would "obliterate" Iranian power plants, "starting with the biggest one first", if the Iranian authorities failed to comply. The authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran said they would retaliate by targeting the "power plants of the occupying regime [Israel] and the power plants of regional countries that supply electricity to US bases, as well as the economic, industrial, and energy infrastructure in which Americans hold shares" if Trump followed through with his threat.[113]

On 23 March 2026, Donald Trump stated on social media that discussions with Iranian officials had taken place aimed at de-escalating hostilities across the Middle East. He added that he had ordered a five-day postponement of any planned military strikes against Iranian power facilities.

Amnesty International urged Donald Trump to retract his threats to commit war crimes, given that destroying power plants would unleash catastrophic harm on millions of civilians in Iran and that the USA is obligated under international humanitarian law to avoid civilian harm. The organization warned that, by threatening such strikes, the USA was effectively indicating its willingness to plunge an entire country into darkness, and to potentially deprive its people of their human rights to life, water, food, healthcare and adequate standard of living, and to subject them to severe pain and suffering.[114]

In late March and early April 2026, US and Israeli forces escalated attacks on civilian infrastructure, including residential buildings, power plants, bridges, health facilities, universities, steel factories and petrochemical facilities, killing and injuring more civilians, condemning the population to years, if not decades, of deepened economic hardship, damaging the environment and leaving long-lasting harm to civilians' lives, health and livelihoods.

On 7 April 2026, US President Trump issued apocalyptic threats, warning that "a whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again" in relation to Iran. The very act of making such threats could amount to a threat to commit genocide, a crime defined by the Genocide Convention and by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court as committing one or more defined acts "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such", and shreds core rules of international humanitarian law, with potentially catastrophic consequences for over 90 million

111. Amnesty International, "Iran: Prisoners in Iran at risk during ongoing US and Israeli strikes" (Index: MDE 13/0789/2026), 6 March 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0789/2026/en
112. Amnesty International, "Middle East: All parties to the conflict must refrain from unlawful attacks on energy infrastructure", 11 March 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/03/middle-east-all-parties-to-the-conflict-must-refrain-from-unlawful-attacks-on-energy-infrastructure
113. Amnesty International, "Middle East: All parties to the conflict must refrain from unlawful attacks on energy infrastructure", 24 March 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/03/trump-warning-attack-iran-power-plants-is-threat-to-commit-war-crimes
114. Amnesty International, "Middle East: All parties to the conflict must refrain from unlawful attacks on energy infrastructure", 24 March 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/03/trump-warning-attack-iran-power-plants-is-threat-to-commit-war-crimes

people.[115]

The next day, the USA and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire.

On 17 June 2026, the USA and Iran signed a 14-point memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU provided for a 60-day negotiation period to address issues including freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's nuclear and missile programmes, and sanctions. The MOU expired on 17 August 2026 against the backdrop of renewed US military strikes since July 2026 and repeated threats by US President Donald Trump to target civilian infrastructure, including bridges and power plants.

Amnesty International renews its calls for an enduring ceasefire and accountability for the unlawful US and Israeli attacks on Iran in violation of the UN Charter and all violations of international humanitarian law and possible war crimes committed during the conflict. The organization further urges the UN General Assembly and Security Council to consider all possible avenues to deliver and ensure peace, security and justice.

At the same time, Amnesty International stresses that the crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed against protesters, dissidents and others in Iran must not be sidelined, forgotten or overshadowed amid shifting global attention. The unlawful conduct and significant civilian harm by Israel and the USA must not deflect or obscure crimes against humanity committed by the Iranian authorities. Nor should the pain and suffering of victims of crimes against humanity in Iran be instrumentalized to justify unlawful attacks on Iran in violation of the UN Charter, breaches of international humanitarian law and civilian harm.

Dual atrocity risks faced by people in Iran requires urgently combining efforts to establish a durable ceasefire, protect civilians, ensure respect for international humanitarian law and deter war crimes by all parties to the conflict, with robust efforts to prevent further atrocities by the Iranian authorities against the people of Iran.

115. Amnesty International, "Iran: President Trump's apocalyptic threats of large-scale civilian devastation demand urgent global action to prevent atrocity crimes", 7 April 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/04/iran-president-trumps-apocalyptic-threats-of-large-scale-civilian-devastation-demand-urgent-global-action-to-prevent-atrocity-crimes

4. INTERNATIONAL LAW AND STANDARDS GOVERNING THE USE OF FORCE

International human rights law imposes strict limitations on the use of force by state authorities. These limitations, on both the exceptional circumstances in which force may be used and the level of force that may be used, stem principally from the rights to life, physical integrity and security of person,[116] to freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment,[117] and, in the context of protests, to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.[118]

The key standard-setting documents governing the use of force by law enforcement officials are the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials[119] and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms).[120] Domestic legal frameworks on the use of force by security forces must align with international law requirements, as guided by these standards.[121] Domestic law must not allow the use of unnecessary or excessive force against assembly participants,[122] and states "must enact… effective criminal prohibitions on all… unnecessary or disproportionate use of firearms by law enforcement officials."[123]

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116. See, in particular, UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36: The Right to Life (Article 6), 3 September 2019, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36, paras 12-14.
117. See, for example, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests*, 31 January 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/60, paras 26 and 43; UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UN Special Rapporteur on torture), *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 20 July 2017, UN Doc. A/72/178, para. 34; UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, adopted on 17 December 1979, Article 5.
118. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37: The Right of Peaceful Assembly (Article 21), 17 September 2020, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC37; UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests*, (previously cited). See also UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014, UN Doc. A/HRC/26/36.
119. UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials (previously cited).
120. UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms), adopted on 7 September 1990.
121. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 78.
122. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 79: "Domestic law must not grant officials largely unrestricted powers… In particular, domestic law must not allow use of force against participants in an assembly on a wanton, excessive or discriminatory basis."
123. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 20.

It is a primary duty of the state to save and protect life. As such, domestic legal frameworks governing the use of force by security forces must reflect the "protect-life" principle,[124] namely, that causing serious harm to a person is only ever acceptable for the purpose of saving another person from a risk of a similarly serious nature. This means that putting a life at risk is only ever acceptable if it is for the purpose of protecting somebody else against a risk to their life. This principle must be upheld in all situations, even in exceptional circumstances.[125]

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section provides an overview of general standards governing the use of force. The second section outlines the high thresholds that apply, under international law and standards, to the use of firearms, other forms of lethal force, and intentional lethal use of force. The third section addresses international law and standards governing the use of less lethal weapons and ammunition. The fourth section addresses the prohibition of the use of weapons and ammunitions that are inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading or that are not developed and tested for law enforcement purposes to minimize harm, prevent unwarranted injury and protect uninvolved persons. The final section provides an overview of how accountability must be ensured for each use of force.

4.1 GENERAL STANDARDS ON THE USE OF FORCE

The UN Human Rights Guidance on Less lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement defines "use of force" as "[t]he use of physical means to coerce or influence behaviour or to damage property. The use of force may injure and even, in certain instances, kill".[126]

The term "force" covers a range of means, including the use of firearms and other means of lethal force, the use of less lethal weapons and the use of prohibited weapons that are not tested or developed for law enforcement purposes or are inherently cruel, inhumane and degrading. Different international standards govern these means of force. Distinct thresholds govern the use of firearms and other means of lethal force and the use of less lethal weapons, while the use of weapons that are not tested or developed for law enforcement or are inherently cruel, inhumane and degrading is prohibited.

Before addressing the specific legal frameworks governing different means of force, it is important to note that all use of force must strictly adhere to the overarching principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, precaution[127] and non-discrimination.[128]

The principle of necessity serves to determine whether force should be used at all and, if so, how much force to achieve a legitimate law enforcement purpose such as protecting life or obtaining compliance with a lawful and human rights-compliant order.[129] Principle 4 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use

124. See, for example, UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 13 (states must put in place "appropriate legislation controlling the use of lethal force by law enforcement officials"), para. 14 (use of less lethal weapons "must be strictly regulated in accordance with applicable international standards") and para. 18 ("States parties must establish a legal framework to ensure the full enjoyment of the right to life by all individuals as may be necessary to give effect to the right to life").
125. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials*, August 2015, https://policehumanrightsresources.org/use-of-force-guidelines-for-implementation-of-the-un-basic-principles-on-the-use-of-force-and-firearms-by-law-enforcement-officials, pp. 60-61.
126. Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/CCPR/LLW_Guidance.pdf, p. 46, noting: "Such means may be kinetic, chemical, electrical or of another kind." See also UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Resource Book on the Use of Force and Firearms in Law Enforcement*, 1 September 2017, https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/policy-and-methodological-publications/resource-book-use-force-and-firearms-law, p. 1.
127. See UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 63.
128. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 78.
129. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 79.

of Force and Firearms provides:

> **"Law enforcement officials, in carrying out their duty, shall, as far as possible, apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms. They may use force and firearms only if other means remain ineffective or without any promise of achieving the intended result."**

The principle of necessity has three components:

- Qualitative: Is force necessary at all or is it possible to achieve the legitimate objective without resorting to force?
- Quantitative: How much force is needed to achieve the objective? The level of force used should be the minimum that can still be considered effective.
- Temporary: The use of force must stop once the objective has been achieved or is no longer achievable.

The principle of proportionality serves to determine whether there is an appropriate balance between the benefits of the use of force and the possible consequences and harm caused by its use. Principle 5 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms provides:

> **"Whenever the lawful use of force and firearms is unavoidable, law enforcement officials shall: (a) Exercise restraint in such use and act in proportion to the seriousness of the offence and the legitimate objective to be achieved".**

The principle of proportionality prohibits the use of force where the harm inflicted by its use outweighs the benefits obtained in relation to achieving a legitimate objective. Ultimately, it requires law enforcement to accept that the legitimate objective may not be achieved. It expresses the principle that the end does not justify all means. This becomes particularly important when the right to life is engaged. In short, the principle of proportionality means that law enforcement officials are only allowed to put life at risk if it is for the purpose of saving or protecting another life.[130]

Security forces should therefore avoid the use of force[131] and seek instead to de-escalate situations that might result in violence. They are obliged to exhaust non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and, if it becomes absolutely necessary to use force, they must give prior warning.[132]

This applies also in the context of assemblies. Only the minimum force necessary may be used where it is required for a legitimate law enforcement.[133]

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130. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), p. 18.
131. See, for example, UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 4. See also UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 75; UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests* (previously cited), para. 25; UN Human Rights Council, *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Roles and Responsibilities of Police and Other Law Enforcement Officials*, 15 March 2021, UN Doc. A/HRC/46/L.27, para. 13.
132. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 78, noting that the only exception to exhausting non-violent means and giving prior warning is if doing so "would be manifestly ineffective."
133. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 79.

Even when protesters engage in violence and the lawful use of force is unavoidable to effectively contain the violent behaviour, security forces must use minimum force,[134] minimize damage and injury, respect and preserve human life,[135] and ensure that adequate medical facilities are available.[136] Once the need for any use of force to achieve legitimate objectives has passed, further resort to force is not permissible.[137]

Under international law and standards, even if some protesters commit violent acts, security forces must ensure that those who remain peaceful can continue protesting without undue interference.[138] Dispersal of an entire assembly should remain an exceptional measure, and an entire assembly should not be dispersed on the basis of isolated acts of violence that could be addressed through more proportionate interventions.[139]

It is also important to recall that even when a protester engages in non-peaceful conduct falling outside the protective scope of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, they retain their other human rights, including the rights to life and to freedom from torture and other ill-treatment, which must be respected.[140]

4.2 FIREARMS AND OTHER MEANS OF LETHAL FORCE

4.2.1 FIREARMS

A particularly high threshold governs the use of firearms in law enforcement, limiting it to the targeting of individuals in exceptional circumstances where it is strictly necessary to confront an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and only when less extreme measures are insufficient to achieve this objective.[141] In determining the minimal force capable of confronting such a threat, the risk to other people, including assembly participants and bystanders, must also be carefully assessed.[142]

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134. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 75. See also (in relation to firearms), UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 14: "In the dispersal of violent assemblies, law enforcement officials may use firearms only when less dangerous means are not practicable and only to the minimum extent necessary. Law enforcement officials shall not use firearms in such cases, except under the conditions stipulated in principle 9."
135. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests*, (previously cited), para. 25.
136. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 88.
137. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 79.
138. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), paras 8, 17, 19, 24 and 74.
139. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), paras 17 and 85; UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 75.
140. See, for example, UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 9.
141. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 88; UN Human Rights Council, *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Roles and Responsibilities of Police and Other Law Enforcement Officials*, 15 March 2021 (previously cited), para. 14; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, *Policing Assemblies in Africa: Guidelines for the Policing of Assemblies by Law Enforcement Officials in Africa*, 2017, http://apcof.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/policing-assemblies-in-africa-multilingual.pdf, paras 21.2.3-21.2.4: "Firearms are not an appropriate tactical tool for the policing of assemblies. Firearms must never be used to disperse an assembly. The indiscriminate discharge of firearms into a crowd is a violation of the right to life."
142. See, for example, UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 75. See also OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), para. 6.3.4; OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), *Human Rights Handbook on Policing Assemblies*, 2016, http://osce.org/files/f/documents/c/5/226981.pdf, p. 81; UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 14.

The high threshold governing the use of firearms in exceptional situations is provided under Principle 9 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms, which reflects binding international law.[143] Principle 9 states:

> **"Law enforcement officials shall not use firearms against persons except in self-defence or defence of others against the imminent threat of death or serious injury, to prevent the perpetration of a particularly serious crime involving grave threat to life, to arrest a person presenting such a danger and resisting their authority, or to prevent his or her escape, and only when less extreme means are insufficient to achieve these objectives. In any event, intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life."[144]**

It short, this means that security forces may only resort to the use of a firearm when the life of another person is at stake. This is an expression of the principle of proportionality, that security forces should not cause greater harm than the harm they seek to prevent. It starts from the premise that, in view of its design as a weapon intended to kill, any use of a firearm puts life at risk and that this can only be accepted if there is a risk of similar gravity, meaning a risk to life.

LEGAL DEFINITION OF 'FIREARM' FOR APPLICATION OF USE OF FORCE PRINCIPLES

Article 3(a) of the UN Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (Firearms Protocol) defines a "firearm" as "any portable barrelled weapon that expels, is designed to expel or may be readily converted to expel a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique firearms or their replicas."[145] This broad technical definition of a "firearm" (expulsion of a projectile by explosive action) encompasses not only weapons that are designed to kill, but also less lethal weapons (weapons designed to injure or incapacitate) that rely on an explosive charge, including conventional firearms that are used to fire less lethal ammunition.

If the high threshold that governs the use of "firearms"[146] were to apply to all weapons captured under the Firearms Protocol's broad definition of "firearms", this would unduly restrict the legitimate and appropriate use of certain less lethal weapons and less lethal ammunition in circumstances that do not rise to the elevated threshold contemplated by Principle 9 of the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms. These circumstances include those where there is no imminent threat of death or serious injury, but where more proportionate methods have nonetheless been ineffective in carrying out lawful arrests, ensuring compliance with a lawful order, or dispersing a gathering that is causing serious and sustained disruption.

143. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 5 September 2006, UN Doc. A/61/311, para. 35: '[T]he substance of article 3 of the Code of Conduct and principle 9 of the Basic Principles reflects binding international law'.
144. UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 9. See also UN Human Rights Council, *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Roles and Responsibilities of Police and Other Law Enforcement Officials*, 15 March 2021 (previously cited), para. 14.
145. UN Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted on 31 May 2001.
146. See UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 9.

Hence, there is necessarily a difference between the technical definition of a firearm under the Firearms Protocol and the legal understanding of a firearm under the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms, which must be interpreted more narrowly as a weapon that, by nature of its ammunition, is designed to take a human life.

On this narrower understanding, "firearms" always fire lethal ammunition. A rifle or pistol, for example, is almost always a "firearm" because its standard load is lethal ammunition. A shotgun, however, while always a "firearm" under the Firearms Protocol definition, may not be considered a "firearm" under the narrower legal understanding for the application of the use of force principles, depending on what ammunition is loaded. On this basis, a shotgun may be a "firearm" if loaded with lethal ammunition but should not be considered a "firearm" if loaded with tear gas, pepper spray or other less lethal ammunition (such as bean bags).[147]

Given the abovementioned high threshold, firearms are not an appropriate tool for the policing of assemblies or for containing widespread violence. Furthermore, their use for the dispersal of assemblies is prohibited.[148] It is prohibited at all times to discharge firearms indiscriminately into a crowd, even if there are violent individuals within the crowd.[149]

The use of "firearms" cannot be justified to prevent the perpetration of crime, even serious crime, or to enable the arrest, or prevent the escape, of a perpetrator, even if they are resisting law enforcement officials, unless the crime to be prevented, or the circumstances necessitating arrest or prevention of escape, involve a grave threat to life.[150]

Any use of "firearms" by members of security forces must be preceded by a clear warning that "firearms" will be used and this must be given in sufficient time for the warning to be observed. Warning shots, including shots fired into the air, are inherently risky and likely to be counterproductive,[151] and therefore should not be used in the policing of assemblies.[152]

147. See, for example, OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), p. 45.
148. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 88; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, *Policing Assemblies in Africa: Guidelines for the Policing of Assemblies by Law Enforcement Officials in Africa* (previously cited), para. 22.6.
149. Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*, 27 November 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/8426/2024/en, p. 93.
150. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), pp. 56-57. See also UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 12, emphasizing that potentially lethal force "may not be used… in order to prevent the escape from custody of a suspected criminal or a convict who does not pose a serious and imminent threat to the lives or bodily integrity of others." See also UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 72; European Court of Human Rights, *Nachova and Others v. Bulgaria*, Cases 43577/98 and 43579/98, judgment, 6 July 2005, para. 95.
151. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), pp. 114-115.
152. African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, *Policing Assemblies in Africa: Guidelines for the Policing of Assemblies by Law Enforcement Officials in Africa* (previously cited), paras 21.2.3 and 21.2.4.

4.2.2 OTHER MEANS OF LETHAL FORCE

The use of firearms is not the only form of lethal force. In general, lethal force refers to any type of force that is highly likely to cause death,[153] even if death does not actually result.[154] The use of firearms loaded with lethal ammunition always constitutes lethal force.[155] Other uses of force that are similarly highly likely to cause death also constitute lethal force. This could for instance be the case of repeated baton strikes to the head or the direct targeted firing of tear gas cannisters from very close range at the head of a person. It could even be a use of force without weapons, such as the throwing of a person from the roof of a high building. The assessment of whether death is a likely consequence of a particular type of force must be made from the perspective of what a reasonable law enforcement official in the particular circumstances ought to have understood, taking into account the state's obligations to ensure appropriate use of force and weapons training.[156]

Where forms of force other than the use of firearms are deployed in ways that are likely to result in death, they would also amount to lethal force. While the high threshold of confronting an imminent threat of death or serious injury applies only to the use of firearms,[157] the overarching general principles on the use of force continue to apply to all other forms of lethal force, including the principles of necessity and proportionality.

In terms of necessity, this means that other forms of lethal force may only be used if there is no lower degree of force available that would be likely to achieve a legitimate law enforcement objective. In terms of proportionality, given that, by definition, lethal force puts life in danger, this can only be acceptable to counter a threat of similar gravity, which means a threat to life or, at least, of serious, life-endangering or life-changing injury.

Lethal force may not be deliberately used merely to protect "law and order" or to disperse protests, or to protect property: "only the protection of life can meet the proportionality requirement where lethal force is used intentionally, and the protection of life can be the only legitimate objective for the use of such force."[158]

4.2.3 INTENTIONAL LETHAL USE OF FORCE

Intentional lethal use of force refers to situations in which force is used with an intent to kill.

An intent to kill cannot be inferred solely from the fact that a firearm or other means of lethal force was used. For example, a firearm could potentially be used in a way that still allows for the possible survival of a person or is carried out with reckless disregard for the likelihood of death, or through a negligent

153. See, for example, UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 12: "The use of potentially lethal force for law enforcement purposes is an extreme measure that should be resorted to only when strictly necessary in order to protect life or prevent serious injury from an imminent threat."
154. Recognizing that death is not certain and need not result, the term "lethal force" includes both (future) force that is highly likely to cause death but where death may not actually result ("*potentially* lethal force") and (past) force where death did not result but where the force used was nonetheless highly likely to cause death.
155. See section 4.2.1.
156. See, for example, UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principles 18-20; UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 80; UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests* (previously cited), paras 47-48.
157. See section 4.2.1.
158. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 72.

failure to appreciate the likelihood of death.[159] Intent to kill will be proven where the perpetrator deliberately acted or failed to act (1) in order to cause the death of one or more persons or (2) where they were aware that death would occur in the ordinary course of events and proceeded nevertheless.

The final sentence of Principle 9 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms addresses the threshold for intentional lethal use of firearms, stating "intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life."

This means that shooting a person in a way that does not give them a chance of survival is only permitted if only the death of the person can actually stop the threat to the life of another person.[160]

While the language of Principle 9 addresses only the use of "firearms", it has been recognized that the clause "intentional lethal use of firearms" should extend to all means of force when used to kill. In other words, no force can be used to kill unless its use is strictly unavoidable to protect life.[161]

The UN Human Rights Committee has emphasized that "[t]he intentional taking of life by any means is permissible only if it is strictly necessary in order to protect life from an imminent threat."[162] Where a death occurs, it "must always be only a means to an end (preventing the loss of another life) and must never be a goal in itself."[163]

The distinction between the intentional lethal use of force, which involves an intent to kill, and the use of lethal force in a manner that still allows for the possibility of survival is relevant for the threshold that allows for the use of such force. The intentional lethal use of force is only permissible if "strictly unavoidable to protect life", meaning that only the death of the person will stop the threat. This will only be the case in the most extreme situations, such as ones in which a suicide bomber is about to detonate an explosive device or a hostage-taker is about to kill a hostage.

Furthermore, the distinction is significant in determining the level of individual culpability and the categorization of the conduct under domestic and international law.

Intentional lethal use of force in an unlawful manner resulting in death is often reflected domestically through charges for the crime of murder, where it is established that those responsible either intended to cause the victim's death or knew, with a sufficient degree of certainty, that death would be the necessary consequence of their intentional and unlawful actions or omissions in the circumstances, yet persisted in their conduct.

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159. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), p. 34, para. (c), and p. 115: "Potentially lethal use refers to other ways of using a firearm, which may still have lethal consequences, but where the firearm is used in a way that allows for the survival of the person."

160. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), pp. 56-57 and 59-60.

161. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 71: "A common sense understanding of the scope of application of Principle 9 suggests that all weapons that are designed and are likely to be lethal should be covered… the use of *which constitutes an intentional lethal use of force* " (emphasis added). See also Stuart Casey-Maslen, *The Right to Life Under International Law: An Interpretative Manual*, 2021, pp. 162-163, para. 7.54: "although the standard [in Principle 9] refers to *intentional lethal use of firearms*, this is extrapolated to all means of force *when used to kill* " (emphasis added). See also International Committee of the Red Cross, *The Use of Weapons and Equipment in Law Enforcement Operations*, 2020, https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document/file_list/qa-use_of_force_in_law_enforcement_operations_en-web.pdf, p. 6.

162. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 12; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, General Comment 3 on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights: The Right to Life (Article 4), https://achpr.au.int/en/node/851: "The intentional lethal use of force by law enforcement officials and others is prohibited unless it is strictly unavoidable in order to protect life (making it proportionate) and all other means are insufficient to achieve that objective (making it necessary)."

163. Amnesty International, Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (previously cited), p. 31, expanding upon "Guideline No. 2: The "protect-life"-principle must be enshrined in law, i.e. any force that involves a high likelihood of lethal consequences, in particular use of firearms, may only be used for protecting against a threat of death or serious injury."

Where the intent to kill cannot be established, domestic criminal law typically provides for non-intentional homicide offences, which vary by jurisdiction and may include reckless homicide, manslaughter or negligent homicide. The UN Human Rights Committee is clear that states are under an obligation to criminalize both intentional and negligent homicides.[11] Criminal negligence generally refers to circumstances where a person through actions or omissions, when the law imposes a duty to act, shows wanton or reckless disregard for the lives or safety of other persons.

Under international human rights law, an unlawful use of lethal force resulting in death constitutes an arbitrary deprivation of life, regardless of whether intent to kill can be proven. According to the UN Human Rights Committee, for a violation of the right to life to occur, there must be a deprivation of life arising from an "intentional or otherwise foreseeable and preventable life-terminating harm or injury, caused by an act or omission".[164]

Deprivation of life is "arbitrary" if it lacks a legal basis or is otherwise inconsistent with life-protecting laws and procedures.[165] As stated by the UN Human Rights Committee in General Comment 36:

> **"The deprivation of life of individuals through acts or omissions that violate provisions of the Covenant other than article 6 [the right to life] is, as a rule, arbitrary in nature. This includes, for example, the use of force resulting in the death of demonstrators exercising their right to freedom of assembly."[166]**

4.3 LESS LETHAL WEAPONS

Law enforcement officials should have a range of weapons available to allow for a differentiated use of force, in other words, to enable them to calibrate, adapt and minimize their use of force and to avoid the use of lethal force.[167]

The terms "less lethal weapon" and "less lethal ammunition" refer to weapons and ammunition that are not specifically designed to kill, although almost any device can potentially become lethal depending on how it is used, including those that are not designed to cause death.[168]

While Principles 2 and 3 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms use the term "non-lethal incapacitating weapons", it is today recognized that "less lethal" is a more accurate and appropriate term than "non-lethal".[169]

The term "less lethal weapon" includes conventional firing weapons when they are used to discharge less lethal ammunition, but not when they are used to discharge conventional bullets or other ammunition likely to cause life-threatening injuries.[170] Less lethal weapons and related equipment, which present undue risk of loss of life or serious injury should not be authorized for procurement,

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164. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 6. See also UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 90: "Both intentional and negligent action or inaction can amount to a violation of human rights."
165. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 11: "a deprivation of life that lacks a legal basis or is otherwise inconsistent with life-protecting laws and procedures is, as a rule, arbitrary in nature."
166. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 17. See also UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), paras 13-14 and 27-28.
167. UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 2.
168. See section 4.2.1. See also OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), p. 45, which defines less lethal weapons as: "weapons designed or intended for use on individuals or groups of individuals and which, in the course of expected or reasonably foreseen use, have a lower risk of causing death or serious injury than firearms."
169. See, for example, Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), p. 133; OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), para. 1.1 (fn. 7), p. 1.
170. See sections 4.2.1.

deployment or use.'[171]

All weapons are designed to cause a certain degree of harm or injury to persons. Hence, they may only be used to counter a threat of similar gravity. The greater the harm a weapon is likely to cause, the higher must be the threshold of danger required for its use. In assemblies, less lethal weapons should only be used in order to contain violence and only when less harmful means are insufficient. They may never be used against peaceful protesters and people only passively resisting any orders.[172]

The use of any weapon must be preceded by an audible warning and sufficient time must be given for people to respond to the warning.

The use of each weapon deployed should be thoroughly regulated with clear instructions as to the situations in which, and how, it should be used, explaining the effects and risks of the weapon and the necessary precautions to be taken, as well as warnings on the circumstances or situations in which it may not be used. Law enforcement officials must have received adequate training and certification in the weapon's use as a precondition to being authorized to use it.[173]

4.4 PROHIBITED WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

Not all available weapons and ammunition are suitable and acceptable for use in a law enforcement context. Weapons deployed and used in a law enforcement context should allow law enforcement officers to comply with the principles of necessity and proportionality as well as with the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. As a result, a number of weapons and types of ammunition are considered prohibited or should be prohibited for law enforcement.[174]

4.4.1 WEAPONS NOT DEVELOPED AND TESTED FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Weapons deployed in law enforcement should allow law enforcement officers to minimize harm, prevent unwarranted injury and protect uninvolved persons. This requires the weapons to be tested to determine their suitability for the specific needs of law enforcement.[175] Therefore, weapons (including ammunition) that were developed outside this context for different purposes should not be deployed in law enforcement.

Metal pellets fired from a shotgun are a form of multiple kinetic impact projectile. While other forms of multiple kinetic impact projectiles may have been developed specifically for law enforcement purposes, any weapon firing multiple kinetic impact projectiles must be prohibited because they are inherently inaccurate.[176]

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171. OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), para. 4.2.3. Note that the lists of unlawful weapons that violate international human rights law (para. 5.1) and related unlawful equipment that are inherently degrading or unnecessarily painful (para. 5.2) are non-exhaustive.
172. Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly* (previously cited), pp. 85-86; OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), para. 2.10.
173. See, for example, Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), Guideline No. 6(f) and pp. 140-143.
174. See also Amnesty International and Omega Research Foundation, *The Human Rights Impact of Less Lethal Weapons and Other Law Enforcement Equipment* (Index: ACT 30/1305/2015), 13 April 2015, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/1305/2015/en
175. For more details on decision making and testing, see Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), pp. 133-140.
176. See section 4.4.2.

In any case, metal pellets are a form of ammunition not developed for law enforcement purposes, but rather for use in particular non-law enforcement contexts. For example, "birdshot"[177] is a type of hunting ammunition that was developed to kill birds and consists of a large number of small metal pellets. If used against human beings, it causes great and excessive harm and injury, amounting to torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and is highly inaccurate, with high risks to bystanders. Furthermore, if fired from very close range, it is highly likely to cause death. Metal pellets are completely inappropriate in the context of assemblies, as well as well as against human beings in other law enforcement situations including against an individual target).

Therefore, it should never be deployed and used in a law enforcement context.[178] Its use in this context is considered unlawful use of force and, if shot from very close range, amounts to unlawful intentional lethal use of force.

4.4.2 INHERENTLY CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING WEAPONS

Weapons and ammunition which are inherently cruel, inhuman, or degrading by design and nature are always incompatible with the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and should never be used in law enforcement.[179] These prohibited weapons and ammunition include rubber-coated metal bullets, electric shock batons, batons with serrated edges or spikes, and thumb cuffs.[180]

According to the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms, the use of ammunition that causes unwarranted injury or presents an unwarranted risk must be prohibited.[181]

A shotgun firing multiple kinetic impact projectiles cannot be used safely or effectively and should never be used in law enforcement, even if its manufacturer has developed it for this purpose.[182] Multiple projectiles discharged in a single shot are highly inaccurate; they carry a high and foreseeable risk of spreading beyond the intended target and of striking bystanders or others in the vicinity. Moreover, the nature of this ammunition means that it can cause painful, potentially life-altering injuries amounting to torture and other ill-treatment, including blinding and other penetrating trauma. For these reasons, the use of multiple kinetic impact projectiles cannot be justified even when used against an intended target and they should be prohibited in law enforcement.[183]

4.5 ACCOUNTABILITY

Law enforcement officials using force must be accountable for each use of force.[184]

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177. Amnesty International, *Kinetic Impact Projectiles in Law Enforcement: An Amnesty International Position Paper*, 2023, https://policehumanrightsresources.org/kinetic-impact-projectiles-in-law-enforcement, p. 18.
178. OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), para. 7.5.6.
179. See also UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), paras 34 and 48-51, noting in para. 51: "In extra-custodial settings governed by the law enforcement paradigm, examples of inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapons include… any… type of weapon or ammunition specifically designed or of a nature to unnecessarily aggravate wounds and suffering…"; Amnesty International and Omega Research Foundation, *The Human Rights Impact of Less Lethal Weapons and Other Law Enforcement Equipment* (previously cited), p. 17.
180. See also OHCHR, *Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, June 2020 (previously cited), para. 5.
181. UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 11(c).
182. African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, *Policing Assemblies in Africa: Guidelines for the Policing of Assemblies by Law Enforcement Officials in Africa* (previously cited), para. 21.2.5: "Weapons that cannot be used safely and effectively in crowd control settings, such as multiple projectile shotguns, must be prohibited from use in the policing of assemblies."
183. Amnesty International, *Kinetic Impact Projectiles in Law Enforcement: An Amnesty International Position Paper*, 2023 (previously cited), p. 18.
184. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 78

As such, every use of force must be recorded in such a way that allows for an assessment of its legality, necessity and proportionality.[185]

Any injury or death resulting from the use of force or firearms, including where there are reasonable grounds for believing that force has been used unlawfully, or that acts of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including sexual or gender-based violence, have occurred in the context of protests, should be automatically reported and must be promptly, effectively and impartially investigated by an independent and competent authority.[186]

Intentional and negligent action or inaction should be investigated across the chain of command.[187]

There must be clear command structures and protocols for ensuring the identification of law enforcement officials.[188]

States must ensure that arbitrary or abusive use of force or firearms by law enforcement officials is punished as a criminal offence under their law.[189] All those who encourage, instigate, order, tolerate, acquiesce in, consent to or perpetrate such violations must be held accountable, including through criminal investigations, prosecutions and punishments in a manner commensurate with the severity of the offence.[190]

Civilian institutions and not military courts should carry out investigations and adjudications related to protests.[191]

The UN Human Rights Committee has stated the following regarding the impermissibility of immunities and amnesties for perpetrators of international killings and their superiors:

> **"Immunities and amnesties provided to perpetrators of intentional killings and to their superiors, and comparable measures leading to de facto or de jure impunity, are, as a rule, incompatible with the duty to respect and ensure the right to life, and to provide victims with an effective remedy."[192]**

The investigation must also consider whether the law enforcement operation as a whole was planned, controlled and conducted so as to minimize the use of lethal force or accidental loss of life as much as possible (the principle of precaution).[193]

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185. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), paras 77 and 91.
186. UN Human Rights Council, *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Roles and Responsibilities of Police and Other Law Enforcement Officials*, 15 March 2021 (previously cited), para. 19; UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests* (previously cited), para. 88; UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 90.
187. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests* (previously cited), para. 88.
188. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 77.
189. UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms (previously cited), Principle 7.
190. UN Human Rights Council, *Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: The Roles and Responsibilities of Police and Other Law Enforcement Officials*, 15 March 2021 (previously cited), para. 19.
191. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and the Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 34; UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, *Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests* (previously cited), para. 88.
192. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 27.
193. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 1 April 2014 (previously cited), para. 63 (Principle of Precaution). See also, for example, European Court of Human Rights, *McCann and Others v. UK*, Case 18984/91, judgment, 27 September 1995, para. 194; European Court of Human Rights, *Huohvanainen v. Finland*, Case 57389/00, judgment, 13 March 2007, para. 94.

5. STATE CARNAGE TO REPRESS 2022 PROTESTS NATIONWIDE

On 16 September 2022, the death of 22-year-old Kurdish woman Zhina Mahsa Amini in the custody of Iran's "morality" police, which was enforcing discriminatory compulsory veiling laws, sparked a three-month nationwide uprising against decades of political repression, discrimination and impunity.

Amnesty International's research concludes that, in response to the nationwide protests, the Iranian authorities unleashed a militarized crackdown characterized by the widespread and systematic commission of serious human rights violations and crimes under international law. The authorities extensively resorted to unlawful use of lethal force, deploying assault rifles, machine guns, handguns and shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter others from joining the protests. As a result, security forces unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders, including dozens of children, across the country and inflicted serious injuries amounting to torture or other ill-treatment on thousands more.

In addition, the authorities arbitrarily arrested tens of thousands of protesters and others showing real or perceived support for the protests; subjected detainees, including children, to widespread and systematic human rights violations including enforced disappearance, incommunicado detention, torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence; imposed unjust prison sentences and death sentences following grossly unfair sham trials that bore no resemblance to legitimate judicial proceedings; and carried out arbitrary executions. In parallel to the deadly crackdown, the authorities sought to demonize and dehumanize protesters to justify their repression.

This chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section provides an overview of how the nationwide protests began, developed and eventually subsided after three months of lethal repression. The subsequent six sections present Amnesty International's documentation of nationwide patterns related to: unlawful use of force and firearms; unlawful killings including during protest dispersals, in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces, in state custody, after release from custody, and in suspicious circumstances suggesting state responsibility; mass arbitrary arrests; enforced disappearances; torture and other ill-

treatment during protest dispersals and in state custody; and rape and other forms of sexual violence in state custody.[194]

5.1 PROTEST DEVELOPMENTS

Protests erupted on 16 September 2022, following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, who had been arbitrarily arrested by Iran's "morality" police on 13 September 2022 in connection with discriminatory compulsory veiling laws. The first demonstrations began outside Kasra Hospital in Tehran, where she had been admitted three days earlier after collapsing in detention.[195] As news of her death spread, family members and supporters gathered in solidarity.



Zhina Mahsa Amini (right); Zhina Mahsa Amini in Kasra Hospital in Tehran shortly before her death on 16 September 2022 (left). © Private

The next day, on 17 September 2022, Saqqez, the hometown of Zhina Mahsa Amini in Kurdistan province, and Sanandaj, the provincial capital, were gripped by protests as Zhina Mahsa Amini was laid to rest in Aichee cemetery in Saqqez.

194. International jurisprudence has recognized that rape can constitute torture. In this report, rape and other forms of sexual violence are addressed in separate sections because they qualify as a separate crime against humanity. See International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others,* Case IT-96-21-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 16 November 1998, paras 495-496; International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Case ICTR-96-4-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 597.

195. Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent international action needed to ensure accountability for Mahsa Amini's death in custody", (Index: MDE 13/6060/2022), 27 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6060/2022/en/



An image showing the grave site of Zhina Mahsa Amini after she was buried. The stone marker reads in Kurdish: "Dear Zhina, you will not die. Your name will become a symbol." The white sheet of paper placed on the ground and surrounded by flowers expresses condolences to the people of Saqqez. © Private.

By 19 September 2022, which marked the third day after Zhina Mahsa Amini's death, protests spread to other cities across Iran, with hundreds of thousands of mourning and outraged people taking to the streets peacefully. In Iran's mourning rituals, the third day, seventh day and 40th day following a person's death are of cultural significance and marked by commemorative ceremonies. On 21 September 2022, protests peaked across the country, with media reports indicating protests in at least 87 cities across the country.[196]

Women and girls stood at the forefront, challenging decades of institutionalized gender-based discrimination and violence. They defied discriminatory compulsory veiling laws that for decades enabled state violence, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and exclusion from education, employment and public spaces. Images of women boldly burning their headscarves, dancing around bonfires into which headscarves were thrown and protesting unveiled reverberated nationally and globally.

The slogan "Woman Life Freedom", first chanted in Kurdish as "Jin Jiyan Azadi", soon spread to other cities in Persian as "Zan Zendegi Azadi". Echoing through main squares and central streets, it quickly became the defining symbol and unifying message of the uprising.

As with previous waves of protests that had swept through Iran since December 2017-January 2018, the Woman Life Freedom uprising encompassed broader long-standing grievances against the existing political establishment from the outset, including those related to political repression, corruption,

196. Relevant media reports have been complied and made available through a database entitled *Namayeh Enqelab* (Revolution's Face). See Enqelab Info, گزارش آماری کل تجمعات اعتراضی ["Statistical report of all protest gatherings"], https://enqelab.info/کل-تجمعات-اعتراضی (accessed on 14 August 2026).

discrimination, poverty and systemic impunity for widespread human rights violations and crimes under international law.

The protesters came from different walks of life and included schoolchildren, teachers, university students, journalists and members of oppressed ethnic and religious minorities, as well as women's rights activists, labour rights activists, environmental activists and other human rights defenders. The significant participation of schoolchildren was visible, reflecting a bold determination to defy the theocratic establishment. Protesters expressed demands for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic political system and its replacement with a secular democratic system built on the foundations of human rights, dignity and equality.



An image posted on X on 3 October 2022 showing schoolgirls in Iran standing in front of a blackboard in an act of defiance against the Islamic Republic system and its leadership © Private

On 30 September 2022, protests spread to Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, home to the long-oppressed Baluchi ethnic minority. Scheduled to take place after Friday prayers, these demonstrations were held in solidarity with nationwide protests but were also driven by local grievances related to reports that a police commander had raped a 15-year-old girl in the province.[197]

Over the following three months, although protests took place on many days across the country, protests surged nationwide during three periods: 8-12 October, 26-30 October and 15-21 November

197. Haalvsh, Telegram post: تجاوز جنسی فرمانده نیروی انتظامی چابهار سرهنگ ابراهیم کوچکزایی به یک دختر نوجوان روستایی ["Police commander of Chabahar, Colonel Ebrahim Kouchakzai, raped a teenage girl from a village"], 16 September 2022, https://t.me/haalvsh/5059 (in Persian).

2022. Between 8 and 12 October 2022, protests surged across the country, as multiple activist groups issued coordinated calls for nationwide protests.[198]

The second surge of mass protests between 26 and 30 October 2022 marked the 40th day after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. In some cities, commemorative ceremonies marking the 40th day following the death of victims unlawfully killed during the early days of the protests in September 2022 further ignited demonstrations.



Crowds of mourners walking towards the burial site of Zhina Mahsa Amini in Aichee cemetery, Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 26 October 2022 during the commemorative ceremony on the 40th day following her death © Private

The third surge of mass protests between 15 and 22 November 2022 marked the third anniversary of the unlawful killings of hundreds of protesters and bystanders during the nationwide protests of 14-19 November 2019.[199] Similar to previous periods, in many cities, the surge in protests was further fuelled by ceremonies commemorating the 40th day after victims were unlawfully killed in early October. Additionally, in some cities, the unlawful killing of one or more protesters at the onset of this period prompted the participation of thousands in funeral ceremonies, which quickly evolved into mass protests.

From early December 2022 onwards, the protests began to die down after multiple waves of devastating violence perpetrated by state actors and amid a highly militarized environment that was established throughout the country. The reduction in protests was also driven by the arbitrary arrest and detention of tens of thousands of protesters. The arbitrary execution of two men, Mohsen Shekari

198. Relevant media reports have been complied and made available through a database entitled *Namayeh Enqelab* (Revolution's Face). See Enqelab Info, گزارش آماری کل تجمعات اعتراضی ["Statistical report of all protest gatherings"], https://enqelab.info/کل-تجمعات-اعتراضی (accessed on 14 August 2026).

199. Amnesty International, *Iran: Details of 321 Deaths in Crackdown on November 2019 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/2308/2020), 29 July 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2308/2020/en (this document was originally published on 20 May 2020 and was subsequently updated with new information on 16 November 2021 and, more recently, on 29 July 2022); Amnesty International, *Iran: 'They Shot Our Children': Killings of Minors in Iran's November 2019 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/1894/2020), 4 March 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1894/2020/en

and Majidreza Rahnavard, on 8 and 12 December 2022, respectively, in connection with the protests further instilled widespread terror and trauma.[200]

Despite this decline, smaller-scale protests, strikes, temporary store closures and sit-ins at schools and universities persisted in many cities across the country.[201] In the following weeks and months, nightly chants, the burning of official banners and, most notably, the continued public appearance of women without a veil continued as prominent manifestations of dissent across Iran. Other forms of resistance included acts of solidarity with the families of those killed, including through memorial gatherings at victims' grave sites, as well as online activism in support of torture survivors and individuals at risk of execution in connection with the protests.

5.2 UNLAWFUL USE OF FIREARMS AND FORCE

Consistent with their long-standing criminalization of peaceful assembly and dissent, Iranian authorities responded to the Woman Life Freedom uprising by swiftly deploying large numbers of security forces and launching a coordinated militarized crackdown across the country.

Throughout the three-month uprising, security forces unlawfully and repeatedly used assault rifles, machine guns, handguns and shotguns loaded with metal pellets into crowds to disperse, punish and terrorize unarmed protesters, crush the spirit of resistance and deter others from exercising their right to freedom of peaceful assembly. In addition to firing into crowds, the security forces engaged in targeted pursuits, closing in on unarmed victims who posed no threat to the security forces or others and unlawfully shooting them at close range with lethal ammunition and prohibited ammunition such as metal pellets.

The way security forces opened fire on crowds meant that, in addition to protesters, many bystanders were caught in the gunfire. They included people going to or returning from work, going about daily activities in busy streets and squares where protests were unfolding, or attempting to flee the area on foot or in vehicles.

Across the country, security forces most commonly used AK-pattern rifles, handguns and shotguns loaded with multiple-projectile cartridges containing diverse types of metal pellets.

In the context of the lethal dispersal of Kurdish protesters, in addition to the above, Amnesty International documented the use of other military-grade firearms, including SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and G-3 rifles; sub-machine guns such as Uzi-pattern and MP5-pattern guns; and DShK heavy machine guns mounted on top of pickup trucks.[202]

Amnesty International's investigations found that security forces opened fire in a broad array of situations, none of which involved an imminent threat of death or serious injury meriting the use of firearms. These included firing into peaceful assemblies; firing into assemblies where the majority of protesters were peaceful while some were engaging in non-peaceful acts, such as stone throwing or vandalism that posed no imminent threat of death or serious injury; chasing and shooting at fleeing

200. Amnesty International, "Iran: Horrifying execution of young protester exposes authorities' cruelty and risk of further bloodshed", 8 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-horrifying-execution-of-young-protester-exposes-authorities-cruelty-and-risk-of-further-bloodshed; Amnesty International, "Iran: Public execution of Majidreza Rahnavard exposes authorities' revenge killings", 12 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-public-execution-of-majidreza-rahnavard-exposes-authorities-revenge-killings

201. Relevant media reports have been complied and made available through a database entitled *Namayeh Enqelab* (Revolution's Face). See Enqelab Info, گزارش آماری کل تجمعات اعتراضی ["Statistical report of all protest gatherings"], https://enqelab.info/-کل-تجمعات-اعتراضی/ (accessed on 14 August 2026).

202. See Chapters 6-8.

protesters and bystanders; and the use of firearms in militarized areas involving armed patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks and vehicle chases.

- **Opening fire on peaceful assemblies**: In many cases, security forces unlawfully opened fire on protesters engaged in peaceful activities protected under international human rights law. These activities included gathering outside government offices or security force bases, chanting slogans, writing slogans on walls, aiding the injured, objecting loudly to human rights violations by security forces, distributing pamphlets, sounding car horns in solidarity with protesters, and using mobile devices to film scenes of violence perpetrated by the security forces. Amnesty International emphasizes that force should not, as a rule, be used against participants in peaceful assemblies,[203] and that firearms should never be used unless strictly necessary to protect against an imminent threat of death or serious injury. While the authorities frequently invoked "unauthorized gatherings" as justification,[204] prior authorization or permit requirements should not be imposed on the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.[205] Participating in and organizing peaceful assemblies is a right, not a privilege, and its exercise should not require prior approval from the state.[206] Furthermore, the mere fact that an assembly is considered unlawful under domestic law does not justify its dispersal as long as it is peaceful.[207]
- **Opening fire on largely peaceful protesters**: In other cases, security forces fired into crowds of protesters and bystanders where the majority were peaceful while some individuals within the crowd were throwing stones, vandalizing property or burning car tyres, in some cases to block security forces' access. Amnesty International emphasizes that an assembly is considered "peaceful" unless serious violence is manifestly widespread within the assembly. Isolated acts of violence by some participants are insufficient to render an entire assembly "non-peaceful". Amnesty International found no credible evidence that, in any of the above situations, the security forces' use of firearms was to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury warranting the use of lethal force.[208] Rather, the evidence shows that security forces unlawfully used different means of lethal force for the illegitimate objectives of dispersing protests, punishing protesters, instilling fear and deterring further street protests.[209] It is important to recall that, even when a protester engages in non-peaceful conduct falling outside the protective scope of the right of peaceful assembly, they retain their other human rights, including the rights to life and to freedom from torture and other ill-treatment, which must be respected.[210] Furthermore, under international law and standards, even if some protesters commit violent acts, members of security forces must ensure that those who remain peaceful

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203. See also Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly* (previously cited), p. 81; OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), *Human Rights Handbook on Policing Assemblies*, 2016 (previously cited), p. 30.
204. See section 11.2.1.
205. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 70.
206. UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association and the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Joint report on the proper management of assemblies*, UN Doc. A/HRC/31/66, 4 February 2016, para. 21.
207. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 71. See also Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly* (previously cited), pp. 77-78.
208. The UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) found that in two cases investigated, security forces used lethal force in response to "protesters who made and threw Molotov cocktails after the security forces had used lethal force". Molotov cocktails, when thrown at security forces at short range, could pose an imminent threat of serious injury. However, according to the findings of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, security forces used lethal force resulting in killings and injuries at a later moment when the threat was no longer imminent. That use of force was thus unlawful." None of the cases of unlawful killings Amnesty International documented in detail involved claims of protesters throwing Molotov cocktails.
209. For the relevant international standards, see Chapter 4.
210. See, for example, UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 9.

can continue protesting without undue interference or intimidation.[211]

- **Opening fire on fleeing protesters and bystanders**: Security forces on foot or motorcycles also repeatedly fired lethal ammunition, metal pellets and tear gas at fleeing protesters and bystanders on foot, as well as at homes and shops that sheltered fleeing protesters and bystanders.
- **Opening fire during patrols:** Security forces also used assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets while patrolling streets. These patrols often involved state agents riding in pairs on motorcycles, with the rear-seated agent firing AK-pattern rifles or shotguns loaded with metal pellets at random. In other instances, agents rode in pickup trucks with armed agents in the back firing or brandishing weapons, or drove cars that they intermittently stopped and briefly exited in order to open fire. Such actions created a climate of terror and placed anyone in the vicinity at serious risk of injury or death.
- **Opening fire on cars moving through militarized areas**: Security forces also fired assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets at cars moving through militarized areas where protests were ongoing or had occurred hours earlier, particularly when drivers failed to stop or accelerated at the sight of approaching security forces. In some cases, security forces chased and closed in on unarmed car drivers or passengers who posed no threat to the security forces or others, and fatally shot them at close range. According to international law and standards, the mere fact a driver does not stop at a checkpoint does not allow members of the security forces to conclude that the driver is a dangerous person. Firing at a moving vehicle, even if aiming at the tyres, carries a great risk to the car's occupants. In this regard, it is important to stress that firing firearms at a moving vehicle must be considered as the use of lethal force against a person and not simply as the use of force against an object. Thus, the use of a firearm in such a situation can – if at all – only be justified by considerations other than simply disrespecting the checkpoint and only when it is strictly necessary to confront an imminent threat of death or serious injury to third persons, while making sure to protect other persons not presenting such a threat, including passers-by and occupants of nearby cars.[212]

The security forces' use of firearms and prohibited weapons such as shotguns loaded with metal pellets was generally accompanied by the deployment of weapons and ammunition categorized as less lethal.[213] These included launchers firing kinetic impact projectiles such as rubber bullets and paintballs; launchers firing tear gas and other chemical irritants; explosive devices including smoke grenades and acoustic grenades; water cannons; electric shock devices including stun guns; and batons.

Amnesty International found that security forces used tear gas, kinetic impact projectiles, explosive devices, and water cannons – commonly along with firearms and shotguns loaded with metal pellets – with complete disregard for the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality and for the illegitimate objectives of dispersing overwhelmingly peaceful protesters, justifying their actions by claiming the gatherings were "unauthorized".[214]

Similar to the patterns related to the use of metal pellets, security forces continued to unlawfully fire tear gas as they chased protesters in side streets and fired tear gas into houses in which fleeing protesters took refuge. As a result, eyewitnesses reported that tear gas frequently infiltrated people's

211. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), paras 8, 17, 19, 24 and 74.
212. Amnesty International, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* (previously cited), pp. 118-120.
213. For more information on such classifications and relevant international standards, see Chapter 4.
214. For more information on the domestic framework governing the authorization of assemblies, see Chapter 11.

homes, causing residents, including pregnant women, children and older people, to experience coughing, breathing difficulties and fainting, among other symptoms. Amnesty International documented the death of at least five protesters and bystanders who were fatally struck by tear gas canisters[215] and another three who suffered complications from inhaling tear gas.[216]

Security forces also used physical violence punitively, including punching, kicking, dragging and throwing individuals to the ground, stamping on them and pulling their hair. Amesty International also documented a pattern of security forces repeatedly using batons and other striking weapons, including rifle butts, to inflict beatings as a means of punishment, targeting people who were already restrained and delivering dangerous head and neck strikes.

5.3 KILLINGS

Iran's security forces unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders as part of their lethal crackdown on the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The real number of victims remains impossible to determine. The authorities have acknowledged the deaths of 202 people during the uprising, but refused to provide detailed figures or disaggregated data on individuals killed by security forces in the context of the state response to the protests. Instead, they have sought to obscure the scale of unlawful killings in many ways, including outright denial, misrepresentation of the number of people killed and attribution of deaths to non-state actors or unrelated circumstances.[217] Furthermore, they have systematically persecuted victims' families, coercing them into silence or forcing them to echo the state narrative.[218]

Following extensive research and investigations, Amnesty International has gathered a voluminous body of information and evidence about the deaths of 377 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. Amnesty International is publishing alongside this report a document that lists the names and details of these 377 protesters and bystanders.[219] The list compiled by the organization is divided into four categories:

1. Killings during violent protest dispersals and in militarized areas: A total of 326 of the recorded victims were killed by security forces using firearms or other means of lethal force to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter other people from joining the protests. Of these recorded victims, most were killed during protest dispersals while some were killed by security forces in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces involving armed patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks, vehicle chases, stop orders or violent raids on people's homes or workplaces.

215. The victims' names are Abolfazl Amiratаei, Hasti Narouie, Mohammad Amin Takali, Mohammad Shariati and Rasoul Haddadi.
216. The victims' names are Jan Bibi Narouie, Mehdi Hosseini and Zoleikha Tarzi.
217. See section 5.3.1 and Chapter 11.
218. See Chapter 9.
219. Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en

The 326 victims comprise 264 men, 13 women and 49 children – 46 boys and three girls – from 69 counties across 23 of Iran's 31 provinces.[220]

2. Deaths in state custody: A total of 18 of the recorded victims lost their lives in state custody after they were arrested in the context of protest crackdowns. They comprise 17 men and one woman from 13 counties across 10 provinces.[221] Under international law and standards, Iranian authorities should be presumed responsible for these deaths, and they have failed to rebut this presumption.[222]

3. Post-custody deaths: A total of 10 individuals – five men, two woman and three children, comprising a girl and two boys – were recorded as having died after release from custody, with reports published by human rights defenders or journalists indicating that their deaths were prison-related.[223] According to these reports, in five cases, physical injuries sustained as a result of torture and other ill-treatment allegedly caused or contributed to the victims' deaths. In five other cases, individuals died by suicide shortly after release, with reports published by journalists or human rights defenders alleging that they took their own lives due to mental harm caused by torture or other ill-treatment in custody.[224] These 10 victims were from nine counties across eight provinces.[225]

4. Suspicious deaths, often following a period of disappearance: A total of 23 of the recorded victims went missing after participating in or supporting the protests, with no information available regarding the circumstances of their arrest or abduction and eventual death. Numerous indicators, including consistent patterns in the victims' disappearances, the types of injuries they sustained, the manner in which families were notified and the persecution families faced by the authorities, alongside the authorities' refusal to investigate and their swift attribution of deaths to suicide, illness or accidents suggest that state agents killed the victims. They comprise 12 men, seven women and four children – two boys and two girls – who died in 12 counties across 10 provinces.[226]

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220. The 69 counties are Abbas Abad, Alvand, Amol, Arak, Babol, Baharestan, Bandar Anzali, Baneh, Bojnourd, Boukan, Dehdasht, Dehgolan, Dezful, Divandareh, Esfahan, Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Fardis, Fouladshahr, Garmsar, Ghaem Shahr, Gharchak, Ghasr-e Shirin, Ghouchan, Hamedan, Ilam, Islamshahr, Izeh, Javanroud, Kamyaran, Karaj, Kermanshah, Khash, Khorramabad, Lahijan, Langarud, Lasht-e Nesha, Lavasan, Mahabad, Malard, Mariwan, Marvdasht, Mashhad, Noshahr, Oshnavieh, Pakdasht, Parsian, Piranshahr, Ghazvin, Gheshm, Rasht, Rezvanshahr, Robat Karim, Rudsar, Salas-e Babajani, Sanandaj, Saqqez, Sari, Savojbolagh, Semirom, Shahr-e Rey, Shahriar, Shiraz, Someh Sara, Tabriz, Talesh, Tehran, Urumieh, Zahedan and Zanjan. The 23 provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Gilan, Hamedan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Ghazvin, Semnan, Sistan and Baluchistan, Tehran, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.
221. The 13 counties are Arak, Boukan, Dehgolan, Dezpart, Karaj, Kermanshah, Mashhad, Sanandaj, Saqqez, Shahr-e Ghods, Shiraz, Tehran and Zahedan. The 10 provinces are Alborz, Fars, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Markazi, Sistan and Baluchistan, Tehran and West Azerbaijan.
222. See the case box in section 5.3.4.
223. For more information on international law and standards related to prison-related deaths, see section 5.3.4.
224. Amnesty International has used the term "prison-related death" to include death by suicide occurring shortly after release where evidence exists that a person took their own life as a result of their treatment in custody. This understanding of the term recognizes that "[t]here is an increased risk of suicide … shortly after release". See UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Deaths in Prisons*, 18 April 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/53/29, para. 33 – citing Erin Renee Morgan and others, "Incarceration and Subsequent Risk of Suicide: A Statewide Cohort Study", *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behaviour*, Volume 52 Issue 3, 2022, pp. 467–477. It further takes into account the particularities of the carceral system in Iran, including documented widespread and systemic patterns of torture and other ill-treatment. See sections 5.6 and 5.7.
225. The nine counties are Amol, Boukan, Hadishahr, Karaj, Kordkoy, Sardasht, Shoush, Sirjan and Tehran. The eight provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Golestan, Kerman, Khuzestan, Mazandaran, Tehran and West Azerbaijan.
226. The 12 counties are Ahvaz, Bushehr, Firouzabad, Fouladshahr, Izeh, Karaj, Lashar, Noshahr, Saqqez, Shiraz, Tabriz and Tehran. The 10 provinces are Alborz, Bushehr, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchistan and Tehran.



A collage of the photographs of 335 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. They include individuals killed by security forces during protest dispersals, in militarized areas or in state custody, individuals who died after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, and individuals who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. For 42 of the total 377 victims recorded by Amnesty International, the organization was unable to find a photograph. All but one of these 42 victims were from Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority. All photographs © Private

Amnesty International has on file over 150 additional names reported online as individuals who were killed by the security forces during the protest period. However, the organization was unable to obtain sufficient information about these reported deaths.[227]

For 323 of the 377 recorded victims, Amnesty International was able to obtain information about their exact or approximate age. Of this group, at least 17% (56) were children, highlighting their notable presence during the protests and the devastating impact of the authorities' lethal crackdown on children, their families and their communities.

227. See Chapter 2.

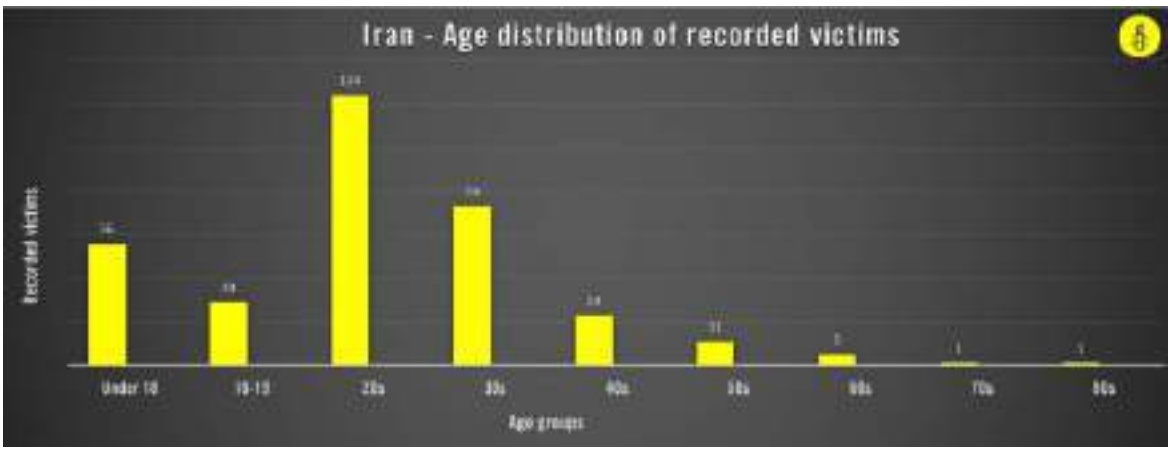
Among the youngest child victims were a two-year-old boy,[228] a six-year-old girl[229] and two nine-year-old boys.[230] Eleven other child victims were between the ages of 11 and 14,[231] while 41 others were between 15 and 17.[232]



A collage of the photographs of 50 children who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. They comprise 42 children who were killed by Iran's security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, three children who died after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, and another four who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. For six of the 56 child victims recorded by Amnesty International, the organization was unable to find a photograph. All six children were from Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority. Top row (left to right): Sarina Esmailzadeh, Abolfazl Amiratae, Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, Mehdi Mousavi Nikou, Setayesh Sharifinia, Ali Mozafari, Arshia Emam Gholizadeh, Danial Pabandi, Amir Mehdi Farrokhipour, and Ahmadreza Ghalji. Second row from top (left to right): Abolfazl Bahou, Nika Shakarami, Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour, Hasti Narouie, Mohammad Eghbal Shahnavazi (Nayebzehi), Barzin Hamzehzadeh, Karvan Ghader Shokri, Bahaoddin Veisi, Mohammad Zamani, and Sina Loh Mousavi. Third row from top (left to right): Artin Rahmani, Amin Marefat, Pouya Ahmadpour Pasikhani, Abolfazl Adinezadeh, Abdollah Mahmoudpour, Javad Pousheh, Adel Kouchakzay (Barichi), Kian Pirfalak, Amirhossein Basati, and Koumar Daroftadeh. Fourth row from top (left to right): Zakaria Khial, Sarina Saedi, Reza Kazemi, Omid Narouie, Sodeys Keshani, Omid Sarani, Yaser Bahadorzehi, Ali Barahouie, Setareh Tajik, and Mohammad Rakhshani. Bottom row (left to right): Mobin Mirkazehi (Mirbaluchzehi), Arvin Golzari Yekta, Omid Safarzehi, Armin Sayadi, Mohammadreza Sarvari, Samer Hashemzehi, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost, Siavash Mahmoudi, Sepehr Maghsoudi and Mosayeb Shahbakhsh. All photographs © Private

228. The name of this victim is Amir Mohammad Mirshekar.
229. The name of this victim is Hasti Narouie.
230. The victim's names are Kian Pirfalak and Mosayeb Shahbakhsh.
231. The victim's names are Adel Kouchakzay (Barichi), Ali Barahouie, Danial Shahbakhsh, Jaber Shirouzehi, Javad Pousheh, Mobin Mirkazehi (Mirbaluchzehi), Mohammad Rakhshani, Mohammadreza Sarvari, Omid Sarani, Sodeys Keshani and Sepehr Maghsoudi.
232. The victim's names are Abdollah Mahmoudpour, Abolfazl Adinezadeh, Abolfazl Amiratae, Abolfazl Bahou, Ahmadreza Ghalji, Ali Mozafari, Amin Marefat, Amir Mehdi Farrokhipour, Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour, Amirhossein Basati, Armin Sayadi, Arshia Emam Gholizadeh, Artin Rahmani, Arvin Golzari Yekta, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost, Bahaoddin Veisi, Barzin Hamzehzadeh, Danial Pabandi, Esmail Shahbakhsh, Karvan Ghader Shokri, Koumar Daroftadeh, Mehdi Mousavi Nikou, Mohammad Amin Gamshadzehi, Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, Mohammad Eghbal Shahnavazi (Nayebzehi), Mohammad Zamani, Nika Shakarami, Omid Narouie, Omid Safarzehi, Pouya Ahmadpour Pasikhani, Reza Kazemi, Samer Hashemzehi, Sarina Esmailzadeh, Sarina Saedi, Setareh Tajik, Setayesh Sharifinia, Siavash Mahmoudi, Sina Loh Mousavi, Yaser Bahadorzehi, Yaser Shahouzehi and Zakaria Khial.

Teenagers aged 18 or 19 made up 9% (29) of the victims while young people in their 20s comprised 38% (124) underscoring the prominent role of youth at the forefront of the protests and the tragic loss of young lives.



A chart showing the breakdown by age group of 323 recorded victims, comprising 273 who were killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, 18 who were killed in state custody, 10 who died after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, and 22 who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. For 54 other victims, Amnesty International was unable to obtain information about their age. © Amnesty International

5.3.1 STATE NARRATIVE

The Iranian authorities' narrative about the scale, causes and circumstances of protest killings can be broadly grouped into three lines of argument. These are reflected in a report issued by the Special Committee to Investigate the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), a body lacking independence and impartiality that was established on 7 May 2023 by the then president, Ebrahim Raisi.[233]

First, the Special Committee only acknowledged 202 deaths during the protests, while attributing some other deaths, reported by human rights defenders and victims' families as having been caused by security forces, to causes unrelated to the protests, including illness, car accidents, drug overdoses, dog attacks, falls from heights and suicide. The Special Committee's report neither identifies the victims nor provides information on the specific circumstances of their killings or disaggregated data such as gender, age or ethnicity.

Second, the Special Committee attributed most deaths to non-state actors, claiming that, of the 202 people who "lost their lives during the protests", 112 were killed by "rioters and… armed terrorists".

Third, the Special Committee claimed that the remaining 90 victims were killed "while carrying or using weapons… in clashes and attacks on military and law enforcement headquarters, critical infrastructure or law enforcement personnel", suggesting that this justified the use of lethal force.

The Special Committee provided no evidence to substantiate the claim that the victims were armed. Moreover, while focusing the narrative on allegations of weapon possession and use, it did not even claim that those killed posed an imminent threat of death or serious injury that would have justified the use of lethal force, the applicable threshold under international law.

Additionally, the Special Committee alleged in its report that 54 members of the security forces were "martyred as a result of widespread violence by rioters and terrorists", but provided no details about the

233. Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, https://geneva.mfa.ir/files/mfageneva/geneva/Summary%20-%20EN.pdf. For more information, see section 11.4.

alleged incidents.

Amnesty International emphasizes that the deaths of state agents, like all deaths, must be subject to independent, impartial and effective criminal investigations. However, in investigating the killings of protesters and bystanders, Amnesty International did not identify any case in which a protester or bystander was shot dead in the same incident as the killing of a state agent. This is significant as it undermines the authorities' apparent attempt to invoke the deaths of state agents to justify the use of lethal force and create a veneer of legitimacy around the killings of some protesters. Under international human rights law, attacks by protesters against state agents can be relevant to assessing the threat faced by security forces in a specific incident. However, the authorities cannot rely on generalized claims that security personnel were killed elsewhere during the protests to justify or legitimize the killing of protesters and bystanders in unrelated incidents.

As noted earlier, the organization's in-depth investigations found that security forces opened fire in a broad array of situations, none of which involved an imminent threat of death or serious injury meriting the use of firearms. These included firing into peaceful assemblies; chasing and shooting at fleeing protesters and bystanders; using firearms in militarized areas involving armed patrols, checkpoints, roadblocks and vehicle chases; and firing into assemblies where the majority of protesters were peaceful while some engaged in throwing stones, vandalizing property or burning car tyres that posed no imminent threat of death or serious injury.

Amnesty International emphasizes that an assembly is considered "peaceful" unless serious violence is manifestly widespread within the assembly. Isolated acts of violence by some participants are insufficient to render an entire assembly "non-peaceful". Furthermore, under international law and standards, even if some protesters commit violent acts, security forces must ensure that those who remain peaceful can continue protesting without undue interference or intimidation. It is also important to recall that, even when a protester engages in non-peaceful conduct falling outside the protective scope of the right of peaceful assembly, they retain their other human rights, including the rights to life and to freedom from torture and other ill-treatment, which must be respected.

5.3.2 KILLINGS IN PROTEST DISPERSALS AND MILITARIZED AREAS

5.3.2(I) NATIONAL OVERVIEW

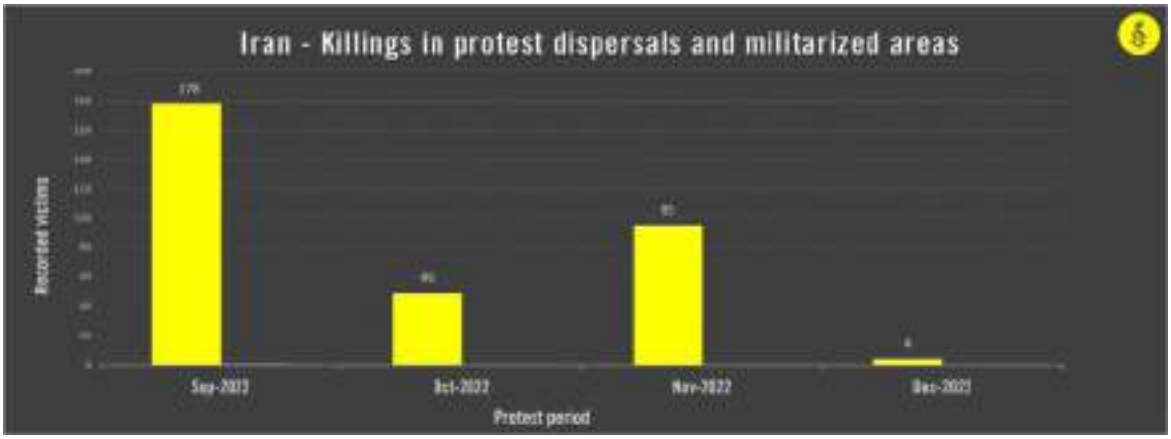
Amnesty International has documented the names and details of at least 326 protesters and bystanders who were killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces.[234] They comprise 264 men, 13 women and 49 children – 46 boys and three girls.

Of these 326 recorded victims, 302 were fatally shot, in at least 45 cases with metal pellets fired from close range. Thirteen victims, one of whom was also stabbed, were subjected to fatal beatings at the hands of security forces. Five were fatally struck by tear gas canisters; one was fatally struck in the head by a kinetic impact projectile; three suffered complications from inhaling tear gas; one was rammed by security forces while riding a motorcycle, causing him to fall, hit a curb and sustain fatal head injuries; and one was deliberately run over by a security forces vehicle.

Of the 326 victims, 55% (178) were killed during the first two weeks of the protests, between 19 and 30 September 2022. This highlights how, from the outset, the authorities swiftly responded with lethal

234. See Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en

force in an effort to crush the protests immediately.



A chart showing the number of protesters and bystanders Amnesty International was able to identify and record as killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas between September and December 2022, totalling 326 © Amnesty International

The pattern of unlawful killings began in Kurdistan province on 19 September 2022, which was gripped by protests marking the third day after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. On this day, four men were unlawfully killed by the security forces in Divandareh,[235] Dehgolan[236] and Saqqez,[237] all in Kurdistan province.[238] The next day, the security forces unlawfully killed at least seven other protesters and bystanders in Ghaem Shahr, Mazandaran province; Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province; Kermanshah, Kermanshah province; and Piranshahr and Urumieh, both in West Azerbaijan province.[239]

As the protests grew larger on 21 September 2022 and spread to many cities across the country, security forces intensified their lethal crackdown, killing at least 60 further protesters and bystanders[240] in 30 counties across 12 provinces.[241]

Throughout the three-month protest period, 21 September 2022 was the day on which the largest number of cities were affected by unlawful killings. The highest death toll was recorded on 30 September 2022, when authorities unlawfully killed at least 87 protesters and bystanders from Iran's

235. See section 6.4.1.
236. See section 6.6.1.
237. See section 6.3.1.
238. Their names are Fereydoon Mahmoudi, Foad Ghadimi, Mohsen Mohammadi and Reza Lotfi.
239. Their names are Abolfazl Bahou, Aysan Madanpasand, Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, Minoo Majidi, Reza Shahparnia, Samad Barginia and Zakaria Khial.
240. Their names are Abbas Mirmousavi, Abdollah Mahmoudpour, Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan, Abolfazl Akbaridoost, Abolfazl Amirataei, Abolfazl Mehdipour, Ali Mozafari, Alireza Fathi, Amin Marefat, Amir Hossein Shams Nateri, Amir Norouzi, Amirhossein Basati, Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi, Behnam Layeghpour, Danesh Rahnama, Erfan Khazaei, Erfan Rezaei, Farzin Lotfi, Ghazaleh Chalabi, Hadis Najafi, Hamid Saneipour, Hananeh Kia, Hosseinali Kia, Iman Mohammadi, Kan'an Aghaei, Maziar Salmanian, Mehdi Babrnejad, Mehdi Mousavi Nikou, Mehrab Dolatpanah, Mehrdad Ghorbani, Mehrzad Avazpour, Milad Zare, Milan Haghighi, Mohammad Falah, Mohammad Hassan Torkaman, Mohammad Hossein Morovati, Mohammad Javad Farmani, Mohammad Javad Zahedi, Mohammad Mehdi Asgari, Mohammad Rasoul Momenizad, Mohammad Reza Eskandari, Mohammadreza Sarvari, Mohammad Zamani, Mohammad Zare'i, Mohsen Gheysari, Mohsen Malmir, Shaban (Mohsen) Mohammadi Kouchaksaraei, Mohsen Pazouki, Morteza Norouzi, Nader Kouhkar, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost, Rahim Kalij, Rouzbeh Khademian, Sadroddin Litani, Saeed Mohammadi, Sasan Ghorbani, Shirin Alizadeh, Siavash Mahmoudi, Sina Loh Mousavi, and Yasin Jamalzadeh.
241. The 30 counties are Abbas Abad, Alvand, Amol, Babol, Baharestan, Bandar Anzali, Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Fardis, Gharchak, Garmsar, Ghaem Shahr, Ghouchan, Hamedan, Ilam, Karaj, Kermanshah, Langarud, Noshahr, Oshnavieh, Pakdasht, Rasht, Rezvanshahr, Rudsar, Sari, Shahr-e Rey, Shahriar, Talesh, Tehran, Urumieh and Zanjan. The 12 provinces are Alborz, Gilan, Hamedan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Mazandaran, Ghazvin, Semnan, Tehran, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.

oppressed Baluchi minority in a single city, Zahedan, in Sistan and Baluchistan province.[242] On this day, one man was also killed in Karaj, Alborz province, and another in Tehran, Tehran province.[243]

Amnesty International has obtained a leaked copy of an official document which reveals that, on 21 September 2022, the General Staff of the Armed Forces issued an order to commanders of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA), nationwide, instructing a "firm and severe response to any gathering, the dispersal of rioters and their arrest and transfer to bases for obtaining undertakings."[244] This document sheds light on the escalation in the use of lethal force that unfolded nationwide on this day.

In October 2022, the authorities continued to use firearms and other means of lethal force to disperse ongoing protests, resulting in the killing of at least 49 additional protesters and bystanders.[245] Over half of these recorded killings (26) took place in 10 counties located in three provinces that are home to Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority – Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. The remaining 23 victims were killed in 11 counties spread across 10 other provinces.[246]

In November 2022, protests surged in the country, particularly between 15 and 21 November 2022, when protesters marked the anniversary of nationwide protests in 2019. The authorities intensified the use of lethal force, killing at least 95 protesters and bystanders.[247] Once again, protesters and bystanders from Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces were among the most affected, with at least 47 recorded victims across 11 counties in these provinces.[248] The remaining 48 victims were killed in 17 counties across 11 other provinces.[249]

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242. See section 5.3.1(II).
243. Their names are, respectively, Kamran Shahbazi and Mohammad Amin Takali.
244. See section 10.1.4.
245. These victims are Abolfazl Adinezadeh, Abolfazl Ahmadpour, Adel Kouchakzay (Barichi), Afshin Asham, Ahmad Shokrollahi, Ali Fazeli, Ali Rouzbahani, Ali Seyedi, Amir Mohammad Mirshekar, Aref Ghorbanpour, Arian Moridi, Armin Sayadi, Aziz Moradi, Dariush Alizadeh, Dastan Rasoul, Ehsan Khan Mohammadi, Esmail (Simko) Moloudi, Esmail Shanbedi, Fayegh Mamghaderi, Fereshteh Ahmadi, Fereydoon Faraji, Hadi Chaksari, Jamal Abdolnasser Mohammadhasani (Barahouie), Kamal Feqhi, Khodanoor Lajei, Kobra Sheikheh, Koumar Daroftadeh, Mansour Hormozi, Masoud Ahmadzadeh, Mehdi Hosseini, Mohammad Amini, Mohammad Ghaemifard, Mohammad Hosseini, Mohammad Keywan Darvishi, Mohammad Khajavi, Mohammad Shariati, Mohsen Mousavi, Mokhtar Ahmadi, Motaleb Saeed Peiro, Omid Narouie, Peyman Manbari, Rasoul Haddadi, Sarina Saedi, Shahou Khezri, Sina Malayeri, Sina Naderi, Soleiman Arab (Salman Maleki), Yahya Rahimi, and Zaniar Aboubakri.
246. These are Esfahan, Esfahan province; Shiraz, Fars province; Lasht-e Nesha, Gilan province; Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province; Dezful, Khuzestan province; Arak, Markazi province; Amol, Mazandaran province; Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province; Tehran, Tehran province; and Zanjan, Zanjan province.
247. The victims are Abbas Shafiei, Abdolmalek Shahnavazi (KamalKhan Zehi), Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, Ali Abbasi, Ali Araghi, Ali Kord Kolahouri (Moradzehi), Ali Molaei, Alireza Karimi, Amir Ferasatishad, Amir Reza Hematazad, Amjad Enayati, Aram Habibi, Ardalan Ghasemi, Arman Emadi, Artin Rahmani, Asa'd Rahimi, Asghar Aghaei, Asghar Hazhir Lotf, Ashraf Nikbakht, Asoo Ghaderi, Avat Ghaderpour, Azad Hosseinpouri, Azim Mahmoudzehi, Bahaoddin Veisi, Borhan Karami, Danial Pabandi, Ebrahim Sharififar, Erfan Kakaee, Erfan Zamani, Esmail Golanbar, Farhad Khosravi, Foad Mohammadi, Foad Savari, Ghafour Moloudi, Habibollah Fathi, Hamed Molaei, Hamed Sedighi, Hamid Reza Shariati, Hamidreza Rouhi, Hezhar Mamkhosravi, Hiva Janjan, Hossein Abdpanah, Hossein Shirazipour, Isa Biglari, Jalal Ghorbani, Jamal Azami, Javad Mousavi, Javad Rezaei, Johar Fattahi, Kambiz Rigi, Karvan Ghader Shokri, Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour, Kian Pirfalak, Komeil Amirkhanlou, Masoud Teimouri, Mehdi Hazrati, Mehdi Salehipour, Mehdi Zare, Mehran Basir Tavana, Mehran Rahmani, Mehran Samak, Mehran Shekari, Milad Maroufi, Milad Saeedianjou, Mobin Mirkazehi (Mirbaluchzehi), Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash, Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour, Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, Mohammad Shahbakhsh (Mirbaluchzehi), Mohsen Niazi, Momen Zandkarimi, Morad Bahramian, Moslem Houshangi, Mostafa Shabani, Nima Nouri Famour, Omid Moayedi, Rahimdad (Abdollah) Shahlibar, Reza Kazemi, Sadegh Aramesh (Barahouie), Saeed Sohrabzehi, Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou, Salar Mojaver, Sami Hashemzehi, Sepehr Azami, Sepehr Biranvand, Sepehr Maghsoudi, Shahou Bahmani, Shahriar Mohammadi, Soleiman Shokri, Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam, Taher Azizi, Tahsin Miri, Yaser Bahadorzehi, Younes Mirbaluchzehi (Salahshouran), and Zaniar Allahmoradi.
248. The 11 counties are Baneh, Boukan, Dehgolan, Divandareh, Javanroud, Kamyaran, Kermanshah, Mahabad, Piranshahr. Sanandaj and Saqqez. The 10 provinces are Esfahan, Fars, Gilan, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchistan, Tehran and Zanjan.
249. The 17 counties are Arak, Bandar Anzali, Esfahan, Izeh, Karaj, Khash, Khorramabad, Lahijan, Marvdasht, Parsian, Gheshm, Semirom, Shiraz, Someh Sara, Tabriz, Tehran and Zahedan. The 11 provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Gilan, Hormozgan, Khuzestan, Lorestan, Markazi, Sistan and Baluchistan and Tehran.

Amnesty International also recorded a pattern of unlawful shootings on 29 November 2022, targeting protesters celebrating the loss of Iran's national football team at the World Cup amid the authorities' attempt to use sport to distract public attention away from the crackdown on the uprising. In Bandar Anzali, Gilan province, one man was shot dead after sounding his car's horn in solidarity with protesters celebrating the loss.[250]

From early December 2022 onwards, protests began to die down amid a militarized environment throughout the country and after multiple waves of devastating violence perpetrated by security forces and mass arbitrary arrests of tens of thousands of protesters. Additionally, the arbitrary execution of two men in connection with the protests, Mohsen Shekari and Majidreza Rahnavard, on 8 and 12 December 2022, respectively, further instilled widespread terror and trauma.[251] Smaller scale protests, strikes, temporary store closures, sit-ins at schools and universities and other acts of resistance such as public defiance of compulsory veiling laws persisted. Amnesty International recorded the killing of at least four other victims[252] during violent protest dispersals or in militarized areas in December 2022 – one each in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province; Javanroud, Kermanshah province; Bojnourd, North Khorasan province; and Tehran, Tehran province.

Of those killed in militarized areas, Amnesty International documented the cases of 15 victims who were killed after security forces deliberately opened fire on their vehicles while they attempted to drive away from intimidating security forces. In some cases, security forces opened fire on vehicles for failing to stop when ordered while in some other instances, they shot at drivers who appeared to be speeding upon seeing security forces. One other victim, **Ardalan Ghasemi**, was fatally targeted while writing political slogans on walls while another, **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar**, aged 17, was targeted as he was walking through a militarized area.

Two other victims, **Mohammad Jameh Bozorg**[253] and **Alireza Hosseini**,[254] were killed during violent raids on their home and workplace, respectively.

Incidents of killings in militarized areas took place in various places, including residential neighbourhoods near areas where protests took place, as well as central squares and boulevards which were frequent sites of protests throughout the three-month protest period. Residents consistently told Amnesty International that, through establishing a militarized presence, the authorities attempted to instil fear among the population, maintain control, monitor the movement of individuals and dissuade people from leaving their homes or travelling from nearby towns and villages to central cities to join protests.

With respect to 233 of the 326 victims recorded as having been killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, Amnesty International was able to conduct investigations and gather sufficient information to support the legal conclusion that the killings were unlawful. This means that the security forces used firearms or other means of lethal force against the victims not to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury, but to disperse, intimidate or punish them and create a climate of terror and fear through a militarized presence.

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250. The name of this victim is Mehran Samak.

251. Amnesty International, "Iran: Public execution of Majidreza Rahnavard exposes authorities' revenge killings", 12 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-public-execution-of-majidreza-rahnavard-exposes-authorities-revenge-killings; Amnesty International, "Iran: Horrifying execution of young protester exposes authorities' cruelty and risk of further bloodshed", 8 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-horrifying-execution-of-young-protester-exposes-authorities-cruelty-and-risk-of-further-bloodshed

252. The victims are Alireza Khoshkar Bayati, Amirhossein Mosaddegh Sharifpour, Borhan Eliasi and Houman Abdollahi.

253. See section 11.3.3.

254. Kurdpa Human Rights Organization (Kurdpa), تهران؛ سید علیرضا حسینی بر اثر شلیک نیروهای یگان ویژه جان خود را از دست داد ["Tehran: Seyed Alireza Hosseini lost his life as result of gunfire by Special Cohort forces"], 22 October 2022, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/تهران-سید-علیرضا-حسینی-بر-اثر-شلیک-نیروهای-یگان-ویژه-جان-خود-را-از-دست-داد (in Persian).

With respect to the remaining 93 victims recorded as killed during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, Amnesty International considers it highly likely that further investigation and access to evidence would confirm that their killings were also unlawful, given the well-documented patterns of unlawful use of firearms against protesters across the country. Credible reports published by other human rights organizations and media outlets on many of the remaining killings further support this assessment.

5.3.2(II) SISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN PROVINCE



A collage of the photographs of 65 Baluchi men, women and children who were killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas in Sistan and Baluchistan province between September-December 2022. For 41 of the 106 Baluchi victims recorded, Amnesty International was unable to find a photograph. All photographs © Private

Amnesty International has recorded the names of 106 Baluchi protesters and bystanders who were killed by security forces in Sistan and Baluchistan province during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces.[255] They comprise 83 men, three women and 20 children – 19 boys and one girl. These Baluchi victims represent 33% of the total number of recorded deaths.

Of these 106 recorded Baluchi victims, 87 people – 69 men, three women, 14 boys and one girl – were unlawfully killed by the security forces during a single lethal crackdown on largely peaceful

255. See Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en

protests after Friday prayers on 30 September 2022 in Zahedan. Iranians now refer to this day as "Bloody Friday".[256]

On this day, after Friday prayers in the Great Mosalla of Zahedan, a large prayer site near the city's main mosque, a group of people gathered outside the police station across the road to protest and chant. Security forces responded by firing lethal ammunition, metal pellets and tear gas at them from the rooftop of the police station. Simultaneously, plain-clothes security forces fired at protesters and bystanders from the rooftops of several nearby houses. Security forces unlawfully fired assault rifles, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas directly into the vicinity of the prayer site, where hundreds of people, including children and older people, were still performing Friday prayers.



A member of the security forces positioned on the rooftop of a police station firing lethal ammunition at Baluchi protesters and bystanders near the Great Mosalla of Zahedan on 30 September 2022 © Private

Consequently, 84 people – 69 men, 14 boys and one woman – sustained fatal wounds from security forces unlawfully firing lethal ammunition at protesters, bystanders and worshippers. Two other women died from tear gas-related respiratory complications after security forces unlawfully fired tear gas into a confined space within the women's section of the prayer site,[257] while one six-year-old girl was killed after a tear gas canister struck her head.[258]

In the aftermath of "Bloody Friday", security forces patrolled the streets and helicopters flew over the city. On 1 and 2 October 2022, at least five other men were shot dead by security forces, most of them in connection with unrest in the areas of Karimabad and Shirabad in Zahedan.

In further protests that took place following Friday prayers in Zahedan on 14, 21 and 28 October 2022, security forces fired lethal ammunition as well as metal pellets. On 21 October 2022, security forces

256. Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 82 Baluchi protesters and bystanders killed in bloody crackdown", 6 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-82-baluchi-protesters-and-bystanders-killed-in-bloody-crackdown. After further investigations, Amnesty International was able to identify additional victims. This update is reflected in text above the press release on Amnesty International's website.
257. The victim's names are Jan Bibi Narouie and Zoleikha Tarzi.
258. The victim's name is Hasti Narouie.

stationed on the rooftops of several buildings around the central mosque in Zahedan fired lethal ammunition to suppress protests. On this day, at least four people sustained gunshot wounds.

On 28 October 2022, security forces unlawfully killed at least two children – **Omid Narouie**, aged 16, and **Adel Kouchakzay (Barichi)**, aged 14 – and injured many more. Those injured included an eight-year-old boy who sustained severe gunshot wounds in his stomach, and a 17-year-old boy who sustained trauma in his left eye due to being shot with metal pellets. Amnesty International has obtained an X-ray image showing metal pellets lodged in the boy's face.

Additionally, one man was unlawfully shot and killed during further protests following Friday prayers in Zahedan on 4 November 2022.

Following the deadly events of 30 September 2022 in Zahedan, weekly Friday protests in other cities across Sistan and Baluchistan province were also met with unlawful use of firearms. On 7 October 2022, security forces in Taftan repeatedly fired lethal ammunition into the air to suppress the mourning ceremony for a 16-year-old boy, Samer Hashemzehi, who was killed during the mass killings of 30 September 2022 in Zahedan.

On 21 October 2022, security forces unlawfully fired metal pellets to suppress protests in Iranshahr, causing injuries to multiple protesters and bystanders.

On 28 October 2022, security forces in Saravan stationed agents on a hill in the city known as Allah Akbar and from there fired lethal ammunition into the air. Similar patterns of security forces firing lethal ammunition into the air were reported during Friday protests in Iranshahr, Saravan, Rask, Sib va Sooran and Sarbaz on 4 November 2022.

In the city of Khash, 11 Baluchi victims – nine men and two boys – were unlawfully shot and killed by security forces during a crackdown on largely peaceful protesters after Friday prayers on 4 November 2022.[259] On this day, as people left Friday prayers in Al-Khalil Mosque and other mosques around 1pm and made their way to the area outside the Office of the County Governor of Khash chanting slogans, uniformed security forces standing on the rooftops of the Office of the County Governor of Khash began firing lethal ammunition towards them. Simultaneously, security forces fired lethal ammunition at protesters and bystanders from inside pickup trucks belonging to the security forces in the streets surrounding Al-Khalil Mosque. Some protesters dispersed into surrounding areas, while others continued to protest outside the county governor's office and a minority threw stones towards the building after being fired at by security forces. Worshippers leaving Al-Khalil Mosque who were not participating in the protests were also caught up in the crackdown.

According to Amnesty International's findings, those killed included a 14-year-old boy named **Mobin Mirkazehi**, who was shot in the head while he was on his way home from the mosque after Friday prayers. Another child, a 17-year-old boy with a disability named **Yaser Bahadorzehi**, was also shot dead and his body was found dumped near the county governor's office on 5 November 2022.

5.3.2(III) KURDISTAN, KERMANSHAH AND WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCES

After Baluchi protesters and bystanders in Sistan and Baluchistan province, Kurdish protesters and bystanders in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan were the most affected, with at least 95 unlawfully killed by the security forces between September and December 2022 during

259. Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent international action needed to stop mass killings of Baluchi protestors", 11 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6193/2022/en/https://www.amnesty.ie/iran-baluchi/. According to the official Telegram channel of Al-Khalil Mosque and its Friday prayer leader, Molana Mohammad Osman Ghalandarzehi, at least 18 people were killed on 4 November in Khash. However, despite its efforts, Amnesty International was only able to obtain the names of 11 victims.

protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. They comprise 79 men, three women, 12 boys and one girl. These Kurdish victims represent 29% of the total number of recorded deaths, reflecting the disproportionate impact of the lethal repression on this persecuted community.

Of these 95 recorded victims, 90 were fatally shot, in at least 22 cases with metal pellets.[260] Three other victims, all from Kurdistan province, were subjected to fatal beatings at the hands of security forces; one of them was also stabbed.[261] Another victim was fatally struck by tear gas canisters while fleeing a violent protest crackdown in Sanandaj on 26 October 2022.[262] Another victim was deliberately run over by a vehicle of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Saqqez on 12 October 2022 while he was loudly objecting to the use of shotguns and tear gas against protesters and bystanders.[263]

Of the 95 victims, Amnesty International identified the cases of 16 victims who were unlawfully killed in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. Of those 16 victims, 12 were unlawfully killed after security forces deliberately opened fire on their vehicles while they attempted to drive away from intimidating security forces.[264] The circumstances surrounding the deaths of the remaining four victims were as follows: **Ardalan Ghasemi** was fatally targeted while writing political slogans on walls; **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar**, aged 17, was beaten and stabbed while simply walking through a militarized area; **Reza Kazemi**, aged 16, was shot after being stopped by security forces at a checkpoint while travelling with friends; and **Dastan Rasoul** was shot while walking through an unofficial but commonly used Iran-Iraq border crossing point near the village of Choman in Baneh county to attend the memorial ceremony of a relative who had been shot the day before.

Saqqez, the hometown of Zhina Mahsa Amini in Kurdistan province, and Sanandaj, the provincial capital, were gripped by protests on 17 September 2022 when Zhina Mahsa Amini was laid to rest. The pattern of unlawful killings began in Kurdistan province on 19 September 2022, which witnessed protests marking the third day after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. On this day, four men were unlawfully shot and killed by the security forces in Divandareh,[265] Dehgolan[266] and Saqqez,[267] all in Kurdistan province.

As the protests grew larger on 20 and 21 September 2022 and spread to other cities, security forces intensified their crackdown, unlawfully killing 16 other protesters and bystanders, including 10 men, one woman and five boys. Three of the 16 victims were killed in Kermanshah,[268] Kermanshah province; three in Eslam Abad-e Gharb,[269] Kermanshah province; four in Oshnavieh,[270] West Azerbaijan province, and two each in Balou,[271] Piranshahr,[272] and Urumieh,[273] all in West Azerbaijan province. The majority of the killings (11) took place on 21 September 2022.

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260. The names of the 22 victims are Asa'd Rahimi, Ebrahim Sharififar, Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, Fereydoon Mahmoudi, Foad Savari, Hezhar Mamkhosravi, Hossein Abdpanah, Houman Abdollahi, Koumar Daroftadeh, Milad Maroufi, Minoo Majidi, Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour, Momen Zandkarimi, Mostafa Shabani, Reza Shahparnia, Samad Barginia, Soleiman Shokri, Zaniar Allahmoradi, Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, Danial Pabandi, Fayegh Mamghaderi, and Yahya Rahimi.
261. The victim's names are Sarina Saedi, Mohammad Keywan Darvishi and Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar.
262. The victim's name is Mohammad Shariati.
263. The victim's name is Mohammad Hosseini.
264. The victim's names are Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, Amjad Enayati, Asoo Ghaderi, Avat Ghaderpour, Bahaoddin Veisi, Danial Pabandi, Farhad Khosravi, Fayegh Mamghaderi, Hiva Janjan, Motaleb Saeed Peiro, Shahriar Mohammadi, and Yahya Rahimi.
265. See section 6.4.1.
266. See section 6.6.1.
267. See section 6.3.1.
268. See section 7.2.1.
269. See section 7.4.
270. See section 8.5.1.
271. See section 8.6.1.
272. See section 8.4.1.
273. See section 8.6.1.

Following the initial lethal crackdown during the early days of protests between 19 and 21 September 2022, killings peaked during three distinct periods: 8-12 October; 26-28 October and 15-21 November 2022. Of the 95 victims recorded, 68 were fatally injured during these periods. The remaining victims were killed in the context of crackdowns on sporadic protests that occurred on other days throughout the three-month protest period between September and December 2022.

Between 8 and 12 October 2022, protests surged as multiple activist groups, including some from Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority, issued coordinated calls for nationwide protests.[274] Amnesty International recorded the killing of 10 protesters and bystanders during this period, including nine men and one boy. Five of the 10 victims were killed in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province,[275] two in Kermanshah, Kermanshah province,[276] and one each in Salas-e Babajani,[277] Kermanshah province; in Boukan,[278] West Azerbaijan province; and in Saqqez,[279] Kurdistan province.

Another surge of mass protests took place between 26 and 28 October 2022 to mark the 40th day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini.[280] In some cities such as Piranshahr[281] and Kermanshah,[282] protests also erupted in the context of commemorative ceremonies marking the 40th day following the death of victims unlawfully killed during the early days of the protests in September 2022. In other cities such as Mahabad,[283] funeral ceremonies for one or more protesters killed at the start of this peak protest period turned into mass protests involving thousands of people.

For the 26-28 October 2022 period, Amnesty International recorded the killing of 13 protesters and bystanders in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, including 10 men, two women, one girl. Six victims were killed in Mahabad,[284] West Azerbaijan province, three in Sanandaj,[285] Kurdistan province, two in Baneh,[286] Kurdistan province, and one each in the village of Choman near Baneh,[287] Kurdistan province, and in Ghasr-e Shirin,[288] Kermanshah province.

Between 15 and 21 November 2022, protests peaked again in commemoration of the third anniversary of the unlawful killings of hundreds of protesters and bystanders during the nationwide protests of 14-19 November 2019. Similar to previous periods, in some cities including Sanandaj, the surge in protests was further fuelled by ceremonies commemorating the 40th day after victims were unlawfully killed in early October 2022. Additionally, in some cities like Javanroud, funeral ceremonies for those killed at the outset of this latest period rapidly evolved into mass protests.

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274. Kurdistan Media, ["Support from Center for Cooperation of Kurdistan Parties for 12 October protest call across Iran"], 11 October 2022, https://kurdistanmedia.com/fa/news/2022/10/72 (in Persian); Kurdistan Media, ["Call by Kurdistan National Committee of Students to coordinate student and schoolchildren protests"], 6 October 2022, https://kurdistanmedia.com/fa/news/2022/10/29 (in Persian); Independent Persian, ["Tehran neighbourhood youth: On Saturday from 12, we will take over the streets"], 6 October 2022, https://www.independentpersian.com/node/274021/سیاسی-و-اجتماعی/جوانان-محلات-تهران-شنبه-از-ساعت-۱۲-خیابان‌ها-را-به-تسخیر-در-می‌آوریم (in Persian); RFI, ["Sharif University of Technology issues a call to hold a protest gathering"], 6 October 2022, https://www.rfi.fr/fa/ایران/20221006-شورای-دانشگاه-صنعتی-شریف-فراخوانی-را-برای-برگزاری-یک-تجمع-اعتراضی-صادر-کرد (in Persian).
275. See section 6.2.1.
276. See section 7.2.2.
277. See section 7.5.1.
278. See section 8.2.1.
279. See section 6.2.2.
280. In Iran's mourning rituals, the third day (*sevvom*), seventh day (*haftom*) and 40th day (*chehelom*) following a person's passing are of significance and marked by commemorative ceremonies.
281. See section 8.4.2.
282. See section 7.2.2.
283. See, for example, the funerals of Esmail (Simko) Moloudi in section 8.3.2, and Azad Hosseinpouri in section 8.3.3.
284. See section 8.3.2.
285. See section 6.2.2.
286. See section 6.5.2.
287. See section 6.5.2.
288. See section 7.6.1.

Amnesty International recorded the killing of 45 individuals, comprising 40 men and five boys, during this period. In West Azerbaijan province, 12 victims were killed in Boukan,[289] six in Mahabad,[290] and four in Piranshahr.[291] In Kermanshah province, seven were killed in Javanroud.[292] In Kurdistan province, seven were killed in Sanandaj, three in Kamyaran,[293] two in Divandareh,[294] two in Saqqez,[295] and one each in Baneh[296] and Dehgolan.[297]

In some cities, including Sanandaj, there was a resurgence of protests between 5 and 7 December 2022, following calls by activist groups for nationwide protests. The date of 7 December 2022 holds particular significance as it marks National Student Day in Iran and commemorates the anniversary of the killing of three university students by Iran's police in 1953. On this day, another man was unlawfully killed by the security forces during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.[298]

On 31 December 2022, Javanroud was once again gripped by protests, this time marking the passing of 40 days following the death of the seven victims who had been unlawfully killed by the security forces in November 2022. During these protests, the security forces unlawfully killed another protester.[299]

5.3.2(IV) MAZANDARAN AND GILAN PROVINCES

Security forces also waged a crackdown on protests in the provinces of Mazandaran and Gilan in northern Iran, resulting in the killing of at least 37 protesters and bystanders during violent protest dispersals.

In Mazandaran province, at least 19 victims – 14 men, three women, two boys – were killed during protests in six counties. Six were killed in Amol,[300] five in Noshahr,[301] three in Ghaem Shahr,[302] three in Babol,[303] and one each in Abbas Abad[304] and Sari.[305]

In Gilan province, at least 18 victims – 17 men and one boy – were killed during protests in nine counties.

289. See section 8.2.2.
290. See section 8.3.3.
291. See section 8.4.3.
292. See section 7.3.2.
293. See section 5.7.
294. See section 6.4.2.
295. See section 6.3.3.
296. The name of this victim is Fereydoon Faraji.
297. See section 6.2.2.
298. See section 6.2.5.
299. See section 7.3.3.
300. The victims' names are Ali Fazeli, Erfan Rezaei, Ghazaleh Chalabi, Hadi Chaksari, Mohammad Falah and Sina Loh Mousavi.
301. The victims' names are Amir Hossein Shams Nateri, Hananeh Kia, Hosseinali Kia, Mehrzad Avazpour and Mohsen Malmir.
302. The victims' names are Abolfazl Bahou, Shaban (Mohsen) Mohammadi Kouchaksaraei and Rahim Kalij.
303. The victims' names are Abolfazl Mehdipour, Milad Zare and Mohammad Hassan Torkaman.
304. The victim's name is Shirin Alizadeh.
305. The victim's name is Mohammad Javad Zahedi.

Four were killed in Rasht,[306] three in Langarud,[307] three in Rezvanshahr,[308] two in Bandar Anzali,[309] two in Lahijan,[310] and one each in Lasht-e Nesha,[311] Rudsar,[312] Someh Sara[313] and Talesh.[314]

Of these 37 identified victims in Mazandaran and Gilan provinces, 35 were fatally shot. At least six of the 35 were shot with metal pellets fired at them from close range.[315] The remaining two of the 37 were subjected to fatal beatings.[316]

The majority of victims in these provinces (30) were killed during the first days of the protests, between 20 and 22 September 2022. Consistent with the nationwide trend of 21 September 2022 having the highest death toll, security forces shot and killed most victims on this day, 16 in Mazandaran[317] and 12 in Gilan.[318]

Of the remaining seven victims killed on other days, three were killed on 27 and 29 October[319] and two on 15 and 17 November 2022,[320] aligning with the nationwide spikes in killings during the periods of 26-30 October and 15-22 November 2022. The remaining two victims were shot and killed on 3 and 29 November 2022.[321]

The deadly 21 September 2022 crackdown in Amol, killing two men, one woman and a boy, exemplifies the security forces' unlawful use of firearms to suppress the very first protests.

An eyewitness, Khosrow, told Amnesty International that uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) fired assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets at peaceful protesters who had gathered in front of the Office of the County Governor of Amol. According to Khosrow, some IRGC and FARAJA agents firing lethal ammunition and metal pellets were positioned inside the office of the county governor, while others advanced from behind, shooting repeatedly in multiple directions, even as protesters fled in search of safety.

306. The victims' names are Behnam Layeghpour, Maziar Salmanian, Mohammad Rasoul Momenizad and Pouya Ahmadpour Pasikhani.
307. The victims' names are Abbas Mirmousavi, Abolfazl Akbaridoost and Morteza Norouzi.
308. The victims' names are Farzin Lotfi, Sasan Ghorbani and Yasin Jamalzadeh.
309. The victims' names are Amir Norouzi and Mehran Samak.
310. The victims' names are Erfan Zamani and Javad Rezaei.
311. The victim's name is Aref Ghorbanpour.
312. The victim's name is Nader Kouhkar.
313. The victim's name is Mehran Basir Tavana.
314. The victim's name is Mehrab Dolatpanah.
315. The victims' names are Behnam Layeghpour, Javad Rezaei, Mehran Samak, Mohammad Falah, Mohammad Javad Zahedi and Mohammad Rasoul Momenizad.
316. The victims' names are Maziar Salmanian and Pouya Ahmadpour Pasikhani.
317. The victims' names are Abolfazl Mehdipour, Amir Hossein Shams Nateri, Erfan Rezaei, Ghazaleh Chalabi, Hananeh Kia, Hosseinali Kia, Mehrzad Avazpour, Milad Zare, Mohammad Falah, Mohammad Hassan Torkaman, Mohammad Javad Zahedi, Mohsen Malmir, Shaban (Mohsen) Mohammadi Kouchaksaraei, Rahim Kalij, Shirin Alizadeh, and Sina Loh Mousavi.
318. The victims' names are Abbas Mirmousavi, Abolfazl Akbaridoost, Amir Norouzi, Behnam Layeghpour, Farzin Lotfi, Maziar Salmanian, Mehrab Dolatpanah, Mohammad Rasoul Momenizad, Morteza Norouzi, Nader Kouhkar, Sasan Ghorbani and Yasin Jamalzadeh.
319. The victims' names are Ali Fazeli, Aref Ghorbanpour and Hadi Chaksari.
320. The victims' names are Javad Rezaei and Mehran Basir Tavana.
321. The victims' names are Erfan Zamani and Mehran Samak.



Ghazaleh Chalabi
© Private

Amnesty International analysed two verified videos related to the crackdown of 21 September 2022 in Amol. The first video includes a clip captured by one of the victims, **Ghazaleh Chalabi**, immediately before she was fatally shot in the head.[322] Protesters are seen standing peacefully in front of the Office of the County Governor of Amol. As at least two loud, possibly gunshot noises are heard, a woman protester says, "Don't be afraid!" A third such noise is heard, and the camera, still recording, drops to the ground. People are heard screaming, "They killed someone."

The second video shows an armed man wearing a white medical mask and firing a weapon from inside the office of the county governor as protesters outside are seen filming the scene with their mobile phones.

In its analysis of both videos, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) found that the sound from the videos was consistent with firearms.[323]



A still from a video that shows an armed man wearing a white medical mask and firing a weapon from inside the Office of the County Governor of Amol © Private

322. Tistoo, X post: اسمش رو به خاطر بسپاریم. #غزاله_چلابی که در ۳۰ شهریور ۱۴۰۱ در حال فیلمبرداری از اعتراضات آمل، با شلیک مستقیم گلوله به دست نیروهای امنیتی جمهوری اسلامی کشته شد .... ["Remember her name. #Ghazaleh_Chalabi was shot and killed by direct gunfire from Islamic Republic security forces on 21 September 2022, while filming protests in Amol..."], 21 October 2022, https://x.com/grontfinger/status/1583293449033306112 (in Persian).
323. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), Annex III, paras 34-39.

5.3.2(V) ALBORZ PROVINCE

In Alborz province, located in central Iran, security forces killed at least 16 protesters and bystanders – 14 men, one woman and one girl – during violent protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. All but two of the victims were killed in Karaj.[324] The remaining two victims were killed in Fardis[325] and the small city of Hashtgerd in Savojbolagh county.[326]

Of these 16 victims, 13 were fatally shot. At least five of the 13 were shot with metal pellets fired at them from close range.[327] Two other victims were subjected to fatal beatings,[328] while another sustained fatal head injuries after being stuck in the head by a paintball, fell into a coma for three months and died on 9 March 2023.[329]

These killings occurred mostly during two waves of crackdowns on protests: 21 and 23 September 2022 and 3 November 2022 when protesters marked the passing of 40 days following the killings in September 2022.



Sarina Esmailzadeh © Private

At least seven protesters and bystanders were killed between 21 and 23 September 2022 in three counties – Karaj, Fardis and Savojbolagh.[330] Of the seven victims killed, one, a 16-year-old girl named **Sarina Esmailzadeh**, died after security forces struck her head with batons.

The remaining six were fatally shot. One of them was **Hadis Najafi**, who was shot with metal pellets fired at her from close range during protests in Karaj, Alborz province, on 21 September 2022. In a media interview with the Persian service of the Voice of America (VOA Persian), her sister, Afsoun Najafi, said that Hadis Najafi had joined the protests that began around 8pm on Eram Boulevard in the Mehrshahr area of Karaj and that, around an hour later, her family received a call from someone using Hadis Najafi's phone telling them that she had been shot with metal pellets and was at Ghaem Hospital.



Hadis Najafi © Private

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed two graphic pictures of Hadis Najafi's deceased body, which show numerous pellet injuries from a smooth bore firearm (shotgun) involving the clothing of the upper breasts and the skin of the upper chest and neck, predominantly on the right. There are a few outlying pellet injuries to the abdomen. The back of the left hand and forearm shown in the photograph have five pellet injuries indicating that the hand was likely raised in a defensive posture to protect the body at the time of gunfire. The concentration of pellets to the upper body suggests a relatively close range of fire, which cannot be determined with precision. The right side of the face has several scattered pellet injuries.

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324. The victim's names are Abbas Shafiei, Amir Reza Hematazad, Hadis Najafi, Kamran Shahbazi, Kan'an Aghaei, Komeil Amirkhanlou, Mahmoud Keshvari, Mehdi Hazrati, Mehdi Leilazi, Mehdi Salehipour, Mehran Shekari, Nima Nouri Famour, Sarina Esmailzadeh, and Sepehr Azami.
325. The victim's name is Rouzbeh Khademian.
326. The victim's name is Parsa Rezadoost.
327. The victim's names are Abbas Shafiei, Hadis Najafi, Nima Nouri Famour, Rouzbeh Khademian and Sepehr Azami.
328. The victim's names are Kamran Shahbazi and Sarina Esmailzadeh.
329. The victim's name is Amir Reza Hematazad.
330. The victim's names are Hadis Najafi, Kan'an Aghaei, Mahmoud Keshvari, Mehdi Leilazi, Parsa Rezadoost, Rouzbeh Khademian and Sarina Esmailzadeh.

The organization also reviewed a copy of Hadis Najafi's death certificate, which lists the cause of death as "operation of combat weapons outside combat" and adds that the death was caused by her "being struck with a bullet". The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran documented that members of the security forces pressured the family to sign papers stating that Hadis Najafi's death was due to natural causes and then to hand over to them the death certificate that contradicted this statement.[331]


Mehdi Hazrati © Private

Seven further people were killed on 3 November 2022, all in Karaj, in the context of a crackdown on protests commemorating the passing of 40 days following the killings in September 2022.[332] One of them was an 18-year-old teenager, **Mehdi Hazrati**. Two verified videos depicting his fatal shooting illustrate the deadly crackdown unleashed by security forces on this day.

One video shows a group of peaceful protesters chanting, with security forces positioned at a distance, at the corner of Meysam and Vali-e Asr Street. A gunshot is then heard, after which Mehdi Hazrati, who was standing alone at the front of the protesters and approximately 50m from the security forces, collapses. The footage shows that Mehdi Hazrati was standing on a distance from the security forces and posed no visible threat.

The second video, which is has no sound, shows the victim lying lifeless on the ground, with blood visible around his head. The video then shows agents in uniforms worn by the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, armed with batons and shotguns, arriving on motorcycles and surrounding the body. Two plain-clothes agents are seen standing over the body; one of them, wearing a red shirt, holds a shotgun. The plain-clothes agents then move away, with the man in a red shirt taking position at a nearby corner and aiming his shotgun at off-screen targets. After a while, a pickup truck is seen arriving and driving away with the victim's body in the back.

331. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), Annex III, paras 23-26.
332. The victim's names are Abbas Shafiei, Komeil Amirkhanlou, Mehdi Hazrati, Mehdi Salehipour, Mehran Shekari, Nima Nouri Famour and Sepehr Azami.



Four stills from two videos that show the killing of Mehdi Hazrati. The first still (top left) shows the body of Mehdi Hazrati lying on the ground next to a silver car. Security forces are visible in the background. The second still (top right) shows the same body with blood visible around the head and surrounded by security forces. The third still (bottom left) shows a plain-clothes agent wearing a red shirt and aiming his shotgun at the off-screen target, having taken position at the corner behind the scene of Mehdi Hazrati's death. The fourth still (bottom right) shows a white pickup truck arriving and taking the victim's body. © Private

5.3.2(VI) TEHRAN PROVINCE

Tehran province also witnessed a high death toll, with security forces killing at least 30 protesters and bystanders – 24 men and six boys – during violent protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. The killings took place in 10 counties across the province. Over half of the victims (16) were killed in the capital, Tehran.[333] In addition, three victims were killed in Pakdasht,[334] three in Shahr-e Rey,[335] two in

333. The victim's names are Abolfazl Ahmadpour, Ahmadreza Ghalji, Alireza Khoshkar Bayati, Ali Rouzbahani, Amir Mehdi Farrokhipour, Asghar Aghaei, Asghar Hazhir Lotf, Ehsan Khan Mohammadi, Hamidreza Rouhi, Mehdi Zare, Milad Javidpour, Milad Ostad Hashem, Mohammad Amin Takali, Mehdi Hosseini, Mohsen Mousavi and Siavash Mahmoudi.
334. The victim's names are Hamid Fouladvand, Mohammad Reza Eskandari and Mohsen Pazouki.
335. The victim's names are Abolfazl Amiratae, Mohammad Javad Farmani and Mohammadreza Sarvari.

Gharchak,[336] and one in each of the following counties: Baharestan,[337] Eslamshahr,[338] Lavasan,[339] Malard,[340] Robat Karim[341] and Shahriar.[342]

Of the 30 recorded victims, 26 were fatally shot. At least five of the 26 were shot with metal pellets.[343]

Regarding the other four victims, according to information gathered by independent media outlets or human rights defenders, one sustained fatal breathing difficulties due to the excessive use of tear gas;[344] one was killed when FARAJA forces reportedly rammed their vehicle into his motorcycle, causing him to fall and suffer a fatal head injury upon hitting the curb;[345] and two sustained fatal injuries from being struck by a tear gas canister fired at close range.[346] One of these two victims died instantly on 30 September 2022,[347] while the other, a 16-year-old boy, died from his injuries several months later on 23 May 2023.[348]

The pattern of killings in Tehran province began on 21 September 2022, which was also the deadliest day of the crackdown in this province. On this day, security forces fatally injured least 10 protesters and bystanders – six men[349] and four boys[350] – in six counties comprising Shahr-e Rey, Gharchak, Baharestan, Pakdasht, Shahriar and Tehran.

The next day, security forces killed three additional protesters and bystanders – two in the capital, Tehran,[351] and one in Pakdasht county.[352]

Information gathered by Amnesty International indicates a systemic pattern of rapid and unlawful resort to lethal force to suppress the protests from the outset.



Mohammad Reza Eskandari (left) and Mohsen Pazouki (right) © Private

For example, in Pakdasht, where two men, **Mohammad Reza Eskandari** and **Mohsen Pazouki**, were killed on the evening of 21 September 2022, an informed source in Iran, Mahdis, told Amnesty International that security forces in uniforms and plain clothes created a "terrifying" atmosphere, with armed agents deployed both in the streets and on rooftops, particularly in the streets between Shobeh Square and Saat Square, where protests were concentrated. Mahdis also noted that local residents saw empty cartridges scattered across the streets, indicating extensive use of firearms. Mahdis said that Mohammad Reza Eskandari was shot in the torso near Marjan clinic and then taken inside the clinic by several people. According to Mahdis, later that same night, security forces removed all CCTV cameras that

336. The victim's names are Mohammad Hossein Morovati and Mohammad Zare'i.
337. The victim's name is Mohammad Zamani.
338. The victim's name is Alireza Hosseini.
339. The victim's name is Erfan Nazarbeigi.
340. The victim's name is Mohammad Jameh Bozorg.
341. The victim's name is Ali Seyedi.
342. The victim's name is Erfan Khazaei.
343. The victims' names are Ali Seyedi, Asghar Aghaei, Asghar Hazhir Lotf, Mohsen Mousavi and Mohammad Jameh Bozorg.
344. The victim's name is Mehdi Hosseini.
345. The victim's name is Abolfazl Ahmadpour.
346. The victims' names are Abolfazl Amiratae and Mohammad Amin Takali.
347. The victim's name is Mohammad Amin Takali.
348. The victim's name is Abolfazl Amiratae.
349. The victims' names are Erfan Khazaei, Mohammad Hossein Morovati, Mohammad Javad Farmani, Mohammad Reza Eskandari, Mohammad Zare'i and Mohsen Pazouki.
350. The victims include Abolfazl Amiratae, Mohammadreza Sarvari, Mohammad Zamani and Siavash Mahmoudi.
351. The victims' names are Milad Javidpour and Ahmadreza Ghalji
352. The victim's name is Hamid Fouladvand.

might have captured the scenes in the clinic, which she described as "horrific", with many injured people brought in.


Siavash Mahmoudi
© Private

In Tehran, **Siavash Mahmoudi**, aged 16, was similarly shot and killed in the evening of 21 September 2022. According to information gathered by his family, he was fatally shot by agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions in front of the Sarallah Basij base in Naziabad. Siavash's mother, Leila Mahdavi, wrote on her Instagram account on 15 December 2022 that, when her son did not answer his phone, she went to the areas where protests were taking place to search for him. She described the streets as resembling a "war scene" due to the extensive presence of security forces, including Basij forces and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. She recalled seeing "more than 50-60 armed motorcyclists", describing the scene as "terrifying". She added that while she was searching for her son in streets filled with tear gas, an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions struck her with a baton, pushed her across the street and told her not to "cause a scene". She said that, after over five hours of searching, she found her son in a hospital, where she learned he had been shot in his head.[353]

A video of Leila Mahdavi circulated online on 30 September 2022; it shows her holding a picture of her son in the street and inviting people to attend her son's funeral. She states:

> **"Let everyone know. This is [the picture of] my Siavash. Siavash Mahmoudi… They [security forces] killed my child. They shot him in his head. I am proud to be the mother of Siavash Mahmoudi. I am not afraid of anyone. They [the authorities] are telling me to remain silent, but I will not sit in silence."[354]**

In a report to member states of the UN Human Rights Council shared ahead of the Special Session on Iran on 24 November 2022, the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran claimed that Siavash Mahmoudi "was gunned down by unknown persons while participating in the recent riots." The authorities added:

> **"During the said time, the law enforcement officers did not use firearms to deal with the riots. It has hitherto not been identified that the deceased was shot by whom, or how he has lost his life. Therefore, investigations are underway to clarify and bring to light the dimensions of the incident."[355]**

Lethal repression persisted throughout the rest of September, bringing the total number of protesters and bystanders killed by security forces in Tehran province between 16 and 30 September 2022 to 19 – 13 men[356] and six boys.[357]

In October 2022, security forces killed at least six more men in the capital Tehran.[358]

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353. leilymahdavi5866, Instagram post: مادر تو پیدا کرد اما ...حال من ماندم یک داغ بر دل نشسته ...["Your mother found you, but I was left with a scar that still burns in my heart..."], 15 December 2022, https://www.instagram.com/p/CmLyyTdjbLM (in Persian).
354. The Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian), مادر سیاوش محمودی از کسته شده گان در اعتراضات اخیر ایران در علی آباد تهران ["Mother of Siavash Mahmoudi, one of those killed in the recent protests in Iran in Aliabad, Tehran"], 1 October 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ig1sUd1AFgw (in Persian).
355. See Chapter 11 on systemic impunity, including patterns of initial official statements denying responsibility and announcing investigations that, in the months and years that followed, failed to result in accountability.
356. The victims' names are Alireza Hosseini, Erfan Khazaei, Erfan Nazarbeigi, Hamid Fouladvand, Milad Javidpour, Milad Ostad Hashem, Mohammad Amin Takali, Mohammad Hossein Morovati, Mohammad Javad Farmani, Mohammad Jameh Bozorg, Mohammad Reza Eskandari, Mohammad Zare'i and Mohsen Pazouki.
357. The victims' names are Abolfazl Amiratae, Ahmadreza Ghalji, Amir Mehdi Farrokhipour, Mohammadreza Sarvari, Mohammad Zamani, and Siavash Mahmoudi.
358. The victims' names are Abolfazl Ahmadpour, Ali Rouzbahani, Ali Seyedi, Ehsan Khan Mohammadi, Mehdi Hosseini and Mohsen Mousavi.

They also killed a man in the small city of Parand in Robat Karim county on 26 October 2022; people had gathered in and around Esteghlal Square in Parand to mark the 40th day following the death of Zhina Mahsa Amini.[359]


Ali Seyedi © Private

Regarding the fatal incident in Parand, an informed source in Iran, Farzaneh, told Amnesty International that the victim, **Ali Seyedi**, was targeted by the security forces after he intervened to stop the beating of two women by agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions and help them escape. According to Farzaneh, in response, a plain-clothes agent and an IRGC agent in uniforms fired metal pellets at Ali Seyedi's stomach from close range. Farzaneh added that, after the shooting, the agents stood over Ali Seyedi for some time, preventing people from approaching to assist him or transfer him to a hospital. She said that only once they saw his condition deteriorating did they leave the scene, after which people took him to Mehr clinic. Amnesty International reviewed a copy of the burial certificate of Ali Seyedi, which listed the cause of death as "extensive internal bleeding", "rupture of vital organs in the thorax and abdomen" and "collision of round projectile with high velocity (metal pellet)".

In November 2022, security forces killed at least four more men, all in the capital, Tehran.[360] All four were killed between 16 and 17 November 2022, during an intensified crackdown on protests marking the anniversary of the November 2019 protests.

According to information published by human rights defenders, three of these men – **Asghar Aghaei**, **Asghar Hazhir Lotf** and **Mehdi Zare** – were fatally shot in a crackdown on protests and strikes around Tehran's Shad Abad iron market on 16 November 2022.


Asghar Aghaei (left), Asghar Hazhir Lotf (centre) and Mehdi Zare (right) © Private

According to information published by the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) citing an informed source, Asghar Hazhir Lotf and his friend were targeted by security forces after they intervened to stop the beating of a woman during the protests around Tehran's Shad Abad iron market.[361] In response, the security forces struck the friend with a baton and shot Asghar Hazhir Lotf with metal pellets, once in the head and a second time in the back.

The same day, the FARAJA Command Staff of Greater Tehran issued a statement which blamed protesters for the shootings. The statement said:

> **"Today at 1pm, a number of rioters, incited by enemies, attempted to threaten and pressure shopkeepers in Tehran's Shad Abad iron market to close their businesses and halt market and commercial activities. The shopkeepers and business owners refused to cooperate with them. Following their refusal, several of the rioters used weapons to injure five citizens and then attempted to flee. With the arrival of police agents, 20 of them were identified and arrested."[362]**

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359. The victim's name is Ali Seyedi.
360. The victims' names are Asghar Aghaei, Asghar Hazhir Lotf, Hamidreza Rouhi and Mehdi Zare.
361. Human Rights Activists News Agency, اعتراضات سراسری؛ گزارش تکمیلی از جان باختن اصغر هژیر لطف در تهران ["Nationwide protests: Updated report death of Asghar Hazhir Lotf in Tehran"], 28 January 2023, https://www.hra-news.org/2023/hranews/a-39217 (in Persian).
362. Tasnim News Agency, دستگیری ۲۰ نفر در ناآرامی امروز بازار آهن تهران ["Arrest of 20 people during today's unrest in Tehran's iron market"], 16 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1401/08/25/2805474/دستگیری-20نفر-در-ناآرامی-امروز-بازار-آهن-تهران (in Persian).

On 17 November 2022, state media outlets released a video which attempted to portray the protests as violent in an apparent effort to justify the lethal repression. However, the video provides no evidence that the security forces faced an imminent threat of death or serious injury that could warrant the use of firearms.

The video shows some protesters throwing stones from a distance and lighting a fire to create a barrier between themselves and the security forces standing further away. Additionally, the video shows security forces in uniforms and plain clothes, advancing on foot and motorcycles, wielding batons, 37/38mm launchers and other less lethal weapons, and wearing protective helmets and black face masks.[363] A plain-clothes agent wearing a black balaclava and holding what seems to be a multi-shot 37/38mm launcher was captured speaking into a megaphone, threatening protesters: "I will take away your breath … Basij agents, FARAJA agents and intelligence agents are all standing here and will forcefully confront you."[364]



Still from a video published on 17 November 2022 showing an agent wearing a black balaclava and holding what it seems to be multi-shot 37/38mm launcher during a crackdown on protests around Tehran's Shad Abad iron market © Unknown

5.3.2(VII) KHUZESTAN PROVINCE

In Khuzestan province, at least nine protesters and bystanders killed by the security forces – five men, one woman and three boys. Of these victims, seven were killed during a lethal crackdown on protests in Izeh on 16 November 2022. Two other men were fatally shot in Dezful on 22 October 2022. One of them was shot and died instantly,[365] while the other died from his injuries on 6 November 2022.[366]

363. AL Mahdi, اغتشاشات / حمله ارازل اوباش به بازار آهن تهران ["Attack by thugs on Tehran's iron market: Riots"], 17 November 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/k6720u2 (in Persian).
364. AL Mahdi, اغتشاشات / حمله ارازل اوباش به بازار آهن تهران ["Attack by thugs on Tehran's iron market: Riots"], 17 November 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/k6720u2 (in Persian); Mashregh News, فیلم/ روایت اغتشاش در بازار آهن شادآباد ["Video: Account of unrest in Shad Abad iron market"], 17 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1436782/فیلم-روایت-اغتشاش-در-بازار-آهن-شادآباد (in Persian).
365. The victim's name is Mohammad Khajavi.
366. The victim's name is Mohammad Ghaemifard.



Hamid Reza Shariati (top left), Sepehr Maghsoudi (top right), Artin Rahmani (bottom left) and Milad Saeedianjou (bottom right) © Private

On 16 November 2022, security forces in uniform and plain clothes used lethal ammunition to disperse protesters gathered on Izeh's Hafez Jonoubi Street – primarily between Saheb Al-Zaman Mosque and Izeh's market, resulting in the fatal shootings of two men, namely **Hamid Reza Shariati** and **Milad Saeedianjou**, and two boys, namely **Artin Rahmani** and **Sepehr Maghsoudi**.

The same evening, security forces equipped with firearms were heavily deployed across Izeh to create a climate of terror and suppress further protests. In this context, they unlawfully fired lethal ammunition at cars driving along Hafez Jonoubi Street and its intersection with Modares Boulevard, locally known as the Helal Ahmar (Red Crescent) intersection.[367] As a result, three individuals – one man, **Ali Molaei**, one woman, **Ashraf Nikbakht**, and a nine-year-old boy, **Kian Pirfalak** – sustained fatal gunshot wounds while travelling in cars, in three separate incidents.



Ali Molaei (left), Ashraf Nikbakht (centre) and Kian Pirfalak (right) © Private

In the case of Ashraf Nikbakht, a journalist, Media Mosavvar, who spoke to an informed source in Iran, told Amnesty International that, at the time of the incident, Ashraf Nikbakht, her daughter and her son-in-law were travelling by car, heading to a wedding. According to Media Mosavvar, as the family drove along Hafez Jonoubi Street and approached Saheb Al-Zaman Mosque, they suddenly heard gunfire. The journalist noted that protesters had already been dispersed by the time the family reached the area, but security forces maintained a heavy presence, particularly near the Helal Ahmar intersection. After hearing the gunfire, the family realized that Ashraf Nikbakht had been struck in the head by a bullet. As they were reeling from the shock, the car came under fire again. Media Mosavvar added that, amid the gunfire, the daughter and son-in-law managed to drive away and take Ashraf Nikbakht to Izeh hospital, where she was declared dead.

In the case of Ali Molaei, the same journalist, Media Mosavver, told Amnesty International that, according to information received from an eyewitness, Ali Molaei and his fiancée came under fire while passing through the Helal Ahmar intersection. She shared with Amnesty International CCTV footage of the incident which contains a timestamp of 5.54pm on 16 November 2022.[368] While the footage is poor in quality, it shows a car slowing down and stopping immediately after passing through the intersection. The eyewitness confirmed that this was Ali Molaei's car. The footage refutes the authorities' claim that all victims were fatally shot in a "terrorist incident on a market" at 5.30pm.[369]

367. This is in reference to the office of the Red Crescent in Izeh which is located at the intersection.
368. Media Mosavar, مستند ایذه ۲۵ آبان ۱۴۰۱ ["Izeh documentary, 16 November 2022"], 2 September 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13TOErc7Loc minute 18:43.
369. See below for details about the state narrative.

In the case of Kian Pirfalak, his mother, Zeinab Molaierad, describes the circumstances of the fatal incident in a speech that she gave during the funeral of nine-year-old Kian Pirfalak on 18 November 2022. In her speech, Zeinab Molaierad emphasized that she wanted people to hear the truth directly from her:

> **"Hear it from me about how the shooting happened so they [the authorities] can't say it was by terrorists; they are lying."**[370]

Zeinab Molaierad explained that she, her two sons and her husband were in their car on the way to their home in Izeh when they reached the Helal Ahmar intersection, where large numbers of security forces were stationed. She said an agent ordered them to stop and turn around after they passed the security forces. Kian Pirfalak's father, who was driving, heeded the order, but suddenly several plain-clothes agents opened fire at the car. As a result, Kian Pirfalak sustained fatal gunshot wounds and his father was severely injured.

Zeinab Molaierad said that, amid the shootings, she opened the front passenger's car door, loudly alerted the agents that her children were in the car and asked them to stop. Three of the plain-clothes agents responsible for the shootings then walked to the family, removed Kian Pirfalak's wounded body from the car and took him first into the building of the Red Crescent and then to Izeh's Shohada Hospital. Zeinab Molaierad said:



Kian Pirfalak's gravestone
© Private

> **"I don't know why [the agents shot at us]… They riddled the car with bullets… I told the kids to hide under the seats. My younger child hid under the car's dashboard, but Kian was chubby and didn't go under the seat."**[371]

The death of Kian Pirfalak sparked an outpouring of rage and solidarity, particularly after a video of him participating in an event at his school went viral. In the video he poetically invokes God as the "God of rainbows" and then tests the ability of a toy boat constructed from ice cream sticks to float. Grieving protesters honoured his memory using images of rainbows and one was later etched onto his gravestone.

The same evening that security forces shot and killed seven protesters and bystanders in Izeh, the authorities launched a denial campaign, misrepresenting the wave of killings as a "terrorist incident on Izeh's market". The authorities' narrative suggested that all victims were killed during a single incident at 5.30pm even though, in fact, victims were killed in separate incidents throughout the evening of 16 November 2022.

In a statement issued the same evening, the deputy provincial governor of Khuzestan for police and security affairs, Valiollah Hayati, claimed that "terrorist agents" were responsible for the incident. He stated:

> **"This terrorist attack, which occurred at 5.30pm today, was carried out by the riders of two motorcycles, and civilians and security defenders were shot. The provincial governor of Khuzestan has dispatched a delegation from the provincial provision council to Izeh, and the task of arresting the assailants has been placed on the agenda of the provision council and the intelligence and police**

370. Media Mosavar, مستند ایذه ۲۵ آبان ۱۴۰۱ ["Izeh documentary, 16 November 2022"], 2 September 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13TOErc7Loc, minute 36:33-39:22.
371. Media Mosavar, مستند ایذه ۲۵ آبان ۱۴۰۱ ["Izeh documentary, 16 November 2022"], 2 September 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13TOErc7Loc, minute 36:33-39:22.

agencies so that the perpetrators can be apprehended as quickly as possible."[372]

The same evening, the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Khuzestan, known as the Vali Asr Corps, said in a statement:

> **"The martyr-nurturing people of Khuzestan are hereby informed that an armed group riding two motorcycles exploited the tension in the city of Izeh and opened fire with Kalashnikov rifles at the people and the police, riddling them with bullets... The Vali Asr Corps of Khuzestan, while offering congratulations and condolences on the martyrdom of a number of compatriots in the terrorist incident in the city of Izeh to… Imam Khamenei, and the martyr-nurturing people of Khuzestan, especially the bereaved families, asks God Almighty to grant the souls of these esteemed martyrs the highest ranks and to bestow patience upon their survivors."[373]**

In the next two days, other officials, including the provincial governor of Khuzestan, Sadegh Khalilian, the head of the department of justice in Khuzestan province, Ali Dehghani, and a deputy of the president, Mohsen Rezaiee, claimed that up to 11 "terrorist agents" had been arrested in connection with the events in Izeh. Officials claimed that some of them were arrested while attempting to flee Iran through the border with Turkey near Makou in West Azerbaijan province.[374] Two months later, on 16 January 2023, the prosecutor general of Izeh, Yarmohammad Resalati, stated that criminal cases had been opened against 70 people who had been identified in connection with the "terrorist incident" in Izeh that resulted in the death of seven individuals.[375]

As part of their campaign of denial, the authorities also broadcast propaganda videos and photographs featuring state officials, including Mohsen Rezaiee, speaking to individuals injured during the crackdown on protests lying on hospital beds. The circumstances suggest that the injured individuals were filmed and photographed without their free and informed consent. The videos also featured statements apparently obtained under coercion from victims' families, interspersed with voiceovers reinforcing the state narrative.[376]

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372. Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA), ["Dispatch of delegation from Khuzestan Security Council to Izeh / Critical condition of 2 injured persons"], 16 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082518107/اعزام-هیأتی-از-شورای-تأمین-خوزستان-به-ایذه-حال-۲-مصدوم-وخیم (in Persian). See Chapter 11 on persistent impunity, including patterns of initial official statements denying responsibility and announcing investigations that, in the months and years that followed, failed to result in accountability.

373. Tasnim News Agency, ["Terrorist attack on Izeh's central market: 6 martyrs so far, terrorists opened fire on people + video"], 16 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/25/2805503/حمله-تروریستی-به-بازار-مرکزی-ایذه-6-شهید-تا-این-لحظه-تروریست-ها-مردم-را-به-رگبار-بستند-فیلم (in Persian).

374. ISNA, ["Reaction of number of MPs to terrorist incident in Izeh"], 19 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082819297/واکنش-تعدادی-از-نمایندگان-به-حادثه-تروریستی-در-ایذه-۲ (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["Terrorists responsible for the Izeh crime arrested at Maku border"], 18 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5634705 (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, ["Three of the main perpetrators of Izeh terrorist incident arrested: Details"], 17 November 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/720788/نفر-از-عوامل-اصلی-حادثه-تروریستی-ایذه-دستگیر-شدند-توضیحات-۳ (in Persian).

375. ISNA, ["Increase in number of suspects in Izeh terrorist incident to 70 people"], 16 January 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401102618068/افزایش-تعداد-متهمان-حادثه-تروریستی-ایذه-به-۷۰-نفر (in Persian).

376. Tabnak, ["Rezaiee visits those injured in the terrorist attack in Izeh"], 19 November 2022, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1151052/عیادت-رضایی-از-مصدومان-حادثه-تروریستی-ایذه (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ["Terrorist attack on Izeh's central market: 6 martyrs so far, terrorists opened fire on people + video"], 16 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/25/2805503/حمله-تروریستی-به-بازار-مرکزی-ایذه-6-شهید-تا-این-لحظه-تروریست-ها-مردم-را-به-رگبار-بستند-فیلم (in Persian).



A photograph published by state media showing Mohsen Rezaei, a deputy of the president, speaking to a man injured during the crackdown on protests in Izeh while state media filmed the interaction. The circumstances suggest that the photograph was taken without the injured man's free and informed consent. © ISNA

On 19 November 2022, a day after Zeinab Molaierad shared her moving testimony at her son's funeral, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Corporation (IRIB) aired an interview with Zeinab Molaierad in which she asked people "not to exploit my words". She also said that "many [officials] have promised to investigate the matter to ensure that the person [responsible for Kian Pirfalak's death] is executed". In the following years, she revealed, through her activism in pursuit of truth and justice, that she was coerced into appearing on camera for the interview.

On 4 December 2022, a hacktivist group by the name of Black Reward obtained a classified audio file from a top-level meeting between several officials which called into question the state narrative concerning the arrests carried out in connection with the incident in Izeh. Black Reward obtained the audio file after hacking the website of Fars News Agency, which is affiliated with the IRGC. In the audio file, Reza Davari, the secretary general of a political faction close to the Supreme Leader, is heard saying that, contrary to the claims made, those arrested were not related to the incident in Izeh and the individual arrested in Makou was in fact an arms smuggler.[377]

On 20 December 2022, security forces arrested a protester, Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri, in the village of Paresourakh near Izeh and subsequently introduced him as the "main agent of the terrorist incident" in Izeh on 16 November 2022. However, according to information gathered by Amnesty International from informed sources, Mojahed Kourkouri was not at the protests that took place in Izeh on 16 November 2022.[378]

377. Black Reward, Telegram post: (دو ساعت و نیم) *نسخه کامل فایل صوتی «نشست شورای ائتلاف نیروهای انقلاب» ["Meeting of 'Coalition Council of Revolutionary Forces' (two and a half hours)"], 4 December 2022, https://t.me/black_reward/186 (in Persian).
378. Amnesty International, "Iran: Man facing imminent protest-related execution: Mojahed Kourkouri" (Index: 13/7565/2024), 5 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7565/2024/en

In early April 2023, a Revolutionary Court in Ahvaz ruled that Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri was involved in the killing of Kian Pirfalak and, for this and othe reasons, sentenced him to death for "*moharebeh*" (waging war against God), "*efsad-e fel arz"* (corruption on earth) and "*baghi*" (armed rebellion against the state). His trial was grossly unfair. He was subjected to enforced disappearance for months and tortured to extract forced "confessions", which were then broadcast in propaganda videos on Iran's state media. In one video he is seen in a hospital bed with his arm bandaged. Branch 39 of the Supreme Court subsequently upheld his conviction and death sentence. This was despite the fact that relatives of Kian Pirfalak repeatedly and publicly stated that Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri was not involved in the killing of their loved one and attributed responsibility to Iran's security forces. The authorities arbitrarily executed Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri on 11 June 2025.[379]

5.3.2(VIII) ESFAHAN PROVINCE

In Esfahan province, at least six protesters and bystanders – five men and one woman – were killed by security forces during violent protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. The killings took place in three counties; namely, Fouladshahr,[380] Semirom[381] and Esfahan.[382]

Of these five victims, all were fatally shot. At least one of them was shot with metal pellets.[383] The fatal incidents took place on 22 September, 8 October, 16 and 17 November 2022, aligning with nationwide patterns of periods in which protests intensified and authorities escalated their use of lethal force.

379. Amnesty International, "Iran: Arbitrary execution of Woman Life Freedom protester after sham trial and torture", 11 June 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/06/iran-arbitrary-execution-of-woman-life-freedom-protester-after-sham-trial-and-torture

380. The victim's name is Mahsa Mogoyee.

381. The victims' names are Ali Abbasi, Morad Bahramian and Moslem Houshangi.

382. The victims' names are Ahmad Shokrollahi and Javad Mousavi.

383. The victim's name is Mahsa Mogoyee.



Mahsa Mogoyee's father holding a picture of her
© Private

In Fouladshahr, a woman, **Mahsa Mogoyee**, was killed on 22 September 2022 after security forces fired metal pellets at her from close range. According to information received from the Abdorrahman Boroumand Center and a Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian) journalist, Parham Ghobadi, who had spoken to informed sources in Iran, Mahsa Mogoyee was returning home from a protest when, in an alley away from the protest site, several individuals in plain clothes agents pulled up in a car in front of her and fired metal pellets at her from close range.[384] The sources concluded that the individuals were members of the security forces partly because the car in which they were travelling was a Peugeot Pars, a model typically used by plain-clothes agents in Iran, and partly because the car did not have a licence plate, which is another indicator.

Two days later, on 24 September 2022, the authorities broadcast a propaganda video, featuring coerced statements from her father saying:

> **"My daughter was on her way home. She was not anywhere affected by the unrest… I know police forces did not kill my daughter."**

The propaganda video also featured a statement from an individual introduced as an eyewitness, who said: "She was shot at from a Peugeot Pars vehicle with a firearm, and there were no police forces or police vehicles present at the scene."[385]

The video also featured the head of the Department of Justice of Esfahan province, Asadollah Jafari, stating:

> **"Investigations began in the early hours, and what has been established so far is that [she] was not at a site of protests and riots and was some distance away from it. The shooting was carried out by unidentified individuals using a gun [loaded with] metal pellets, similar to the type of ammunition seen in recent days during the riots… Two teams of experienced provincial investigators are examining the case. The judiciary will certainly conduct a thorough and precise investigation to identify the main perpetrators. The family has also filed a complaint."[386]**

Mahsa Mogoyee's family subsequently revealed that the statement was extracted under coercion. On 1 November 2022, her father published a video in which he addressed the authorities:

> **"Mahsa Mogoyee was martyred by plain-clothes forces. I want to know what my daughter's crime was; she was protesting with empty hands [when] you shot her, riddling her body with [pellets]… I have been**

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384. BBC Persian, Instagram post: مهسا موگویی، نوجوان ۱۹ ساله ای بود که در هفته اول اعتراضات سراسری اخیر در فولادشهر اصفهان کشته شد ["Mahsa Mogoyee was a 19-year-old teenager who was killed in the first week of the recent nationwide protests in Fouladshahr, Esfahan"], 15 May 2023, https://www.instagram.com/reel/CsRsTbBO0R-/ (in Persian); Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights in Iran, مهسا موگویی ["Mahsa Mogoyee"], https://www.iranrights.org/fa/memorial/story/-8758/mahsa-mogui (accessed on 15 August 2026).

385. Hawzah News, افشای دروغ بزرگ رسانه‌ای | روایت شاهدان عینی از کشته شدن مهسا موگویی + فیلم ["Exposing a major media lie: Eyewitness accounts of killing of Mahsa Mogoyee + video"], 24 September 2022, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1045313/افشای-دروغ-بزرگ-رسانه-ای-روایت-شاهدان-عینی-از-کشته-شدن-مهسا (in Persian).

386. See Chapter 11 on persistent impunity, including patterns of initial official statements denying responsibility and announcing investigations that, in the months and years that followed, failed to result in accountability.

going back and forth for 40 days, but they [the authorities] have not given me a proper answer… I demand justice… I cannot remain silent… I have been going back and forth for 40 days, but they [the authorities] have not given me a proper answer. I cannot sit silent. I demand justice… I cannot remain silent."[387]



Ali Abbasi (left), Morad Bahramian (centre) and Moslem Houshangi (right)
© Private

In Semirom, three victims – **Ali Abbasi**, **Morad Bahramian** and **Moslem Houshangi** – were shot and killed by security forces during a crackdown on protests that took place near Mandegar Square on the evening of 16 November 2022. In official statements made in response to public outcries over the killings in the small city, the county governor of Semirom, Morad Eliaspour, confirmed that, on that day, FARAJA forces in Semirom and the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Semirom county had requested additional forces from the provincial authorities and that this request was granted.[388] He also confirmed that, during the protests, assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets were fired, resulting in at least three deaths and other injuries. However, he denied that security forces were responsible for the shootings, claiming that "security forces do not carry combat firearms and are not authorized to use such weapons."[389]

Protesters and victims' families rejected the state narrative, with the burial and subsequent memorial ceremonies of the victims in Semirom witnessing widespread participation from the local community.[390] Attendees at the ceremonies chanted slogans such as "Down with Khamenei" and "Our lives are in our hands – enough of oppression and injustice against us".[391]

In Esfahan, two men were shot and killed. One of them, **Ahmad Shokrollahi**, was fatally shot on 8 October 2022 while passing through an area where protests were taking place as he was taking his mother to a hospital, according to information obtained by Amnesty International from a BBC Persian journalist, Farin Asemi, who had spoken to an informed source in Iran. The other one, **Javad Mousavi**, was killed on 17 November 2022 during protests marking the 40th day following the death of the first protester in Esfahan. According to information published by Iran Wire, an independent media outlet outside Iran, security forces chased and shot Javad Mousavi as he was attempting to seek shelter in a

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387. Iran International, X post: پدر مهسا موگویی، از کشته‌شدگان اعتراضات فولادشهر اصفهان، با انتشار ویدیویی گفت:... ["Mahsa Mogoyee's father, whose daughter was killed during the protests in Fouladshahr, Esfahan, said in a video:..."], 1 November 2022, https://x.com/iranintl/status/1587530311231066117 (in Persian).

388. Khabarban, فرماندار: در جریان ۳ روز ناآرامی در سمیرم، سپاه از مرکز درخواست نیروی کمکی کرد ["County governor: During three days of unrest in Semirom, the IRGC requested reinforcements from the centre"], 20 November 2022, https://36441447.khabarban.com (in Persian).

389. Khabarban, فرماندار: در جریان ۳ روز ناآرامی در سمیرم، سپاه از مرکز درخواست نیروی کمکی کرد ["County governor: During three days of unrest in Semirom, the IRGC requested reinforcements from the centre"], 20 November 2022, https://36441447.khabarban.com (in Persian).

390. Persian service of Voice of America (VOA Persian), سخنرانی خواهر علی عباسی برای جمعیتی انبوه: جوان‌های ایران‌خاتون مثل ققنوس می‌مونن ["Speech by Ali Abbasi's sister to a large crowd: Iranian youth of Iran-Khatoun are like phoenixes"], 29 December 2022, https://ir.voanews.com/a/6896673.html (in Persian).

391. VOA Persian, شعار «مرگ بر خامنه‌ای» در سمیرم؛ خاکسپاری دو کشته شده اعتراضات این شهر ["'Death to Khamenei' slogan in Semirom: Burial of two victims of protests in the city"], 18 November 2022, https://ir.voanews.com/a/semirom-protest-iran-funeral-victim/6840376.html (in Persian); Iran International, X post: ویدیوی رسیده به ایران اینترنشنال نشان می‌دهد که روز جمعه ۲۷ آبان‌ماه، مردم در سمیرم برای مراسم خاکسپاری علی عباسی، از کشته‌شدگان اعتراضات، شعار می‌دهند: «جون‌مون دست‌مونه، ظلم و ستم بسه‌مونه» ["Video sent to Iran International shows that on Friday 18 November, people in Semirom chanted during the burial ceremony of Ali Abbasi, one of the victims of the protests: 'Our lives are in our hands, enough of oppression and tyranny'"], 18 November 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1593543188295610370 (in Persian).

house.[392]

5.3.2(IX) FARS PROVINCE

In Fars province, at least six protesters, all men, were killed by security forces during violent protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. Five were killed in Shiraz[393] and one was killed in Marvdasht.[394]

Five of the six victims were fatally shot. At least one of the five was shot with metal pellets.[395] The sixth victim was subjected to fatal beatings.[396] Four of the fatal incidents took place between 15-19 November 2022 and the remaining two on 22 September and 15 October 2022, mirroring nationwide patterns of periods in which protests intensified and authorities escalated their use of lethal force.

At least one protester was killed on 22 September 2022 during the first day of protests in Shiraz. Iranian authorities claimed that the victim, **Amirreza Oladi**, was an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions who was killed by "rioters".[397] However, an eyewitness account, shared with Amnesty International by an activist, contradicted the official account. The eyewitness described Amirreza Oladi as a protester who was shot with metal pellets while being chased by security forces who had violently dispersed a gathering on Mirzayee Boulevard.



Amirreza Oladi (left) and Esmail Shanbedi (right)
© Private

On 15 October 2022, another victim, **Esmail Shanbedi**, was fatally injured by security forces in Gha'ani Street in Shiraz, where there was a militarized security presence after protests that had recently occurred nearby. An informed source in Iran, Sheida, told Amnesty International that, in the early hours of 15 October 2022, Esmail Shanbedi and his friend were riding a motorcycle in the street when they came across members of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA positioned in the street. As they passed them, they chanted slogans. In response, the Special Cohorts began chasing them and fired metal pellets at them. According to Sheida, as Esmail Shanbedi and his friend attempted to flee, the Special Cohorts rammed their vehicle into the motorcycle, causing Esmail Shanbedi to fall to the ground and sustain spinal injuries from the impact. The agents then subjected him to severe beatings. He suffered multiple serious injuries, including broken ribs, lung damage, internal bleeding, head injuries and kidney failure. The security forces subsequently called an ambulance and he was transferred to Rajai Hospital in a critical condition. He died from his injuries several days later, on 19 October 2022.

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392. Iran Wire, چشم‌هایش؛ سید جواد موسوی را با شلیک به چشم‌هایش کشتند ["His eyes; Seyed Javad Mousavi was killed with a shot to his eyes"], 14 March 2023, https://iranwire.com/fa/special-features/114752-چشمهایش-سید-جواد-موسوی-را-با-شلیک-به-چشمهایش-کشتند (in Persian).
393. The victims' names are Amirreza Oladi, Esmail Shanbedi, Hossein Shirazipour, Omid Moayedi, and Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou.
394. The victim's name is Arman Emadi.
395. The victim's name is Amirreza Oladi.
396. The victim's name is Esmail Shanbedi.
397. Fars News Agency, امید مویدی از شاخص‌های معرفی به عنوان شهید برخوردار است ["Omid Moayedi meets the criteria to be recognized as a martyr"], 21 November 2022, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1669038058000642916 (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, شهادت تضمین کننده پایداری و ماندگاری اسلام و انقلاب اسلامی است ["Martyrdom is the guarantor of the stability and permanence of Islam and the Islamic Revolution"], 26 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/04/2779068/شهادت-تضمین-کننده-پایداری-و-ماندگاری-اسلام-و-انقلاب-اسلامی-است (in Persian); Fars News Agency, شهادت؛ پاداش جوان ۲۴ ساله شیرازی ["Martyrdom: The reward of a 24-year-old young man from Shiraz"], 18 September 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1695011963000898186/شهادت؛-پاداش-جوان-۲۴-ساله-شیرازی (in Persian).



Omid Moayedi (left), Hossein Shirazipour (centre) and Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou (right) © Private

The remaining three victims in Shiraz – **Omid Moayedi**, **Hossein Shirazipour** and **Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou** – and the victim in Marvdasht, **Arman Emadi**, were killed between 15 and 19 November 2022, during a period of nationwide protests.

Omid Moayedi was killed on 15 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests on Zerehi Boulevard and Pasdaran Boulevard near Mohammad Rasoul Allah clinic in Shiraz. An informed source in Iran, Ardalan, told Amnesty International that Omid Moayedi fell to the ground after being struck by a security forces vehicle. According to Ardalan, several members of the security forces on motorcycles then arrived at the scene, first beating him with batons and subsequently shooting him from a distance of less than 2m. Amnesty International reviewed a copy of the burial certificate of Omid Moayedi, which lists the cause of death as "hypovolemic shock", "perforation of internal organs" and "collision with a penetrating metal projectile".

On 22 November 2022, the then county governor of Shiraz, Lotfollah Sheibani, acknowledged the death of Omid Moayedi. However, he distorted the facts surrounding the causes and circumstances of his death, stating:

> **"Omid Zareh Moayedi[398] died while passing through Ma'ali Abad Street when he was shot with a firearm during clashes between security forces and armed rioters. While the identification of the shooter or shooters is still under investigation, the examinations indicate that he was not accompanying the rioters."[399]**

Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou was fatally shot by security forces the next day during protests in or around Ma'ali Abad Street, where protests frequently took place. On 19 November 2022, the head of the Office for Security and Police Affairs at the Office of the Provincial Governor of Fars, Vahid Sha'bani, acknowledged the death of Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou. However, he claimed that the victim "was not among the rioters and protesters":

> **"This citizen [Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou] was passing through Ma'ali Abad Street, one of the centres of riots, when he was injured and transferred to the hospital. Counter-revolutionary propaganda claiming that this young man was among the rioters on 16 November are not true."[400]**

Hossein Shirazipour was fatally shot by security forces three days later, on 19 November 2022, during a crackdown on protests that took place in the context of the funeral ceremony of Sajjad Ghaemi Bahman Biglou in Keshen cemetery in Shiraz, according to information broadcast by Iran International citing an informed source close to Hossein Shirazipour's family. On 20 November 2022, the then county governor of Shiraz, Lotfollah Sheibani, acknowledged the death of one man during the events at

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398. While the authorities referred to the victim as Omid Zareh Moayedi, Amnesty International recorded his name as Omid Moayedi, consistent with the spelling on his burial certificate and gravestone.

399. Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), ["Individual who lost their life in Ma'ali Abad, Shiraz, meets criteria to be recognized as a martyr"], 21 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84949760 (in Persian). See Chapter 11 on systemic impunity, including patterns of initial official statements denying responsibility and announcing investigations that, in the months and years that followed, failed to result in accountability.

400. Asr-e Iran, ["Office of the Provincial Governor of Fars: 'Sajjad Ghaemi,' the citizen who lost his life in Shiraz, was not among the protesters"], 19 November 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/866833/استانداری-فارس-سجاد-قائمی-شهروند-جان-باخته-در-شیراز-در-صف-معترضان-نبوده (in Persian). See Chapter 11 on systemic impunity, including patterns of initial official statements denying responsibility and announcing investigations that, in the months and years that followed, failed to result in accountability.

Keshen cemetery, without naming the victim. However, he distorted the facts surrounding the causes and circumstances of his death, stating:

> **"A man [Hossein Shirazipour] was passing through the area of Keshen cemetery in Shiraz when he was hit by metal pellets and injured. He was transferred to medical centres, but due to the severity of his injuries, he died… This individual was a passer-by and a local shopkeeper who owned a car repair shop, and was not among the rioters… Identifying and arresting the perpetrators responsible for his death is on the agenda of police investigators."[401]**



Arman Emadi © Private

In Marvdasht, Arman Emadi sustained fatal injuries on 16 November 2022 after security forces fired metal pellets at his head, according to a journalist who spoke to an informed source in Iran and shared their information with Amnesty International. He was declared dead three days later on 19 November 2022. Amnesty International examined an X-ray image showing dozens of pellets in the skull and face area, along with a forensic report from the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran (Legal Medicine Organization), the state forensic institute, dated 20 November 2022, which stated that Arman Emadi died from "damage to brain tissue", "fracture of the eye socket bone" and "collision with penetrating projectile – metal pellet".

5.3.2(X) OTHER PROVINCES

Amnesty International recorded the names and details of at least 21 other protesters and bystanders – 17 men, one woman, and three boys – who were killed by security forces during violent protest dispersals or in militarized areas in 15 counties across 12 other provinces. These comprise Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province;[402] Hamedan, Hamedan province;[403] Parsian[404] and Gheshm,[405] both in Hormozgan province; Ilam, Ilam province;[406] Mashhad[407] and Ghouchan,[408] both in Khorasan Razavi province; Bojnourd, North Khorasan province;[409] Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province;[410] Khorramabad, Lorestan province;[411] Arak, Markazi province;[412] Alvand[413] and Ghazvin,[414] both in Ghazvin province; Garmsar, Semnan province;[415] and Zanjan, Zanjan province.[416]

Of these 21 victims, 15 were fatally shot, in at least four cases[417] with metal pellets, and one was fatally struck by a tear canister fired at him from close range.[418] Five others were subjected to fatal beatings.[419]

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401. IRNA, از شایعه تا واقعیت درگیری در محله کشن شیراز ["From rumour to reality: the clash in the Kashan neighbourhood of Shiraz"], 20 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84948755/از-شایعه-تا-واقعیت-درگیری-در-محله-کشن-شیراز (in Persian).
402. The victims' names are Ali Araghi and Aysan Madanpasand.
403. The victim's name is Hamid Saneipour.
404. The victim's name is Hamed Molaei.
405. The victim's name is Hamed Sedighi.
406. The victim's name is Mohsen Gheysari.
407. The victim's name is Abolfazl Adinezadeh.
408. The victims' names are Ali Mozafari and Mehdi Babrnejad.
409. The victim's name is Amirhossein Mosaddegh Sharifpour.
410. The victims' names are Mehrdad Behnam Asl and Pedram Azarnoush.
411. The victim's name is Sepehr Biranvand.
412. The victims' names are Alireza Karimi and Sina Malayeri.
413. The victim's name is Alireza Fathi.
414. The victim's name is Javad Heydari.
415. The victim's name is Mohammad Mehdi Asgari.
416. The victims' names are Mehdi Mousavi Nikou, Mehrdad Ghorbani and Rasoul Haddadi.
417. The victims' names are Abolfazl Adinezadeh, Hamid Saneipour, Mehdi Mousavi Nikou and Mohsen Gheysari.
418. The victim's name is Rasoul Haddadi.
419. The victims' names are Alireza Karimi, Amirhossein Mosaddegh Sharifpour, Aysan Madanpasand, Ali Araghi and Sina Malayeri.

Twelve of the 21 recorded victims in these provinces, that is more than half of the total, were killed by security forces during the very first days of protests between 20 and 22 September 2022. All but one were fatally shot by security forces in circumstances where there was no imminent threat to life, pointing to the unlawful use of firearms from the outset as a tool of dispersal and repression.[420]

The remaining victim was fatally beaten during the protests in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province, on 20 September 2022.[421] An eyewitness, Saman, told Amnesty International that security forces fatally struck her on the head with a stick. The next day, authorities issued a blanket denial, attributing her death to a heart attack.[422]



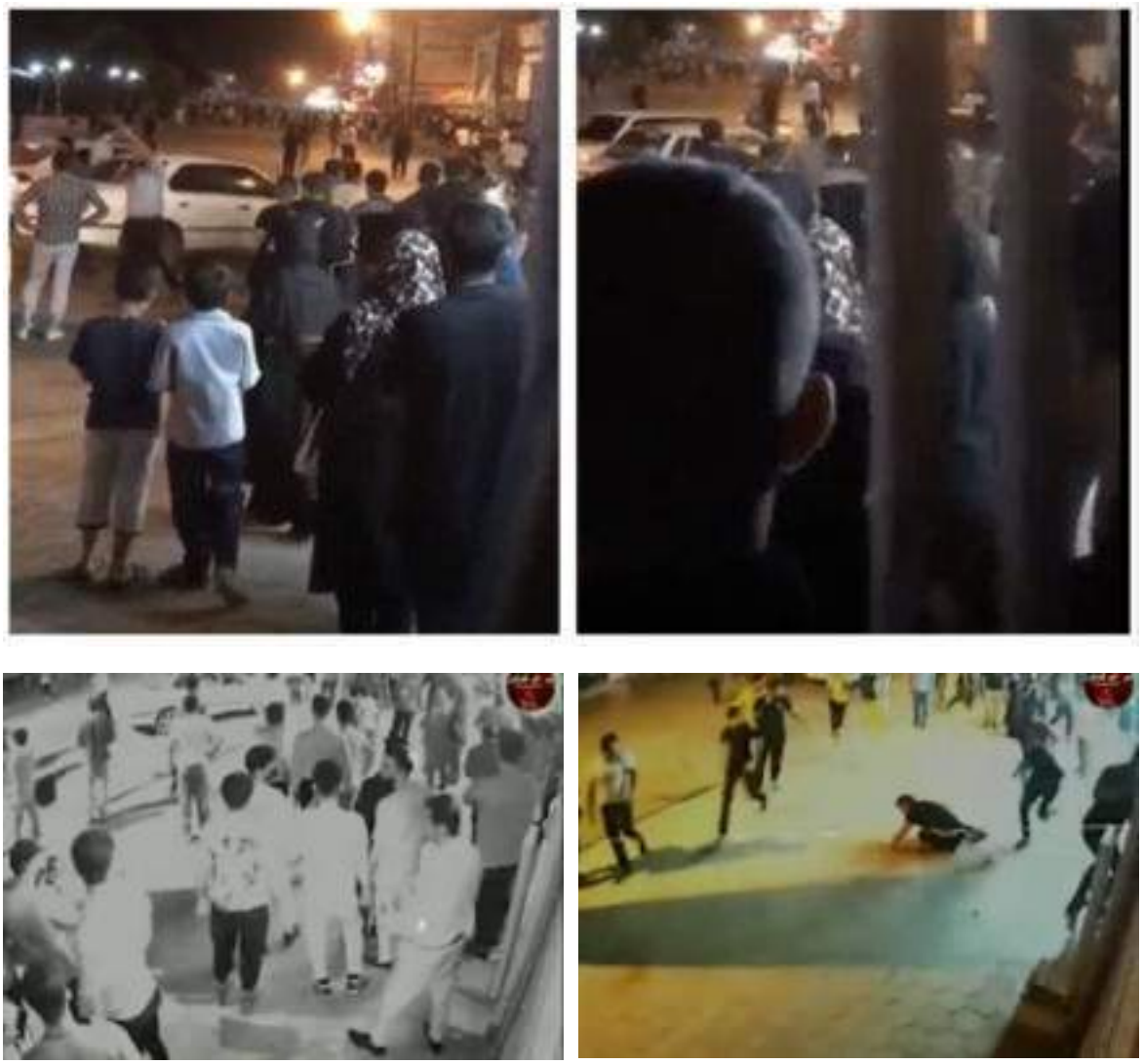
Mehrdad Behnam Asl
© Private

Two videos capture the moments when a bystander, **Mehrdad Behnam Asl**, was shot during the protests in Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, on 22 September 2022.

The first video shows a crowd of bystanders, including children, gathered on the pavement, while some protesters in the front are running, filming the scene, and a few are throwing stones.[423] Repeated sounds of gunfire can be heard in the footage. A man, later identified as Mehrdad Behnam Asl, stands among the crowd of bystanders with his back to the camera. The footage cuts after he suddenly collapses to the ground amid screams.

The second video captures the same incident from a different angle.[424] It shows the same crowd of bystanders, including Mehrdad Behnam Asl, observing the scene before suddenly dispersing as he collapses to the ground.

420. The victims' names are Ali Mozafari, Alireza Fathi, Hamid Saneipour, Javad Heydari, Mehdi Babrnejad, Mehdi Mousavi Nikou, Mehrdad Behnam Asl, Mehrdad Ghorbani, Mohammad Mehdi Asgari, Mohsen Gheysari and Pedram Azarnoush.
421. The name of this victim is Aysan Madanpasand.
422. Mehr News Agency,خانواده «آیسان معدن پسندی»: از داغ فرزند مردم سوءاستفاده نکنید ["The family of 'Aysan Madanpasand': Do not exploit the grief of the people's child"], 21 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5595129/خانواده-آیسان-معدن-پسندی-از-داغ-فرزند-مردم-سوءاستفاده-نکنید (in Persian).
423. Manoto TV, Facebook post: لحظه شلیک به مهرداد بهنام در دهدشت... ["Moment Mehrdad Behnam was shot in Dehdasht..."], 16 December 2022, https://www.facebook.com/manototv/videos/686736823086634 (in Persian).
424. IRN280, video on file with Amnesty International.



Four stills from two videos that capture the scene where a bystander, Mehrdad Behnam Asl, was shot during the protests in Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, on 22 September 2022. First still (top left) shows the scene where protesters and bystanders came under gunfire. Second still (top right) shows Mehrdad Behnam Asl standing next to another person with his back to the camera. Third still (bottom left) shows the same scene as the second still filmed from another angle. Fourth still (bottom right) shows Mehrdad Behnam collapsing on the ground. © Private



Javad Heydari © Private

Patterns of unlawful conduct that further heightened the risk of death and were documented throughout the three-month protest period, such as security forces leaving injured victims bleeding unattended and obstructing emergency medical treatment of those injured, were also evident from the very first days of the lethal crackdown, including in these 12 provinces.

For example, according to information obtained from an informed source, after a victim, **Javad Heydari**, was fatally shot by security forces in Ghazvin, Ghazvin province, on 22 September 2022, security forces first took him to a police station and only transferred him to a hospital several hours later. A copy of his burial certificate, reviewed by Amnesty International, cites the cause of death as "extensive internal bleeding" resulting from "from the rupture of the left buttock's artery". This aligns with information received by Amnesty International from an eyewitness, Faramarz, in Ghazvin, who described seeing security forces preventing the transfer to a hospital of an injured man shot on 22 September 2022, whom he later learned was Javad Heydari. Faramarz said: "A large number of plain-

clothes agents had gathered around the individual. They did not allow people to stop by and attacked anyone who tried to do so with stun weapons… I am outraged that they just left him to die."

Like the rest of the country, these 12 provinces continued to experience violent crackdowns in October, November and December 2022, with certain periods witnessing an escalation in the use of lethal force. Five victims were killed by the security forces in November 2022, mostly on 16-17 November 2022 when protests marked the anniversary period of the nationwide protests of 2019. Three of them were fatally shot,[425] while two were fatally beaten.[426]

Four other victims were killed by the security forces on 8, 22 and 26 October and 6 December 2022. Two were fatally beaten,[427] one was fatally shot with metal pellets,[428] and one was fatally struck by a tear gas canister.[429] On most of these days, lethal crackdowns took place across the country as protests surged for various reasons, including coordinated calls for nationwide demonstrations on 8 October 2022, the 40th day following the death of Zhina Mahsa Amini on 26 October 2022, and protests surrounding the National Student Day on 7 December 2022.

5.3.3 DEATHS IN CUSTODY

STATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEATHS IN CUSTODY

As detailed below, UN Special Rapporteurs, the UN Human Rights Committee and regional human rights courts have consistently affirmed the presumption of state responsibility for deaths in custody until such responsibility is refuted based on an independent, impartial, effective, thorough and transparent investigation conducted in accordance with the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions[430] and the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death.[431]

Deaths in custody are deaths that "occurred when a person was detained by, or was in the custody of, the State, its organs, or agents. This includes, for example, all deaths of persons detained in prisons, in other places of detention (official and otherwise) and in other facilities where the State exercises heightened control over their life."[432]

The UN Secretary-General has stated:

> **"[I]n the custodial environment, a state has a heightened duty to ensure and respect the right to life. Thus, there is a rebuttable presumption of state responsibility – whether through acts of commission or omission – for custodial deaths. The state must affirmatively show that it lacks the**

425. The victims' names are Hamed Molaei, Hamed Sedighi and Sepehr Biranvand.
426. The victims' names are Ali Araghi and Alireza Karimi.
427. The victims' names are Amirhossein Mosaddegh Sharifpour and Sina Malayeri.
428. The victim's name is Abolfazl Adinezadeh.
429. The victim's name is Rasoul Haddadi.
430. Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/65, *Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions*, 24 May 1989, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/executions.pdf
431. OHCHR, *The Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death (2016): The Revised United Nations Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions* (Minnesota Protocol), 2017, p. 22.
432. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), p. 1.

responsibility to avoid this inference, and has an obligation to investigate and publicly report its findings and evidence supporting them."[433]

Similarly, the UN Human Rights Committee has stated:

"Loss of life occurring in custody, in unnatural circumstances, creates a presumption of arbitrary deprivation of life by State authorities, which can only be rebutted on the basis of a proper investigation that establishes the State's compliance with its obligations under article 6."[434]

Investigations must be undertaken by an independent, impartial expert body, in a prompt, effective, thorough and transparent manner. The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions has stated:

"The main purpose is to discover the truth of the circumstances leading to the death. This includes identifying the deceased, determining the cause and manner of death, and thus distinguishing between homicide, suicide, accidental death and natural death, always remembering that what appears to be a natural death may well have been caused or contributed to by prison conditions. The investigation may inform prosecution and punishment of those responsible, lead to an effective remedy for the next of kin and prevent the recurrence of similar deaths… As it is presumed that all prisoner deaths are unlawful, the scene of a prisoner death should be regarded as crime scene. A trained forensic doctor should attend the scene, preferably with the body in situ, prior to undertaking an autopsy. An autopsy must be conducted in all cases. Forensic doctors should have access to all evidence and information they deem relevant to their investigation."[435]

Furthermore, state authorities must ensure that all records and potential sources of evidence are gathered, secured and made available to investigators. These include medical records, visitor logs, closed circuit television records, the deceased's belongings and other relevant sources of information.[436]

Upholding the right to life requires that there be full transparency of investigations and accountability for all deaths in prisons. With respect to the treatment of family members, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary executions has stated:

"The next of kin of the deceased should be informed of the death of the prisoner at the earliest opportunity, be consulted with and kept regularly informed. All significant developments should be brought to their attention by the independent investigating authority in a coordinated and respectful fashion. The next of kin should also be properly supported throughout the investigation, taking account of their religion and culture. They should be permitted to have a representative present at the autopsy. If they wish to speak with the forensic doctor, either before and/or after the autopsy, they should have the opportunity to do so… Throughout the investigation, all involved must respect the dignity of the dead. Once the investigation is complete, the body of the deceased,

433. UN General Assembly, Resolution 68/261 Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, adopted on 29 January 2014, UN Doc. A/RES/68/261, para. 52, citing UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 28 May 2009, UN Doc. A/HRC/11/2/Add.5, para. 42.
434. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36 (previously cited), para. 29.
435. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Deaths in Prisons* (previously cited), para. 50.
436. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Deaths in Prisons* (previously cited), para. 52.

including all personal possessions, should be delivered to the next of kin in a compassionate manner, as soon as possible."[437]

Amnesty International recorded the names and details of 18 protesters and bystanders – 17 men and one woman – who died in state custody after security forces apprehended them in the context of protest crackdowns based on their real or perceived participation in or support for the protests.[438]

Under international law and standards, Iranian authorities should be presumed responsible for these 18 deaths, and they have failed to rebut this presumption. Instead, this presumption is strengthened by information gathered by Amnesty International about the circumstances of the victims' arrests, disappearances and deaths; the types of injuries the victims sustained; systematic patterns of state denial and cover-up; and the persecution of victims' families in the days, weeks and months following their loved ones' deaths. Based on this information, Amnesty International considers that these deaths must be subject to criminal investigations as unlawful deaths.

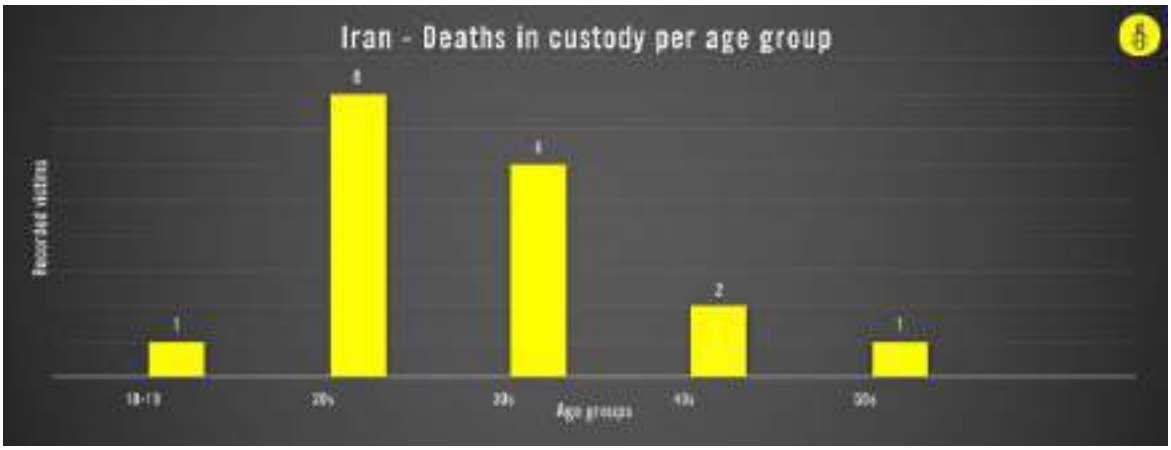


A collage of the photographs of 18 victims who died in state custody between October and December 2022 after security forces arrested them in the context of crackdowns on the Woman Life Freedom uprising. Top row (left to right): Amirjavad Asadzadeh, Heyman Aman, Esmail Dezvar, Mojtaba Ghena'ati Khalari, Ehsan Ghasemifar, and Mehrshad Shahidinejad. Second row from top (left to right): Hamed Bajizehi (Barahouie), Omid Hassani, Saman Ghaderbeig, Ramin Fatehi, Mehdi Karam Ashtiani, and Shadman Ahmadi. Third row from top (left to right): Ramin Karami, Hamed Salahshour, Saman Rahmani, Hamid Goli, Mohammad Lotfollahi and Darya Nazmdeh. All photographs © Private

437. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Deaths in Prisons* (previously cited), para. 54.
438. See Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en

The 18 victims died in custody in 13 counties across 10 provinces: two in the capital, Tehran, and one in Shahr-e Ghods (Tehran province); two in Karaj (Alborz province); two in Sanandaj, two in Saqqez and one in Dehgolan (Kurdistan province); two in Boukan (West Azerbaijan province); and one each in the counties of Arak (Markazi province), Dezpart (Khuzestan province), Kermanshah (Kermanshah province), Mashhad (Khorasan Razavi province), Shiraz (Fars province) and Zahedan (Sistan and Baluchistan province).

Of the 18 victims, one was aged 18-19, eight were in their 20s, six were in their 30s, two were in their 40s and one was in their 50s.



A chart showing the breakdown by age group of 18 recorded victims who died in custody during the Woman Life Freedom uprising © Amnesty International

The majority of recorded deaths in state custody occurred in October 2022 (eight victims) and November 2022 (eight victims), followed by December 2022 (two victims).

5.3.3(I) CIRCUMSTANCES OF ARREST AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Of the 18 victims whose deaths in custody Amnesty International recorded, only in one case known to Amnesty International did the authorities admit that the security forces had arrested the victim and caused his death. In this case, that of **Amirjavad Asadzadeh**, they acknowledged that the security forces had arrested him on 19 November 2022 while he was writing slogans on walls in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province, and fatally beat him. This acknowledgement came after his family filed a criminal complaint, which was exceptionally processed by a cooperative investigator, leading to the identification of the agents involved in his arrest and killing.

In three other cases, the authorities acknowledged the arrest of victims and their deaths in custody. However, they claimed that the victims committed suicide in custody. These cases were those of **Ramin Fatehi**, arrested in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 13 October 2022; **Heyman Aman**, arrested at his home in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 18 November 2022; and **Shadman Ahmadi**, arrested at his home in Dehgolan, Kurdistan province, on 8 December 2022. All three were arrested in the aftermath of protests, seemingly for their participation in or support for the protests.

In two other cases, those of **Hamed Bajizehi (Barahouie)** and **Ramin Karami**, the authorities admitted that security forces fatally shot or beat the victims. However, they did not acknowledge that these killings occurred in state custody:

- The authorities denied arresting Hamed Bajizehi (Barahouie) at his home, despite eyewitnesses seeing security forces take him away in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, on 17 October 2022, according to information received by Amnesty International from Haalvsh, a

Baluchi human rights group, which interviewed an informed source in Iran. Instead, the authorities claimed he was fatally shot, while attempting to escape arrest.

- The authorities claimed that Ramin Karami was shot during protests in Kermanshah, Kermanshah province, on 12 October 2022 and taken to a hospital where he later died, according to information received by Amnesty International from Kurdpa Human Rights Organization (Kurdpa), a Kurdish human rights group, which interviewed an informed source in Iran. However, the authorities failed to disclose what happened between 12 October 2022, the day on which he was shot, and 20 October 2022, the day on which his family learned he had died after being transferred by security forces to a hospital.

In the case of 11 other victims, the authorities formally denied the victims' arrest and any state involvement in their deaths. However, Amnesty International obtained information contradicting the state's version in each of these cases.

One of the 11 victims, **Hamid Goli**, was last heard from on 19 October 2022 when he briefly called his family to say he had been arrested during protests in Tehran, Tehran province, according to an informed source in Iran, Shilan, who spoke to Amnesty International.

In the case of 10 other victims, eyewitness accounts, gathered directly by Amnesty International or by journalists, family members and human rights defenders who spoke to Amnesty International, indicate that security forces violently apprehended and took them away, sometimes in public view. Eyewitnesses reported that, before being caught, some victims had collapsed to the ground while fleeing, after colliding with fixed objects or being struck with metal pellets or other ammunition. The details of these 10 victims are as follows:

- **Mehdi Karam Ashtiani**, apprehended while sounding his car's horn in solidarity with a protest in Tehran, Tehran province, on 1 October 2022;
- **Esmail Dezvar**, apprehended while driving through an area where a protest was underway in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 9 October 2022;
- **Mehrshad Shahidinejad**, apprehended while taking part in a protest in Arak, Markazi province, on 26 October 2022;
- **Mohammad Lotfollahi**, apprehended after being injured with metal pellets and falling to the ground during a protest in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 26 October 2022;
- **Darya Nazmdeh**, apprehended while taking part in a protest in Karaj, Alborz province, on 3 November 2022;
- **Saman Rahmani**, apprehended while writing slogans in Shahr-e Ghods, Tehran province, on 11 November 2022;
- **Saman Ghaderbeig**, arrested while taking part in a protest in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 15 November 2022;
- **Omid Hassani**, apprehended while taking part in a protest in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 17 November 2022;
- **Ehsan Ghasemifar**, apprehended while passing through a militarized area in Karaj, Alborz province, on 30 November 2022; and
- **Mojtaba Ghena'ati Khalari**, apprehended while writing slogans in Shiraz, Fars province, on 30 December 2022.

With respect to another victim, **Hamed Salahshour**, information received by Amnesty International indicates that he was apprehended while travelling by car with his fiancée from Esfahan to Izeh on 25 November 2022 in connection with his support for protesters in Izeh, Khuzestan province. However, the organization was unable to find out the authorities explained his death to his family.

5.3.3(II) CIRCUMSTANCES OF DISAPPEARANCE AND DEATH NOTIFICATION

In the case of eight of the 18 victims whose deaths in custody Amnesty International recorded, according to information available, less than 24 hours passed between when they were last seen or heard from and when their families learned of their deaths.[439] The period of enforced disappearance was between three and 10 days for six others,[440] and between two to four weeks for three others.[441]

In one other case, that of **Mehdi Karam Ashtiani**, the authorities concealed information about his fate and whereabouts for nearly 100 days following his disappearance on 1 October 2022 in Tehran, Tehran province. According to information obtained by a journalist who spoke to Amnesty International, his family learned around January 2023 that he had died the same day on which the security forces fired metal pellets at him from close range during a protest and took him away.

The circumstances of death notification were consistently cruel. Some victims' families learned of their loved ones' death after receiving a sudden call from a caller who refused to identify themselves directing them to a morgue or cemetery or summoning them to the local office of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC or a police station.

Other families desperately inquired about their loved ones at various places, including hospitals, police stations, prosecution offices, prisons, detention centres and morgues, when they did not return home from protests. The initial response from the authorities at these locations was often denial of any knowledge. Eventually, families would receive a call informing them that a body matching their loved one had been found. Sometimes, before official confirmation of death, medical workers would discreetly and in confidence inform families that security forces had brought in their loved one to the hospital and, after the victim died, had taken their body away. This prompted some families to revisit police stations, where authorities finally admitted that their loved one had died.

Families directed to a morgue were typically given only a few minutes to view their loved ones' bodies for identification. Those sent to cemeteries at the outset were sometimes denied even this opportunity. Upon arrival, they would find the grave already dug, with security forces present, preventing them from seeing, touching or saying a final goodbye to their loved one.

In the case of one victim, **Hamed Salahshour**, security forces buried his body in a remote area in Ghalehtol, Khuzestan province, without informing his family and disclosed the burial site to his family several days after he was last seen alive on 25 November 2022. According to information obtained by a journalist, Media Mosavvar, who spoke to Amnesty International, a group of protesters discreetly exhumed the body and returned it to his family, who re-buried him in accordance with their cultural rituals.

439. These victims are Amirjavad Asadzadeh, Esmail Dezvar, Mehrshad Shahidinejad, Mohammad Lotfollahi, Omid Hassani, Saman Ghaderbeig, Saman Rahmani, and Shadman Ahmadi.
440. These victims are Ehsan Ghasemifar, Hamed Salahshour, Heyman Aman, Mojtaba Ghena'ati Khalari, Ramin Fatehi and Ramin Karami.
441. These victims are Darya Nazmdeh, Hamed Bajizehi (Barahouie) and Hamid Goli.

5.3.3(III) TYPES OF INJURIES

In cases where families saw their loved ones' bodies at a morgue, they witnessed the severe injuries inflicted on the victims.

For 16 of the 18 victims whose deaths in custody Amnesty International recorded, eyewitnesses reported seeing clear signs of severe beatings on victims' bodies following their deaths, including skull fractures, shattered jaws, broken noses and teeth, crushed skulls or facial bones, head and facial wounds, blood around the nose and mouth, and deep bruising and swelling across heads or bodies.[442] In the case of **Hamed Bajizehi (Barahouie)**, his family saw gunshot wounds on his body, while in the case of **Mehdi Karam Ashtiani**, his family saw his face riddled with metal pellets and his eyes missing.

For the remaining two victims, **Saman Rahmani** and **Ramin Karami**, Amnesty International was unable to obtain information on the types of injuries observed on their bodies. However, for Saman Rahmani, eyewitness accounts obtained by human rights defenders indicate that the security forces severely beat him with batons on the head at the time of his arrest and that he died less than 24 hours afterwards.

For **Saman Ghaderbeig** and **Hamid Goli**, Amnesty International obtained graphic pictures of their bodies at the morgue.

For three victims – **Darya Nazmdeh**, **Hamid Goli** and **Mehdi Karam Ashtiani** – Amnesty International also obtained copies of burial certificates corroborating eyewitness accounts of the fatal injuries they sustained. The burial certificate of Darya Nazmdeh explains the cause of death with general phrases such as "shock from trauma, multiple injuries (multiple fractures and bleeding) and collision with a hard object (accident)". The burial certificate of Hamid Goli refers to "brain injuries, brain bleeding and skull fracture". The burial certificate of Mehdi Karam Ashtiani cites the cause of death as "skull fracture and brain tissue damage; impact of a high-velocity projectile to the head".

5.3.3(IV) STATE DENIAL AND COVER-UP

Official confirmations of death were generally accompanied by vague official accounts, attributing deaths to suicides, accidental falls from heights, heart attacks, poisoning or car accidents, none of which was supported by evidence or could explain the types of injuries seen on victims' bodies.

Before allowing grieving families to see their loved one's body at the morgue or directing them to a cemetery, members of the security forces frequently forced families to sign documents or make televised statements, stating they had no complaints against the state and falsely attributing the cause of death to a heart attack, accident or suicide. This treatment was consistent with that of families whose loved ones were unlawfully killed in the context of protest dispersals.

442. These victims are Amirjavad Asadzadeh, Darya Nazmdeh, Ehsan Ghasemifar, Esmail Dezvar, Hamed Bajizehi (Barahouie), Hamed Salahshour, Hamid Goli, Heyman Aman, Mehdi Karam Ashtiani, Mehrshad Shahidinejad, Mohammad Lotfollahi, Mojtaba Ghena'ati Khalari, Omid Hassani, Ramin Fatehi, Saman Ghaderbeig and Shadman Ahmadi.

Members of the security forces frequently threatened families, telling them that refusal to comply would result in being denied access to the body and authorities secretly burying their loved one in an unmarked location. They also threatened surviving relatives, saying that they could suffer similar "fatal accidents" or be imprisoned or executed. The pressure to accept the state narrative sometimes continued even after burial, with security forces threatening to exhume the body and re-bury it in a secret location if the family spoke out.

The authorities also instructed families to explicitly tell attendees at memorial ceremonies that their loved ones had died from a car accident or illness, in an effort to discredit circulating reports that security forces had killed the victim.

According to information obtained by Kurdish human rights defenders who spoke to Amnesty International, the family of one victim, **Esmail Dezvar**, was even forced, under coercion and threats that a detained relative would be executed, to falsely attribute his death to a "car accident" on his memorial poster. Amnesty International reviewed the poster.



The memorial poster of Esmail Dezvar, who died in state custody hours after he was arrested on 9 October 2022. His family was coerced to falsely note on his memorial poster that he died "due to a heart wrenching car accident". This false information is written in red under his name. © Private

Iran Wire, an independent Persian-language media outlet based outside Iran, reported that, in the case of **Darya Nazmdeh**, the authorities not only falsely attributed her death to a car accident but also wrongly recorded her date of death as occurring a week before her arrest. Friends of hers witnessed her arrest during the protests in Karaj, Alborz province, on 3 November 2022, and her family stated that they were in contact with her just hours before she was detained.[443]

Amnesty International obtained and reviewed copies of the burial or death certificates of three victims – **Mehrshad Shahidinejad**, **Esmail Dezvar** and **Heyman Aman** – which listed the cause of death as "unknown" or "under examination". Despite this, members of the security forces conditioned the release and burial of the victim's body on the family's acceptance of the state narrative. Amnesty International also reviewed a copy of the death certificate of **Saman Ghaderbeig**, which cited "behavioural disorder diseases" as the cause of death. Security forces first claimed he had died in a car accident and then changed their narrative to suicide.

443. Iran Wire, دریا نظم‌ده، از کشته شدگان اعتراضات در کرج؛ گفتند بگویید تصادف کرده ["Darya Nazmdeh, one of the victims of the protests in Karaj: They told her to say she had an accident"], 15 December 2022, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/111335--دریا-نظمده-از-کشته-شدگان-اعتراضات-در-کرج-گفتند-بگویید-تصادف-کرده (in Persian).

5.3.4 POST-CUSTODY DEATHS

STATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR POST-CUSTODY DEATHS

The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has emphasized that the presumption of state responsibility for the deaths of prisoners extends to circumstances when "prisoners die outside prison, during transport, following admission to a hospital from prison… or after formal prison release":

> **"The death of person under the control of prison authorities is a prison death. Deaths are prison-related when prisoners die outside prison, during transport or following admission to a hospital from prison and should be reported to investigating authorities. Delayed prison-related fatalities may occur after formal prison release. Indeed, because the early post-release period is high risk, it should be presumed that all deaths occurring within 30 days of release are prison-related unless that presumption can be rebutted. However, prison-related deaths may also occur after this period of time."[444]**

Amnesty International recorded the cases of 10 individuals – five men, two women and three children, comprising two boys and a girl – who died after release from custody, with reports published by human rights defenders or journalists indicating that their deaths were prison-related.[445] These 10 victims were from nine counties across eight provinces.[446]

According to information received by Amnesty International, in five cases, physical injuries sustained as a result of torture and other ill-treatment allegedly caused or contributed to the victims' deaths. Two of the victims were under 18 years of age;[447] two others were in their 20s[448] and one was in his 50s.[449]

444. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Deaths in Prisons*, 18 April 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/53/29, paras 45 and 66.
445. See Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en
446. The nine counties are Amol, Boukan, Hadishahr, Karaj, Kordkoy, Sardasht, Shoush, Sirjan and Tehran. The eight provinces are Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Golestan, Kerman, Khuzestan, Mazandaran, Tehran and West Azerbaijan.
447. The victims' names are Barzin Hamzehzadeh and Setayesh Sharifinia.
448. The victims' names are Maryam Arvin and Shahriar Adeli.
449. The victim's name is Mohammad Haji Rasoulpour.



A collage of the photographs of 10 victims who died after release from custody, with reports published by human rights defenders or journalists indicating that their deaths were prison-related. The top row features five victims who died by suicide shortly after release, with reports published by journalists or human rights defenders alleging that they took their own lives due to mental harm caused by torture or other ill-treatment in custody. The bottom row features five other victims who allegedly died as a result of physical injuries sustained through torture and other ill-treatment. Top row (left to right): Abbas Mansouri, Farham Nikpour, Arshia Emam Gholizadeh, Mohsen Jafarirad, and Yalda Agha Fazli. Bottom row (left to right): Maryam Arvin, Shahriar Adeli, Setayesh Sharifinia, Barzin Hamzehzadeh and Mohammad Haji Rasoulpour. All photographs © Private

Three of these five victims – **Shahriar Adeli**, **Setayesh Sharifinia** and **Mohammad Haji Rasoulpour** – died less than a month after their release from custody:

- **Shahriar Adeli** died on 9 December 2022, six days after he was released on bail from detention on 3 December 2022 and admitted to a hospital for serious injuries that were consistent with physical torture and proved fatal. A journalist and a human rights defender who spoke to informed sources in Iran, told Amnesty International that Shahriar Adeli had been arrested in connection with his participation in protests in Sardasht, West Azerbaijan province, on 26 November 2022 and held in a detention facility run by the Ministry of Intelligence. Amnesty International obtained a graphic photograph of his body at the morgue, which was reviewed by a forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International. Among other injuries visible in the photograph, the pathologist identified a blunt force injury on the right side of the back of the body over the lower ribs, comprising an arc-shaped purple bruise with associated abrasion, and estimated its dimensions to be about 20cm by 3cm.
- **Setayesh Sharifinia** died on 13 January 2023 less than a month after her release from detention. A journalist, who spoke to an informed source in Iran, told Amnesty International that the authorities transferred Setayesh Sharifinia from a detention centre to a hospital in Kordkoy,

Golestan province, on an emergency basis on 27 December 2022.[450] In the following days, she was released and returned home, but was readmitted to the hospital after her health deteriorated again. According to the journalist, medical workers at the hospital told her family that Setayesh Sharifinia had extensive injuries on her body and suffered damage to one of her lungs. Following her death, state media outlets broadcast a statement from her mother, who, in a distressed voice, said, "My daughter's death has nothing to do with the noise, and please do not exploit my child's death." They also aired a statement from an individual presented as a doctor, who stated, "The deceased had a history of hospitalization and underlying health conditions. She suffered from heart and respiratory issues."[451] Amnesty International has serious concerns that these statements were extracted under coercion, as the Iranian authorities have a long-standing documented record of forcing statements from victims' relatives under threat of harm to conceal violations committed by security forces.[452]

- **Mohammad Haji Rasoulpour** died on 19 December 2022, six days after he was released on bail on 13 December 2022 and admitted to a hospital for serious heath complications that allegedly resulted from torture and other ill-treatment in detention. According to Hengaw Organization for Human Rights (Hengaw), a Kurdish human rights group, he was arrested at his shop in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, on 23 November 2022, and, when he emerged from prison 20 days later, he showed minimal signs of consciousness and had lost the ability to speak.[453] Hengaw has reported that Mohammad Haji Rasoulpour had previously been arrested on 1 October 2022 and detained until 17 October 2022, when he was released on bail. Prior to the 2022 protests, he had also been sentenced to five months' imprisonment for "spreading propaganda against the system" in connection with his political activism, and was released on 13 April 2022 upon completion of his sentence.

Two other victims, **Maryam Arvin** and **Barzin Hamzehzadeh**, died more than 30 days after release. While these deaths occurred outside the period during which deaths are presumed to be prison-related, Amnesty International is concerned, based on available information, that they may nonetheless be prison-related and calls for independent and impartial investigations into their circumstances:

- **Maryam Arvin** died on 7 February 2023, several weeks after she was released on bail on 13 December 2022. An informed source in Iran, Sharareh, told Amnesty International that Maryam Arvin had been violently arrested on 26 November 2022 in connection with her professional work as a lawyer and her support for the protests. According to Sharareh, Maryam Arvin was first taken to a detention facility run by the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA and then transferred to Sirjan prison in Kerman province. Upon arrival in the prison, she was found to be very unwell, pale and semi-conscious. Sharareh said that the cause of her sudden poor health following her arrest and detention by intelligence agents remains unknown, but emphasized that

450. Iran International, گزارش‌های تازه درباره ستایش شریفی‌نیا و شهریار عادلی، از کشته‌شدگان خیزش انقلابی ["New reports on Setayesh Sharifinia and Shahriar Adeli, among those killed in the revolutionary uprising"], 17 January 2023, https://www.iranintl.com/video/ott_89af5426cfcf4d8492bf1ab73f613b97 (in Persian), minute 02:10-02:32.

451. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News), تکذیب ارتباط فوت ستایش شریفی نیا با وقایع اخیر ["Denial of any connection between Setayesh Sharifinia's death and recent events"],16 January 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3717743/تکذیب-ارتباط-فوت-ستایش-شریفی-نیا-با-وقایع-اخیر (in Persian).

452. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities covering up their crimes of child killings by coercing families into silence", 9 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-authorities-covering-up-their-crimes-of-child-killings-by-coercing-families-into-silence; Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 23 children killed with impunity during brutal crackdown on youthful protests", 13 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-23-children-killed-with-impunity-during-brutal-crackdown-on-youthful-protests; Amnesty International, *'They Shot Our Children'* (previously cited), pp. 19-20.

453. Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, محمد حاجی رسول‌پور زندانی سیاسی سابق اهل بوکان بر اثر شکنجه جانباخت ["Mohammad Haji Rasoulpour, a former political prisoner from Boukan, died as a result of torture"], 19 December 2022, https://hengaw.net/fa/news/archive/57537 (in Persian).

she had been in good health prior to her arrest. In the next three weeks, her health further deteriorated as she experienced significant weight loss and shortness of breath. The authorities failed to provide her with adequate medical care and only took her to the prison's clinic, where she was given sedatives. Sharareh told Amnesty International that Maryam Arvin's health continued to deteriorate following her release on bail on 13 December 2022. On 6 February 2023, she was taken to a hospital where she died the next day as a result of lung and kidney failure. In response to the public outcry about her post-custody death, the prosecution authorities in Srijan blamed her death on suicide. Her family strongly refuted the claim, stating that she had been healthy prior to her arrest, was full of life and had recently become engaged to the person she loved.

- **Barzin Hamzehzadeh** died on 2 January 2024 following a year of health complications. According to Hengaw, a Kurdish human rights group, Barzin Hamzehzadeh developed serious health issues, including kidney complications, damage to internal organs and episodes of complete or partial loss of consciousness after he was detained for a week in Sardasht, West Azerbaijan province, in November 2022.[454] Hengaw has reported that, while detained, Barzin Hamzehzadeh was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, including severe beatings. Amnesty International was unable to independently establish the circumstances related to Barzin Hamzehzadeh's arrest and subsequent death.

In five other cases, the individuals died by suicide shortly after release, with reports published by journalists or human rights defenders alleging that they took their own lives due to mental harm caused by torture or other ill-treatment in custody.[455] One of them was under 18 years of age;[456] two were aged 18 or 19;[457] one was in his 20s[458] and one was in his 30s.[459]

A 16-year-old boy, **Arshia Emam Gholizadeh**, and two teenagers, **Yalda Agha Fazli** and **Abbas Mansouri**, died by suicide within seven or fewer days of their release from detention. The remaining two, **Farham Nikpour** and **Mohsen Jafarirad**, died by suicide after two or more months. Although Amnesty International has not documented sufficient information to establish the circumstances of their detention and death, given the short period between release and death, the serious nature of the allegations and the documented patterns of torture and other ill-treatment against those arrested in connection with the protests, the organization considers that these post-custody deaths warrant independent and impartial investigations into whether the individuals' treatment in custody contributed to their suicides and whether state authorities bear responsibility.

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454. Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: گرتە ڤیدیۆی کاتی ڕفاندنی #بەرزین_حەمزەزادە، مێرمندالێکی گیانبەختکردووی خەڵکی شاری ...#سەردەشت بە هەنگاو گەیشتووە کە لەلایەن هێزە سەرکوتکەرەکانی ئێرانەوە دەڕفێندرێت ["A video of the kidnapping of #Barzin_Hamzehzadeh, a deceased young man from the city of #Sardasht, has reached Hengaw. He is being kidnapped by Iranian repressive forces..."], 6 January 2024, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1743623024509690005 (in Kurdish); Radio Farda, برزین حمزه‌زاده، از کودکان بازداشتی در اعتراضات «زن، زندگی، آزادی»، جان باخت ["Barzin Hamzehzadeh, one of the detained children in the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' protests, has passed away"], 4 January 2024, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/barzin-hamzezadeh-a-child-from-sardasht/32759528.html (in Persian); Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, سردشت؛ برزین حمزه‌زاده از کودکان بازداشت شده در جنبش زن ژیان ئازادی در اثر آسیب دیدگی ناشی از شکنجه جانباخت ["Sardasht: Barzin Hamzehzadeh, one of the children arrested during the 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadi' movement, has passed away due to injuries sustained from torture"], 3 January 2024, https://hengaw.net/fa/news/archive/63652 (in Persian).

455. Amnesty International has used the term "prison-related death" to include death by suicide occurring shortly after release where evidence exists that a person took their own life as a result of their treatment in custody. This understanding of the term recognizes that "[t]here is an increased risk of suicide… shortly after release". See UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, *Deaths in Prisons*, 18 April 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/53/29, para. 33, citing Erin Renee Morgan and others, "Incarceration and subsequent risk of suicide: A statewide cohort study", *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behaviour*, Volume 52, Issue 3, 2022, pp. 467–477. It further takes into account the particularities of the carceral system in Iran, including documented widespread and systemic patterns of torture and other ill-treatment. See sections 5.6 and 5.7.

456. The victim's name is Arshia Emam Gholizadeh.

457. The victims' names are Yalda Agha Fazli and Abbas Mansouri.

458. The victim's name is Farham Nikpour.

459. The victim's name is Mohsen Jafarirad.

5.3.5 SUSPICIOUS DEATHS

MINNESOTA PROTOCOL ON THE INVESTIGATION OF SUSPICIOUS DEATHS

The investigatory obligations set out in the UN Minnesota Protocol apply where there has been a "potentially unlawful death". According to the Protocol, in addition to deaths in custody,[460] a "potentially unlawful death" includes the following situations:

> **"The death may have been caused by acts or omissions of the State, its organs or agents, or may otherwise be attributable to the State… [including] all deaths possibly caused by law enforcement personnel or other agents of the state; deaths caused by paramilitary groups, militias or 'death squads' suspected of acting under the direction or with the permission or acquiescence of the State; and deaths caused by private military or security forces exercising State functions."**

It also includes the following situations:

> **"The death occurred where the State may have failed to meet its obligations to protect life… [including] any situation where a state fails to exercise due diligence to protect an individual or individuals from foreseeable external threats or violence by non-State actors."**

The Minnesota Protocol further emphasizes that there is "a general duty on the state to investigate any suspicious death, even where it is not alleged or suspected that the state caused the death or unlawfully failed to prevent it."

Amnesty International recorded the deaths in suspicious circumstances of at least 23 protesters and bystanders – 12 men, seven women, two boys and two girls – during the three-month protest period. These deaths should be criminally investigated in accordance with the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death as numerous factors raise reasonable grounds to suspect that state agents killed the victims. These indicators include consistent patterns in the victims' disappearances, the types of injuries they sustained, the manner in which families were notified and the persecution families faced by the authorities, alongside the authorities' refusal to investigate and their swift attribution of deaths to suicide, illness or accidents. These patterns are consistent with those documented by Amnesty International in cases of deaths in custody and other deaths where state agents caused or contributed to deaths.

460. See section 5.3.3.

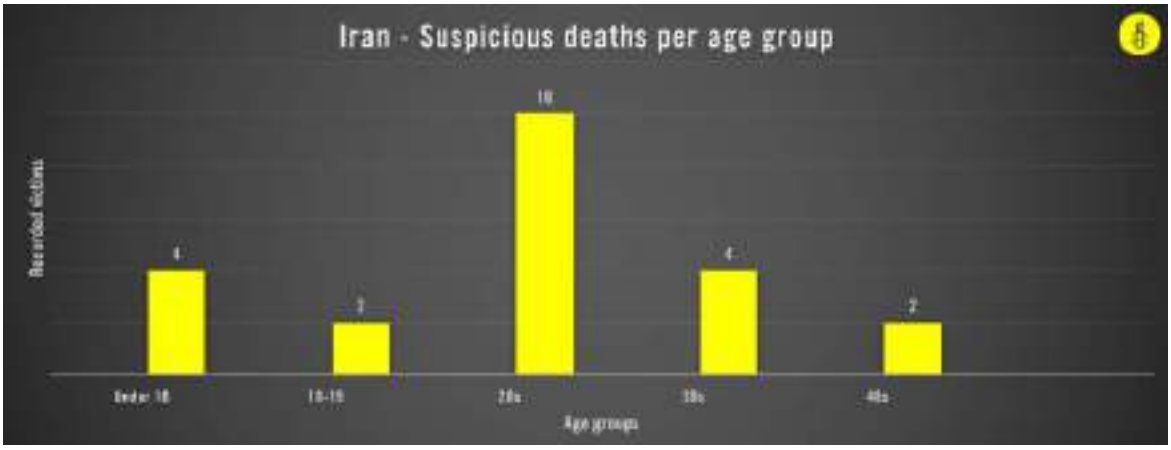


A collage of the photographs of 23 protesters and bystanders who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them in the context of crackdowns on the Woman Life Freedom uprising between September and December 2022. Top row (left to right): Ariana Seyf, Hamidreza Nokhbeh Zaeim, Aylar Haghi, Arvin Golzari Yekta, Ahmad Goudarzi, Saeed Boyeri, Mohammad Hossein Hajiani and Aida Rostami. Second row from top (left to right): Atefeh Naami, Erfan Sarikhani Dashti, Shahaboddin Hashemi, Nasrin Ghaderi, Mohammmadreza Bali Iashak, Milad Khoshkam, and Behnaz Afshari. Third row from top (left to right): Yousef Raisi, Nika Shakarami, Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour, Mohammad Hosseini, Amirhossein Ghorbani Malmali, Setareh Tajik, Donya Farhadi and Behzad Pareh. All photographs © Private

Families often discovered their loved ones' bodies after a period of disappearance and they remain in the dark about the exact circumstances of their loved ones' disappearances and deaths.

The 23 recorded victims were from 12 counties across 10 provinces. Nine deaths were recorded in Tehran, Tehran province; three in Karaj, Alborz province; two in Fouladshahr, Esfahan province; and one each in the following counties: Ahvaz and Izeh, in Khuzestan province; Bushehr, Bushehr province; Firouzabad and Shiraz, both in Fars province; Lashar, Sistan and Baluchistan province; Noshahr, Mazandaran province; Saqqez, Kurdistan province; and Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province.

Four of the victims were aged 16 or 17, two were 18, 10 were in their 20s, four were in their 30s and two were in their 40s. Amnesty International was unable to obtain information about the age of the remaining victim.



A chart showing the breakdown by age group of 22 of the 23 victims Amnesty International recorded as having died in suspicious circumstances during the Woman Life Freedom uprising, with multiple indicators pointing to state responsibility. The organization was unable to obtain information about the age of the remaining victim. © Amnesty International

5.3.5(I) CIRCUMSTANCES OF DISAPPEARANCE, BODY DISCOVERY AND DEATH NOTIFICATIONS

According to information gathered and reviewed by Amnesty International, the 23 recorded victims disappeared after having participated in protests, funerals or memorial ceremonies of other victims before or on the day they disappeared, and/or after having supported the protests through actions such as writing slogans on walls, chanting from the balconies of their homes, issuing statements in solidarity with protesters, communicating with media outlets outside Iran about the protests, or aiding those injured during the protests.

In 13 of the 23 cases of suspicious deaths recorded by Amnesty International, victims' families learned of the death of their loved ones within 24 hours of their disappearance.[461] The families of six other victims received the devastating news after two or three days,[462] while the families of three others did so after seven to nine days.[463] Another victim was missing for 40 days before his family learned of his death.[464]

According to information gathered by Amnesty International, in 13 recorded cases, a member of the security forces informed families of the death or injury of their loved ones and instructed them to go to a police station, morgue or hospital for identification.[465] In some instances, the authorities claimed that the bodies had been found in locations such as a hotel room, a residential building, the outskirts of a desert, a highway, under a bridge, or a cemetery, but refused to provide further details about the exact location, the timing of the recovery or who had discovered the body and reported doing so. In other instances, the authorities provided no information at all about the circumstances of the death or injury.

In 10 other recorded cases, the victims' bodies were found either directly by relatives or by neighbours, friends or members of the public who then informed the relatives. The locations at which bodies were

461. The victim's names are Amirhossein Ghorbani Malmali, Ariana Seyf, Arvin Golzari Yekta, Aylar Haghi, Behzad Pareh, Donya Farhadi, Mohammad Hossein Hajiani, Mohammad Hosseini, Mohammmadreza Bali Lashak, Nasrin Ghaderi, Saeed Boyeri, Setareh Tajik, and Yousef Raisi.
462. The victim's names are Aida Rostami, Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour, Behnaz Afshari, Erfan Sarikhani Dashti, Hamidreza Nokhbeh Zaeim and Shahaboddin Hashemi.
463. The victim's names are Milad Khoshkam, Atefeh Naami and Nika Shakarami.
464. The victim's name is Ahmad Goudarzi.
465. The victim's names are Ahmad Goudarzi, Aida Rostami, Ariana Seyf, Aylar Haghi, Behnaz Afshari, Behzad Pareh, Erfan Sarikhani Dashti, Hamidreza Nokhbeh Zaeim, Milad Khoshkam, Mohammad Hossein Hajiani, Nika Shakarami, Saeed Boyeri, and Setareh Tajik.

found included the victims' residences,[466] and other private or public locations, such as a bus terminal,[467] the rooftop of a residential building,[468] the courtyard of a residential building,[469] a roadside,[470] an area in front of a hospital,[471] and riverbanks.[472] In some of these cases, the bodies were discovered in circumstances that appeared staged to create the impression that the deaths had resulted from suicide or other causes unrelated to the security forces' repression of the protests.[473]

NIKA SHAKARAMI


Nika Shakarami © Private

Nika Shakarami, a 16-year-old girl, was forcibly disappeared on 21 September 2022 after taking part in protests in Tehran in the evening of 20 September 2022.

Nika Shakarami's aunt, Atash Shakarami, told Amnesty International that Nika Shakarami exchanged calls and text messages with her mother and two friends several times between around 11.30pm on 20 September 2022 and 4.45am on 21 September 2022, when she went missing. According to Atash Shakarami, Nika Shakarami called her mother and a friend between around 11.30pm and 11.45pm on 20 September 2022, saying that she had taken part in the protests and was fleeing from members of the security forces who were chasing her. Amnesty International analysed a verified video footage recorded on the evening of 20 September 2022, shortly before Nika Shakarami went missing, showing her taking part in the protests in Laleh Park in Tehran, including by standing on a structure and waving a burning headscarf amid chants from protesters.[474]

Atash Shakarami said that, between 3am and 4.45am, Nika Shakarami called another friend and mentioned that, during the protests, she had encountered a young couple who had invited her to a place to talk and plan for the following day, and that she was staying at that location. The friend warned Nika Shakarami that it was not safe and advised her to go instead to her aunt's home, which was nearby. Nika Shakarami's phone then disconnected. Atash Shakarami suspects that the couple Nika Shakarami mentioned in her last call were collaborating with state authorities and involved in luring protesters to locations where they could be arrested. Amnesty International's monitoring and research over the years indicate that security forces have engaged in such practices, including setting traps or using infiltrators to lead protesters into areas where they could be kettled or arrested. The organization has also documented the long-standing practice of security forces using residential buildings as unofficial detention and interrogation places, colloquially referred to by state agents as "safe houses".[475]

For the next nine days, Nika Shakarami's family repeatedly sought to obtain information about her from multiple police stations, detention facilities, intelligence bodies and the Legal Medicine

466. Illustrative examples include the cases of Shahaboddin Hashemi, Atefeh Naami and Nasrin Ghaderi.
467. An illustrative example is the case of Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour.
468. An illustrative example is the case of Amirhossein Ghorbani Malmali.
469. An illustrative example is the case of Nika Shakarami.
470. An illustrative example is the case of Mohammad Hosseini.
471. An illustrative example is the case of Yousef Raisi.
472. An illustrative example is the case of Donya Farhadi.
473. Illustrative examples include the cases of Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour, Mohammad Hosseini and Atefeh Naami.
474. CNN, "Videos show Iranian teen protester's final hours", 27 October 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udmMIKN4LWY, minute 0:55-1:10.
475. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7480/2023), 6 December 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7480/2023/en, pp. 24 and 31-32.

Organization. However, authorities either denied any knowledge about her fate and whereabouts or gave the family conflicting information. During the same period, several individuals who said they were IRGC agents but refused to provide their names phoned the family multiple times, stating that she had been in the custody of the IRGC for several days and was then transferred to Tehran's Evin prison. Despite this, when her family sought information at Evin prison, officials denied that Nika Shakarami was being held there.

On 29 September 2022, authorities at the Investigation Police of FARAJA in Tehran informed the family that there was a body in the central morgue in Kahrizak, Tehran province, that matched the description of Nika Shakarami. The next morning, her family was allowed to briefly see the body in the Kahrizak morgue and identified the deceased as Nika Shakarami. According to media interviews given by her family, her cheekbones, nose and teeth were broken and her skull pounded from blows to her head.

Nika Shakarami's aunt, Atash Shakarami, told Amnesty International that, on 30 September 2022, the same day on which the family identified Nika's body at the morgue, they learned through their lawyer that her body had been found in the courtyard of a residential building at around 7.30-8am on 21 September 2022 by local residents and obtained its address, which is on file with Amnesty International.

Atash Shakarami said that she, Atash Shakarami's brother and the family's lawyer went to the location on the afternoon of 30 September 2022 and talked to three residents there. The residents reported that, at around 4.45am-5am on 21 September 2022, they heard the sound of something falling and initially assumed that an object had fallen in the adjacent building, which housed several clothes-making workshops. However, at around 7.30-8am, the residents discovered a body in their courtyard and notified the local police station.

According to information received by Atash Shakarami from the residents, a team from the local police station then arrived at the scene and assessed that the body had been thrown from one of the balconies of the adjacent building that opened directly onto the courtyard. The residents reported to Atash Shakarami that, shortly afterwards, a group of plain-clothes agents arrived, interfered with the documentation of the incident, despite objections from the lead FARAJA agent, and took the body away.

Atash Shakarami said that, while they were at the residential building on the afternoon of 30 September 2022 seeking information, a man emerged from the adjacent building, confronted her aggressively and demanded to know what she was doing there. He shouted at her to leave and behaved in a threatening manner. Atash Shakarami said that she felt at the time that the man might have been an agent involved in or aware of the circumstances of Nika Shakarami's killing. Atash Shakarami said that she also encountered a couple at the entrance of the adjacent building. She learned through the residents that the couple were living on the first floor while the young man who had aggressively confronted her lived on the third floor.

Atash Shakarami said she suspected that the couple she encountered was the same couple Nika Shakarami had mentioned in her last call to her friend. Atash Shakarami said her suspicions were reinforced because, while they were at the location, agents repeatedly phoned her brother, reprimanding them for going to the site where Nika Shakarami's body had been found and instructing them to leave immediately.

Atash Shakarami told Amnesty International that, in the following months, she received a message on Instagram from a local resident reporting that security forces had removed all the CCTV cameras on the street where the building was located, which mostly consisted of clothing shops, and had

arrested several shop owners and detained them for a number of days, before releasing them on bail and on condition that they would not disclose any information.

At around 1.30am on 2 October 2022, Ministry of Intelligence agents arrested Atash Shakarami in reprisal for speaking with BBC Persian and transferred her first to a detention facility run by the Ministry of Intelligence and then to an unofficial detention site in a residential building colloquially referred to by the security forces as a "safe house". Atash Shakarami was released around 3.30am on 3 October 2022. She told Amnesty International that, while detained, Ministry of Intelligence agents subjected her to lengthy interrogations, while blindfolded, and torture or other ill-treatment,to coerce her into making statements on camera that endorsed the official narrative. According to Atash Shakarami, these included repeated threats of gang rape and severe beatings that the interrogators said would fracture all her bones.

On 5 October 2022, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting aired a propaganda video which presented Atash Shakarami and her brother as accepting the official narrative and referring to the actions of protesters using expressions identical to those used by the authorities and state media to vilify demonstrators. The propaganda video shows a girl whom the authorities claim is Nika Shakarami walking into a building and asserts that her death was unrelated to protests or any beating by security forces but was instead caused by "falling from a height" from a building rooftop.

Despite the narrative promoted by the authorities publicly, in her interview with Amnesty International, Atash Shakarami revealed that, at some point during the interrogations, after she strongly objected to contradictory state narratives from interrogators blaming Nika Shakarami's death on suicide or murder by non-state actors, the lead interrogator verbally admitted that state agents had arrested and killed Nika Shakarami, but claimed that this had not been the agents' intention and that the fatal incident had accidentally occurred for a "stupid" reason. However, the authorities have never formally accepted responsibility.

Atash Shakarami told Amnesty International that, following her release, the Public Security Police pressured the family to agree to close the criminal case by accepting one of the official narratives, either that Nika Shakarami had committed suicide, or that she had been lured into a location by unidentified individuals who raped and killed her and then threw her from the balcony. She said the authorities claimed that, since the perpetrators could not be identified, the family should simply accept state-funded "blood money", which they rejected.

Atash Shakarami added that, for two years after her release, she was subjected to intense surveillance. She said that, upon her release, Ministry of Intelligence agents installed a camera at the entrance to her home and informed her that her movements and social interactions would be monitored. According to her account, the agents warned her that if she socialized with anyone beyond a small number of approved individuals, those individuals could face repercussions. She further stated that the authorities also warned people in her social circle that they risked losing their jobs if they continued to associate with her.

Amnesty International reviewed an official receipt confirming the payment of a specified amount for the release of Nika Shakarami's body and her transfer from Tehran province to Lorestan province for burial. The document cites 21 September 2022 as the date of death and states that she died from "multiple injuries caused by collision with a hard object".

SETAREH TAJIK



Setareh Tajik © Private

Setareh Tajik, a 17-year-old girl of Afghan nationality, went missing in the afternoon of 22 September 2022 in Tehran, Tehran province. Later in the evening, her family received a call from a police station in Tehran and were told to go to there the next morning. The family were provided with no further information. The next morning, at around 6am, an official from the same police station called the family, informed them of Setareh Tajik's death and instructed them to go to Behesht Zahra morgue in Tehran to collect her body.

The family subsequently went to the morgue and, after hours of waiting, they were shown Setareh Tajik's body, which was wrapped in plastic sheets. An informed source, Sima, told Amnesty International that, when the family removed the plastic sheets, they saw signs of bleeding from Setareh Tajik's head, ears, nose and mouth.

Agents present at the morgue told Setareh Tajik's family that she had committed suicide and refused to answer their questions as to how the authorities had found her body. The authorities conditioned the handover of her body on the family signing a statement accepting the official narrative of suicide. The authorities forced the family to bury Setareh Tajik the same evening quickly and without a funeral service. They also prevented the family from taking pictures or videos of the deceased body.

Since her death, Setareh Tajik's family have repeatedly gone to police and prosecution authorities to file a complaint and seek an investigation into the causes and circumstances surrounding her death. The authorities have refused to process the family's requests and provided contradictory accounts. On some occasions, they said Setareh Tajik may have been killed by someone who had "a private dispute" with the family. At other times, they have said the family should accept that Setareh Tajik committed suicide. The family's requests from the Legal Medicine Organization for access to her autopsy report have also gone unanswered. The family has not been able to locate any eyewitnesses to gather further information about the causes and circumstances surrounding her death. However, in light of Setareh Tajik's consistent participation in the protests, the pattern of injuries on her body and the pattern of denial and state cover-up, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that security forces killed her.

In a report to member states of the UN Human Rights Council shared ahead of the Special Session on Iran on 24 November 2022, the authorities claimed that Setareh Tajik died "as a result of suicide caused by falling from a height." The report added that, "[w]hen receiving the body, the father of the deceased announced in writing that her daughter had thrown herself from the bridge and died on the spot."

Amnesty International reviewed a copy of Setareh Tajik's burial certificate, which states that her death resulted from "multiple injuries caused by collision with a hard object".

BEHNAZ AFSHARI



Behnaz Afshari © Private

Behnaz Afshari went missing on 25 October 2022 after leaving home to attend a protest in Tehran, Tehran province. Two days later, her family received a call from a police station instructing them to come in. There, police claimed that her body had been found in a hotel room and that she had died by suicide after taking aluminium phosphide tablets.

A journalist who spoke to an informed source in Iran told Amnesty International that the authorities refused to answer the family's questions about when and how they had found Behnaz Afshari's body in the hotel and when and how Behnaz Afshari had checked into the hotel. The family was shown only CCTV footage of a covered body being taken out of the hotel and was told that footage of Behnaz entering the hotel had been deleted. The authorities failed to explain the circumstances under which the footage had allegedly been deleted.

Furthermore, the authorities refused to explain what forensic evidence had been examined to substantiate the claim of suicide by poisoning. The family was only allowed to see Behnaz Afshari's neck and face, which were covered in blood, and they observed cuts on her ears and neck. The authorities failed to explain the inconsistencies between these visible injuries on her body and the official account of suicide by poisoning. They claimed that the cuts were due to autopsy procedures for toxicology testing, but failed to explain why such methods were used for toxicology testing. Officials also refused to provide the family with a report on the condition of her body before the autopsy, including photographs and forensic records.

The authorities conditioned the handover of Behnaz Afshari's body on the family signing a statement accepting the official narrative of suicide. This was despite the fact that her burial certificate, seen by Amnesty International, provided no explanation for the cause of death. The burial took place in the presence of security forces and the family was barred from attending the ritual washing of the body, which was brought to the grave site already wrapped in a shroud.

5.3.5(II) TYPES OF INJURIES

For 20 of the 23 recorded victims, Amnesty International was able to gather information about the types of injuries seen by eyewitnesses on victims' bodies.

The reported injuries included a consistent pattern of extensive bruising and fractures across the body; crushed skull injuries; severe facial trauma with swelling and discoloration; broken noses or injured chins; blood covering the face and filling the ears; deep cuts behind the ears extending toward the neck; burns from lit cigarettes; marks from binding the hands and feet with rope; and ligature marks on the neck. Additionally, genital swelling was reported in one case,[476] amputations in another,[477] and injuries consistent with strangulation or asphyxiation in a third.[478]

For seven victims – **Aylar Haghi**, **Aida Rostami**, **Ariana Seyf**, **Hamidreza Nokhbeh Zaeim**, **Setareh Tajik**, **Milad Khoshkam** and **Nika Shakarami** – Amnesty International obtained copies of burial or

476. The name of this victim was Mohammad Hosseini.
477. The name of this victim was Hamidreza Nokhbeh Zaeim.
478. The name of this victim was Atefeh Naami.

death certificates corroborating eyewitness accounts of the fatal injuries they sustained.[479] The certificates describe the causes of death using formulaic, vague phrases that commonly include terms such as "collision with a hard object" and "multiple injuries". They include "brain injuries and skull fracture following collision with a hard object" for Aida Rostami;[480] "multiple injuries, collision with a hard object" for Ariana Seyf; "multiple bodily injuries, collision with a hard object" for Hamidreza Nokhbeh Zaeim; "multiple injuries, collision with a hard object" for Setareh Tajik, "collision with hard or sharp objects" for Milad Khoshkam; and "multiple injuries resulting from collision with a hard object" for Nika Shakarami.

MOHAMMAD HOSSEINI



Mohammad Hosseini © Private

Mohammad Hosseini died in suspicious circumstances in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 20 October 2022. An informed source in Iran, Teymour, told Amnesty International that, prior to his death, Mohammad Hosseini regularly participated in the Woman Life Freedom uprising, was known for his activism and assisted individuals injured during the protests.

Teymour said that, in the early morning of 20 October 2022, Mohammad Hosseini left his residence in Saqqez. According to information gathered by Teymour, several hours later, at around 10am, a passer-by found his body on a rural road near Qukh village, approximately 3.5km away from Saqqez. The individual contacted the local police, who arrived and transferred the body to a morgue. According to Teymour, the individual who found the body later reported to his family that Mohammad Hosseini had been left a few metres away from a tree, with his keffiyeh placed on a tree branch, to create the impression that he had committed suicide by hanging.

Teymour said that Mohammad Hosseini's family subsequently received a call instructing them to go to a hospital morgue. There, the family were informed that Mohammad Hosseini had died. The family was then told they would need to wait several hours while the body was subjected to an autopsy and prepared for discharge and burial. Throughout this process, the family were not allowed to view the body. Later in the day, the family were told that, before receiving the body, they would have to go to the office of the Ministry of Intelligence in Saqqez.

There, Ministry of Intelligence agents warned the family against holding a large funeral and instructed them to conduct a quiet ceremony attended only by a few close relatives. The agents threatened to withhold the body unless the family conveyed to their extended relatives and others that the cause of death was suicide. The agents also said that, if the family refused to comply with the restrictions, their other children could also disappear and die.

Eventually, at 1 am on 21 October 2022, the authorities authorized the burial. The body was then taken to the cemetery in Saqqez, where it was washed. Teymour learned that, during the washing, those present observed bruising on Mohammad Hosseini's back and swelling in one of his testicles.

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479. In the case of Nika Shakarami, the document obtained by Amnesty International is not the standard burial certificate issued by the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran. It is rather an official document issued by the Behesht-e Zahra organization (a state organization responsible for the management of cemeteries) that confirms the payment of a specified amount for the release of Nika Shakarami's body and her transfer from Tehran province to Lorestan province for burial. The document cites 21 September 2022 as the date of her death and lists the cause of death as "multiple injuries caused by collision with a hard object".
480. Abdorrahman Boroumand Center, آیدا رستمی ["Aida Rostami"], https://www.iranrights.org/fa/memorial/story/-8967/aida-rostami (accessed on 25 August 2026).

The burial took place took place quietly in the dark in the presence of security forces. The authorities did not provide the family with an autopsy report and failed to explain how the suicide claim was consistent with the types of injuries witnessed on the body. According to Teymour, the family disputes the suicide claim, noting Mohammad Hosseini's spirit and that his religious beliefs strongly discouraged suicide.

AMIR MOHAMMAD (ILYAD) RAHMANIPOUR



Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour © Private

Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour, a 17-year-old boy, went missing in Firouzabad, Fars province, on 29 November 2022. In a media interview with Iran Wire, his aunt, Nasrin Dolatyari, stated that, prior to his disappearance, he participated in the Woman Life Freedom uprising.[481]

According to Nasrin Dolatyari, on 2 December 2022, three days after his disappearance, the family of Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour received a call from an unidentified person saying the body of Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour had been found at a central bus terminal in Firouzabad, Fars province. Nasrin Dolatyari said that, when a relative arrived, he found the boy's body seated cross-legged, with its hands positioned in pockets and several pills and shot glasses placed in front of it. The body's face was also bruised, suggesting the boy had been beaten.

The authorities then transferred the body to a morgue for autopsy. The family was subsequently told that the cause of death was "toxification", but they received no explanation as to how this claim was consistent with the injuries observed on Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour's body during washing. According to Nasrin Dolatyari, the injuries included burn marks from lit cigarettes covering his body from the waist down, as well as numerous bruises and other blunt-force injuries across the body.

In her interview, Nasrin Dolatyari emphasized that the family rejects the suicide claim, stating that Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour was not depressed, was athletic, had shown resilience while participating in the protests and remained hopeful about the future. She added that the security forces had subjected the family to threats and intimidation to coerce them into silence and prevent them from publicly challenging the state narrative. Nasrin Dolatyari also revealed that the authorities withheld Amir Mohammad (Ilyad) Rahmanipour's belongings and, after a year, only returned his mobile phone to the family, who found that its contents had been completely erased.

5.3.5(III) STATE DENIAL AND COVER-UP

Concerns that state agents were likely responsible for the deaths of these 23 victims are strengthened by the authorities' swift attribution of the deaths to suicide or car accidents, without comprehensive investigations, while simultaneously engaging in patterns of behaviour aimed at obstructing families' access to the truth and coercing them into accepting the state narrative.

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481. Iran Wire, علیه فراموشی؛ ایلیاد رحمانی‌پور، تکواندوکار ۱۷ساله‌ای که گفتند خودکشی کرد ["Against forgetfulness: Ilyad Rahmanipour, a 17-year-old taekwondo athlete who was said to have committed suicide"], 13 September 2024, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/133878--ایلیاد-رحمانیپور-تکواندوکار-۱۷سالهای-که-گفتند-خودکشی-کرد (in Persian); Iran International, پیکر بی‌جان ایلیاد رحمانی‌پور پس از سه روز ناپدید شدن پیدا شد ["The lifeless body of Ilyad Rahmanipour was found after three days of being missing"], 9 December 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoDkHkHyPOU (in Persian).

For most of these victims, Amnesty International was able to gather information indicating two or more of the following patterns of persecution against victims' families aimed at enforcing silence and impunity:

- Authorities restricted families from conducting a full examination of their loved ones' bodies, often allowing them only a brief look at the victim's face and/or body and sometimes covering some body parts.
- Authorities prevented families from taking photographs or videos, limiting their ability to document injuries.
- Authorities withheld autopsy reports and/or medical records, depriving families of crucial forensic findings that could clarify the cause of death.
- Authorities denied families access to CCTV footage from the locations where the bodies were reported to have been found.
- Authorities refused to return the personal belongings of victims, including their mobile phones.
- Authorities refused to conduct criminal investigations and swiftly attributed deaths to accidents or suicides, without providing any evidence to substantiate their claims.
- Authorities conditioned the return of victims' bodies on families accepting the state narrative that the victim had died due to a suicide or a car accident. They also threatened further harm if the families spoke out or publicly challenged the state narrative and imposed a security presence at funeral and memorial ceremonies.
- Authorities forced families to bury their loved ones in remote locations, different from the place of their choosing, in the presence of security forces, and warned them against holding memorial ceremonies.

With respect to the attribution of deaths to other causes, the authorities sometimes changed their narrative within the same conversation or between meetings, oscillating between explanations such as an accident, suicide or a heart attack. They offered general accounts that families found both ludicrous and distressing, reflecting a blatant disregard for accountability and justice. These included claims such as the following: the deceased had consumed alcohol and driven into a valley; the deceased was hit by a train or may have thrown themself in front of it; the deceased was ill and suffered a heart attack at home during the night; and the deceased committed suicide by inserting a gas pipe into their mouth.

Regardless of whether the authorities cited an accident, suicide or a heart attack, they failed to explain injuries on the victims' bodies that were inconsistent with these claims or to answer families' questions, including about the absence of evidence supporting the state narrative and the basic details of when, where and how the alleged incident occurred and the body was discovered.

AYLAR HAGHI



Aylar Haghi © Private

Aylar Haghi died in suspicious circumstances in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province, on 16 November 2022. An informed source in Iran, Sardar, told Amnesty International that, prior to her death, Aylar Haghi regularly participated in the Woman Life Freedom uprising and feared that she had been identified by the security forces for her activism.

According to Sardar, Aylar Haghi was last heard from in three phone calls she made to her friends between 9.33pm and 9.41pm, during which she said that several individuals were chasing her and expressed fear for her life. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain whether she provided any further information about the possible identities or profiles of the individuals pursuing her. Sardar added that, based on the call logs found on her phone, she also called the Red Crescent helpline at 9.43pm, but no one answered. Aylar Haghi's friends reported to her family that at 9.45pm she uploaded a post on her Instagram account, again stating that several individuals were pursuing her, asking for help and saying that "they are killing everyone". Based on the context of her statement, Amnesty International considers that the subject "they" refers to the security forces. Sardar said that this post was subsequently deleted from her account in circumstances unknown to them.

Medical records from the emergency department of Shohada Hospital, which were reviewed by Sardar, indicate that, at 11pm the same evening, Aylar Haghi's lifeless body was brought to the hospital.

Aylar Haghi's family went to a local police station at around 1.15am on 17 November 2022 after she did not return home. At the station, they were instructed to go to Shohada Hospital to identify a deceased body that had been brought in. Sardar said that, at the hospital, the family found Aylar Haghi's body bearing multiple marks of beatings on her legs, chest, sides and head. They also observed stitches on the back of her head and wetness on her hair, which they understood to be the result of blood having been washed from it.

On 18 and 19 November 2022, the prosecutor of Tabriz, Babak Mahboub Alilou, issued statements claiming that Aylar Haghi had died after falling into a construction pit dug near the Shahran residential tower in Tabriz and that the site's security guard, upon hearing sounds of wailing near the pit and discovering that a woman had fallen inside, called an ambulance, which collected the body and transferred it to a hospital.[482] The prosecutor claimed that three individuals who were with Aylar Haghi that evening had been subsequently arrested and one of them had said that he had offered Aylar Haghi a ride to take her home and eventually dropped her off near the Shahran tower, where she allegedly fell into the construction pit.[483] This claim was made even though Aylar Haghi's home is located far from the Shahran tower.

On these days, IRIB and other state media outlets also published articles and propaganda videos which supported the official narrative. The propaganda videos featured two individuals, introduced

482. Fars News Agency, جزئیات جدید درباره علت فوت آیلار حقی ["New details about the cause of death of Aylar Haghi"], 19 November 2022, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/16688832970009113 15/جزئیات-جدید-درباره-علت-فوت-آیلار-حقی (in Persian); Diyar Mirza, اعترافات همراهان آیلار حقی دختر جوان تبریزی ["Confessions of companions of Aylar Haghi, the young woman from Tabriz"], 19 November 2022, https://diyarmirza.ir/1401/08/اعترافات-همراهان-آیلار-حقی-دختر-جوان-ت (in Persian).
483. Tabnak, جزئیات جدید درباره علت فوت آیلار حقی ["New details about the cause of death of Aylar Haghi"], 20 November 2022, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1151162/جزئیات-جدید-درباره-علت-فوت-آیلار-حقی (in Persian).

as Aylar Haghi's friends with their faces blurred, saying that they had consumed alcohol with her earlier that evening and that one of them had dropped her off near the site of the incident and noticed that she lacked balance.[484] The videos also featured several individuals presented as security guards at the construction site where the authorities alleged her body had been found.[485] An article published by Fars News Agency on 18 November 2022 also quoted an emergency worker saying: "At around 10pm, a report was received of a fall from height. We arrived within 10 minutes. The victim was breathing but unconscious, lying face down. Her abdomen was swollen, and she had internal bleeding."[486]

Aylar Haghi's father was likewise shown stating that his daughter's death was unrelated to the "riots", expressing trust in the judicial authorities to investigate the matter and saying he "detested" those who sought to provoke unrest at her funeral.[487] Aylar Haghi's father later indicated, during the ceremony marking the 40th day following her death, that the statements he made in state media broadcasts had been coerced. He said:

"I pray that God does not forgive the IRIB reporter who, in the span of two minutes, acted as interrogator and judge, issuing a verdict, and trampled the dignity of Aylar Haghi's entire family. Aylar lives on in our hearts. Her dignity and fame are alive… I might have forgiven her blood being shed, but I will never forgive the IRIB reporter who trampled her dignity."[488]

ERFAN SARIKHANI DASHTI



Erfan Sarikhani Dashti © Private

Erfan Sarikhani Dashti disappeared in Tehran, Tehran province, on 18 October 2022. An informed source in Iran, Farzaneh, told Amnesty International that, before his disappearance, Erfan participated in the Woman Life Freedom uprising and had expressed concerns to his friends that he felt he was being monitored by plain-clothes agents who frequently visited the street where he lived. Farzaneh added that, on the evening of 18 October 2022, he briefly called a friend whom he was scheduled to meet, telling him not to come to their meeting place. He spoke in a distressed voice, breathing heavily as if he had been running. His phone was subsequently disconnected.

According to Farzaneh, on 21 October 2022, three days after his disappearance, the family of Erfan Sarikhani Dashti received a phone call from a police station in Tehran, Tehran province, instructing them to go to the station.

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484. Diyar Mirza, اعترافات همراهان آیلار حقی دختر جوان تبریزی ["Confessions of companions of Aylar Haghi, the young woman from Tabriz"], 19 November 2022, https://diyarmirza.ir/1401/08/اعترافات-همراهان-آیلار-حقی-دختر-جوان-ت/ (in Persian); Mashregh News, فیلم اعترافات دو پسر همراه آیلار حقی ["Video: Confession of two boys accompanying Aylar Haghi"], 18 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1437211/فیلم-اعترافات-دو-پسر-همراه-آیلار-حقی (in Persian).

485. Mashregh News, فیلم/ جزییات فوت دختر جوان تبریزی از زبان شاهدان ["Video: Details of death of young Tabrizi woman from perspective of eyewitnesses"], 19 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1437097/فیلم-جزییات-فوت-دختر-جوان-تبریزی-از-زبان-شاهدان (in Persian).

486. Fars News Agency, پیدا و پنهان فوت آیلار حقی و ["Seen and unseen aspects of the death of Aylar Haghi"], 18 November 2022, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1668778528000752726/پیدا-و-پنهان-فوت-آیلار-حقی-و-کشته-سازی-جدید-ضدانقلاب-روایتی-از-شب-25-آبان-برج-شهران-تبریز-و-اظهارات-پدر-آیلار-فیلم (in Persian).

487. IRNA, فیلم/ پدر آیلار حقی: فوت دخترم ربطی به اغتشاشات اخیر ندارد ["Video: Aylar Haghi's father: My daughter's death has nothing to do with recent unrest"], 18 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84946715/فیلم-پدر-آیلار-حقی-فوت-دخترم-ربطی-به-اغتشاشات-اخیر-ندارد (in Persian); Diyar Mirza, اعترافات همراهان آیلار حقی دختر جوان تبریزی ["Confessions of companions of Aylar Haghi, the young woman from Tabriz"], 19 November 2022, https://diyarmirza.ir/1401/08/اعترافات-همراهان-آیلار-حقی-دختر-جوان-ت (in Persian).

488. Iran Wire, آیلار حقی؛ بازداشت پدری که روایت رسمی حاکمیت را زیر سوال برد ["Aylar Haghi: Arrest of a father who questioned the official narrative of the authorities"], 28 December 2022, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/111934--آیلار-حقی-بازداشت-پدری-که-روایت-رسمی-حاکمیت-را-زیر-سوال-برد (in Persian).

There, authorities told his family that Erfan Sarikhani Dashti had died and instructed them to go to an office of the Investigation Police for further information. The family went there immediately, but the authorities there failed to provide the family with additional information and told them to come back the next day. In the following hours, the authorities contacted the family again, first claiming that Erfan Sarikhani Dashti had died in a car accident in Jajroud, around 45km from Tehran, and suggesting that they should go there. They then said that his body had been transferred to a morgue in Tehran and that the family should visit the morgue the next morning.

Farzaneh said that, the next morning at the morgue, the family were given a few moments to see the body of Erfan Sarikhani Dashti. They observed that the face, neck and body bore signs of beatings and that the nose and chin were fractured. They also noted cuts on the stomach.

Farzaneh said that the Investigation Police provided the family with contradictory accounts of Erfan Sarikhani Dashti's death, none of which were consistent with the injuries observed on his body. They initially claimed that he had died by suicide without providing any evidence. They later asserted that he had died of cardiac arrest. However, in the death certificate of Erfan Sarikhani Dashti, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, the cause of death was recorded as "unknown". Farzandeh said that in the days and weeks after Erfan Sarikhani Dashti's death, the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC and the Investigation Police subjected his family to threats and intimidation to coerce them into silence and prevent them from pursuing truth and justice.

MILAD KHOSHKAM



Milad Khoshkam © Private

Milad Khoshkam disappeared in Shiraz, Fars province, on 6 November 2022 after leaving home at around 8pm. A relative outside Iran, Fariba Rad, told Amnesty International that, prior to his disappearance and death, he regularly participated in the Woman Life Freedom uprising and filmed demonstrations to raise awareness. The following day, his family reported him missing to the authorities.

On 13 November 2022, an official using Milad Khoshkam's phone contacted the family and instructed them to go to an office of the Investigation Police. They went the same day and, after waiting anxiously for several hours, the authorities informed them that Milad Khoshkam had been found dead under Tabiat Bridge in Shiraz on 6 November 2022. The authorities swiftly attributed his death to suicide without conducting any investigations. Amnesty International reviewed a police report, dated 6 November 2022, which records the discovery of Milad Khoshkam under Tabiat Bridge, noting that he was found lifeless on the ground, face down, with heavy bleeding from his head and ears. The report adds that a jacket was hanging from the edge of the bridge as if to suggest that he had jumped from that location. At the top of the report, the incident is entitled "commission of suicide".

The family were told to go to the morgue of the Legal Medicine Organization to identify and collect his body. According to Fariba Rad, at the Investigation Police, the official speaking to the family claimed they had not notified the family earlier because Milad Khoshkam had remained unidentified. However, according to information obtained by Fariba, as the official said this, Milad Khoshkam's ID card fell out of the case file. In reaction, the official merely stated that the ID card had been "found later" without providing any further explanation.



The body of Milad Khoshkam at a morgue in Shiraz, encased in a cast without his family's consent and in circumstances indicative of a state cover-up © Private

Fariba told Amnesty International that, at the morgue, the family were informally told by an official that Milad Khoshkam had been beaten so severely that his bones had shattered, which was why his body had been concealed in a cast. However, the authorities failed to formally explain why, where and when his body had been encased in a cast. Amnesty International reviewed a photograph that Fariba confirmed shows Milad Khoshkam's body in the morgue, encased in a cast.

Fariba said that the authorities refused to return Milad Khoshkam's body to the family until 17 November 2022 and conditioned the release on the family accepting the state narrative that he had died by suicide. However, according to Fariba, the family subsequently went to the bridge where the authorities claimed Milad Khoshkam had taken his own life and spoke with shopkeepers in the area, who told them they had not heard of any suicide there in the past month.

Amnesty International reviewed a copy of Milad Khoshkam's death certificate, which lists the cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

5.4 ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS

As part of their crackdown on the Woman Life Freedom uprising, Iranian authorities embarked on a campaign of mass arbitrary arrests between September and December 2022 that spanned the country and involved sweeping up tens of thousands of men, women and children, some as young as 10 years old.

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International establishes the arbitrary nature of these arrests and detentions. The arrests were overwhelmingly for acts protected under international law, including peaceful protests, chanting, dancing, removing headscarves, writing slogans, sounding car horns, showing solidarity online and, in the case of bereaved families, seeking truth and justice. Journalists were targeted for investigating protest-related violations and lawyers for representing detained protesters or families of those killed.[489]

Across all documented cases, arrests and detentions violated due process and fair trial rights. Detainees were denied access to lawyers, protection from torture, timely information on charges, the right to silence, the presumption of innocence and the ability to challenge their detention or prepare a defence. Trials lacked impartiality, transparency and meaningful appeal.

According to official statements, authorities opened investigations against tens of thousands of individuals in connection with the uprising, while hundreds or more were convicted in grossly unfair sham trials before courts lacking independence and impartiality. Protesters and supporters of the Woman Life Freedom uprising were routinely prosecuted solely for exercising their human rights, such as the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and sentenced to harsh prison terms, flogging and even death.

5.4.1 MASS ARRESTS

The authorities began arresting individuals on 16 September 2022, immediately after the announcement of Zhina Mahsa Amini's death.[490] The first set of arrests took place outside Kasra hospital in Tehran where Zhina Mahsa Amini had been admitted for medical treatment three days earlier and where her family members and their supporters gathered in solidarity.[491]

Those arrested included human rights defender Leila Mirghafari, who made a video statement on 18 September 2022, shortly after her release, in which she detailed how the security forces arrested her near Kasra Hospital on 16 September 2022. She stated that security forces put her into a van where a female agent referred to by other agents as "*sarhang* [colonel]" strangled her by putting both hands around her neck and squeezing hard and told her, "I will kill you." Leila Mirghafari further explained that she was among 22 people arrested and taken to a detention centre, and said that the authorities charged her with "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security".[492]

Within days of Zhina Mahsa Amini's death, two journalists – Niloufar Hamedi and Elaheh Mohammadi – who had been investigating her arrest, detention and death in custody for the Shargh Daily newspaper in Iran were arbitrarily arrested and detained to suppress independent investigations and

489. VOA Persian, ["Protests in over 35 cities: Intensified arrests of activists and journalists"], 23 September 2022, https://ir.voanews.com/a/iran-protests-2022-mahsa-amini/6760155.html (in Persian); BBC Persian, ["Photo album of the protests: Images that became 'icons'"], 21 September 2022, https://www.bbc.com/persian/articles/cl7dzx9e8zko (in Persian); Iran Wire, "Mahsa Amini: Widespread arrests of protesters on Hijab Street in Tehran"], 19 September 2022, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/107672-مهسا-امینی-یازداشت-گسترده-معترضان-در-خیابان-حجاب-تهران (in Persian); VOA Persian, ["Dozens of protesters arrested over Mahsa Amini's death in Saqqez, Sanandaj and Tehran"], 18 September 2022, https://ir.voanews.com/a/iran-detention-protesters-mahsa-amini/6752563.html (in Persian).

490. Iran Wire, "Mahsa Amini died at Kasra hospital in Tehran: Several protesters arrested"], 16 September 2022, https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/107584-مهسا-امینی-در-بیمارستان-کسری-تهران-جان-باخت/ (in Persian).

491. Tavaana2010, ["Leila Mirghafari, after her release: An agent inside the 'morality' police van was choking me and saying 'I will kill you'"], 20 February 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SbrCZIo9JU

492. Tavaana2010, ["Leila Mirghafari, after her release: An agent inside the 'morality' police van was choking me and saying 'I will kill you'"], 20 February 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SbrCZIo9JU

reporting of the circumstances surrounding her death.[493]

As the news of Zhina Mahsa Amini's death in custody quickly spread across Iran and people began taking to the streets in protest, authorities waged a mass campaign of arbitrary arrests and detentions across the country.

As early as 18 September 2022, officials publicly threatened to arbitrarily arrest anyone protesting or sharing news about the circumstances of Zhina Mahsa Amini's death, and announced arrests in Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, as well as other provinces across the country.

On 19 September 2022, the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, gave a warning to protesters and anyone questioning the official state narrative around her death, stating, "Anyone who disturbs the psychological security of society, spreads fake news and disturbs the public mind, must answer for their claims because all these acts have been criminalized."[494]

State media and officials launched a coordinated propaganda campaign smearing protesters as "rioters", "terrorists" and "separatists" to justify arrests, including pre-emptive arrests. They issued statements accusing "opposition media" and "foreign enemies" of fomenting riots to "overthrow the Islamic Republic" and threatening to confront protesters who create "disorder" and "chaos".[495]

For example, on 23 September 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi, indicated that multiple people who had been "planning to incite unrest" in the city of Qorveh had been pre-emptively arrested.[496]

The same day, state media reported that the authorities in West Azerbaijan province had arrested multiple people, whom it described as "terrorists" and "infiltrators".[497] It reported that the individuals arrested were connected to Kurdish "separatist groups" and had "orchestrated the protests" in West Azerbaijan province.[498]

Similar statements were made about protesters in the rest of the country. For example, on 22 September 2022, the then FARAJA deputy commander of Gilan province, Hossein Hassanpour, stated:

> **"Following the blind calls of the enemies of the Islamic system on social media for holding illegal protests, some individuals, ignoring police warnings, intended to direct these protests, disrupt public order and security, and cause damage to several business units, but were diligently arrested by the police… The police will stand firmly against those who seek chaos and insecurity in society and will not allow a few individuals to exploit people's emotions to create disorder and chaos."[499]**

Similarly, on 22 September 2022, the head of the Justice Department in Ghazvin province, Ali

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493. Shargh Daily, نگاهی به ابعاد حقوقی بازداشت نیلوفر حامدی و الهه محمدی ["A look at the legal aspects of the detention of Niloufar Hamedi and Elaheh Mohammadi"], 22 October 2022, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-بخش-روزنامه-100/859103-نگاهی-به-ابعاد-حقوقی-بازداشت-نیلوفر-حامدی-الهه-محمدی (in Persian).

494. Eghtesad News, واکنش معاون وزیر کشور به تقطیع شدن فیلم مهسا امینی/ بخش‌های تقطیع شده غیرمهم است ["Reaction of the deputy minister of interior to the editing of Mahsa Amini's video: The edited parts are unimportant"], 19 September 2022, https://www.eghtesadnews.com/بخش-اخبار-سایر-رسانه-ها-61/522473-واکنش-معاون-وزیر-کشور-به-تقطیع-شدن-فیلم-مهسا-امینی-بخش-های-تقطیع-شده-غیرمهم-است (in Persian).

495. See sections 10.1.3, 10.2.4, 10.3.4 and 10.4.3 for illustrative examples of these official statements.

496. Mehr News Agency, دستگیری اعضای یک تیم خرابکار در کردستان ["Arrest of members of a sabotage team in Kurdistan"], 23 September 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5596099/دستگیری-اعضای-یک-تیم-خرابکار-در-کردستان (in Persian).

497. Mehr News Agency, دستگیری اعضای یک تیم خرابکار در کردستان ["Arrest of members of a sabotage team in Kurdistan"], 23 September 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5596099/دستگیری-اعضای-یک-تیم-خرابکار-در-کردستان (in Persian).

498. Mehr News Agency, دستگیری عناصر یک گروهک تروریستی در اغتشاشات شمال‌غرب کشور ["Arrest of elements of a terrorist group in the unrests in the north-west of the country"], 23 September 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5596107/-دستگیری-عناصر-یک-گروهک-تروریستی-در-اغتشاشات-شمال-غرب-کشور (in Persian).

499. Mehr News Agency, برخورد با اغتشاش گران مطالبه جدی مردم است ["Arrest of elements of a terrorist group in the unrests in the north-west of the country"], 22 September 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5595486/برخورد-با-اغتشاش-گران-مطالبه-جدی-مردم-است (in Persian).

Shabani, stated:

> **"The enemies aim to overthrow the Islamic Republic system, using veiling and chastity as an excuse… A small number of norm-breakers and lawbreakers are attempting to destroy societal security… With the efforts of intelligence, security and police forces, some of the leaders of the riots have been identified and arrested, and the identification and arrest of such individuals are ongoing. In the near future, detailed information about the individuals and leaders of the riots will be published, and our response to them will be severe and decisive."[500]**

Amnesty International has documented arrests and detentions in 18 out of Iran's 31 provinces, namely Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Gilan, Golestan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Tehran, Sistan and Baluchstan, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.[501] The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and independent human rights organizations have documented arrests in the remaining 14 provinces, namely Ardabil, Bushehr, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Fars, Golestan, Hamedan, Kerman, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, North Khorasan, Ghazvin, Qom, Semnan, South Khorasan and Yazd.[502]

Arbitrary mass arrests occurred daily throughout the uprising, often peaking on protest days when security forces cracked down on demonstrations, as well as during memorial and funeral ceremonies for victims killed during the protests.

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International points to the involvement of multiple security forces in carrying out arbitrary arrests and detentions. They included agents from the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, the Ministry of Intelligence and various divisions of FARAJA, including the Public Security Police, the Investigation Police and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. The organization documented arrests carried out by both uniformed and plain-clothes agents, who often collaborated with each other in their response to the protests.

The authorities consistently refused to be transparent and reveal the exact number of people arrested and detained across the country in connection with the uprising. However, leaked official information and statements by officials at the national and provincial levels indicate that tens of thousands of people were swept up in the wave of arbitrary arrests. Less than two months into the uprising, in a leaked audio file obtained and published by BBC Persian on 14 November 2022, an official was heard

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500. Mehr News Agency, هنجارشکنان درصدد از بین بردن امنیت جامعه هستند ["Norm breakers are seeking to destroy the security of society"], 22 September 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5595420/هنجارشکنان-درصدد-از-بین-بردن-امنیت-جامعه-هستند (in Persian).
501. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 24 and 30-32.
502. As part of its investigations into torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual violence, perpetrated by the Iranian authorities against protest detainees during the uprising, the organization documented arbitrary arrests and detentions in 18 provinces, with 17 provinces being featured in a report titled '*They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising*, which was published on 6 December 2023. See Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped* Me' (previously cited), pp. 33-72. In addition to these 18 provinces, the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) documented arrests in one additional province: Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad. See Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), "Woman, life, freedom; Comprehensive report of 20 days of protest across Iran", 12 October 2022, https://www.en-hrana.org/woman-life-freedom-comprehensive-report-of-20-days-of-protest-across-iran The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran documented arrests in a further two provinces: Kerman and Qom. See OHCHR, "Iran: Institutional discrimination against women and girls enabled human rights violations and crimes against humanity in the context of recent protests, UN Fact-Finding Mission says", 8 March 2024, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/iran-institutional-discrimination-against-women-and-girls-enabled-human Arrests from a further 10 provinces were compiled by Enqelab Info, which used statistical data from the Committee for the Follow-up on the Status of Detainees to create lists and visual data sets of arrests across Iran. The 10 additional provinces are Ardabil, Bushehr, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Fars, Hamedan, North Khorasan, Ghazvin, Semnan, South Khorasan and Yazd. See Enqelab Info, برای من و تو که برخیزیم ["For us to rise up"], https://enqelab.info (accessed on 15 August 2026); and Committee for the Follow-up on the Status of Detainees, X account, https://x.com/followupiran (accessed on 15 August 2026).

stating in a closed meeting that the authorities had arrested between "15,000 and 16,000 people during the first wave of arrests" after the protests began, without clarifying the relevant time frame.[503]

In March 2023, in advance of Nowruz (the Persian new year), Iran's head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, announced that pardons had been granted to 22,628 people arrested in connection with the uprising.[504] According to the statement, the 22,628 people pardoned had either been convicted or were undergoing criminal investigation. It noted that most had already been released at the time of the announcement, suggesting that all had, at some time, been detained.

Information gathered by Amnesty International from former detainees, survivors and victims' families consistently indicated that detention facilities were severely overcrowded in the period between September and December 2022.[505] Individuals were often detained alongside scores or even hundreds of other protesters in overcrowded conditions. This, coupled with the authorities' documented use of makeshift detention facilities in locations such as warehouses, sports stadiums, military compounds, large prayer halls, parking lots, residential buildings and schools, further underscores the large scale of arrests linked to the uprising.[506]

Accounts gathered by Amnesty International of severe overcrowding and the use of unofficial places as makeshift detention facilities have been corroborated by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. For example, in one case, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran reported the mass detention of thousands of individuals, including children, in one stadium alone in Tehran.[507]

5.4.2 PROFILE OF INDIVIDUALS DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY

The authorities carried out mass arbitrary arrests targeting protesters and others who expressed real or perceived support for the Woman Life Freedom uprising or advocated equality and other human rights.

Victims of arbitrary arrests and detentions included university students, schoolchildren, women and girls who removed their headscarves in public, journalists and other media workers, political dissidents, members of oppressed ethnic minorities, social media users and human rights defenders. The authorities also targeted others who publicly supported the Woman Life Freedom uprising, including athletes, actors, writers and film directors.[508] Even individuals supporting protesters by providing medical care to them were sometimes arrested, according to the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran.[509]

The authorities used the uprising as an opportunity to further crush Iran's civil society through the arrest and detention of human rights defenders, including women's rights activists, labour rights activists and minority rights activists.

Amnesty International recorded the arrest and detention of at least 76 journalists and other media workers, including some investigating the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, based on

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503. BBC Persian, ["Iran protests: Audio file attributed to intelligence official: our own personnel are more detrimental than MI6"], 14 November 2022, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-63618568 (in Persian).
504. IRNA, ["22 thousand pardoned in relation to the recent protests"], 13 March 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85055898/ (in Persian).
505. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 60-62.
506. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 24, 30-32, 40-41, 43-44, 49-50 and 90-91.
507. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 630.
508. Center for Human Rights in Iran, "Iran: Death sentences and imprisonment used to crush dissent in film and theatre industries", 20 December 2022, https://iranhumanrights.org/2022/12/iran-death-sentences-and-imprisonment-used-to-crush-dissent-in-film-and-theatre-industries
509. See UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 626; OHCHR, "Iran: Institutional discrimination against women and girls enabled human rights violations and crimes against humanity in the context of recent protests, UN Fact-Finding Mission says", 8 March 2024, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/iran-institutional-discrimination-against-women-and-girls-enabled-human

information received from human rights defenders and reports and documentation by other human rights and media organizations.

The organization also recorded the arrest of at least 43 lawyers, including some representing detainees and families of those killed during the protests, based on information received from human rights defenders and reports and documentation by other human rights and media organizations.

One lawyer, Shervin, who spoke to Amnesty International following his release, explained to Amnesty International that he believed the authorities had targeted him and other lawyers to stop them from representing detained victims and families of those killed, based on statements made to him by agents. Another lawyer, Ali, interviewed by the organization after his release reported that agents reprimanded him during interrogations for working on "political" and "protester" cases.

Based on reports from independent media and human rights organizations, as well as state media and official statements, thousands of young university students and schoolchildren were arrested and detained for protesting in the streets or in their educational institutions and, in the case of schoolgirls, for removing their headscarves.[510]

The young age of some of those detained in the context of the protests was acknowledged early on by the authorities. For example, on 5 October 2022, the then deputy general commander of the IRGC, Ali Fadavi, said that the "average age of many of those arrested nationwide was just 15 years old."[511] Despite this, the authorities continued to arbitrarily detain children with impunity, holding them alongside adults and subjecting them to the same violations without any regard for the principles of juvenile justice.

Authorities also targeted members of ethnic minorities for mass arbitrary arrests, particularly Baluchis in Sistan and Baluchistan province, and Kurds in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, areas which were heavily affected by protests.

Women and girls who courageously defied discriminatory compulsory veiling laws were also targeted for widespread arbitrary arrest and detention.[512]

Family members who enquired about their detained loved ones or sought truth and justice for loved ones unlawfully killed during the protests were also targeted for arbitrary arrest and detention.[513] Under international human rights law, egregious examples of arbitrary detention include detaining family members of individuals sought by the authorities when those family members are not accused of any wrongdoing.[514]

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510. Center for Human Rights in Iran, "Iran protests: Detained university students subjected to sexual assault, disappearances", 6 December 2022, https://iranhumanrights.org/2022/12/iran-protests-detained-university-students-subjected-to-sexual-assault-disappearances; Aftab News, زندان به‌جای مدرسه/ پرونده‌سازی برای دانش‌آموزان ["Prison instead of school / Case-building against students"], 15 October 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/801104 (in Persian); IRNA, میانگین سنی ۱۵ سال دستگیرشدگان اغتشاشات اخیر به دلیل غفلت از حوزه‌های تربیتی است ["Average age of the detainees in the recent unrest is 15, due to neglect in educational areas"], 5 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84904665/میانگین-سنی-۱۵-سال-دستگیرشدگان-اغتشاشات-اخیر-به-دلیل-غفلت-از (in Persian); Kalam Parsa, حمله مسلحانه پلیس به دانش‌آموزان معتاد ["Armed police attack on drug-addicted students"], https://kalamparsa.ir/1787/مله-مسلحانه-پلیس-به-دانش‌آموزان-معتاد (in Persian).

511. Amnesty International has quoted the authorities' statement verbatim. The statement fails to specify the number of cases from which the average was calculated. IRNA, میانگین سنی ۱۵ سال دستگیرشدگان اغتشاشات اخیر به دلیل غفلت از حوزه‌های تربیتی است ["Average age of the detainees in the recent unrest is 15, due to neglect in the educational areas"], 5 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84904665/میانگین-سنی-۱۵-سال-دستگیرشدگان-اغتشاشات-اخیر-به-دلیل-غفلت-از (in Persian).

512. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).

513. See Chapter 9.

514. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 35: Article 9 (Liberty and security of person), 16 December 2014, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/35, para. 16.

5.4.3 MANNER OF ARRESTS

Authorities arrested people from the streets during protests or in their immediate aftermath, as well as during raids on the homes or workplaces of individuals identified through images captured by members of the security forces at protests or obtained from surveillance cameras. Security forces also maintained a heavy presence in and around hospitals and medical clinics, arresting injured protesters and interrupting their treatment against medical advice. University students and schoolchildren were arrested while attending protests in their campuses or schools, while travelling to and from school or university, and from their homes.

In the case of arrests carried out during protests, based on evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, other human rights organizations and the media, plain-clothes members of the security forces often infiltrated crowds of protesters, joined in the chanting of slogans to blend in and then carried out violent arrests with support from other members of the security forces, who were stationed nearby and suddenly appeared on the scene.[515] This tactic was publicly acknowledged by the authorities during the protests. On 10 October 2022, the then deputy minister of interior for security and police affairs, Majid Mir Ahmadi, told Shargh, a daily newspaper, that plain-clothes members of the security forces were operating among the "rioters" to identify and arrest them.[516]

Former detainees told Amnesty International that they witnessed security forces using lasers pointed at protesters to identify individuals for nearby plain-clothes members of the security forces to arrest. According to the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, the security forces also used specific measures to hide their identities from protesters while remaining identifiable to each other, such as covering the number plates of unmarked motorcycles with medical masks.[517]

In many cases, security forces forced victims into unmarked vehicles and took them to undisclosed locations where they were tortured, including through rape and other sexual violence. Some victims were then abandoned in remote areas after hours or days. Individuals interviewed by Amnesty International who were detained and released in this manner told the organization that, following their release, they were left shocked and bewildered about what had happened to them. Even months afterwards, they remained in a state of fear and confusion about whether they were at risk of criminal prosecution. Other victims were eventually registered at detention facilities run by the security forces or other facilities, where they faced further torture and were coerced into writing false "confessions".

5.4.4 JUDICIAL DIRECTIVES DRIVING MASS ARRESTS AND PROSECUTIONS

The Iranian authorities have never been transparent about the exact number of individuals arrested and detained in relation to the Woman Life Freedom uprising or the number of those prosecuted, convicted and sentenced. However, official statements from the head of the judiciary and other senior prosecution and judicial officials indicate that tens of thousands were subjected to criminal

515. See, for example, Sky News, "Iran protests: The secret police carrying out daylight abductions", 28 October 2022, https://news.sky.com/story/iran-protests-the-secret-police-carrying-out-daylight-abductions-12726459; Radio Farda, لباس شخصی‌ها، که هستند و چه می‌خواهند ["Who are the plain-clothes agents and what do they want?"], 2 October 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32048994.html (in Persian); VOA Persian, ویدئوی ارسالی شما از شگرد ماموران لباس شخصی برای حضور در اعتراضات و بازداشت معترضان ["Video you sent shows tactics used by plain-clothes agents to infiltrate protests and arrest protesters"], 20 September 2022, https://ir.voanews.com/a/iran-protest-mahsa-amini-/6755049.html (in Persian).

516. Shargh Daily, تایید نظر پزشکی قانونی درباره علت بررسی فوت مهسا امینی ["Confirmation of forensic medicine opinion regarding the cause of the investigation into Mahsa Amini's death"], 10 October 2022, https://www.sharghdaily.com/858117 (in Persian).

517. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 641.

proceedings.[518] The statements underscore the authorities' policy of criminalizing protests, directing security, judicial and prosecutorial bodies to cast a wide net of repression and sweep up anyone who participated in or supported the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

In a report published in March 2024,[519] the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran stated that, "during the riots of [2022], cases were filed for about 34,000 people."[520]

The report stated that "filing a case is not the same as detention". However, subsequent statements in the report, though opaque, indicate that the 34,000 individuals were all initially detained. For example, regarding their status, the report states:

> **"Given the… instructions of the national prosecutor general and the directives of the State Security Council regarding how to deal with those detained, many people who were in the detention centre were released by the issuing of appropriate judicial orders. For this reason, more than 90% of the people were outside the prison with appropriate judicial orders. Later, many of… their cases were dismissed. By looking into the available documents and reports, it was found that in the early days, with the aim of settling the cases of those apprehended as quickly as possible and handling possible complaints, officers and relevant judicial officials were stationed at the detention centres round the clock."[521]**

From early on during the uprising, the head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, made multiple announcements instructing provincial prosecutors and other judicial officials to take deterrent measures against "rioters" and fast-track their cases. His directives included charging protesters with offences punishable by the death penalty and expediting trials.

For example, on 24 September 2022, Mizan News Agency, the judiciary's news website, reported that Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i had issued a directive to prosecutors and other judicial officials across

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518. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 821; High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Examining the inauthentic, non-legal and political report of the so-called Fact-Finding Mission*, March 2024, available at https://geneva.mfa.ir/portal/newsview/741577/Examining-the-Inauthentic-Non-legal-and-Political-Report-of-the-So-called-Fact-Finding-Mission-on-Iran

519. The High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran is not an independent human rights institution and is itself implicated in gross violations of human rights. It has consistently functioned as a propaganda machine and the main state entity defending Iran's appalling human rights record at the UN Human Rights Council and other international forums. Throughout its history, the Council is not known to have taken any action to document and denounce widespread human rights violations in Iran or support victims, survivors or their families. The statements and reports on its website echo the state's official narratives of denials and distortions; dehumanize the victims of human rights violations; attack reports, statements and resolutions issued by UN human rights bodies about the situation of human rights in Iran; and exclusively emphasize human rights violations by states viewed as geopolitical adversaries by the Iranian authorities. The High Council for Human Rights falls under the head of the judiciary, who is appointed by the Supreme Leader. This arrangement is inconsistent with the UN Paris Principles, which outline the minimum standards that national human rights institutions must meet to be effective and credible. According to these principles, national institutions tasked with protecting and promoting human rights must be established in accordance with a procedure which affords all necessary guarantees to ensure the pluralist representation of civil society involved in the protection and promotion of human rights and must be free from government financial control that could compromise their autonomy. Such provisions collectively ensure an institution's operational and financial independence, enabling it to effectively fulfil its human rights mission. For more on the Paris Principles, see OHCHR, *Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles)*, 20 December 1993, UN General Assembly, Resolution 48/134.

520. High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Examining the inauthentic, non-legal and political report of the so-called Fact-finding Mission*, March 2024, available at https://geneva.mfa.ir/portal/newsview/741577/Examining-the-Inauthentic-Non-legal-and-Political-Report-of-the-So-called-Fact-Finding-Mission-on-Iran, p. 27.

521. High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Examining the inauthentic, non-legal and political report of the so-called Fact-finding Mission*, March 2024, available at https://geneva.mfa.ir/portal/newsview/741577/Examining-the-Inauthentic-Non-legal-and-Political-Report-of-the-So-called-Fact-Finding-Mission-on-Iran, pp. 27-28.

the country to act swiftly against national security threats, once again conflating peaceful acts of dissent protected by international law and violent acts.[522] The report stated:

> **"The head of the judiciary issued orders and recommendations to expedite the processing of cases pertaining to the main and professional elements of the recent riots, as well as those individuals connected in any way to well-known counter-revolutionary movements and affiliated with foreign grouplets and intelligence services… The head of the judiciary emphasized that deterrent actions… would be taken against those who destroy public property, are connected to foreign intelligence services and anti-revolutionary groups, and elements who, under the influence of false propaganda and the enemy's psychological warfare, disrupt public security in streets and public places… The same deterrent actions will be taken… against those who promote lies and spread rumours to create unrest and intimidate citizens".[523]**

According to the Mizan News Agency article, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i also stated:

> **"The judiciary, in collaboration and cooperation with relevant police and security divisions, will not allow under any circumstances the main elements of professional rioters and troublemakers to roam freely in cities and various regions of the country, disrupting the security and peace of citizens."[524]**

On 25 September 2022, Mizan News Agency reported that Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i visited the Command Staff of the Assistance Cohorts of FARAJA in Tehran and commended FARAJA forces and commanders for their handling of the uprising, stating: "The judiciary, alongside other bodies including FARAJA forces, will not allow the daily lives of people and citizens to be manipulated by rioters and troublemakers."[525]

The Mizan News Agency article went on to state that the head of the judiciary "reiterated the need for decisive and uncompromising action against the main and professional elements of the riots".[526]

On 26 September 2022, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i once against praised security forces and issued an ominous warning to protesters:

> **"These valiant and dear forces of FARAJA and the Basij sacrificed their blood and health and showed patience to establish security… Deterrent action will be taken against the rioters… Those who have sided and collaborated with the hateful enemy, inciting the youth and bringing them to the streets…**

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522. Mizan News Agency, بازدید سرزده رئیس قوه‌قضاییه از دادسرای جرائم امنیتی تهران/ رئیس عدلیه به صورت ویژه وضعیت بازداشت‌شدگان اغتشاشات اخیر را مورد بررسی و رسیدگی قرار داد ["Unannounced visit of head of the judiciary to the Tehran Security Crimes Prosecutor's Office: Head of judiciary specifically reviewed and addressed the situation of those arrested in the recent unrest"], 24 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4454337 (in Persian).

523. Mizan News Agency, بازدید سرزده رئیس قوه‌قضاییه از دادسرای جرائم امنیتی تهران/ رئیس عدلیه به صورت ویژه وضعیت بازداشت‌شدگان اغتشاشات اخیر را مورد بررسی و رسیدگی قرار داد ["Unannounced visit of head of the judiciary to the Tehran Security Crimes Prosecutor's Office: Head of judiciary specifically reviewed and addressed the situation of those arrested in the recent unrest"], 24 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4454337 (in Persian).

524. Mizan News Agency, بازدید سرزده رئیس قوه‌قضاییه از دادسرای جرائم امنیتی تهران/ رئیس عدلیه به صورت ویژه وضعیت بازداشت‌شدگان اغتشاشات اخیر را مورد بررسی و رسیدگی قرار داد ["Unannounced visit of head of the judiciary to the Tehran Security Crimes Prosecutor's Office: Head of judiciary specifically reviewed and addressed the situation of those arrested in the recent unrest"], 24 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4454337 (in Persian).

525. Mizan News Agency, حضور سرزده رئیس قوه‌قضاییه در مقر فرماندهی یگان امداد فراجا/قدردانی رئیس دستگاه قضا از زحمات کلیه اعضاء و پرسنل فرماندهی انتظامی کشور ["Unexpected visit of head of judiciary to the Headquarters of the Assistance Cohorts of FARAJA: Head of judiciary's appreciation for efforts of all members and personnel of country's police command"], 25 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4454732 (in Persian).

526. Mizan News Agency, حضور سرزده رئیس قوه‌قضاییه در مقر فرماندهی یگان امداد فراجا/قدردانی رئیس دستگاه قضا از زحمات کلیه اعضاء و پرسنل فرماندهی انتظامی کشور ["Unexpected visit of head of judiciary to the Headquarters of the Assistance Cohorts of FARAJA: Head of judiciary's appreciation for efforts of all members and personnel of country's police command"], 25 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4454732 (in Persian).

should know that they will face severe consequences and… must face punishment and retribution for their actions…

"It is not only those who came to the streets who are guilty; those who encouraged and supported them, those who poured water into the enemy's mill and implemented the enemies' plans, those who had connections with foreigners and those who collaborated with counter-revolutionaries living abroad in committing these crimes and acts of betrayals against the people and the country – they are all responsible and must be held accountable…

"It is possible that for some individuals, the situation and the issues were not clear in the first hours and day following the death of Ms Mahsa Amini, and their emotions were deeply affected. However, in the days that followed, the full scope of the situation became completely clear, revealing that the rioters and those threatening the security of the people who took to the streets used Ms Amini's death as an excuse to act against the [Islamic Republic] system and Islamic values. Therefore, no excuse will be accepted from those who participated in the riots in the days that followed."[527]

On 5 October 2022, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i again ordered judicial officials across the country to expedite cases related to the uprising "to serve as a deterrent".[528]

On 7 November 2022, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i once again called on security forces and judicial officials to ensure swift identification, arrest and prosecution of protesters. He stated:

"From the very first days of the recent events, judicial officials asked security and police agencies to identify, arrest and refer [for prosecution] the main elements of the riots and disturbances. In this regard, good progress has been gained and this process is continuing… Judicial colleagues should promptly act to [secure] deterrent prosecutions and punishments against the elements and instigators of the recent riots."[529]

The authorities also warned people that publishing "falsehoods" on social media about the protests was a criminal offence, revealing their intent to prevent and punish the dissemination of any information not falling in line with the authorities' official narrative on the uprising. For example, on 17 October 2022, the judiciary spokesperson, Masoud Setayeshi, stated:

"Publishing falsehoods with the intention of disturbing public opinion is punishable… Those who make false statements after everything is clear, and create excitement and disturbance, leading people to take action… cause a breach in national security, and these individuals must be held accountable for their actions."[530]

In line with directives from the head of the judiciary to criminalize and prosecute involvement in protests, between October and December 2022, prosecution and judicial officials from multiple

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527. Mizan News Agency, هشدار جدی رئیس قوه‌قضاییه به بازیگران و آتش بیاران معرکه اغتشاشات می‌شود ["Serious warning from head of judiciary to instigators and agitators of riots"], 26 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4455681 (in Persian).
528. Mizan News Agency, توصیه‌ها و دستورات مهم رئیس عدلیه خطاب به مقامات قضایی سراسر کشور درخصوص نحوه رسیدگی به پرونده‌های اغتشاشات اخیر ["Important recommendations and instructions from head of the judiciary to judicial officials across country regarding handling of cases related to recent unrest"], 5 October 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4464647 (in Persian).
529. Iran Newspaper, مجازات آشوب‌طلبان باید بازدارنده باشد ["Punishment of agitators must be a deterrent"], 8 November 2022, https://old.irannewspaper.ir/newspaper/page/8047, p. 2; ISNA, محسنی اژه‌ای: محاکمه و مجازات عناصر اغتشاشات اخیر زودتر انجام شود ["Mohseni Eje'i: Trial and punishment of elements involved in recent unrests should be carried out sooner"], 7 November 2022, isna.ir/news/1401081610915 (in Persian).
530. Jamaran News, سخنگوی قوه قضاییه: نشر اکاذیب به قصد تشویش اذهان عمومی قابلیت مجازات دارد ["Spokesperson of Judiciary: Spreading falsehoods with intent to disturb public opinion is punishable"], 17 October 2022, https://www.jamaran.news/بخش-بازنشر-59/1570607-سخنگوی-قوه-قضاییه-نشر-اکاذیب-به-قصد-تشویش-اذهان-عمومی-قابلیت-مجازات-دارد (in Persian).

provinces across the country announced criminal proceedings and indictments against large numbers of people in relation to the protests.

For example, on 24 October 2022, the prosecutor of Tehran province, Ali Salehi, stated that indictments and summons to trial had been issued against 315 individuals accused of participating in the recent "riots" in Tehran, including on sweeping and broad accusations such as "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security" and "spreading propaganda against the system". These offences contravene the principle of legality as they are overly broad and vague, and allow the authorities to apply them arbitrarily. Ali Salehi also stated that indictments had been issued against four people on the capital charge of "*moharebeh*" (waging war against God).[531]

On 25 October 2022, the head of the Justice Department in Kurdistan province, Hossein Hosseini, announced that indictments had been issued against 110 people in an expedited manner, in line with directives from the Supreme Leader and the head of the judiciary. He stated:

> **"In accordance with the instructions and guidelines of the Supreme Leader and following the directive of the honourable head of the judiciary to confront the main elements of rioters and professional agitators within the framework of legal standards and without leniency, from the early days of the assemblies and riots... the justice department in Kurdistan province set as its working agenda the task of distinguishing, monitoring and screening between defendants who were deceived and emotionally participated in the gatherings, and those who played the role of leaders and instigators… The policy of the province's judiciary, following the directives and emphasis of the esteemed head of the judiciary, is to deal firmly, effectively, and in a manner that has a deterrent effect, with the main agents of the riots, while adhering to the two principles of accuracy and speed in the proceedings."[532]**

On 26 October 2022, the head of the Justice Department in Zanjan province, Esmail Sadeghi Niaraki, announced that provincial authorities there had opened criminal cases against 325 people, stating:

> **"With the efforts of judicial colleagues and coordination of the intelligence community and [judicial] officers using past experiences, the riot scenes in the province were well managed… So far, 279 cases have been filed for 325 individuals by the prosecution offices in the province… Following the order of the head of the judiciary [Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i] during the Supreme Judicial Council meeting on the necessity of fast-tracking the cases of recent rioters and issuing indictments and verdicts, indictments have been issued for 119 rioters in the province… while verdicts have been issued against 16 people, and the remaining cases are under review… The processing of rioters' cases is being conducted with speed, precision and decisiveness. Those who sought to create disorder, destruction and riots in the society must be dealt with according to the law in a manner that instils regret."[533]**

Also on 26 October 2022, the head of the Justice Department of West Azerbaijan province, Naser Atabati, announced that indictments had been issued against 95 individuals.[534] Likewise, the then head of the justice department of Semnan province, Mohammad Jafar Abdollahi, announced that 72 individuals had received indictments. Both officials stated that the individuals indicted had been

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531. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست برای ۳۱۵ نفر در ارتباط با ناآرامی‌های اخیر/ چهار نفر به "محاربه" متهم شدند ["Indictments issued for 315 individuals in connection with recent unrests: Four individuals charged with '*moharebeh*' "], 24 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080201293/ (in Persian).

532. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست ۱۱۰ نفر از متهمان اغتشاشات اخیر ["Indictments issued for 110 individuals involved in recent unrests"], 25 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080301631/صدور-کیفرخواست-۱۱۰-نفر-از-متهمان-اغتشاشات-اخیر (in Persian).

533. Mehr News Agency, صدور کیفرخواست برای ۱۱۹ نفر از اغتشاش‌گران در استان زنجان ["Indictments issued for 119 rioters in Zanjan province"], 26 October 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5617443/صدور-کیفرخواست-برای-۱۱۹-نفر-از-اغتشاش-گران-در-استان-زنجان (in Persian).

534. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست برای دستگیرشدگان ناآرامی‌های اخیر در سمنان و آذربایجان غربی ["Indictments issued for those arrested in connection with recent unrests in Semnan and West Azerbaijan"], 26 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080402842/ (in Persian).

"accused of participating in the riots".[535]

On 14 November 2022, the head of the Justice Department in Markazi province, Abdolmehdi Mousavi, announced that the authorities there had issued indictments against 276 "criminals". The use of the word "criminals" violated their right to the presumption of innocence. He also said that 100 young people and children were released without charge after signing undertakings as a "preventive measure" against them. He did not explain what the undertakings entailed, but former detainees told Amnesty International that undertakings usually included commitments not to participate in further protests, which fundamentally undermines the right of peaceful assembly.[536] Regarding the 276 individuals indicted, he warned that the judiciary will "deal with them decisively".[537]

On 28 December 2022, the head of the Justice Department in Ghazvin province, Ali Shabani, announced that indictments had been issued against 237 individuals, of whom 93 individuals had already been tried and sentenced."[538]

Between October and December 2022, officials in multiple other provinces similarly announced the issuance of indictments against protesters, including 316 in Esfahan province,[539] 213 in Khuzestan province,[540] 201 in Alborz province,[541] 164 in Hormozgan province,[542] 45 in Zahedan in Sistan and Baluchistan province,[543] and 25 in Kerman province.[544] Some of the prosecution cases stemming from the uprising continued for several years after 2022.[545]

5.4.5 VIOLATIONS OF FAIR TRIAL RIGHTS

The mass arrests and detention of tens of thousands of people in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising were accompanied by systematic violations of fair trial rights from the moment of arrest through investigation, trial and appeal. Amnesty International documented systemic and widespread denial of the rights to:

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535. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست برای دستگیرشدگان ناآرامی‌های اخیر در سمنان و آذربایجان غربی ["Indictments issued for those arrested in connection with the recent unrests in Semnan and West Azerbaijan"], 26 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080402842 (in Persian).
536. Under international law, the authorities are prohibited from forcing individuals to sign pledges or undertakings not to organize or participate in future assemblies. See UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 66.
537. Mehr News Agency, صدور کیفرخواست برای ۲۷۶ نفر از دستگیرشدگان اغتشاشات اخیر مرکزی ["Indictments issued for 276 individuals arrested in connection with the recent unrests in Markazi province"], 14 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5631600/ (in Persian).
538. Mizan News Agency, احکام بدوی ۹۳ نفر از عوامل و عناصر اغتشاشات اخیر در استان قزوین صادر شد ["First-instance sentences issued for 93 agents and elements of the recent riots in Ghazvin province"], 28 December 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4571709/احکام-بدوی-93-نفر-از-عوامل-و-عناصر-اغتشاشات-اخیر-در-استان-قزوین-صادر-شد (in Persian).
539. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست برای ۳۱۶ پرونده اغتشاشات اخیر در اصفهان ["Indictments issued for 316 cases [related to] recent riots in Esfahan"], 12 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082114454/صدور-کیفرخواست-برای-۳۱۶-پرونده-اغتشاشات-اخیر-در-اصفهان (in Persian).
540. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست ۱۰۵ پرونده مرتبط با ناآرامی‌های اخیر در خوزستان ["Indictments issued for 105 cases related to the recent unrest in Khuzestan"], 25 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080302152/صدور-کیفرخواست-۱۰۵-پرونده-مرتبط-با-ناآرامی-های-اخیر-در-خوزستان (in Persian).
541. Tabnak, صدور کیفرخواست ۲۰۱ متهم اغتشاشات در البرز ["Indictments issued for 201 [individuals] accused [of involvement] in riots in Alborz"], 24 October 2022 https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1147053 (in Persian).
542. ISNA, صدور کیفرخواست ۱۶۴ نفر از متهمان جرایم علیه امنیت اخیر در هرمزگان ["Indictments issued for 164 individuals accused of recent crimes against security in Hormozgan"], 6 December 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401091509763/صدور-کیفرخواست-۱۶۴-نفر-از-متهمان-جرایم-علیه-امنیت-اخیر-در-هرمزگان (in Persian).
543. IRNA, کیفر خواست برای متهمان اغتشاشات زاهدان صادر شد ۴۵ ["45 indictments issued for those accused [in connection with] riots in Zahedan"], 2 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84930752/کیفر-خواست-برای-متهمان-اغتشاشات-زاهدان-صادر-شد-۴۵ (in Persian).
544. IRNA, کیفرخواست ۲۵ پرونده اغتشاشات در استان کرمان صادر شد ["Indictments issued for 25 cases [related to] riots in Kerman province"], 26 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84924218/کیفرخواست-۲۵-پرونده-اغتشاشات-در-استان-کرمان-صادر-شد (in Persian).
545. Amnesty International, "Iran: Risks of Further Protest-Related Executions" (Index: MDE 13/8873/2024), 19 December 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8873/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Risk of protest-related executions after unfair trials" (Index: MDE 13/8077/2024), 22 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8077/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Man facing imminent protest-related execution: Mojahed Kourkouri" (Index: MDE 13/7565/2024), 5 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7565/2024/en

- access a lawyer of one's choosing from arrest and throughout the investigation, trial and appeal proceedings;
- protection from torture and other ill-treatment;
- freedom from being compelled to incriminate oneself or confess guilt;
- the presumption of innocence;
- meaningfully challenge the legality of one's detention;
- trial before an independent, competent and impartial tribunal;
- the meaningful review of one's case by a higher court.

Detainees' criminal cases generally followed two paths. Some were forced to sign undertakings in exchange for their freedom, with cases closed before reaching indictment or trial. Others were referred to trial, where they were frequently convicted and sentenced to harsh prison terms and/or the death penalty after grossly unfair proceedings that bore no resemblance to legitimate judicial proceedings.

Based on interviews with former detainees, lawyers and family members, as well as reviews of official announcements and legal documents, including summons, indictments, court verdicts and defence submissions, Amnesty International found that the authorities used a plethora of charges to prosecute protesters and others in connection with the protesters and impose prison sentences or the death penalty. The charges fall broadly into three categories.

The first category encompasses the overly broad and vaguely worded charges of "*moharebeh*" (waging war against God), "*efsad-e fel arz*" (corruption on earth) and "*baghi*" (armed rebellion against the state). These charges are not internationally recognizable offences and do not meet the principle of legality, which requires all criminal conduct to be clearly defined and its definitions to be accessible and foreseeable. The authorities used these charges to impose the death penalty, including for acts other than intentional killing, in contravention of international law, which prohibits the imposition of the death penalty for crimes that do not amount to the most serious crimes involving intentional killing.[546]

The second category encompasses charges based on acts protected under the rights to privacy, freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, religion or belief, acts that should never be criminalized let alone punished with imprisonment or death. These include "apostasy", "insulting the Supreme Leader", "insulting Islamic sanctities", "spreading lies with the intention of disturbing public opinion", "spreading propaganda against the system", "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security" and "participating in illegal protests". Some of these charges also contravene the principle of legality as they are overly broad and vague, enabling the authorities to apply them arbitrarily.

The third category encompasses charges for internationally recognizable offences related to public order which do not involve intentional killing, including arson and "disrupting public order".

The judicial authorities wielded the threat of prosecution on charges carrying harsh penalties, including lengthy prison terms and the death penalty, as a tool of political repression, aimed at tormenting protesters and their supporters, terrorizing the general population and deterring further protests and

546. Amnesty International, "Iran: Tortured dissident rapper facing spurious charges: Toomaj Salehi" (Index: MDE 13/8339/2024), 18 July 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8339/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Execution Risk for Tortured Dissident Rapper: Toomaj Salehi" (Index: MDE 13/8055/2024), 16 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8055/2024/en/; Amnesty International, "Iran: Tortured protesters sentenced to death: Javad Rouhi, Mehdi Mohammadifard and Arshia Takdastan" (Index: MDE 13/6390/2023), 27 January 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6390/2023/en

dissent.[547]

In furtherance of this political strategy, in December 2022, the authorities arbitrarily executed two young men in their 20s – Majidreza Rahnavard and Mohsen Shekari – following grossly unfair trials before Revolutionary Courts in the provinces of Khorasan Razavi and Tehran, respectively.[548]

Mohsen Shekari was executed on 8 December 2022, two and a half months after his arrest on 25 September 2022, just five weeks after his grossly unfair sham trial on 1 November 2022, and less than three weeks after the authorities convicted and sentenced him to death. The authorities convicted him of "*moharebeh*" (waging war against God) in connection with accusations of "blocking a street in Tehran, creating fear and depriving people of freedom and security, and intentionally wounding an agent with a cold weapon [knife]". The day after he was executed, state media broadcast his forced "confessions" in a disturbing propaganda video which showed him with a large bruise and scar on his right cheek, reinforcing concerns that he had been subjected to torture. The video also showed gruesome clips of computer games depicting people stabbing other individuals, interspersed with his forced "confessions", in what appeared to be an attempt to justify his execution.[549]

Majidreza Rahnavard was executed on 12 December 2022, just three weeks after his arrest on 19 November 2022 in connection with protests and less than two weeks after his expedited grossly unfair trial on 29 November 2022. His forced "confessions" were broadcast in a propaganda video on state television the day after his arrest, prior to his trial, in a blatant breach of the right to the presumption of innocence.[550] In the video, he appeared with a heavily bandaged arm, reinforcing concerns that he had been subjected to torture. He was executed after being convicted and sentenced to death in relation to the fatal stabbing of two agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions during protests in Mashhad on 17 November 2022.

Given the Iranian authorities' long-standing pattern of extracting video-recorded "confessions" under torture and other ill-treatment, Amnesty International has serious concerns that these televised "confessions" were obtained under duress and by coercion.[551]

Between September and December 2022, dozens of other individuals were prosecuted on capital charges in grossly unfair sham trials. In the following years, multiple other individuals were sentenced

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547. Amnesty International, "Iran: Death penalty sought in sham trials" (Index: MDE 13/6219/2022), 16 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6219/2022/en, pp. 6-16; Amnesty International, "Iran: Chilling use of the death penalty to further brutally quell popular uprising", 16 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-chilling-use-of-the-death-penalty-to-further-brutally-quell-popular-uprising

548. Amnesty International, "Iran: Public execution of Majidreza Rahnavard exposes authorities' revenge killings", 12 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-public-execution-of-majidreza-rahnavard-exposes-authorities-revenge-killings; Amnesty International, "Iran: Horrifying execution of young protester exposes authorities' cruelty and risk of further bloodshed", 8 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-horrifying-execution-of-young-protester-exposes-authorities-cruelty-and-risk-of-further-bloodshed

549. alireza.km.a, محسن شکاری اعدام شد! چرا؟! اعترافات او را بشنوید ["Mohsen Shekari was executed! Why?! Listen to his confessions"], 9 December 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/a4413y6 (in Persian).

550. Rokna Press, اولین فیلم از اعترافات قاتل ۲ بسیجی در مشهد / ببینید ["See first video of confessions of murderer of two Basijis in Mashhad"], 20 November 2022, https://www.rokna.net/بخش-حادثه-245/844906-ببینید-اولین-فیلم-از-اعترافات-قاتل-بسیجی-در-مشهد (in Persian).

551. Amnesty International, *'They Shot Our Children'* (previously cited); Amnesty International, "Iran: Cruel campaign to extract propaganda 'confessions' from protesters against compulsory veiling", 15 July 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/07/iran-cruel-campaign-to-extract-propaganda-confessions-from-protesters-against-compulsory-veiling; Amnesty International, "Iran: Broadcasting injustice, boasting of mass killing: A case study of August 2016 execution of 25 Sunni men in Iran", 17 November 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5079/2016/en; Amnesty International, "Trial by camera – 'TV confessions' and the death penalty in Iran", 11 April 2013, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2013/04/trial-by-camera-tv-confessions-and-the-death-penalty-in-iran

to death in connection with the protests and at least 12 others, in addition to Mohsen Shekari and Majidreza Rahnavard, were arbitrarily executed.[552]

Some of the individuals were arbitrarily executed for their alleged participation in acts such as blocking streets, arson or vandalism, while others were executed in relation to the deaths of members of the security forces during protests, for which they denied any responsibility. Dozens more are at risk of being sentenced to death in connection with the uprising.[553]

5.5 ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Amnesty International has previously documented how, during the uprising between September and December 2022, security forces and prosecution authorities worked together to routinely subject detainees to enforced disappearance for days or weeks by withholding all information from families about their fate or whereabouts.[554] Some detainees were held in official detention facilities, others in unofficial detention sites such as warehouses, schools and residential buildings colloquially referred to by the security forces as safe houses.

Distressed relatives told Amnesty International how they visited police stations, prosecution offices, Revolutionary Courts, prisons and other known detention centres in search of loved ones. In some cases previously documented by Amnesty International, officials deliberately concealed information about the fate and/or whereabouts of detainees, despite knowing detainees were in state custody. In other cases, officials admitted to relatives that their loved ones were detained, but refused to disclose their location or the charges against them. Those detained were frequently denied visits from their families and lawyers, as well as any other contact with them, for periods ranging from days to several weeks and, in some cases, even months.

Enforced disappearance removed detainees from legal protection, enabling torture and other ill-treatment and the extraction of forced "confessions" later used in grossly unfair trials to secure

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552. The 14 individuals arbitrarily executed are Majidreza Rahnavard, Mohsen Shekari, Mohammad Mehdi Karami, Seyed Mohammad Hosseini, Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi, Saeed Yaghoubi, Milad Zohrevand, Mohmmad Ghodadlou, Reza (Gholamreza) Rasaei, Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri, Mehran Bahramian, Mehrab Abdollahzadeh and Aref Khoshkar; Amnesty International, "Iran: End escalating campaign of arbitrary executions and death sentences against protesters", 28 July 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/07/iran-end-escalating-campaign-of-arbitrary-executions-and-death-sentences-against-protesters; Amnesty International, "Iran: Further Information: Protesters and dissidents at risk of execution"(Index: MDE 13/1032/2026), 21 May 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1032/2026/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Shocking secret execution of young man in relation to 'Woman Life Freedom' uprising", 6 August 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/iran-shocking-secret-execution-of-young-man-in-relation-to-woman-life-freedom-uprising; Amnesty International, "Iran: Risk of protest-related executions after unfair trials" (Index: MDE 13/8077/2024), 22 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8077/2024/en; Amnesty International, *'Don't Let Them Kill Us': Iran's Relentless Execution Crisis Since the 2022 Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7869/2024), 4 April 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7869/2024/en, pp. 18-19; Amnesty International, "Iran: Executions of protester with mental disability and Kurdish man mark plunge into new realms of cruelty", 24 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/01/iran-executions-of-protester-with-mental-disability-and-kurdish-man-mark-plunge-into-new-realms-of-cruelty; Amnesty International, X post: "Amnesty International is horrified by reports of the chilling execution of Milad Zohrevand on 23 November in Hamedan Central prison", 24 November 2023, https://x.com/AmnestyIran/status/1728096676261277927https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/01/iran-young-man-at-grave-risk-of-execution-in-connection-with-protests-amid-killing-spree/; Amnesty International, "Iran: Executions of tortured protesters must trigger a robust reaction from the international community", 19 May 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/01/iran-young-man-at-grave-risk-of-execution-in-connection-with-protests-amid-killing-spree; Amnesty International, "Iran: Young man at grave risk of execution in connection with protests amid 'killing spree'", 11 January 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/01/iran-young-man-at-grave-risk-of-execution-in-connection-with-protests-amid-killing-spree

553. Amnesty International, "Iran: Further Information: Thousands at risk of execution in Iran", 10 September 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0277/2025/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Risk of protest-related executions after unfair trials" (Index: MDE 13/8077/2024), 22 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8077/2024/en;

554. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 29-34.

indictments and convictions. The uncertainty caused psychological harm to families, leaving them in anguish over whether loved ones were dead or alive amid reports of protest-related killings.

Amnesty International's findings on enforced disappearance are corroborated by those of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, which, in its March 2024 report, cited multiple testimonies from former detainees who were denied the right to contact their families, even after pleading with the authorities for permission, as well as testimonies from victims' families who were denied any information about their loved ones' fate and/or whereabouts and, in some cases, were told to search for them in other cities.[555] The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran also documented that authorities forcibly disappeared children and subjected their distressed parents to verbal insults, gave them conflicting information about their fate and whereabouts, and threatened them, saying that they would never see their children alive if they publicized their names or ordeals.[556]

5.6 TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

Amnesty International has previously published its findings on patterns of torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, during the Woman Life Freedom uprising, based on interviews with 84 individuals, including victims and their families, eyewitnesses and lawyers, and documentary evidence such as photographs, medical records and video footage which was verified by the organization's Digital Verification Corps.[557] The evidence gathered revealed that Iran's security forces waged a campaign of torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual violence, on a widespread and systematic basis against thousands of men, women and children.[558]

The organization found that security forces perpetrated torture and other ill-treatment in the streets during protest dispersals, at the time of arrest during protests or in peoples' homes or places of work, and later in detention centres and prisons across the country where people were held.

Security forces responsible for perpetrating torture and other ill-treatment across the country included the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, the Ministry of Intelligence and various bodies of FARAJA, including the Public Security Police, the Investigation Police and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.

5.6.1 TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT IN PROTEST DISPERSALS

Amnesty International found that security forces subjected protesters to torture and other ill-treatment, including through the use of beatings, the administration of electric shocks, the firing of lethal ammunition and metal pellets at protesters and the misuse of less lethal weapons, leading to severe and, in some cases, life-altering injuries. Evidence gathered by the organization shows that security forces knew their actions would lead to severe pain and suffering amounting to torture and other ill-treatment but persisted in the conduct regardless as part of a deliberate strategy to punish, intimidate and deter protesters.

Security forces used beatings in a widespread manner as a tactic to disperse crowds, to punish protesters and stop their further participation in protests, to prevent people filming the violent crackdown and to subdue individuals at the time of arrest. Amnesty International documented instances of security forces delivering dangerous blows to people's heads and necks and punching, kicking, pushing and striking them with batons. In some cases, they also used electric shock devices

555. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 663.
556. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 664.
557. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).
558. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 33-72.

during the protests, causing victims to collapse to the ground with severe injuries.[559]

Security forces also extensively fired assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets at protesters and misused less lethal weapons, including by firing paintball pellets and tear gas canisters at close range, aimed at the upper body and head. These actions resulted in blindness in one or both eyes, and/or other severe and painful injuries. Such intentional actions by the security forces, including the persistent use of shotguns loaded with metal pellets, caused severe pain and suffering amounting to torture and other ill-treatment.

Survivors of torture and other ill-treatment who were detained during the uprising and were previously interviewed by the organization also said that, while in detention, they witnessed detainees with injuries consistent with metal pellets fired at crowds during the protests, and that their pain and suffering were compounded by the authorities' refusal to provide them with adequate healthcare.[560]

Eyewitnesses interviewed by Amnesty International consistently reported that they witnessed security forces firing metal pellets towards protesters, including at close range and without warning. The organization also reviewed extensive documentary and audiovisual evidence, including videos and photographs, as well as X-rays, diagnostic records and other medical documents, pertaining to the use of metal pellets during the protests and the injuries they caused.

Multiple victims said they did not go to hospital to seek medical care for their injuries, fearing arrest by the security forces. Amnesty International received reports from interviewees, including former detainees and eyewitnesses at the protests, who said that security forces were often present in hospitals to arrest protesters seeking medical care.

Other victims whose documents Amnesty International reviewed said they were forced to seek expensive medical care for injuries caused by metal pellets, including multiple surgical operations, to remove metal pellets from their eyes, restore their sight and relieve their pain. Victims said their injuries left them unable to carry out their daily activities, and affected their livelihood in some cases as the pain and disability left them struggling to work. In other cases, individuals were injured from metal pellets shot at their chest, abdominal area, genitals and other parts of their bodies, also leaving them in states of distress and excruciating pain, affecting all areas of their lives.

The incidents of injuries, including blindness, from metal pellets during the uprising was so high that, according to reports from independent Persian-language media, 140 ophthalmologists from inside Iran signed a public letter, published on 25 November 2022, warning that a large number of protesters had sought medical treatment after being shot in the eyes by metal pellets and paintball pellets, causing many to lose sight in one or both eyes.[561] The ophthalmologists urged that their letter be forwarded to the relevant authorities to raise awareness about the irreversible consequences of using metal pellets against protesters.[562]

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559. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited); Amnesty International, "Iran: Leaked official documents ordering deadly crackdown highlight need for international action" (Index: MDE 13/6070/2022), 30 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6070/2022/en

560. Amnesty International also previously documented a similar pattern of violations by security forces during the November 2019 nationwide protests. In a report published in 2020, the organization documented how scores of protesters and bystanders injured by lethal ammunition, birdshot and metal pellets were arrested at hospitals while seeking medical care or immediately after being discharged from hospital and transferred to detention centres where they were denied access to treatment and medication. See Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity: Mass Arrests, Disappearances and Torture Since Iran's 2019 November Protests* (Index: MDE 13/2891/2020), 1 September 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2891/2020/en, pp. 16-17.

561. Radio Farda, هشدار ۱۴۰ چشم‌پزشک نسبت به استفاده از گلوله‌های ساچمه‌ای علیه معترضان ایرانی ["Warning from 140 ophthalmologists regarding use of metal bullets against Iranian protesters"], 26 November 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32149259.html

562. Radio Farda, هشدار ۱۴۰ چشم‌پزشک نسبت به استفاده از گلوله‌های ساچمه‌ای علیه معترضان ایرانی ["Warning from 140 ophthalmologists regarding use of metal bullets against Iranian protesters"], 26 November 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32149259.html

Amnesty International's research is supported by similar findings from independent media and human rights organizations, as well as the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran.

The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran reported in March 2024 that Iran's security forces inflicted devastating and life-altering injuries against protesters and bystanders, including children, through the use of metal pellets and rubber bullets during protests, leading to debilitating, severe and painful disabilities such as blindness and intense long-lasting pain and effectively "branding" them for life as protesters.[563] The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran stated that forensic pathology analysis of victims' medical records confirmed extensive severe traumatic eye injuries to victims, including "rupture of the eye globe; severe lacerations; eyeball atrophy; corneal scar and displacement; loss or displacement of the natural lens of the eye; perforation of the globe of the eye; vitreous prolapse; and haemorrhage at the retina and damage to it including detachment".[564] The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran's report stated:

> **"Evidence collected by the Mission showed a clear and discernible pattern of systematic eye injuries caused by security forces to women, men and children during protests countrywide. Injuries led to victims losing their eyesight, either partially or fully, in one or both eyes. Victims routinely described to the Mission that they had been shot at close range, with weapons loaded with ammunition containing pellets, or paintball guns loaded with rubber bullets, including bullets that were described by witnesses as excessively heavy, as well as with tear gas cannisters."[565]**

The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran's reported victims, including one child, suffering from long-term disability involving severe nerve, vascular and musculoskeletal damage caused by lethal ammunition used by security forces during the protests.[566]

An investigation by the New York Times, published on 19 November 2022, reported that more than 500 protesters who had suffered severe eye injuries after being shot with metal pellets by security forces had sought medical care in three large hospitals in Tehran, according to statistics provided to the newspaper by ophthalmologists in the hospitals.[567] The New York Times also reported that doctors in Kurdistan province treated at least 80 people who suffered eye injuries from metal pellets.[568]

A report by the Norwegian-based independent human rights organization, Iran Human Rights, published on 22 September 2023, recorded injuries to 138 individuals and concluded that Iran's security forces intentionally and systematically targeted protesters' eyes and faces with metal pellets during the uprising.[569] The report also said that those shot in the eyes with metal pellets included children as young as five years old, as well as men and women.[570]

Given that many individuals did not seek medical care in hospitals and medical centres fearing arrest, the reports from the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, the New York Times, and Iran Human Rights, together with evidence gathered by Amnesty International, and as well as the letter from ophthalmologists, provide indications that thousands of protesters and bystanders were shot with metal

563. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 560-562 and 582.
564. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 565.
565. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 564.
566. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 572.
567. New York Times, "Hundreds of protesters in Iran blinded by metal pellets and rubber bullets", 19 November 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/19/world/asia/iran-protesters-eye-injuries.html
568. New York Times, "Hundreds of protesters in Iran blinded by metal pellets and rubber bullets", 19 November 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/19/world/asia/iran-protesters-eye-injuries.html
569. Iran Human Rights, "Iran protests 2022: Women protester eyes intentionally and systematically targeted", 22 September 2023, https://iranhr.net/en/articles/6205/
570. Iran Human Rights, "Iran protests 2022: Women protester eyes intentionally and systematically targeted", 22 September 2023, https://iranhr.net/en/articles/6205/

pellets by security forces throughout the country during the uprising.

In addition to causing severe physical pain and suffering, the use of force described above was also intended to cause severe mental suffering amounting to psychological torture and other ill-treatment – and to dissuade protesters and their supporters from further protests. The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran's report stated:

> **"In addition to causing severe physical pain and mental suffering and devastation, the Mission notes the deterrent and chilling effect that injuries, in particular blindings, have on protesters. The Mission is satisfied that such effect was intended. A woman protester, who lost her sight in one eye, described the use of force by the security forces as a deliberate act of intimidation of protesters. She noted that injuries sustained by protesters not only impacted them, but also affected their families and the people around them. 'An injured protester means one less person on the streets', she said. Another woman protester described how the use of force was aimed at intimidating, saying 'it is to create fear in society. You get shot and you scream, and people get the message.'"**[571]

5.6.2 TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT IN STATE CUSTODY

Amnesty International previously interviewed 84 individuals about human rights violations that occurred in detention during the uprising and found that the authorities subjected detained protesters to torture and other ill-treatment in state custody.[572]

Survivors told Amnesty International how, at the time of arrest, security forces routinely subjected them and others being arrested to severe beatings, including with batons and electric shocks, even when they had already been restrained. Immediately following arrest, agents often continued to subject detainees to torture and other ill-treatment after violently throwing them into vehicles and during transfer to detention facilities, even when they were already blindfolded and restrained with handcuffs.

In detention, agents subjected protesters to torture and other ill-treatment including during interrogations while they were blindfolded or forced to face a wall.

Amnesty International's research found that the most frequently reported methods of physical torture and other ill-treatment used in state custody included beatings with batons and chains; slapping, kicking and punching; flogging; suspension, including from the neck and wrists; forcing detainees into painful stress positions for prolonged periods, often while blindfolded or having their head covered with a bag or sack; prolonged solitary confinement for days or weeks without access to sunlight or fresh air; the administration of electric shocks to different body parts; and sexual violence.[573] Other documented methods of torture included sticking needles into sensitive body parts such as toenails; exposure to extreme temperatures; forcible extraction of nails; discharging pepper spray into the eyes; mock executions; forcing detainees to perform humiliating acts, including in front of other detainees; violently pulling the hair of both women and men; forced administration of chemical substances including pills and injections; and bombardment of light and/or sound over a sustained period, including at night.

The authorities also used various forms of psychological torture, including threats of further torture such as rape against the detainees; threats to kill or imprison detainees for life; threats to have them charged and convicted of capital offences such as "*efsad-e fel arz*" (corruption on earth) and/or "*moharebeh*" (waging war against God); threats to arrest, kill, rape or otherwise torture, physically harm and/or forcibly disappear their family members, including children, parents, spouses and siblings;

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571. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 490.
572. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).
573. See section 5.7.

persistent use of degrading verbal insults and profanities directed against them and members of their families, especially female family members; forcing detainees to utter insulting words against themselves and their female family members; and exposure to screams of other detainees being tortured.

Amnesty International's research found that detainees were held in cruel and inhuman conditions violating the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, characterized by extreme overcrowding; filthy and unsanitary conditions and facilities; infestations of cockroaches and mice; a lack of climate-appropriate accommodation and bedding; and little or no access to toilet and washing facilities due to severe overcrowding.

The authorities also deliberately denied detainees access to basic necessities such as food and water, with one survivor being told by an agent, "Eat from your own faeces!" They also denied detainees access to items to maintain personal hygiene, such as sanitary items for women and girls, and to medical care, including medication. In some instances, detainees were denied access to toilet facilities, which intensified physical and mental suffering and even compelled them to urinate in their clothing.

Multiple former detainees from different provinces independently told Amnesty International that security forces particularly targeted younger protesters, including children, in detention for torture and other ill-treatment in order to "teach them a lesson" as a long-term strategy to dissuade them from ever protesting again.

According to information gathered by Amnesty International, the authorities systematically used torture and other ill-treatment in detention for the purposes of punishment, fear, intimidation, mocking, humiliation, as well as to extract "confessions" from detainees.

Survivors consistently told Amnesty International that security forces used widespread torture and other ill-treatment to break their spirit, self-esteem and sense of dignity, to instil fear and to inflict lasting trauma, thereby discouraging them from participating in future protests or other acts of resistance, including, in the case of women and girls, removing their veils in public. The organization's findings reveal a pattern of security and intelligence agents subjecting detained protesters to hours of torture and other ill-treatment immediately after arrest, without any initial attempt to gather information through interrogations. This is indicative of the authorities' efforts to use torture as a punitive measure and to send a chilling message that protesters would face brutal consequences simply for their dissent and/or activism.

These findings are supported by those of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, which revealed that, in addition to causing severe physical pain, mental suffering and devastation, the torture inflicted both in detention and in the streets, including through blinding, was intended to have a deterrent and chilling effect on protesters as a deliberate act of intimidation, noting survivors' testimonies that injuries sustained not only impacted them but also their families and the people around them to create fear in society.[574]

Torture was also used as an interrogation tactic to coercively elicit self-incriminating statements and "confessions" not just about detainees' involvement in the protests, but also about their alleged associations with opposition groups outside Iran, human rights defenders, journalists and media organizations outside Iran, as well as foreign governments.

Security forces also committed torture on discriminatory grounds, including discrimination based on gender identity or expression, and to punish people for not conforming to gender-based stereotypes of how men and women are expected to behave.

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574. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 489.

5.7 RAPE AND OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

5.7.1 PATTERNS OF RAPE AND OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Amnesty International has previously published its research findings on how Iran's security forces committed acts of rape, gang rape and other forms of sexual violence against those arbitrarily arrested and detained in connection with the uprising, including children.[575]

The organization found that the authorities used rape and other forms of sexual violence to punish those who participated in the protests against the political and security establishment, which challenged decades of oppression and entrenched gender-based discrimination against women and girls in the country.

The organization's research indicates that documented cases of rape and other sexual violence were not isolated violations but were part of a wider pattern.

Despite rape and other forms of sexual violence likely being widely under-reported given the fear of reprisals by the authorities and social stigma attached, Amnesty International was able to document, in detail, 45 cases that took place in 17 of Iran's 31 provinces, namely Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Gilan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Tehran, Sistan and Baluchistan, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.

More than half of the testimonies gathered by Amnesty International in relation to the torture and other ill-treatment perpetrated against protesters detained during the uprising – 45 out of 84 – involved claims of state agents committing rape and/or other forms of sexual violence, indicating that sexual violence was committed on a widespread basis and at an alarmingly higher rate than in previous waves of protests.[576] Multiple individuals from different provinces told the organization that they were eyewitnesses to incidents that involved the commission of mass sexual violence against groups of detainees, composed of up to 50 people. Other former detainees told Amnesty International that they heard women detainees screaming and pleading with security forces in a way they found extremely distressing, leading them to believe that the women and/or girls were being subjected to sexual violence.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence were perpetrated by both low-ranking agents and those who appeared to have command responsibility over detention facilities. They were from state bodies that included the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, the Ministry of Intelligence and various bodies of the FARAJA, including the Public Security Police, the Investigation Police and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.

Sexual violence was used with total impunity as a weapon of torture by the authorities within their wider machinery of oppression to humiliate and intimidate protesters, to obtain forced "confessions" from them, to punish them for challenging the political and security establishment and entrenched gender-based discrimination, including compulsory veiling laws, and to crush their spirit of resistance and deter them from further protests. In relation to women and girls, it appeared that security forces perpetrated sexual violence to punish them for transgressing socially constructed norms about the way women are expected to behave, including through removing their headscarves in defiance of compulsory veiling laws and taking part in the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

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575. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).

576. Amnesty International documented sexual violence against protesters detained during the November 2019 protests on a smaller scale. See Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity* (previously cited), pp. 40-41.

Amnesty International's findings on sexual violence are supported by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran's investigations which found that state agents from the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, the Ministry of Intelligence and FARAJA committed rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence amounting to torture against women, girls, men, boys and non-binary individuals in a widespread manner during the Woman Life Freedom uprising.[577] The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran's report stated:

> **"By perpetrating rape and other forms of sexual violence, the State also violated individuals' right to… bodily integrity, the rights to autonomy and to sexual autonomy, the right to privacy, the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, women's right to equality before the law and the rights to be free from violence, discrimination, torture and other cruel or inhuman treatment."[578]**

The Mission also found that security forces capitalized on cultural and sexual taboos and impunity for sexual and gender-based violence to spread fear, humiliate, punish and terrorize people for their participation in the protests.[579]

5.7.2 RAPE

Amnesty International's research found that agents from Iran's security forces, including the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, and FARAJA, including the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, subjected women, men and children, whose ages ranged from 14 to 39, to rape, including gang rape.

Agents raped women and girls vaginally, anally and orally, forcing them into performing oral sex acts, while men and boys were raped anally. Agents raped victims with wooden and metal batons, glass bottles, hosepipes, and/or their sexual organs and fingers.

The 16 cases of rape that Amnesty International documented in detail, which involved six women, seven men, a 14-year-old girl and two boys aged 16 and 17, took place in the provinces of East Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchistan, and Tehran. Six of the 16 rape survivors were subjected to gang rape by multiple agents and the rest were raped by a single perpetrator. The organization also received information about the rape of a further six individuals in detention from interviews conducted with survivors of rape and other sexual violence but was unable to investigate these in detail.

Amnesty International documented rape committed by male agents, sometimes with the full knowledge and/or active participation of one or multiple female agents.

The rapes took place in both official and unofficial detention facilities, including IRGC detention facilities, an unidentified building unofficially and unlawfully repurposed to detain protesters, an empty residential building, a primary school and a pre-school unofficially and unlawfully repurposed to detain protesters, and vans belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and other security forces.

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International reveals that rape was frequently accompanied by other physical and psychological forms of torture and ill-treatment. These included beatings, floggings and electric shocks resulting in severe injuries to the survivors, including bruises, broken teeth and fractures or other injuries to other parts of their bodies, such as their head, neck, arms, legs, feet and back. Common forms of psychological torture included threats to arrest, kill, rape or otherwise harm detainees' family members and forcing male survivors to refer to their female family members using sexist slurs, which caused them extreme distress.

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577. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 806.
578. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 806.
579. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 807.

Security forces routinely denied medical care to rape survivors for injuries sustained as a result of rape, beatings and other forms of torture and ill-treatment, even when survivors repeatedly asked for help.

Security forces often threatened rape survivors, including children, telling them that they had to stay silent about their torture or else they would face reprisals, including further torture and other ill-treatment as well as arrest and physical harm to their loved ones. In one case documented by the organization, a police agent who raped a teenage schoolgirl threatened the girl not to resist the rape to avoid prolonged detention and harm to her family.

5.7.3 OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Amnesty International found that security forces across Iran routinely subjected women and girls, as well as boys and men, who were arrested to sexual violence acts other than rape.

The organization documented sexual violence against women and girls including male security forces putting their hands under the clothing of women and girls and into their underwear; touching, grabbing, groping, beating, punching and kicking their breasts, genitals and buttocks; stripping them of their clothes and performing intrusive body searches, including in front of male detainees; holding them naked for hours or days in detention, including in front of video cameras and in freezing conditions; forcibly cutting their hair; dragging them around violently by their hair; exposing their bodies in front of groups of male detainees and other agents; threatening to rip their breasts off or cut off their breasts with knives; and threatening to rape them and their female relatives. The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran also found that agents carried out forced virginity testing on women and girls.[580]

Security forces routinely used gendered insults, slurs and vulgar language against detained women and girls, labelling them "slutty girls" and "whores" who "wanted to be naked" simply for defying compulsory veiling. State agents mocked women and girls for protesting against compulsory veiling, and told them that they deserved to be punished with rape or other forms of sexual violence for removing their headscarves and protesting.

Amnesty International also documented the use of humiliating and degrading racist insults against women from the oppressed Baluchi ethnic minority about their bodies and skin colour.

Amnesty International found that security forces routinely subjected men and boys to forms of sexual violence other than rape. These included agents threatening men and boys with rape; forcing them to undress in front of others; subjecting them to cold temperatures while naked; administrating electric shocks to their genitals; sticking needles into their genitals; touching, pressing, kicking and beating their testicles and buttocks; and putting ice on their testicles for prolonged periods. Agents also used gendered and derogatory language to refer to the female relatives of male detainees, including their mothers and sisters, calling them vulgar words such as "whore" and forcing the detainees to repeat the gendered insults, which caused them immense mental suffering and constituted some of the worst forms of psychological torture they endured.

The organization also found that security forces perpetrated sexual violence against LGBTI people. Amnesty International documented sexual violence against two LGBTI individuals – a bisexual man and a trans woman – because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, including through stripped them naked; touching and beating their buttocks; pressing their nipples with a pair of pliers; threatening to rape them with a baton; questioning them in an invasive and humiliating manner about their gender identity; and directing derogatory remarks rooted in homophobia and transphobia towards

580. The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran documented virginity testing in its report published in March 2024. See UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 714.

them. The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran's investigations supported Amnesty International findings into sexual violence against LGBTI people and, additionally, found that agents subjected LGBTI individuals to forced genital checks; burnt the hair of a trans woman upon finding out her gender identity; and forced a gay man to sign a document stating that he was "a transgender and suffered a mental illness".[581]

581. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), paras 733-734.

6. UNLAWFUL KILLINGS IN KURDISTAN PROVINCE

> **"They [the authorities] showed no mercy whatsoever. Killing and injuring people became normal for the security forces."**
>
> Rojin, a protester, describing the crackdown on protests in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, in October 2022

Waves of largely peaceful protests gripped multiple cities in Kurdistan province between 17 September and the end of December 2022. Amnesty International's research concludes that security forces unlawfully and persistently used force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter further protests. The security forces unlawfully killed at least 35 protesters and bystanders in seven counties across the province during lethal protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces.[582] Across the province, the security forces also inflicted injuries amounting to torture and other ill-treatment on at least hundreds of protesters and bystanders.

582. This figure does not include protesters and bystanders in Kurdistan province who died in state custody, after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, or in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. For information on these categories of deaths, see sections 5.3.3, 5.3.4 and 5.3.5. See also Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en



Images of victims unlawfully killed by security forces in Kurdistan province during protest dispersals or in militarized areas between 19 September and 7 December 2022. Top row (left to right): Fereydoon Mahmoudi, Motaleb Saeed Peiro, Sarina Saedi, Fereydoon Faraji, Foad Ghadimi, Zaniar Allahmoradi and Mohsen Niazi. Second row from top (left to right): Foad Savari, Reza Kazemi, Asoo Ghaderi, Aziz Moradi, Isa Biglari, Yahya Rahimi and Foad Mohammadi. Third row from top (left to right): Mohammad Shariati, Shahou Bahmani, Aram Habibi, Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, Borhan Karami, Habibollah Fathi and Dariush Alizadeh. Fourth row from top (left to right): Mohsen Mohammadi, Houman Abdollahi, Mohammad Amini, Momen Zandkarimi, Mokhtar Ahmadi, Danial Pabandi and Peyman Manbari. Bottom row (left to right): Reza Lotfi, Hossein Abdpanah, Dastan Rasoul, Mohammad Keywan Darvishi, Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, Farhad Khosravi and Mohammad Hosseini. All photographs © Private

This chapter is divided into eight sections. The first section provides an overview of the context and circumstances during which at least 35 protesters and bystanders were unlawfully killed during lethal protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces; summarizes the audiovisual evidence analysed by the organization in relation to the crackdown in Kurdistan province; and outlines the institutional affiliations of the various security forces identified by Amnesty International as having been involved in lethal protest dispersals and the types of weapons and munitions they used.

The subsequent seven sections document the lethal suppression of protests in the seven counties in Kurdistan province where killings took place: Sanandaj, Saqqez, Divandareh, Baneh, Dehgolan, Kamyaran and Mariwan. These sections focus on the specific days when unlawful killings took place and include case boxes detailing the causes and circumstances surrounding the death of victims on those days.



Map showing the seven counties in Kurdistan province where at least 35 protesters and bystanders were unlawfully killed between 19 September and 7 December 2022 during lethal protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. The counties are Baneh, Dehgolan, Divandareh, Kamyaran, Mariwan, Sanandaj and Saqqez. © OpenStreetMap contributors

6.1 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

6.1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International concerning the circumstances surrounding the killing of 35 protesters and bystanders, comprising 31 men, three boys and one girl, in Kurdistan province establishes that all these killings were unlawful in nature. Security forces did not use firearms and other means of lethal force to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury. Rather, they used lethal force for the illegitimate objectives of dispersing protests, punishing protesters, instilling fear and deterring further street protests.

Of the 35 recorded victims, 30 were fatally shot, in at least nine cases with metal pellets. Three victims were subjected to fatal beatings at the hands of security forces; one of them was also stabbed. They were **Sarina Saedi**, aged 15, and **Mohammad Keywan Darvishi**, who were fatally beaten in separate incidents in Sanandaj on 26 October 2022, and **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar**, aged 17, who was fatally beaten and stabbed in Sanandaj on 17 November 2022. One victim, **Mohammadi Shariati**, was fatally struck by a tear gas canister while fleeing a violent protest crackdown in Sanandaj on 26 October 2022. Another victim, **Mohammad Hosseini**, was deliberately run over by a vehicle of the Special Cohorts of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) in Saqqez on 12 October 2022 while he was loudly objecting to the use of shotguns and tear gas against protesters and bystanders.

Of the 35 victims, nine victims were unlawfully killed in areas near which protests were ongoing or had recently occurred, and where there was a militarized presence of security forces:

- Five of these eight victims were unlawfully killed after security forces deliberately opened fire on their cars as they attempted to drive away: **Yahya Rahimi**, shot in Sanandaj on 8 October 2022; **Motaleb Saeed Peiro**, shot in Baneh on 27 October 2022; **Asoo Ghaderi**, shot in Baneh on 17 November 2022; **Farhad Khosravi**, shot in Sanandaj on 17 November 2022; and **Abdolrahman Bakhtiari**, shot in Saqqez on 17 November 2022. Yahya Rahimi was chased while in his car and deliberately shot at close range after sounding the car's horn in solidarity with protesters. The other four men were deliberately fired at after attempting to accelerate when they saw approaching security forces.
- **Dastan Rasoul** was shot on 28 October 2022 while walking through an unofficial but commonly used Iran-Iraq border crossing point near the village of Choman in Baneh county to attend the memorial ceremony of his relative Motaleb Saeed Peiro, who had been shot in Baneh the day before.
- **Danial Pabandi**, a 17-year-old boy who was shot in Saqqez on 16 November 2022, was chased by several agents in a car while he was riding his motorcycle near a site of ongoing protests. The agents struck him with a stick, causing him to fall off his motorcycle. As he tried to mount it again, they fired a shotgun loaded with metal pellets at his back from less than 1m away and drove off.
- **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar**, another 17-year-old victim, was fatally beaten and stabbed by multiple agents as he passed through a militarized residential street in Sanandaj on 17 November 2022. The circumstances of the fatal incident, captured on video, clearly show the unprovoked and unlawful nature of the attack.
- **Reza Kazemi**, a 16-year-old boy, was fatally shot after being stopped by security forces at a checkpoint while travelling with friends.

In addition to the five cases mentioned above in which security forces deliberately fired at victims' vehicles, Amnesty International documented 10 other cases in which security forces approached victims at close range and deliberately shot them dead, often aiming for the torso or head, using assault rifles, shotguns or pistols:

- **Zaniar Allahmoradi**, **Danial Pabandi** and **Foad Savari** had fallen to the ground while trying to flee when agents approached and deliberately shot them from close range. Zaniar Allahmoradi was shot dead in Sanandaj on 15 November 2022. Danial Pabandi was shot dead in Saqqez on 16 November 2022. Foad Savari was shot dead in Divandareh on 19 November 2022.
- **Mohsen Niazi** was shot in the back and killed while attempting to escape arrest in Dehgolan on 20 November 2022.
- **Fereydoon Mahmoudi**, **Isa Biglari** and **Peyman Manbari** were part of a group of protesters who were standing or fleeing when, it seems, an agent approached and deliberately fired lethal ammunition at them from close range. Fereydoon Mahmoudi was shot dead in Saqqez on 19 September 2022. Peyman Manbari and Isa Biglari were shot dead in Sanandaj in separate incidents on 8 October and 15 November 2022, respectively.
- **Mohsen Mohammadi** was shot dead in Divandareh on 19 September 2022 while attempting to enter a base belonging to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) by climbing over the walls of its back gate. The IRGC agent shooting him was positioned a few hundred metres away and used an AK-pattern rifle.

- **Hossein Abdpanah** and **Houman Abdollahi** were trying to hide from security forces patrolling the streets when they were spotted, approached and deliberately shot and killed. They were shot in Sanandaj in separate incidents on 19 November and 7 December 2022, respectively.

In addition to carrying out targeted killings, security forces caused deaths by unlawfully firing both into crowds to force dispersal and at fleeing protesters to intimidate and punish them and prevent them from regrouping. Protesters who were killed in such circumstances include: **Foad Ghadimi**, shot in Divandareh on 19 September 2022; **Reza Lotfi**, shot in Dehgolan on 19 September 2022; **Dariush Alizadeh** and **Mohammad Amini**, shot in separate incidents in Sanandaj on 8 October 2022; **Aziz Moradi**, shot in Sanandaj, on 12 October 2022; **Momen Zandkarimi**, shot in Sanandaj on 2 November 2022; **Borhan Karami**, shot in Kamyaran on 16 November 2022; **Aram Habibi** and **Shahou Bahmani**, shot in separate incidents in Sanandaj on 17 November 2022; and **Habibollah Fathi**, shot in Divandareh on 19 November 2022.

Unlawful shootings aimed at dispersing, intimidating and punishing protesters resulted in the deaths of not only protesters but also bystanders. For example, **Fereydoon Faraji** was shot dead in Baneh on 27 October 2022 when security forces fired at fleeing protesters and bystanders. A bullet struck him as he looked out of a window at his place of work to observe events unfolding.

Amnesty International also documented a pattern of security forces exacerbating the risk of death by committing further violations after shooting victims. This included beating victims with kicks, batons, sticks and gun handles after they had already fallen to the ground from gunshot or metal pellet wounds. Illustrative cases include the killings of **Dariush Alizadeh**, **Momen Zandkarimi** and **Houman Abdollahi**, all of whom were shot and then severely beaten in separate incidents in Sanandaj on 8 October, 2 November and 7 December 2022, respectively. In other cases, security forces encircled injured protesters and deliberately left them to bleed without aid before either abandoning the scene or belatedly calling for medical assistance. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following three individuals:

- **Shahou Bahmani** was fatally shot in Sanandaj on 17 November 2022. He was left on the ground bleeding for approximately 30 to 40 minutes while security forces continued to shoot at protesters who attempted to reach him to urgently transport him to a hospital. It was only after security forces departed the scene that protesters could belatedly transfer Shahou Bahmani to a hospital where he died.
- **Hossein Abdpanah** was fatally shot in Sanandaj on 19 November 2022. After he collapsed, residents attempted to gather around him, but they were forced to disperse as security forces threatened to open fire on them. Security forces threatened to shoot Hossein Abdpanah's son when he arrived after hearing his father had been shot. They retreated after he identified himself, allowing the family to belatedly take Hossein Abdpanah to a hospital where he died.
- **Mohsen Niazi** was fatally shot in Dehgolan on 20 November 2022. He was left bleeding for about 10 minutes as security forces stood over him, preventing onlookers from approaching to help. Security forces even fired shotguns towards several medical professionals who attempted to intervene and provide first aid. It was only after security forces finally departed that individuals could transport Mohsen Niazi to a hospital where he died.

In addition, the widespread pattern of security forces carrying out arrests at hospitals deterred many from seeking medical care for themselves or others injured during the protests. This fear forced the injured to be taken to private homes, businesses or clinics ill-equipped to treat gunshot wounds or serious injuries, resulting in deaths from excessive bleeding, infections or complications that prompt specialized care might have prevented. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following four individuals:

- **Foad Ghadimi** was shot in Divandareh on 19 September 2022. Due to ongoing gunfire and fears of arrests, individuals present at the scene of the incident were unable to immediately transfer Foad Ghadimi to a hospital for urgent medical care. Instead, he was first taken to a hair salon and then left beside a street gutter in front of Imam Khomeini Hospital in Divandareh. It is unclear how long he remained there unattended, but eventually two people noticed him and took him inside the hospital, where he died shortly afterwards.
- **Momen Zandkarimi** was shot in Sanandaj on 2 November 2022. His friends initially took him to his home and not a hospital due to fears of arrest. After about 15 minutes, his family realized that his condition was deteriorating and decided to transfer him to a hospital despite the risk of arrest, but he died before arriving at the hospital.
- **Isa Biglari** was shot in Sanandaj on 15 November 2022. Due to fears of arrests, his friends and relatives did not initially take him to a hospital. He was first taken to a private house and then a private medical clinic. The medical workers at the clinic said after about 40 minutes that they did not have the equipment to treat him, and Isa Biglari was then transferred to a hospital in Sanandaj, where he died shortly afterwards.
- **Zaniar Allahmoradi** was shot in Sanandaj on 15 November 2022. Due to fears of arrest, Zaniar Allahmoradi's friends did not immediately transfer him to a hospital. Instead, they took him to a private medical centre. The journey from the scene of the incident to the medical centre would have taken 20 minutes under normal circumstances. However, on that evening, it took around 40 minutes due to the heavy presence of security forces and various checkpoints blocking the streets. After Zaniar Allahmoradi lost all signs of life, the personnel at the medical centre called for an ambulance, which took him to a hospital in Sanandaj, where he was declared dead.

6.1.2 AUDIOVISUAL EVIDENCE

Amnesty International verified and analysed 162 videos that pertain to the crackdown on protests by security forces in Kurdistan province. They were uploaded online between 17 September and 31 December 2022. Of the 158 videos, eight are from Baneh, 10 from Dehgolan, 13 from Divandareh, 19 from Kamyaran, 18 from Mariwan, 51 from Sanandaj and 43 from Saqqez. The totality of audiovisual evidence analysed by Amnesty International corroborates witness testimonies that, from the very outset, largely peaceful protesters were consistently met with a violent response by security forces, which resorted to the unlawful use of force and firearms, including intentional lethal force.

Of the 162 videos analysed, the sound of gunfire is audible in 89 videos, of which five were filmed in Baneh, seven in Dehgolan, 10 in Divandareh, seven in Kamyaran, 14 in Mariwan, 29 in Sanandaj and 17 in Saqqez. Based on the videos and other evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the sound of gunfire is attributable to the security forces.

Of the 162 videos, 88 show security forces visibly present in the streets, patrolling on foot, on motorcycles, in vehicles bearing security force markings – armoured or otherwise – or in unmarked vehicles. In these videos, members of the security forces are seen wearing uniforms, plain clothes or a combination of both, underscoring the involvement of multiple security forces during the crackdown. Those in uniform are seen wearing uniforms belonging to the Prevention Police of FARAJA, the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC, including its Basij battalions.

Of the 88 videos in which security forces are present, 34 show security forces carrying shotguns and firearms, including assault rifles. Of the 34 videos in which security forces are carrying firearms, 22 show security forces holding their firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot. Of the 22 videos in which security forces are holding their firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot, 10 show security forces shooting their firearms.

Of the 88 videos in which security forces are present, 35 videos show evidence of security forces engaging in additional acts of violence against protesters such as beatings, including in the context of carrying out arrests, using tear gas and water cannons, and smashing cars and the windows of residential buildings.

Of the 162 videos analysed pertaining to the crackdown on protests by security forces in Kurdistan province, 23 show a total of 13 injured and/or lifeless protesters and bystanders who were identified by Amnesty International as having been unlawfully killed by security forces: Aram Habibi, Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, Borhan Karami, Fereydoon Mahmoudi, Foad Mohammadi, Habibollah Fathi, Mobin Feizy, Mohammad Amini, Momen Zandkarimi, Motaleb Saeed Peiro, Reza Kazemi, Shahou Bahmani and Yahya Rahimi. Some of the victims appear in multiple videos.

6.1.3 SECURITY FORCES RESPONSIBLE FOR LETHAL REPRESSION

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the security forces identified as committing serious human rights violations in the context of lethal protest dispersals in Kurdistan province included FARAJA and the IRGC.[583]

Among the FARAJA branches involved were the Prevention Police, including its Assistance Cohorts, and the Special Cohorts. The latter were primarily responsible for the use of shotguns loaded with metal pellets and firearms, including AK-pattern rifles, while both branches resorted to beatings with batons, sticks and kicks and deployed tear gas to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.[584]

The IRGC branches involved included the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division, the provincial Security Cohort and various Basij battalions, such as the Imam Ali Battalions and the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions. All these branches operated under the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, known as the Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps, which in turn falls under a regional IRGC headquarters called the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, directing and overseeing IRGC operations in the provinces of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan.[585]

In repressing the 2022 protests, the IRGC branches in Kurdistan province deployed an array of weaponry against protesters and bystanders, including not only shotguns loaded with metal pellets but also military-grade firearms. These included handguns, assault rifles such as AK-pattern and G-3 rifles, and DShK heavy machine guns mounted on top of pickup trucks. In addition, IRGC agents consistently used tear gas, chemical irritants, PepperBall-pattern guns and batons to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.

6.2 SANANDAJ

Thousands of people in Sanandaj, which is the provincial capital of Kurdistan and had a population of 501,402 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[586] peacefully took to the streets on 17 September 2022, the day Zhina Mahsa Amini was being buried in her home city of Saqqez, around 180km away.

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583. See Chapter 2 for the methodology of identification.
584. See Chapter 10 for detailed information on FARAJA and its various branches, including their organizational and command structure, mandates and uniforms, as well as official statements and leaked official documents related to their role in repressing the 2022 protests.
585. See Chapter 10 for detailed information on the IRGC and its various branches, including their organizational and command structure, mandates and uniforms, as well as official statements and leaked official documents related to their role in repressing the 2022 protests.
586. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 21 August 2026).

A protester, Nishteman Molayee, told Amnesty International that from around 6pm on 17 September 2022, hundreds of women, men and children gathered in Azadi Square (also known as Eghbal Square). She mentioned that women and girls sat in the middle of the street to protest while men stood behind them. She recalled that, as they were chanting, plain-clothes agents arrived and ordered them to disperse. When they refused, she said, dozens of FARAJA agents in solid dark green uniforms, armed with batons, wearing hats and boots, showed up. The FARAJA agents' attire indicates they belonged to the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police of FARAJA.

Nishteman Molayee recalled that the FARAJA agents began kicking the women and girls, including her 14-year-old daughter, Niaz Aak, who was among those sitting on the ground. Nishteman Molayee stated that a FARAJA agent also beat Niaz with a baton and that, when she intervened to save her daughter from beatings, a FARAJA agent hit her on her neck with the baton. Eventually, after a young man intervened and Niaz lost consciousness, the beating stopped. Niaz's parents and the young man took Niaz to a nearby store and later, at around 8pm, to Towhid Hospital in Sanandaj for medical treatment.

At the hospital, following an ultrasound, a doctor informed Nishteman Molayee that her daughter's stomach and intestines had been injured and two of her ribs had been broken. Nishteman Molayee recalled that the hospital was filled with agents who were searching the rooms. Fearing her daughter's arrest, at around 12.30-1am, she made the difficult decision to take her daughter home, despite the doctors' warnings that her condition was critical and required hospitalization.

Another protester, Kamal, described to Amnesty International how the crackdown against the protesters in Azadi Square on 17 September 2022 continued after 8pm when he joined the gathering. He said he saw dozens of FARAJA agents in dark green or navy blue uniforms,[587] as well as plain-clothes agents, ordering the protesters to disperse using a megaphone and subjecting the protesters to tear gas and beatings with batons. Kamal said that, later in the evening, as the protesters refused to disperse, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, arrived at the protest and repeatedly fired metal pellets from shotguns to disperse the protesters. Kamal noted that some of the IRGC agents also carried AK-pattern rifles.

Nishteman Molayee mentioned that, while she was at the hospital, she saw several FARAJA agents with injuries to their arms or legs, indicating that clashes had broken out later in the evening between security forces and some protesters. She added that, due to fears of arrest, many protesters avoided going to the hospital and those who did go often claimed their injuries were from falls, accidents or fights with other citizens.

Amnesty International's analysis of videos from the first days of the protests in Sanandaj shows that security forces began using violence from early on.

The organization verified a video, first published online on 18 September 2022, which shows agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Ferdowsi Street near Azadi Square using a water cannon against fleeing protesters who do not appear to be posing any threat to the security forces or others that would justify the use of force.[588] Several agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA dressed in green shirts and trousers, and wearing helmets can also be seen in the video.

Another video published online on 18 September 2022 shows numerous agents, dressed in black uniforms and helmets, running along Namaki Boulevard towards protesters and repeatedly raising their

587. The navy blue uniform indicates that these officers were from the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police of FARAJA.
588. IRN0001, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kolbarnews, X post: حضور گسترده نیروهای سرکوبگر یگان ویژه و ماشین آبپاش در خیابان‌های #سنندج ["Heavy presence of Special Cohort repressive forces and water cannon trucks in streets of #Sanandaj"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1571567697770565634 (in Persian).

weapons, which appear to be shotguns, and firing them, even as the protesters are running away.[589]

Amnesty International analysed four further videos, published online on 18 September 2022, showing the crackdown on protesters on Enghelab Street, close to the city bazaar. In two videos, protesters are seen at around dusk standing or walking and cheering until multiple loud gunshots are heard, prompting them to turn around and flee in the opposite direction.[590] In the third video, also filmed around dusk, agents, dressed in black uniforms, ride on motorcycles amid a chaotic protest scene with gunshots audible in the background.[591] People are screaming and feeling from the security forces. The fourth video, recorded later in the evening, shows protesters on the street starting to run away amid the sound of multiple gunshots.[592]

A further video published online on 18 September 2022 shows protesters gathered at an intersection at night fleeing amid the sound of continuous gunfire, with approximately 25 gunshots audible.[593]

In the following days, weeks and months, protests in Sanandaj continued with chants of "Woman Life Freedom" resonating through the city. The protests were consistently met with unlawful use of force and firearms by the security forces. Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of 17 protesters and bystanders – a girl, a boy and 15 men – during protest dispersals or in militarized areas in Sanandaj between 8 October and 7 December 2022. The victims were:

- Yahya Rahimi, Mohammad Amini, Dariush Alizadeh and Peyman Manbari, who were shot and killed on 8 October 2022;
- Aziz Moradi, who was shot and killed on 12 October 2022;
- Mohammad Keywan Darvishi, who was beaten on 24 October 2022 and died of his injuries two days later;
- Mohammad Shariati, who was fatally struck by a tear gas canister on 26 October 2022;
- Sarina Saedi, a 15-year-old girl who was beaten on 26 October 2022 and died of her injuries the next day;
- Momen Zandkarimi, who was shot and killed on 2 November 2022;
- Isa Biglari, Zaniar Allahmoradi, Farhad Khosravi, Shahou Bahmani, Aram Habibi and Hossein Abdpanah, who were shot and killed between 15 and 19 November 2022;
- Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, a 17-year-old boy who was beaten and stabbed on 17 November 2022 and died as a result on 15 March 2023; and

589. IRN0002, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Soran Khateri, X post: "Another video from Sanandaj shows security forces firing protesters on Sunday night where 100s stormed into the streets to condemn the killing of #MahsaAmini by Islamic Republic Morality police", 18 September 2022, https://x.com/sorankhateri/status/1571563257437224961

590. 15 IRN0366, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: beegonah1, X post: تیراندازی نیروهای سرکوبگر به سوی معترضین در سنندج ["Suppression forces firing at protestors in Sanandaj"],18 September 2022, https://x.com/begoonah1/status/1571530159722995712 (in Persian); Kolbarnews, X post: تصاویر دیگری از تیراندازی نیروهای سرکوبگر به سوی معترضین در #سنندج ["Additional images of repressive forces shooting at protesters in #Sanandaj"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1571534723041857536 (in Persian).

591. IRN0004, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rafiq Hossein Panahi, X post: شلیک مستقیم مزدوران جنایتکار رژیم به مردم معترض ["Direct gunfire by the regime's criminal mercenaries at protesting people"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/PanahiRafiq/status/1571536143455293441 (in Persian).

592. IRN0005, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kolbarnews, X post: هم‌اکنون سنندج- تیراندازی نیروهای رژیم به سمت مردم یکشنبه ۲۷ شهریور ["Right now in Sanandaj – Regime forces shooting at people, Sunday 18 September"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1571536211315142657 (in Persian).

593. IRN0006, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویر دیگری از شلیک مستقیم نیروهای مسلح به سوی مردم معترض سنندج ["Additional images of armed forces firing directly at protesting people in Sanandaj"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1571609785870725120 (in Persian).

- Houman Abdollahi, who was shot and killed on 7 December 2022.

Amnesty International's research and documentation show that the authorities' unlawful use of force and firearms in Sanandaj escalated during three deadly waves of protest crackdowns, with 14 of the 17 recorded unlawful killings carried out during these waves.

The first wave was in response to protests on 8 October 2022, which followed calls for a nationwide day of protests, during which security forces unlawfully killed four people.

The second was in response to protests on 24-26 October 2022, which marked 40 days following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, during which the security forces unlawfully killed three individuals.

The third was in response to protests on 15-19 November 2022, which commemorated the victims of the deadly protest crackdowns in November 2019, as well as 40 days following the death of protesters in Sanandaj on 8 October 2022. In this third wave, security forces unlawfully killed seven individuals.

6.2.1 PROTESTS ON 8-12 OCTOBER 2022

Between 8 and 12 October 2022, demonstrations surged in Sanandaj and other cities across Iran, as multiple activist groups coordinated a nationwide day of protests on 8 October 2022. The protests were scattered across Sanandaj, reflecting the decentralized nature of the movement. The authorities responded by escalating their crackdown, aiming to suppress dissent and quell the growing wave of demonstrations.

Amnesty International analysed 17 videos published online between 8 and 11 October 2022 showing the security forces' crackdown on protests. The videos show a significant presence of armed uniformed and plain-clothes members of the security forces patrolling the streets on foot and motorcycles and using firearms, tear gas and batons against protesters.

Nine of the videos are from 8 October 2022 when Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing by security forces of four protesters – **Yahya Rahimi**, **Dariush Alizadeh**, **Peyman Manbari** and **Mohammad Amini** – who were shot and killed at different times and in different locations in the city.[594] The videos show the violence perpetrated against protesters and bystanders by security forces.

One video shows multiple armed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, on foot and motorcycles wearing black or beige and dark green camouflage uniforms.[595] The video, recorded from a window, shows agents equipped with less lethal weapons such as pepper ball-pattern guns and 37/38mm launchers, including one agent wearing a black uniform who is reloading his weapon and running towards what seem to be off-screen targets.

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594. IRN0007, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rafiq Hossein Panahi, X post: جنایت جنگی در سنندج ["War crime in Sanandaj"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/PanahiRafiq/status/1578738879342907392 (in Persian); IRN0367, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: goliammar, X post: آخرین وضعیت #سنندج ["Latest situation in Sanandaj"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1578690049457426433; Radio Farda, مرگ راننده‌ای که بوق اعتراضی می‌زد در پی تیراندازی مستقیم ماموران امنیتی ["Death of a driver honking in protest following direct gunfire by security forces"], 8 October 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/protesters-shot-sanandaj-iran/32071133.html; IRN0015, IRN0008, IRN0009, IRN0016, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0010, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian), X post: جزئیات تازه‌ای درباره کشته شدن یحیی رحیمی، معترض سنندجی بدست بی‌بی‌سی رسیده ["New details about the killing of Yahya Rahimi, a protester from Sanandaj, have been obtained by the BBC"], 2 September 2023, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1698003671018025459 (in Persian); IRN0012, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, X post: تصویر کشته شدن یحیی رحیمی با شلیک ماموران به سرش در مهر ماه در سنندج دل بسیاری را به درد آورد ["Clip of Yahya Rahimi being killed by security forces who shot him in the head in Sanandaj in October deeply saddened many people"], 10 December 2022, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1601657875952271360 (in Persian).

595. IRN0007, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rafiq Hossein Panahi, X post: جنایت جنگی در سنندج ["War crime in Sanandaj"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/PanahiRafiq/status/1578738879342907392 (in Persian).

Two other videos show agents at night amid sounds of gunfire, with the individual filming stating that the agents are from the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and are "attacking protesters and shooting directly" at them.[596]

Five of the videos pertain to the unlawful killing of Yahya Rahimi and one pertains to the unlawful killing of Mohammad Amini.[597]

YAHYA RAHIMI



Yahya Rahimi © Private

Security forces in Sanandaj unlawfully killed Yahya Rahimi, a 30-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 8 October 2022 while he was in his car.

Nishteman Molayee and another informed source in Iran, Pouya, told Amnesty International that, at around noon, agents in plain clothes first broke some of the windows of Yahya Rahimi's car, apparently in reprisal for him sounding his horn in solidarity with the protests while stuck in traffic on Pasdaran Street (also known as Sixth Bahman Street). Plain-clothes agents were patrolling the streets to suppress the demonstrations that were expected to form in central Sanandaj that day. Shortly afterwards, an agent aimed his shotgun at Yahya Rahimi's head and fired metal pellets from a distance of about half a metre. Pouya said that, according to eyewitnesses he spoke to, the police stopped people chasing the agent, enabling him to run away. Nishteman Molayee told Amnesty International that she arrived at the scene minutes later and saw Yahya Rahimi lying lifeless in the driver's seat, with his face covered in blood. She recalled that, when she first arrived, there were no security forces, allowing people to gather around the victim, crying in distress. However, after several minutes, plain-clothes agents began to arrive, prompting some people, including her, to leave.

Pouya stated that, the day after the incident, a local shop owner told him that agents from the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC seized from him and other local shop owners CCTV footage from cameras that might have recorded the events leading to Yahya Rahimi's death.

Yahya Rahimi's burial certificate, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, lists the cause of death as "extensive damage to brain tissue" and "fractured and shattered skull bones" caused by "being struck with a fast-moving projectile".

Amnesty International verified five videos that support eyewitness accounts about the circumstances surrounding Yahya Rahimi's killing. The first video was filmed by Yahya Rahimi himself before his death and published on his brother's Instagram account on 24 January

596. IRN0008, IRN0009, videos on file with Amnesty International.

597. IRN0010, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, X post: جزئیات تازه‌ای درباره کشته شدن یحیی رحیمی، معترض سنندجی بدست بی‌بی‌سی رسیده ["New details about the killing of Yahya Rahimi, a protester from Sanandaj, have been obtained by the BBC"], 2 September 2023, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1698003671018025459 (in Persian); IRN0012, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, X post: تصویر کشته شدن یحیی رحیمی با شلیک ماموران به سرش در مهر ماه در سنندج دل بسیاری را به درد آورد ["Clip of Yahya Rahimi being killed by security forces who shot him in the head in Sanandaj in October deeply saddened many people"], 10 December 2022, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1601657875952271360 (in Persian); Radio Farda, مرگ راننده‌ای که بوق اعتراضی می‌زد در پی تیراندازی مستقیم ماموران امنیتی ["Death of a driver honking in protest following direct gunfire by security forces"], 8 October 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/protesters-shot-sanandaj-iran/32071133.html; IRN0013, IRN0014, IRN0015, videos on file with Amnesty International.

2023.[598] It shows Yahya Rahimi sounding his horn while behind the wheel of his car in solidarity with protests.

The other videos were filmed by those present at the scene and published online. Pouya confirmed to Amnesty International that the videos relate to Yahya Rahimi's killing.

One video shows two plain-clothes agents smashing the front windows of Yahya Rahimi's green Kia Pride car with sticks.[599] It then shows Yahya Rahimi's car moving forward with the plain-clothes agents following it. Seconds later, a single loud shot is heard.



(1) A still from a video showing a plain-clothes security agent in light- coloured clothing smashing Yahya Rahimi's car windscreen with a stick. The windscreen shows two impact marks. The security agent behind, wearing a checked shirt, can also be seen walking towards the car with a stick. (2)-(4) The plain-clothes security agent in the checked shirt can be seen smashing Yahya Rahimi's windscreen with a stick. © Private

Another video shows a group of plain-clothes agents running down the same street. The plain-clothes agent who is holding a shotgun in the video has been identified by eyewitnesses as the individual who fired at Yahya Rahimi.[600]

598. The Instagram account that originally posted the video appears to have since been removed. However, the video is included in footage published by the Persian service of the BBC. IRN0010, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, X post: جزئیات تازه‌ای درباره کشته شدن یحیی رحیمی، معترض سنندجی بدست بی‌بی‌سی رسیده ["New details about the killing of Yahya Rahimi, a protester from Sanandaj, have been obtained by the BBC"], 2 September 2023, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1698003671018025459 (in Persian).

599. IRN0011, video on file with Amnesty International and available at Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: "In this new footage, that was sent to Hengaw in delay due to the internet problem in Sanandaj, shows how the plaincloth forces have attacked the Kia pride car, which it's owner was slain shortly", 9 October 2022, https://x.com/Hengaw_English/status/1579099419105820673

600. IRN0012, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, X post: تصویر کشته شدن یحیی رحیمی با شلیک ماموران به سرش در مهر ماه در سنندج دل بسیاری را به درد آورد ["Clip of Yahya Rahimi being killed by security forces who shot him in the head in Sanandaj in October deeply saddened many people"], 10 December 2022, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1601657875952271360 (in Persian).



A still from a video showing a plain-clothes agent carrying a shotgun who has been identified by eyewitnesses as the individual who fired at Yahya Rahimi. He is the only member of the security forces in the video seen to be carrying a shotgun. © Private

The two remaining videos show the immediate aftermath of the shooting.[601] In one video, the interior of the vehicle below the driver's window, next to his head, appears covered in blood and people gathering around the car are screaming and crying.[602] In another video, Yahya Rahimi is lying lifeless on the driver's seat, with his face covered in blood.[603] A group of agents can be seen standing nearby. Both of the doors on the driver's side are open and Yahya Rahimi's seat is reclined so that his body is lying lifeless in a semi-horizontal manner. The driver's window is partly lowered. It remains in place, but its tempered glass is partly shattered. An irregular break approximately 15cm long is visible, below which blood has run down the surface. An earlier photograph shows Yahya Rahimi seated upright and being assisted by a person at the open driver's door. There are extensive blood flow stains on the inside of the door.

On 8 October 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi, confirmed in media interviews that the driver of a Kia Pride car had been fatally shot from close range while passing through "rioters", but said that "anti-revolutionary" agents and "rioters" were responsible and no FARJA forces were present in the area when the incident occurred at 12.30pm.[604] Ali Azadi added that the victim had been shot with live ammunition and that FARAJA forces do not use "live bullets" while on duty.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed the videos of the incident in which Yahya Rahimi was killed. The pathologist noted that the face and right side of

601. IRN0013, IRN0014, videos on file with Amnesty International.
602. IRN0013, video on file with Amnesty International.
603. IRN0014, video on file with Amnesty International.
604. AL Mahdi, اعتراضات گشت ارشاد / 1401 مهر 16 مهسا امینی / پروژه کشته سازی در اغتشاشات سنندج ["Mahsa Amini / Alleged victim-making project during the Sanandaj unrest, 8 October 2022 / Morality Police protests"], 8 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/5dc4w; Tasnim News Agency, جزئیاتی از کشته شدن راننده پراید توسط ضدانقلاب در سنندج؛ هنوز کسی بازداشت نشده/ هویت فرد در دست بررسی است ["Details of the killing of a Pride driver by counter-revolutionaries in Sanandaj; no one has yet been arrested / the individual's identity is under investigation"], 8 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1401/07/16/2785257

Yahya Rahimi's head are un-bloodied apart from some stains around the nose and blood flow from the right ear, likely the result of a fracture of the skull base. According to the pathologist, taken together, the audiovisual evidence strongly supports the finding that Yahya Rahimi suffered a devastating injury to the left side of the head as a result of a gunshot through the car window.

DARIUSH ALIZADEH



Dariush Alizadeh © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Dariush Alizadeh, a 33-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 8 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

According to an eyewitness in Iran, Parham, whose testimony was obtained by a journalist at Radio Zamaneh, an independent media outlet outside Iran, and shared with Amnesty International, security forces fired live ammunition towards protesters who had gathered on Enghelab Street (also known as Sirous Street) in the area of Tappeh Bahar Mast. Parham stated that the protesters posed no threat to the security forces and were simply marching and chanting when they came under fire. He said:

"As protesters marched, the security forces started firing live ammunition and several people were injured. It was a harrowing scene. People began chanting again, and the agents fired once more. Dariush was struck by a bullet and fell to the ground, bleeding severely."

Parham said that other protesters tried to move Dariush Alizadeh away from the scene, but failed as the security forces began to chase them.

According to Parham, several agents then approached Dariush Alizadeh and one of them kicked him once in his stomach while yelling at him to stand up. Parham said that Dariush Alizadeh was unresponsive and that the agents left the scene a few minutes later. Once the agents left, other protesters returned to the scene, called for a taxi, which took about half an hour to arrive, and took Dariush Alizadeh to Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj.

Another informed source in Iran, Farzad, told Amnesty International that, on the way to the hospital, Dariush Alizadeh informed his family that he had been injured. By the time his family arrived at the hospital, he had died. According to Farzad, Dariush Alizadeh's relatives and friends believe that he might have survived had he received medical care promptly, particularly considering that the gunshot wounds he sustained were to his thighs.

Amnesty International reviewed Dariush Alizadeh's burial certificate, which states that he died due to "severe injuries in… lower limbs on both sides" caused by "being struck with a fast-moving metal projectile".

PEYMAN MANBARI



Peyman Manbari © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Peyman Manbari, a 25-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 8 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

A protester in Iran, Arshia, told Amnesty International that Peyman Manbari was among dozens of protesters who had gathered in side streets near Keshavarz Street (also known as Vakil Street) in the area of Ghatarchian. Arshia said that, between 11am and 7pm on 8 October 2022, agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions in green camouflage uniforms and other IRGC agents in brown camouflage uniforms, positioned around 150m from the protesters, intermittently fired tear gas canisters and metal pellets at the protesters. According to Arshia, approximately every 15 minutes, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA on motorcycles also entered the streets, chasing the protesters and firing metal pellets at them. Each time, the protesters dispersed and then regrouped. Several protesters were injured. Arshia emphasized that the protesters were unarmed but that some of them threw stones towards the security forces.

Arshia witnessed Peyman Manbari collapsing when the IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, were firing immediately after Peyman Manbari had thrown a stone and walked away from the security forces. Arshia and several other protesters carried Peyman Manbari to safety while the gunfire continued. Arshia said that, amid the chaos, he did not see the shooter, but later spoke to several fellow protesters who revealed that a plain-clothes agent had approached Peyman Manbari from behind and fired a pistol at him from close range. The bullet caused fatal injuries to Peyman Manbari's heart. The protesters reported to Arshia that two other men also sustained gunshot wounds, to the shoulder and thigh, respectively. According to Arshia, the protesters identified the agent by name, saying that he was affiliated with the IRGC. The reported name is on file with Amnesty International.

MOHAMMAD AMINI



Mohammad Amini © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mohammad Amini, a 33-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 8 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

An informed source in Iran, Mehran, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 8 October 2022, hundreds of protesters gathered in Kargar Street near Karamouzi Square. Agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions dressed in brown or green camouflage uniforms, and plain-clothes agents, repeatedly fired metal pellets from shotguns to disperse the protesters. Mehran added that he saw at least one plain-clothes agent with an AK-pattern rifle. He reported that, at around 8.30pm, as protesters dispersed and some fled into a side alley called Zagros 16, the agents chased them, firing metal pellets as they ran. Mehran spoke to several eyewitnesses who saw a plain-clothes agent standing on Kargar Street firing his AK-pattern rifle into Zagros 16 Alley. The

eyewitnesses then saw Mohammad Amini, who was about 200m away from the agent, collapse after a bullet struck him.

Amnesty International reviewed a graphic photograph from the immediate aftermath of the shooting, which shows Mohammad Amini lying on the ground, with his eyes open and his shirt soaked in blood. An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed the photograph and determined that the extensive blood soiling of the shirt was in keeping with a chest injury. The organization also reviewed a video that shows a man lying on the ground in a side street with blood pooling under his body.[605] Amnesty International confirmed through two Kurdish human rights defenders that the victim was Mohammad Amini.



A still from a video showing Mohammad Amini lying in the street with a pool of blood around him. The person filming says, "Sanandaj, they have killed someone." © Private

Amnesty International also received information from three protesters – Nishteman Molayee, Iman and Hessam – about patterns of violent state repression that took place in other areas across Sanandaj on 8 October 2022.

Nishteman Molayee described an incident involving beatings and the unlawful use of tear gas against scores of schoolgirls, including her 14-year-old daughter, Niaz, at around 12pm in front of Zakieh high school in the area of Baharan. She stated that, around 1.30pm, she went to her daughter's school to collect her. On arrival, she saw no students and noticed a strong smell of tear gas. Shortly afterwards, her daughter called and said she had taken refuge in a neighbour's house nearby.

605. IRN0015, video on file with Amnesty International.

There, Nishteman Molayee learned from her daughter that, at around noon, the school principal had sent the students out of the school after they had begun a protest and informed the security forces. Niaz told her that uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and plain-clothes agents, armed with batons and handguns, arrived and attacked the students, including by firing tear gas to disperse them and chasing them with batons. In addition, Niaz said the agents fired into the air. Niaz attempted to flee but fell. She said a plain-clothes agent then kicked her in the stomach and genital area, pulled her hair and threw her around. Eventually, a uniformed FARAJA agent intervened and pulled Niaz away from the plain-clothes agent.

Nishteman Molayee said that, in the following days, Niaz experienced pain in her abdomen and genital areas and lost control of her bladder for three days. For several days afterwards, she also lived in fear of being arrested, convinced that the principal had reported the students' names to the authorities. Nishteman Molayee said that, after the incident, Niaz never returned to school before they left Iran around seven months later and eventually arrived in Germany.

Nishteman Molayee told Amnesty International about another incident later that night on 8 October 2022 involving the severe beating of two protesters by several plain-clothes agents in Gha'em Magham Farahani Street. She stated that she and her family were in a car driving down that street when a woman who lived nearby warned them not to go any further, explaining that, about an hour earlier, the area had been chaotic, with a lot of gunfire. Despite her warning, Nishteman Molayee and her family raised the car windows and cautiously continued down the two-lane street. Soon, she said, they saw a large fire, about 4-5m high, with five or six young protesters standing at the intersection of the street and a side alley.

Nishteman Molayee said that, within seconds, five or six white Peugeot and Samand cars belonging to the security forces arrived and blocked their path. Multiple plain-clothes agents, armed with handguns and wearing blue masks, left the vehicles to attack the young protesters. Some managed to run away, but two were caught by the agents, who severely beat them with hoses and pistol butts. Nishteman Molayee recalled that the agents repeatedly hit the backs and necks of the young men with their pistols and kicked their stomachs. She recalled that the beating lasted for 15-20 minutes before the agents violently dragged the protesters into a car and drove away. She mentioned that her daughter was so terrified that she urinated involuntarily and trembled in terror.

Amnesty International reviewed a video from 8 October 2022, which shows IRGC agents confronting dozens of protesters near the intersection of Felestin and Sayed Qutb streets near the Office of the Provincial Governor of Sanandaj.[606] The camouflage uniforms of the agents, their black protective helmets and the round-shaped black shields they hold resemble the attire seen in images published by state media from the military exercises of the IRGC's Basij battalions. At least two agents can be seen lifting weapons that appear to be shotguns and aiming them towards the protesters. Protesters can be seen throwing stones towards the security forces.

Amnesty International reviewed another video, which the individual filming says was captured at the Fatemeh three-way intersection on 8 October 2022 and shows an extensive deployment of security forces at night.[607] The video features groups of agents on motorcycles riding down the street while gunfire can be heard. The individual filming, who did so from a window overlooking the street, says that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC are attacking and shooting at protesters.

A weapons expert in Amnesty International reviewed a video which shows a mix of spent shotgun shells, including likely kinetic impact rounds, tear gas canisters and spent intermediate cartridges for

606. IRAN0016, video on file with Amnesty International.
607. IRAN0008, video on file with Amnesty International.

use in rifles.[608] According to information received from a human rights defender, the video was filmed in Sanandaj on 9 October 2022. The person filming says that the security forces used the munitions to "suppress the people". Amnesty International posted this video on X on 10 October 2022 along with a statement expressing concern that the security forces were repeatedly firing metal pellets and tear gas towards residential buildings in Sanandaj.[609]

Protesters and other eyewitnesses told Amnesty International that the security forces continued to use firearms in the days following 8 October 2022 to suppress further protests and create a climate of fear and terror in Sanandaj.

A woman bystander, Jaleh, told the organization that IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, who had covered their faces, fired metal pellets at the glass door of their house on the evening of 10 October 2022 when they saw her rushing inside and closing the door behind her. The incident occurred during a crackdown on protests in the Doushan area. The pellets shattered the glass and a shard penetrated Jaleh's left eye, causing severe injury. Despite two surgical operations, Jaleh lost vision in the eye.

Jaleh shared with Amnesty International a photograph of the damaged glass door in the immediate aftermath of the incident. According to the independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International, the photograph shows an opaque glass window with a group of about nine projectile holes, likely representing buckshot from a shotgun fired at close range. Jaleh also shared with Amnesty International a photograph that, according to the weapons expert, shows empty shotgun shells found near the glass door following the shooting. Amnesty International further obtained photographs that show Jaleh with a medical dressing over her left eye and medical records that verify her hospitalization and surgery.

Radio Zamaneh published the account of another eyewitness who reported similar patterns of violations by the security forces in the Baharan area on the evening of 10 October 2022. The eyewitness was quoted stating:

> **"Security forces [in uniforms] and plain-clothes agents attacked the Mehr housing complex in Baharan in Sanandaj at 9pm on 10 October 2022 with brutality to instil fear and terror. The Special Cohorts [of FARAJA] fired shotguns and… combat weapons at the windows and threatened the people. They also fired tear gas. The children were very scared; crying could be heard from nearby units. In these three weeks, and especially since Sunday [9 October], Sanandaj has become fully militarized and is no different from a battlefield. Despite all this, people have still not abandoned the streets."[610]**

According to Radio Zamaneh, similar attacks occurred in other areas across Sanandaj, including Vilashahr, Karamouzi and Zagros, as well as nearby suburbs, including Naysar.

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608. IRAN0017, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Amnesty Iran, X post: ۱۰ سازمان عفو بین‌الملل نسبت به ابعاد گسترده سرکوب جاری معترضان در #سنندج در استان کردستان، هشدار می‌دهد ["Amnesty International warns about the widespread crackdown on protesters currently taking place in #Sanandaj, in Kurdistan province"], 10 October 2022, https://x.com/AmnestyIran/status/1579554334991257600 (in Persian).

609. IRAN0017, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Amnesty Iran, X post: ۱۰ سازمان عفو بین‌الملل نسبت به ابعاد گسترده سرکوب جاری معترضان در #سنندج در استان کردستان، هشدار می‌دهد ["Amnesty International warns about the widespread crackdown on protesters currently taking place in #Sanandaj, in Kurdistan province"], 10 October 2022, https://x.com/AmnestyIran/status/1579554334991257600 (in Persian).

610. Radio Zamaneh, گزارش رخدادها – در سنندج نیروهای امنیتی به سوی منازل مسکونی تیراندازی کردند ["Incident report: In Sanandaj, security forces fired at residential homes"], 11 October 2022, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/735209 (in Persian).

Amnesty International verified a video that was published on 10 October 2022 and shows multiple agents with protective gear, including helmets, on Naysar Boulevard repeatedly firing shotguns.[611] A black armoured vehicle similar to the vehicles used by the Special Cohorts of FARAJA can be seen in the video.

Two other videos verified by Amnesty International, also published on 10 October 2022, show dozens of protesters before tear gas is launched into the crowd, forcing people to disperse.[612] International guidelines prohibit the use of tear gas to disperse peaceful protesters and provide that grenades should never be fired directly at people.[613]



A still from a video published on 10 October 2022 showing dozens of protesters before tear gas is launched into the crowd, forcing people to disperse © Private

Further crackdowns took place over the next days, with security forces continuing the unlawful use of force and firearms against protesters, resulting in the unlawful killing of Aziz Moradi.

611. IRN0018, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: "Repressive forces are directly shooting toward residences in Naysar neighborhood's Sanandaj", 10 October 2022, https://x.com/Hengaw_English/status/1579580062655209472

612. IRN0019, IRN0020, videos on file with Amnesty International.

613. See Amnesty International, *Amnesty International: 30 Rules for the Use of Chemical Irritants in Law Enforcement,* 2021, https://www.amnesty.nl/content/uploads/2021/07/Leaflet_teargas_English_online.pdf

AZIZ MORADI



Aziz Moradi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Aziz Moradi, a 46-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 12 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

A Kurdish human rights organization outside Iran, Kurdpa, helped Amnesty International send questions about the incident to Baran, an informed source in Iran, and receive his written answers. Baran stated that, according to information gathered from eyewitnesses, Aziz Moradi was killed between 6pm and 7pm on Naysar Boulevard by uniformed members of the security forces whose faces were covered. According to Baran, at around sunset, approximately 100 protesters had gathered on Naysar Boulevard, chanting slogans and blocking the street, when security forces composed largely of IRGC agents arrived in vans. Shortly after their arrival, the security forces began firing metal pellets directly towards the crowd, injuring multiple protesters.

Baran reported that, as Aziz Moradi was positioned closer to the security forces, he was struck by metal pellets from an approximate distance of 10m. Baran said that, after Aziz Moradi was struck with metal pellets, the security forces shot him with live ammunition from an AK-pattern rifle. Following the shooting, two members of the security forces stood guard over Aziz Moradi's body for about one hour, refusing to allow anyone to provide medical assistance or move him to a hospital. Eventually, Aziz Moradi's wife and brother-in-law were able to retrieve his body and transport him to a hospital, where medical staff attempted to save his life. However, his injuries were too severe and he was pronounced dead shortly afterwards.

6.2.2 PROTESTS ON 24-26 OCTOBER 2022

The second wave of crackdowns on protests in Sanandaj occurred on 24-26 October 2022 in advance of and on the 40th day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. The protests took place across various areas in Sanandaj.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of three protesters by the security forces during protest dispersals in this period – **Mohammad Keywan Darvishi**, **Mohammad Shariati** and **Sarina Saedi** – the first two in central Sanandaj and the third in the suburb of Naysar around 7-8km from central Sanandaj.

MOHAMMAD KEYWAN DARVISHI



Mohammad Keyvan Darvishi
© Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mohammad Keywan Darvishi, a 42-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, by beating him during the crackdown on protests in Sanandaj on 24 October 2022. He died from his injuries two days later.

An informed source in Iran, Farzaneh, told Amnesty International that Mohammad Keywan Darvishi was among the protesters who had gathered on Hafez Street near Adab Mosque, on the evening of 24 October 2022. This area was a focal point of protests between September and December 2022.

Farzaneh spoke to two eyewitnesses who reported seeing several agents dressed in all-black uniforms severely beating Mohammad Keywan Darvishi with batons. The eyewitnesses told Farzaneh that some of the agents were wearing black protective helmets with face shields, while others were wearing black balaclavas that covered their faces.

Farzaneh told Amnesty International that, when Mohammad Keywan Darvishi returned home that evening, his elderly mother noticed that he was having difficulty breathing and could not speak. However, he did not let his mother discover that he had been injured and remained in his bedroom. Over the next 36 hours, his condition deteriorated. According to Farzaneh, on the morning of 26 October 2022, Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's family saw blood dripping from his mouth. They also saw that his back was bruised and swollen from the beating and that his eyes were red and burning, likely from pepper spray. His family called an ambulance, which took him to Towhid Hospital. After arriving at the hospital, the family realized that his legs were riddled with metal pellets.

According to Farzaneh, at the hospital, the medical staff informed his family that he had very low blood pressure and a low level of consciousness. They said his kidneys had failed due to a severe beating, which led to his breathing difficulties. On the afternoon of 26 October 2022, Mohammad Keywan Darvishi died after suffering a cardiac arrest.

Farzaneh told Amnesty International that the hospital authorities warned Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's family that, if the official death report mentioned that his injuries were caused by beatings by the security forces, the security forces would likely withhold his body and subject the family to extortion and harassment. As a result, the family agreed that respiratory failure and cardiac arrest would be listed as the cause of death on his medical records. His death certificate, which has been reviewed by Amnesty International, lists his cause of death as "diseases of the respiratory system".

MOHAMMAD SHARIATI



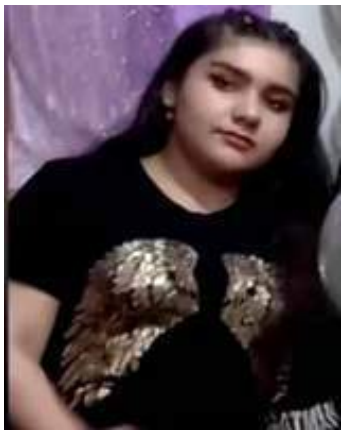
Mohammad Shariarti © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mohammad Shariati, a 32-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 26 October 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

Kurdpa helped Amnesty International send questions about the incident to Mohsen, an informed source in Iran, and receive his written answers. Mohsen stated that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, as well as plain-clothes agents, repeatedly fired tear gas canisters and metal pellets at scores of protesters who were less than 10m away on Dr Hosseini Boulevard, near Molavi neighbourhood, to disperse them. Mohsen said that, at around noon, as protesters were running away from the security forces, Mohammad Shariati was fatally struck by metal pellets and a tear gas canister.

Mohammad Shariati's burial certificate, reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he died from injuries to his abdominal organs caused by being "struck with a fast-moving projectile". His death certificate, which has also been reviewed by the organization, notes his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

SARINA SAEDI



Sarina Saedi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Sarina Saedi, a 15-year-old girl from Iran's Kurdish minority, by beating her severely during a crackdown against protests in Sanandaj on 26 October 2022. She died from her injuries the following day.

According to an informed source, Diaco, Sarina Saedi had taken part in multiple protests in Sanandaj, including at school. Diaco told Amnesty International that, on 26 October 2022, she and several friends were chanting protest slogans after school when the school's security department reported them to security forces who turned up on motorcycles and chased them into a dead-end road in the area of Naysar, which was the scene of protests during the evening of 26 October 2022. According to information gathered by Amnesty International, the security forces attacked Sarina Saedi and her friends, and struck Sarina Saedi multiple times on the head with batons. A protester, Iman, and an informed source in Iran, Amin, told Amnesty International that, according to information obtained by Sarina Saedi's family from eyewitnesses, two plain-clothes agents were responsible for severely beating Sarina Saedi on the head with batons and that, as people started gathering to investigate the commotion, the agents quickly fled the scene.

Diaco reported that, when Sarina Saedi arrived home that evening, she suddenly lost consciousness and collapsed, but insisted she was fine and went to sleep. According to Amin, her family found her unresponsive in her bed the next day and rushed her to Towhid Hospital in Sanandaj, where doctors said she had suffered a brain haemorrhage and declared her dead.

Diaco told Amnesty International that, within minutes, the hospital was swarming with security forces, including agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions. The security forces took her father into a

> room where officials pressured him to publicly accept the state narrative that his daughter had committed suicide and had a history of suicide attempts. When he refused, they threatened not to release her body and to fabricate charges against his son, claiming he was involved in anti-government activities. Consequently, her father was forced to accept the state narrative and was subsequently shown reluctantly repeating it in a press conference orchestrated by the state and broadcast on state television.[614]
>
> Amin reported to Amnesty International that the security forces also warned the family not to speak to the media. They detained the family for several hours until 2am and then forcibly transferred them and Sarina Saedi's body to Behesht Mohammadi Cemetery in Sanandaj where they buried her in the middle of the night without allowing a funeral ceremony.[615]

Amnesty International obtained testimonies from two protesters, Nishteman Molayee and Iman, who witnessed widespread violations on 26 October 2022, including shootings, severe beatings and the dangerous close-range use of tear gas, indicating that the serious human rights violations leading to the deaths of the three victims described above were part of a broader pattern.

Nishteman Molayee told Amnesty International that, in the early afternoon of 26 October 2022, as she and her husband were driving towards the Sharif Abad three-way intersection, they heard multiple gunshots. Upon arriving at the intersection, she said, they saw fires blazing, a heavy presence of security forces and people fleeing through the streets and alleys amid sounds of gunfire.

She recalled that the security forces included IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, wearing brown or green camouflage pattern uniforms, and agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, wearing all-black uniforms. She added that the agents wore intimidating black helmets, were equipped with firearms, batons and shields, some round and others rectangular, and covered their faces with masks or other coverings.

Nishteman Molayee stated that dozens of agents, dressed in all-black uniforms, were on motorcycles, chasing fleeing protesters through the side streets while firing tear gas. She also described seeing numerous black armoured vehicles of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, two water cannon vehicles and several pickup trucks equipped with a mounted DShK heavy machine gun. She recalled seeing one of these trucks, firing multiple shots while chasing fleeing protesters. Nishteman Molayee said that the security forces also shot randomly at passing cars, hit them with their batons or threw stones at them, without any regard for who might be inside the cars.

Nishteman Molayee stated that, fearing for their safety, they ducked into one of the side alleys off Adab Street near the Sharif Abad three-way intersection and took refuge in the house of an acquaintance. She said that, for the next hour, they were unable to leave the house as agents continued to patrol the alley on foot and on motorcycles, firing metal pellets and paintballs at the windows of homes to shatter them, launching tear gas into homes and damaging parked cars in the alley.

She said that, during the hour they were there, two groups of young protesters, including 40-50 men and women, took refuge in the same house. Some of them were experiencing symptoms of exposure to tear gas, including breathing difficulties, chest tightness, vomiting and coughing.

Nishteman Molayee shared with Amnesty International the details of a young man in his twenties, Hiwa, who was left in the alley by a motorcyclist. She and others brought him into the house for safety. She recalled that Hiwa's entire body was swollen and covered in red marks from paintballs, and blood

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614. rooziato, صحبت های پدر سارینا ساعدی درباره مرگ دخترش ["Remarks of Sara Saeedi's father about daughter's death"], 29 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/MebOB (in Persian).
615. See section 9.1.3 for more details on the authorities' cover-up.

was coming from his mouth. After the man regained some strength, he recounted what had happened to him while crying. He explained that around a dozen agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA on motorcycles, dressed in all-black uniforms, attacked him as he was leaving his office. Nishteman Molayee noted that the reason for the agents targeting the young man was unclear. However, she added that such violations were common and could happen without any clear reason, simply because the victim crossed the agents' path or based on the agents' assumptions that the victim had sheltered protesters or had been in hiding themselves.

Hiwa recalled that the agents had thrown him onto one of their motorcycles, taken him to a back alley, shot him with paintballs and subjected him to severe beatings, as well as sexual violence. He stated that the agents beat him with batons on his hands, arms, face and neck. He said the agents also hit his genitals, struck him in the anus with a baton and then forced the baton into his mouth. He said the agents threatened to rape him. He complained of severe pain all over his body. Hiwa noted that, after he had been assaulted for about 15-20 minutes, the agents left. A passerby found him, drove him to the alley and left him there.

Another protester, Iman, told Amnesty International that he witnessed similar patterns of violations against protesters on 26 October 2022, first in the suburb of Hassan Abad, around 7-8km from central Sanandaj, between 5pm and 6pm, and later in the area near the Sharif Abad three-way intersection where Nishteman Molayee had been earlier in the day.

Iman said that, shortly after several hundred protesters gathered in Hassan Abad Street, scores of agents arrived and deployed tear gas and fired shotguns to disperse them. The security forces included agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, dressed in all-black uniforms, and agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions, dressed in green camouflage uniforms. He noted that the agents wore black helmets and face masks, and carried shotguns, tear gas launchers and/or batons. Some of the agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions were on red motorcycles. Iman also recalled seeing several plain-clothes agents who had covered their faces with masks. He said they were initially mingling in the crowd but then drew handguns, aiming them at several protesters before moving into the line of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. Iman noted that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA repeatedly fired tear gas canisters towards them from distances that were sometimes less than 10m. He said one woman was struck by a tear gas canister in the abdominal area and was taken away by protesters for urgent medical assistance.

Iman told Amnesty International that, around 6-6.30pm, he left Hassan Abad Street and went to the Sharif Abad three-way intersection. He described a heavy presence of security forces stationed there and patrolling the side streets and alleys on motorcycles and foot, randomly targeting people for arrests. He said the security forces included uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC's Basij battalions, as well as plain-clothes agents. He said, due to fear of arrest, he took refuge in a house and was not able to leave until after 8pm when the security forces had left the area.

Amnesty International analysed two videos that feature audible sounds of gunshots and were captured on 26 October 2022, according to the individuals filming them.[616]

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616. IRN0368, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: اخبار آرین, Facebook post: تیراندازی پی در پی نیروهای سرکوبگر علیه مردم انقلابی شهر سنندج چهارشنبه ۴ آبان #ژینا_ئەمینی] "Continuous gunfire by repressive forces against the revolutionary people of Sanandaj – Wednesday 26 October #Zhina_Amini"], 26 October 2022, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1234051727155483 (in Persian); IRN0369, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, Facebook post: سنندج؛ محله شریف‌آباد، چهارشنبه ۴ آبان ۱۴۰۱ ادامه مقاومت مردم و تیراندازی نیروهای حکومتی به سوی مردم تصاویر اختصاصی هه‌نگاو #مهسا_امینی #ژینا_امینی] "Sanandaj: Sharif Abad neighbourhood, Wednesday, 26 October 2022 – Continued resistance of the people and government forces shooting at civilians. Exclusive images by Hengaw. #Mahsa_Amini #Zhina_Amini"], 26 October 2022, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=628117968945710 (in Persian).

Security forces also violently quashed peaceful protests by students in several universities in Sanandaj in the last days of October 2022.

On 29 October 2022, the Kurdish Human Rights Network, based outside Iran, reported that the Special Cohorts of FARAJA had attacked student protests at the Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences by launching tear gas and metal pellets.[617] Amnesty International verified a video from 29 October 2022 showing security forces wearing black uniforms and helmets outside the university entrance.[618] The security forces are seen carrying rifles, with some aiming their weapons towards the inside of the university grounds.

Amnesty International verified another video posted on 30 October 2022 showing two members of the university's security staff standing outside the gate of the University of Kurdistan and holding their arms out as if to shield students who are protesting and chanting behind the gate.[619] In front of the gate, dozens of agents wearing black uniforms and helmets and carrying rifles can be seen. The sound of multiple gunshots can be heard while students scream and take cover behind the gate.

6.2.3 PROTESTS IN EARLY NOVEMBER 2022

Despite the authorities' ruthless crackdown on protests, Sanandaj continued to be a focal point of protests and strikes in the weeks that followed. Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of one protester – **Momen Zandkarimi –** in this period.

MOMEN ZANDKARIMI



Momen Zandkarimi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed 18-year-old Momen Zandkarimi from Iran's Kurdish minority during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj on 2 November 2022.

Kurdpa sent Amnesty International's questions to an informed source in Iran, Mahsa, and conveyed her answers in writing to the organization. Mahsa stated that Momen Zandkarimi was among protesters who had peacefully gathered in Golshan Street near Nabovat Square on the evening of 2 November 2022. According to information obtained by Mahsa from eyewitnesses, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas from close range to disperse the protesters and attacked them with batons. The eyewitnesses emphasized that, when the protesters came under fire, they were simply chanting and had lit fires to reduce the effects of tear gas. Mahsa said that Momen Zandkarimi fell to the ground after being struck by metal pellets and several agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA then beat him.

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617. Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: نیروهای ضدشورش با شلیک گاز اشک‌آور و گلوله ساچمه‌ای به تجمع دانشجویان در مقابل درب ورودی دانشگاه علوم پزشکی کردستان در #سنندج حمله کردند ["Anti-riot forces attacked a gathering of students in front of the entrance to Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences in #Sanandaj by firing tear gas and metal bullets"], 29 October 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1586307004389203969 (in Persian).

618. IRN0021, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: با وجود حمله نیروهای ضدشورش با شلیک گاز اشک‌آور و گلوله ساچمه‌ای به دانشجویان دانشگاه علوم پزشکی کردستان، تجمع تا این لحظه ادامه دارد ["Despite the riot police attacking the students of Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences with tear gas and metal bullets, the gathering is still ongoing"], 29 October 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1586324858765561856 (in Persian).

619. IRN0022, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Saman Rasoulpour, X post: اینجا #سنندج است. دانشگاه کردستان ["This is #Sanandaj. University of Kurdistan."], 30 October 2022, https://x.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1586817268423745536 (in Persian).

Human rights defenders outside Iran shared with Amnesty International a video statement from Momen Zandkarimi's father wherein he stated that his son's friends took him to his home, not a hospital, due to fears of arrest.[620] After about 15 minutes, his family realized that his condition was deteriorating and decided to take him to a hospital despite the risks, but Momen Zandkarimi died before they arrived. Medical workers at Towhid Hospital told his family that he had suffered extensive internal bleeding.

Amnesty International reviewed a graphic video of Momen Zandkarimi after his death that shows injuries on his back consistent with the spray patterns of metal pellets.[621] An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed the video and found that there was a dense scattering of shotgun pellet injuries along the entire width of the back between the lower tips of the shoulder blades and the hips. Midway down the left side of the back is a prominent rounded skin wound about 3cm to 4cm in diameter from which blood is oozing. The wound likely represents a clump of pellets, indicating that the shotgun was discharged at close range.

6.2.4 PROTESTS ON 15-19 NOVEMBER 2022

The third wave of deadly protest crackdowns in Sanandaj occurred between 15 and 19 November 2022. In Sanandaj and elsewhere across Iran, mass protests took place during this period in commemoration of the victims of the nationwide protests of November 2019. Additionally, 17 November 2022 marked the 40th day following the unlawful killing of Peyman Manbari, Dariush Alizadeh, Yahya Rahimi and Mohammad Amini, which had taken place on 8 October 2022.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing by the security forces of six men – **Isa Biglari**, **Zaniar Allahmoradi**, **Aram Habibi**, **Shahou Bahmani**, **Farhad Khosravi** and **Hossein Abdpanah** – and 17-year-old **Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar** between 15 and 19 November 2022. These fatal incidents occurred at different times and in different areas of Sanandaj, reflecting the widespread nature of the crackdown.

Amnesty International verified video footage filmed between 16 and 19 November 2022 and published online showing security forces unlawfully using firearms and other means of force against protesters, including through the use of tear gas, and beating retreating protesters with batons.[622]

One video posted on 16 November 2022, shows security forces riding motorcycles along Kurdistan Boulevard while continuous gunfire and sounds of distress among residents can be heard.[623] The video supports eyewitness accounts of the climate of terror that the security forces spread across the city during this period by patrolling the streets in large numbers and unnecessarily and repeatedly firing their weapons, including towards pedestrians and car drivers.

620. IRN0169, video on file with Amnesty International.
621. IRN0269, video on file with Amnesty International.
622. IRN0370, videos on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, حمله نیروهای یگان ویژه با باتوم و چاقو به آریان خوش‌گوار کودک جان‌باخته کُرد ["Attack by Special Cohort forces with batons and knives on Arian Khoshgavar, the deceased Kurdish child"], 2 April 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLA4YuEbz4Y&ab_channel=KurdistanhumanRightsNetwork (in Persian); Iran International, خیزش انقلابی در ۲۸ آبان؛ اعتصاب، تحصن دانشجویی، تجمع خیابانی و تدفین اعتراضی کشته‌شدگان ["Revolutionary uprising on 19 November: Strikes, student sit-ins, street protests, and protest funerals for those killed"], 19 November 2022, https://www.iranintl.com/202211195594 (in Persian); IRN0023, video on file with Amnesty International; Iran International, X post: ویدیوهای رسیده به ایران اینترنشنال نشان می‌دهد ماموران امنیتی به دانشجویان دانشگاه کردستان حمله کرده و دانشجویان برای در امان ماندن به سمت تپه‌های اطراف دانشگاه پناه برده‌اند ["Videos received by Iran International show that security officials attacked students at the University of Kurdistan, and the students fled towards the surrounding hills to stay safe"], 19 November 2022, https://www.instagram.com/reel/CIJX2XrI0yt (in Persian).
623. IRN0025, video on file with Amnesty International.

In two videos, students from University of Kurdistan in Sanandaj are fleeing and trying to seek refuge from the security forces on a hill amid tear gas and the sound of gunshots.[624] The first video, published on 16 November 2022, shows protesters taking refuge in an area filled with trees behind a fence – some protesters are throwing stones towards the security forces.[625] Security forces wearing black uniforms with protective helmets are on the other side of the fence in the background.

The second video, published on 19 November 2022, shows peaceful protesters gathered in and around the university coming under gunfire and tear gas.[626] The video features the sound of gunfire, which continues even when protesters are already dispersing and fleeing. Smoke from tear gas is visible. The second segment of the video depicts dozens of protesters apparently seeking refuge from gunfire in an area further away from the security forces. Some protesters are hiding behind raised structures while others sit or crawl on the ground. This video also supports eyewitness accounts about the traumatizing patterns of gunfire that protesters and bystanders experienced at the hands of security forces who used firearms at whim and unchecked.

In a further video, posted on the night of 17 November 2022, plain-clothes and uniformed members of the security forces are running after and beating an individual with a baton.[627] An informed source confirmed for Amnesty International that the individual beaten in the video was 17-year-old Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, who later died of his injuries.

ISA BIGLARI



Isa Biglari © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Isa Biglari, a 40-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 15 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

An informed source in Iran, Yaser, told Amnesty International that Isa Biglari was among dozens of protesters who had gathered in front of the University of Kurdistan in Sanandaj, a location that was a focal point of protests between 15 and 19 November 2022. According to information obtained by Yaser from an eyewitness, within minutes of the protests forming, dozens of plain-clothes agents and agents dressed in black uniforms approached the protesters, firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets, handguns and tear gas to disperse the crowd. The eyewitness recalled that all the agents had covered their faces with masks. Yaser said that, in response, some protesters hurled stones and Molotov cocktails at the security forces. Meanwhile, Isa Biglari aimed a laser pen towards security forces to disorient them. Yaser thought the security forces might have intentionally targeted Isa Biglari in reprisal. According to eyewitness accounts collected by Yaser, a plain-clothes agent fired a handgun at Isa Biglari from a distance of about 2m.

624. 88 Iran International, ["Revolutionary uprising on 19 November: Strikes, student sit-ins, street protests, and protest funerals for those killed"], 19 November 2022, https://www.iranintl.com/202211195594 (in Persian).

625. Iran International, ["Revolutionary uprising on 19 November: Strikes, student sit-ins, street protests, and protest funerals for those killed"], 19 November 2022, https://www.iranintl.com/202211195594 (in Persian).

626. IRN0023, video on file with Amnesty International.

627. IRN0370, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, ["Attack by Special Cohort forces with batons and knives on Arian Khoshgavar, the deceased Kurdish child"], 2 April 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLA4YuEbz4Y&ab_channel=KurdistanhumanRightsNetwork (in Persian).

Yaser told Amnesty International that, due to fears of arrest, Isa Biglari's friends and relatives did not initially take him to a hospital, but rather to a private house and then a private medical clinic. According to Yaser, after about 40 minutes the medical workers at the clinic said they did not have the equipment to treat him, and Isa Biglari was then transferred to Kowsar Hospital, where he died shortly after arrival.

Amnesty International reviewed Isa Biglari's death certificate, which cites his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

ZANIAR ALLAHMORADI



Zaniar Allahmoradi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Zaniar Allahmoradi, a 21-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, by firing metal pellets at him from close range during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj on 15 November 2022.

Saman, a medical worker who participated in the protests in Sanandaj, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 15 November 2022, security forces repeatedly fired tear gas canisters and metal pellets to disperse the protesters who had gathered in the area of Abbas Abad, and chased and repeatedly fired towards protesters as they fled into side streets. Saman noted that the security forces involved in the shootings included uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, and uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, some of whom wore masks, as well as plain-clothes agents.

According to information obtained by Saman from several eyewitnesses, several agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA riding on motorcycles chased Zaniar Allahmoradi as he was attempting to flee the area. As he ran away, he came across another group of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA on motorcycles. According to the eyewitnesses, at this point, Zaniar Allahmoradi raised his right hand to show that he did not hold any weapons; his left hand had been amputated around a year before due to a work accident. An agent from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA sitting on the back of a motorcycle kicked him, causing him to fall to the ground. Another agent then fired a shotgun at him from less than 2m away.

Amnesty International interviewed another informed source in Iran, Arian, who corroborated Saman's account based on information obtained from other eyewitnesses he spoke to. Arian revealed that, due to fears of arrest, Zaniar Allahmoradi's friends did not immediately take him to a hospital. Instead, they took him to a private medical centre. Arian said that the journey to the medical centre would normally have taken 20 minutes but that evening it took around 40 minutes due to the presence of numerous security forces in the streets and various checkpoints.

According to Arian, after Zaniar Allahmoradi lost all signs of life, the personnel at the medical centre called for an ambulance, which took him to Towhid Hospital in Sanandaj, where he was declared dead.

Saman, who saw the body of Zaniar Allahmoradi in the immediate aftermath of his shooting, told Amnesty International that the extent and depth of his injuries supported eyewitness accounts that he had been shot at close range. An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed graphic photographs showing injuries consistent with the spray patterns of birdshot. The photographs show an old left forearm amputation. The pathologist observed on the right side and front of the torso, extending from the waist to the armpit, a dense scattering of

bleeding metal pellet injuries, estimating them to be over 100 in number. The absence of pellet injuries to the right upper arm and the presence of pellet injuries to the side of the chest below the armpit indicate that he was very unlikely to have had his right arm at his side when shot. This is consistent with eyewitness accounts that, before being shot, Zaniar Allahmoradi raised his right hand to demonstrate that he was unarmed and did not pose a threat to the security forces.

FARHAD KHOSRAVI



Farhad Khosravi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Farhad Khosravi, a 41-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 in the context of the militarized presence of security forces to quell protests during the anniversary period of the November 2019 protests.

An informed source in Iran, Shima, told Amnesty International that, according to information obtained from an eyewitness, at around midnight to 1am on 17 November 2022, IRGC agents opened fired, without any justification, on Farhad Khosravi and his friend, while they were travelling in a car. The eyewitness stated that the men were not engaging in any acts of protest at the time and posed no threat to the security forces or others. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain the location of the incident or whether there had been any protests at that time or earlier in the evening.

The burial certificate of Farhad Khosravi, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he was "hit by a bullet in the chin", leading to "extensive bleeding" and "rupture of the critical vessels in the neck".

ARAM HABIBI



Aram Habibi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Aram Habibi, a 27-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

A protester, Iman, and another informed source in Iran, Azadeh, told Amnesty International that Aram Habibi was among the thousands of protesters who had gathered in Behesht Mohammadi cemetery around 2pm to commemorate the 40th day following the death of four protesters on 8 October 2022. After about an hour, the gathering began to march to Azadi Square.

Iman told Amnesty International that, at around 3-4pm, when he and several hundred other protesters were approaching Gheshlagh Bridge, about 4km from the cemetery, he heard from fellow protesters that a plain-clothes agent had shot and killed Aram Habibi, who was in the crowd around 300m behind them, near Mohammadi Park.

According to information subsequently obtained by Iman from protesters, the plain-clothes agent who shot Aram Habibi was initially positioned inside a white Samand car, accompanied by other agents. Iman recalled that, on that day, many such cars were parked along the protest route, with

the agents inside leaving the vehicles to intimidate and attack protesters and then returning to the cars. Iman said that this led to confrontations between the agents in these cars and the protesters. Protesters told Iman that, when several protesters approached the Samand car, one of the plain-clothes agents left it and fired a handgun and the bullet struck Aram Habibi in the head. In response, a group of enraged protesters attacked one of the agents, who was wearing a uniform, beating and stabbing him to death, and damaging the car. The other agents fled the scene. State media confirmed that the deceased was a FARAJA agent, pointing to the likelihood that the plain-clothes agent who shot Aram Habibi was also affiliated to FARAJA.[628]

Azadeh told Amnesty International that Aram Habibi was taken to Kowsar Hospital, where he died shortly afterwards. The organization reviewed a video showing medical workers in the hospital trying to save his life by giving him emergency care.[629]

Aram Habibi's burial certificate, which Amnesty International reviewed, describes his cause of death as "destruction of brain tissue [resulting from] being struck by a bullet in the skull". The organization also reviewed his death certificate, which records his cause of death as "operation of combat equipment outside combat".

SHAHOU BAHMANI



Shahou Bahmani © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Shahou Bahmani, a 36-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj.

A protester, Iman, and another informed source in Iran, Bahar, told Amnesty International that Shahou Bahmani was among the thousands of protesters who had gathered in Behesht Mohammadi cemetery around 2pm to commemorate the 40th day following the death of four protesters on 8 October 2022. After about an hour, they began to walk towards Azadi Square.

Iman told Amnesty International that, after crossing Gheshlagh Bridge and nearing Sanandaj bus terminal, approximately 4km from the cemetery, protesters were blocked by several hundred uniformed IRGC agents, uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and agents in all-black uniforms equipped with protective helmets and gear, and face masks, as well as plain-clothes agents. Iman suspected that the black-uniformed agents belonged to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA as they stood next to the agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA. However, he could not be certain, as some IRGC security units are also known to use all-black uniforms. Iman mentioned that, based on his training during compulsory military service, he recognized that some of these black-uniformed agents were carrying G-3 rifles, while others were carrying shotguns and tear gas launchers.

Iman added that the IRGC agents were divided into three groups. The first group, positioned at the

628. Khabar Online, اطلاعات سپاه: تعدادی از عاملان شهادت شهید سرهنگ یوسفی در کردستان ["IRGC Intelligence: A number of those responsible for the martyrdom of martyr Colonel Yousefi in Kurdistan arrested"], 2 December 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1702135/اطلاعات-سپاه-تعدادی-از-عاملان-شهادت-شهید-سرهنگ-یوسفی-در-کردستان (in Persian). On 2 December 2022, the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan announced that four individuals involved in the fatal attack against the deceased agent had been arrested. See also Kurdistan Human Rights Network, چهار شهروند بازداشت شده اعتراضات مردمی در سنندج به «محاربه» متهم شدند ["Four citizens arrested during public protests in Sanandaj charged with '*moharebeh* '"], 8 August 2023, https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/fa/news-fa/prisoners-fa/2023/08/08/p21681 (in Persian).

629. IRN0270, video on file with Amnesty International.

front, wore green camouflage uniforms and were equipped with batons, protective helmets and shields, similar to those used by Basij battalions. The second group, who mostly wore brown camouflage uniforms, stood behind the first and carried AK-pattern rifles. The third group, who were dressed in green camouflage uniforms worn by Basij battalions, were on red motorcycles and the agents sitting on the back of them carried shotguns and tear gas launchers.

Iman said that, as soon as they crossed Gheshlagh Bridge, the agents in black uniforms repeatedly fired tear gas canisters and stun grenades towards them. As a result, some protesters dispersed and others, including Iman and Shahou Bahmani, moved to the nearby Hosseini Boulevard. The security forces followed them. According to Iman, the use of tear gas continued, but the protesters remained defiant. Iman then saw an IRGC agent taking what he believed to be a G-3 rifle from one of the black-uniformed agents. The agent first fired a single shot into the air and then fired towards the protesters. As Iman was running away, he saw Shahou Bahmani fall to the ground after being struck by the bullet fired from the rifle.

Iman told Amnesty International that many protesters, including himself, subsequently fled into the residential side streets of the Molavi neighbourhood and took refuge in houses that had left their doors open to help protesters. Meanwhile, IRGC agents on motorcycles chased the fleeing protesters, repeatedly fired tear gas canisters and metal pellets, smashed the windows of cars parked in the neighbourhood, and vandalized houses by shattering their windows with metal pellets. He stated:

"There was a lot of tear gas. I was struggling to breathe. The agents were firing so much tear gas that people were collapsing and dragging themselves into houses with open doors. The agents would shoot anyone in their sight, not caring if they were women, children, passersby or protesters. They shattered windows by firing metal pellets at them and then fired tear gas into the houses. Many people were injured by metal pellets striking their legs, bodies, chests and faces. Some were severely injured, with pellets lodged in their skulls or near their eyes."

According to information gathered by Bahar from eyewitnesses, Shahou Bahmani remained on the ground bleeding for 30 to 40 minutes after being shot, while security forces persistently fired at any protesters who attempted to help him. After security forces left, protesters rushed Shahou Bahmani to a hospital.

Amnesty International reviewed two videos showing Shahou Bahmani injured with significant blood around his groin and on the ground underneath him while several protesters attempt to help him.[630]

Shahou Bahmani was declared dead shortly after arrival at the hospital. His death certificate, which has also been reviewed by the organization, states as his cause of death "operation of combat equipment outside combat".

630. IRN00271, IRN0272, videos available on file with Amnesty International.

MOHAMMAD ARIAN KHOSHGAVAR



Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar
© Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar, a 17-year-old boy from Iran's Kurdish minority, by beating and stabbing him on 17 November 2022. He died from his injuries on 15 March 2023.

An informed source in Iran, Shadi, told Amnesty International that Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar was on his way home from his father's shop, passing through a residential street near Showra Square in the area of Haji Abad, when he was assaulted by multiple agents wielding knives and batons. Some of the agents wore uniforms while others were in plain clothes.

According to Shadi, the beating and stabbing resulted in severe fractures to his head and body. Shadi said that members of the security forces also ran over his leg with a motorcycle, leaving visible tyre marks on his leg for weeks. The agents left the scene after several minutes. A local resident took Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar into their house and informed his family, who came and took him to a hospital.

According to Shadi, before falling into a coma, Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar told his family that he was looking down at his phone when the agents started attacking him and that, as they were chasing him, several vehicles belonging to the security forces were parked a few metres away.

Amnesty International analysed a video, authenticated by Shadi, that captures the initial moments of the security forces' attack on Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar.[631]

In the video, multiple agents can be seen surrounding him and pushing, shoving and assaulting him. Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar is clearly trying to run away from them and avoid any confrontation.



Three stills from a video showing security forces attacking Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar. Left: The yellow frame highlights him in the middle of two members of the security forces, attempting to run away. Middle: The agent on the right raises his right arm to strike him. Right: Mohammad Arian Khoshgavar runs closer to the camera and several agents, including a uniformed agent wearing a helmet, beat him with batons. The scene is too dimly lit to be clearly seen in the still images. © Private

631. IRN0370, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, حمله نیروهای یگان ویژه با باتوم و چاقو به آریان خوش‌گوار کودک جان‌باخته کُرد ["Attack by Special Cohort forces with batons and knives on Arian Khoshgavar, the deceased Kurdish child"], 2 April 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLA4YuEbz4Y&ab_channel=KurdistanhumanRightsNetwork (in Persian).

Although the scene is dimly lit, it is evident that some of the agents wield batons and at least one is seen wearing the uniform and helmet typically used by the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.

The video shows the agents striking him multiple times, both with their hands and with batons. The strikes are so hard that they can be heard in the video. Several cars, next to which agents stand, can also be seen in the video.

HOSSEIN ABDPANAH



Hossein Abdpanah © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Hossein Abdpanah, a 72-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 19 November 2022 by firing metal pellets at him from close range during a crackdown on protests in the neighbourhood of Baharan in Sanandaj, where he lived.

An informed source in Iran, Leila, told Amnesty International that Hossein Abdpanah left his house at around 10pm after he heard repeated sounds of shooting. Protests had taken place in the vicinity of his house earlier in the evening. Minutes later, a local resident informed his family that Hossein Abdpanah had been shot.

According to Leila, Hossein Abdpanah's family was informed by local residents that he was seeking cover behind a car when several plain-clothes agents approached him from behind and fired metal pellets at his back from close range. Leila said that Hossein Abdpanah sustained wounds all over his back.

According to Leila, after Hossein Abdpanah collapsed, residents attempted to gather around him, but they were forced to disperse as security forces threatened to open fire on them. Leila further revealed that the security forces threatened to shoot Hossein Abdpanah's son, who arrived at the scene after local residents informed him that his father had been shot. The security forces stopped their threats and left after Hossein Abdpanah's son explained who he was, enabling his family to rush him to a hospital, where he died shortly afterwards.

6.2.5 PROTESTS ON 7 DECEMBER 2022

The intensity of the demonstrations in Sanandaj began to subside from late November 2022. Nonetheless, journalists and human rights defenders continued to report incidents where security forces unlawfully resorted to firearms to suppress dissent.

For example, on 23 November 2022, Kurdish human rights defenders reported that the security forces, including IRGC agents, targeted a group of young schoolboys protesting in the area of Shahrak-e Vahdat in Sanandaj, during which at least three boys were injured, one of them critically.[632]

632. BBC Persian, درگیری‌ها در کردستان ایران شدت گرفت؛ افزایش شمار کشته‌ها و زخمی‌ها ["Clashes intensify in Kurdistan, Iran: Rising number of casualties and injuries"], 23 November 2022, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-63739187 (in Persian); IRN0371, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: بنا به اطلاع شبکه حقوق بشر کردستان، ساعاتی پیش نیروهای سپاه پاسداران در شهرک وحدت #سنندج ["According to Kurdistan Human Rights Network, a few hours ago, IRGC forces opened fire on a group of students in Vahdat residential area #Sanandaj…"] 23 November 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1595390992701702146 (in Persian).

Amnesty International verified a video posted online on 23 November 2022, showing a young man being placed onto the back of a pickup truck by other protesters to be taken for medical care, according to the Hengaw Organization for Human Rights (Hengaw), a Kurdish human rights organization based outside Iran.[633] In the background, a man can be heard shouting, "The Islamic Republic killed him." Amnesty International did not record any deaths of protesters in Sanandaj on 23 November 2022.

Security forces engaged in unlawful shootings not only during protest dispersals but also in the context of nightly raids on neighbourhoods and street patrols, all aimed at suppressing gatherings and instilling fear among the population.

The city of Sanandaj experienced a final resurgence in demonstrations between 5 and 7 December 2022, aligning with a similar trend seen in other parts of the country. This was the result of a coordinated call by activist groups for nationwide protests during that period, notably on 7 December 2022, as it marks National Student Day in Iran and commemorates the anniversary of the killing of three university students by police in 1953.

Amnesty International reviewed a video filmed on 7 December 2022 showing around 16 plain-clothes agents in a side street, many of them wearing masks covering their faces and with some carrying white wooden batons.[634] Some of the agents are seen beating a man and violently forcing him into a white private car. The sound of multiple gunshots and women screaming can be heard in the background.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of one young man, **Houman Abdollahi**, during the protests on 7 December 2022.

HOUMAN ABDOLLAHI



Houman Abdollahi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Houman Abdollahi, a 21-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, by firing metal pellets at him from close range after chasing him during a crackdown on protests in Sanandaj on 7 December 2022.

Three protesters, Iman, Nima and Sepehr, and another informed source, Hamed, who arrived at the site just minutes after the shooting, said that, at around 4.30pm, protesters had gathered in the neighbourhood of Hassanabad, specifically on Hassanabad Street near Hassanabad Jame' Mosque and a central taxi and bus stop locally known as Istgah Ghahvehkhaneh. Iman, Nima and Sepehr told Amnesty International that, as soon as the gathering formed, multiple agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA based at the local police station in Hassanabad, known as Police Station 19, arrived and deployed tear gas to disperse the protesters. Some protesters dispersed while others threw stones in response. The FARAJA agents left the site after a short time, which allowed the protesters to regroup in larger numbers.

633. IRN0027, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, Instagram post: ویدیویی که سازمان حقوق بشری هه‌نگاو منتشر کرده، انتقال یک نوجوان ۱۶ ساله به بیمارستان بعد از اصابت گلوله در روز ۲ آذر را نشان می‌دهد ["Video released by the human rights organization Hengaw shows a 16-year-old teenager being taken to the hospital after being shot on the 23 November"], 23 November 2022, https://www.instagram.com/reel/CITfCVNITAt/?utm_source=ig_embed (in Persian).
634. IRN0028, video on file with Amnesty International.

Iman, Nima and Sepehr recalled that, around one and a half hours later, while the protesters were chanting, dozens of plain-clothes agents arrived in four cars, carrying shotguns, AK-pattern rifles, batons and wooden sticks. Sepehr told Amnesty International that, among the plain-clothes agents, he recognized several individuals he knew were employed by the IRGC, including its Basij battalions. Sepehr noted that he had seen these individuals frequently entering the base of the Shaheed Chamran Basij Resistance Domain of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, located less than 200m from the protest on Hassanabad Street. Additionally, Sepehr noted that, among the plain-clothes agents, he recognized the head of Police Station 19 and an individual who worked for the Public Security Police. The names of these agents are on file with Amnesty International.

Amnesty International reviewed Houman Abdollahi's death certificate, which cites his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".



Photograph showing a Basij base. The sign on the building indicates that this is the base of the Shaheed Chamran Basij Resistance Domain of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, known as the Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps. © Private

Sepehr added that a relative living near the premises of the Shaheed Chamran Basij Resistance Domain observed large numbers of plain-clothes agents leaving the base in their cars throughout the protest period, including the evening of the incident in which Houman Abdollahi was killed.

Nima recalled that, upon arriving at the protest site, the plain-clothes agents initially fired into the air. Then, an agent shot towards them with an AK-pattern rifle. A bullet hit and injured one of Nima's feet. Nima and Sepehr stated that, as the protesters fled into side streets, the agents pursued them while continuously firing towards them with shotguns. Nima witnessed a protester with injuries to his mouth caused by metal pellets. According to Sepehr, up to 20 protesters sustained injuries.

Amnesty International analysed a video from 7 December 2022 that shows several plain-clothes agents armed with firearms, batons or sticks arresting a man while beating him and pushing him into an unmarked vehicle.[635] Nima and Sepehr told Amnesty International that the man, Naser Khosravi, sustained injuries during the shootings on Hassanabad Street and that he was pursued by members of the security forces, who chased protesters and raided houses where people had sought shelter. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, Naser Khosravi was arrested in a side street called Mola Abdolkarim Modares and taken to a detention centre run by the Public Security Police, located at 12 Farvardin Square in Sanandaj, where he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Sepehr witnessed several plain-clothes agents chasing protesters into another side street called Masjed Jame' while continuously firing. Some moments later, these agents unlawfully shot and killed Houman Abdollahi. Sepehr and Hamed told Amnesty International that, according to information obtained from neighbours who witnessed the fatal incident, the agents were walking

635. IRN0028, video on file with Amnesty International.

back towards Hassanabad Street when they noticed Houman Abdollahi peeking through the front door of his house before closing it. The agents then approached his house and, as soon as Houman Abdollahi opened the front door again, one of them aimed a shotgun at his chest and fired metal pellets at him from close range. Hamed and Sepehr believe that the agents targeted Houman Abdollahi, who was not armed, solely on the assumption that he was one of the protesters who had fled from them and had hidden in a house. According to the eyewitnesses they spoke to, after Houman Abdollahi fell to the ground, the agents beat him on the head with sticks and batons.

The independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed a photograph which shows Houman Abdollahi's chest covered by a large medical dressing. Only the left side of his face is visible and no injuries or blood staining can be seen on it. According to the expert, the implied presence of a major chest injury and the absence of blood around the mouth and nose suggest a very quick death due to rapid blood loss caused by catastrophic internal haemorrhaging. Amnesty International reviewed Houman Abdollahi's death certificate, which records his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

Sepehr reported that, after shooting Houman Abdollahi, the agents walked to an adjacent street called Baghcheh 1, around 150m away, in further pursuit of protesters, and continued to fire their shotguns. Sepehr said he was hit by metal pellets in his back while fleeing. He shared with Amnesty International a video in which a gunshot can be heard and five plain-clothes agents can be seen.[636] He said that the footage was filmed from a building overlooking Baghcheh 1 Street several minutes after Houman Abdollahi was shot and that the four agents seen in the video were among the agents who had been in Masjed Jame' Street some minutes earlier.

Sepehr identified by name one of the agents visible in the video by his red jacket, saying that he worked for the Shaheed Chamran Basij Resistance Domain. Sepehr said that, throughout the protest period, he and other local residents witnessed this agent participating in the violent suppression of protests in Hassanabad, including in shootings, and operating a security checkpoint that stopped and inspected vehicles entering Hassanabad. The agent's name is on file with Amnesty International.

6.3 SAQQEZ

Saqqez, the home city of Zhina Mahsa Amini, which had a population of 226,451 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[637] was gripped by protests on 17 September 2022 while she was being buried in the city's Aichee cemetery. Protesters gathered at the cemetery and then peacefully marched towards the city centre and assembled in Qods Square, where the Office of the County Governor of Saqqez is located.

Amnesty International's research shows that security forces fired metal pellets towards protesters and mourners, resulting in injuries. An informed source in Iran, Farshad, told Amnesty International that on this day, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA fired metal pellets at 18-year-old Nachirvan Maroufi from a distance of about 10m, resulting in him losing sight in his right eye. Farshad said that the same forces also fired metal pellets at another young man, 22-year-old Parsa Sehat, who consequently lost sight in both eyes.

636. IRN0029, video on file with Amnesty International.

637. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).

Amnesty International analysed two videos from the day that shows the injuries sustained by a third man, Kian Derakhshan, aged 23, after he was struck by scores of metal pellets in his face and body.[638] The first video shows him lying motionless on the ground with blood stains on his face and the surrounding pavement.[639] An individual is carrying Kian Derakhshan, rushing him to a nearby hospital amid the distressed cries of onlookers. The footage continues inside the hospital showing Kian Derakhshan being placed on a bed with bleeding injuries on his face, neck and arm. The second video shows him on the hospital bed bleeding from his injuries.[640]

In a media interview with the Persian service of Voice of America (VOA Persian), published on 8 September 2023, Kian Derakhshan stated that more than 100 pellets were still in his body, including near his spine, which irritate his nerves and cause severe pain requiring constant medication.[641] He said that his right eye also suffered significant impairment. In his September 2023 interview with VOA Persian, Kian Derakhshan revealed that state media journalist, whom he called an "interrogator-journalist", coerced a televised statement from him when he was hospitalized, only half conscious and unable to even recognize his family.[642] VOA Persian featured a clip from the video aired by state television, which shows Kian Derakhshan on a hospital bed with a tube in his nose and multiple scars from metal pellets on his face. Amnesty International was unable to locate the original state television broadcast.

Amnesty International analysed 10 other videos from 17 and 18 September 2022 showing the heavy presence of security forces in Saqqez and their violent suppression of protests from the very outset of the uprising.

Four videos show water cannons dispersing protesters;[643] one of these videos also shows scores of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in uniforms and protective gear beating retreating

638. IRN0030, video on file with Amnesty International; IRN0032, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: شنبه ۲۶ شهریور، استفاده از ماشین آب‌پاش در تجمع مردم #سقز ["Saturday 7 September, use of a water cannon at a gathering of people in #Saqqez"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1571499380594843655 (in Persian).
639. IRN0030, video on file with Amnesty International.
640. IRN0031, video on file with Amnesty International.
641. Persian service of Voice of America (VOA Persian), کیان درخشان: آزادی و دموکراسی قطعا در ایران پیروز خواهند شد ["Kian Derakhshan: 'Freedom and democracy will certainly prevail in Iran"], 8 September 2023, https://ir.voanews.com/a/kian-derakhshan-certain-freedom-emocracy-prevail-in-iran/7258636.html (in Persian).
642. VOA Persian, کیان درخشان: آزادی و دموکراسی قطعا در ایران پیروز خواهند , کیان درخشان: آزادی و دموکراسی قطعا در ایران پیروز خواهند شد ["Kian Derakhshan: 'Freedom and democracy will certainly prevail in Iran"], 8 September 2023, https://ir.voanews.com/a/kian-derakhshan-certain-freedom-emocracy-prevail-in-iran/7258636.html (in Persian).
643. IRN0032, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: شنبه ۲۶ شهریور، استفاده از ماشین آب‌پاش در تجمع مردم #سقز ["Saturday 7 September, use of a water cannon at a gathering of people in #Saqqez"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1571499380594843655 (in Persian); IRN0033, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran Wire, X post: در این ویدیو که از دومین روز اعتراضات به جان باختن #مهسا_امینی در سقز منتشر شده است، درگیری معترضان با نیروهای امنیتی حکومت ایران دیده می‌شود ["In this video, released from the second day of protests over the death of #Mahsa_Amini in Saqqez, clashes between protesters and Iranian security forces can be seen"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/iranwire/status/1571566128748531714 (in Persian); IRN0034, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: استفاده از ماشین آب‌پاش برای متفرق کردن مردم ["Use of water cannons to disperse people"], 17 September 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1571090491894272002 (in Persian); IRN0035, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran International, X post: ویدیوی رسیده به ایران اینترنشنال نشان می‌دهد ماموران امنیتی برای متفرق کردن معترضان به کشته شدن مهسا امنیتی علاوه بر شلیک گاز اشک‌آور و گلوله‌های ساچمه‌ای از ماشین‌های آب‌پاش استفاده کرده‌اند ["Video received by Iran International shows security forces using tear gas, metal bullets and water cannons to disperse protesters over the killing of Mahsa Amini"], 17 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1571099937588248577 (in Persian).

protesters with batons.[644] One of the videos shows smoke around houses while the person filming says that the security forces are firing into peoples' homes and that there is tear gas in their backyards.[645]

Three further videos show members of the security forces wearing black and/or dark green camouflage uniforms resembling those of the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and protective gear and carrying firearms amid the sound of gunfire.[646] In one of these videos, an agent can be seen carrying a shotgun.[647] The second video shows more than two dozen armed agents filmed on the roundabout of Qods Square; one of the agents is seen raising a PepperBall-pattern gun and aiming it towards off-camera targets while the sound of a gunshot is heard.[648]

Over the next several months, the security forces' crackdown on protesters in Saqqez resulted in the unlawful killing of four individuals – **Fereydoon Mahmoudi**, **Mohammad Hosseini**, **Danial Pabandi** and **Abdolrahman Bakhtiari** – during protest dispersals or in militarized environments. The killings took place on several streets, highlighting the scattered nature of the protests and the repression of them.

6.3.1 PROTESTS ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

On 19 September 2022, protests peaked in Saqqez and many other cities in Kurdistan province to mark the third day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. Protests were mostly concentrated around 22 Bahman Square, though protesters also gathered in other nearby areas, including Jomhouri Street, Perde Hewai Street, Halo Square and Qods Square.

According to information gathered by Amnesty International, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA unlawfully fired metal pellets to disperse the protesters, resulting in the death of **Fereydoon Mahmoudi** and injuries to dozens of other protesters.

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644. IRN0033, video on file with Amnesty Internatonal and available at: Iran Wire, X post: در این ویدیو که از دومین روز اعتراضات به جان باختن #مهسا_امینی در سقز منتشر شده است، درگیری معترضان با نیروهای امنیتی حکومت ایران دیده می‌شود ["In this video, released from the second day of protests over the death of #Mahsa_Amini in Saqqez, clashes between protesters and Iranian security forces can be seen"], 18 September 2022, https://x.com/iranwire/status/1571566128748531714 (in Persian).

645. IRN0037, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kolbarnews, X post: #سقز-تیراندازی نیروهای یگان ویژه به داخل منازل مردم ["#Saqqez – Special Cohort forces firing into people's homes"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1571799710364581890 (in Persian).

646. IRN0036, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: منابع شبکه حقوق بشر کردستان از مسدود کردن بلوار انقلاب شهر سقز توسط نیروهای یگان ویژه خبر می‌دهند ["Kurdistan Human Rights Network sources report that Special Cohort units have blocked Enghelab Boulevard in the city of Saqqez"], 17 September 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1571101035971903494 (in Persian); IRN0038, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran International, X post: ویدیوهای رسیده به ایران اینترنشنال نشان می‌دهد ماموران امنیتی در میدان قدس سقز به سمت معترضان به کشته شدن مهسا امینی شلیک مستقیم کرده‌اند ["Videos received by Iran International show that security forces opened fire directly at protesters over the killing of Mahsa Amini in Qods Square, Saqqez"], 17 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1571083874201120768 (in Persian).

647. IRN0036, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: منابع شبکه حقوق بشر کردستان از مسدود کردن بلوار انقلاب شهر سقز توسط نیروهای یگان ویژه خبر می‌دهند ["Kurdistan Human Rights Network sources report that Special Cohort units have blocked Enghelab Boulevard in the city of Saqqez"], 17 September 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1571101035971903494 (in Persian).

648. IRN0038, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran International, X post: ویدیوهای رسیده به ایران اینترنشنال نشان می‌دهد ماموران امنیتی در میدان قدس سقز به سمت معترضان به کشته شدن مهسا امینی شلیک مستقیم کرده‌اند ["Videos received by Iran International show that security forces opened fire directly at protesters over the killing of Mahsa Amini in Qods Square, Saqqez"], 17 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1571083874201120768 (in Persian).

FEREYDOON MAHMOUDI



Fereydoon Mahmoudi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Fereydoon Mahmoudi, a 32-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, by firing dozens of metal pellets at him from close range during a crackdown on protests in Saqqez on 19 September 2022.

Fereydoon Mahmoudi's brother, Farhad Mahmoudi, and another informed source, Rojin, told Amnesty International that Fereydoon Mahmoudi was shot and killed by the security forces while taking part in peaceful protests that marked the third day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini.

An eyewitness, Teymour, told Amnesty International that the protests in Saqqez that day were mostly concentrated around 22 Bahman Square, though protesters also gathered in other nearby areas, including Jomhouri Street, Halo Square and Qods Square, where the Office of the County Governor of Saqqez is located. According to Teymour, the protests lasted from around 3-4pm to around 10-11pm. Teymour reported seeing agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA repeatedly firing metal pellets to disperse the protesters in the square. According to Teymour, some protesters responded by throwing stones while others ran away along Perde Hewai Street towards Jame' Mosque.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, during the crackdown, an agent approached Fereydoon Mahmoudi and fatally fired a shotgun loaded with metal pellets at him from close range. According to information obtained by Farhad Mahmoudi and Rojin from local residents, the incident happened near Jame' Mosque.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed a video of the immediate aftermath of the fatal shooting of Fereydoon Mahmoudi.[649] The video shows him unconscious but still breathing, with blood pouring out from his mouth as others turn him on his side into the recovery position. His shirt is pulled back to expose a heavily blood-stained white vest. The images strongly support information received by Amnesty International that Fereydoon Mahmoudi suffered a lethal chest wound.

Amnesty International reviewed Fereydoon Mahmoudi's burial certificate, in which the cause of death is recorded as "under review".

On 21 September 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi, announced in a media interview that Fereydoon Mahmoudi had been fatally shot with metal pellets at close range by "anti-revolutionary groups".[650] He claimed that several individuals who had covered their faces with masks transported him in a Peugeot 405 car without a licence plate to a hospital in Saqqez, where he died 15 minutes later.

Despite this initial statement, after Fereydoon Mahmoudi's family filed criminal complaints in late 2022, the head of the Office of the Military Prosecutor in Saqqez and Baneh and deputy military prosecutor of Kurdistan province, Sohrab Shafayee, issued a written order on 11 April 2023 confirming that an agent from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Saqqez was responsible for firing at Fereydoon Mahmoudi with a shotgun loaded with "metal pellets of size 9-12" and killing him.

649. IRN0273, video on file with Amnesty International.

650. Tasnim News Agency, اختصاصی|جزئیات کشته شدن مشکوک ۴نفر در کردستان: با "گلوله جنگی و از پشت" تیر خورده‌اند ["Exclusive: Details of the suspicious killing of 4 people in Kurdistan: they were shot 'with combat bullets from behind'"], 21 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/06/30/2777420 (in Persian).

> However, the order, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, held that, as it was not possible to identify the agent responsible for firing at Fereydoon Mahmoudi, the criminal investigation would be closed.[651]

6.3.2 PROTESTS IN OCTOBER 2022

Despite the initial crackdown, protests continued in Saqqez in the following weeks[652] and, in response, the security forces escalated their unlawful use of lethal force.

A protester, Rojin, told Amnesty International:

> **"In the weeks following Fereydoon's killing, the mistreatment of the people by the authorities increased significantly. They showed no mercy whatsoever. Killing and injuring people became normal for the security forces. Firing metal pellets and blinding people became routine for them as the protests continued."**

An eyewitness, Teymour, likewise told Amnesty International that, as protests continued, security forces fired assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets, leading to the frequent sound of gunfire echoing in the city.

Amnesty International analysed 20 videos published between 20 September and 29 October 2022 that show the brutality of the security forces suppressing the protests in Saqqez. The security forces' pattern of quelling protests involved chasing protesters into side streets in residential neighbourhoods, as well as other locations, while firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets at them. The videos, together with testimonies from residents, indicate that this this approach created a hostile environment where residents lived under constant threat of physical assault and deadly shootings.

Sixteen of the videos show agents from the IRGC and Special Cohorts of FARAJA in black and camouflage uniforms, including six[653] where they are carrying firearms. One video, published online on 2 October 2022, shows a man on a motorcycle being chased by uniformed IRGC agents, one of whom

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651. IRN0473, legal document on file with Amnesty International. For more information, see sections 9.4.3 and 11.3.2.
652. Relevant media reports have been complied and made available through a database entitled *Namayeh Enqelab* (Revolution's Face). See Enqelab Info, گزارش آماری کل تجمعات اعتراضی ["Statistical report of all protest gatherings"], https://enqelab.info/کل-تجمعات-اعتراضی (accessed on 14 August 2026).
653. IRN0389, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: بنا به تصاویری که به دست شبکه حقوق بشر کردستان رسیده است دیده می‌شود که روز گذشته ۴ آبان، نیروهای امنیتی هزاران شهروندی ["According to footage received by the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, it can be seen that yesterday, on 26 October, security forces opened fire on thousands of citizens"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1585534719269244930 (in Persian); IRN0040, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Sirwan Mansouri, X post: این ویدیو مربوط به شهر #سقز است که تقابل یکی از انقلابیون را با نیروهای سرکوبگری نشان می‌دهد که در حال تخریب اتومبیلها و شکستن درب و پنجره مردم هستند ["This video is from the city of #Saqqez and shows a confrontation between one of the revolutionaries and repressive forces who are vandalizing cars and smashing people's doors and windows"], 13 October 2022, https://x.com/MansouriSirwan/status/1580565742319464448 (in Persian); IRN0041, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: مستقر شدن نیروهای سپاه پاسداران در میدان ۲۲ بهمن شهر سقز ["Deployment of IRGC forces in 22 Bahman Square, Saqqez"], 12 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1580084882189193216 (in Persian); IRN0042, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویری از هجوم نیروهای سرکوبگر به مردم معترض در شهر سقز ["Footage of repressive forces attacking protesters in the city of Saqqez"], 12 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1580213067903692801 (in Persian); IRN0044, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X post: این ویدیو مربوط به سقز است و ۵ بار صدای سلاح‌های سنگین مانند کلاشنیکف یا ژ۳ شنیده می‌شود ["This video is from Saqqez, and the sound of heavy weapons like Kalashnikovs or G3 rifles can be heard five times"], 10 October 2022, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1579588089957482498 (in Persian); IRN0043, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویری از شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی به سوی مردم معترض سقز در شامگاه شنبه ۹ مهر ۱۴۰۱ ["Images of direct gunfire by repressive government forces towards protesters in Saqqez on the evening of Saturday 1 October 2022"] 2 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1576570663292194817 (in Persian).

appears to fire a rifle towards him.[654] The sound of gunshots can be heard. Another video, filmed at night and published online on 10 October 2022, shows a group of protesters, including some that appear to be children, running into a side street.[655] They are followed by uniformed members of the security forces carrying firearms amid the sound of gunfire and children's voices in the background. Two videos published on 12 October 2022 show, respectively, an IRGC agent patrolling next to a pickup truck while holding a rifle and a group of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA riding on motorcycles while carrying firearms.[656]

This risk was heightened for those who dared to voice objections or show any form of support for the protesters. The unlawful killing of **Mohammad Hosseini** on 12 October 2022 serves as a stark example of this brutality.

MOHAMMAD HOSSEINI



Mohammad Hosseini © Private

Agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA deliberately used their car to run over Mohammad Hosseini, a man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 12 October 2022 during a crackdown on protests in the residential neighbourhood of Kouhdasht, as reported by human rights defenders outside Iran.

According to these reports, Mohammad Hosseini, a resident of the street where protests were taking place, had loudly objected to the conduct of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA who were firing shotguns and tear gas at fleeing protesters, damaging parked cars and breaking the windows or doors of homes. The reports indicate that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA intensified these actions after several people threw stones at them from their rooftops.

Videos from Saqqez from around this time show security forces smashing private property, including windows of cars and homes. For example, one video, which was filmed at night and published in the early evening of 13 October 2022, shows security forces wearing camouflage uniforms and protective gear smashing the windows of homes.[657] The person filming says that the agents are also smashing the windows of cars. One agent is seen shooting a pistol into another side street. Another agent fires tear gas directly at the person filming for shouting at the agents to shame them.

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654. IRN0043, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویری از شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی به سوی مردم معترض سقز در شامگاه شنبه ۹ مهر ۱۴۰۱"] Images of direct gunfire by repressive government forces towards protesters in Saqqez on the evening of Saturday 1 October 2022"] 2 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1576570663292194817 (in Persian).

655. IRN0044, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X post: این ویدیو مربوط به سقز است و ۵ بار صدای سلاح‌های سنگین مانند کلاشنیکف یا ژ۳ شنیده می‌شود"] This video is from Saqqez, and the sound of heavy weapons like Kalashnikovs or G3 rifles can be heard five times"], 10 October 2022, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1579588089957482498 (in Persian).

656. IRN0041, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: مستقر شدن نیروهای سپاه پاسداران در میدان ۲۲ بهمن شهر سقز"] Deployment of IRGC forces in 22 Bahman Square, Saqqez"], 12 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1580084882189193216 (in Persian); IRN0042, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویری از هجوم نیروهای سرکوبگر به مردم معترض در شهر سقز"] Footage of repressive forces attacking protesters in the city of Saqqez"], 12 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1580213067903692801 (in Persian).

657. IRN040, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Sirwan Mansouri, X post: این ویدیو مربوط به شهر #سقز است که تقابل یکی از انقلابیون را با نیروهای سرکوبگری نشان می‌دهد که در حال تخریب اتومبیلها و شکستن درب و پنجره مردم هستند"] This video is from the city of #Saqqez and shows a confrontation between one of the revolutionaries and repressive forces who are vandalizing cars and smashing people's doors and windows"], 13 October 2022, https://x.com/MansouriSirwan/status/1580565742319464448 (in Persian).

Amnesty International was not able to speak to an eyewitness inside the country about the circumstances surrounding the death of Mohammad Hosseini. However, the organization talked to an activist in Saqqez, Teymour, who had received information from a fellow activist who, in turn, had spoken with an eyewitness. The Kurdistan Human Rights Network, which is based outside Iran, also shared with Amnesty International text messages that it received from a trusted local human rights defender, who visited Kouhdasht several weeks after the incident and spoke to a resident who had witnessed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA running over Mohammad Hosseini with their car. According to both sources, this incident was widely known within the neighbourhood, but people were afraid to publicly speak out or share information.



Mohammad Hosseini's funeral poster, on which his family was reportedly compelled to state that he had died in a "car accident" © Private

Teymour also reported talking to a neighbour who had attended the memorial ceremony of Mohammad Hosseini and learned that security forces had made death threats against Mohammad Hosseini's family to force them to write on his funeral poster that he had died in a "car accident".

Amnesty International obtained a copy of Mohammad Hosseini's funeral poster and confirmed that the phrase "car accident" was written on it.

6.3.3 PROTESTS ON 15-19 NOVEMBER 2022

Protests in Saqqez peaked between 15 and 19 November 2022 in response to nationwide calls for demonstrations to commemorate the victims of the deadly protest crackdowns of November 2019. In response, the authorities heightened levels of surveillance and control, creating what a protester described to Amnesty International as "a climate of severe repression".

In this context, security forces unlawfully killed 17-year-old **Danial Pabandi** in the area of Karim Abad on 16 November 2022 and **Abrolrahman Bakhtiari** the next day near Hafez Boulevard.

DANIAL PABANDI



Danial Pabandi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Danial Pabandi, a 17-year-old boy from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 16 November 2022 in the context of a crackdown on protests in Saqqez.

Two informed sources, Shahin and Teymour, told Amnesty International that the fatal incident took place at around 6pm on a side street near Shahnaz Avenue near Karim Abad Square. Based on information gathered by Shahin and Teymour from eyewitnesses, several agents in a car approached Danial Pabandi, who was riding his motorcycle. They struck him with a stick, causing him to fall off his motorcycle, and, as he tried to mount it again, they fired a shotgun at his back from less than 1m away and drove off. Shahin and Teymour said that eyewitnesses were not able to see whether the agents were wearing uniforms or plain clothes. This account is consistent with a video statement by Danial Pabandi's father, which first appeared on X on 17 November 2022. In he says members of the security forces, who were travelling in a car, approached his son and shot him in the back.[658]

Shahin and Teymour told Amnesty International that they did not have any information indicating the motivations of the security forces for pursuing and shooting Danial Pabandi. However, Teymour stated, that moments before Danial Pabandi was shot, he had passed through Shahnaz Avenue near Karim Abad Square where protests were taking place and then turned into the side street where he was shot.

Shahin informed Amnesty International that some local dissidents and activists in Saqqez identified an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions as Danial Pabandi's killer. However, the basis of their identification remains unclear. Amnesty International is aware that the name and image of this alleged perpetrator has been published online and this information is on file with Amnesty International.

A protester, Rojin, described to Amnesty International how security forces violently suppressed the protests in Karim Abad on the evening of 16 November 2022. He said that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets, as well as paintballs and tear gas, to disperse hundreds of protesters who had gathered in Karim Abad Square and that, on multiple occasions, they also deployed firearms. Rojin said that the agents had covered their faces with masks. She added that, as protesters dispersed and sought shelter in side streets, security forces pursued them on motorcycles while continuing to fire shotguns. According to her account, the security forces also smashed windows in several residential homes in reprisal for residents leaving their doors open for protesters to seek shelter.

658. IRN0390, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X post: ویدیویی از صحبت‌های پدر #دانیال_پابندی دیشب مقابل بیمارستان تامین اجتماعی به دستم رسیده که می‌گوید: ["Video of the statements made by the father of #Daniel_Pabandi last night in front of the Social Security Hospital has reached me, in which he says..."], 17 November 2022, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1593362031385665538 (in Persian).

ABDOLRAHMAN BAKHTIARI



Abdolrahman Bakhtiari © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, a 66-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Saqqez on 17 November 2022.

An eyewitness, Kazem, told Amnesty International that Abdolrahman Bakhtiari was a bystander caught in the turmoil of the security forces' crackdown on protests in Hafez Boulevard near Karim Abad Square. He said that Abdolrahman Bakhtiari and his family were visiting someone's home in the vicinity when they heard gunfire. They waited until the gunfire subsided and the protesters were dispersed. However, as they left their host's house and entered their car, a group of protesters reassembled on Moallem Street, close to Hafez Boulevard, igniting a fire. As a result, Abolrahaman Bakhtiari and his family stayed stationary in the car to wait for the situation to calm down.

Kazem recalled that, shortly after, two vehicles carrying agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA arrived and positioned themselves behind the family's car. Additionally, a plain-clothes agent on a motorcycle approached the car from the front and joined the agents from Special Cohorts of FARAJA. Bagher said that, unexpectedly, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA struck the car's rear with a baton, fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at the boot of the car and fired a bullet at the rear window using a firearm. Frightened by the unprovoked attack, the driver moved forward. As they drove away, the family discovered that Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, who was sitting in the passenger seat, had been shot in the back of his head. They rushed him to hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Kazem learned that the burial certificate of Abdolrahman Bakhtiari recorded the cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects". Amnesty International reviewed his death certificate, which also records his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

6.4 DIVANDAREH

Divandareh, which had a population of 80,040 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[659] was also gripped by protesters during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The security forces unlawfully killed four protesters during violent protest dispersals or in militarized areas in this county.

Mohsen Mohammadi and **Foad Ghadimi** were shot dead on 19 September 2022 when protests first spread to Divandareh on the occasion of the third day after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. **Habibollah Fathi** and **Foad Savari** were unlawfully killed two months later on 19 November 2022 during a violent crackdown on protests marking the third anniversary of the November 2019 nationwide protests. All four fatal incidents happened in or near Imam Khomeini Street (also known as Divandareh-Saqqez Road), the central gathering place for protesters in Divandareh.

659. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).

6.4.1 PROTESTS ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

On 19 September 2022, hundreds of protesters peacefully gathered in front of the main base of the IRGC in Divandareh, on Imam Khomeini Street, and the nearby Imam Square.

A protester, Kambiz, and two other informed sources in Iran, Shahla and Hamid, told Amnesty International that, when the protests first began in the morning, agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA arrived at the protest, closed off the streets, and ordered the protesters to disperse. They were soon joined by plain-clothes agents who tried to disperse the protesters by beating them with wooden sticks.

Kambiz recalled that, as the protesters refused to disperse and the gathering grew larger, agents from the Basij battalions of the IRGC, who were equipped with shields, batons, tear gas launchers and/or shotguns, arrived and began firing tear gas and shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse the protesters. In response, some protesters threw stones. As the number of protesters grew, IRGC agents in brown camouflage uniforms, who were armed with AK-pattern rifles, as well as greater numbers of plain-clothes agents, who had covered their faces with masks, were also deployed.

According to Kambiz's eyewitness account and information obtained by Shahla and Hamid from other eyewitnesses, the IRGC agents first fired into the air and then fired lethal ammunition towards protesters. According to Shahla, they fired into the crowd of protesters from both street level and a watchtower inside the IRGC base. In response, some protesters threw stones.

Amnesty International analysed 11 videos recording the escalation of the crackdown, which were first published online on 19 September 2022 or the following days.

Five of the videos capture how the crackdown unfolded on Imam Khomeini Street. One shows a large contingent of security forces repeatedly firing into the air as a crowd of protesters, including at least one that appears to be a child, observes the intimidating display of force.[660] Many in the crowd are seen recording the event on their mobile phones. The person filming the video states that the security forces are firing into the air.

Two others show protesters throwing stones in the direction of the security forces amid repeated sounds of gunfire.[661] One of these videos shows a stationary armoured vehicle next to a group of security forces.[662] Some of the agents are in plain clothes and others are wearing camouflage uniforms and helmets and carrying rectangular shields resembling those used by Basij battalions.

The fourth video shows IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, in uniforms of various colours that appear to be shades of green or brown, as well as plain-clothes agents.[663] At least two agents wearing uniforms and helmets are aiming shotguns towards the protesters in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot, while others are wearing helmets and carrying round-shaped black shields and batons typically used by members of Basij battalions. Subsequently, the agents are retreating while the protesters advance towards them. As the agents retreat, an armoured vehicle is ploughing into the crowd.

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660. IRN0045, video on file with Amnesty International.
661. IRN0046, video on file with Amnesty International; Kambiz Ghafouri, X post: "Security forces attack people in Divandareh, Kurdistan province, Iran. People protest #MahsaAmini's murder. She was arrested, beaten and killed by the Islamic regime of Iran's hijab police last week.", 19 September 2022; https://x.com/KambizGhafouri/status/1571815923690143745?s=20
662. IRN0046, video on file with Amnesty International.
663. IRN0048, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: در ویدیوئی که در شبکه‌های اجتماعی منتشر شده، دیده می‌شود که در جریان برگزاری اعتراضات روز ۲۸ شهریور در شهر #دیواندره نیروهای ضدشورش از فاصله نزدیک معترضین را هدف تیراندازی قرار می‌دهند ["In a video published on social media, it can be seen that during the protests on 19 September in the city of #Divandareh, riot police fired at protesters from close range"], 26 September 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1574332669919481856 (in Persian).



Three stills from the same video showing the security forces' violent crackdown on protesters on Imam Khomeini Street. (1) IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, are seen in uniforms of various colours that appear to be shades of green or brown. (2) The yellow frame highlights an agent wearing a uniform and helmet aiming a shotgun towards protesters who are outside the frame to the right. (3) Following this, the armoured vehicle in this image ploughs into the crowd of protesters. © Private

The fifth video captures the chaotic scenes that unfold as outraged protesters scatter to avoid the oncoming armoured vehicle.[664] Subsequently, many return to the main road, moving through a haze of smoke and loudly denounce the security forces. Sounds of gunshots are audible.

Amnesty International also verified a video recorded on 19 September 2022 showing protesters hiding from the brutality of the security forces.[665] The first part of the video shows a group of five men and one woman in an alley trying to help a man who appears to be wounded in his neck, on which blood is visible. The group is trying to wash away the blood with water. Continuous gunfire is audible in the background. In the second part of the video, two injured people are carried by the group, put on motorcycles, and taken away for medical care.

Amnesty International verified another video that shows an agent aiming what appears to be a shotgun at a small group of young protesters gathered in Asad Abadi Street, a side street near Imam Khomeini Street.[666] The agent is wearing a black uniform and helmet. Behind this agent, multiple other agents can be seen, including agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA wearing light green shirts, plain-clothes agents and agents wearing black uniforms and helmets. Several protesters are throwing stones while some agents throw stones back.

In two other videos from the same incident, sounds of gunshots are heard while the individuals filming say that the security forces are resorting to "military weapons" and "combat weapons".[667]

Amnesty International verified two videos filmed in the evening, which show protesters gathered again in Asad Abadi Street. Loud chants of "Woman Life Freedom" and continuous gunfire can be heard.[668]

Amnesty International also verified one panoramic video of the city of Divandareh published on 19 September 2022 which shows at least four large smoke plumes, indicating fires were burning across the city. Multiple gunshots can be heard.[669]

During the crackdown on the protests on 19 September 2022, the security forces unlawfully killed two people, **Mohsen Mohammadi** and **Foad Ghadimi**.

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664. IRN0049, video on file with Amnesty International.
665. IRN0050, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویر اختصاصی هەنگاو از زخمی شدن شهروندان دوباره با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای مسلح ["Exclusive images from Hengaw showing citizens of Divandareh wounded by direct gunfire from armed forces"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1571784614779432960 (in Persian).
666. IRN0051, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Soran Khateri, X post: "Clashes between security forces and protesters erupted on Monday in Divandareh after anti-riot forces attacked peaceful demonstrators who gathered to condemn the killing of Mahsa (Zhina) Amini by Islamic Republic Morality Police", 19 September 2022, https://x.com/sorankhateri/status/1571786474840002560?s=20
667. IRN0052, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Federation of Anarchism Era, X post: "Monday, September 19th, 2022, Divandareh: People throwing stones at armed riot police", 20 September 2022, https://x.com/asranarshism/status/1572117093314883585?s=20; IRN0053, video on file with Amnesty International.
668. IRN0054, IRN0055, videos on file with Amnesty International.
669. IRN0274, video on file with Amnesty International.

MOHSEN MOHAMMADI AND FOAD GHADIMI



Mohsen Mohammadi (left) and Foad Ghadimi (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mohsen Mohammadi, aged 31, and Foad Ghadimi, aged 40, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Divandareh on 19 September 2022.

A protester, Kambiz, told Amnesty International that the two men were among the protesters who had gathered in front of the main base of the IRGC in Divandareh, on Imam Khomeini Street, that morning. Kambiz said that, when IRGC agents started firing lethal ammunition into the air, Mohsen Mohammadi tried to enter the IRGC base by climbing over the walls of its back gate, which opens onto 16 Metri Street. Kambiz stated that in response, an IRGC agent, positioned a few hundred metres away, fired two shots at Mohsen Mohammadi using an AK-pattern rifle. Kambiz witnessed people carrying Mohsen Mohammadi away from the scene.

Kambiz recalled that, after Mohsen Mohammadi was shot, protesters, including Foad Ghadimi, fled towards the nearby Imam Square. The IRGC agents continued to shoot at the fleeing protesters and fatally struck Foad Ghadimi in his stomach.

An informed source in Iran, Shahla, shared with Amnesty International a video that captures scenes of distressed protesters fleeing from gunfire.[670] Some protesters appear to be carrying a person away from the scene of the shootings. Shahla informed the organization that individual being carried away was Foad Ghadimi.

Shahla told Amnesty International that, due to ongoing gunfire and the fear of arrest, individuals at the scene were unable to immediately take Foad Ghadimi to a hospital. Instead, he was first taken to a hair salon and then left in front of Imam Khomeini Hospital in Divandareh. It is unclear how long he remained there unattended, but eventually, two people took him inside. There, he underwent a surgical procedure, during which one of his kidneys was removed. Later that evening, he was transferred by helicopter to a hospital in Sanandaj, where he underwent a second surgical operation. He died in the early hours of 21 September 2022.

Amnesty International reviewed Foad Ghadimi's death and burial certificates. His death certificate states "unknown" as his cause of death, while his burial certificate has left the space available for writing the cause of death blank.

6.4.2 PROTESTS ON 19 NOVEMBER 2022

The security forces carried out another crackdown in Divandareh on 19 November 2022, when several hundred protesters peacefully took to the streets to mark the three-year anniversary of the nationwide protests of November 2019. Some protesters engaged in vandalism and arson, targeting the local office

670. IRN0275, video on file with Amnesty International.

of a member of parliament, Mohsen Fathi, and the house of the representative of the Supreme Leader in Divandareh and the city's Friday prayer leader, Jalal Moradi.[671]

According to information obtained from Kambiz, a protester, and Aref, a medical worker in Divandareh, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and IRGC agents were involved in a militarized crackdown on protests in the city. After the security forces used firearms and tear gas to prevent protesters from gathering in Imam Khomeini Square, the protesters scattered into the side streets around Imam Khomeini Street and Saheli Road. According to Aref and Kambiz, the security forces relentlessly deployed tear gas and fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at protesters. Aref treated multiple injured individuals, removing metal pellets that had entered their arms, backs or sides. He noted that the metal pellets varied in size, with some being noticeably larger than others.

Aref told Amnesty International that, according to information received from eyewitnesses, IRGC agents also repeatedly fired into the air. He said that a group of IRGC agents dressed in brown camouflage uniforms, who were armed with AK-pattern rifles, were positioned in front of a branch of Tejarat Bank on Imam Khomeini Street, some 400-500m from a group of protesters. Additionally, he and Kambiz said that several IRGC agents armed with rifles were stationed on the rooftops of Tejarat Bank and Meli Bank, also on Imam Khomeini Street.

During this repression, two men – **Habibollah Fathi** and **Foad Savari** – were unlawfully killed.

HABIBOLLAH FATHI



Habibollah Fathi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Habibollah Fathi, a 62-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, during the crackdown on protests in Divandareh on 19 November 2022.

Kambiz and Aref told Amnesty International that Habibollah Fathi was among the protesters who gathered on side streets near Imam Khomeini Street that morning. Kambiz said that he witnessed Habibollah Fathi falling to the ground after being struck by a bullet in his head. He stated that the shot was fired by an IRGC agent armed with a rifle who was positioned on the rooftop of a branch of Meli Bank.

Amnesty International reviewed a graphic video of the immediate aftermath of the fatal shooting, which shows Habibollah Fathi lying lifeless on the ground with significant bleeding from his head.[672]

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed the video and noted a large gaping wound involving the outer margin of the left eye socket and the adjacent cheek bone. Blood from the wound and nose has soiled the face and the clothing covering the left shoulder and upper chest with a flow pattern indicating that he was upright at the time of injury. According to the pathologist, the appearances are strongly suggestive of a high-velocity gunshot exit wound, with the entry wound likely at the back of the head.

671. Hamshahri Online, التهاب در دیواندره ؛ ۲ نفر کشته شدند | منزل امام جمعه و دفتر نماینده مجلس را به آتش کشیدند | شلیک گاز اشک آور تجمع را به اطراف میدان کشاند ["Tensions in Divandareh; 2 Killed: The residence of the Friday Prayer Leader and the Office of the Member of Parliament set on fire: Tear gas fired, protest spreads around the square"], 20 November 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/721453/التهاب-در-دیواندره-۲-نفر-کشته-شدند-منزل-امام-جمعه-و-دفتر (in Persian).
672. IRN0276, video on file with Amnesty International.

Kambiz and another eyewitness with whom Aref spoke stated that, before Habibollah Fathi was fatally shot, he had been urging younger protesters to exercise caution and loudly imploring the security forces to stop the shooting. They noted that this could have given the impression to the security forces that Habibollah Fathi had a leadership role in the protests. Considering this, along with Habibollah Fathi's fatal wound to his head while no other individual near him was struck by bullets, Aref and Kambiz suspected that the security forces deliberately targeted Habibollah Fathi.

According to information obtained by Aref from eyewitnesses, security forces fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets towards several protesters who were attempting to move Habibollah Fathi's body into a car to take him to his family. Aref said that, as a result, one man was reported as having lost vision in one eye and at least two other men still had multiple metal pellets lodged in their faces or bodies.

FOAD SAVARI



Foad Savari © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Foad Savari, a man from Iran's Kurdish minority, by firing metal pellets at him from close range during a crackdown on protests in Divandareh on 19 November 2022.

Kambiz and Aref told Amnesty International that Foad Savari was among the protesters who had gathered on side streets near Imam Khomeini Street that morning. They said that, according to information received from eyewitnesses and another informed person in Iran, Foad Savari was part of a group of protesters who were fleeing from gunfire. He fell to the ground after being injured by metal pellets. Two IRGC agents then approached Foad Savari, pressed a shotgun loaded with metal pellets against his chest and fired. Following the fatal shooting, the agents quickly left the scene.

Later, state media reports stated that two people had been killed in Divandareh that day but did not name them.[673] The reports described the deaths as "suspicious" and suggested that security forces only used tear gas in response to acts of arson, vandalism and stone-throwing by some protesters. These claims conflict with witness accounts and video footage reviewed by Amnesty International, which leave no doubt that security forces unlawfully used firearms and force against protesters.

6.5 BANEH

Similar to other cities in Kurdistan province, Baneh, which had a population of 158,690 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[674] was first gripped by major protests on the evening of 19 September 2022.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of four individuals in Baneh and a nearby village, Choman, in the context of the protest crackdowns of September-December 2022 and the

673. Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), در ناآرامی‌های امروز دیواندره چه گذشت؟ ["What happened in today's unrest in Divandareh?"], 19 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84947725 (in Persian).
674. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).

militarized environment prevailing during this period. **Fereydoon Faraji** and **Motaleb Saeed Peiro** were bystanders who were shot and killed on 27 October 2022 in separate incidents. IRGC agents shot dead **Dastan Rasoul** on 28 October 2022 while he was on his way to attend a memorial ceremony for his relative Motaleb Saeed Peiro. **Asoo Ghaderi** was shot and killed on 17 November 2022 while driving near Police Station 12 near Showra Square.

6.5.1 PROTESTS ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

Protesters gathered peacefully in Imam Square (also referred to as Moravati Square) and marched from there to the Office of the County Governor of Baneh in Kamarbandi Street, where uniformed agents from the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police of FARAJA and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, as well as plain-clothes agents, were positioned.

Amnesty International analysed five videos posted online on 19 September 2022, which show hundreds of peaceful protesters outside the Office of the County Governor, chanting, clapping and waving scarves in the air.[675] An eyewitness, Shahed, told Amnesty International that a group of women protesters removed and set fire to their headscarves, defying dispersal orders issued by agents from the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police of FARAJA and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. Amnesty International analysed a video first posted online on 19 September 2022, which shows several women in Baneh burning their headscarves against the backdrop of Woman Life Freedom chants.[676]

Shahed recounted how, in response to these protests, a significant number of plain-clothes agents, who had been stationed within the premises of the Office of the County Governor since earlier that day, joined the uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. Shahed mentioned that, like many other members of the security forces, the agents had covered their faces. He recalled that the agents first fired into the air around 10 times and then fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at protesters. Shahed further mentioned seeing a pickup truck bearing the insignia of the IRGC and equipped with a DShK heavy machine gun, which fired into the air. Outraged, some protesters engaged in stone-throwing, damaging the windows of the Office of the County Governor.

Shahed reported that, as the plain-clothes agents fired shotguns, uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts and the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police of FARAJA, in tandem, used tear gas and attacked the protesters with sticks and batons. In addition, some agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA chased fleeing protesters with their vehicles. According to Shahed, local residents reported that, at around 9pm, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA deliberately rammed their black armoured vehicles into at least two protesters who were attempting to escape on motorcycles. The impact caused them to fall to the ground and they were then violently arrested and taken into custody.

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675. IRN0063, video on files with Amnesty International and available at: KolbarNews, X post: #بانه تجمع مردم روبروی فرمانداری ["People gathering in front of the office of the Office of the County Governor of #Baneh"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1571868671106256898 (in Persian); IRN0062, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rita Joker اکانت دوم, X post: #بانه آغاز قیام در ["Beginning of the uprising in #Baneh"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/Ritajoker2/status/1571867224956194817 (in Persian); ; IRN0061, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: AVATODAY, X post: #بانه اعتراضات را به مقابل فرمانداری کشاندند قیام ایران/ مردم ["Iran Uprising/People of #Baneh protested in front of the Office of the County Governor"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/avatoday_news/status/1571879354455494656 (in Persian); IRN0060, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: hra_news, X post: مروز دوشنبه ۲۸ شهریورماه ۱۴۰۱، شماری از شهروندان در مقابل ساختمان فرمانداری بانه در اعتراض به جان باختن مهسا (ژینا) امینی دست به تجمع اعتراضی زدند ["Today, Monday 19 September 2022, a number of citizens held a protest rally in front of the Office of the County Governor of Baneh building to protest the death of Mahsa (Zhina) Amini"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/hra_news/status/1571873181513793541 (in Persian); IRN0056, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran International, X post: معترضان به کشته شدن مهسا امینی در بانه، روسری‌های خود را آتش زدند ["Protesters in Baneh, demonstrating against the killing of Mahsa Amini, set their headscarves on fire"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1571907830784921603 (in Persian).

676. IRN0056, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran International, X post: معترضان به کشته شدن مهسا امینی در بانه، روسری‌های خود را آتش زدند ["Protesters in Baneh, demonstrating against the killing of Mahsa Amini, set their headscarves on fire"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1571907830784921603 (in Persian).



A still from a video published on 20 September 2022 showing plain-clothes agents, uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA, and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA carrying firearms. The yellow frame highlights an agent from the Prevention Police of FARAJA in a light green shirt at the moment he shoots his firearm towards targets to the right of the screen. The still captures the exact moment the trigger is pulled, as it shows the muzzle flash emitted as the shots are fired. © Private

Shahed recalled that gunshots reverberated through the air in Baneh from around 8pm to midnight that evening. He reported that the extensive use of metal pellets from distances as short as 10m away from protesters resulted in injuries to numerous men, women and children, including on their faces, chests, stomachs, backs and legs. He mentioned a case where a woman suffered serious injuries after metal pellets became lodged dangerously close to her spinal column. Due to fears of arrest, the woman refused to go to a hospital and instead went to a private clinic, which was not equipped to treat her. Amnesty International has no further information on the fate of the woman.

Shahed added that, after midnight, when the protesters dispersed, he saw a significant number of plain-clothes agents stationed in the vicinity of the Office of the County Governor. The agents, who wore masks, were equipped with shields, batons and firearms. According to Shahed, the authorities also positioned in the surrounding streets four vehicles bearing the insignia of the IRGC and equipped with DShK heavy machine guns.

According to reports from human rights groups and independent media based outside Iran, in the weeks following 19 September 2022, neighbourhood-level protests persisted in Baneh and continued to be met with unlawful use of force, including through the use of firearms.[677]

A video published on 20 September 2022 analysed by Amnesty International shows plain-clothes agents and uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA carrying firearms, including shotguns and AK-pattern rifles.[678] One of the agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA, who is wearing a light green shirt, raises, aims and shoots his firearm multiple times.

The Persian Service of the BBC (BBC Persian) also published a video on 13 October 2022, which it said was filmed the same day in Baneh a day earlier, which shows a heavy machine gun mounted on a

677. See, for example, BBC Persian, اعتراضات ایران؛ شهروندان برای حمایت از سنندج به خیابان‌ها آمدند ["Iran protests: Citizens take to the streets to support Sanandaj"], 13 October 2022, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-63237892 (in Persian); Kurdistan Human Rights Network, اعتراضات سراسری وارد سومین هفته شد؛ کشته شدن دست‌کم ۲۰ معترض با تیراندازی نیروهای نظامی و زخمی شدن بیش از ۴۹۰ نفر ["Nationwide protests enter third week: At least 20 protesters killed by military gunfire and over 490 injured"], 2 October 2022, https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/fa/news-fa/freedom-fa/freedom-of-expression-fa/2022/10/02/p19289 (in Persian); Kurdistan Human Rights Network, یک هفته اعتراضات مردمی به قتل مهسا امینی در شهرهای کردستان؛ کشته شدن دست‌کم ۱۷ معترض، زخمی شدن حداقل ۴۳۵ نفر و بازداشت دست‌کم ۵۷۰ نفر ["One week of public protests over Mahsa Amini's death in Kurdistan's cities: At least 17 protesters killed, minimum 435 injured, and at least 570 arrested"], 25 September 2022, https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/fa/news-fa/freedom-fa/freedom-of-expression-fa/2022/09/25/p19215 (in Persian).

678. IRN0057, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: hamid mutasher, X post: الان اشتباكات مسلحه لاول مره فی مدینة بانه الباسله ["Now, armed clashes for the first time in the brave city of Baneh"], 20 September 2022, https://x.com/HamedMusher/status/1572314846833557509 (in Persian).

pickup truck pursuing fleeing protesters, while simultaneously firing at them with rifles.[679] Multiple sounds of gunshots are audible.

6.5.2 PROTESTS ON 27-28 OCTOBER 2022

The security forces' crackdown on protests in Baneh reached its peak on 27 October 2022. Between 26-28 October 2022, protests resurged in many cities to mark the 40th day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. An eyewitness interviewed by Amnesty International, Shahed, told the organization that in Baneh, from the morning of 27 October 2022, security forces and armoured vehicles were extensively deployed across the city, including on side streets. Shahed recalled that the security forces included agents from the Anti-Riot Battalions and the Anti-Terror Special Forces (known by their Persian acronym, NOPO) of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, identified by the insignia on their uniforms, and IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij Battalions. He also recalled seeing several armoured vehicles bearing the NOPO insignia.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, at around 2pm, scores of protesters gathered in Hamzeh Abad Square, near an area known as Shahrak-e Towhid, with the intention of marching along Azadi Boulevard (also known as Varzesh Boulevard) to reach 15 Khordad Park. However, security forces obstructed them and unlawfully used firearms to disperse them. Shahed reported that, for hours, the city reverberated with the sound of gunfire:

> **"FARAJA agents and IRGC agents descended upon the protesters and unleashed a barrage of gunfire on the crowd. The police fired shotguns while the IRGC agents fired both shotguns and Kalashnikov rifles, raining down bullets upon anyone who crossed their path."**

Shahed noted that some IRGC agents in the back of pickup Toyota vans indiscriminately fired their weapons as they advanced towards protesters. He added that agents from the IRGC's Basij Battalions on motorcycles chased protesters while firing at them as they fled into side streets or took refuge in shops. He reported the account of a shop owner, who said that several IRGC agents carrying shotguns arrived at his shop where protesters had sought refuge, pushed their shotguns through the blinds of the shop front and fired. As a result, more than 20 people inside were injured. Shahed said that he remained in touch with some of those who were injured and that, months later, some of them were still having surgery and other medical care for their injuries.

Shahed also mentioned the case of a bystander, Shahab, who was struck in the leg by a bullet fired from an AK-pattern rifle while he was on his way to work on Azadi Boulevard. Shahab told Shahed that, upon falling to the ground, several agents, who wore green camouflage uniforms bearing the insignia of the IRGC on their uniform sleeves, black face masks and protective helmets, surrounded him. Shahed stated that the attire of the agents, as described by Shahab, indicates that they were from the Basij battalions of the IRGC. Based on his training during compulsory military service, he believed that the agents carried AK-pattern rifles and pepper ball-pattern guns. One of the agents placed his rifle against Shahab's forehead, threatening to pull the trigger. He recounted how Shahab, pleading for his life, said that he was not a protester and was returning from work. The agents ended their attack after seeing the man had his work tools with him and left.

Amnesty International verified a video published online on 28 October 2022 that captures the unlawful use of an AK-pattern rifle by the security forces on Ghaderkhanzadeh Street, located a block away from

679. IRN0058, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: See video at BBC Persian, Telegram post: ویدیویی از بانه به دست بی‌بی‌سی رسیده که نشان می‌دهد معترضان در خیابانی در حال فرار از نیروهای امنیتی هستند ["A video from Baneh has been obtained by BBC, showing protesters fleeing from security forces in a street"], 13 October 2022, https://t.me/bbcpersian/146854 (in Persian).

Azadi Boulevard.[680] While the video likely shows warning shots, AK-pattern rifles are lethal weapons that have no lawful use in policing contexts. Warning shots using lethal ammunition in crowded civilian areas are inherently dangerous.[681] Shahed and Kurdpa, who received the video from an informed source in Iran, confirmed to Amnesty International that the video relates to the protest crackdown on 27 October 2022. At least two members of the security forces are seen firing towards off-screen targets. In the same video, several members of the security forces, some in plain clothes and others in uniforms belonging to the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, are seen carrying an Akkar Karatay 612 shotgun[682] and what seems to be a kinetic impact launcher.[683] What sound like gunshots can be heard in the background throughout the video.

680. See IRN0059, video on file with Amnesty International and available at:VOA Persian, شلیک‌های پیاپی ماموران و لباس شخصی‌ها در اعتراضات بانه ["Continuous gunfire by security forces and plain-clothes agents during the protests in Baneh"], 28 October 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhRabM-ijCE (in Persian).

681. See section 4.3.

682. Akkar is a small arms manufacturing company based in Turkey. It equips Iranian security forces with various items, including Akkar Karatay 612HD shotguns. See Iran Wire, "Special report: What equipment is used to suppress Iran protests, which companies provides them?", 7 November 2022, https://iranwire.com/en/politics/109507-from-armored-vehicles-to-kalashnikovs-equipment-used-to-suppress-iran-protests

683. Kinetic impact launchers, commonly known as "rubber bullet launchers", are used by police forces around the world in protests or demonstration settings and are consider less lethal weapons if used properly.



Three stills from a video filmed in Ghaderkhanzadeh Street on 27 October 2022 capturing several members of the security forces, some in plain clothes and others in uniforms belonging to the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, carrying an Akkar Karatay 612 shotgun and what seems to be a kinetic impact launcher, highlighted by the yellow frames © Private

FEREYDOON FARAJI



Fereydoon Faraji © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Fereydoon Faraji, a 27-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 27 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Baneh.

Shahed, an informed source in Baneh, told Amnesty International that, according to information directly received from an eyewitness, Fereydoon Faraji was struck by a bullet when he peered out of a window at his place of work to observe the shootings on Azadi Boulevard. The incident took place at Soushian pizzeria, at the intersection of Azadi Boulevard and Himan Boulevard, where Fereydoon Faraji worked as a cook.

Shahed spoke to an eyewitness present inside the pizzeria at the time of the shooting, who said the incident unfolded abruptly and shocked everyone. Initially, people in the pizzeria thought Fereydoon Faraji had fainted, but soon saw blood spilling onto the ground. As people began to scream, several IRGC agents, wearing face masks, entered the pizzeria and took away Fereydoon Faraji's body.

According to information provided by another informed source in Iran, Mahmoud, the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran, the state forensic institute, told Fereydoon Faraji's family that the bullet had struck him in the heart.

Shahed told Amnesty International that, on 27 October 2022, a group of protesters gathered in Showra Square near Police Station 12 and intended to march from there to 15 Khordad Park. According to eyewitnesses he spoke to, the security forces, including IRGC agents, used firearms to disperse the protesters and then drove into nearby residential side streets to pursue them. This is where IRGC agents unlawfully killed Motaleb Saeed Peiro.

MOTALEB SAEED PEIRO



Motaleb Saeed Peiro © Private

Motaleb Saeed Peiro, a 40-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, was killed on 27 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Baneh.

Amnesty International analysed CCTV footage from cameras that captured his killing in his car.[684] It shows two pickup trucks carrying armed agents pulling up alongside his car. Four plain-clothes agents can be seen in the leading vehicle, a white pickup truck. One agent, holding a shotgun, is standing in the truck bed, while three others emerge from the rear doors of the cabin. One of them, carrying a large stick, runs towards the front of the truck; the other two, one with a stick and the other with a shotgun, rush towards Motaleb Saeed Peiro's car.

684. Sky News, "Iran protests: Who killed this man? CCTV offers vital evidence of lethal attack", 24 November 2022, https://news.sky.com/story/iran-protests-who-killed-this-man-cctv-offers-vital-evidence-of-lethal-attack-12748042

The second vehicle, a beige Toyota pickup truck carries seven agents in the truck bed. Two of them are wearing a uniform - one is wearing the green camouflage uniform and helmet typically worn by the Basij battalions of the IRGC, and another is in the brown camouflage uniform worn by IRGC agents, without protective helmet. Both of the uniformed agents carry shotguns and at least the one with a helmet is equipped with an AK-pattern rifle. Four are in plain clothes but wearing protective helmets. One is in plain clothes without any protective gear.



Three stills from a video capturing the fatal attack on Motaleb Saeed Peiro. In the first image, two pickup trucks belonging to the security forces are seen. The white car next to the white Toyota Hilux belongs to Motaleb Saeed Peiro, who is inside the car. The yellow frame highlights a plain-clothes agent with a stick about to smash the car windows. The yellow frame in the second image highlights two plain-clothes agents raising their firearms before using them to shoot and kill Motaleb Saeed Peiro. The yellow frame in the third image highlights the impact on the rear window from it being smashed by a stick and shot at by firearms. © Private

The footage shows the armed agents in the leading vehicle launching an attack on Motaleb Saeed Peiro. Shahed identified for Amnesty International the location as a residential street near Showra

Square and Police Station 12, where protesters had earlier come under fire and fled into side streets, pursued by IRGC agents. Shahed said that the CCTV footage was captured by the cameras of a shop that Motaleb Saeed Peiro had left just before he encountered the IRGC agents.

In the footage, the plain-clothes agent in the truck bed of the white Toyota, is loading his firearm as he approaches Motaleb Saeed Peiro. When Motaleb Saeed Peiro sees the agent lifting his firearm and aiming, he quickly enters his car. A second plain-clothes agent jumps out of the back cabin of the white Toyota and smashes the windows of his car using a stick. A third plain-clothes agent leaves the white Toyota and aims a firearm at Motaleb Saeed Peiro's car. As Motaleb Saeed Peiro attempts to drive away, the two armed agents fire at him and his car. One of the plain-clothes agents shoots into the back window.

As the car moves away, the agents who had jumped out of the white Toyota continue the assault. The other agent, who holds a stick, tries to continue striking Motaleb Saeed Peiro's car as he drives off.

The CCTV footage shows that, after Motaleb Saeed Peiro drives away, some of the plain-clothes agents in the white Toyota smash a parked car with their sticks for unclear reasons. The agents in the beige Toyota behind trail them, watching the scene unfold. After this, both vehicles are driving away.

Rahim, a relative of Motaleb Saeed Peiro outside Iran, told Amnesty International that Motaleb Saeed Peiro managed to reach his home, around 250m away. He was taken to a hospital where he died shortly afterwards. Amnesty International reviewed CCTV footage that shows several individuals taking Motaleb Saeed Peiro out of his car before he was transferred to the hospital. The footage was widely shared by human rights defenders on social media and covered by Sky News in a piece focused on the killing of Motaleb Saeed Peiro.[685]

Rahim shared with Amnesty International a graphic photograph showing a large shotgun wound, including what appears to be a large hole, on the left side of Motaleb Saeed Peiro's back, and a video showing him lying lifeless on a hospital bed, with blood-soaked sheets beneath his left shoulder.[686] In the footage, his distressed wife can be seen kissing and embracing him while crying.

The independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International examined this audiovisual evidence and the CCTV footage and found that on the left side of his upper back at the level of the armpit is a large oval shotgun wound, about 10cm by 6 cm in size, with ragged edges and a few surrounding satellite pellet injuries close by. The wound is aligned obliquely, passing from the level of the armpit downwards and to the right. The wound is entirely in keeping with the victim being the driver of a left-hand drive vehicle and being shot at close range by a person standing in the back of a pickup truck alongside him, as seen in the video. Later shots fired at the vehicle through the rear window do not appear to have struck him.

The burial certificate of Motaleb Saeed Peiro, reviewed by Amnesty International, indicates that his death resulted from "extensive injuries and tears in his left lung, heart and abdominal area" caused by "being struck by fast-moving projectiles on the left side of his back".

The death of Saeed Motaleb Peiro was followed by the unlawful killing of a relative of his, **Dastan Rasoul**, the following day, 28 October 2022, near the village of Choman, in Baneh county.

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685. Sky News, "Iran protests: Who killed this man? CCTV offers vital evidence of lethal attack", 24 November 2022, https://news.sky.com/story/iran-protests-who-killed-this-man-cctv-offers-vital-evidence-of-lethal-attack-12748042
686. IRN0171, video on file with Amnesty International.

DASTAN RASOUL



Dastan Rasoul © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Dastan Rasoul, a 31-year-old Iraqi national, on 28 October 2022 near the village of Choman in the context of the violent militarized crackdown on protests.

IRGC agents shot Dastan Rasoul while he was walking through an unofficial but commonly used Iran-Iraq border crossing point near Choman. He was enroute to attend the memorial ceremony of Motaleb Saeed Peiro in the village.

Shahed spoke to eyewitnesses, who said Dastan Rasoul died as a result of gunshot wounds to his chest, and that another man accompanying him sustained gunshot wounds to his thigh. Shahed said that the men came under fire near a shallow river that serves as a natural boundary between Iran and Iraq. It is common for people from both sides to wade through this river without any response from the authorities. However, according to Shahed, on this occasion, amid unrest in Baneh and the funeral in Choman for Motaleb Saeed Peiro, the IRGC agents fired at anyone attempting to cross the border.

Shahed told Amnesty International that mourners in Choman came to the scene of the incident after they heard gunshots and took Dastan Rasoul to the village's mosque. Several hours later, the then county governor of Baneh, Kamal Khedry, and several other officials, arrived at the village and authorized the transfer of Dastan Rasoul's body to Iraq the same evening.

6.5.3 PROTESTS ON 17 NOVEMBER 2022

As in many other cities throughout Iran, further protests gripped Baneh on 17 November 2022 to mark the three-year anniversary of the protest killings of November 2019. Shahed told Amnesty International that, during the day, people took to the streets around Farmandari Square and other areas. However, the protests remained fragmented and quickly dissipated due to the heavy presence of security forces throughout the city, which effectively hindered any large protests from forming.

According to Shahed, on the evening of 17 November 2022, a militarized environment prevailed in Baneh, with security forces establishing numerous checkpoints throughout the city and opening fire on cars. In this context, **Asoo Ghaderi** was shot and killed while travelling in his car.

ASOO GHADERI



Asoo Ghaderi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Asoo Ghaderi, a 26-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 in Baneh. Shahed told Amnesty International that security forces opened fire on a car that Asoo Ghaderi was driving after he failed to comply with a stop order. According to Shahed, the incident happened near Police Station 12, which had been a site of protests in previous weeks and months.

BBC Persian reported that Asoo Ghaderi was struck by three live bullets and aired a clip indicating that he sustained head injuries. The BBC further aired an audio statement from Asoo Ghaderi's brother Shahram indicating that the authorities had sought to justify the shooting by claiming that Asoo Ghaderi was carrying weapons and munitions in his car but did not provide any evidence of this claim.

6.6 DEHGOLAN

Similar to other cities in Kurdistan province, Dehgolan, which had a population of 64,015 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[687] was first gripped by major protests on the evening of 19 September 2022. On this date, security forces unlawfully killed a protester **Reza Lotfi**. Two months later, on 19 November, another protester, **Mohsen Niazi**, was unlawfully killed by the security forces during violent protest dispersals.

6.6.1 PROTESTS ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

The city of Dehgolan was first gripped by protests on 19 September 2022, which marked three days following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. A protester, Shabnam, told Amnesty International that, at around 6pm that day, she joined thousands of women, men and children who gathered near Moallem Square in peaceful protests. Shabnam recalled the heavy presence of security forces, who aggressively ordered the protesters to disperse. The security forces included uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, and plain-clothes agents.

687. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).



An image taken in Dehgolan on 19 September 2022, capturing the security forces deployed to repress the protests. The agents' uniforms indicate that they belong to the Prevention Police of FARAJA, including its Assistance Cohorts. © Private

Shabnam described seeing armed agents in uniforms and protective gear positioned every one or two metres in the streets leading to Moallem Square. She noted that many of the agents had concealed their faces with masks.

According to Shabnam, from around 7.30pm, as the protesters defied dispersal orders, security forces, including agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, fired lethal ammunition into the air, and then towards the crowd.

Shabnam noted that this provoked the protesters, leading some to throw stones or vandalize banks. She said that, due to her health situation, she felt compelled to return home once the shooting started. For the next several hours until around 1am, she remembered hearing sounds of gunfire.

REZA LOTFI



Reza Lotfi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Reza Lotfi, a 25-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 19 September 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Dehgolan.

According to an informed source, Destan, Reza Lotfi participated in the protests during the day on 19 September and then went home, where he stayed for several hours before leaving again sometime in the evening to rejoin the protests, which were taking place in Moallem Square in the centre of the city. Destan reported that security forces, including uniformed agents from FARAJA and the IRGC and plain-clothes agents, were present and began to violently crackdown on the protests between 7.30pm and 8pm, causing some protesters to disperse.

According to information obtained by Destan from protesters present, plain-clothes agents chased Reza Lotfi into the side streets south of Moallem Square. As Reza Lotfi ascended a set of steps in an alley, heading towards a main road, an agent positioned across the street shot him from behind with an assault rifle. He sustained gunshot wounds to his torso and died within minutes. Local residents transported him to a hospital in Dehgolan, but he was pronounced dead shortly thereafter.

According to information obtained by Shabnam from fellow protesters, Reza Lotfi was shot by an IRGC agent.

Shabnam told Amnesty International that, in the following days, the climate in Dehgolan became militarized, with security forces continuing to resort to firearms unlawfully to suppress and disperse protests immediately after their formation. She detailed how security forces, including agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, routinely chased protesters as they fled into residential side streets, while firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets at protesters from close range, as well as extensive amounts of tear gas. Shabnam noted that tear gas was used so extensively that it infiltrated people's homes.[688] She recounted fainting inside her house at one point due to exposure to tear gas. Additionally, she noted that security forces, including agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, damaged doors and smashed windows of homes that were left open to assist protesters in their escape.

Shabnam recalled the heavy presence of black armoured vehicles belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, which regularly patrolled the streets. She remembered on at least one occasion witnessing a pickup truck equipped with a mounted machine gun patrolling Esteghlal Street.

Another protester, Shervin, shared a similar account about the crackdown that persisted in the following days. He told Amnesty International that, during the evening of 21 September 2022, security forces, including uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and plain-clothes agents, subjected protesters on their way to a memorial ceremony for Reza Lotfi to beatings and violent arrests.

Shervin shared with Amnesty International a photograph which he said was taken that evening. They show three plain-clothes agents and an agent from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in the back of a vehicle belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. Shervin said that the photograph was taken as the agents violently arrested a man, placed him on the floor in the back of the vehicle and tortured him, including through beatings with batons and electric shocks. The arrested man is not visible in the photograph. Shervin stated that he could identify two of the plain-clothes agents by name – one by both his first and last name and the other by his last name only. He said they were affiliated with FARAJA and noted the senior role held by one of them. The details of these officials are on file with Amnesty International.

Amnesty International analysed four videos filmed in Dehgolan and published in late September and October 2022 that support the eyewitness accounts.

One video, posted online on 20 September 2022, shows at least three black vehicles belonging to the security forces moving along a road in the centre of Dehgolan.[689] One of the vehicles is a pickup truck carrying multiple members of the security forces in uniforms and helmets in the back. Amnesty International was not able to discern the insignia on the vehicles.

Another video, published online on 1 October 2022, shows six members of the security forces, four in uniforms and protective gear that appear to belong to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and two in the

688. See section 4.3 on international law and standards that relates to the use of tear gas.
689. IRN0064, video on file with Amnesty International.

uniform of the Prevention Police of FARAJA.[690] One of the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA is walking in a seemingly casual manner and firing what appears to be a shotgun twice at off-camera targets.



A still from a video published online on 20 September 2022 showing three black vehicles belonging to the security forces in Dehgolan. One of the vehicles is carrying members of the security forces in uniforms and helmets in the back. © Private



A still from a video published online on 1 October 2022 showing members of the security forces in Dehgolan, some in uniforms and protective gear that appear to belong to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and two in uniforms belonging to the Prevention Police of FARAJA. The yellow frame highlights one of the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA raising what appears to be a shotgun and firing twice at off-camera targets. © Private

690. IRN0065, video on file with Amnesty International.

A third video, published online on 1 October 2022, records the sound of continuous gunfire as unarmed protesters walk in different directions.[691]

Another video published online on 1 October 2022 shows one plain-clothes agent carrying a baton.[692] In the same video, an IRGC agent dressed in a beige camouflage uniform and a mask covering his face carries an AK-pattern rifle. The video shows him raising the AK-pattern rifle and aiming it in a manner suggesting he is about to fire. The video has no sound.



A still from a video published online on 1 October 2022 showing an IRGC agent in Dehgolan wearing a beige camouflage uniform and mask and carrying an AK-pattern rifle. In the video, he raises the firearm in a manner suggesting he is about to shoot. © Private

Shabnam told Amnesty International that in late October and early November 2022, security forces were positioned on the rooftops of several buildings overlooking the courtyard of the Rastegaran religious school, in which armoured vehicles had been parked and which security forces frequented. Shabnam also said that, for a period in late October and early November 2022, an armed agent was stationed on the rooftop of the residence of the janitor of Hajar school for girls. Shabnam said that this was intended to intimidate schoolgirls who were active in the protests.

6.6.2 PROTESTS ON 20 NOVEMBER 2022

Protests in Dehgolan surged on 19 and 20 November 2022 to mark the anniversary of the protest killings of November 2019 as well as in solidarity with the people of Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, who had endured a deadly crackdown on protests in the preceding days.[693]

691. IRN0066, video on file with Amnesty International.
692. IRN0067, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: sarahramani, X post: کردستان دهگلان تیراندازی مستقیم مزدوران خودفروخته رژیم به سمت مردم شنبه یکم اکتبر #مهسا_امینی #اعتصابات_سراسری ["Kurdistan Dehgolan direct shooting by the regime's sold-out mercenaries at the people Saturday 1 October"], 1 October 2022, https://x.com/sarahramani/status/1576163987049193472 (in Persian).
693. See section 8.3.3.

According to eyewitness accounts obtained by Amnesty International, from around 11am on 20 November 2022, protesters gathered on Herfeyee Street near Imam Square. The security forces, including plain-clothes agents and uniformed IRGC agents, fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse the protesters, injuring many people.

Amnesty International reviewed a video, published online on 20 November 2022, which shows over a dozen men in plain clothes or black uniforms and helmets walking on a street.[694] The individual filming says that the men in plain clothes are agents. Some of the agents are carrying firearms. At least 13 shots can be heard, one after the other. One woman who is carrying a small child and turns around and walks in the opposite direction, away from the agents amid the sound of gunfire. When posting the video online, Hengaw, a Kurdish human rights group based outside Iran, said that the video captured an attack by plain-clothes agents on a group of schoolchildren in Dehgolan.[695] In the video, two schoolgirls carrying backpacks are running along the pavement amid sounds of gunfire.

During this crackdown, the security forces unlawfully killed **Mohsen Niazi** after he attempted to evade arrest.

MOHSEN NIAZI



Mohsen Niazi © Private

Mohsen Niazi, a 33-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, was unlawfully killed on 20 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Dehgolan.

Two protesters, Arsalan and Shabnam, told Amnesty International that Mohsen Niazi was among the protesters who gathered near Imam Square. They recalled that, on that day, security forces, including plain-clothes and IRGC agents, repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse demonstrations and pursued fleeing protesters to carry out arrests.

Arsalan and Shabnam told Amnesty International that they were just metres from Imam Square, where Mohsen Niazi was shot, and could hear gunshots. According to information they obtained from eyewitnesses, a plain-clothes agent grabbed Mohsen Niazi by his arm, attempting to arrest him, but he managed to escape. Arsalan and Shabnam learned that Mohsen Niazi, along with dozens of other fleeing protesters, rushed towards the entrance of the nearby Shohada Hospital in search of refuge. However, a security official from the hospital's intelligence office, responsible for guarding the entrance, shut the gate after some protesters entered the hospital, leaving Mohsen Niazi and others outside. As described by the eyewitnesses to Arsalan, the plain-clothes agent pursuing Mohsen Niazi then shot him in the back with a handgun from a distance of less than 1.5m.

Arsalan and Shabnam told Amnesty International that, for about 10 minutes after Mohsen Niazi collapsed, security forces stood above him, leaving him bleeding and unattended. Their intimidating presence deterred onlookers from approaching. According to Shabnam, the security forces even fired shotguns towards several medical professionals who attempted to intervene and provide first aid. Eventually, the security forces left, allowing people to take Mohsen Niazi to

694. IRN0068, video on file with Amnesty International.
695. IRN0427, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: حمله نیروهای مسلح و لباس شخصی جمهوری اسلامی به دانش آموزان مقطع دبیرستان در شهر دهگلان (دیولان) و تیراندازی به سوی آنها ["Attack by armed forces and plain-clothes agents of the Islamic Republic on high school students in the city of Dehgolan (Diolan), opening fire on them"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/hengawo/status/1594253016194240513?s=46&t=xfQLdRkJogx-h35eaA3ISw (in Persian).

the hospital. Amnesty International understands that, due to a lack of supplies, Mohsen Niazi was transferred that evening to Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj, 71km away. He died shortly after arriving there.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed two photographs of Mohsen Niazi. The first photograph is from the immediate aftermath of the shooting and shows the skin of Mohsen Niazi's exposed lower back, as well as heavily bloodied clothing higher up on the back. The second photograph shows his body sometime after death. He has a medical dressing over the front of the abdomen suggesting that medical personnel had conducted a laparotomy (a cut in the abdomen) to perform emergency abdominal surgery.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, the patten of security forces unlawfully using firearms to suppress protests in Dehgolan continued throughout late November and into early December 2022. The crackdown was accompanied by mass arbitrary arrests carried out violently, both during protests and in their aftermath.

Shabnam told Amnesty International that the protests began to subside after the death in custody of a protester, Shadman Ahmadi, on 8 December 2022, amid credible reports by human rights groups and independent Persian-language media outlets that his death followed torture and other ill-treatment in detention.[696]

Shabnam said that, for months afterwards, gatherings to mourn Shadman Ahmadi's death took place almost every Thursday in Dehgolan cemetery. She said that the security forces often attacked the mourners and protesters, firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets and targeting those identified as having participated in the gatherings for arbitrary arrests and detention later at night or in the following days.

6.7 KAMYARAN

Eyewitness accounts and media reports indicate that Kamyaran, which had a population of 102,856 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[697] was gripped by protests from 19 September 2022.[698] Ramin, a protester, told Amnesty International that, during the first evening of the protests, which took place primarily on Beheshti Street near Emam Shafeyee Square, the security forces used

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696. See, for example, Kurdpa Human Rights Organization, آذر ۱۴۰۲؛ سالگرد قتل حکومتی شادمان احمدی از جانباختگان خیزش انقلابی ژن، ژیان، ئازادی در دهگلان زیر شکنجه نهادهای امنیتی ["8 December 2023: Anniversary of the state killing of Shadman Ahmadi, one of the victims of the revolutionary uprising 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadi,' who died under torture by security agencies in Dehgolan"], 8 December 2023, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/2023/12/28 (in Persian); IranWire, شادمَن احمدی، معترضی که تنها ۴ ساعت پس از بازداشت جان باخت ["Shadman Ahmadi, a protester who lost his life just 4 hours after his arrest"], 12 January 2023, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/112530--شادمان-احمدی (in Persian); BBC Persian, معترضی-که-تنها-۴-ساعت-پس-از-بازداشت-جان-باخت اعتراضات ایران؛ واکنش داخلی و بین‌المللی به اعدام محسن شکاری ادامه دارد ["Iran protests; Domestic and international reactions to the execution of Mohsen Shekari continue"], https://www.bbc.com/persian/live/63912534 (in Persian); Radio Farda, گزارش‌ها درباره «کشته‌شدن» شادمان احمدی، از بازداشت‌شدگان اعتراضات، در بازداشتگاه کلانتری دهگلان ["Reports on the 'killing' of Shadman Ahmadi, a detainee from the protests, in the detention centre of Dehgolan Police Station"], 9 December 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/shadaman-ahmadi-killed-kurdistan/32168746.html (in Persian); HENGAW Organization for Human Rights, شادمان احمدی جوان اهل دهگلان زیر شکنجه جانباخت ["Shadman Ahmadi, a young man from Dehloran, died under torture"], 8 December 2022, https://hengaw.net/fa/news/archive/57410 (in Persian).

697. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).

698. Kurdistan Human Rights Network, اعتراضات سراسری وارد سومین هفته شد؛ کشته شدن دست‌کم ۲۰ معترض با تیراندازی نیروهای نظامی و زخمی شدن بیش از ۴۹۰ نفر ["Nationwide protests enter third week; at least 20 protesters killed by military gunfire and over 490 injured"], 2 October 2022, https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/fa/news-fa/freedom-fa/freedom-of-expression-fa/2022/10/02/p19289 (in Persian); Kurdistan Human Rights Network, یک هفته اعتراضات مردمی به قتل مهسا امینی در شهرهای کردستان؛ کشته شدن دست‌کم ۱۷ معترض، زخمی شدن حداقل ۴۳۵ نفر و بازداشت دست‌کم ۵۷۰ نفر ["One week of public protests over Mahsa Amini's death in Kurdistan cities; at least 17 protesters killed, minimum 435 injured, and at least 570 arrested"], 25 September 2022, https://kurdistanhumanrights.org/fa/news-fa/freedom-fa/freedom-of-expression-fa/2022/09/25/p19215 (in Persian).

tear gas extensively to scatter the protesters.[699] Ramin noted that the protesters were overwhelmingly peaceful, though some hurled stones towards the security forces after IRGC agents verbally issued dispersal orders. Ramin added that the security forces, including agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions, chased protesters into residential side streets while persistently firing tear gas: "They had fired such a massive amount of tear gas that people could hardly breathe inside their houses. On that night, I saw an individual who had been affected by tear gas intoxication."

Amnesty International verified a video, first published online on the evening of 19 September 2022, which captures the brutality of the security forces, including agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions wearing uniforms and protective gear, as well as plain-clothes agents, repeatedly striking unarmed protesters using batons on Towhid Street (also known as 12 Metri Street).[700] The protesters, who don't seem to pose any immediate threat to the security forces, are using their hands to protect their faces and trying to walk away but are restrained by the agents. In the video, three protesters can be seen enduring repeated strikes across their body, neck, arms and legs while on the ground and being prevented from standing up. At one point, a protester is pursued, restrained and beaten repeatedly by three agents.



Four stills from a video published online on 19 September 2022 showing uniformed agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, as well as plain-clothes agents, beating protesters with batons in Kamyaran. Top left: The two yellow frames highlight multiple agents beating protesters who are on the ground. Top right and bottom left: The yellow frames highlight a plain-clothes agent pursuing a fleeing protester in a white top and beating him with a baton. Bottom right: The yellow frame highlights other agents beating the protester in the white top, even as he raises his arms in a gesture to signal that he does not pose a threat. © Private

Ramin stated that, in the following days and weeks, the crackdown intensified, with the security forces frequently firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets toward the protesters. He added that, on a few occasions, the security forces also fired assault rifles. According to Ramin, in Kamyaran, the crackdowns were carried out primarily by IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions.

699. See section 4.3 on standards around the use of tear gas.
700. IRN0069, video on file with Amnesty International.

The peak of the protests in Kamyaran was on 15 and 16 November 2022 to commemorate the protest killings of November 2019. According to eyewitness accounts and video footage reviewed by Amnesty International, during these two days, the security forces fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets toward the protesters. Ten videos analysed by the organization show the significant presence of security forces in the streets, protesters screaming and running for shelter amid the sound of gunshots, agents beating and violently arresting protesters, and the visible presence of tear gas.[701]

Amnesty International learned that, on 15 November 2022, IRGC agents pursued 17-year-old Mobin Feizy through side streets adjacent to Towhid Street, where the protesters had initially gathered, eventually cornering him in a dead-end street and firing shotguns at his head. The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International medical records which state that numerous metal pellets were seen in the left side of Mobin Feizy's skull, with some having penetrated his brain. The medical records indicate that he underwent at least two surgical operations due to the head injuries. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, Mobin Feizy, who is now outside Iran, continues to suffer from speech difficulties and paralysis in one leg and one hand.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International analysed a photograph taken in the immediate aftermath of the shooting, which the Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with the organization, and a video, which was published online on 15 November 2022.[702] Both the video and the photograph show an injured teenager lying lifeless on the ground with blood on his head, neck and torso. According to the forensic pathologist, the photograph shows a tangential, high-velocity gunshot wound on the left side of his head, within the hairline; the wound extends backwards for around 10cm, exposing a significant amount of brain tissue, fragments of which have adhered to the hair.

The security forces' violent repression of the protests on 15 and 16 November 2022 resulted in the unlawful killing of two individuals – **Foad Mohammadi** and **Borhan Karami**.

FOAD MOHAMMADI



Foad Mohammadi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Foad Mohammadi, a 45-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 15 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Kamyaran.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International from Ramin, a protester, and Saba, another informed source in Iran, Foad Mohammadi was among hundreds of protesters who had gathered on Towhid Street. Ramin recalled that uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions in green camouflage uniforms, as well as plain-clothes agents, advanced towards the protesters from both the front and rear, repeatedly firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets at them. Ramin stated that some agents arrived at the protest site in a vehicle equipped with a water cannon, alighted from it and then started shooting their shotguns.

Ramin told Amnesty International that he was standing in front of a tailor's shop called Milad, approximately 100m from where Foad Mohammadi was shot, when he heard cries that someone

701. IRN0070, IRN0071, IRN0072, IRN0073, IRN0074, IRN0075, IRN0076, IRN0077, IRN0078, IRN0080, videos on file with Amnesty International.
702. IRN0081, video on file with Amnesty International.

had been shot dead. He rushed to the scene. There, he said, a fellow protester informed him that an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions had approached Foad Mohammadi while he was about to throw a car tyre into a fire and shot him in the head from close range. Ramin noted that the protesters had ignited bonfires to counter the effects of tear gas.

Amnesty International analysed a video, which the individual filming says was recorded in Kamyaran on 15 November 2022.[703] Based on information received from Ramin, Saba and a human rights defender with local knowledge, as well as visual clues in the video, Amnesty International verified that the video was filmed on Towhid Street. Ramin and Saba told the organization that the video captured the first moments after Foad Mohammadi was shot. The video shows a chaotic scene with a group of people in distress screaming amid sounds of gunfire. The person filming indicates that an individual has been killed, as the group appears to carry someone away.

Amnesty International reviewed Foad Mohammadi's death certificate, which records his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

BORHAN KARAMI



Borhan Karami © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Borhan Karami, a 32-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 16 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Kamyaran.

Three informed sources in Iran, Ramin, Pardis and Saba, who spoke to eyewitnesses, told Amnesty International that Borhan Karami was among the hundreds of protesters who peacefully took to the streets to mourn and protest the unlawful killing of Foad Mohammadi on the previous day. Saba told Amnesty International that, on the morning of 16 November 2022, hundreds of people gathered in Zarnah Street, where Foad Mohammadi's house is located, in solidarity with his bereaved family. Amnesty International reviewed two videos, posted online on 16 November 2022, which show hundreds of peaceful protesters in Zarnah Street chanting in Kurdish, "Martyr Foad never dies".[704]

The protesters then marched to Kholafaye Rashedin Street in an area known as Farhangsara and gathered near the Office of the Municipality of Kamyaran, located at the intersection of Salahoddin Ayoubi Street and Kholafaye Rashedin Street. Ramin and Saba told Amnesty International that, in response, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA deployed tear gas and fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets. Ramin and Saba said they did not participate in these protests but learned about the security forces' crackdown through their relatives, friends, acquaintances and neighbours who had joined them.

Saba told Amnesty International that numerous people, including children as young as four, were injured by metal pellets in their bodies, including their faces, and that she was aware of at least one

703. IRN0077, video on file with Amnesty International.

704. IRN0433, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran – Campaigns, کامیاران - تظاهرات و تجمع مردم با شعارهای شهید نمیمیرد - ۲۵آبان ["Protests and gatherings of people with the slogan 'A martyr never dies' - 16 November"], 16 November 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5OITV-9Pf4&t=12s (in Persian); IRN0434, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran – Campaigns, کامیاران - جمعیت پرشمار با هزاران زنان و شعارها علیه خامنه‌ای ۲۵ آبان ["Kamyaran – A large crowd, including thousands of women, chanting slogans against Khamenei – 16 November"], 16 November 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdXyYWXQNnU&t=2s (in Persian).

young man who lost sight in an eye due to metal pellets hitting his face. Saba explained that, due to fear of arrest, most people refrained from seeking hospital treatment for their injuries.

Amnesty International analysed five videos published online on 16 November 2022.[705] Their content is consistent with Ramin's and Saba's accounts. They show hundreds of peaceful protesters, including children, men and women, gathered near the Office of the Municipality on Kholafaye Rashedin Street and then running away in fear after repeated gunfire. Clouds of smoke can be seen.

Ramin reported that, later that day, he saw IRGC agents on the rooftop of the Office of the Municipality, presumably to deter further protests there.

Saba recalled that the security forces established a heavy presence on main roads and side streets in central Kamyaran, including on rooftops. According to information obtained by Saba from eyewitnesses, the security forces included agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and IRGC agents, who had concealed their faces with masks and carried AK-pattern rifles.

Saba and Pardis told Amnesty International that later, at around 4pm, a group of protesters, including Borhan Karami, attempted to peacefully regroup on Zarnah Street. Saba said that, this time, the security forces rapidly resorted to firing rifles. These shootings resulted in the unlawful killing of Borhan Karami.

Shortly before Borhan Karami was shot, Ramin drove past Zarnah Street to visit the home of a friend and described a heavy presence of security forces. He reported seeing a group of masked IRGC agents armed with AK-pattern rifles near the intersection of Zarnah Street and Kholafayeh Rashedan Street in front of Molavi Park. He also reported seeing several IRGC agents positioning themselves behind electricity poles or walls and aiming to shoot.

According to information obtained by Pardis and Saba from several eyewitnesses, IRGC agents armed with rifles positioned themselves on the rooftop of a public toilet in Molavi Park. Eyewitnesses reported to Pardis and Saba that the IRGC agents fired several times and that they saw Borhan Karami falling to the ground after being struck with a bullet in his head. Pardis said that the eyewitnesses believed that the IRGC agents singled out Borhan Karami because he was at the front of the crowd, raising his fists and signalling advice to other protesters.

Amnesty International analysed three videos, published online on 16 November 2022, that provide a glimpse into the unlawful killing of Borhan Karami and its aftermath.[706] In all three videos, Borhan Karami can be identified by his clothing and, later, the pattern of his injuries.

In one video, several unarmed protesters, including Borhan Karami, are captured walking and seemingly talking to protesters behind them, seen later in the video.[707] Borhan Karami takes a couple of steps forward and then abruptly collapses as a single loud shot rings out. Some protesters run to him while others scatter as gunshots continue to be fired. In the second video, gunshots can still be heard while Borhan Karami is carried away by protesters.[708] The third video shows him motionless, with blood around his upper torso and face, and being tended to by protesters.[709]

In none of the three videos is there any indication that Borhan Karami or other protesters posed any threat to the security forces or others that warranted the use of lethal force. The independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed the videos and found that his face

705. IRN0076, IRN0075, IRN0072, IRN0074, videos on file with Amnesty International.
706. IRN0080, IRN0078, IRN0082, videos on file with Amnesty International.
707. IRN0080, video on file with Amnesty International.
708. IRN0078, video on file with Amnesty International.
709. IRN0082, video on file with Amnesty International.

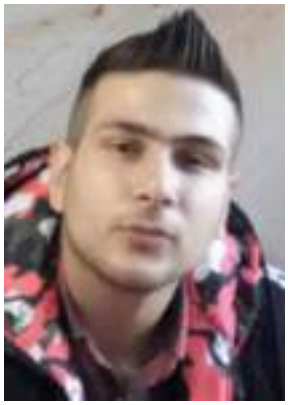
is bloodied as a result of blood flow from the nose. On the right cheek is a barely discernible mark which might represent the entry wound.

The burial certificate of Borhan Karami, reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he died from "damage to brain tissue" due to "a projectile (bullet) striking the head and face (skull)". His death certificate, also reviewed by the organization, records his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

According to Kurdish human rights defenders, in the days following the protests of 15 and 16 November 2022, the security forces maintained a heavy presence in Kamyaran and nearby areas and established numerous security checkpoints. Ramin told Amnesty International that the security forces also regularly patrolled residential neighbourhoods and, if they heard people chanting from inside their houses, would direct tear gas towards the houses.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of a 16-year-old boy, **Reza Kazemi**, on 22 November 2022.

REZA KAZEMI



Reza Kazemi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed **Reza Kazemi**, a 16-year-old boy from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 November 2022, after targeting him for attending protests in the small town of Mouchesh, located in Kamyaran county and approximately 40km from the centre of the county, which is also called Kamyaran.

According to Kurdish journalist Ammar Goli, based outside Iran, who spoke to several informed sources in Iran, Reza Kazemi took part in protests organized by schoolchildren in Mouchesh around two weeks before he was killed. The protests were violently quashed by security forces, who fired metal pellets at protesters.

An informed source in Iran, Behnam, told Amnesty International that following these protests, an IRGC commander and an IRGC agent, both of whose names are on file with Amnesty International, phoned Reza Kazemi and summoned him to an IRGC base, telling him that they had work for him. Behnam said that the two IRGC officials pressured Reza Kazemi to become an informant for the authorities, to report on the identity of the "leaders" of the protests in the town and to give them intelligence about school friends who had also attended the protests. In exchange, they offered him money, but Reza Kazemi refused. According to Behnam, after this, the IRGC officials called him the next day to place more pressure on him to become an informant, but he again refused.

Ammar Goli reported that, on 21 November 2022, Reza Kazemi was out for a drive with two friends when security forces stopped their car at an unofficial checkpoint they had set up on Gayar Road, a rural road between Mouchesh and the village of Gayar. Ammar Goli reported to Amnesty International that the two IRGC officials threatened to kill Reza Kazemi if he did not collaborate with them, but he again refused, pleading for them to leave him alone. According to Ammar Goli, an altercation ensued between Reza Kazemi and the officials, who shot him in his hand, neck and chest, leaving him severely injured, and then departed the scene.

According to Behnam, Reza Kazemi's body was discovered on Gayar Road, approximately 2km from the location where he was initially shot. Several residents found Reza Kazemi severely injured at the side of the road. The residents called for an ambulance, which took Reza Kazemi to Kowsar

Hospital in Sanandaj, where he underwent surgery before going into a coma and subsequently dying from his injuries on 27 November 2022.

Amnesty International analysed a video which was filmed by the residents who found Reza Kazemi and was published online by Ammar Goli on 22 November 2022. The video shows the body of Reza Kazemi motionless on his side in the dark;[710] the back of his body, which is facing the camera, is covered in blood.[711] The man filming the video is heard saying, "The Revolutionary Guards of Mouchesh shot him and killed him."

According to Ammar Goli, following Reza Kazemi's death, officials from the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces[712] interrogated the two friends who were with him on the night he was killed and witnessed the events.

Ammar Goli reported to Amnesty International that Reza Kazemi's family raised with the authorities in December 2022 an official complaint about his killing. Subsequently, the authorities tried to pressure them into withdrawing their complaint, but eventually the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces opened an investigation into his death and the Office of the Military Prosecutor opened a case against two IRGC officials. A first commission investigating the case concluded that the two IRGC officials were not responsible for Reza Kazemi's killing. His family protested this decision, resulting in a second commission investigating the case, which subsequently concluded that the two IRGC officials were responsible. However, since then, the authorities have provided Reza Kazemi's family with no information about the case and have refused to allow their lawyer access to his case files, informing them that the documents related to his case are "confidential".

The security forces continued to maintain a significant presence of security forces in Kamyaran for the rest of November and in December 2022. Amnesty International analysed two videos recorded by the residents of Kamyaran showing the presence of the agents in the streets. In one video, captured by a resident from a car, at least four black vans belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA can be seen driving in the street.[713] Another video, published on 8 December 2022, shows vehicles of the same type stationary at a main intersection on Kurdistan Boulevard.[714]

6.8 MARIWAN

The protests in Mariwan, which had a population of 195,263 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016, began on 19 September 2022 and continued sporadically until the end of December 2022.[715]

A protester interviewed by Amnesty International, Loghman, told the organization how the repression started even before the protests took place. He described how, on 17 September 2022, the day of

710. IRN0435, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: ساعاتی پیش ["A few hours ago, IRGC forces in the city of Mouchesh (Mojzhez), a district of Kamyaran, targeted and shot a 16-year-old youth named Reza Kazemi in the chest"], 22 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1595146967663136769 (in Persian).

711. IRN0083, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: جنایت سپاه در موچش ["IRGC's crime in Mouchesh"], 22 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1595152928570212353 (in Persian).

712. See section 11.2.4.

713. IRN0084, video on file with Amnesty International.

714. IRN0085, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X post: حضور گسترده نیروهای امنیتی در خیابان‌های کامیاران ["Widespread presence of security forces in the streets of Kamyaran"], 8 December 2022, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1600971929871355904 (in Persian).

715. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).

Zhina Mahsa Amini's funeral, significant numbers of agents from the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, among other security forces, descended on the city in an intimidating show of force. Loghman reported that he saw dozens of vehicles belonging to the security forces present in the streets, including trucks carrying water cannons and minibuses carrying agents.

Another eyewitness, Hatem, described to Amnesty International how the security forces created a militarized atmosphere from the first day of the protests, 19 September 2022. He said:

> **"From the very first day, the security forces created a militarized atmosphere. They had firearms. The security forces brought in tanks to intimidate people. They had vehicles with mounted machine guns. They were constantly firing [warning shots] during the first day… On subsequent days they mostly used [shotguns loaded with] metal pellets. I saw security forces firing into the air, resulting in protesters fleeing into side streets. From the first day, I consistently saw snipers on rooftops of buildings, including banks, especially on days when there had been organized public calls for protests."**

Loghman and another protester, Jafar, explained to Amnesty International that the protests began mainly in four areas of Mariwan – Darsiran, Koureyeh Mousavi, Moosk and Sarbaz Square – but quickly expanded to most neighbourhoods in the city, including its outskirts. They described how the main protests usually started in the late afternoon or evening, with protesters chanting, blocking roads and burning tyres at protest sites.

Loghman and Hatem told Amnesty International that, on 19 September 2022, security forces were stationed at various points in the city.

Jafar, a resident of Koureyeh Mousavi, a neighbourhood in the centre of the city, described how at approximately 4-5pm, around dusk, people began to slowly emerge from their homes and congregate around the Behzisti three-way intersection in the same neighbourhood to protest. Security forces extensively deployed tear gas and fired lethal ammunition into the air to disperse the protesters. He said that the security forces present consisted of uniformed FARAJA agents and other agents in uniforms and plain clothes who had firearms such as Kalashnikov rifles and pistols, and patrolled in both vehicles and on foot.

Loghman, who also witnessed the events in Koureyeh Mousavi on 19 September 2022, reported seeing the IRGC firing lethal ammunition in the direction of protesters. He further told Amnesty International that, on multiple occasions during the uprising, he witnessed IRGC and FARAJA agents chasing young protesters and firing lethal ammunition towards them.

Hatem, who was also present during the protests in Koureyeh Mousavi on 19 September 2022, explained that the protests were supposed to start on side streets and converge in Sarbaz Square, but the security forces had closed off the main square and violently dispersed the protesters. Hatem told Amnesty International that the shooting from the security forces, including the IRGC, began at around dusk. He reported witnessing security forces deploying tear gas against protesters and firing lethal ammunition towards homes, including in the direction of individuals watching the protests from their balconies.

Jafar reported to Amnesty International that, after 19 September 2022, security forces, among them the police and the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, were always present in the main areas of the city, often firing lethal ammunition towards protesters. He told the organization:

> **"The security forces had every kind of weapon. They had air rifles that looked like Winchester rifles, regular air rifles – the kind of rifles that fire metal pellets – and Kalashnikovs. The plain-clothes agents**

had pistols. The police [FARAJA] mostly had air rifles. The Basijis [agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions] had batons."

Hatem, Jafar and Loghman all reported hearing heavy firing of weapons during multiple protests throughout the uprising. Loghman reported seeing people, including children, with metal pellet injuries in protests throughout the uprising. He told Amnesty International that, on one occasion, he witnessed IRGC agents on the roof of a house near Buali Hospital, located in the east of the city, as well as multiple vehicles mounted with machine guns and scores of security forces on motorcycles.

Amnesty International analysed 18 videos from Mariwan that were filmed during the uprising and published online showing the heavy presence of security forces, among them uniformed agents from the IRGC, including its Basij Battalions, and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. One video from 21 September 2022 shows security forces arriving in the city in multiple FARAJA vehicles, including regular police cars and vans and trucks belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA carrying agents wearing black uniforms with protective gear.[716]

In other videos from the uprising, the sound of gunshots can be heard, including amid the sight of protesters fleeing.[717] In one video, a protester holds a spent shotgun shell, as well as several spent small arms cartridges, which were likely used in handguns and rifles.[718]



A still taken from a video from the protests in Mariwan in which a protester holds a spent shotgun shell, as well as several spent small arms cartridges © Private

716. IRN0086, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kolbarnews, X post: مانور نیروهای سرکوبگر یگان ویژه و پلیس ضد شورش با ماشین آبپاش در خیابان‌های #مریوان ["A show of force by repressive Special Cohort and anti-riot police with water cannon trucks in the streets of #Mariwan"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1572585991759867910 (in Persian).
717. IRN0087, IRN088, IRN089, IRN090, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0091, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: اعتراضات شبانه در مریوان ["Nighttime protests in Mariwan"], 30 October 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1586662989046120448 (in Persian).
718. IRN0092, video on file with Amnesty International.

6.8.1 PROTESTS ON 1 OCTOBER 2022

According to eyewitnesses Hatem, Jafar and Loghman, on 1 October 2022, security forces fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets and other weapons from multiple directions towards protesters.

Loghman told Amnesty International that security forces maintained a heavy presence across the city and closed off many streets. He reported that, at around 9.30pm, he and a friend who were in a car reached the area of Moosk, in the north-east of the city. There, he witnessed what he described as "crowded chaos", with agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and IRGC agents wielding weapons such as firearms and batons. He described hearing the sound of gunshots being fired from different directions and saw security forces firing into the windows of homes. He told the organization that security forces fired metal pellets at a man in his home, which struck his arm, waist and pelvis, and also fired at his wife, who was standing outside their home, striking her knees and other parts of her legs.

Loghman's account is consistent with that of Jafar, who told the organization that the authorities moved between neighbourhoods, firing sporadically, leaving many individuals with serious injuries from being struck with metal pellets.

Jafar reported witnessing significant numbers of plain-clothes and uniformed agents from the IRGC and FARAJA, including its Special Cohorts, arriving in the area of Koureyeh Mousavi and using firearms against protesters. He described witnessing security forces, including plain-clothes agents, firing directly into side streets where protesters – men, women and children – were gathered to disperse them. Jafar told the organization that, at one point, security forces began firing towards him and other protesters as they were running away and one of the protesters was shot in the back with metal pellets.

Amnesty International analysed one video filmed and published on 1 October 2022 showing a protester with injuries to the back of his legs.[719] The person filming states that the injuries were caused by metal pellets.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of a bystander, **Mokhtar Ahmadi**, who was killed while he was on his way home.

MOKHTAR AHMADI



Mokhtar Ahmadi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed **Mokhtar Ahmadi**, a 37-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 1 October 2022, during a crackdown on protests in Mariwan.

A protester from Mariwan, Loghman, told Amnesty International that Mokhtar Ahmadi was killed near Darayi Square, in the north-west of Mariwan. Loghman reported to the organization that, as he and a friend reached Imam Hussein Square (also known as Baharoshi Square) in the west of Mariwan in their car, they heard the sound of gunshots. Loghman reported that the area was very crowded and chaotic and he heard someone shout from inside another car, "They have killed him." He said that, when they drove towards the Bayou intersection, they learned from individuals they spoke to who were present in the area that a plain-clothes agent

719. IRN0093, video on file with Amnesty International.

wearing a balaclava had shot a man named Mokhtar Ahmadi on a side street between the Bayou intersection and Darayi Square.

In a video recorded during a ceremony marking 40 days following Mokhtar Ahmadi's death at his grave site, published on 10 November 2022, a member of his family describes how he was killed. The family member stated:

"Forty days ago, Mokhtar Ahmadi, a resident of the area of Takieh in Mariwan, was shot and severely injured in Darayi Square during the shootings by the oppressive security forces. He died on the path to freedom before reaching the hospital. In order to receive the body of our dear Mokhtar, [the authorities] forced us to bury him at night and his funeral was carried out in the presence of the security forces."[720]

6.8.2 PROTESTS ON 6 NOVEMBER 2022

The security forces used unlawful force to disperse protesters, as well as mourners, on 6 November 2022, the day of the funeral of Nasrin Ghaderi, a protester who had died in Tehran two days earlier in suspicious circumstances and whose body was returned to her home city for burial.

According to Jafar, who was present at her funeral, which was attended by hundreds of mourners, there was a heavy presence of security forces outside the cemetery where Nasrin Ghaderi's body was buried. Jafar told Amnesty International that, as he was driving away from the cemetery, he saw that the streets were filled with security forces and witnessed many uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA with their vehicles, including motorcycles, heading towards the cemetery. Loghman, who also attended the funeral, reported to Amesty International that he witnessed security forces firing metal pellets towards protesters and mourners after the funeral procession, leading to injuries.

Amnesty International analysed videos published on 6 November 2022 depicting the violence used by security forces against protesters and mourners, including two videos showing protesters fleeing amid the sound of gunshots.[721]

Several videos show the heavy presence of security forces on the streets. One video shows IRGC agents carrying firearms in the street amid black smoke and the sound of gunfire.[722] Another video shows a plain-clothes agent wearing a face mask kneeling on the ground while aiming a pistol towards off-camera targets.[723] He then stands up, retrieves a baton from the ground and begins to walk away. Before leaving the scene, he turns back towards the direction he had been aiming, suddenly drops the baton, raises his arms and again points his pistol in a manner indicating he is about to shoot, before finally walking off.

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720. IRN0441, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran Wire, Facebook post: پیام خانواده مختار احمدی به مردم ایران ["Message from Mokhtar Ahmadi's family to the people of Iran"], 10 November 2022, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=454284820146960 (in Persian).

721. IRN0094, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: مریوان ۱۵ آبان ۱۴۰۱ جنگ و گریز خیابانی مبارزان در مریوان ["Mariwan, 6 November 2022, street fighting and fleeing of fighters in Mariwan"], 6 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1589293196022251520 (in Persian); IRN0095, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: #مریوان مریوان ۱۵ آبان ۱۴۰۱ شلیک مستقیم گلوله‌ی جنگی و ساچمه‌ای به سوی جوانان مبارز در #مریوان."Mariwan, 6 November 2022, direct firing of combat bullets and metal bullets at young fighters in #Mariwan"], 6 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1589306920887730177 (in Persian).

722. IRN0096, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: وضعیت خیابان‌های مریوان و حضور گسترده نیروهای سپاه پاسداران ["Situation of the streets of Mariwan and the widespread presence of IRGC forces"], 6 November 2022 https://x.com/HengawO/status/1589239079740506114 (in Persian).

723. IRN0097, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: مریوان ۱۵ آبان ۱۴۰۱ مزدوران لباس‌شخصی با اسلحه‌ی کمری معترضان را هدف قرار می‌دهند ["Mariwan, 6 November 2022, plain-clothes mercenaries are targeting protesters with handguns"], 6 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1589315287878598656 (in Persian).



A still taken from a video from 6 November 2022 in Mariwan. A plain-clothes agent aims a pistol towards off-screen targets. © Private

7. UNLAWFUL KILLINGS IN KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

> **"The situation resembled a battlefield. We were pursued by uniformed IRGC agents wielding Kalashnikov rifles. At every corner, we sought refuge behind a wall… They followed us… as soon as they spotted us, they unleashed continuous gunfire… Wounded individuals were scattered everywhere."**
>
> Shahram, a protester, describing the crackdown by security forces against protesters in Javanroud on 20 and 21 November 2022

Waves of largely peaceful protests gripped multiple cities in Kermanshah province between 19 September 2022 and the end of December 2022. Amnesty International's research has concluded that security forces unlawfully and persistently used force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter further protests. Through these lethal crackdowns on protests, the security forces unlawfully killed at least 19 protesters and bystanders in five counties across the province during lethal protest dispersals or in areas where there was a militarized presence of security forces following the protests. Across the province, the security forces also inflicted injuries amounting to torture and other ill-treatment on at least hundreds of protesters and bystanders.



Images of victims unlawfully killed by security forces in Kermanshah province during protest dispersals or in militarized areas between 20 September and the end of December 2022. Top row (left to right): Afshin Asham, Bahaoddin Veisi, Reza Shahparnia, Saeed Mohammadi and Masoud Teimouri. Second row from top (left to right): Jamal Azami, Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi, Arian Moridi, Esmail Golanbar and Borhan Eliasi. Third row from top (left to right): Armin Sayadi, Tahsin Miri, Ardalan Ghasemi, Johar Fattahi and Sina Naderi. Bottom row: Minoo Majidi, Iman Mohammadi, Erfan Kakaee and Amirhossein Basati. All photographs © Private

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section provides an overview of the context and circumstances during which at least 19 protesters and bystanders were unlawfully killed during lethal protest dispersals or in areas where there was a militarized presence of security forces immediately following the protests; summarizes the audiovisual evidence analysed by the organization in relation to the crackdown in Kermanshah province; and outlines the institutional affiliations of the various security forces identified by Amnesty International as having been involved in lethal protest dispersals and the types of weapons and munitions they used.

The subsequent five sections document the lethal suppression of protests in the five counties in Kermanshah province where killings took place: Kermanshah, Javanroud, Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Salas-e Babajani and Ghasr-e Shirin. These sections focus on the specific days when unlawful killings took place and include case boxes detailing the causes and circumstances surrounding the death of victims on those days.



Map showing the five counties in Kermanshah province where at least 19 protesters and bystanders were unlawfully killed between 20 September and end of December 2022 during lethal protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. The counties are Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Ghasr-e Shirin, Javanroud, Kermanshah and Salas-e Babajani. © OpenStreetMap contributors

7.1 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

7.1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International concerning the circumstances surrounding the killing of 19 protesters and bystanders, comprising 15 men, one woman and three boys, in Kermanshah province demonstrates that all these killings were unlawful in nature. Security forces did not use firearms and other means of lethal force to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury. Rather, they used lethal force for the illegitimate objectives of dispersing protests, punishing protesters, instilling fear and deterring further street protests.

All 19 victims were fatally shot, in at least two cases with metal pellets.

Of the 19 recorded victims, two victims were unlawfully killed in areas at times when no protests were taking place, but where security forces had established a militarized presence:

- **Ardalan Ghasemi** was shot in Kermanshah on 10 November 2022 after security forces saw him writing political slogans on walls and opened fire to prevent him fleeing.
- **Bahaoddin Veisi**, a 16-year-old boy, was shot in Javanroud on 20 November 2022 when Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) agents opened fire on a car in which he was travelling.

In the context of lethal protest dispersals, security forces caused deaths by unlawfully firing both into crowds to force dispersal and at fleeing protesters and bystanders to intimidate and punish them and

prevent them from regrouping. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following individuals:

- **Minoo Majidi** was shot with metal pellets at close range in Kermanshah on 20 September 2022 while fleeing from the Special Cohorts of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA), on motorcycles, who were chasing panicked protesters and bystanders and repeatedly firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets.
- **Amirhossein Basati**, aged 15, was shot dead in Kermanshah on 21 September 2022 by IRGC agents positioned on the rooftop of a mosque as he turned back to retrieve his slipper while trying to flee from mass shootings.
- **Saeed Mohammadi**, **Iman Mohammadi** and **Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi** were shot dead in rapid succession in Eslam Abad-e Gharb on 21 September 2022 as security forces opened fire to disperse protesters.
- **Esmail Golanbar**, **Jamal Azami**, **Johar Fattahi**, **Masoud Teimouri** and **Tahsin Miri** were shot dead in rapid succession in Javanroud on 21 November 2022. This crackdown was carried out to disperse mourning protesters who had taken to the streets after attending the funeral of **Erfan Kakaee**, who had been shot dead the night before during another lethal protest dispersal in Javanroud.

Unlawful shootings aimed at dispersing, intimidating and punishing protesters resulted in the deaths of not only protesters but also bystanders. For example, **Erfan Kakaee** was struck by a bullet in Javanroud on 20 November 2022 as he loudly pleaded with the security forces to stop the shootings. Another victim, **Armin Sayadi**, was passing through a protest site in Kermanshah on 12 October 2022 in his car when a bullet fired by an IRGC agent, who was shooting from a rooftop at a group of protesters, struck him.

In addition to killings resulting from shootings into crowds and at fleeing protesters and bystanders, Amnesty International documented the case of **Borhan Eliasi**, who was deliberately targeted and shot at close range in Javanroud on 31 December 2022 after intervening to help a young protester being beaten by security forces.

Amnesty International also documented a pattern of security forces exacerbating the risk of death by committing further violations after shooting victims. These included continued shootings to prevent people from approaching and aiding injured protesters and bystanders who had fallen to the ground. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following individuals:

- **Afshin Asham** was shot dead during lethal protest dispersals in Ghasr-e Shirin on 26 October 2022. He collapsed after being hit by multiple metal pellets in the stomach. Those nearby were unable to move him to safety and had to flee due to ongoing gunfire.
- **Masoud Teimouri**, **Jamal Azami** and **Johar Fattahi** were shot dead during lethal protest dispersals in Javanroud on 21 November 2022. The men sustained fatal gunshot wounds while attempting to aid injured protesters amid constant gunfire.

Additionally, the widespread pattern of security forces carrying out arrests at hospitals deterred many from seeking medical care for themselves or others injured during the protests. This fear forced the injured to be taken to private homes, businesses or clinics ill-equipped to treat gunshot wounds or serious injuries, resulting in deaths from excessive bleeding, infections or complications that prompt specialized care might have prevented.

For example, in the case of **Johar Fattahi**, who was shot in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, Amnesty International learned that a resident took him first into their house in a side street to help him. His condition worsened, but, due to the heavy presence of security forces at hospitals, he asked to be

taken to his family house instead of a hospital. At his house, he lost consciousness following extensive bleeding. His family eventually transferred him to a hospital, but it was too late to save him.

7.1.2 AUDIOVISUAL EVIDENCE

Amnesty International verified and analysed 81 videos that pertain to the crackdown on protests by security forces in Kermanshah province. They were uploaded online between 20 September 2022 and 31 December 2022. Of the 81 videos, 54 are from Javanroud, 25 from Kermanshah and one each from Eslam Abad-e Gharb and Salas-e Babajani. The totality of audiovisual evidence analysed by Amnesty International corroborates witness testimonies that, from the very outset, largely peaceful protests were consistently met with a violent response by security forces, which resorted to the unlawful use of force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, to quash them.

Of the 81 videos analysed, the sound of gunfire is audible in 49 videos, of which 31 were filmed in Javanroud, 16 in Kermanshah, one in Eslam Abad-e Gharb and one in Salas-e Babajani. Based on the videos and other evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the sound of gunfire is attributable to the security forces.

Of the 81 videos, 40 show security forces visibly present in the streets, patrolling on foot, on motorcycles, in vehicles bearing security force markings – armoured or otherwise – or in unmarked vehicles. In these videos, members of the security forces are seen wearing uniforms, plain clothes or a combination of both, underscoring the involvement of multiple security forces during the crackdown. Those in uniform are seen wearing uniforms belonging to the Prevention Police of FARAJA, the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC, including its Basij battalions.

Of the 40 videos in which security forces are present, 27 show security forces carrying firearms including assault rifles and shotguns. Of the 27 videos in which security forces are carrying firearms, 14 show security forces holding their firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot. Of the 14 videos in which security forces are holding their firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot, nine show security forces shooting their firearms.

Of the 40 videos in which security forces are present, 12 show evidence of security forces engaging in additional acts of violence against protesters such as beatings, using tear gas, running over protesters with vehicles and administering electric shocks, including in the context of carrying out arrests.

Of the entirety of the 81 videos analysed pertaining to the crackdown on protests by security forces in Kermanshah province, 13 show a total of eight injured and/or lifeless protesters and bystanders who were identified by Amnesty International as having been unlawfully killed by security forces: Amirhossein Basati, Borhan Eliasi, Esmail Golanbar, Jamal Azami, Johar Fattahi, Minoo Majidi, Reza Shahparnia and Tahsin Miri. Some of the victims appear in multiple videos.

7.1.3 SECURITY FORCES RESPONSIBLE FOR LETHAL REPRESSION

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the security forces identified as committing serious human rights violations in the context of lethal protest dispersals in Kermanshah province included FARAJA and the IRGC.[724]

Among the FARAJA branches involved were the Prevention Police, including its Assistance Cohorts, and the Special Cohorts. The latter were primarily responsible for the use of AK-pattern rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets, while both branches resorted to beatings with batons, sticks and

724. See Chapter 2 for the methodology of identification.

kicks and deployed tear gas to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.[725]

The IRGC branches involved included the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division, the provincial Security Cohort and various Basij battalions, such as the Imam Ali Battalions and the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions. In connection with the crackdown in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade, a unit of the IRGC's Special Forces based in Javanroud, was also likely involved. All these branches operated under the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, known as the Nabi Akram Corps, which in turn falls under a regional IRGC headquarters called the Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, directing and overseeing IRGC operations in the provinces of Kermanshah, Hamedan and Ilam.[726]

In repressing the 2022 protests, the IRGC branches in Kermanshah province deployed an array of weaponry against protesters and bystanders, including not only shotguns loaded with metal pellets but also military-grade firearms. These included handguns; assault rifles such as AK-pattern, type 56-1 pattern, SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and G-3 rifles; sub-machine guns such as Uzi-pattern and MP5 guns; and DShK heavy machine guns mounted on top of pickup trucks. In addition, IRGC agents consistently used tear gas, chemical irritants, PepperBall-pattern guns and beatings to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.

7.2 KERMANSHAH

The city of Kermanshah, which is the provincial capital of Kermanshah and had a population of 1,083,833 according to the last census of Iran in 2016,[727] was gripped by protests between September and December 2022, similar to what was happening in the rest of the country.

Amnesty International documented the unlawful killing of at least six individuals during the protests in Kermanshah province: **Minoo Majidi**, **Reza Shahparnia**, **Amirhossein Basati**, **Sina Naderi**, **Armin Sayadi** and **Ardalan Ghasemi**.

7.2.1 PROTESTS ON 19-21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Mass protests erupted in Kermanshah on 19 September 2022, which marked the third day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, and were immediately met with a lethal response by the authorities.

From 19 September 2022, the authorities deployed large numbers of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA across the city of Kermanshah.[728] As the protests in Kermanshah grew on 20 and 21 September 2022, they repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse, intimidate and punish the protesters.

Amnesty International analysed nine videos recorded between 19 and 21 September 2022 showing peaceful protesters in Kermanshah and repressive measures by members of the security forces in

725. See Chapter 10 for detailed information on FARAJA and its various branches, including their organizational and command structure, mandates and uniforms, as well as official statements and leaked official documents related to their role in repressing the 2022 protests.
726. See Chapter 10 for detailed information on the IRGC and its various branches, including their organizational and command structure, mandates and uniforms, as well as official statements and leaked official documents related to their role in repressing the 2022 protests.
727. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).
728. See, for example, Radio Farda, درگیری شدید معترضان و پلیس ضدشورش در تهران؛ گزارش‌ها از کشته شدن چند معترض در کردستان ["Intense clashes between protesters and riot police in Tehran: Reports of several protesters being killed in Kurdistan"], 19 September 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/mahsa-amini-protests/32040689.html (in Persian).

uniforms resembling those of the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.[729] Evidence from videos filmed from nearby residential buildings corroborates witness accounts of peaceful gatherings of protesters on and around Nowbahar Boulevard.[730]

On 20 September 2022, large groups of members of the security forces, some riding motorcycles, started confronting the protesters on the boulevard and surrounding streets, initially launching tear gas towards them.[731]

Video analysis shows that the crackdown quickly turned deadly, with security forces shooting firearms at protesters.[732] This resulted in the unlawful killing of two adults, **Minoo Majidi** and **Reza Shahparnia**, on 20 September 2022 and the death of a boy, **Amirhossein Basati**, on 21 September 2022.

Two videos from 20 September 2022 show the heavy presence of security forces carrying and shooting firearms.[733] One video published online on 20 September 2022 shows security forces on Nowbahar Boulevard wearing green and camouflage uniforms and protective gear resembling those of the IRGC, including its Basij battalions and Security Cohorts, and carrying firearms.[734] One agent raises his shotgun, points it towards off-screen targets and shoots three times. The muzzle flash caused by the second shot is clearly visible. Another uniformed officer shoots in the direction of protesters sheltering behind trees, one of whom is throwing stones towards the security forces. Minoo Majidi and Reza Shahparnia were unlawfully killed in this area on this day.

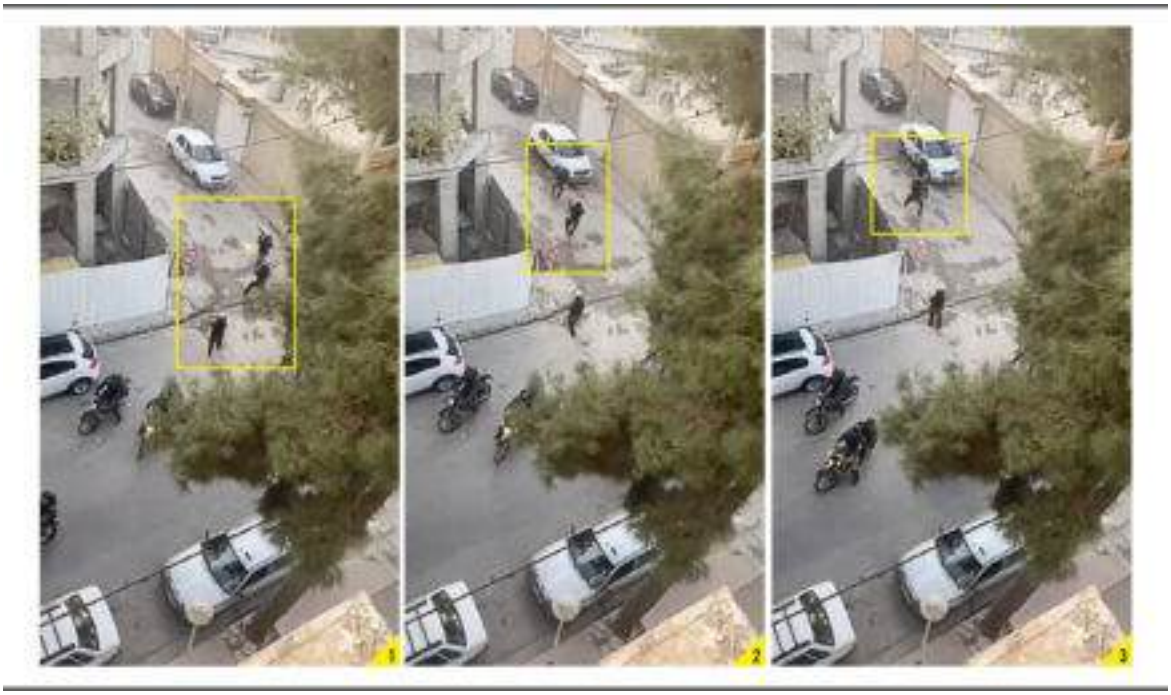
A second video published online on 20 September 2022 shows security forces wearing green camouflage uniforms and protective gear, carrying firearms and patrolling on foot and motorcycles.[735] The video shows two agents raising their shotguns, pointing them and firing them towards off-screen targets. The muzzle flashes from the shots are clearly visible. As they leave the scene, one agent, who is moving on foot and carrying a large stick, confronts a woman holding a paper sign. As he moves on, another agent apparently runs over her with his motorcycle.

Another video shows the lifeless body of a protester, whom Amnesty International identified as Reza Shahparnia, being surrounded and carried by other protesters in chaotic scenes.[736]

729. IRN0098, IRN099, IRN0100, IRN0101, IRN0102, IRN0103, IRN0104, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0105, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Avatoday, X post: مردم کرمانشاه سنگر مبارزه را ترک نمی‌کنند ["The people of Kurdistan will not abandon the battleground"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/avatoday_news/status/1572610915685498881 (in Persian); IRN0106, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO), X post: کرمانشاه- مردم در برابر حمله مأموران امنیتی از خود دفاع می‌کنند. ["Kermanshah: People are defending themselves against attacks by security forces"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/IHRights/status/1572639728352088068 (in Persian).
730. IRN0098, IRN0102, videos on file with Amnesty International.
731. IRN0101, IRN0102, videos on file with Amnesty International.
732. IRN0100, IRN0103, IRN0104, videos on file with Amnesty International.
733. IRN0100, IRN0103, videos on file with Amnesty International.
734. IRN0100, video on file with Amnesty International.
735. IRN0103, video on file with Amnesty International.
736. IRN0104, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, بر اساس گزارش رسیده به هه‌نگاو، در اعتراضات شامگاه سه‌شنبه ۲۹ شهریور ۱۴۰۱ در کرمانشاه یک زن اهل قصرشیرین به نام مینو مجیدی در اثر اصابت گلوله مستقیم به سرش جانش را از دست داده است. ["According to a report received by Hengaw, during Tuesday evening protests on 20 September 2022 in Kermanshah, a woman from Ghasr-e Shirin named Minoo Majidi was killed after being shot directly in the head"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1572540830233272321 (in Persian).



Stills from a video showing security forces deployed to suppress protests in Nowbahar Boulevard on 20 September 2022. The yellow frames show an agent firing a shotgun towards off-screen targets. © Private



Stills from a video published online on 20 September 2022. The agents are seen pointing their shotguns and shooting multiple times. The yellow frames show the agents shooting and in (1) the muzzle flash caused by the shotgun being shot. © Private

MINOO MAJIDI AND REZA SHAHPARNIA



Minoo Majidi (left) and Reza Shahparnia (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Minoo Majidi, a woman aged 62, and Reza Shahparnia, a man aged 23, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Kermanshah on 20 September 2022.

The two victims were among several hundred protesters who peacefully gathered around Markazi Square and Nowbahar Boulevard on the evening of 20 September 2022, according to information obtained by Amnesty International from Minoo Majidi's daughter Mahsa Piraee, who lives outside Iran; a protester, Diako; and another informed source in Kermanshah, Mahtab.

Diako told Amnesty International that he joined the gathering at around 6-7pm. He recalled that he and other protesters chanted for around 20-30 minutes before dozens of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA arrived on motorcycles and began to fire tear gas and metal pellets to disperse the crowd. Diako said that the protesters fled in different directions: some ran along Nowbahar Boulevard towards 2nd Si Metri Street; others fled eastwards towards Gozarnameh Boulevard; and some made their way westwards towards the intersection of Vahdat Boulevard and Khorram Street.

Diako said that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA chased the fleeing protesters on motorcycles while firing metal pellets towards them from distances ranging from 5m to 50m. He recalled the sound of constant gunfire echoing in the streets. Diako added that the agents chasing protesters typically moved in groups. Motorcycles at the front carried uniformed agents armed with batons and shotguns, while a motorcycle often trailed behind carrying a plain-clothes agent, believed to be the team's commander, who was armed with an AK-pattern rifle. Diako said that occasionally the plain clothes agents fired their rifles into the air.

Diako recalled that, at around 7.30-8pm, while he was on Vahdat Boulevard, he saw a group of distressed protesters carrying an injured man who had been hit with metal pellets. Diako recalled that the street was very dark; it appeared that the authorities had cut off the electricity to facilitate the crackdown and create a climate of fear. He said the protesters laid the injured man down and attempted to resuscitate him, but their efforts were unsuccessful. Diako said that he and others then placed the victim in a car, which took him to the hospital. Diako recalled that, while moving the young man, he noticed that the young man was bleeding from his back and that his own clothes were stained with the blood. Diako later learned that the young man, identified as Reza Shahparnia, had died. In his interview with Amnesty International, Diako expressed deep sorrow and outrage at the unlawful killing, saying:

"I had hoped he would survive. When I heard that he had passed away, especially being so young, I was very upset. Why would the authorities treat a young person who was unarmed and just came to protest in such a way?"

Amnesty International analysed a video that shows the immediate aftermath of the shooting of Reza Shahparnia.[737] An informed source, Mahtab, verified that the man in the video is Reza Shahparnia. In the video, Reza Shahparnia can be seen lying on the ground, with his blood staining the pavement. The organization also reviewed the burial certificate for Reza Shahparnia, which records that he sustained "heavy bleeding" and "injuries to organs within ribs, chest, stomach, lungs, heart and liver" as a result of "collision with a round projectile object (pellet)".

In a video statement published by independent Persian-language media outlets based outside Iran on 29 October 2022, Reza Shahparnia's mother said:

"I wanted to know what my child's sin was that you [the authorities] subjected his body to 80 pellets? My child was unarmed. My child was defenceless. What crime had he committed? I demand justice for my child. I want to know what sin I committed to be left with this grief. I demand that his murderer be identified."[738]

Diako told Amnesty International that, after Reza Shahparnia was driven away, the protests continued for around an hour, with protesters dispersing into side streets and regrouping. According to Diako, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA continued to fire metal pellets at protesters. Diako said that he himself was struck by several metal pellets in his shoulders and saw a young man who had been hit by a pellet near his eye. He recalled that among the protesters being shot at were girls and boys who appeared, based on their physical appearance, to be as young as 12 years old.

Diako added that he and some of the other protesters gathered at the nearby Khorram intersection near Kermanshah's ring road. There, he said, some agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA shot from motorcycles, while others fired through the upper windows of armoured personnel carriers.

Minoo Majidi was shot and killed at around the same time as Reza Shahparnia in a nearby location. Her daughter Mahsa Piraee told Amnesty International that the incident in which she was killed took place at around 8pm in front of a pastry shop called Taban on 2nd Si Metri Street near Vahdat Boulevard and Nowbahar Boulevard. According to information obtained by her family from eyewitnesses, two agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, who wore masks and were riding a motorcycle, approached Minoo Majidi and the agent sitting on the back of the motorcycle fired at her from a distance of less than 2m. This resulted in scores of metal pellets penetrating her back.

Amnesty International analysed two videos that show the immediate aftermath of the shooting.[739] The first shows Minoo Majidi lying motionless on her back on the ground.[740] The second shows protesters carrying her and placing her in a car to be taken to Taleghani Hospital in Kermanshah.[741] Amnesty International reviewed a medical note issued by the hospital's emergency department, which states that Minoo Majidi displayed no signs of life on arrival at the hospital and resuscitation efforts failed.

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737. IRN0104, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, بر اساس گزارش رسیده به هەنگاو، در اعتراضات شامگاه سەشنبه ۲۹ شهریور ۱۴۰۱ در کرمانشاه یک زن اهل قصرشیرین به نام مینو مجیدی در اثر اصابت گلوله مستقیم به سرش جانش را از دست داده است. [According to a report received by Hengaw, during Tuesday evening protests on 20 September 2022 in Kermanshah, a woman from Ghasr-e Shirin named Minoo Majidi was killed after being shot directly in the head], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1572540830233272321?s=20 (in Persian).

738. Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian), Facebook post: مادر رضا شهپرنیا، جوان ۲۰ ساله‌ای که در اعتراضات کرمانشاه کشته‌شد در ویدیویی خواستار شناسایی قاتل فرزندش شد» ["Mother of Reza Shahparnia, a 20-year-old young man killed in the protests in Kermanshah, calls in a video for the identification of her son's killer"], 29 October 2022, https://www.facebook.com/bbcpersian/videos/مادر-رضا-شهپرنیا-جوان-۲۰-سالهای-که-در-اعتراضات-کرمانشاه-کشته‌شد-در-ویدیویی-خواستا/1779500302411114 (in Persian).

739. IRN0107, IRN0108, videos on file with Amnesty International.

740. IRN0107, video on file with Amnesty International.

741. IRN0108, video on file with Amnesty International.

Additionally, the organization reviewed photographs which show injuries on Minoo Majidi's neck and back consistent with the spray patterns of metal pellets. An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed a photograph that shows that the entire back of the torso from hips to shoulders, as well as the inner aspect of the left upper arm, is covered by multiple shotgun pellet strike marks. Just above the inner aspect of the left eyebrow is a fresh circular bruise with a pale centre around 1cm in diameter and likely representing a blow from a tubular object such as a gun muzzle.

Mahsa Piraee told Amnesty International that the forensic expert at the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran, the state forensic institute, who examined Minoo Majidi's body told her family that 167 pellets had penetrated her body. The expert added that three pellets had ruptured her lungs and spleen and that these pellets had caused her death. The family was not provided with a written autopsy report.

Minoo Majidi's burial certificate, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, states that her death resulted from "collision with hard and round projectile objects (metal pellets)", leading to bleeding and damage in her chest and abdomen. Her death certificate, also reviewed by Amnesty International, is even more brief and simply states that she died due to "collision with hard or sharp objects".

AMIRHOSSEIN BASATI



Amirhossein Basati © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Amirhossein Basati, a 15-year-old boy from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 September 2022 during a crackdown on protests in the city of Kermanshah.

A protester, Maziar, told Amnesty International that he and Amirhossein Basati were among a group of around 300 protesters who had peacefully gathered on and around Modarres Street (also referred to as Sepah Street) near Azadi Square (also referred to as Garaj Square) and Vaziri Square on the evening of 21 September 2022. Maziar said that the uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and plain-clothes agents repeatedly fired metal pellets to disperse the protesters. He revealed that security forces positioned on the rooftop of a nearby mosque simultaneously shot firearms. He recounted the circumstances in which Amirhossein Basati was shot:

"Amirhossein and I were trying to escape. He was in slippers, and one slipped off while running. He turned back to grab it and that is when he got shot. The shot came from security forces positioned on the rooftop of a mosque."

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International a video that shows Amirhossein Basati lying face down on the ground while bleeding from his back and face.[742] According to information obtained by the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, Amirhossein Basati's family had no information about his fate and whereabouts for several days until they saw the video online. They subsequently discovered the body of Amirhossein Basati in a hospital morgue in Kermanshah.

742. IRN0109, video on file with Amnesty International (video withheld for security and privacy concerns).

A report, which has been seen by Amnesty International and was distributed by the Iranian authorities to member states of the UN Human Rights Council ahead of the Special Session on Iran held on 24 November 2022, confirms that, according to the Legal Medicine Organization, Amirhossein Basati died from "a gunshot wound" sustained during protests in Kermanshah, described as "riots". However, the authorities claimed: "It has hitherto not been identified that the deceased was shot by whom, or how he has lost his life. Therefore, investigations are underway to clarify and bring to light the dimensions of the incident."

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed a video taken at the scene of the death, which shows Amirhossein Basati's body lying face down, bleeding heavily from the nose and mouth, apparently unconscious and making agonal movements. He is wearing a blood-stained white T-shirt which has a pattern of staining indicating multiple underlying wounds across the back from the shoulder to the waist but more concentrated in the upper part. Partly exposed skin at the waistline has a small bleeding wound and several similar wounds appear on the exposed skin of the right upper arm, the right side of the face and the back of the head. The wounds represent pellet injuries from the discharge of a shotgun at close range, which would also have resulted in internal injuries to the chest.

7.2.2 PROTESTS IN OCTOBER 2022

Information gathered by Amnesty International from protesters and media reports indicate that neighbourhood-level protests persisted in Kermanshah throughout October 2022.

Video footage from the city during this period shows protesters obstructing traffic, lighting bonfires and chanting "Woman Life Freedom". Amnesty International analysed seven videos published from 9 October to 29 October 2022 showing the crackdown on protesters in the city of Kermanshah.

Kermanshah witnessed a second surge in protests between 8 and 12 October 2022 following coordinated calls for demonstrations in the province and nationwide, which was met by state violence.

A video first published on 9 October 2022 shows a panoramic view over the city, with thick smoke visible and the sound of continuous gunfire audible in the background.[743] Another video filmed on 12 October 2022 shows security forces on motorcycles driving along a street at night while the sound of gunfire is audible in the background.[744] A third video, which was first published on 12 October 2022, shows around seven members of the security forces violently detaining a protester.[745] While all of the agents are in plain clothes, one of them is wearing a helmet similar to those of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and is carrying a shotgun. The agents drag the man, who appears to pose no threat and is not resisting, along the street and administer multiple electric shocks to him, which are audible,[746] in clear violation of international human rights standards on the use of electric shock weapons when the person is restrained.

In the Dareh Deraz area on the western outskirts of the city of Kermanshah on 12 October 2022, security forces unlawfully killed **Sina Naderi** and **Armin Sayadi** and caused serious injuries, including eye trauma, to protesters and bystanders.

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743. IRN0110, video on file with Amnesty International.
744. IRN0111, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC Persian, X post: این ویدیو ۲۲ مهر ۱۴۰۱ به دست بی‌بی‌سی فارسی رسیده که در آن صدای شلیک شنیده می‌شود ["This video was received by BBC Persian on 1 October 2022, where the sound of gunfire can be heard and a large number of motorcycle-riding agents can be seen"], https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1580866448582447106 (in Persian).
745. IRN0112, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: استفاده نیروهای امنیتی از شوکر برقی ["Use of electric shockers by security forces"], 12 October 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1580282814159020032 (in Persian).
746. IRN0112, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: استفاده نیروهای امنیتی از شوکر برقی ["Use of electric shockers by security forces"], 12 October 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1580282814159020032 (in Persian).

SINA NADERI AND ARMIN SAYADI



Armin Sayadi (left) and Sina Naderi (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Sina Naderi, aged 23, and Armin Sayadi, aged 17, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 12 October 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Kermanshah city.

An eyewitness, Arash, told Amnesty International that Sina Naderi was among scores of protesters who had peacefully gathered near Sanjabi Square in the area of Dareh Deraz at around 4pm. Arash recalled that, soon after the protesters began chanting, uniformed armed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, who were stationed at a nearby IRGC base, left the base and moved towards the protesters, some on motorcycles and others in black vehicles. Arash noted that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in black uniforms and black masks and plain-clothes agents joined the crackdown. According to Arash, the uniformed IRGC agents carried either shotguns or AK-pattern rifles, the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA carried shotguns and the plain-clothes agents carried handguns.

Arash recalled that the security forces first fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse the crowd: "They fired metal pellets from varying distances, even from as close as 5m. I witnessed protesters sustaining injuries to their heads and faces. Some sustained injuries to their backs."

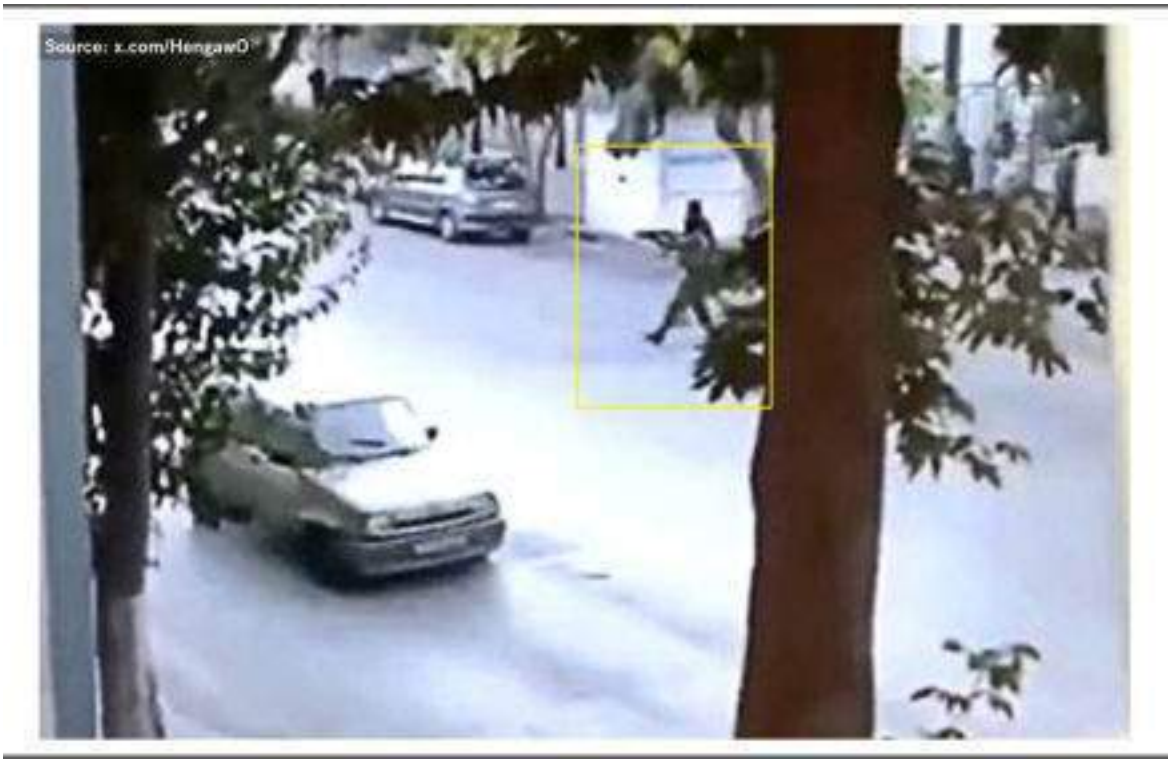
Arash said that the security forces subsequently started firing bullets both at street level and from the rooftop of a multi-storey fire station that IRGC agents used for security operations. Several outraged protesters threw stones in response.

According to Arash, the shootings resulted in the unlawful killing of Sina Naderi, who was standing in front of Kalhor supermarket near the fire station. Another informed source, Soheil, told Amnesty International that Sina Naderi was struck by two bullets resulting in injuries to his arm and chest. Arash reported that several people carried Sina Naderi away and took him to Farabi Hospital in Kermanshah city, where he died shortly afterwards. His death certificate, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, lists the cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

Arash told Amnesty International that the shootings from the rooftop also resulted in the unlawful killing of Armin Sayadi while he was driving his car. Arash said that Armin Sayadi was not participating in the protests; he was passing through the area when bullets hit his car. Amnesty International examined a photograph, showing the immediate aftermath of the shooting. In the photograph, Armin Sayadi is seen lying on the ground, his shoulder and chest covered in blood, which also stained the pavement. An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International who reviewed the photograph noted that the entire chest being soaked in blood indicates serious injury or injuries involving the torso. Arash said that the photograph was taken immediately after the fatal shooting when people had removed Armin Sayadi from his car and attempted to give him first aid.

Amnesty International's research, including its analysis of videos, shows that security forces continued to violently quash protests in Kermanshah throughout October 2022.

Residents of Kermanshah, filming secretly from the windows of their homes, captured security forces roaming around the city's streets on 13 October 2022. In one video, multiple plain-clothes and uniformed members of the security forces are seen moving through the streets while carrying and aiming firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot.[747] The uniformed agents are wearing black balaclavas covering their faces and black or dark green uniforms resembling those of the IRGC. One uniformed agent is seen firing his shotgun multiple times.[748]



A still from a video published online on 13 October 2022. A uniformed agent wearing a black balaclava and green uniform resembling those worn by the IRGC is aiming his firearm in a manner that suggests he is preparing to shoot. In the video, this agent is seen shooting multiple times. © Private

In another video published online on 13 October 2022, also recorded from a window, dozens of agents on motorcycles are seen patrolling the streets. Two agents on the motorcycle run over a pedestrian and kick him while he is under their vehicle.[749]

Digital evidence and testimonies gathered by Amnesty International show that security forces continued to use lethal force against the protesters in Kermanshah towards the end of October 2022. In a video published online on 27 October 2022, protesters are seen gathered along Keshvari Boulevard and running away and screaming, while loud gunshots are audible in the background.[750]

747. IRN0113, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تیراندازی مستقیم نیروهای حکومتی به سوی مردم در خیابان دبیر اعظم کرمانشاه ["Direct shooting by government forces on Dabir Azam Street in Kermanshah"], 13 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1580435767716761600 (in Persian).
748. IRN0113, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تیراندازی مستقیم نیروهای حکومتی به سوی مردم در خیابان دبیر اعظم کرمانشاه ["Direct shooting by government forces on Dabir Azam Street in Kermanshah"], 13 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1580435767716761600 (in Persian).
749. IRN0114, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Sedaye Shahrivar, X post: کرمانشاه ۲۰ مهر ۱۴۰۱ مزدوران سرکوبگر یک جوان را با موتور زیر می‌گیرند و با باتون او را کتک می‌زنند ["Kermanshah 12 October 2022 repressive mercenaries run over a young man with a motorcycle and beat him with batons"], 13 October 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1580479351446831104 (in Persian).
750. IRN0116, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Omid Barin, X post: 2امشب در کرمانشاه غوغای به پاست ["Tonight in Kermanshah a storm is brewing"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1585675034445611011 (in Persian).

Diako told Amnesty International that, on 28 October 2022, dozens of mourners and protesters gathered at the grave site of Reza Shahparnia in Behesht-e Zahra cemetery for a commemorative ceremony marking the 40th day following his death. Diako recalled that there was a heavy presence of security forces in the streets leading to the cemetery. He recalled seeing around 20 plain-clothes agents standing 5m from the grave site of Reza Shahparnia and filming mourners and protesters.

Diako told Amnesty International that, for the commemorative ceremony marking the 40th day following the death of Minoo Majidi on 29 October 2022, several thousand protesters gathered in Mina Abad cemetery. After the ceremony, protesters marched towards Azadegan Square. Diako recounted how, before reaching the square, IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, advanced towards the protesters on dozens of motorcycles and in several armoured vehicles and fired tear gas and metal pellets towards them. Diako told Amnesty International that, after he fled into a side street, he encountered a vehicle carrying a group of IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions. He said the agents fired at him with paintballs and metal pellets while ordering him to stop. He noted that he narrowly avoided being struck in the head by pellets by ducking just in time. The agents then arrested him.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 29 October 2022, showing the use of firearms by plain-clothes agents and uniformed IRGC agents against peaceful protesters who were marching and chanting in the vicinity of Mina Abad cemetery.[751] At the beginning of the video, multiple plain-clothes agents equipped with AK-pattern rifles and shotguns are standing next to two white cars of a type commonly used by plain-clothes agents. One of the agents is raising his hand and what sounds like a single gunshot can be heard immediately afterwards. According to Amnesty International's research and documentation, during the protests of September-December 2022, many plain-clothes agents used handguns. In the video, several loud gunshots are heard as the camera briefly captures security forces on motorcycles before panning back to film the agents.[752] At least eight agents are visible in the street beside a white pickup truck and two white cars. A still from the video is reproduced below. Three agents standing immediately next to the pickup truck are wearing black or green camouflage uniforms worn by the Imam Ali battalions or the Security Cohorts of the IRGC, while a fourth individual positioned on the far side of the pickup truck, in the top right of the still, appears to be wearing plain clothes. All four of the agents are armed and are wearing black balaclavas. Four other agents are seated in the back of the pickup truck, wearing camouflage uniforms and helmets worn by the IRGC's Basij battalions. The agents are carrying multiple firearms, including shotguns and an AKMS-pattern rifle.

751. IRN0117, video on file with Amnesty International.
752. IRN0117, video on file with Amnesty International.



A still from a video published online from Kermanshah city on 29 October 2022 showing IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, carrying firearms © Private

7.2.3 PROTESTS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2022

According to media reports and information obtained from eyewitnesses, in the subsequent weeks, smaller protests and other acts of dissent, including writing slogans on walls, continued in Kermanshah city. From 9 November 2022 onwards, Kurdish human rights groups reported a "highly securitized atmosphere" in the city marked by the extensive deployment of security forces, hindering the assembly of large crowds.[753] This development underscored the authorities' increased repression in anticipation of protests between 15 and 19 November 2022 to commemorate the nationwide protests of November 2019.

Video evidence analysed by Amnesty International shows uniformed and plain-clothes members of the security forces beating and arresting protesters during November 2022.[754] A video first published on 1 November 2022 shows a group of uniformed FARAJA agents gathered at Markazi Square, who then seize, drag and arrest a protester.[755]

Amnesty International learned that, on the evening of 10 November 2022, security forces unlawfully killed **Ardalan Ghasemi** after they saw him writing political slogans on walls.

753. Persian service of Voice of America (VOA Persian), ادامه اعتراضات در مهاباد؛ حضور گسترده شهروندان برای بدرقه پیکر فایق مامقادری ["Protests in Mahabad continue: Large presence of citizens for Fayegh Mamghaderi's funeral procession"], 10 November 2022, https://ir.voanews.com/a/protests-continue-mahabad-fayeq-mamghader/6828585.html (in Persian).

754. IRN0118, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: ضرب و شتم شدید مردم ["Severe beating of people"], 30 November 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1597743045445058565 (in Persian); IRN0115, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: کرمانشاه-میدان مرکزی - بازداشت خشن و وحشیانه دو جوان کرمانشاهی ["Kermanshah-Central Square: Violent and brutal arrest of two Kermanshah youth"], 1 November 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1587452949986529283 (in Persian).

755. IRN0115, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: کرمانشاه-میدان مرکزی - بازداشت خشن و وحشیانه دو جوان کرمانشاهی ["Kermanshah-Central Square: Violent and brutal arrest of two Kermanshah youth"], 1 November 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1587452949986529283 (in Persian).

ARDALAN GHASEMI



Ardalan Ghasemi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Ardalan Ghasemi, a 51-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, in Kermanshah on 10 November 2022.

An informed source, Emad, told Amnesty International that security forces spotted Ardalan Ghasemi and his friend writing political slogans on walls on Taq-e Bostan Boulevard and opened fire on them as they tried to flee.

Ardalan Ghasemi's burial certificate, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he died because of "extensive bleeding" and "injuries to the critical arteries in his left thigh" caused by "being hit with a speedy projectile and a bullet".

Ardalan Ghasemi's friend sustained gunshot wounds but survived. Amnesty International was unable to obtain a copy of his death or burial certificate.

Further video evidence from November and December 2022 showed that the security forces continued their crackdown on protests, including through the use of firearms and in the context of arrests.[756]

In three videos analysed by Amnesty International and published on 9 December 2022, the sound of gunfire is audible.[757] In one of these videos, members of the security forces wearing plain clothes or dark green uniforms, as well as white face masks, can be seen holding rifles while loud gunshots are audible in the background and people can be heard screaming.[758] In another one of these videos, a large group of plain-clothes agents are shown running after, beating and violently arresting a protester.[759]

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756. IRN0119, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: کرماشان تەقەیان لە بەشداربوانی ڕێپێوانی خەڵک کردووە کە هێمنانە و بە بێدەنگی بەڕێوە دەچوو ["In Kermanshah, security forces have targeted participants of the people's silent and peaceful march"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1601239762056392704 (in Sorani Kurdish); IRN0120, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: کرمانشاه, شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: کرمانشاه ۱۸ آذر بلوار طاقبستان: تیراندازی به‌سوی مردم ["Kermanshah, 9 December, shooting at people on Taq-e Bostan Boulevard"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1601210776496193537 (in Persian); IRN0121, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: کرمانشاه, شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: کرمانشاه / جمعه ۱۸ آذر / شلیک ممتد گلوله به سمت مردم ["Kermanshah: Friday 9 December: Continuous gunfire directed at people"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1601309977079320578 (in Persian); IRN0118, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: ManotoNews, X post: ضرب و شتم شدید مردم ["Severe beating of people"], 30 November 2022, https://x.com/ManotoNews/status/1597743045445058565 (in Persian).

757. IRN0119, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: کرماشان تەقەیان لە بەشداربوانی ڕێپێوانی خەڵک کردووە کە هێمنانە و بە بێدەنگی بەڕێوە دەچوو ["In Kermanshah, security forces have targeted participants of the people's silent and peaceful march"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1601239762056392704 (in Sorani Kurdish); IRN0120, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: کرمانشاه, شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: / کرمانشاه ۱۸ آذر بلوار طاقبستان تیراندازی به‌سوی مردم ["Kermanshah, 9 December, shooting at people on Taq-e Bostan Boulevard"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1601210776496193537 (in Persian); IRN0121, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: کرمانشاه, شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: کرمانشاه / جمعه ۱۸ آذر / شلیک ممتد گلوله به سمت مردم ["Kermanshah: Friday 9 December: Continuous gunfire directed at people"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1601309977079320578 (in Persian).

758. IRN0120, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: کرمانشاه, شورای آزادی‌خواهان کرمانشاه, X post: / کرمانشاه ۱۸ آذر بلوار طاقبستان تیراندازی به‌سوی مردم ["Kermanshah, 9 December, shooting at people on Taq-e Bostan Boulevard"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/Sh_A_kermanshah/status/1601210776496193537 (in Persian).

759. IRN0119, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: کرماشان تەقەیان لە بەشداربوانی ڕێپێوانی خەڵک کردووە کە هێمنانە و بە بێدەنگی بەڕێوە دەچوو ["In Kermanshah, security forces have targeted participants of the people's silent and peaceful march"], 9 December 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1601239762056392704 (in Sorani Kurdish).

7.3 JAVANROUD

In September and October 2022, security forces unlawfully used firearms to suppress small protests in Javanroud, which had a population of 75,000 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016.[760] The crackdown by security forces escalated in October and over the subsequent weeks, reaching a peak in November and December 2022.[761]

Videos that were filmed in Javanroud during these months and analysed by Amnesty International show the heavy presence of plain-clothes and uniformed members of the security forces carrying firearms, patrolling neighbourhoods either on foot or in vehicles, often in large groups, spreading fear among residents and violently cracking down on protests. In multiple videos, the sounds of gunshots reverberate through the city.

On 8 October 2022, Kurdish human rights groups reported the heavy deployment of security forces in Javanroud.[762] A 17-year-old protester, Karvan, told the Kurdistan Human Rights Network that he saw security forces using firearms against peaceful protesters, including schoolgirls, who had gathered in Azadi Square (also known as Basij Square) and then moved towards Felestine Square and Mowlavi Square. He said that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA initially fired shots into the air to disperse the crowd, but the protesters remained defiant and continued to chant and some of them set fire to government banners. He explained that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA started to fire shotguns loaded with metal pellets and then IRGC agents fired AK-pattern rifles, and that this was accompanied by extensive use of tear gas. He said he saw around a dozen people injured.

Also on 8 October 2022, independent media outside Iran published a video from Javanroud showing clouds of black smoke in the sky against a backdrop of repeated sounds of gunfire.[763]

Amnesty International's analysis of seven videos from 8 October 2022 reveals a clear escalation in the use of force by security forces against peaceful protesters gathered in the area.[764] Three videos filmed during daylight hours show a small group of demonstrators peacefully assembling while the sound of protesters cheering can be heard in the background.[765] However, by the evening, the situation had significantly deteriorated. Four additional videos, recorded later that same day, capture chaotic scenes of protesters fleeing the amid the sound of continuous gunfire, indicating a heavy and sustained use of

760. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census (accessed on 22 August 2026).
761. IRN0448, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: خبر فوری از ساعاتی پیش با آغاز اعتراضات مردمی در #جوانرود استان کرمانشاه ["Breaking news: Since a few hours ago, with the start of public protests in #Javanroud, Kermanshah Province..."], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1578772085530578944 (in Persian).
762. Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: "خبر فوری از ساعاتی پیش با آغاز اعتراضات مردمی در #جوانرود استان کرمانشاه، این شهر به شدت نظامی و امنیتی شده و صدای تیراندازی از خیابان‌ها شنیده می‌شود" ["Breaking news: Since popular protests began several hours ago in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, the city has become heavily militarized and placed under tight security, and the sound of gunfire can be heard from the streets"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1578772085530578944?s=20 (in Persian).
763. IRN0122, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran Wire, X post: در این ویدیو که از #جوانرود به دست ایران‌وایر رسیده است، ستون‌های بلند دود دیده شده و صدای ممتد تیراندازی شنیده می‌شود ["In this video received by IranWire from #Javanroud, tall columns of smoke can be seen and continuous gunfire can be heard"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/iranwire/status/1578805524896055297 (in Persian).
764. IRN0123, IRN0124, IRN0125, IRN0127, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0126, video on file with Amnesty International; Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویری از درگیری‌های گسترده میان مردم معترض در جوانرود با نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی ["Images of widespread clashes between protesters in Javanroud and government repressive forces"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1578777217819062272 (in Persian); IRN0128, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: فوری نیروهای سرکوبگر با بلندگو از مردم معترض جوانرود می‌خواهند که به منازل خود برگردند ["Urgent: Repressive forces are using loudspeakers to tell the protesters in Javanroud to return to their homes"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1578789230029176833 (in Persian); IRN0454, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: BBC News Persian, X post: "در اعتراض‌های امروز ۱۶ مهرماه در شهرهای مختلف ایران، نیروهای امنیتی در بعضی از نقاط با معترضان درگیر شدند" ["During protests on 8 October in cities across Iran, security forces clashed with protesters"], 9 October 2022, https://x.com/bbcpersian/status/1578897035838619648 (in Persian).
765. IRN0123, IRN0124, IRN0125, videos on file with Amnesty International.

firearms by security forces.[766]

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, the security forces resorted to similar repressive tactics, including firing lethal ammunition, during protests on 6 November 2022 in the city and throughout November 2022. In addition, one protester, Nariman, told Amnesty International that he saw agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC's Basij battalions beating protesters, including children, and IRGC agents firing a canister emitting a yellow-green gas.

A video published online on 15 November 2022 from Javanroud provides evidence of the militarized presence of security forces, as well as the use of firearms in residential areas.[767] Filmed from inside an apartment, the footage shows armed IRGC agents dressed in camouflage uniforms and beige balaclavas. The video also shows damage to the apartment itself: two windows on opposite sides have been shattered, one bearing a small, round hole that could possibly be the entry point of a firearm projectile. Overlaid text in the video reads: "We don't even have security in our homes. We were bombarded by bullets at 5pm this afternoon." This underscores the fear and danger experienced by people inside their own homes.



A still from a video from Javanroud, published online on 15 November 2022. The yellow frame shows IRGC agents carrying firearms. © Private

766. IRN0126, video on file with Amnesty International; Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویری از درگیری‌های گسترده میان مردم معترض در جوانرود با نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی ["Images of widespread clashes between protesters in Javanroud and government repressive forces"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1578777217819062272 (in Persian); IRN0128, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: فوری نیروهای سرکوبگر با بلندگو از مردم معترض جوانرود می‌خواهند که به منازل خود برگردند ["Urgent: Repressive forces are using loudspeakers to tell the protesters in Javanroud to return to their homes"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1578789230029176833 (in Persian); IRN0122, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Iran Wire, X post: در این ویدیو که از #جوانرود به دست ایران‌وایر رسیده است، ستون‌های بلند دود دیده شده و صدای ممتد تیراندازی شنیده می‌شود ["In this video received by IranWire from #Javanroud, tall columns of smoke can be seen and continuous gunfire can be heard"], 8 October 2022, https://x.com/iranwire/status/1578805524896055297 (in Persian).

767. IRN0129, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: شلیک به خانه مردمی که حتی در اعتراضات امشب جوانرود شرکت نداشتند ["Firing at the homes of people who didn't even participate in tonight's protests in Javanroud"], 15 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1592539147868463104 (in Persian).

From around 17 November 2022, protests and other acts of dissent proliferated in Javanroud in solidarity with the people of Mahabad who were enduring a crackdown at that time.[768]

From 20 November 2022 until the end of the year, according to information obtained by Amnesty International, the crackdown on protests in the city resulted in the unlawful killings of a total of eight protesters: **Bahaoddin Veisi** and **Erfan Kakaee** on 20 November 2022; **Jamal Azami**, **Tahsin Miri**, **Masoud Teimouri**, **Johar Fattahi** and **Esmail Golanbar** on 21 November 2022; and **Borhan Eliasi** on 31 December 2022.

7.3.1 PROTESTS ON 20 NOVEMBER 2022

From around 3pm on 20 November 2022, hundreds of people in Javanroud took to the streets in solidarity with the people of Mahabad, who had endured a deadly crackdown in the preceding days.[769] According to information obtained by Amnesty International, protesters initially gathered in and around the centre of Javanroud, on Taleghani Street (also known as Behdari Street), Hamzeh Street, Azadi Square, Felestine Square and Mowlavi Square. Two protesters, Shahram and Danesh, told Amnesty International that IRGC agents fired AK-pattern rifles into the air to disperse the peaceful protesters and pursued them while repeatedly firing their rifles at them, as well as using tear gas.

Shahram and Danesh said that several hundred protesters escaped along Hamzeh Street and its adjacent alleys, heading towards the Shahvardi area, approximately 1km from the initial gathering. Shahram recounted the terrifying scenes:

> **"The situation resembled a battlefield. We were pursued by uniformed IRGC agents wielding Kalashnikov rifles. At every corner, we sought refuge behind a wall, collected and hurled a few stones, before running to another alley. They followed us at a slower pace and, as soon as they spotted us, they unleashed continuous gunfire."**

Danesh told Amnesty International that, following the violent dispersal of the protesters around Taleghani Street, around 200 protesters regrouped in Hamzeh Street near the office of the National Organization for Civil Registration later in the evening and began chanting. According to Danesh, the IRGC agents once again fired lethal ammunition to intimidate and disperse the protesters. During this crackdown, **Erfan Kakaee** was unlawfully killed by the security forces.

Amnesty International analysed two videos related to the events of 20 November 2022, which corroborate witness testimonies of a crackdown on protesters in Javanroud that evening.[770]

The first video captures a group of protesters standing in the street amid the sound of multiple gunshot audible in the background.[771]

The second video, a brief 14-second clip recorded from a window, captures a harrowing scene involving repeated shootings by the security forces.[772] In the video, uniformed members of the security

768. See section 8.3.3 for details.
769. See section 8.3.3 for details.
770. IRN0130, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Yaghobi Hossein, X post: جوانرود در آتش و گلوله ["Gunfire and flames in Javanroud"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/YaghobiHossein/status/1594464248381558785 (in Persian); IRN0131, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, جمهوری اسلامی جوانرود را به رگبار بسته است ["Islamic Republic has subjected Javanroud to heavy gunfire"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594408085136805888 (in Persian).
771. IRN0130, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Yaghobi Hossein, X post: جوانرود در آتش و گلوله ["Gunfire and flames in Javanroud"], 20 November 2022, https://X.com/YaghobiHossein/status/1594464248381558785 (in Persian).
772. IRN0131, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, جمهوری اسلامی جوانرود را به رگبار بسته است ["Islamic Republic has subjected Javanroud to heavy gunfire"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594408085136805888 (in Persian).

forces are seen walking along a street at night while a pickup truck drives alongside them; a member of the security forces makes unintelligible announcements via a loudspeaker. Throughout the clip, security forces are visibly firing shotguns, with at least 34 distinct gunshots audible.

ERFAN KAKAEE



Erfan Kakaee © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Erfan Kakaee, a 51-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, in Javanroud on 20 November 2022.

According to Shahram and Danesh, on the evening of 20 November 2022, IRGC agents fired live ammunition at a group of chanting protesters who had gathered near the intersection of Hamzeh Street and Parastaran Street. Danesh remembered the shooting as continuous, saying:

"The protesters came under fire while chanting and the distance between them and the agents firing was nearly 100m. The security forces shot in multiple directions senselessly. The city felt like a war zone."

Shahram and Danesh stated that Erfan Kakaee was not among the protesters; he had arrived at the scene while returning from a nearby mosque to his house, located in an alley some distance from the protest site. Danesh said that, amid the relentless shooting, he heard Erfan Kakaee urging protesters, including teenage boys and girls, to run away. Danesh said that Erfan Kakaee was also loudly pleading with the security forces to stop shooting. The security forces ignored his pleas. During these tense moments, Erfan Kakaee was fatally struck by a bullet.

Danesh said that he rushed to where Erfan Kakaee had fallen to the ground and found his shirt soaked in blood. According to Shahram, who obtained information from an informed source, Erfan Kakaee sustained a gunshot wound in his stomach. Shahram recounted how local residents put Erfan Kakaee in a car, but were unable to take him immediately to hospital due to ongoing shooting in Hamzeh Street. He died shortly afterwards.

News of Erfan Kakaee's killing spread rapidly through Javanroud, prompting thousands of protesters, some of whom had attended the initial gathering and dispersed and others who had joined the protests later, to congregate outside Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital, where his body was taken, in solidarity with his grieving family and to prevent the security forces from taking his body to an unidentified location. The family managed to retrieve his body from the hospital and take it home.

Shahram told Amnesty International that protesters stood guard at the front entrance of Erfan Kakaee's family home throughout the night worried that the security forces might seize the body and prevent a dignified burial. Shahram described how protesters erected barriers and lit fires in the alleys leading to the house in anticipation of the arrival of security forces. According to Shahram, officials called Erfan Kakaee's family multiple times throughout the night, pressuring them to return his body and threatening further violence if the protesters in front of their house did not disperse. Shahram mentioned that, at one point, a relative left the house and said the family did not wish for anyone else's blood to be spilled in front of their house. However, the protesters remained defiant, chanting a phrase in unison that symbolized they were prepared to sacrifice their lives for their cause. Shahram also recalled that, at one point, a low-ranking plain-clothes agent arrived with an ambulance to take Erfan Kakaee's body away, raising fears that the authorities might bury him in a secret location and not return

his body to his family. In response, some protesters punctured one of the ambulance's tyres and beat the agent, forcing him to leave.

Among the protesters who gathered in front of Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in solidarity with Erfan Kakaee's family were Najmoddin Veisi and his brother, **Bahaoddin Veisi**. Later that evening, after leaving the hospital area, IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, fired at the car in which the brothers were travelling, unlawfully killing Bahaoddin Veisi and violently arresting his injured brother.

BAHAODDIN VEISI



Bahaoddin Veisi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Bahaoddin Veisi, a 16-year-old boy from Iran's Kurdish minority, in Javanroud on 20 November 2022.

Amnesty International received information about the incident from five informed sources, Danesh, Shahram, Sajad, Morad and Behrooz. The organization interviewed Danesh, Shahram and Sajad and received the written testimonies of Morad and Behrooz from the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, which had interviewed them. According to information received from these five individuals, Bahaoddin Veisi was travelling in a black Peugeot 405 with his brother Najmoddin Veisi and two other individuals[773] when IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, fired lethal ammunition at them. The incident took place near the intersection of Hamzeh Street and Taleghani Street, which is informally called Tooti crossroads. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, no protests were taking place there at the time.

The Veisi brothers and their friends were returning from the protest in front of Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in solidarity with the family of Erfan Kakaee. Amnesty International learned that Najmoddin Veisi had posted on Instagram earlier that evening, calling on people to gather in front of the hospital.

Amnesty International reviewed a photograph from the immediate aftermath of the fatal shooting, depicting multiple armed IRGC agents carrying firearms, including rifles and shotguns, and wearing balaclavas that cover their faces as they surround the brothers' car. A white IRGC pickup truck is seen behind the car.

773. The names of these two individuals are on file with Amnesty International.



A photograph taken in Javanroud on 20 November 2022 showing the immediate aftermath of the shooting of Bahaoddin Veisi with more than a dozen armed IRGC agents surrounding his brother's black car. The car's windscreen has multiple bullet holes. © Private

Mahan reported seeing Bahaoddin Veisi bleeding inside the car. Mahan stated that he and several others intervened and prevented the IRGC agents from taking away his body. Instead, they transported him to Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in a private car. Mahan said that the IRGC agents arrested the three other passengers who had also sustained gunshot wounds. He recounted seeing two IRGC agents pulling Najmoddin Veisi onto the ground as he was bleeding from his leg and holding on to a traffic cone to avoid arrest.

Mahan noted that shortly before he arrived at the incident, he had looked outside from the balcony of his nearby house and seen a group of IRGC agents in a pickup truck patrolling Hamzeh Street and warning people through a loudspeaker to stay inside their homes or face serious consequences. Mahan mentioned that no protests were happening there at that time, but sounds of gunfire were audible. He then saw several IRGC agents standing on Hamzeh Street near Azadi Square firing towards two motorcycles. Mahan recalled that one of the motorcyclists turned into a side alley and disappeared, but the second one was hit by a bullet and fell to the ground. As soon as Mahan saw this, he rushed outside to help the rider, but before he could reach him, the IRGC agents arrived, put the rider in their vehicle and drove away. Mahan said that he then walked further along Hamzeh Street and saw, when he reached a pharmacy near Tooti crossroads, the Veisi brothers' black Peugeot 405 car with bullet holes and the scenes described above.

7.3.2 PROTESTS ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022

The unlawful killings of Bahaoddin Veisi and Erfan Kakaee on 20 November 2022 sparked further mass protests in Javanroud. On the morning of 21 November 2022, thousands of women, men and children peacefully gathered at Haj Ebrahim cemetery in Javanroud where Erfan Kakaee was laid to rest. Bahaoddin Veisi had been quietly buried earlier that morning in Hassan Gayer cemetery as security forces threatened his family that, if his burial turned into a protest, they would kill his brother Najmoddin Veisi, who was being arbitrarily detained and tortured at that time, according to information obtained by Amnesty International.[774]

774. See section 9.1.2 for details.

At around 11am, following the funeral ceremony of Erfan Kakaee, mourners and protesters peacefully marched towards the family homes of Erfan Kakaee and Bahaoddin Veisi, located near Hamzeh Street and Farhangian Street, respectively.

A protester, Shahram, told Amnesty International that the procession passed the building of the command headquarters of the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade, a unit of the IRGC's Special Forces based in Javanroud.[775] A few protesters threw stones from a distance at the building's walls and door. Amnesty International reviewed a video of the incident shared by protesters, which shows a couple of individuals throwing stones and other protesters intervening to prevent stone-throwing and encouraging restraint.[776]

Shahram said that, in response, IRGC agents positioned on the rooftop of the building's entrance fired their rifles into air. A photograph reviewed by Amnesty International shows five IRGC agents wearing camouflage or dark green uniforms on the rooftop overlooking the protesters. Two of the agents are wearing balaclavas and the other three are wearing face masks. One agent can be seen holding an AK-pattern rifle.



Five IRGC agents stand on the rooftop of the command headquarters of the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade, an IRGC unit based in Javanroud. The yellow frame highlights an agent holding an AK-pattern rifle. © Private

According to a protester, Danesh, the peaceful procession continued to Mowlavi Square and the nearby Felestine Square, where protesters faced gunfire and tear gas from IRGC agents. Danesh recalled that,

775. See sections 10.3.1(VI) and 10.3.2(VI).
776. IRN0132, video on file with Amnesty International.

at this point, some protesters fled via 22 Bahman Street or Farhangian Street (also known as Amoozesh Parvaresh Street), while others continued along Taleghani Street (also widely known as Behdari Street).

Eyewitness accounts obtained by Amnesty International reveal that the protesters who continued along Taleghani Street faced deadly shootings, while those who fled down the other two streets also faced tear gas, bullets and metal pellets.

Eyewitnesses recounted how IRGC agents relentlessly fired lethal ammunition at the protesters on Taleghani Street, using AK-pattern rifles and other firearms, which, according to protesters, included SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles (referred to locally as *ghanaseh*), Uzi-pattern sub-machine guns and G-3 rifles.[777]

The IRGC agents also fired at protesters using a DShK machine gun mounted on a vehicle. In response, some protesters threw stones. Protesters recalled that, after some of them were struck by bullets and fell to the ground, IRGC agents would sometimes come over, beat them and threaten to shoot them again from close range.

Shahram told Amnesty International:

> **"The most terrifying scenes that you can imagine ensued. Gunfire was coming from all sides. From the front, several squads… positioned in Taleghani Street… were firing. Gunfire sounds also echoed from behind, originating from agents stationed around Mowlavi Square, where the office of the Ministry of Intelligence and the Office of the County Governor are located. Furthermore, a pickup truck equipped with a DShK heavy machine gun departed Felestine Square and proceeded down Taleghani Street, firing several times as it went. I also saw an agent on the rooftop of a residential building firing tear gas."**

Another protester, Davoud, similarly recounted:

> **"Shortly after we reached Felestine Square and proceeded onto Taleghani Street, we came under fire. The IRGC agents first threw smoke grenades and then repeatedly fired live ammunition with Kalashnikov rifles. They also attacked us with a pickup truck equipped with a mounted DShK machine gun. Every time a shot was fired from the machine gun, the vehicle would tremble. At some point, the vehicle passed by me at a distance of 20m. At that moment, the gunner pointed the machine gun upwards, firing towards the sky. However, I heard from other protesters that the gunner also shot at people. I also saw three or four snipers on the rooftops of a multi-storey building as well as a residential house. The scenes resembled a war zone."**

Shahram and Davoud told Amnesty International that they witnessed scores of people sustaining gunshot wounds as they fled into side streets off Taleghani Street. Shahram said:

> **"In the side streets leading to Taleghani Street, wounded individuals were scattered everywhere. Whichever direction you looked, people were collapsing to the ground. One friend would call and say so-and-so had been shot in the leg. Another friend would call and mention someone who had been shot in the stomach. I saw a protester who had been shot in both legs."**

Davoud similarly said:

> **"I saw around 15-20 people who were wounded. There were both men and women among them. They had gunshot wounds on their backs, legs, arms and shoulders. As we carried them away in our arms, the shootings continued."**

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777. Eyewitnesses were able to identify firearms because of the knowledge they gained during their compulsory conscription. In Iran, military conscription of between 17 and 24 months is compulsory for men, typically beginning at the age of 18.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, another protester, Jamal, described how the IRGC agents, positioned 200m from them on Taleghani Street, began their lethal shooting. Jamal recounted how the agents first fired tear gas, which angered the protesters, leading some to throw stones in response. The agents then discharged firearms.

Amnesty International analysed a video filmed on 21 November 2022 and published online on 22 November 2022 showing the events around Taleghani Street, with the air thick with significant quantities of yellow-green smoke.[778]



A still from a video filmed on 21 November 2022 showing the events around Taleghani Street. The air appears thick with yellow-green smoke. © Private

Jamal said that he saw a protester fall after being struck by a bullet in his thigh. He said:

> **"People did not expect the security forces to open fire on them in such a cruel manner. We had thought that they would fire 'combat bullets' [lethal ammunition] into the air, but instead Taleghani Street turned into a battlefield for the IRGC forces. Taleghani Street is not a large street, but the security forces continued the shootings unabated."**

Jamal stated that he was among the protesters who fled to Farhangian Street and faced further shooting there. Jamal witnessed at least three people being wounded, including a young man who was shot in the back. He said protesters flagged down a motorcyclist to rush the injured man to hospital.

Jamal noted that, for a short while after he moved to Farhangian Street, he was unaware of the deadly events that were unfolding in nearby Taleghani Street. He made a call and learned that three people

778. IRN0133, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: بنابر تصاویر موجود در جوانرود نوع عجیبی از یک گاز شیمیایی استفاده شده که بعضا به رنگ زرد یا سبز بوده و مردم را با آثار شدید جسمانی مواجه ساخته است ["Based on the available footage from Javanroud, a strange type of chemical gas has been used, which in some cases appeared yellow or green in colour and has caused severe physical effects on people. The Hengaw investigation team is examining the matter and will provide information as soon as results are obtained"], 22 November 2022, https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595073892426866688 (in Persian).

had already been killed on Taleghani Street.[779] He said his heart sank, fearing one of them was his brother, and tried to rush to Taleghani Street. He then realized that the situation there was worse than he had imagined:

> **"I spotted a DShK machine gun mounted on top of a vehicle. The agent operating it was firing in all directions… As the repression escalated further, the women who had been staging a sit-in nearby and I were forced to retreat through a side alley."**

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network also shared with Amnesty International the transcript of an interview with another protester, Pejman, who described similar scenes of shootings, which caused extensive injuries to hundreds of protesters, including his brother, who was struck by a bullet in his leg. Pejman stated:

> **"I saw three to four people fall next to me. The IRGC agents, including Basij agents, were relentlessly using rifles and shooting at people. You would pull a few injured people away into side streets and take them into people's homes and, when you returned, you would see a few more had fallen."**

Pejman said a protester who had been shot in the thigh told him that, after he fell to the ground, an IRGC agent came over and was about to shoot him again from close range, but another agent stopped him.

Eyewitness accounts that IRGC agents unlawfully fired on peaceful protesters are corroborated by 18 videos from 21 November 2022,[780] most of which were published online between 21 November and 21 December 2022 and analysed by Amnesty International.

The videos show scenes from the crackdown against protesters and bystanders by security forces using firearms and tear gas, while unarmed protesters are seen fleeing constant shooting or hiding behind trees and walls, sometimes carrying injured protesters. The videos show security forces in plain clothes or in uniforms worn by IRGC agents. In 13 of the videos, continuous gunfire is audible and in at least five videos, large numbers of IRGC agents can be seen carrying and/or firing firearms.

In one video, first published online on 1 December 2022, armed security forces wearing uniforms resembling those of the IRGC are seen directly shooting in the direction of protesters.[781]

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779. See below for the details of those killed.

780. IRN0136, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: در این ویدیو که به شبکه حقوق بشر کردستان رسیده، دیده می‌شود نیروهای سپاه پاسداران در تاریخ ۳۰ آبان پس از برگزاری مراسم خاکسپاری ۲ تن از جان‌باختگان اعتراضات #جوانرود معترضان را به رگبار می‌بندند ["In this video received by Kurdistan Human Rights Network, IRGC forces are seen opening fire on protesters in Javanroud on 21 November, following funeral ceremony of two people killed during protests"], 1 December 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1598438910568587264 (in Persian); IRN0135, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصویری که هم اکنون بدست هه‌نگاو رسیده؛حمله نظامی سپاه نبی اکرم کرمانشاه به جوانرود. ["An image just received by Hengaw shows military attack on Javanroud by Nabi Akram Corps of the IRGC in Kermanshah"], 22 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1595008160167002114 (in Persian); IRN0139, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Chief Inspector Japp, X post: "When the protesters returned to the city, they were attacked on Behdari Street by #IRGCterrorists and Nabi Akram's forces", 21 December 2022,. https://x.com/Chief_Japp/status/1605522758787399681?s=20; IRN0140, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Chief Inspector Japp, X post: "#JamalAzami, along with the rest of the people, hides behind the wall, and suddenly he hears a protester screaming from behind him", 21 December 2022, https://x.com/Chief_Japp/status/1605522982842994688?s=20; IRN0145, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویر دیگری از زخمی شدن چندین شهروند دیگر در جوانرود با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی. ["Additional images show several more civilians injured in Javanroud by direct gunfire from government repressive forces"], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594672111414611969 (in Persian); IRN0134, IRN0137, IRN0138, IRN0141, IRN0142, IRN0143, IRN0144, IRN0146, IRN0147, IRN0148, IRN0149, IRN050, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0151, video on file with Amnesty International (video withheld for privacy and security reasons).

781. IRN0136, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: در این ویدیو که به شبکه حقوق بشر کردستان رسیده، دیده می‌شود نیروهای سپاه پاسداران در تاریخ ۳۰ آبان پس از برگزاری مراسم خاکسپاری ۲ تن از جان‌باختگان اعتراضات #جوانرود معترضان را به رگبار می‌بندند ["In this video received by Kurdistan Human Rights Network, IRGC forces are seen opening fire on protesters in Javanroud on 21 November, following funeral ceremony of two people killed during protests"], 1 December 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1598438910568587264 (in Persian).



A still from a video from Javanroud on 21 November 2022 showing armed IRGC agents facing protesters who are standing behind the camera. In this video, multiple IRGC agents are seen raising their firearms and shooting in the direction of the protesters. © Private

In another video, armed uniformed IRGC agents and plain-clothes members of the security forces are seen running along a street, shouting and firing their weapons.[782] A third video shows large numbers of armed IRGC agents in uniforms and plain-clothes agents walking along a street brandishing their firearms.[783] Further videos show protesters walking or fleeing while IRGC agents are seen in the background and constant gunfire is audible.[784]

Other videos analysed by Amnesty International show scenes of people injured and being helped by others or individuals lying on the ground.[785]

782. IRN0135, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصویری که هم اکنون بدست هه‌نگاو رسیده؛حمله نظامی سپاه نبی اکرم کرمانشاه به جوانرود. ["An image just received by Hengaw shows military attack on Javanroud by Nabi Akram Corps of the IRGC in Kermanshah"], 22 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1595008160167002114 (in Persian).

783. IRN0148, video on file with Amnesty International.

784. IRN0149, video on file with Amnesty International; IRN0140, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Chief Inspector Japp, X post: "#JamalAzami, along with the rest of the people, hides behind the wall, and suddenly he hears a protester screaming from behind him", 21 December 2022, https://x.com/Chief_Japp/status/1605522982842994688?s=20

785. IRN0137, IRN0141, IRN0143, IRN0144, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0139, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Chief Inspector Japp, X post: "When the protesters returned to the city, they were attacked on Behdari Street by #IRGCterrorists and Nabi Akram's forces", 21 December 2022, https://x.com/Chief_Japp/status/1605522758787399681?s=20; IRN0145, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویر دیگری از زخمی شدن چندین شهروند دیگر در جوانرود با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی. ["Additional images show several more civilians injured in Javanroud by direct gunfire from government repressive forces"], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594672111414611969 (in Persian).



A still from a video showing IRGC agents walking along a street in Javanroud and brandishing firearms on 21 November 2022 © Private

It was in the context of this crackdown on and around Taleghani Street on 21 November 2022 that security forces unlawfully killed five people: **Masoud Teimouri**, **Jamal Azami**, **Tahsin Miri**, **Johar Fattahi** and **Esmail Golanbar**.

MASOUD TEIMOURI



Masoud Teimouri © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Masoud Teimouri, a 22-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Javanroud.

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International the transcript of an interview with a protester, Mobin, who recalled that IRGC agents shot Masoud Teimouri when he sought to help several injured protesters, including his father, Mahmoud Teimouri, who had been shot in the abdomen. Mobin said:

"The IRGC forces caught the people off guard and there was no prior warning. We did not even know that agents had been stationed in our path [from the cemetery to Taleghani Street]. They [IRGC agents] had set up an ambush and intended to kill."

Mobin said that Masoud Teimouri was declared dead several minutes after he was taken to Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital.

Mobin said that a group of protesters carried Mahmoud Teimouri to a nearby house as intense gunfire prevented them from taking him to hospital immediately. After about an hour, they managed to take him to Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital, where he spent 27 days in intensive care unaware of his son's death.

JAMAL AZAMI AND TAHSIN MIRI



Jamal Azami (left) and Tahsin Miri (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Jamal Azami, aged 34, and Tahsin Miri, aged 44, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Javanroud that day.

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International the transcript of an interview with a source in Javanroud, Mahboubeh, who spoke to an eyewitness about the circumstances surrounding the killing of Jamal Azami.

According to information obtained by Mahboubeh, Jamal Azami was fleeing mass shootings in an alley off Taleghani Street when he heard another protester, Tahsin Miri, crying out in pain and saw him collapse to the ground after being shot in the back. Jamal Azami and another protester turned back to help Tahsin Miri, but, as they attempted to carry him away, IRGC agents continued to fire. Jamal Azami and Tahsin Miri were transferred to Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in Javanroud where they were declared dead.

Amnesty International analysed a graphic video that depicts the immediate aftermath of the fatal incident.[786] Jamal Azami and Tahsin Miri are seen lying injured on the ground a few metres apart. A group of protesters carry Tahsin Miri into a side street, while another group takes Jamal Azami into another side street on the opposite side. As the victims are being moved, other protesters can be seen sheltering behind walls, looking towards the area where IRGC agents appear to be standing. A few protesters are seen throwing stones. The video captures the sound of constant gunfire amid the distressed cries of protesters.



A still from a video showing protesters attending to Jamal Azami in a side street off Taleghani Street after IRGC agents shot at protesters. This street is directly opposite the side street show in the still below, into which protesters took Tahsin Miri after both men were shot. © Private

786. IRN0145, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تصاویر دیگری از زخمی شدن چندین شهروند دیگر در جوانرود با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی. ["Additional images show several more civilians injured in Javanroud by direct gunfire from government repressive forces"], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594672111414611969 (in Persian).



A still from a video showing protesters attending to Tahsin Miri in a side street off Taleghani Street after IRGC agents shot at protesters. This road is directly opposite the side street shown in the still above, into which protesters took Jamal Azami after both men were shot. © Private

JOHAR FATTAHI



Johar Fattahi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Johar Fattahi, a 60-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Javanroud.

An informed source in Iran, Khosro, told Amnesty International that, according to information obtained from eyewitnesses, Johar Fattahi was shot on Taleghani Street as he approached two protesters who had already been shot by the security forces.

Amnesty International analysed a video that shows Johar Fattahi walking while bleeding from his upper thighs and groin area.[787] Johar Fattahi is pausing and sitting down, with his blood staining the pavement. A fellow protester is helping him to stand up and leave the scene. Other protesters are fleeing amid the sounds of gunshots. Based on the video, the independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International found that it was likely he had suffered an injury to a femoral vessel (a major blood vessel in the groin).

Khosro told Amnesty International that a resident took Johar Fattahi into their house in a side street to help him. After his condition worsened and, on his request, he was taken to his family house instead of a hospital.

787. IRN0144, video on file with Amnesty International.

At his house, Johar Fattahi lost consciousness following extensive bleeding. His family eventually took him to a hospital, but it was too late to save him.

Amnesty International reviewed Johar Fattahi's death certificate which lists his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".



A still from a video showing Johar Fattahi in the moments after he was shot. He is sitting on the ground due to his gunshot injuries. © Private

ESMAIL GOLANBAR



Esmail Golanbar © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Esmail Golanbar, a 39-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Javanroud.

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, Esmail Golanbar was killed on Taleghani Street amid a crackdown on protesters.

Amnesty International examined six videos capturing the immediate aftermath of Esmail Golanbar's killing.[788]

In one video, filmed by a protester and published on 21 December 2022, Esmail Golanbar's body lies on the ground amid chaotic scenes of protesters fleeing from IRGC agents who repeatedly fire lethal ammunition towards them.[789] Protesters are seeking cover behind a wall while loudly condemning the actions of the IRGC agents. Multiple members of the security forces in uniforms and plain clothes can be seen on the other side of the street from where his body lies.

788. IRAN0141, video on file with Amnesty International; IRN0151, IRN0152, IRN0153, IRN0154, videos on file with Amnesty International (videos withheld for security and privacy concerns).
789. IRN0140, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Chief Inspector Japp, X post: "#JamalAzami, along with the rest of the people, hides behind the wall, and suddenly he hears a protester screaming from behind him", 21 December 2022, https://x.com/Chief_Japp/status/1605522982842994688?s=20



Two stills from a video taken on 21 November 2022. On the left, uniformed IRGC agents and plain-clothes agents are seen on Taleghani Street in the moments after Esmail Golanbar was killed. The yellow frame highlights the agents on the pavement. They are carrying firearms. Some of the agents are wearing balaclavas. The agents are standing directly across the street from where Esmail Golanbari was killed. On the right, a nearby part of Taleghani Street can be seen. The yellow frame on the right highlights the lifeless body of Esmail Golanbar. The yellow frame on the left highlights where agents are standing, near a white car. Just before this scene in the video, protesters are seen running along the street towards the camera and taking cover in the side street from where this video was filmed. © Private

The second video shows a close-up shot of his body lying motionless on the ground while the sounds of protesters shouting and a gunshot can be heard in the background.[790]

Two further videos show several IRGC agents wearing brown and beige camouflage uniforms standing or walking near Esmail Golanbar's lifeless body on the pavement of Taleghani Street, with blood pooling around his head and on the pavement.[791]

790. IRN0141, video on file with Amnesty International.
791. IRN0152, IRN0153, videos on file with Amnesty International (videos withheld for security and privacy concerns).



A still from a video filmed on 21 November 2022 in Javanroud showing IRGC agents in brown and beige camouflage uniforms standing near Esmail Golanbar's lifeless body on the pavement in Taleghani Street, with blood pooling on the pavement around him. © Private

The fifth video shows Esmail Golanbar's lifeless body in the same position, while a cleric is seen speaking to a plain-clothes agent nearby.[792] As they talk, three IRGC agents wearing brown and beige camouflage uniforms, as well as white face masks or black balaclavas that cover their faces, move along the street, looking out in different directions and remaining visibily attentive to their surroundings. The agents are carrying shotguns and AK-pattern rifles. Additionally, at least seven more armed IRGC agents can be seen walking or standing on the pavement near Esmail Golanbar's body. The video begins with loud, trembling sounds in the background. Towards the end of the video, the cleric and most of the agents move off camera, appearing to engage with something happening just out of view.

The sixth video captures several IRGC agents wearing brown and beige camouflage uniforms moving Esmail Golanbar's body and dumping it in the back of a pickup truck equipped with a DShK machine gun.[793] Two IRGC agents are seen in the back of the vehicle, while more than a dozen other IRGC agents, along with the cleric mentioned earlier, are seen standing or walking around the truck on the street and along the pavement. As Esmail Golanbar's body is being moved, what sounds like gunfire can be heard, along with the voice of an agent using a loudspeaker to order people to return to their homes and avoid looking through their windows. A vehicle with four mounted speakers then appears on the scene, pauses briefly, and moves on while the vehicle

792. IRN0154, video on file with Amnesty International (video withheld for security and privacy concerns).
793. IRN0151, video on file with Amnesty International (video withheld for security and privacy concerns).

equipped with the DShK machine gun turns around and drives away. As the pickup truck leaves, some of the IRGC agents and the cleric can be seen on the street signalling to each other and individuals off camera with hand gestures, while others stand guard, and a few are seen aiming their firearms. The agent's threatening voice through the loudspeakers remains audible.



A still from a video taken on 21 November 2022 on Taleghani Street showing a group of IRGC agents, sometime after Esmail Golabnar was killed. The agents are carrying firearms and wearing beige and brown camouflage uniforms, as well as beige or black balaclavas, or masks, covering their faces. The pickup truck is mounted with a DShK machine gun. This still is from a few moments after security forces removed Esmail Golanbar's lifeless body from the pavement and dumped it into the pickup truck. The yellow frame highlights his legs in the truck as his body is driven away. He is wearing black trousers and his legs are visible. © Private

The security forces' crackdown on protests in Javanroud on 21 November 2022 also left scores of protesters, mourners and bystanders with serious and sometimes life-changing injuries, affecting both themselves and their families.

Amnesty International documented in detail the cases of 12 protesters aged between 16 and 73 – 10 men, one woman and one child – who were seriously injured. Eleven of them suffered severe gunshot wounds, leading to long-term complications, while one man was injured by metal pellets for which he did not receive specialized medical care.

The details of 11 of the 12 victims are presented below while the details of the remaining one, Mahmoud Teimouri, appears in a case box above about the unlawful killing of his son, Masoud Teimouri.

The sources interviewed about these cases also referred to numerous other injured protesters, including children, whom they saw on the streets or in private homes where they had been initially taken for first aid and/or at hospitals.

Protesters consistently recounted the challenges that injured protesters and their families faced when trying to access medical care. Fearing arrest, those injured by metal pellets often avoided going to hospitals. If the metal pellets were close to the surface, they would remove them at home. However, when the metal pellets were lodged deep in their bodies, many endured weeks or even months of agony with them still embedded.

Protesters who were struck by bullets sometimes used pieces of cloth to staunch their wounds and endured agonizing pain until the security situation calmed down enough to visit a hospital. Others who did go to hospitals often requested early discharge to avoid being identified. Some were even interrogated by members of the security forces while receiving medical treatment in hospital. Many families, fearing for their loved ones' safety, chose to drive them out of Javanroud, enduring perilous journeys with the injured, who were often at risk due to blood loss. Some also spent the recovery period hiding outside Javanroud to avoid arrest, which took a further toll on their health and well-being and/or they refrained from returning to their workplace to avoid identification due to their injuries, which caused them and their families financial hardship.

NARIMAN

Nariman,[794] a 41-year-old man, was left in a coma and then needed intensive care and months of gruelling surgery after a member of the security forces shot him during protests in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International from two informed sources, Navid and Aida, he was struck in his throat by a bullet fired from an AK-pattern rifle, which became lodged in his neck, breaking one of his vertebrae and damaging his spinal cord. The sources interviewed by Amnesty International said that an agent positioned on a rooftop fired at Nariman while he was on Taleghani Street talking with other protesters.

Amnesty International reviewed a video capturing the immediate aftermath of the shooting.[795] In the video, Nariman is briefly seen with his face and throat covered in blood. Amid sounds of gunshots, distressed protesters in a side street are carrying him. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, many feared that he had died after he instantly lost consciousness.

Amnesty International learned that, following the incident, Nariman was in a coma for several days and hospitalized in the intensive care unit Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in Javanroud for around a week. Aida told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 21 November 2022, in addition to Nariman, she saw several other protesters with severe gunshot wounds to their stomach, arm or back in the same intensive care unit.

On 28 November 2022, Nariman underwent an intensive surgical operation that lasted several hours. Several days after the surgery, it transpired that his oesophagus had been perforated when he was shot. A stent was then inserted to allow him to drink fluids. Medical assessments indicated

794. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.
795. IRN0268, video on file with Amnesty International.

that his throat had sustained serious damage, affecting his ability to breathe and speak. He depended on a tracheostomy tube for breathing for about five months. He underwent multiple further surgical operations, after which he could breathe through his nose and mouth, but doctors said that it was impossible to repair his vocal cords.

A year on from the incident, he still needed to use an electrolarynx, a medical device for producing voice, and his left hand and leg remained numb due to nerve damage.

The independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed a photograph that shows a mid-line vertical healed surgical scar, about 8cm in length, on the back of his neck. There is a tracheal airway in place.

ANAHITA

Anahita[796] was among those seriously injured by IRGC agents in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, leaving her with long-term numbness and mobility problems.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, Anahita recalled that IRGC agents positioned several metres away fired towards her and other protesters on Taleghani Street, while they were fleeing. A bullet struck her left thigh leading to extensive injuries and long-term complications. She stated:

"I have undergone surgery twice now. The bullet burnt through 5cm of my bone and severed a nerve, leaving me unable to move, with my left leg completely numb. After a bone graft procedure, I am scheduled for nerve graft surgery in the coming months. However, doctors have told me there is only a 20% chance that my leg will regain mobility."

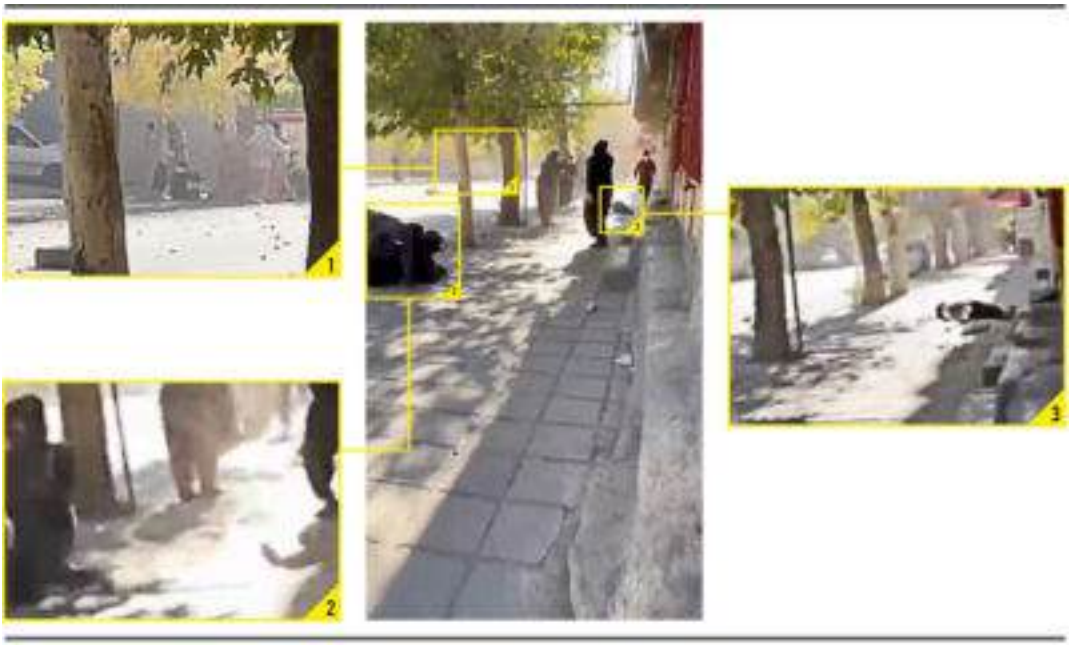
Anahita said that, after she was shot, she was initially taken to a nearby house by her family and other protesters and her wound was dressed with a cloth. However, as she was experiencing severe bleeding, her family decided to take her to Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in Javanroud. There, because of the severity of her injury, she was advised to go to a hospital in Kermanshah. On arrival at Taleghani Hospital in Kermanshah, they saw a heavy presence of security forces, so they went to Hakim Hospital in Kermanshah. Anahita said that she spent one night and one day there, but no specialized treatment was provided. She was then transferred back to Taleghani Hospital for surgery.

Amnesty International has analysed a video that captures Anahita being shot while fleeing and then swiftly carried away by fellow protesters.[797] The video shows how, as Anahita and several other protesters run from continuous gunfire, she stumbles and falls to her knees. The body of Esmail Golanbar, who was unlawfully killed moments earlier, is visible on the ground as protesters run past, unable to stop due to the relentless shooting by security forces. Moments later, the video shows several IRGC agents carrying rifles and wearing balaclavas that cover their faces.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed seven X-rays that show a comminuted (multiple) fracture of the top of the left femur (thigh bone). The expert confirmed that the spread of small bone fragments is consistent with a bullet wound, although no bullet fragments are seen. An improvised belt tourniquet can be seen in the initial X-ray. Post surgical X-rays show repair by pins and a plate. An associated letter in English records damage to Anahita's sciatic nerve, the main nerve of the leg.

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796. The victim's name has been withheld to protect her security.
797. IRN0140, video on file with Amnesty International.



Stills from a video from 21 November 2022. (1) IRGC agents are positioned several metres away across the street. (2) The protester seen kneeling in the foreground, to the left, is Anahita, a moment after she was struck by a bullet in her leg. (3) The body lying on the pavement further behind is Esmail Golanbar. © Private

DAMOUN

Damoun,[798] a 16-year-old boy, was severely injured during the crackdown on protests in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, Damoun's father, Neysun, said that Damoun was struck by two bullets in his arm and leg on Taleghani Street amid extensive indiscriminate shooting by IRGC agents. Protesters present at the scene initially took Damoun to a nearby house. His family then took him to Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital hospital in Javanroud. Later that day, given his critical condition and limited resources at the hospital in Javanroud, his family transferred him to Taleghani Hospital in Kermanshah, where he was hospitalized for about 20 days and underwent several surgical operations. Doctors advised him not to move for six months to allow the platinum implant inserted into his body to settle. They further noted that he might need further surgery as his sciatic nerve had been damaged.

Damoun was a boxing champion in Kermanshah province. His life-changing injuries interrupted his education and left him unable to continue his sport.

KOUROUSH

Kourosh[799] was injured by two bullets fired by security forces during the crackdown in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, leaving him with serious problems with his legs.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, Kourosh stated that he ran, along with several other protesters, into an alley off Taleghani Street, but the IRGC agents had blocked the other end of it. The IRGC agents then

798. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.
799. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.

fired lethal ammunition towards them using a DShK machine gun mounted on a vehicle. A bullet hit his right leg and, immediately after, another struck his left leg. He recounted how one of the IRGC agents then hurled a rock at him and, soon after, three or four IRGC agents came over and beat him, including on his head, with their weapons and fists, and kicked him.

Kourosh stated that local clerics and an elderly man who were nearby intervened, stopping the assault. He recounted one of the agents loudly stating, "Shoot him, he is a prisoner of war". Kourosh said that the agent tried to have the vehicle equipped with the DShK machine gun take Kourosh away, but the vehicle drove off in pursuit of other protesters.

Amid the chaos, several people managed to put Kourosh in a car and rush him to hospital. Kourosh said that, later at the hospital, the security forces apprehended him and ordered his transfer to another hospital in Kermanshah.[800] Kourosh said that, despite his serious condition, security forces interrogated him at the hospital, asking about the identities of protesters he knew, the role of Kurdish opposition parties in the protests and his affiliation with them. Kourosh subsequently underwent several surgical operations and suffered prolonged infection in one of his legs.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed 20 X-ray images and nine photographs capturing the injuries sustained by Kourosh. According to the pathologist, the evidence shows that both lower legs were fractured and that the fractures were stabilized using surgical external fixation (supports attached outside the legs). One X-ray shows a comminuted (multiple) fracture of the right tibia (shin bone) and fibula (the outer bone of the two bones in the lower part of the leg between the knee and the ankle) just below the knee joint. The pathologist observed that although no bullet fragments are seen in the X-ray, the appearance of the fractures strongly suggests that the wounds to the lower legs were caused by a high-velocity gunshot, such as that from a rifle. This interpretation is supported by a large (about 5-6cm) open wound to one leg which has the appearance of an exit wound caused by a high-velocity gunshot.

HASHEM

Hashem[801] was seriously injured during the crackdown in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, leaving him at one point unconscious.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, Hashem described how IRGC agents "opened fire on defenceless citizens without any warning." He noted that he saw the IRGC agents using various rifles which he believed, based on his military knowledge, included SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and G-3 rifles. Hashem said that he sought refuge in a side street off Taleghani Street. He then saw a young man being shot and killed before his eyes. He said that, amid the constant shooting, he was unable to identify the victim. He stated:

"The situation was chaotic... They [the authorities] had militarized the whole city, particularly Taleghani Street… The cries of people filled the air, warning others not to stay in the street, as the risk of being shot was high. The IRGC forces were using lethal ammunition without any hesitation, as if they were facing a foreign enemy rather than their own people."

A few minutes later, Hashem was struck by a bullet while fleeing:

800. The names of the two hospitals have been withheld for security reasons.
801. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.

"At first, I did not realize I had been wounded. Suddenly, I saw that my shoes were filled with blood, and I fell to the ground. The bullet had struck my calf, exiting through my foot, with such force that it tore through the flesh and even shredded my shoe."

Hashem said that several protesters first took him to a nearby house where a woman, along with a few young men, bandaged his wound until he could reach a hospital. He then lost consciousness and so was taken to hospital, where he regained consciousness and received initial treatment. A few hours later, due to fears of arrest, he asked to be discharged and returned home. Around 10 days after the incident, he underwent surgery.

BEHROOZ

Behrooz[802] was shot and severely injured during the crackdown on protesters in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, Behrooz said that he was struck by a bullet in his knee as he was trying to help a boy, aged around 15-16 years, who had been shot. He recalled that the IRGC agents fired at them, using AK-pattern rifles, from a distance of 30-40m.

Behrooz said that, due to fears of arrest, he refrained from going to hospital immediately. Instead, he went to a nearby house, which had left its doors open to help protesters escape. There, he met several other protesters with injuries more severe than his. He said a piece of cloth was used to bandage his knee. In the following days, Behrooz went to a hospital where X-rays were taken, and his leg was put in a cast for two recalled.

Behrooz recalled that he witnessed many others on Taleghani Street that day who sustained gunshot wounds, including a 65-year-old man, Johar Fattahi, who was shot and killed.

MATIN HASHEMI

Matin Hashemi, aged 18, was among the scores of protesters, including children, who sustained severe injuries during the crackdown against peaceful protesters in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

In an interview with Amnesty International, he described how he was among the protesters on Taleghani Street and was struck by a bullet that entered the right side of his body, damaging his right kidney, passed into the left side, damaging his left kidney, and lodged itself in his pelvis. He told the organization that he witnessed IRGC agents standing on top of many buildings, including residential buildings, and firing their rifles into the air and at the ground. He also recalled seeing IRGC agents launching green and orange tear gas. He told the organization: "The people just wanted to go to the homes of the victims killed. They had nothing to do with the agents, but the mercenaries [agents] of the Islamic Republic had the intention to kill."

Several protesters took Matin Hashemi inside a home where he lost consciousness. Matin Hashemi recalled that he regained consciousness some minutes later to the sounds of non-stop firing, shouting and around two dozen uniformed IRGC agents trying to arrest him and other injured protesters from inside the home. Members of the public managed to save him from being taken away by the IRGC agents and took him to the home of one of his relatives. From there, the family

802. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.

took Matin Hashemi to a hospital in Kermanshah city. He was admitted six hours after the incident, by which time he had suffered extensive blood loss.

At the hospital, Matin Hashemi was immediately taken in for surgery and was kept in for two weeks. In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, an informed source in Iran, Jamal, said that the surgical operation took several hours and that, to protect Matin Hashemi from being arrested, a medical worker falsified the medical report, claiming the injury was from a knife fight. Matin Hashemi told Amnesty International that multiple agents of the IRGC's Basij battalions stationed at the hospital constantly harassed him while he was receiving treatment, seeking information to ascertain whether he was a protester who had been shot in order to detain him.

Jamal noted that seven or eight other injured protesters had been also brought to the hospital from Javanroud on 21 November 2022. One young man had been struck by bullets in both legs and doctors initially thought that his legs might need to be amputated. Jamal also mentioned someone who had been shot in the bladder and had undergone surgery that same day. He added that, on that day, the emergency room of the hospital was exclusively dedicated to injured people from Javanroud.

Matin Hashemi needed treatment for nearly two months, during which he did not return to Javanroud out of fear of arrest. Months later, the fear of arrest still haunted him. He subsequently fled in Iran.

ARMIN

Armin[803] sustained severe injuries during the crackdown by IRGC agents against peaceful protesters in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, a human rights defender and informed source, Ehsan, recalled that Armin fell to the ground after being hit by a bullet in his foot and was then beaten by IRGC agents. Armin underwent multiple surgical operations to repair the shattered bone in his foot but experienced minimal improvement.

For months after the incident, he lived in hiding at a relative's house in a village near Javanroud due to fears of arrest, which exacerbated his poor health.

803. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.

SIAVASH

Siavash[804] sustained severe injuries during the crackdown by IRGC agents against peaceful protesters in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, a human rights defender and informed source, Siamak, stated that Siavash was struck by a bullet in his thigh. Due to fear of arrest, his family drove him to Paveh, 45km away, where he underwent surgery discreetly, without revealing the circumstances of his injury, and had a plate inserted in his leg.

According to Siamak, the severity of Siavash's injury left him with one leg shorter than the other leg. Months after the incident, he still needed a cane to walk and had not fully recovered. Fearing identification and arrest, he avoided returning to his workplace, which led to serious financial hardship for him and his family.

KOUHYAR

Kouhyar[805] was injured by metal pellets fired by IRGC agents during the crackdown on peaceful protesters in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

In an interview with the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, the transcript of which was shared with Amnesty International, Kouhyar stated that he was struck by 45 metal pellets in his legs: "The security forces showed no mercy. The older protesters moved forward in an attempt to stop the shooting and protect the younger ones, but it made no difference."

Kouhyar said that, with the help of a few people, he managed to get home. Due to fear of arrest, he refrained from going to a hospital or medical centre and removed the pellets at home with the help of his brother, who is a doctor. He stated:

"We knew that going to hospitals and other medical centres was dangerous as they were all under tight control [by the security and intelligence forces]. Therefore, following the advice of my children and my brother, who is a doctor, I was treated at home. For a full week, I experienced significant pain and felt unwell, but gradually I improved at home. One of my daughters, who had received first aid training, had some bandaging supplies and my brother and other friends also managed to gather additional materials."

804. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.
805. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.

HABIB

Habib[806] was among the many protesters injured by IRGC agents during the crackdown on peaceful protesters in Javanroud on 21 November 2022.

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International the transcript of an interview with Habib's brother, Pejman, who said that Habib's legs were injured by both bullets and metal pellets. Pejman added that he learned his brother had been shot after returning home from the protests that day to change his clothes. He said that, due to fear of arrest, the family took his brother to a place outside Janavroud where he received medical care discreetly.

Pejman described the challenges faced by his brother and other injured protesters in accessing medical care. He noted that, in the hours and days after the crackdown, protesters who refused to go to hospital and instead were treated at home suffered agonizing pain:

"Aside from some needles and sutures, we had nothing – no anaesthetics at all. Everything was shut down, and the pharmacies were closed. The city was swarming with IRGC agents. People were constantly afraid of being identified. We had no access to anything."

Additionally, Amnesty International obtained the testimonies of seven protesters – Aida, Behrooz, Faraz, Jamal, Kourosh, Pejman and Shahram – who saw IRGC agents firing canisters that emitted coloured gas. All six witnesses reported seeing green and/or orange gas, Behrooz also recalled seeing red and blue gas, Jamal noted blue gas, Faraz noted orange and green gas, and Aida observed yellow gas.

Kourosh, Behrooz and Pejman said the green gas caused dizziness. Koroush saw several people fainting. Behrooz added that the gas disoriented them, blocked their view and caused severe coughing in some people. Jamal said that his eyes were severely burnt due to repeated exposure. Aida told Amnesty International about a child protester who was taken to a doctor after he experienced digestive complications; the doctor said that the symptoms resulted from exposure to the gas deployed in the protests. Amnesty International was not able to obtain additional information to independently verify this and believes that further investigations are needed.

Shahram described the condition of one of the protesters who had breathed in the gas as follows:

> **"He had a strange and rapidly blinking eyelid. It was difficult for him to speak, but I discerned that he said he felt nauseous. A few of us blew some cigarette smoke into his eyes and face to help, but he kept groaning. From what I understood, he was experiencing a burning sensation on his skin. He repeatedly rubbed his face and head."**

Amnesty International analysed videos posted in the days following 21 November 2022 that depict a heavy presence of security forces in Javanroud.[807] Two videos, originally published on 24 and 25 November 2022, show convoys of trucks and other vehicles transporting security forces into the city. In one of the videos, approximately 30 armed agents are parading through side streets in a display of force. According to local residents, this show of strength was widely interpreted as a deliberate act of intimidation intended to deter further protests.

806. The victim's name has been withheld to protect his security.
807. IRN0155, IRN0156, videos on file with Amnesty International.

7.3.3 PROTESTS ON 31 DECEMBER 2022

Javanroud was gripped by protests once again on 31 December 2022, which marked 40 days following the death of the seven people unlawfully killed by the security forces on 21 November 2022.

According to eyewitness accounts obtained by Amnesty International, on the morning of 31 December 2022, thousands of mourners and protesters headed towards Haj Ebrahim cemetery in Javanroud, where some of the seven victims had been buried. As they approached the cemetery, they saw large numbers of members of the security forces blocking the way to the cemetery, including uniformed IRGC agents, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA dressed in black uniforms and plain-clothes agents.

A protester, Shahram, told Amnesty International that an IRGC agent used a megaphone to order people to return home. Two other protesters, Aida and Danesh, told the organization that the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, dressed in black uniforms and armed with shotguns and batons, encircled the cemetery and warned people that they would open fire on them if they did not leave the area. Danesh recalled that, behind the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, IRGC agents stood armed with both shotguns and AK-pattern rifles. However, the people did not leave and attempted to find alternative ways into the cemetery

Danesh told Amnesty International that, as the number of protesters and mourners grew, the security forces started to fire tear gas and lethal ammunition, including metal pellets, to disperse the crowd, injuring several people.

Shahram stated that, after they were prevented from entering the cemetery, hundreds of protesters made their way back to the city, initially congregating around Imam Khomeini Square and then moving towards Taleghani Street (widely known as Behdari Street) and Hamzeh Street near Azadi Square (also known as Basij Square). According to Shahram, from the outset, the security forces resorted to firing tear gas to disperse the crowds, but the protesters did not disperse. After a while, IRGC agents, including members f the IRGC's Basij battalions, escalated the crackdown, using AK-pattern rifles to fire at the protesters and pursued them as they sought refuge. Shahram said that, at times, the distance between the protesters and the IRGC agents firing was only around 50m.

Aida told Amnesty International that the security forces fired in multiple directions, even targeting residential houses:

> **"Our homes trembled from the intensity of gunfire. The security forces also shot at residential buildings. Locals reported an incident where the security forces fired at two five-storey buildings. A bullet shattered a window of one of the houses and hit the fridge inside the apartment."**

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International the name and details of a 24-year-old protester, Omid, who was struck by a tear gas canister in his chest, causing a deep wound. Omid said that a member of the security forces threw the tear gas canister at him from a distance of about 2m. He was hospitalized for about a month. Following his release, due to fears of arrest, he stayed at a relative's house in a village outside Javanroud, which took a great toll on his health.

Amnesty International analysed multiple videos recorded in Javanroud showing the events of 31 December 2022, corroborating witness accounts of the crackdown. The videos show members of the security forces wearing camouflage uniforms resembling those of the IRGC, black uniforms resembling those of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA or plain clothes and carrying firearms. In two videos, in both of which the sound of gunfire is audible, security forces are shown raising their firearms and shooting.[808]

808. IRN0157, IRN0158, videos on file with Amnesty International.

In the first video, filmed from a hill above the town, dozens of members of the security forces wearing uniforms resembling those of the IRGC are seen marching along a street.[809] Towards the end of the video, one agent is seen raising his firearm and shooting in the direction of the protesters.[810]



Two stills from a video from Javanround on 31 December 2022. On the left, a protester stands on a hill in the foreground as IRGC agents carrying firearms head along a street below. In the video, the agents can be seen heading in the direction of protesters in the hills above Javanroud and the sound of gunshots is audible. On the right, in the yellow frame, one of the agents is seen with his firearm raised. In the video, he can be seen shooting towards protesters on the hills. © Private



A still from a video showing members of the security forces wearing black uniforms resembling those of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. The yellow frame highlights an agent with his firearm raised. In the video, he is seen shooting at protesters who are off screen at the corner of Hamzeh Street, amid the sound of gunshots. © Private

809. IRN0157, video on file with Amnesty International.
810. IRN0157, video on file with Amnesty International.

The second video shows the heavy presence of security forces wearing black uniforms and helmets resembling those of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.[811] In the video, one agent runs into the middle of the screen, raises his firearm and shoots in the direction of protesters who are off screen.

A third video shows another group of security forces wearing black uniforms and helmets resembling those of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.[812] In the video, one agent raises his firearm in a manner that suggests he may be about to shoot.[813]

Other videos show evidence of the significant use of tear gas against protesters, including one video,[814] where tear gas has been fired into a car. Another video recorded in the hills above the town, in the vicinity of the Haj Ebrahim cemetery, shows a large group of mourners fleeing from security forces wearing uniforms resembling those of the IRGC and carrying firearms, while the sound of gunfire is audible.[815] The protesters are coughing from exposure to tear gas.

Continuous gunfire is heard in five of the videos.[816]



A photograph captured on 31 December 2022 showing members of the security forces on top of the building of the justice department in Javanroud © Private

A photograph captured on 31 December 2022 shows members of the security forces on top of the building of the justice department in Javanroud.[817]

The crackdown on 31 December 2022 resulted in the unlawful killing of one individual, **Borhan Eliasi**.

811. IRN0158, video on file with Amnesty International.
812. IRN0159, video on file with Amnesty International.
813. IRN0159, video on file with Amnesty International.
814. IRN0160, video on file with Amnesty International.
815. IRN0161, video on file with Amnesty International.
816. IRN0157, IRN0158, IRN0159, IRN0161, IRN0162, videos on file with Amnesty International.
817. Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: "The deployment of IRGC snipers on the roof of the Judiciary building in Javanroud", 31 December 2022, https://x.com/Hengaw_English/status/1609198809241862148?s=20

BORHAN ELIASI



Borhan Eliasi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Borhan Eliasi, a 26-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 31 December 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Javanroud.

A protester, Shahram, told Amnesty International that Borhan Eliasi was among the protesters who gathered in Haj Ebrahim cemetery that day and then marched to the city centre. Shahram said that the fatal incident happened around noon in Hamzeh Street near Azadi Square (Basij Square).

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International the transcript of an interview with another informed source in Iran, Bahram, who stated that, based on information obtained by Borhan Eliasi's family from eyewitnesses, an IRGC agent shot him from a distance of 1-2m using a rifle after Borhan Eliasi intervened to help a young protester who was being beaten by members of the security forces.

Bahram said that Borhan Eliasi sustained two gunshot wounds, one close to his heart and the other on his right shoulder. According to Bahram, protesters took Borhan Eliasi to a hospital, where he died around an hour later.

Amnesty International reviewed a video showing chaotic scenes in which a group of people are carrying the lifeless body of Borhan Eliasi inside what appears to be a hospital after he was fatally shot.[818] In the video, his bare chest has a dressing over a wound close to his heart. On the afternoon of 31 December 2022, many protesters headed towards Hassan Gayer cemetery in Javanroud to bury Borhan Eliasi. Protesters then made their way back to the city centre along Shafei Street. Shahram recalled that, during this march, some outraged protesters vandalized banks and an IRGC checkpoint.

From 31 December 2022 onwards, protests began to die down in Javanroud as security forces carried out mass arbitrary arrests, including during nightly raids, and created a militarized climate across the city. The people of Javanourd also suffered crippling restrictions from late November 2022 until early March 2023. During this period, the IRGC forces installed checkpoints at the entrances to the city, tightly controlling the movement of vehicles in and out of the city and frequently preventing items purchased from Javanroud's market leaving the city.[819] The restrictions deeply impacted the daily lives and livelihoods of many residents.

On 24 February 2023, the representative of the Supreme Leader and the Friday prayer leader of Paveh, Ghader Ghaderi, acknowledged the devastating impact of the restrictions on Javanroud.[820] He stated:

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818. IRN0163, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: #برهان_الیاسی، اهل جوانرود، امروز ۱۰ دی ۱۴۰۱ در مقاومت مردمی جوانرود با شلیک مستقیم مزدوران سرکوبگر به قتل رسید. ["#Borhan_Elyasi, a resident of Javanroud, was killed today, 31 December 2022, by direct fire from repressive regime forces during the people's resistance in Javanroud"], 31 December 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1609121439613095942 (in Persian).

819. See also Center for Human Rights in Iran and the Kurdistan Human Rights Network, *Massacre in Javanrud State Atrocities Against Protesters in Iran's Kurdish Regions*, September 2023, https://iranhumanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/Massacre-in-Javanrud-Iran-Violations-Report.pdf

820. Mamousta Mollah Ghader Ghaderi Friday Prayer Leader of Paveh, نماز جمعه شهر پاوه/ حاج ماموستاملا قادر قادری جمعه ۵ اسفند ۱۴۰۱ ["Friday Prayer in city of Paveh / Haji Mamousta Mollah Ghader Ghaderi, Friday 24 February 2023"], 24 February 2023, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEoepkucQiY (in Kurdish).

"During the recent riots and protests, the people of Javanroud county faced numerous difficulties, and unfortunate incidents occurred… During this period, checkpoints were established around Javanroud to maintain security, placing traders and merchants in Javanroud in a state of bankruptcy and causing the market in this city to approach closure."[821]

Ghader Ghaderi proceeded to explain that, amid growing public pressure to lift the restrictions, extensive high-level discussions were held with senior IRGC commanders, suggesting their involvement. According to Ghader Ghaderi, the commanders included Mohammad Nazar Azimi, the then commander of the Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, which directs and oversees IRGC operations in the provinces of Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan,[822] and his deputy, Kourosh Asiabani.

Ghader Ghaderi revealed that the eventual order to lift the restrictions was issued by the commander of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC, Mohammad Pakpour.[823] Ghader Ghaderi stated:

"To lift the restrictions and meet the demands and requests of the people, numerous consultations were conducted. After extensive follow-up and consultations with the commanders of the Najaf [Ashraf] Headquarters… in a call made to General [Mohammad] Pakpour, the commander of the Ground [Resistance] Force, the situation in Javanroud was explained… He issued an order to lift the restrictions and checkpoints."[824]

7.4 ESLAM ABAD-E GHARB

Eslam Abad-e Gharb, a city with a population of 140,876 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016, was gripped by protests on the evening of 21 September 2022, with hundreds of women, men and children peacefully gathering in Imam Khomeini Square and then marching towards the Office of the Governor located on Fakouri Street near a three-way intersection known as the Hedayat three-way intersection or Hedayat Square.[825]

A protester, Farhad, told Amnesty international that, as the march began, around 50 plain-clothes individuals, who were within the crowd, started hurling stones at banks and government buildings. He suspected them to be affiliated with the security forces, noting that they had covered their faces with masks and that many of them spoke in Persian, unlike members of the local community, who tend to use Kurdish to communicate with each other. Farhad noted that most protesters objected to this vandalism, urging the individuals to stop their actions. Farhad explained that their actions provided a pretext for the security forces to use firearms.

The security forces' crackdown resulted in the unlawful killing of **Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi**, **Saeed Mohammadi** and **Iman Mohammadi**.

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821. Mamousta Mollah Ghader Ghaderi Friday Prayer Leader of Paveh, نماز جمعه شهر پاوه/ حاج ماموستاملا قادر قادری جمعه ۵ اسفند ۱۴۰۱ ["Friday Prayer in city of Paveh / Haji Mamousta Mollah Ghader Ghaderi, Friday 24 February 2023"], 24 February 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEoepkucQiY (in Kurdish), minute 23:05-24:27.

822. For more details, see section 13.4.3(II).

823. For more details, see section 13.4.3(I). See also Fars News, وقتی صدای ماموستا قادری فرمان سردار پاکپور شد ["When Mamousta Ghaderi's voice became Sardar Pakpour's command"], 21 April 2026, https://farsnews.ir/Aranramazani1/1776768025299894111/وقتی-صدای-ماموستا-قادری-فرمان-سردار-پاکپور-شد?lang=en

824. Mamousta Mollah Ghader Ghaderi Friday Prayer Leader of Paveh, نماز جمعه شهر پاوه/ حاج ماموستاملا قادر قادری جمعه ۵ اسفند ۱۴۰۱ ["Friday Prayer in city of Paveh / Haji Mamousta Mollah Ghader Ghaderi, Friday 24 February 2023"], 24 February 2023, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEoepkucQiY (in Sorani Kurdish), minute 25:57-27:30.

825. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census

ANOUSHIRVAN (AMIR ALI) FOULADI, SAEED MOHAMMADI AND IMAN MOHAMMADI



Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi (left), Saeed Mohammadi (centre) and Iman Mohammadi (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi, aged 18, Saeed Mohammadi, aged 20, and Iman Mohammadi, aged 32, all from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 September 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Kermanshah province.

A protester, Farhad, told Amnesty international that, at around 6.30pm, security forces advanced towards the protesters who had gathered near the Hedayat three-way intersection, fired several shots into the air, and then began firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets at the protesters. He recalled that those firing were plain-clothes agents and that behind them were uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and the IRGC's Basij battalions equipped with shields and protective helmets.

Farhad shared with Amnesty International a video that shows dozens of plain-clothes agents and uniformed agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA and the IRGC's Basij battalions walking past Mellat Bank on Fakouri Street towards protesters gathered near the Hedayat three-way intersection.[826] A plain-clothes agent positioned at the front is seen firing what looks like a tear gas launcher into the air. A few seconds later, another agent, who appears to be a FARAJA agent, is seen using a similar weapon. What sounds like three other single shots are subsequently heard. Several other agents appear to be carrying firearms.

Farhad also recalled seeing agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, dressed in black uniforms, firing shots into the air and deploying tear gas. In response, some protesters lit a fire at a traffic police station. Farhad also noted the heavy presence of cars belonging to the Prevention Police of FARAJA and armoured vehicles belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.

Farhad told Amnesty International that, as people fled into side streets, distinct sounds of gunfire could be heard, originating from IRGC agents positioned on the rooftops of Imam Hossein Mosque and Mellat Bank, located next to each other and near the Office of the County Governor on Fakouri Street.

Farhad said that, seconds after he fled into a side street located behind Imam Hossein Mosque, he received a phone call from a friend saying that two young men had been shot near the mosque. Farhad later learned that the victims' names were Saeed Mohammadi and Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi.

Farhad stated that, after he learned about the transfer of Saeed Mohammadi to hospital, he attempted to go there as well. However, the route was blocked by uniformed FARAJA agents and plain-clothes agents. Amid the sound of gunfire, he sought refuge in a nearby house, which had left its door open to assist protesters.

Farhad told Amnesty International that, following these deadly shootings, some protesters regrouped in front of the Office of the County Governor where the security forces shot and killed a

826. IRN0164, video on file with Amnesty International.

third man, Iman Mohammadi, and injured several other protesters.

Farhad added that many of the injured protesters refrained from seeking treatment at hospitals due to information circulating in the city that security forces positioned at hospitals were arresting patients with gunshot wounds.

Amnesty International was unable to obtain a copy of the death or burial certificate for Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi, Saeed Mohammadi or Iman Mohammadi.

According to Farhad, in the days and weeks following the crackdown on 21 September 2022, "the streets of Eslam Abad-e Gharb became militarized, [leaving] no room for [the formation of] protests." Farhad mentioned that significant numbers of uniformed agents from the IRGC, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, and from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, as well as plain-clothes agents, were stationed in central squares, intersections and shopping centres, as well as in front of banks.

Protests peaked once again in Eslam Abad-e Gharb on 3 November 2022 on the occasion of the 40th day following the death of Anoushirvan (Amir Ali) Fouladi, Saeed Mohammadi and Iman Mohammadi. Farhad, who participated in these protests, told Amnesty International that IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, attempted to stop people from entering Bagh-e Rezvan cemetery, but many still managed to find a way into it. The mourning protesters once again came under fire. Farhad recalled that the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets, chased protesters into side streets and even fired at houses where the protesters sought refuge. The crackdown resulted in multiple injuries. Farhad witnessed the security forces carrying out violent arrests, including targeting protesters who fell to the ground after being hit by metal pellets.

7.5 SALAS-E BABAJANI

7.5.1 CRACKDOWN ON PROTESTS ON 9 OCTOBER 2022

Salas-e Babajani, a small city some 53km from Javanroud with a population of 35,219 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016, was gripped by mass protests on the evening of 9 October 2022.[827] Around this date, protests peaked in various cities across Iran in response to calls for nationwide protests.

An eyewitness, Javid, told Amnesty International that the protests in Salas-e Babajani primarily took place around Farogh Azam Street, Farmandari Street and Seilband Street. He recalled the presence of security forces in the three streets, conducting patrols and ordering people through megaphones to disperse and return to their homes.

According to Javid, the security forces included IRGC agents, carrying shotguns, AK-pattern rifles, G-3 rifles, SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and P5 handguns, as well as agents of the IRGC's Basij battalions, who used batons, tear gas and electric shock weapons. Additionally, there were plain-clothes agents in bulletproof vests carrying handguns. Javid also reported witnessing several agents equipped with rifles who were positioned on the rooftops of the Office of the County Governor, the Office of the Municipality and two residential buildings. He further recalled observing Toyota pickup trucks equipped with mounted machine guns patrolling the streets.

827. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census

Javid told Amnesty International that, in response to the mass protests, which were overwhelmingly peaceful, the security forces repeatedly fired tear gas as well as shotguns loaded with rubber bullets or metal pellets at the protesters, causing injuries to numerous individuals. He recounted offering first aid to two protesters who were bleeding and had sustained severe injuries after being shot at close range from shotguns loaded with metal pellets. One had a leg injury while the other had wounds on his arm and near one of his ears, raising concerns about a possible concussion. Javid said that, on multiple occasions, the security forces also fired their rifles into the air to disperse and intimidate the protesters.

Javid said that, later in the evening, as the protesters dispersed into smaller groups on various streets, two plain-clothes agents arrived in a car near the intersection of Farmandari Street and Farogh Azam Street. One of them, wearing a face mask and carrying an AK-pattern rifle, disembarked from the vehicle and repeatedly shot at the protesters assembled on Farogh Azam Street. Javid noted, "The agent firing showed no concern for who was there. He fired relentlessly."

Amnesty International analysed a 15-second video from Salas-e Babajani, the date of publication for which is unknown.[828] In the video, protesters are seen on the street at night and the sound of constant gunfire is audible, with at least 35 gunshots heard in the short clip.

During these shootings, a protester, **Arian Moridi**, was killed.

ARIAN MORIDI



Arian Moridi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed **Arian Moridi**, a 19-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Salas-e Babajani, Kermanshah province.

An eyewitness, Javid, told Amnesty International that Arian Moridi was shot in his chest and died when the plain-clothes agent wearing a face mask was shooting at the protesters.

Javid stated that, after Arian Moridi was shot, he and other protesters had to escape the scene as the security forces started to conduct mass arrests.

7.6 GHASR-E SHIRIN

7.6.1 CRACKDOWN ON PROTESTS ON 26 OCTOBER 2022

Ghasr-e Shirin, a small city situated some 172km from Kermanshah with a population of 23,929 people according to the last census of Iran in 2016, saw mass protests on 26 October 2022, which marked the 40th day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini.[829] A protester, Kamyar, told Amnesty International that over a thousand protesters peacefully gathered in the city's main square,

828. IRN0165, video on file with Amnesty International.
829. Iran's most recent national census was conducted in 2016 by the Statistical Centre of Iran. See Statistical Centre of Iran, نتایج سال ۱۳۹۵ ["2016/2017 results"], https://amar.org.ir/population-and-housing-census

called Bala Afshar. Kamyar noted that the police ordered the protesters to disperse, but the people refused, insisting that they had a right to protest.

According to Kamyar, as the protesters began chanting, they were attacked by a group of agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions, who launched tear gas canisters into the crowd. Outraged by the unwarranted use of tear gas, Kamyar said that some protesters threw stones and confronted agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions with sticks. This led to more tear gas being deployed against the protesters. Kamyar described how, as tensions escalated, IRGC agents dressed in uniforms stepped in, first firing AK-pattern rifles into the air and then firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets at the protesters repeatedly. He remarked: "The security forces fired metal pellets from close range. We could hear the metal pellets striking the pavement, doors and walls around us. The sound was chilling."

Kamyar stated that, as the crackdown intensified, many protesters, including women and children, dispersed, while others stood their ground. In response to the defiance, additional IRGC agents arrived, masked and armed with AK-pattern rifles and shotguns.

Kamyar recalled that the shootings by security forces became more intense and this is when **Afshin Asham** was shot and killed.

AFSHIN ASHAM



Afshin Asham © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed **Afshin Asham**, a 31-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Ghasr-e Shirin, Kermanshah province.

A protester, Kamyar, told Amnesty international that, after the security forces started shooting, he witnessed Afshin Asham, a 31-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, falling to the ground, struck by multiple metal pellets in his stomach.

Kamyar said that several protesters dragged him to the side of a tree, but they were unable to move him away to safety and were forced to flee due to the continuing gunfire.

Kamyar saw from a distance that several IRGC agents gathered around Afshin Asham.

Kamyar told Amnesty International that, in the following days, someone told him that they had seen Afshin Asham's body in a morgue and that there was a visible bullet wound beneath his heart. This led Kamyar to believe that the security forces killed the wounded Afshin Asham with a fatal shot after approaching him. Amnesty International was unable to obtain additional information to corroborate this.

8. UNLAWFUL KILLINGS IN WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

> **"What do people want other than bread, water and freedom? Why do you kill people?"**
>
> Farid, a protester in Piranshahr, reporting the words of an elderly bystander addressing the security forces

Waves of largely peaceful protests gripped multiple cities in West Azerbaijan province between 17 September and the end of 2022. Amnesty International's research concludes that security forces unlawfully and persistently used force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter further protests. Through these lethal crackdowns on protests, the security forces unlawfully killed at least 41 protesters and bystanders in five counties across the province, either during lethal protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces.[830] Across the province, the security forces also inflicted devastating and sometimes life-changing injuries, amounting to torture and other ill-treatment, on hundreds of protesters and bystanders.

830. This figure does not include protesters and bystanders in Kurdistan province who died in state custody, after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, or in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. For information on these categories of deaths, see sections 5.3.3, 5.3.4 and 5.3.5. See also Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en



Images of victims unlawfully killed by security forces in West Azerbaijan province during protest dispersals or in militarized areas between 20 September and 20 November 2022. Top row (left to right): Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan, Taher Azizi, Fereshteh Ahmadi, Azad Hosseinpouri, Hiva Janjan, Hezhar Mamkhosravi, Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour, and Asa'd Rahimi. Second row from top (left to right): Amin Marefat, Zakaria Khial, Soleiman Shokri, Ebrahim Sharififar, Mostafa Shabani, Shahou Khezri, Salar Mojaver and Ghafour Moloudi. Third row from top (left to right): Shahriar Mohammadi, Kobra Sheikheh, Milad Maroufi, Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour, Karvan Ghader Shokri, Zaniar Aboubakri, Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam and Sadroddin Litani. Fourth row from top (left to right): Samad Barginia, Danesh Rahnama, Milan Haghighi, Fayegh Mamghaderi, Koumar Daroftadeh, Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost, Avat Ghaderpour. Bottom row (left to right): Esmail (Simko) Moloudi, Abdollah Mahmoudpour, Kamal Feqhi, Masoud Ahmadzadeh, Amjad Enayati, Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash, Mehran Rahmani, Jalal Ghorbani and Amir Ferasatishad. All photographs © Private

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section provides an overview of the context and circumstances during which at least 41 protesters and bystanders were unlawfully killed either during lethal protest dispersals or in militarized areas near sites where protests were ongoing or had recently taken place; summarizes the audiovisual evidence analysed by the organization in relation to the lethal crackdown in West Azerbaijan province; and outlines the institutional affiliations of the various security forces identified by Amnesty International as having been involved in lethal protest dispersals and the types of weapons and munitions they used.

The subsequent five sections document the lethal suppression of protests in the five counties in West Azerbaijan province where killings took place: Boukan, Mahabad, Piranshahr, Oshnavieh and Urumieh. These sections focus on the specific days when unlawful killings took place and include case boxes detailing the causes and circumstances surrounding the death of victims on those days.



Map showing the five counties in West Azerbaijan province where at least 41 protesters and bystanders were unlawfully killed by security forces between 20 September and 20 November 2022 during lethal protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. The counties are Boukan, Mahabad, Oshnavieh, Piranshahr and Urumieh © OpenStreetMap contributors

8.1 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

8.1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International concerning the circumstances surrounding the killing of 41 protesters and bystanders, comprising 33 men, two women and six boys, in West Azerbaijan province establishes that all these killings were unlawful in nature. Security forces did not use firearms and other means of lethal force to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury. Rather, they used lethal force for the illegitimate objectives of dispersing protests, punishing protesters, instilling fear and deterring further street protests.

All 41 recorded victims were fatally shot, in at least 11 cases with metal pellets.

Of the 41 victims, five victims were unlawfully killed in militarized areas at times when no protests were taking place in the area where the incident took place, but where security forces had established a heavily armed presence and were conducting armed patrols. All five were unlawfully killed after security forces deliberately opened fire on their cars as they attempted to drive away from intimidating security forces. Four – **Amjad Enayati**, **Hiva Janjan**, **Avat Ghaderpour** and **Shahriar Mohammadi** – were fatally shot in Boukan on 17 and 18 November 2022, and another, **Fayegh Mamghaderi**, was shot in Mahabad on 15 October 2022.

In addition to the five cases mentioned above in which security forces deliberately fired at victims' vehicles, evidence from at least eight other cases reveals a pattern of security forces approaching

victims at close range and deliberately shooting them, often aiming for the torso or head, using assault rifles or shotguns:

- **Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost**, **Kobra Sheikheh**, **As'ad Rahimi** and **Milad Maroufi** were shot and killed in separate incidents on 21 September 2022 in Urumieh, on 27 October 2022 in Mahabad, and on 16 and 17 November 2022 in Boukan, respectively. Kobra Sheikheh was running towards her house, fleeing from security forces who were chasing her and other protesters and bystanders. Before she could enter, one of the agents approached and deliberately shot her in the neck with an assault rifle. Milad Maroufi was similarly chased by security forces as he and other panicked protesters fled into an alley. Agents approached him and deliberately fired a bullet at his head from close range. Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost and Asa'd Rahimi were bystanders who happened to cross paths with security forces pursuing others and, without provocation, security forces suddenly fired metal pellets at them from close range.
- **Koumar Daroftadeh** and **Mostafa Shabani** were shot and killed in separate incidents in Piranshahr on 30 October 2022 and Boukan on 17 November 2022, respectively. In both cases, agents deliberately fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at the victims from inside a vehicle. In the case of Koumar Daroftadeh, the agents then got out of their vehicle and kicked Koumar Daroftadeh before dragging him inside the vehicle. In the case of Mostafa Shabani, after he fell to the ground, a second car also carrying additional agents stopped next to him; one of the agents then got out of the car and shot him for a second time before the perpetrators fled the scene.
- **Kamal Feqhi** and **Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash** were deliberately shot in separate incidents in Boukan on 12 October 2022 and Mahabad on 18 November 2022, respectively, in apparent retaliation for actions that attracted the wrath of the security forces. Both victims were standing on the rooftops of houses when they were targeted. In the case of Kamal Feqhi, security forces shot him in the head after he denounced the security forces for firing on protesters and started chanting. In the case of Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash, an agent who had apparently seen him throwing stones at security forces from the rooftop ascended to the roof, deliberately shot him in the neck with an AK-pattern rifle and then left the scene.

In addition to carrying out targeted killings, security forces caused deaths by unlawfully firing both into crowds to force dispersal and at fleeing protesters to intimidate and punish them and prevent them from regrouping. Protesters who were killed in such circumstances include **Amir (Farjad) Darvishi**, shot in Urumieh on 20 September 2022; **Zakaria Khial** and **Samad Barginia**, shot in Piranshahr on 20 September 2022; **Amin Marefat**, **Milan Haghighi**, **Sadroddin Litani** and **Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan**, shot in Oshnavieh on 21 September 2022; **Esmail (Simko) Moloudi**, shot in Mahabad on 26 October 2022; **Shahou Khezri**, **Zaniar Aboubakri** and **Masoud Ahmadzadeh**, shot in Mahabad on 27 October 2022; **Salar Mojaver**, shot in Boukan on 16 November 2022; **Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam** and **Azad Hosseinpouri**, shot in Mahabad on 17 November 2022; **Mehran Rahmani**, shot in Mahabad on 18 November 2022; **Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour** and **Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour** shot in Mahabad on 18 November 2022; **Amir Ferasatishad**, shot in Piranshahr on 18 November 2022; and **Jalal Ghorbani**, **Karvan Ghader Shokri** and **Taher Azizi**, shot in Piranshahr on 20 November 2022.

Unlawful shootings aimed at dispersing, intimidating and punishing protesters resulted in the deaths of not only protesters but also bystanders. For example, **Fereshteh Ahmadi** was shot dead in Mahabad on 27 October 2022 when security forces fired at fleeing protesters and bystanders. A bullet struck her while she was standing on a rooftop observing the events unfolding. In another example, **Abdollah Mahmoudpour** was travelling from work in Balou village near Urumieh on 21 September 2022 when he

reached an area where a group of protesters came under fire. As he tried to flee the gunfire, he was fatally shot.

Amnesty International also documented a pattern of security forces exacerbating the risk of death by committing further violations after shooting victims. These included beating victims with kicks, batons, sticks and gun handles after they had already fallen to the ground from gunshot or metal pellet wounds. Illustrative cases include the killings of **Amir (Farjad) Darvishi** in Urumieh on 20 September 2022, **Fayegh Mamghaderi** in Mahabad on 15 October 2022 and **As'ad Rahimi** in Boukan on 16 November 2022, all of whom were shot and then severely beaten.

Other violations included deliberately leaving injured victims to bleed without aid before either abandoning the scene or belatedly calling for medical assistance and/or continuing shootings to prevent people from approaching and aiding injured victims who had fallen to the ground. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following two individuals:

- **Hiva Janjan** was shot while in a car in Boukan on 17 November 2022. Security forces removed him and his friend from the car, covered the friend's head with a plastic sheet and beat him before taking him away. Meanwhile, Hiva Janjan was left bleeding until the agents called an ambulance. He died shortly after being admitted to Shahid Gholipour Hospital in Boukan.
- **Danesh Rahnama** was shot in Balou village near Urumieh on 21 September 2022 while he attempted to aid and move Abdollah Mahmoudpour, who had been shot seconds earlier. Security forces also fired at the pickup truck that carried the victims to a hospital, resulting in bullet holes in the vehicle, and subjected the driver of the pickup truck to beatings after he drove back from the hospital. Danesh Rahnama died shortly after reaching the hospital following significant loss of blood.

In addition, the widespread pattern of security forces carrying out arrests at hospitals deterred many from seeking medical care for themselves or others injured during the protests. This fear forced the injured to be taken to private homes, businesses or clinics ill-equipped to treat gunshot wounds or serious injuries, resulting in deaths from excessive bleeding, infections or complications that prompt specialized medical care might have prevented. Illustrative cases include the deaths of the following 10 individuals:

- **Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost**, aged 17, was shot in Urumieh on 21 September 2022. Protesters initially brought him to a private residence where he received first aid. He was then taken to his uncle's house and subsequently to his own family's home. His family decided to take him to a hospital, but upon reaching it, they saw a significant presence of security forces at the entrance. Fearing that Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost might be apprehended, his family opted to return him home. Over the following days, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost was intermittently taken from his home to an ill-equipped private clinic. His condition severely deteriorated due to an infection on 5 October 2022. He was rushed to a hospital where he died around 30 minutes after arrival.
- **Milan Haghighi**, **Sadroddrin Litani** and **Amin Marefat**, aged 16, were shot in Oshnavieh on 21 September 2022. Due to the heavy presence of security forces at hospitals as well as reports of arrests targeting those seeking medical care for themselves or other injured individuals, protesters present at the scene chose not to take Amin Marefat, Milan Haghighi and Sadroddin Litani to a hospital for treatment. Instead, they took them to a nearby private house. After about one and a half hours, as their conditions worsened due to excessive blood loss, they were taken to a hospital, where they died shortly afterwards.
- **Esmail (Simko) Moloudi** who was shot in Mahabad on 26 October 2022. Due to fears of arrest, protesters initially transferred Esmail (Simko) Moloudi to a private residence. However, as his

condition deteriorated and his pulse weakened, he was taken to a hospital, where he died shortly afterwards.

- **Masoud Ahmadzadeh** was shot in Mahabad on 27 October 2022. Due to fears of arrest, Masoud Ahmadzadeh asked people to take him to his house rather than a hospital. In the following hours, his condition deteriorated, as he developed a severe infection which was left untreated. He died on 28 October 2022.
- **Hezhar Mamkhosravi** was shot in Boukan on 17 November 2022. Due to fears of arrest, Hezhar Mamkhosravi asked his family not to transfer him to a hospital. After several hours, his condition severely worsened, prompting his family to transfer him to a hospital despite the risks. He died shortly after arriving at the hospital.
- **Milad Maroufi** was shot in Boukan on 17 November 2022. Due to fears of arrest, protesters first took Milad Maroufi to a private house and then to a nearby medical centre, which was ill-equipped to treat him. He was then transferred to a hospital in Boukan, where he died in the early hours of the morning on 18 November 2022.
- **Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour** was shot in Mahabad on 18 November 2022. Due to ongoing shooting, fellow protesters were unable to transport Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour to a hospital immediately. Instead, they placed him in a nearby shelter where numerous protesters had sought refuge. After several hours, some protesters managed to inform his family of his condition and whereabouts. His family was initially hesitant to take him to a hospital due to fear of arrests and transferred him only after several hours, by which time he had lost consciousness. He was in a coma for three days and declared dead on 24 November 2022.
- **Karvan Ghader Shokri**, aged 15, was shot in Piranshahr on 20 November 2022. Those present at the scene of the incident were unable to immediately transfer Karvan Ghader Shokri to a hospital due to the heavy presence of security forces, which were engaged in continuous shooting. Instead, he was provided with first aid at a private house. After his condition deteriorated, he was taken to a hospital, where he died shortly afterwards.

8.1.2 AUDIOVISUAL EVIDENCE

Amnesty International verified and analysed 142 videos that pertain to the crackdown on protests by security forces in West Azerbaijan province. They were uploaded online between 19 September 2022 and 25 December 2022. Of the 142 videos, 52 are from Mahabad, 38 from Bukan, 30 from Piranshahr, 10 from Balou, eight from Oshnavieh and four from Urumieh. The totality of audiovisual evidence analysed by Amnesty International corroborates witness testimonies that, from the very outset, largely peaceful protesters were consistently met with a violent response by security forces, which resorted to the unlawful use of force and firearms, including intentional lethal force.

Of the 142 videos analysed, the sound of gunfire is audible in 70 videos, of which 31 were filmed in Mahabad, 16 in Piranshahr, 15 in Bukan, five in Oshnavieh, two in Balou and one in Urumieh. Based on the videos and other evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the sound of gunfire is attributable to the security forces.

Of the 142 videos, 39 show security forces visibly present in the streets, patrolling on foot, on motorcycles, in vehicles bearing security force markings – armoured or otherwise – or in unmarked vehicles. In these videos, security forces are seen wearing uniforms, plain clothes or a combination of both, underscoring the involvement of multiple security forces during the crackdown. Those in uniform are seen wearing uniforms belonging to the Prevention Police of FARAJA, the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC, including its Basij battalions.

Of the 39 videos in which security forces are present, 22 show security forces carrying firearms including assault rifles and shotguns. Of the 22 videos in which security forces are carrying firearms, 10 show security forces holding their firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot. Of the 10 videos in which security forces are holding their firearms in a manner that suggests they are preparing to shoot, six show security forces shooting their firearms.

Of the 38 videos in which security forces are present, four show evidence of security forces engaging in additional acts of violence against protesters such as beatings and using tear gas, including in the context of carrying out arrests.

Of the entirety of the 142 videos analysed pertaining to the crackdown on protests by security forces in West Azerbaijan province, 32 show a total of 20 injured and/or lifeless protesters and bystanders who were identified by Amnesty International as having been unlawfully killed by security forces: Abdollah Mahmoudpour, Amin Marefat, Amir Ferastishad, Azad Hosseinpouri, Danesh Rahnama, Esmail (Simko) Moloudi, Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, Karvan Ghader Shokri, Kobra Sheikheh, Koumar Daroftadeh, Milad Maroufi, Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash, Mostafa Shabani, Sadroddin Litani, Salar Mojaver, Samad Barginia, Shahou Khezri, Shahriar Mohammadi, Tahir Azizi and Zaniar Aboubakri.

8.1.3 SECURITY FORCES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LETHAL REPRESSION

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the security forces identified as committing serious human rights violations in the context of lethal protest dispersals in West Azerbaijan province included the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).[831]

Among the FARAJA branches involved were the Prevention Police, including its Assistance Cohorts, and the Special Cohorts. The latter were primarily responsible for the use of shotguns loaded with metal pellets and firearms, including AK-pattern rifles, while both branches resorted to beatings with batons, sticks and kicks and deployed tear gas to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.[832]

The IRGC branches involved included the 3 Hamzeh Operational Division, the provincial Security Cohort and various Basij battalions, such as the Imam Ali Battalions and the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions. All these branches operated under the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, known as the Shohada Corps, which in turn falls under a regional IRGC headquarters called the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, directing and overseeing IRGC operations in the provinces of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan.[833]

In repressing the 2022 protests, the IRGC branches in West Azerbaijan province deployed an array of weaponry against protesters and bystanders, including not only shotguns loaded with metal pellets but also military-grade firearms. These included handguns, assault rifles such as AK-pattern rifles, SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and DShK heavy machine guns mounted on top of pickup trucks. In addition, IRGC agents consistently used tear gas, chemical irritants, PepperBall-pattern guns and batons to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.

831. See Chapter 2 for the methodology of identification.
832. See Chapter 10 for detailed information on FARAJA and its various branches, including their organizational and command structure, mandates and uniforms, as well as official statements and leaked official documents related to their role in repressing the 2022 protests.
833. See Chapter 10 for detailed information on the IRGC and its various branches, including their organizational and command structure, mandates and uniforms, as well as official statements and leaked official documents related to their role in repressing the 2022 protests.

8.2 BOUKAN

Protests in Boukan began on 19 September 2022 and lasted until late November 2022. The protesters were invariably and swiftly met with violence and intimidation by security forces.

A protester, Simin, told Amnesty International that, on 19 September 2022, her husband arrived home with a bloodied face after being struck by metal pellets during protests near Farmandari Square.

The Kurdpa Human Rights Organization (Kurdpa), a Kurdish human rights group based outside Iran, told Amnesty International about a 10-year-old girl, Dina Zahrayian, who was also injured that day after security forces fired metal pellets to disperse protesters in Farmandari Square. Amnesty International analysed two videos published online on 19 and 20 September 2022, which show an injured young girl.[834] The first video shows a man carrying the girl while accompanied by a group of individuals who are visibly distressed.[835] The organization verified that the video was filmed in Enghelab Street, near Farmandari Square, and Kurdpa confirmed that the girl was Dina Zahrayian. The second video shows Dina Zahrayian in a visibly distressed condition and in pain, lying on a bed that appears to be in a hospital or other medical facility.[836] She has sustained significant injuries, with visible bleeding from her head and face, and several metal pellets are seen embedded in her torso.

Even a year later, according to information obtained by Kurdpa, over a dozen metal pellets remained lodged in Dina Zahrayian's head and body, causing her pain and affecting her daily activities.[837] According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International who reviewed a video[838] and several photographs taken of Dina Zahrayian in hospital, these show four widely scattered pellet wounds in the right of her chest and abdomen and two bleeding pellet wounds on the left of her forehead. X-rays obtained by the organization reveal the presence of shotgun pellets.

Simin told Amnesty International that, in the following days and weeks, she regularly attended the protests in Enghelab Street near the Shahrdari intersection and Farmandari Square and witnessed how agents of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC, including members of its Basij battalions, repeatedly subjected protesters to "a hail of metal pellets" and tear gas. She also recalled that large numbers of agents dressed in all-black uniforms patrolled the streets on motorcycles while discharging their weapons repeatedly. She mentioned seeing at a relative's house in late September 2022 several individuals who had been injured by metal pellets, including a man who had been struck with metal pellets in his genital area.

Amnesty International analysed multiple videos published between September and December 2022 showing the security forces' crackdown on protesters in Boukan, including through the use of firearms, shotguns, tear gas, beatings and arrests.

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834. IRN0180, video on file with Amnesty International; IRN0181, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hossein Ronaghi, X post: "Basij and anti-riot forces have shot a 10-year-old girl in Boukan to prove that they didn't kill #MahsaAmini!", 20 September 2022, https://x.com/HosseinRonaghi/status/1572132353501442048?s=20
835. IRN0180, video on file with Amnesty International.
836. IRN0181, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hossein Ronaghi, X post: "Basij and anti-riot forces have shot a 10-year-old girl in Boukan to prove that they didn't kill #MahsaAmini!", 20 September 2022, https://x.com/HosseinRonaghi/status/1572132353501442048?s=20
837. Kurdpa Human Rights Organization (Kurdpa), بوکان؛ روایتی از شلیک ۱۵ گلوله به دینا زهرائیان، کودک ۱۰ ساله و ساچمه‌هایی که هنوز در سر و بدنش وجود دارند ["Boukan: A story of 15 bullets fired at Dina Zahrayian, a 10-year-old child, and the pellets that remain in her head and body"], 25 September 2023, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/2023/09/125 (in Persian).
838. IRN0181, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hossein Ronaghi, X post: "Basij and anti-riot forces have shot a 10 year old girl in Boukan to prove that they didn't kill #MahsaAmini!", 20 September 2022, https://x.com/HosseinRonaghi/status/1572132353501442048?s=20

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 23 September 2022, which shows several agents in black uniforms and protective gear, walking along a residential street in Boukan.[839] The video captures one of the agents becoming aware of the individual filming from a house window and then firing a shotgun towards the window. The video concludes with the sound of a gunshot and then breaking glass while a child is seen beside the person who was recording.

Amnesty International analysed another video, published online on 23 September 2022, which shows scores of peaceful protesters at Shahrdari intersection amid what sounds like constant gunfire.[840] The video also shows clouds of tear gas.

The organization analysed a third video, published online on 1 October 2022, which shows scores of peaceful protesters in Se Rama-Vaz 2 Street running away amid sounds of repeated gunfire.[841]

The crackdown on protests in Boukan intensified from mid-October 2022, with the security forces unlawfully and repeatedly using lethal force to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters.

According to information gathered by Amnesty International, at least 13 men were unlawfully killed by the security forces between 12 October and 19 November 2022 in the context of violent protest dispersals and the militarized environment that subsequently prevailed across the city. They are: **Amjad Enayati**, **Asa'd Rahimi**, **Avat Ghaderpour**, **Ebrahim Sharififar**, **Ghafour Moloudi**, **Hezhar Mamkhosravi**, **Hiva Janjan**, **Kamal Feqhi**, **Milad Maroufi**, **Mostafa Shabani**, **Salar Mojaver**, **Shahriar Mohammadi** and **Soleiman Shokri**.

In addition, Amnesty International is aware of the case of **Mohammad Hassanzadeh**, who was fatally stabbed on 16 November 2022 and whose funeral turned into a mass protest in Boukan. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain that his stabbing was connected to the protests and carried out by a member of the security forces, but given the widespread allegations that the security forces caused his death, Amnesty International has detailed below the information gathered about him from witnesses and the state media.

The deadliest day of the protests in Boukan was on 17 November 2022, when the security forces unlawfully killed at least seven people. Protests peaked on this day as the memorial ceremonies of Salar Mojaver and Mohammad Hassanzadeh became powerful rallying points for solidarity and expressions of collective grief and anger.

8.2.1 PROTESTS ON 12-13 OCTOBER

On 12 and 13 October 2022, Boukan witnessed a surge in protests following coordinated calls for nationwide demonstrations during this period.

Simin, a protester who was severely injured during the crackdown on 13 October 2022, told Amnesty International that the security forces involved in the crackdown were IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, dressed in green camouflage and all-black uniforms. She recalled that the agents carried handguns, shotguns and rifles. She said that she was standing outside the gated entrance of Kohne Hospital on Kurdistan Boulevard, near Farmandari Square, where protesters had gathered, when an agent, dressed in an all-black uniform, pressed his shotgun against her arm and fired. Simin stated:

> **"The agent was dressed in a black uniform and had covered his face with a mask, leaving only his eyes and mouth visible. I think he was an IRGC agent. He stood inside the hospital courtyard. He extended his**

839. IRN0182, video on file with Amnesty International.
840. IRN0183, video on file with Amnesty International.
841. IRN0184, video on file with Amnesty International.

weapon through the hospital's gate and pressed it against my arm. Our eyes met. Initially, I thought he was trying to intimidate me, but to my shock, he pulled the trigger. At that moment, I was not even chanting. I was simply looking for my husband. Around 300 metal pellets penetrated my arm. Seeing him trying to unlock the gate, I fled. After running for a short distance and making sure I was out of his view, I fell, bleeding heavily."

Simin described the challenges she faced in accessing medical care due to widespread fears of arrest at hospitals. Initially, she sought treatment at a doctor's private residence and then went to a private medical clinic. At the clinic, she said that medical workers removed a bowl-full of shattered bones from her arm. Persistent bleeding necessitated her transfer to the main hospital in Boukan. However, upon arrival, she was informed by hospital staff that they had been directed not to treat those who had sustained gunshot wounds and advised her to go to Imam Khomeini Hospital in Urumieh. Fearing arrest in Urumieh, Simin opted for a private hospital where a sympathetic doctor admitted her, recording her case as an accident. She underwent three surgical operations during her 15 days in hospital. She told Amnesty International that her arm is now paralysed.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed photographs that show a large gaping wound on Simin's right elbow, exposing bone and muscle, and with metal pellets visible in the tissue. The pathologist also reviewed X-rays taken before and after surgery to fix the fractured upper and lower arm bones, which show a large number of metal pellets. According to the pathologist, the X-rays corroborate fully the associated hospital letter, reviewed by Amnesty International, from the orthopaedic surgeon. The pathologist assessed that the wounds were inflicted at very close range.

Kurdpa reported that at least 10 other individuals sustained injuries during protests that took place on 12 October 2022 in central Boukan and various suburban areas, including Amirabad and Hesar.[842] One of them was **Kamal Feqhi**, who was shot dead by security forces.

KAMAL FEQHI



Kamal Feqhi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Kamal Feqhi, a 46-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 12 October 2022 in the suburb of Hesar during a crackdown on protests in Boukan.

According to Simin,[843] who knew Kamal Feqhi, security forces shot him in the head after he denounced the security forces for firing on protesters and started chanting. He was standing on the roof of his house at the time.

Amnesty International obtained a copy of Kamal Feqhi's burial certificate, which states that he died on 12 October 2022 as a result of "severe breathing difficulties and damage to the spinal cord in the neck" caused by "collision with a hard object".

842. Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, گزارش اختصاصی هەنگاو از اعتراضات و کشته‌شدگان مهر در شهرهای کردستان ["Hengaw's exclusive report on protests and fatalities in October in Kurdish cities"], 13 October 2022, https://hengaw.net/fa/news/archive/56790 (in Persian); Kurdpa, بوکان - کمال فقهی بر اثر تیراندازی نیروهای امنیتی جان باخت ["Boukan - Kamal Feqhi killed by security forces' gunfire"], 13 October 2022, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/بوکان-کمال-فقهی-بر-اثر-تیراندازی-نیروهای-امنیتی-جان-باخت (in Persian).
843. See above.

The pattern of security forces establishing a heavy presence and unlawfully using firearms and shotguns loaded with metal pellets to suppress neighbourhood-level protests in Boukan continued into late October and November 2022.

Simin told Amnesty International that she knows many individuals in Boukan who lost their eyesight during these months of protests and repression due to extensive use of metal pellets by the security forces. She said that, on several occasions, she also witnessed agents armed with rifles firing from the watchtower of an IRGC base near the Sculpture of Mother at the intersection of Chamran Street and Moghabel Honar Pajouh.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 20 October 2022, which shows two armoured vehicles entering a girls' high school called Tamaddon.[844] A Kurdish human rights defender told Amnesty International that, during the protest period, the authorities used this school as a temporary base for their security forces as additional forces were brought in from other cities to suppress the protests. This mirrors a pattern during protest crackdowns in Iran where authorities turn mosques, schools and other large complexes into bases for security forces when bringing in reinforcements from other cities.

8.2.2 PROTESTS ON 16 NOVEMBER

Various central and suburban areas in Boukan witnessed large protests on 16 November 2022, when **Salar Mojaver** and **Asa'd Rahimi** were shot and killed by security forces.

SALAR MOJAVER



Salar Mojaver © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Salar Mojaver, a 26-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 16 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in the suburban area of Amirabad in Boukan.

An informed source in Boukan, Bahman, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 16 November 2022, Salar Mojaver joined hundreds of unarmed protesters who gathered in front of Police Station No. 13 near Azadi Square in Amirabad. According to several eyewitness accounts gathered by Bahman, security forces, including uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and plain-clothes agents, swiftly resorted to using shotguns and AK-pattern rifles to disperse, terrorize and punish the protesters. Eyewitnesses told Bahman that the gunfire seemed to come from both street level and rooftops. Several protesters consistently told Bahman about witnessing several plain-clothes agents arriving in a white Samand vehicle, firing from inside the car and then quickly leaving the scene.

According to Bahman, amid the shootings, Salar Mojaver fell to the ground after a bullet entered his forehead and exited through the back of his head, killing him instantly. Bahman mentioned that another protester standing next to Salar Mojaver was shot in his leg but survived. Bahman suspected that Salar Mojaver might have been deliberately targeted for his real or perceived

844. IRN0185, video on file with Amnesty International.

leadership in the protests based on accounts from those present, who recalled that Salar Mojaver was at the front, encouraging protesters to stay united and not disperse.

Amnesty International analysed a graphic video, published online on 16 November 2022, depicting the immediate aftermath of the fatal shooting.[845] Bahman confirmed that a man seen lying lifeless on a blood-stained pavement was Salar Mojaver.

ASA'D RAHIMI



Asa'd Rahimi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Asa'd Rahimi, a 29-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 16 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Boukan.

Kurdpa shared with Amnesty International information from an informed source in Iran who said that Asa'd Rahimi was on his way home when security forces unexpectedly fired bullets and shotguns loaded with metal pellets at him.[846] The source stated that the incident took place at around 8pm in or around Zeytoon Street. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain if there were protests in the area at the time or earlier.

According to Kurdpa, the source revealed that Asa'd Rahimi's back was riddled with metal pellets from his neck to his waist and that he had sustained a gunshot wound to the heart. Additionally, the source noted that, after Asa'd Rahimi was shot, the security forces beat him with batons, including on his head.

Kurdpa shared with Amnesty International a photograph of Asa'd Rahimi in a morgue. The photograph shows injuries on his back consistent with the spray patterns of metal pellets. According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International, the photograph shows scattered shotgun pellet wounds extending from the shoulder to the waistline and predominantly concentrated on the left side. In the middle of the pellet wounds on the left side is an irregular prominent graze measuring an estimated 6cm by 3cm and likely caused by the impact of wadding from a shotgun cartridge. The concentration of pellet wounds and an injury consistent with the impact of wadding indicate a close-range discharge of the shotgun.

Mohammad Hassanzadeh was stabbed to death on 16 November 2022. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain whether the stabbing took place in the context of the crackdown on protests in Boukan and if the perpetrator was affiliated with the security forces.

A protester, Milad Mohammadi, told Amnesty International that, at the time of the stabbing, Mohammad Hassanzadeh was accompanied by several friends, including Milad Mohammadi's brother, Shahriar Mohammadi, who was unlawfully killed by the security forces on 18 November 2022. Milad Mohammadi said that he talked to Shahriar Mohammadi before his death and that Shahriar Mohammadi alleged that an individual in plain clothes had stabbed Mohammad Hassanzadeh in his

845. IRN0186, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: یک شهروند به نام سالار مجاور اهل بوکان، در جریان مقاومت مردمی این شهر با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی کشته شد ["A citizen named Salar Mojaver, from Boukan, was killed by direct gunfire from government suppression forces during the popular resistance in the city"], 16 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1592920419065278464 (in Persian).

846. Kurdpa, روایتی از قتل حکومتی اسعد رحیمی، از جانباختگان خیزش انقلابی زن زندگی آزادی ["Account of state killing of Asa'd Rahimi, one of the victims of the revolutionary Woman Life Freedom uprising"], 2 May 2023, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/2023/05/3 (in Persian).

back after Mohammad Hassanzadeh intervened to prevent the individual from assaulting a woman. According to information obtained by Milad Mohammadi, the incident took place on the evening of 16 November 2022 near the intersection of Bahonar Street and Enghelab Street in the centre of Boukan, where protests were taking place.

Amnesty International reviewed Mohammad Hassanzadeh's death certificate, which lists the cause of death as "violence by others" and provides as further explanation "impact from a sharp and cutting object".

Milad Mohammadi said that Shahriar Mohammadi had told him that the same individual attempted to stab him following a physical confrontation but failed. The individual subsequently fled towards a group of uniformed IRGC agents who were repressing protests nearby. According to Milad Mohammadi, these uniformed agents beat Shahriar Mohammadi, but he escaped with the help of other protesters.

On 29 August 2023, the judiciary announced the arrest of Fardin Karimi for allegedly stabbing Mohammad Hassanzadeh.[847] In an interview with Amnesty International before the public announcement was made, Milad Mohammadi had named Fardin Karimi as someone widely believed by locals in Boukan to be affiliated with security forces and to be the person responsible for stabbing Mohammad Hassanzadeh. The judiciary described Fardin Karimi as a member of the public and denied that the stabbing was connected to the protests, describing it as a "private brawl". The judiciary stated that Mohammad Hassanzadeh and Fardin Karimi became involved in an altercation with each other when Mohammad Hassanzadeh offered a woman a lift in a car. The judiciary claimed that the investigations into the details of the incident were ongoing, yet it highlighted that the case of Mohammad Hassanzadeh served as another instance of the "false [victim] list" concocted by "anti-revolutionary outlets and those seeking the overthrow [of the Islamic Republic system] during [the 2022] riots" to advance their "project of staging killings".[848]

On 7 September 2023, state media published a video showing a statement from Fardin Karimi endorsing the authorities' account that the incident arose out of an altercation involving a woman.[849] The video was presented by state media as proof that Mohammad Hassanzadeh's death resulted from a personal dispute unrelated to the protests.

8.2.3 PROTESTS ON 17 NOVEMBER

The security forces' crackdown against protests in Boukan peaked on 17 November 2022, when they unlawfully killed at least eight men at different times and locations. Those killed were **Milad Maroufi**, **Soleiman Shokri, Ghafour Moloudi, Mostafa Shabani, Ebrahim Sharififar, Hezhar Mamkhosravi, Hiva Janjan** and **Amjad Enayati**.

On the morning of 17 November 2022, thousands of people peacefully marched along Hashemi Boulevard (also known as Sad Road) from Quds Square towards Boukan's main cemetery for the memorial ceremony of Mohammad Hassanzadeh. Amnesty International obtained a detailed account from a protester, Milad Mohammadi, who described the scenes that unfolded during this march and the protests that followed.

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847. Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), برملا شدن یک کشته‌سازی دیگر؛ بعد از ۱۰ ماه قاتل محمد حسن‌زاده دستگیر شد ["Another staged killing revealed: Perpetrator of Mohammad Hassanzadeh's murder arrested after 10 months"], 29 August 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85214603/برملا-شدن-یک-کشته-سازی-دیگر-بعد-از-۱۰-ماه-قاتل-محمد-حسن-زاده (in Persian).

848. IRNA, برملا شدن یک کشته‌سازی دیگر؛ بعد از ۱۰ ماه قاتل محمد حسن‌زاده دستگیر شد ["Another staged killing revealed: Perpetrator of Mohammad Hassanzadeh's murder arrested after 10 months"], 29 August 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85214603/برملا-شدن-یک-کشته-سازی-دیگر-بعد-از-۱۰-ماه-قاتل-محمد-حسن-زاده (in Persian).

849. Mehr News Agency, اعترافات قاتل محمد حسن‌زاده که آبان پارسال در یک نزاع کشته شد ["Confession of killer of Mohammad Hassanzadeh who was killed in a fight last November"], 7 September 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5881040/ (in Persian).

Milad Mohammadi stated that, after marching for several hundred metres, IRGC agents blocked both sides of the road with vehicles on which DShK heavy machine guns were mounted. IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, then left the IRGC's nearby command centre and began firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets and rubber bullets towards mourners from a distance of approximately 200m. To intensify the climate of terror, some agents also fired AK-pattern rifles into the air repeatedly. Milad Mohammadi recounted how, despite the shooting, the protesters remained defiant and managed to continue the procession due to their large numbers. He added that, as the procession advanced, plain-clothes agents entered the main boulevard from side streets, violently arresting protesters who were on the edges of the crowd.

Following the memorial ceremony of Mohammad Hassanzadeh at the cemetery, which lasted a couple of hours, thousands of mourners peacefully marched back along Hashemi Boulevard towards the Office of the County Governor of Boukan, located between Quds Square and Farmandari Square in the centre of the city. Amnesty International reviewed three videos capturing the peaceful nature of the procession.[850]

Milad Mohammadi told Amnesty International that the protesters came under fire once again when reaching the IRGC's command centre, which is about 1km from the cemetery. He recalled that, this time, IRGC agents positioned themselves on the rooftops of both the command centre and another nearby building, also belonging to the IRGC, and, from these vantage points, fired tear gas and lethal ammunition at crowds that included children who appeared, based on their physical appearance, to be as young as 10 years old. Milad Mohammadi mentioned seeing several men, women and children sustaining injuries, including gunshot wounds.

The shooting in front of the command centre scattered the crowd, but several thousand protesters managed to regroup around Farmandari Square. According to Milad Mohammadi, there the IRGC agents once again fired tear gas and lethal ammunition to intimidate, disperse and punish protesters, and parked vehicles on which heavy machine guns were mounted in Farmandari Square to intensify the climate of terror. He emphasized that the protesters were unarmed. In the face of the attacks, some protesters threw stones towards the security forces.

Milad Mohammadi stated that the security forces fired from both street level and the rooftops of the Office of the Governor and several other buildings, including the Office of the Telecommunication Authority and the Office of the Electricity Authority.

Another protester, Simin, told Amnesty International that the IRGC agents pressured shop owners near Farmandari Square, including some of her relatives, to allow security forces to position themselves on the rooftops of their shops. She reported that, when some shop owners refused, the security forces beat them with the butts of their weapons and threatened them with further harm.

Milad Mohammadi stated that most protesters in the area suffered injuries from metal pellets fired at close range and some sustained eye injuries. He further mentioned witnessing a fellow protester sustaining a serious injury to one of his thighs by shots fired by IRGC agents positioned on the rooftop of the Office of the County Governor.

Simin recounted to Amnesty International how security forces chased protesters into side streets and launched tear gas into houses that had opened their doors to assist fleeing protesters.

After the violent dispersal of the protests around Farmandari Square, some protesters threw stones at the Office of the Municipality of Boukan, breaking its windows. Large numbers of protesters

850. IRN0257, IRN0248, IRN0249, videos on file with Amnesty International.

subsequently regrouped near and in front of a store called Kourosh at the intersection of Varzesh Street and Heidary Street, which was vandalized.

Milad Mohammadi told Amnesty International that, once again, IRGC agents, including its Basij battalions, fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at protesters gathered in the vicinity of Kourosh store. He said:

> **"The agents attacked from all directions, firing metal pellets and causing terror and fear. As they rode their motorcycles along the main road, the agents sitting on the back fired metal pellets repeatedly into side streets. They showed no regard for who was present and if those in the side streets were protesters or residents who had left their houses. It was an awful situation. In the main road, they [other agents] advanced towards protesters in a zigzag manner, hiding behind trees and shooting at people."**

The shooting persisted into the evening in Boukan's central areas and some protesters responded by vandalizing or setting fire to buildings. Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 17 November 2022, which shows the Office of Tazirat,[851] located near Farmandari Square, engulfed in flames with protesters chanting "Down with the dictator" and "Martyrs never die".[852]

On 17 November 2022, multiple areas across Boukan were gripped by mass protests. Concurrently with the march to the city's main cemetery for the memorial ceremony of Mohammad Hassanzadeh, thousands of people peacefully marched from Boukan to Akhtetar village to attend the funeral of Salar Mojaver, who had been killed the previous day.

An eyewitness, Bahman, told Amnesty International that security forces blocked the roads connecting Boukan to Akhtetar, forcing mourners to leave their cars and walk. Bahman stated that security forces, including plain-clothes agents and uniformed IRGC agents, damaged people's cars and fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas canisters, injuring many people.

Amnesty International analysed four videos, published online on 17 November 2022, related to this crackdown on the mourners heading to Akhtetar village. The first video captures a solemn and peaceful procession of mourners.[853] The second shows protesters walking on the main road and chanting "Freedom".[854] Multiple parked cars are seen on the road. The third shows a group of people who have apparently abandoned their cars after being blocked and scenes of chaos in the distance.[855] The individual filming notes that they are doing so at the entrance of Boukan and speaks of intense "clashes". Clouds of smoke, which appear to be from tear gas, are visible in the areas where people are seen running. The fourth video shows around two dozen members of the security forces dressed in plain black clothes and carrying weapons walking on the main road.[856] Multiple unmarked white Samand cars are blocking the road and a large cloud of black smoke can be seen in the distance.

Following the funeral of Salar Mojaver, scores of protesters gathered in and around Shaheed Najari Street, Saheli Street and Pasdaran Boulevard, streets close to each other and around 2-3km from where Salar Mojaver had been killed the previous evening. The protesters were once again met with a lethal response from the security forces, resulting in the unlawful killing of **Milad Maroufi**, **Soleiman Shokri** and **Ghafour Moloudi**.

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851. The Office of Tazirat is a governmental body under the Ministry of Justice responsible for combating financial corruption and smuggling.
852. IRN0187, video on file with Amnesty International.
853. IRN0188, video on file with Amnesty International.
854. IRN0189, video on file with Amnesty International.
855. IRN0190, video on file with Amnesty International.
856. IRN0191, video on file with Amnesty International.

MILAD MAROUFI



Milad Maroufi © Private

Security forces shot Milad Maroufi, a 22-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Boukan. He died in the early hours of the following day.

Shahla, an informed source in Iran, told Amnesty International that, on the morning of 17 November 2022, Milad Maroufi joined thousands of mourners in Akhtetar village for the memorial ceremony of Salar Mojaver. Shahla said that, upon returning to Boukan, Milad Maroufi joined scores of protesters who gathered in and around Shaheed Najari Street. She stated that, at around noon, minutes before he was shot, Milad Mohammadi sent her a text message, reporting that security forces were firing firearms to disperse them.

Shahla provided Amnesty International with a screenshot of the exchange. According to information gathered by Shahla from protesters present, security forces – among them both plain-clothes agents and uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions – fired metal pellets at the protesters to disperse them and chased them into side streets while firing at them. According to Shahla, an agent approached Milad Maroufi and, from close range, fired a bullet at him that struck his left eye, shattering his skull and causing a brain haemorrhage.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 17 November 2022, depicting the immediate aftermath of the fatal shooting.[857] The video shows protesters carrying Milad Maroufi, who has blood flowing down his face. Shahla said that, due to fears of arrest, protesters first took Milad Maroufi to a private house and then to a nearby medical centre, which was ill-equipped to treat him. He was then transferred to Shahid Gholipour Hospital in Boukan, where he died in the early hours of 18 November 2022.

857. IRN0192, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: در جریان مقاومت مردمی امروز پنج‌شنبه ۲۶ آبان ۱۴۰۱ در شهر بوکان، یک شهروند با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی کشته شد ["During the people's resistance today, Thursday, 17 November 2022, in the city of Boukan, a citizen was killed by direct fire from the government's repressive forces"], 17 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1593203733189767168 (in Persian).

SOLEIMAN SHOKRI



Soleiman Shokri © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Soleiman Shokri, a 28-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Boukan.

Kurdpa shared with Amnesty International information from an informed source in Iran who said that Soleiman Shokri was among dozens of protesters gathered in Saheli Street and Pasdaran Boulevard near and in front of a coffee shop called Pesar-e Khoob. According to Kurdpa, several eyewitnesses said security forces fired metal pellets at Soleiman Shokri from close range, which hit his head and face. Security forces then also beat him on his head and neck with batons.

Following this incident, Soleiman Shokri was first transferred to Shaheed Gholipour Hospital in Boukan and, later that evening, as his condition deteriorated, to Imam Khomeini Hospital in Urumieh. He succumbed to his injuries on 20 November 2022.[858]

Amnesty International reviewed Soleiman Shokri's burial certificate, which cites his cause of death as "respiratory failure" resulting from "damage to the upper respiratory system" caused by "being struck in the face with a fast-moving incendiary projectile".

GHAFOUR MOLOUDI



Ghafour Moloudi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Ghafour Moloudi, a 51-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in the neighbourhood of Amirabad in the north-west of Boukan.

An informed source in Iran, Barzan, told Amnesty International that, in the days leading up to Ghafour Moloudi's unlawful killing, members of the security forces in both plain clothes and uniforms had been patrolling Amirabad on motorcycles and unmarked vehicles and firing at protesters and bystanders on main roads and side streets.

Barzan, a resident of Amirabad, told Amnesty International that, the night before Ghafour Moloudi was killed, he was also nearly shot by security forces. Barzan reported that he was standing near his home in Amirabad watching the protests when dozens of motorcycles carrying agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA rode past. The riders, two on each motorcycle, were clad in black uniforms with body armour and carried shields. He said that one of the motorcycles stopped near him and that a member of the security forces opened fire at him with an AK-pattern rifle from several metres away, but narrowly missed him.

858. Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, جان‌باختن یکی از مجروحان مقاومت مردمی بوکان در ارومیه ["Death of injured participant in Boukan public resistance in Urumieh"], 21 November 2022, https://hengaw.net/fa/news/archive/57196 (in Persian).

According to Barzan, Ghafour Moloudi had attended protests in the days prior to his unlawful killing. However, on 17 November 2022, after returning home from work, he had gone for a walk at around 2pm and was simply observing the protests from the road where he lived when he was shot.

Barzan reported that, according to information obtained by Ghafour Moloudi's family from an eyewitness, security forces shot multiple rounds of metal pellets at Ghafour Moloudi's chest from close range, firing from inside an unmarked car which had its licence plate removed.

According to Barzan, local residents tried to provide assistance to Ghafour Moloudi and one individual drove him to a hospital, where he was admitted around 2.20pm. Shortly after his admission, his family received a phone call from an individual using Ghafour Moloudi's mobile phone, falsely claiming that he had been in a car accident and had sustained a leg injury, and asking them to go to the hospital.

Upon arrival at the hospital at 3pm, the head nurse told Ghafour Moloudi's son that he had been taken to an operating room to undergo emergency surgery and gave him multiple documents to sign. Barzan reported that, on one of the documents, the reason for Ghafour Moloudi's admittance to hospital was handwritten as "struck by pellet(s) from a shotgun".

According to Barzan, a doctor at the hospital told the family that Ghafour Moloudi had sustained such extensive injuries to his chest that his heart had "exploded".

Ghafour Moloudi's burial certificate, which Amnesty International reviewed, states that he died as a result of "internal bleeding" and "injuries to his chest" caused by "being struck with a fast-moving object (hunting pellet)".

Throughout 17 November 2022, protests also took place in and around Ali Abad Square and Azizkhan Mukri Street in Boukan. In response, IRGC agents, including its Basij battalions, repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets and AK-pattern rifles to disperse the protesters and terrorize them and their supporters. Three people – **Mostafa Shabani**, **Hezhar Mamkhosravi** and **Ebrahim Sharififar** – were unlawfully killed when security forces fired metal pellets at them from close range.

MOSTAFA SHABANI



Mostafa Shabani © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mostafa Shabani, a 45-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Boukan.

An eyewitness, Majid, told Amnesty International that the incident took place near Mostafa Shabani's house in Azizkhan Mukri Street. According to Majid, protests there began around 9am and continued for the rest of the day, with protesters retreating and regrouping periodically. Majid recalled that, at approximately 11.30am, multiple vehicles carrying IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, who were dressed in green camouflage uniforms, arrived at the scene and fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets from inside their cars towards unarmed protesters, who were chanting. Majid also reported seeing a vehicle equipped with a DShK heavy machine gun. He said:

"The agents shot anyone who crossed their path, including women and children. They did not care who their targets were, what they were doing or where they were coming from. All they did was shoot people."

Majid said the constant shootings caused the protesters to disperse. However, amid the chaos, Mostafa Shabani remained near a water fountain on Azizkhan Mukri Street, a spot he often frequented. Majid noted that Mostafa Shabani suffered from a mental illness affecting his cognitive abilities, adding that the sounds of constant shooting and seeing protesters being injured caused him deep distress and anxiety. Amnesty International reviewed a medical document that confirms Mostafa Shabani had a mental illness.

Majid recalled that several IRGC agents in a car pulled up next to Mostafa Shabani and that one of them fired a shotgun loaded with metal pellets at his torso through the car window from a distance of 1.5m. Majid said that, after Mostafa Shabani fell to the ground, a second car also carrying IRGC agents stopped next to him and that one of the agents got out of the car and shot him directly. The perpetrators then left the scene. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain the type of weapon and ammunition used in the second shooting. Majid did not see Mostafa Shabani immediately before the attack but said that others present at the scene reported that Mostafa Shabani had merely raised his voice and picked up a stone, actions that would not have justified the use of lethal force.

Mostafa Shabani's burial certificate, which Amnesty International reviewed, states that he died as a result of "internal bleeding" and "injuries to his chest" caused by "being struck with a fast-moving object (hunting pellet)". The latter phrase is similarly listed as the cause of death in Mostafa Shabani's death certificate, which the organization also reviewed. However, the death certificate additionally notes that Mostafa Shabani died due to being targeted by "operation of combat equipment outside combat".[859]

Amnesty International also reviewed two graphic videos showing Mostafa Shabani's body after the fatal shooting.[860] The videos, recorded while his body was being washed in a morgue, show injuries to the left side of his torso and left arm. According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International, the videos show scattered shotgun pellet injuries to the left side of the chest and adjacent left arm from just below the shoulder to the mid forearm. A horizontal sutured incision is visible on the left side of the chest, indicating that emergency surgical resuscitation had been attempted through a left thoracotomy.

HEZHAR MAMKHOSRAVI AND EBRAHIM SHARIFIFAR



Hezhar Mamkhosravi (left) and Ebrahim Sharififar (right)
© Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Hezhar Mamkhosravi, aged 19, and Ebrahim Sharififar, aged 29, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Boukan.

Majid and Soroush, informed sources in Boukan, told Amnesty International that, following the fatal shooting of Mostafa Shabani at around 11.30am, the crackdown in Ali Abad intensified, with security forces continuing to unlawfully use firearms and other weapons for the

859. See section 9.3.3.
860. IRN0193, IRN0194, videos on file with Amnesty International.

rest of the day to disperse, intimidate and terrorize protesters. In response, some protesters set up barriers and bonfires in different streets and threw stones at the security forces.

Majid and Soroush said that at around 5-6pm, a group of protesters gathered in front of the property of a man known within the community as working for the IRGC. The property, near Ali Abad Square, consisted of his bakery on the ground floor and his private residence on the top floor. Soroush told Amnesty International the agent's first name and the pseudonym he is known by within the community. Based on this information, Amnesty International conducted online research and identified reports disclosing the agent's full name. This information is on file with the organization.

Majid and Soroush said that some protesters attempted to forcibly enter the agent's property and threw Molotov cocktails at his bakery. In response, the agent fired a shotgun from his balcony to disperse the protesters.

Amnesty International analysed a video, posted on X and authenticated by sources interviewed by the organization, which depicts several protesters standing in the vicinity of the agent's house.[861] The agent is seen coming out of a balcony door and aiming his rifle down towards where the protesters are standing, at which point a single gunshot is heard. The agent then goes back inside. In this footage, no signs of a fire are visible.

Soroush spoke to several eyewitnesses who stated that Hezhar Mamkhosravi and Ebrahim Sharififar were targeted while they were trying to climb the walls of the agent's house. According to information obtained by Soroush, the agent fired at Hezhar Mamkhosravi and Ebrahim Sharififar from a distance of around 10m. Soroush stated that around a dozen metal pellets hit Hezhar Mamkhosravi, resulting in injuries to his throat, ear, shoulder and chest. Amnesty International was not able to determine the exact injuries sustained by Ebrahim Sharififar.

Soroush told Amnesty International that, due to fears of arrest, Hezhar Mamkhosravi asked his family not to take him to a hospital. After several hours, his condition worsened, prompting his family to take him to a hospital despite the risks. He died shortly afterwards.

Amnesty International reviewed the death certificate of Hezhar Mamkhosravi, which states his cause of death as "operation of combat equipment outside of combat", with a further explanatory note stating, "impact of a high-velocity projectile (shotgun pellets)".

According to information obtained by the organization, the IRGC agent's sons and daughter-in-law were inside the house at the time when protesters gathered outside and threw Molotov cocktails. However, it has not been clearly established that a law enforcement officer would reasonably have perceived an imminent threat to human life warranting the resort to lethal force against Hezhar Mamkhosravi and Ebrahim Sharififar. Amnesty International recognizes that the use of proportionate force may sometimes be necessary in self-defence or to protect others from acts of violence. Nonetheless, law enforcement officials must always seek to minimize injury, and to respect and preserve human life. In this regard, shotguns loaded with metal pellets – an inherently inaccurate form of ammunition developed for hunting purposes and highly likely to cause death if fired from very close range – should not be deployed in law enforcement settings, including protest policing. Any such deployment is incompatible with the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Moreover, the use of potentially lethal force is permitted

861. IRN0249, video on file with Amnesty International.

only if strictly necessary and proportionate in self-defence or defence of others against an imminent threat to life.[862]

On the evening of 17 November 2022, a militarized environment prevailed across Boukan, with security forces patrolling the streets and establishing numerous security checkpoints throughout the city. Amnesty International documented the cases of two other men, **Amjad Enayati** and **Hiva Janjan**, who were unlawfully killed when security forces deliberately fired at their cars solely because they failed to stop.

AMJAD ENAYATI AND HIVA JANJAN



Hiva Janjan (left) and Amjad Enayati (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Amjad Enayati, aged 22, and Hiva Janjan, aged 32, in separate incidents in Boukan on the evening of 17 November 2022 by firing lethal ammunition at the cars in which they were travelling.

Milad Mohammadi[863] told Amnesty International that, at around 8pm, IRGC agents fired at the car in which Amjad Enayati and two of his friends were travelling after it did not stop at a security checkpoint. Amjad Enayati, who was sitting in the back, sustained fatal gunshot wounds in his head. Another young man who was sitting in the front passenger seat sustained injuries to his torso and one of his elbows but survived after receiving treatment at an underground medical centre established by medical professionals sympathetic to injured protesters fearing arrest at hospitals.

Milad Mohammadi told Amnesty International that the incident took place in Niayesh Street, a few blocks from Azadegan Square. Amnesty International learned that there were no protests in this area, but the environment was militarized, with multiple checkpoints set up due to the location's strategic importance. The area contains state-provided accommodation occupied by IRGC personnel and the police and their families; the Ministry of Intelligence is also located nearby. Milad Mohammadi said:

"You are in the heart of danger in this location. The streets are so perilous that, even if you are not involved in any political activities and are just passing by, you have to be cautious and prepared to be stopped and confronted because it is their [the IRGC's] place of residence."

In a separate incident at 9.15pm, about an hour later, IRGC agents fired lethal ammunition, without any apparent reason or warning, at a car in which Hiva Janjan and his friend were travelling. According to information obtained from Milad Mohammadi and another informed source, Hadi, who spoke to an eyewitness, the incident took place near the intersection of Niayesh Street and Azadegan Street, a block south of where Amjad Enayati had been fatally shot earlier.

862. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 36: Right to life (Article 6), 3 September 2019, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36, para. 12.
863. See above.

Hadi told Amnesty International that the IRGC agents, who were armed with AK-pattern rifles, first fired at the rear of the vehicle, causing Hiva Janjan's friend, who was driving, to accelerate and lose control, ultimately colliding with a wall. According to Hadi, after the car came to a halt, the agents approached the car and shot Hiva Janjan multiple times through the passenger window, hitting his body and causing wounds to his abdomen. Hadi said that the agents then removed Hiva Janjan and his friend from the car, placed a plastic sheet over the friend's head and beat him, before taking him to an IRGC detention centre where he was arbitrarily detained for about three weeks. According to information obtained by Hadi from an eyewitness, while the beatings were taking place, Hiva Janjan was left bleeding before the agents finally called an ambulance. He died shortly after being admitted to Shahid Gholipour Hospital in Boukan.

Hadi told Amnesty International that, shortly before Hiva Janjan was fatally shot, he saw several vehicles near Azadegan Square, each carrying around five agents, some in plain clothes and others in green and brown camouflage uniforms worn by IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions. He said, "If anyone were to come near or pass by the agents and arouse their suspicion, they would open fire without any knowledge of the person's identity or intentions." Hadi noted that the security forces may have deemed Hiva Janjan and his friend suspicious simply because of their vehicle's black-tinted windows and their failure to stop after the security forces initially opened fire at the car's rear.

Eyewitness accounts obtained by Amnesty International shed light on the militarized environment prevailing in Boukan between 15 and 18 November 2022. During this time, security forces established numerous checkpoints across the city and repeatedly fired rifles and shotguns to instil fear and terror among the population. Amnesty International understands it was within this context that the shooting incidents leading to the deaths of Amjad Enayati and Hiva Janjan occurred.

8.2.4 PROTESTS ON 18 NOVEMBER

At around 4-5pm on 18 November 2022, thousands of mourners from Boukan and nearby villages gathered in Kouseh village for the funeral of Milad Maroufi. A protester, Milad Mohammadi, told Amnesty International that IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, positioned beige Toyota vehicles at multiple points along the main road connecting Boukan and Kouseh, with the apparent aim of obstructing the movement of protesters and mourners. To avoid these makeshift checkpoints, people were forced to disperse and use alternative routes via unpaved side roads to reach Kouseh. Milad Mohammadi described the intimidating environment as drones hovered above, filming them while they travelled to and from Kouseh, as well as during the funeral ceremony.

Meanwhile, according to accounts provided by other protesters, the security forces used firearms and shotguns loaded with metal pellets to suppress protests that were taking place near Moallem Square in central Boukan at around 7-8pm.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, after two days of crackdowns on 16 and 17 November 2022 that claimed the lives of at least 10 people, Boukan was relatively quiet by the end of the night on 18 November 2022. However, security forces maintained a heavy presence throughout the city, arbitrarily stopping, searching, chasing and assaulting people on foot or in vehicles and carrying out arrests in a violent manner.

Amnesty International learned that, in this militarized environment, the security forces unlawfully shot and killed two individuals – **Shahriar Mohammadi** and **Avat Ghaderpour** – late on 18 November 2022.

SHAHRIAR MOHAMMADI

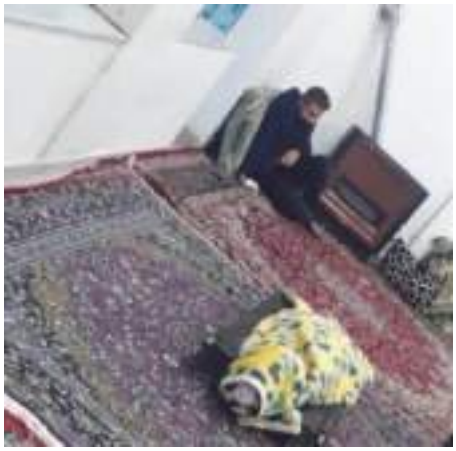


Shahriar Mohammadi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Shahriar Mohammadi, a 28-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 18 November 2022 while he was travelling in a car.

Shahriar Mohammadi's brother, Milad Mohammadi, told Amnesty International that IRGC agents repeatedly fired at a car carrying Shahriar Mohammadi and two of his friends. Milad Mohammadi noted that the men were targeted shortly after returning to Boukan from the funeral ceremony of Milad Maroufi in Kouseh village. Shahriar Mohammadi, who was driving, was fatally wounded in the heart. The front-seat passenger sustained gunshot wounds to one kidney, resulting in its loss, as well as to his hands and legs. The back-seat passenger sustained an injury to one of his feet. The names of the injured men are on file with Amnesty International.

Milad Mohammadi recounted how he heard echoes of heavy gunfire from a distance and drove by the location of the incident shortly after it occurred. There, he said, he saw a group of plain-clothes agents and IRGC agents in brown camouflage uniforms, as well as several vehicles, including pickup trucks equipped with DShK heavy machine guns, surrounding Shahriar Mohammadi's car. Milad Mohammadi later spoke to Shahriar Mohammadi's friends who were injured in the incident. They recalled that they had accelerated after they noticed a car following them. According to Milad Mohammadi, as they reached Ali Abad Square, they found themselves suddenly surrounded by vehicles belonging to IRGC agents and came under fire. Milad Mohammadi also reported speaking to several neighbours who recalled the sound of intense gunfire and the sight of the night sky illuminated by flashes of gunfire.



Shahriar Mohammadi sitting next to Mohammad Hassanzadeh's body in a prayer room © Private

Shahriar Mohammadi's friends suspected that the security forces had been informed of their intended route to Ali Abad Square and positioned themselves in the square in anticipation of their arrival. Milad Mohammadi similarly suspected that Shahriar Mohammadi was deliberately targeted due to his role in organizing the protests linked to the funeral ceremony of Mohammad Hassanzadeh on 17 November 2022. He believed that the authorities were also aware that Shahriar Mohammadi played a significant role in breaking into the morgue of the hospital where Mohammad Hassanzadeh's body was kept, taking it away and returning it to his family.

Milad Mohammadi noted that the authorities had refused to return Mohammad Hassanzadeh's body to his family unless they agreed to carry out a rushed burial at night. Prior to his death, Shahriar Mohammadi had sat next to the body of his friend in the prayer room of the cemetery in Boukan throughout the night and insisted that the burial take place the next morning in the context of a proper funeral ceremony. Amnesty International reviewed an image that went viral around 20 November 2022 and shows Shahriar Mohammadi sitting next to Mohammad Hassanzadeh's body in the prayer room.

AVAT GHADERPOUR



Avat Ghaderpour © Private

Security forces unlawfully fired at Avat Ghaderpour, a 21-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 18 November 2022 while he was travelling in a car. The incident took place in the context of a militarized environment in Boukan after days of violent protest crackdowns. He died from his injuries 12 days later, on 30 November 2022.

According to reports by Kurdpa, the security forces repeatedly fired at Avat Ghaderpour's car after he changed direction shortly before approaching a security checkpoint.[864] He sustained gunshot injuries to his chest and face. Kurdpa stated that the checkpoint was near the village of Nachit, north of Ali Abad Square in Boukan. Amnesty International was unable to obtain further information about the circumstances surrounding the killing directly from informed sources, but Kurdpa confirmed that they received their information from an informed source with direct knowledge of the incident.

Security forces continued to maintain a presence in the streets and to crack down on protesters during the rest of November 2022. Amnesty International analysed two videos, published online on 19 November 2022, showing around two dozen armed agents in plain clothes and their unmarked vehicles on Hashemi Boulevard.[865] Most of the agents have their faces covered with masks and are carrying AK-pattern rifles, as well as shotguns. The first video shows several agents beating and kicking a man who is restrained on the ground before arresting him and forcing him into the boot of a car.[866] One agent is captured striking the detained man with the handle of his gun once he is in the boot. Other agents stand guard during the violent arrest, brandishing their weapons, seemingly to dissuade members of the public from intervening. At one point, one of the agents is seen pointing his rifle at residential houses with windows overlooking the incident. Several sounds that seem to be gunshots are audible, albeit their origin is unclear. The second video shows the armed agents at the same scene; the footage concludes with the agents standing together and engaging in conversation, with their weapons exposed, before entering their cars and driving away.[867]

Amnesty International analysed two further videos, filmed from inside cars by Boukan residents and published online on 21 and 27 November 2022, showing large processions of security forces in

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864. Kurdpa, ["Ninth of November 2023: Anniversary of state killing of Avat Ghaderpour and Ehsan Ghasemifard, among the victims of the Jin, Jiyan, Azadi revolutionary uprising in Boukan and Karaj"], 30 November 2023, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/2023/11/127 (in Persian); Kurdpa, ["Urumieh; Avat Ghaderpour lost his life due to severity of injuries caused by gunshot wound"], 30 November 2022, https://kurdpa.net/fa/news/ارومیه-آوات-قادرپور-بر-اثر-شدت-جراحات-وارده-ناشی-از-اصابت-گلوله-جان-خود-را-از-دست-داد (in Persian).

865. IRN0195, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: صحنه‌هایی از بازداشت یک شهروند در بوکان همرا با شکنجه او ["Scenes of a citizen's arrest in Boukan, along with his torture"], 19 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1593926102711472134 (in Persian); IRN0196, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: بخش دوم ["Part two"], 19 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1593926298472222720 (in Persian).

866. IRN0195, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: صحنه‌هایی از بازداشت یک شهروند در بوکان همرا با شکنجه او ["Scenes of a citizen's arrest in Boukan, along with his torture"], 19 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1593926102711472134 (in Persian).

867. IRN0196, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: بخش دوم ["Part two"], 19 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1593926298472222720 (in Persian).

Boukan, along with multiple vehicles equipped with machine guns in an overt display of force.[868] The first video, published on 21 November 2022, shows a large procession made up of vehicles carrying IRGC and FARAJA agents.[869] The procession includes a marked FARAJA police car at the front, scores of unmarked IRGC vehicles, including pickup trucks, Jasoor armoured personnel carriers and motorcycles, as well as around a dozen more marked police cars and pickup trucks at the first. The IRGC agents visible in the back of the pickup trucks and motorcycles are wearing plain clothes or green uniforms and have their faces covered. Most of the pickup trucks are equipped with machine guns mounted on tripods, while the IRGC agents are equipped with various AK-pattern rifles or shotguns. The FARAJA agents are not clearly visible.

868. IRN0197, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: ویدئویی از رژه‌ی اشغالگران در سطح شهر #بوکان با دوشکا و اسلحه‌های نیمه‌سنگین ["A video of the occupiers' parade in the city of #Boukan with DShK machine guns and medium-heavy weapons"], 27 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1596902187292332032 (in Persian); IRN0198, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: ادامه لشکرکشی به سوی شهرهای بوکان و مهاباد ["Continuation of military offensive towards cities of Boukan and Mahabad"], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594719181697597442 (in Persian).

869. IRN0198, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: ادامه لشکرکشی به سوی شهرهای بوکان و مهاباد ["Continuation of military offensive towards cities of Boukan and Mahabad"], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594719181697597442 (in Persian).



Three stills from a video published on 21 November 2022 showing a procession of vehicles carrying IRGC and FARAJA agents, including pickup trucks equipped with heavy machine guns © Private

The second video, published on 27 November 2022, shows another procession of vehicles, including at least a dozen unmarked pickup trucks, two of them equipped with heavy machine guns. Scores

of armed IRGC agents wearing green and/or beige uniforms and covering their faces are riding in the vehicles.[870]



A still from a video published on 27 November 2022 showing a pickup truck equipped with a heavy machine gun in which several IRGC agents are riding © Private

Similar images and videos were recorded by residents in December 2022. A photograph published online by the Kurdistan Human Rights Network on 12 December 2022 shows two IRGC agents wearing beige camouflage uniforms and face coverings.[871] One agent is standing on the back of an unmarked pickup truck and aiming a heavy machine gun.

870. IRN0197, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: ویدئویی از رژه‌ی اشغالگران در سطح شهر #بوکان با دوشکا و اسلحه‌های نیمه‌سنگین ["A video of the occupiers' parade in the city of #Boukan with DShK machine guns and medium-heavy weapons"], 27 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1596902187292332032 (in Persian).

871. Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: امروز دوشنبه ۲۱ آذر، حضور گسترده نیروهای سپاه پاسداران در خیابان‌ها و ورودی‌های #بوکان ["Today, Monday 12 December, a widespread presence of IRGC forces in the streets and entrances of #Boukan"], 12 December 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1602366327032877065 (in Persian).



A still from a video published on 12 December 2022 showing a pickup truck equipped with a heavy machine gun, as well as two IRGC agents, one on top of the vehicle and the other in front of it © Private

Violence against protesters continued later in the month. Two videos, published on 25 December 2022, show security forces firing and chasing protesters. In one video, filmed by a protester who appears to be running and trying to find shelter at street corridors, at least 11 officers are seen, some in plain clothes and some in uniform.[872] Smoke is visible, while at least one gunshot is audible in the background. In another video, published on the same day and filmed from inside a car, two armed agents with balaclavas over their heads are seen walking along the street.[873] As the car moves, the video captures other parts of the street where residents are walking and three gunshots are heard. The footage does not indicate that the protests were ongoing in that location.

8.3 MAHABAD

Mahabad city was gripped by protests in the weeks following 19 September 2022. According to information gathered by Amnesty International, the protests were initially concentrated in Jomhouri Islami Street in central Mahabad. After several days, the protests spread to other areas in the city, including Shahrak-e Karmandan, Shahrak-e Fajr and Posht Tap.

A protester, Shahou, told Amnesty International that, from the outset, the security forces, including agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, used firearms to quash the protests. He said that, on 19 September 2022, scores of metal pellets struck him in the back and legs while he was participating in protests on Nobovat Sharghi Street (also referred to as Manba' Street). He shared with Amnesty

872. IRN0199, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: درگیری شدید میان مردم معترض در بوکان و نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی ["Heavy clashes between people protesting in Boukan and government suppression forces"], 25 December 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1606996574164422656 (in Persian).
873. IRN0200, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Fattahi, X post: تیراندازی مزدوران در #بوکان ["Shooting by mercenaries in #Boukan"], 25 December 2022, https://x.com/FattahiFarzad/status/1607001598127132672 (in Persian).

International photographs taken shortly after the protest, which show injuries on his back consistent with the spray patterns of metal pellets.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 19 September 2022, which shows how the authorities' response was militarized from the early days.[874] The video opens with several unveiled women chanting "Woman Life Freedom" on Jomhouri Islami Street at the Azadi intersection. Moments later, they are joined by teenagers and young men echoing the same chant. Large numbers of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA can be seen congregating in the centre of the intersection, some on foot and others on motorcycles. Some agents are seen wielding what appear to be shotguns while others carry batons. A black armoured vehicle bearing the insignia of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA enters the intersection. The voice of an agent is then heard addressing the crowd through a megaphone, claiming that the protesters have been incited and deceived by the "enemies of the system to disrupt public order". The agent orders the crowd to leave and warns that "those seeking to disrupt public order will be severely punished".

Another protester, Kamal, recalled that, on 20 September 2022, when he participated in the protests for the first time, he also saw a commanding FARAJA agent using a megaphone to order peaceful protesters gathered in Jomhouri Islami Street to disperse. Kamal stated that when the protesters did not comply, the Special Cohorts of FARAJA fired tear gas and shotguns loaded with metal pellets directly at the protesters.

Five videos published online between 21 and 29 September 2022 and analysed by Amnesty International corroborate the witness accounts of the increased repression against protesters in Mahabad. In three videos, published online on 21 and 23 September 2022, protesters are heard screaming and seen running for cover amid the sound of gunshots.[875] In the fourth video, published online on 25 September 2022, agents in both plain clothes and black uniforms and protective gear resembling those of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA are seen carrying away an individual.[876] Information published by the Hengaw Organization for Human Rights (Hengaw) suggests that the footage was filmed on 22 September 2022 around Nobovat Sharghi Street, where security forces were conducting house-to-house searches and carrying out violent arrests. The fifth video shows a group of IRGC agents dressed in green camouflage uniforms maintaining an intimidating presence in the street, with at least one carrying an AK-pattern rifle.[877]

Kamal and Shahou told Amnesty International that the security forces' pattern of using unlawful force against protesters, including through the use of metal pellets, continued for the next two months. The use of metal pellets resulted in injuries, including eye trauma, to numerous men, women and children.

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874. IRN0307, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Saman Rasoulpour, X post: این ویدیوی #مهاباد مثل یک فیلم مستند است. عمق دارد. این ویدیو را از دست ندهید ["This video from Mahabad is like a documentary film. It has depth. Don't miss it"], 19 September 2022, https://x.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1571962994632065024 (in Persian).

875. IRN0202, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: AVATODAY, X post: مهاباد همچنان در جنگ با مزدوران خامنه‌ای خائن/ مردم غیور مهاباد با حضور جانانه خود در قیام سراسری علیه جمهوری فاسد اسلامی به پا خاستند ["Mahabad is still at war with the traitorous mercenaries of Khamenei. The brave people of Mahabad have risen with wholehearted presence in the nationwide uprising against the corrupt Islamic Republic"], 23 September 2022, https://x.com/avatoday_news/status/1573201515484962816 (in Persian); IRN0203, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: درگیری شدید خیابانی میان مردم و نیروهای حکومتی در مهاباد ["Severe street clashes between people and government forces in Mahabad"], 23 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1573389617327472647 (in Persian); IRN0205, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: درگیری شدید مردم مهاباد با نیروهای حکومتی و تیراندازی مستقیم به سوی مردم توسط این نیروها ["Clashes between people of Mahabad and government forces, with direct gunfire by these forces towards people"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1572620293654581248 (in Persian).

876. IRN0205, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: جستجوی خانه به خانه و بازداشت خشن مردم در #مهاباد.! ["House-to-house searches and violent arrests of people in #Mahabad"], 25 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1573974644436115458 (in Persian).

877. IRN206, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: توزیع موتور میان نیروهای سرگوبگر برای سرکوب معترضان در مهاباد ["Distribution of motorcycles to suppression forces to crack down on protesters in Mahabad"], 29 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1575528328038993920 (in Persian).

Videos published online between October and December 2022 corroborate witness accounts of the presence of security forces in the streets and the use of unlawful force to disperse protests. In at least three videos analysed by Amnesty International, members of the security forces wearing plain clothes and/or uniforms belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC are seen aiming their weapons and shooting them in the direction of protesters or directly into a vehicle.[878]

Amnesty International recorded the unlawful killings of 13 protesters and bystanders – 11 men and two women – in Mahabad during and in the aftermath of violent protest dispersals by the security forces between 15 October 2022 and 18 November 2022. On 15 October 2022, **Fayegh Mamghaderi** was killed. In a wave of killings on 26 and 27 October 2022, two women – **Kobra Sheikheh** and **Fereshteh Ahmadi** – and four men – **Esmail (Simko) Moloudi**, **Shahou Khezri**, **Zaniar Aboubakri** and **Masoud Ahmadzadeh** – were killed**.** In another wave of killings on 17 and 18 November 2022, six men – **Mehran Rahmani**, **Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam**, **Azad Hosseinpouri**, **Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash**, **Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour** and **Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour** – were killed.

8.3.1 PROTESTS ON 12-15 OCTOBER

Kamal told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 12 October 2022, he was among hundreds of protesters on Nobovat Sharghi Street. He recalled that the protesters encountered hundreds of agents, among them plain-clothes agents, uniformed FARAJA agents, including members of FARAJA's Special Cohorts and Prevention Police, and uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions. Kamal said that, in addition to using shotguns loaded with metal pellets, the security forces also fired paint balls and rubber bullets. He noted that, in response, some protesters threw stones and Molotov cocktails to push back the security forces and prolong the protests.

During the crackdown that evening, Kamal suffered an injury to his left eye after an agent from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA aimed a shotgun at his face from a distance of about 12m and discharged a round of metal pellets. Kamal told Amnesty International that the agent deliberately targeted him after he loudly alerted several protesters that he had recognized the agent, who lived in Mahabad. Kamal added that, after he was injured, the agent continued to fire metal pellets in his direction, resulting in some striking the eyes of a fellow protester who tried to help Kamal. The organization has on file the names of three agents whom Kamal witnessed participating in the crackdown on 12 October 2022, as well as the name and title of a senior FARAJA commander whom Kamal heard issuing orders to members of the security forces to fire at protesters.

Kamal described to Amnesty International the difficulties he experienced in accessing emergency medical care due to the presence of security forces at hospitals. He was denied admission to several hospitals, which he later realized was due to concerns by medical staff that security forces were arresting injured patients at these facilities. Eventually, he went to Nikoukari Hospital in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province, some 200km from Mahabad, where he saw numerous injured protesters who had been taken there from Mahabad, as well as from Saqqez and Boukan. He recounted the case of a man from Mahabad who had sustained injuries to one of his eyes and other parts of his body after being hit with metal pellets. He also mentioned the case of another man, who had sustained injuries to his buttocks from metal pellets.

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878. IRN0308, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: هجوم نیروهای سرکوبگر با ادوات جنگی به مردم ["Assault of suppression forces on people with military equipment"], 24 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1595853847955644416 (in Persian); IRN0207, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ali Javanmardi, X post: فوری! در #مهاباد در حالیکه چند ماشین نیروی انتظامی حاضر نشدند به مردم تیراندازی کنند و در بین جمعیت با کف زدن بدرقه شدند، گردان مالک اشتر سپاه تروریستی وارد شده و مردم را به رگبار بست ["Urgent! In #Mahabad, while several police vehicles refused to shoot at people and were seen applauded by the crowd, the Malek Ashtar battalion of the terrorist IRGC entered and opened fire on people"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/javanmardi75/status/1594338304954179588 (in Persian); IRN0208, video on file with Amnesty International.

Amnesty International reviewed medical records documenting the injuries sustained by Kamal and noting that he underwent two surgical operations. Nevertheless, a metal pellet remained lodged in his left eye and, over the following years, he continued to suffer from infections and headaches as a result.

Mahabad also witnessed security forces opening fire on cars in areas affected by protests, solely because the vehicles failed to stop at the instruction of security forces. The fatal shooting of **Fayegh Mamghaderi** serves as an example of this brutality.

FAYEGH MAMGHADERI



Fayegh Mamghaderi © Private

Security forces unlawfully opened fire on Fayegh Mamghaderi, a 37-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 15 October 2022 while he was travelling in a car in Mahabad, causing him fatal injuries.

Shahou, a protester who talked to some of Fayegh Mamghaderi's friends and relatives, told Amnesty International that several IRGC agents fired at the car in which Fayegh Mamghaderi and his friend, Masoud Farajzadeh, were travelling after the men did not immediately comply with an order to stop. Shahou explained that the incident occurred in Nobovat Sharghi Street, which was frequently the epicentre of protests, leading to the presence of security forces in the area. However, at the time of the incident, no protests were taking place in the area. According to Shahou, Fayegh Mamghaderi was rushing to reach his house, which was nearby, after receiving news that his younger brother had been arrested.

Masoud Farajzadeh, who was driving the car, sustained gunshot wounds to his waist, but survived. However, Fayegh Mamghaderi, who was in the front passenger seat, sustained fatal injuries caused by metal pellets fired from shotguns at his forehead from close range. According to Shahou, after shooting Fayegh Mamghaderi, the IRGC agents beat him with batons and the handles of guns as they took him from the car and put him in their own vehicle, before driving away. Shahou added that the agents fired into the air to prevent people from gathering.

Fayegh Mamghaderi's family was informed several hours later that he had been taken to a hospital in Urumieh, where he died on 9 November 2022.

8.3.2 PROTESTS ON 26-27 OCTOBER

On 26 October 2022, thousands of people took to the streets of Mahabad, amid a heavy presence of security forces, to mark the 40th day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, the protests lasted from approximately 4-5pm until 12-1am and took place in various areas, including the vicinity of Islamic Azad university, Sa'at Square, Esteghlal Square, Nobovat Sharghi Street, Ghabrestan Street and Posht Tap Street.

Four protesters told Amnesty International that, from around 4pm onwards, around 150 armed agents, including plain-clothes agents and uniformed agents from the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, were stationed near every central square and intersection to deter people from joining the protests. They said, based on their training during compulsory military service, they recognized large numbers of IRGC agents carrying AK-pattern rifles and SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles (locally known as *ghanaseh*).

The protesters said that, despite the intimidating atmosphere, thousands took to the streets in a powerful display of resistance. In response, the security forces repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse the protesters, injuring scores of men, women and children. The protesters recounted how, on numerous occasions, the security forces also fired from both street level and rooftops. They said that the agents firing from rooftops were armed with rifles and were positioned on the rooftops of police stations and buildings belonging to the IRGC, as well as commercial and residential buildings, which intensified the climate of fear within neighbourhoods.

Consistent with widespread media reports, the protesters added that the authorities intentionally cut off electricity in the early evening to facilitate the crackdown in the dark.

Shahou told Amnesty International about the case of a man who sustained severe gunshot wounds to one of his legs, which led to it being amputated. According to Shahou, the incident happened near Sa'at Square early in the evening of 26 October 2022. Amnesty International reviewed a picture showing the man with his right leg amputated from the knee down. The victim's name is on file with the organization but is withheld due to security concerns. Shahou also reported seeing a young man who was shot in the hand by an AK-pattern rifle, similarly on 26 October 2022.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, at around 9pm, the crackdown escalated in Posht Tap Street near Mola Khalil Square and a police station known as Police Station No. 13, where protesters frequently gathered. An eyewitness, Erfan, told Amnesty International that the security forces advanced towards protesters on foot, as well as in cars and on motorcycles, and fired repeatedly. The eyewitnesses emphasized that protesters were overwhelmingly peaceful and posed no threat to the security forces warranting the use of force, let alone lethal force. Shahou said:

> **"People had simply assembled [around] bonfires and were chanting. In response to the constant shootings, some individuals resorted to throwing stones in the direction of the security forces, who were situated several hundred metres away. People did not want the situation to escalate further."**

During this crackdown, security forces unlawfully killed **Esmail (Simko) Moloudi**.

ESMAIL (SIMKO) MOLOUDI



Esmail (Simko) Moloudi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Esmail (Simko) Moloudi, a 35-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 26 October 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Mahabad.

Shahou and another informed source in Iran, Erfan, told Amnesty International that Esmail (Simko) Moloudi was among hundreds of protesters gathered in Posht Tap Street near Mola Khalil Square and Police Station No. 13. According to Erfan and Shahou, at around 9.30pm, Esmail (Simko) Moloudi was struck by a bullet that penetrated his heart and lung before exiting through his left arm. Shahou and Erfan said that it had not been confirmed whether uniformed IRGC agents and plain-clothes agents operating at street level or agents positioned on rooftops who wore black uniforms and black balaclavas were responsible for shooting Esmail (Simko) Moloudi. They noted that some of the agents were armed with variants of SVD-pattern rifles. Both Shahou and Erfan suspected that Esmail (Simko) Moloudi was singled out and shot by an agent positioned on a rooftop because no other protesters in the vicinity were harmed at that time. They also noted that the considerable distance between the crowd of protesters and the members of security forces at street level, who were facing the crowd, meant that it would have been challenging for one of them to shoot Esmail

(Simko) Moloudi in his torso. Amnesty International was not able to obtain any information indicating why he may have been singled out.

Erfan and Shahou told Amnesty International that, after Esmail (Simko) Mouloudi collapsed, the security forces continued shooting to disperse the crowd. Despite this, several people managed to carry his body away.

The organization analysed a video which shows distressed people attempting to aid Esmail (Simko) Moloudi in the darkness amid sounds of gunfire.[879] Erfan told Amnesty International that, due to fears of arrest, protesters initially transferred Esmail (Simko) Moloudi to a private residence. However, as his condition deteriorated and his pulse weakened, he was transferred to the main hospital in Mahabad, where he died shortly afterwards.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed graphic videos of Esmail (Simko) Moloudi's body taken both immediately after his death, at the scene of the shooting, and later.[880] The expert noted that these show heavily bloodstained clothing on the upper torso and that the clothing has been pulled aside to expose the chest. In the videos, no wounds are identifiable to the front of the exposed chest; the source of the blood appears to be from the side or back. There is blood around the nose and mouth, in keeping with a chest wound associated with bleeding into the airways, although the wound itself is not visible.

Esmail (Simko) Moloudi's burial certificate, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, lists the cause of death as "failure of the organs in the chest and extensive internal bleeding", which resulted from "an incendiary penetrative object entering the right side of the chest and exiting through the opposite side".

Tensions in Mahabad escalated following the unlawful killing of Esmail (Simko) Moloudi. On the morning of 27 October 2022, thousands of people attended his funeral in Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery. Subsequently, at around 9.30am, a large funeral procession marched from the cemetery towards the Office of the County Governor of Mahabad near Farmandari Square. Amnesty International reviewed a video, published online on 27 October 2022, that captured the procession.[881]

Eyewitness accounts from the protests in front of the Office of the County Governor of Mahabad that morning indicate that most of the protesters were peaceful while some threw stones towards the building and attempted to break through its front gate and enter the premises. Protesters Nader and Shahou told Amnesty International that the security forces stationed inside the premises, including uniformed IRGC agents and plain-clothes agents, escalated the situation by firing AK-pattern rifles into the air, as well as shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas, towards the protesters to disperse them. Nader and Shahed said that, as the gunfire intensified, hundreds of peaceful protesters ran away in distress.

Amnesty International analysed video footage that confirms that the security forces violently dispersed protesters gathered in front of the Office of the County Governor of Mahabad. In one video, published

879. IRN0209 Video available on file with Amnesty International.
880. IRN0309, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: "Esmail Moloudi, 35, was killed tonight during the people's resistance in Mahabad by direct fire from security forces", 26 October 2022, https://x.com/Hengaw_English/status/1585385592824942592 (in Persian); IRN0310, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: beyondthewalls2, X post: لحظه تیراندازی ماموران به سمت مردم مهاباد در مراسم تشییع پیکر [The moment security forces fire on people in Mahabad during funeral procession], 31 October 2022, https://x.com/beyondthewalls2/status/1586955266049785856 (in Persian). IRN0209, video on file with Amnesty International.
881. IRN0211, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Fattahi, X post: مهاباد، اکنون! مردم به سوی فرمانداری این شهر می‌روند... ["Mahabad, now! People are heading towards the Office of the County Governor in the city..."], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/FattahiFarzad/status/1585546603347206144 (in Persian).

online on 27 October 2022, protesters can be heard chanting while congregating in front of the Office of the County Governor.[882] A small number of protesters can be seen throwing stones, damaging banners or attempting to climb over the front gate of the Office of the County Governor. The majority of the protesters stand by, observing the situation or chanting. The video shows that, as chants grew louder, single shots turn into a stream of gunfire.[883] Initially, a small number of protesters stand defiant and throw stones in response. The remainder of the footage shows people running away from Farmandari Square in distress amid constant sounds of gunfire. People are heard coughing while running. Clouds of smoke are visible.

A second video shows similar scenes of protesters fleeing amid the sound of constant gunfire with tear gas visible in the air.[884] A third video shows protesters hiding and running away to the side streets, amid the increasing sound of gunfire, and groups of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA wearing black uniforms and protective gear arriving on motorcycles.[885]

Security forces also launched a crackdown on the neighbourhood where Email (Simko) Moloudi's home was located. A video published online on 27 October 2022 shows people running away amid the sound of gunshots.[886]

According to information gathered by Amnesty International from protesters, hundreds of protesters regrouped and marched towards a square known as Ard Square at the intersection of Emam Shafei Street and Taleghani Sharghi Street. Some protesters reassembled in front of a nearby police station known as Police Station No. 11, located on Taleghani Sharghi Street, and attempted to forcibly enter its premises.

Nader told Amnesty International that the protesters came under fire from a large number of plain-clothes agents armed with AK-pattern rifles and uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, who were armed with shotguns loaded with metal pellets. Nader stated that the security forces fired from both street level and the rooftop of the police station. In the face of the crackdown, the protesters once again dispersed.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 27 October 2022, that is consistent with Nader's account.[887] It shows protesters standing in the street, chanting and cheering, with the constant sound of gunfire in the background. The person filming the video states that the location is in front of Police Station No. 11. The footage also shows a drone flying over the heads of the protesters.

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882. IRN0311, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Cheshm_abi, X post: #مهاباد فوری هم اینک پنجشنبه ۵ آبان فرمانداری سقوط کرد و به تسخیر مردم انقلابی در آمد ["#Urgent: As of now, Thursday 27 October, the Office of the County Governor of #Mahabad has fallen and been seized by the revolutionary people"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/chawshin_83/status/1585542894760386563 (in Persian).

883. IRN0311, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Cheshm_abi, X post: #مهاباد فوری هم اینک پنجشنبه ۵ آبان فرمانداری سقوط کرد و به تسخیر مردم انقلابی در آمد ["#Urgent: As of now, Thursday 27 October, the Office of the County Governor of #Mahabad has fallen and been seized by the revolutionary people"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/chawshin_83/status/1585542894760386563 (in Persian).

884. IRN0213, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kamran Kamaei, X post: نیروهای امنیتی جمهوری اسلامی، پنجشنبه پنجم مهر با هدف جلوگیری از ادامه اعتراضات ضدحکومتی در مهاباد به سوی معترضان تیراندازی کردند ["On Thursday 27 September, the Islamic Republic's security forces opened fire on protesters in Mahabad to prevent continuation of anti-government demonstrations"], 27 September 2022, https://x.com/Kamaei444/status/1585549107091111936 (in Persian).

885. IRN0214, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Begoonah1, X post: رویارویی مردم مهاباد با مزدوران ["Confrontation between people of Mahabad and mercenaries"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/begoonah1/status/1585549216973201409 (in Persian).

886. IRN0312, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rafiq Hosein Panahi, X post: نیروهای حکومتی در محله گمرک مهاباد که منزل اسماعیل مولودی آنجا واقع شده است، مردم را به رگبار بسته‌اند ["Government forces in the Gomrok neighbourhood of Mahabad, where Esmail Moloudi's home is located, have opened fire on people"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/PanahiRafiq/status/1585549541117513729 (in Persian).

887. IRN0216, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: OfficialMaHastim, X post: مردم مهاباد درحال تسخیر کلانتری ۱۱ پنجشنبه ۵ آبان ["People of Mahabad in the process of occupying Police Station No. 11 on Thursday 27 October"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/RealMaHastim/status/1585630151513370625 (in Persian).

Another video from near the same location, also published online on 27 October 2022, shows that the security forces continued to use firearms and prohibited weapons to disperse the protesters.[888] A third video from the same location shows that, at some point, a building near the police station became engulfed in flames.[889] Protesters are seen clapping and chanting. Gunshots remain audible in the background. It is unclear how the fire started.

Nader told Amnesty International that, from Police Station No. 11, a group of protesters moved a block north of the Ard Square intersection and regrouped at a three-way intersection called Hafez in Hafez Street. According to Nader, it was here that Shahou Khezri was shot and killed.

SHAHOU KHEZRI


Shahou Khezri © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Shahou Khezri, a 20-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Mahabad on 27 October 2022.

A protester, Nader, told Amnesty International that he and Shahou Khezri were standing a few steps away from a group of 15-20 protesters who were gathering stones and constructing a barricade in Hafez Street. He emphasized that the protesters were unarmed.

According to Nader, at around 11-11.30am, several masked IRGC agents fired towards them without warning from a distance of approximately 200-250m. Nader said that the agents were armed with AK-pattern rifles and were wearing black protective vests over traditional khaki Kurdish clothing.[890] He recounted how, overwhelmed by fear, he briefly closed his eyes when the shooting began and, when he opened them, saw Shahou Khezri lying on the ground, having suffered a fatal gunshot wound to his forehead. He said that he was unable to move Shahou Khezri due to the ongoing gunfire from the IRGC agents.

Amnesty International understands that the shootings in this location stopped after the crowd dispersed, allowing people to eventually move Shahou Khezri's body. Amnesty International reviewed a video, published online on 27 October 2022, which captures the scene immediately after the shooting, showing several individuals carrying Shahou Khezr's body, with his face stained in blood.[891]

Amnesty International was unable to obtain copies of Shahou Khezri's death or burial certificate.

Following the crackdown in Hafez Street that resulted in the unlawful killing of Shahou Khezri, several hundred protesters fled to nearby Kargar Street close to Mola Jami Square. According to Nader, who was among the protesters, for the next two hours, agents wearing green camouflage uniforms, black

888. IRN0217, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rkzsafari, X post: تسخیر کلانتری ۱۱ مهاباد ۵ آبان ۲۷۰۱ چند اداره حکومتی مثل اداره دارایی، کمیته امداد و... به تصرف مردم مهاباد در آمده است ["Seizing of Police Station No. 11 in Mahabad, 27 October, 2701, Several government offices, including the Tax Office, the Relief Committee, and others, taken over by people of Mahabad"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/rkzasafari/status/1585559686287429633 (in Persian).
889. IRN0313, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Nima Sanaei, X post: مهاباد - تسخیر کلانتری ۱۱ توسط جوانان شورشگر و مبارز ["Mahabad: Youth rebels and fighters seize Police Station No. 11"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/nima_saneie/status/1585620943694696450 (in Persian).
890. See section 10.3.3(II) on the security forces' use of traditional Kurdish clothes.
891. IRN0314, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Pouria Zeraati, X post: مهاباد، ۵ آبان تیراندازی به یک جوان معترض ["Mahabad, 27 October, shooting of a young protester"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/pouriazeraati/status/1585597348738113537 (in Persian).

protective vests and helmets repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets towards the protesters. Nader added that. to intensify the climate of fear, the security forces also fired into the air. Despite the crackdown, the protesters remained defiant, constructing barriers to protect themselves against the barrage of metal pellets and throwing stones towards the security forces.

According to Nader, shortly after 1pm, the security forces intensified their repression by advancing from Mola Jami Square towards the protesters assembled in Kargar Street. The security forces then fired, without warning, multiple rounds using AK-pattern rifles. The protesters ran away and sought shelter in houses in and around Kargar Street, which had been left open by sympathetic residents to aid protesters in their escape. The security forces chased the protesters while continuing to fire at them. During this crackdown, security forces chased, shot and killed **Kobra Sheikheh**.

KOBRA SHEIKHEH


Kobra Sheikheh © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Kobra Sheikheh, a 59-year-old woman from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 27 October 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Mahabad.

Protester, Nader, told Amnesty International that Kobra Sheikheh was among a group of protesters gathered in Kargar Street who were forced to disperse and flee when the security forces advanced towards them, firing multiple rounds from AK-pattern rifles. Nader recalled that Kobra Sheikheh, along with several other protesters, sought refuge in her house in Kargar Street. They were chased by several agents wearing green camouflage uniforms along with black protective vests and helmets.[892] Nader stated that Kobra Sheikheh momentarily paused at the entrance of her house, glancing at the approaching agents, and that, before she could open the door, an agent swiftly approached and shot her in the neck with an assault rifle.

Amnesty International analysed several videos published on 27 October 2022 depicting the crackdown by security forces near Kargar Street. One video shows uniformed security forces on motorcycles and wearing protective helmets on one side of the street, with protesters on the other.[893] Due to the quality of the video, it is not possible to determine the institutional affiliation of the security forces. Two further videos show protesters near the police station known as Police Station No. 11, located on Taleghani Sharghi Street and near Kargar Street.[894] The protesters are seen standing in the street and cheering amid the constant sound of gunfire.

Amnesty International reviewed images that show Kobra Sheikheh lying lifeless on the ground with a gunshot injury to her neck. According to Nader's eyewitness account, the bullet entered her

892. As Nader was unable to see the insignia on the agents' uniforms, it was not possible to ascertain if they were from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA or a Basij battalion of the IRGC.
893. IRN0315, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Begoonah1, X post: رویارویی مردم مهاباد با مزدوران ["Confrontation between people of Mahabad and mercenaries"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/begoonah1/status/1585549216973201409 (in Persian).
894. IRN0216, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: OfficialMaHastim, X post: مردم مهاباد درحال تسخیر کلانتری ۱۱ پنجشنبه ۵ آبان ["People of Mahabad in the process of occupying Police Station No. 11 on Thursday 27 October"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/RealMaHastim/status/1585630151513370625 (in Persian); IRN0217, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Rkzsafari, X post: تسخیر کلانتری ۱۱ مهاباد ۵ آبان ۲۷۰۱ چند اداره حکومتی مثل اداره دارایی، کمیته امداد و... به تصرف مردم مهاباد در آمده است ["Seizing of Police Station No. 11 in Mahabad, 27 October, 2701, Several government offices, including the Tax Office, the Relief Committee, and others, taken over by people of Mahabad"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/rkzasafari/status/1585559686287429633 (in Persian).

neck, exited through her shoulder, and pierced the front door of her residence. A photograph reviewed by the organization shows a hole in the door.[895] Kobra Sheikheh died from her injuries shortly after she was shot and was then taken by her family to hospital.

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed a photograph and video of Kobra Sheikheh's body taken after she was shot.[896] According to the pathologist, the photograph shows a small round penetrating wound to the front of the neck in the mid-line, strongly corroborating testimony that she was shot in the neck with a high velocity military rifle. There is blood staining of the neck and evidence of emergency medical intervention. The same wound is visible in the video.

Nader told Amnesty International that Kobra Sheikheh's family persuaded hospital staff to release her body to them before security and intelligence officials could seize it. According to Nader, as Kobra Sheikheh's relatives were nearing their house, more than a dozen members of the security forces on motorcycles began chasing their car and repeatedly fired shotguns towards them. According to Nader, who witnessed the incident, the security forces targeted the bereaved family after they noticed Kobra Sheikheh's husband sitting next to the body of his wife in the back of a pickup truck. As described by Nader, her husband was crying and loudly condemning the authorities for killing his wife, which drew the attention of the security forces and prompted their violent response. Kobra Sheikheh's husband and several other relatives sustained metal pellet injuries to their bodies and faces. Kobra Sheikheh's body was also riddled with metal pellets. Eventually, the security forces left after Kobra Sheikheh's family promised to take her body quietly into their house.

Later in the day, Kobra Sheikheh's family was joined by thousands of protesters and mourners, who carried her body in a peaceful procession to Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery in Mahabad. Nader told Amnesty International that security forces, including the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, once again attacked the protesters and mourners by firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas. Nader recounted how mourners were forced to put down Kobra Sheikheh's body after her brother, who was carrying the coffin, was injured with metal pellets and several relatives lost consciousness due to excessive exposure to tear gas. Eventually, after repeated pleas, the security forces left and the procession continued.

Amnesty International was able to obtain a copy of Kobra Sheikheh's death certificate, which cites the cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

Shortly after Kobra Sheikheh was killed in Kargar Street, two other protesters, **Zaniar Aboubakri** and **Masoud Ahmadzadeh**, were unlawfully killed by security forces in nearby streets on 27 October 2022.

895. The photograph is on file with Amnesty International.
896. IRN0260, photograph and video on file with Amnesty International (photograph and video withheld for security and privacy reasons).

ZANIAR ABOUBAKRI



Zaniar Aboubakri © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Zaniar Aboubakri, a 21-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 27 October 2022 during the crackdown on protesters in Mahabad.

An eyewitness, Mahshid, told Amnesty International that, at around 1.45pm, significant numbers of members of the security forces, who were wearing green camouflage uniforms and protective helmets and carrying automatic and semi-automatic rifles, as well as shotguns and tear gas launchers, advanced towards a group of unarmed protesters gathered in Sardaran Street and began to fire at them. Among the protesters were Zaniar Aboubakri and his mother.

According to Mahshid, initially, the agents fired tear gas and metal pellets. However, soon afterwards, protesters heard sounds of gunfire that appeared to be from rifles. Mahshid said that, as soon as these sounds started, Zaniar Aboubakri advised his mother to flee with him. However, before they could escape, Zaniar Aboubakri collapsed after a bullet entered the right side of his waist and exited from the left side.

Mahshid said:

"I had never seen such scenes before, not even in films. The situation was very frightening and felt like a war zone. The security forces just kept shooting. They had no mercy towards anyone. It made no difference if you were participating in the protests or what you were doing. They just shot."

Relatives immediately transferred Zaniar Aboubakri to a hospital, but he died shortly afterwards. Hospital records reviewed by Amnesty International state that he showed no signs of life upon admission due to gunshot wounds in his stomach. His death certificate, which was reviewed by the organization, cites his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects", adding a further explanatory statement that "according to the medical certificate, the cause of death has been recorded as rupture of a vein as a result of being struck by a combat bullet".

Amnesty International reviewed four photographs of Zaniar Aboubakri's body after his death. According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by the organization, the photographs show a large, sutured mid-line incision to the abdomen, which either represents an emergency laparotomy (a surgical cut in the abdomen) or an incision made during an autopsy. On the right side of the abdomen, a little above the level of the umbilicus (navel) is an oblique sutured wound about 6cm long associated with some fresh bruising. According to the pathologist, the photographs are supportive of the testimony that he sustained a fatal gunshot wound to the abdomen.

Mahshid told Amnesty International that, out of concern that the authorities would seize Zaniar Aboubakri's body and prevent a dignified burial, his relatives transported his body from the hospital to his family home. Later the same day, mourners and protesters joined the family to carry Zaniar Aboubakri's body from his house to Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery. Mahshid told Amnesty International that the security forces once again used firearms to disperse the protesters and stop the procession, injuring numerous people.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published online on 27 October 2022, which shows a group of distressed protesters carrying a body away from a scene of gunfire.[897] Mahshid confirmed that it was Zaniar Aboubakri's body. Terrifying sounds of constant gunfire can be heard in the

897. IRN0316, video on file with Amnesty International.

background. Protesters can be seen hiding behind a barricade as security forces positioned some distance from them on the same road shoot towards them. Protesters hold their ground behind the barricade, enabling the group carrying the body to move away.

Many protesters and mourners subsequently gathered in front of a mosque peacefully.[898] According to an eyewitness, Abed, who was present, the security forces once again used firearms to disperse the crowd, injuring several people. He added that the authorities deliberately cut off electricity to facilitate the crackdown in the dark.

MASOUD AHMADZADEH



Masoud Ahmadzadeh © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Masoud Ahmadzadeh, a 27-year-old-man from Iran's Kurdish minority, during the crackdown on protests in Mahabad on 27 October 2022.

A protester, Shahou, told Amnesty International that security forces, including plain-clothes agents, repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets towards a group of around 150-200 protesters who were positioned near Mola Jami Square, some 200-500m away. Shahou described hearing the sound of metal pellets fired from shotguns, as well as distinct sounds he assessed to be from automatic rifles being fired. Shahou also witnessed bullet marks on walls in the vicinity. Shahou said that the security forces used firearms to disperse protesters and instil fear among the protesters. He emphasized that most protesters were peaceful, engaging in setting up bonfires and chanting, while some threw stones.

Amid the chaos of the shootings, Shahou said that he heard a young woman say that someone had been shot. He rushed over and saw Masoud Ahmadzadeh lying on the ground with gunshot wounds to his stomach. Shahou told Amnesty International that, due to fears of arrest, Masoud Ahmadzadeh asked people to take him to his house, rather than a hospital. In the following hours, his condition deteriorated as he developed a severe infection, and he died the next day.

898. IRN0219, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Omid Barin, X post: هزاران نفر از مردم پیرانشهر با حمل پیکر «امیر فراست شاد» بر دوش، به سمت آرامستان شهر حرکت میکنند... ["Thousands of people in Piranshahr, carry the body of 'Amir Ferasati-Shad' on their shoulders as they march towards the the city's cemetery..."], 18 November 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1593666746170351620 (in Persian).

FERESHTEH AHMADI



Fereshteh Ahmadi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Fereshteh Ahmadi, a 32-year-old-woman from Iran's Kurdish minority, during a crackdown on protests in Mahabad on 27 October 2022.

Fereshteh Ahmadi's brother, Ebrahim Ahmadi, who lives outside Iran, told Amnesty International that Fereshteh Ahmadi was the neighbour of Zaniar Aboubakri, who was killed earlier on 27 October 2022. According to Ebrahim Ahmadi, because the area around Zaniar Aboubakri's home became crowded with mourners and protesters, and security forces were deployed there, Fereshteh Ahmadi's family decided to go to the home of a relative in the area of Beri Shilanan in Mahabad on the day she was killed.

According to Ebrahim Ahmadi, when the family arrived at the relative's home, they found that protests were taking place at a nearby intersection that was around 20m away. He told the organization that uniformed agents from the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, as well as plain-clothes agents, were present in the area, that there were snipers on the rooftops of nearby buildings and that the sound of gunshots could be heard.

Ebrahim Ahmadi reported that, at around 7pm, Fereshteh Ahmadi went to the roof of the relative's three-storey home to hang her three-year-old son's trousers to dry when she was shot in the chest and fell to the floor next to her six-year-old daughter.



Fereshteh Ahmadi's daughter at her grave site © Private

In a video showing Fereshteh Ahmadi's daughter, Bavan, published by the Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian) on 16 September 2024, her daughter describes what she witnessed: "We were on the rooftop. Mum was hanging Miran's trousers when the agents shot her. The bullet also ripped through Miran's trousers and struck mum here [pointing to the upper chest area]."[899]

Fereshteh Ahmadi appeared to have died either instantly or on the way to hospital.

After a photograph of Fereshteh Ahmadi's daughter crying at her mother's grave site at her funeral went viral, the authorities launched a campaign to deny any involvement in her death and to misrepresent her family's statements about it. According to Ebrahim Ahmadi, the authorities initially blamed her death on her husband. In the days following her death, the head of the Justice Department of West Azerbaijan province, Nasser Atabati, publicly claimed that, according to the authorities' investigations, the fatal shot came from inside her

899. Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian), گفت‌وگو بی‌بی‌سی با برادر فرشته احمدی، خواهرم را کشتند و خانواده را هم زیر فشار امنیتی گذاشتند ["BBC interview with the brother of Fereshteh Ahmadi: They killed my sister and also put the family under security pressure"], 16 September 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynbzU1jvDeE

> home.[900] Nasser Atabati falsely claimed that this "fact" had been "confirmed" by her family and stated that "there were no protests, disturbances or police presence near the house at the time of the incident."[901]

Violence continued the day after Fereshteh Ahmadi's death, as shown in two videos published on 28 October 2022 and analysed by Amnesty International. The first video shows thick white smoke resembling tear gas, while protesters and shopkeepers flee through an alleyway of the local bazaar.[902] They are followed by someone on a motorcycle but, due to the quality of the video, it is unclear if the person is a member of the security forces. The second video shows a panoramic view of Mahabad while dozens of gunshots are heard.[903]

8.3.3 PROTESTS ON 16-18 NOVEMBER

The crackdown on protests in Mahabad intensified again between 16 and 18 November 2022, when various areas across the city witnessed mass protests in commemoration of the November 2019 nationwide protests. The authorities seemingly engineered power cuts to facilitate the crackdown under the cover of darkness.

Amnesty International recorded the unlawful killing of six men – **Mehran Rahmani**, **Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam**, **Azad Hosseinpouri**, **Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash**, **Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour** and **Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour** – on 17 and 18 November 2022.

A protester, Kamal, told Amnesty International that on the morning of 16 November 2022, around 800-900 protesters assembled on Nobovat Sharghi Street (widely known as Manba' Street) in central Mahabad. According to Kamal, large numbers of members of the security forces were deployed there, among them uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts and Prevention Police of FARAJA, uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, and plain-clothes agents. He told the organization that he realized that reinforcements were being transported from Urumieh, the provincial capital of West Azerbaijan, to Mahabad after he and other local residents saw armoured vehicles transporting security forces, including agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC, on the road linking the two cities.

Kamal said the security forces were armed with shotguns, handguns and assault rifles. He recalled that some agents carried grenades as well. Kamal recalled that, on this day, the security forces repeatedly used firearms and prohibited weapons, including shotguns loaded with metal pellets and assault rifles, to disperse the protesters, and chased them as they fled into side streets to punish and terrorize them further, and deter them from regrouping and continuing to protest.

On the evening of 17 November 2022, other areas in Mahabad, including Posht Tap, were also gripped by protests. During their violent dispersal of these demonstrations, the security forces unlawfully killed **Mehran Rahmani**.

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900. Mashregh News, تشکیل پرونده قتل فرشته احمدی/ گلوله در داخل منزل شلیک شده ["Murder case opened for Fereshteh Ahmadi: Bullet was fired inside the house"], 1 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1431873/ (in Persian).
901. Mashregh News, تشکیل پرونده قتل فرشته احمدی/ گلوله در داخل منزل شلیک شده ["Murder case opened for Fereshteh Ahmadi: Bullet was fired inside the house"], 1 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1431873/ (in Persian).
902. IRN0317, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Omid Barin, X post: اعتراضات در مهاباد همچنان ادامه دارد ["Protests in Mahabad continue"], 28 October 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1585940368780152832 (in Persian).
903. IRN0222, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kolbarnews, X post: #مهاباد زیر رگبار سنگین هم‌اکنون ["Protests in Mahabad continue"], 28 October 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1585943106608062464 (in Persian).

MEHRAN RAHMANI



Mehran Rahmani © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mehran Rahmani, a 22-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022 during their crackdown on protests in Mahabad. He died from his injuries on 19 November 2022.

A source in Mahabad, Kaveh, told Amnesty International that the incident took place around 11pm during the crackdown on protests in and around Shoan Street, near Safa elementary school in the area of Posht Tap.

Information gathered by Kaveh from eyewitnesses revealed that Mehran Rahmani, alongside other protesters, had used stones and concrete to erect a barrier separating them from the security forces. An eyewitness recounted to Kaveh that, just moments before Mehran Rahmani was shot, the security forces broke through the barrier and approached the protesters. These security forces included plain-clothes agents and uniformed IRGC agents, who were concealing their faces with masks. The same eyewitness told Kaveh that he heard sounds of gunfire nearby and then saw Mehran Rahmani collapse to the ground. According to Kaveh, a bullet entered the right side of Mehran Rahmani's torso and exited from the left side, causing fatal damage to his internal organs.

Mehran Rahmani's burial certificate, reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he died as a result of "damage to critical organs in the abdomen and bleeding" caused by "being struck with a fast-moving projectile". His death certificate, which was also reviewed by the organization, cites his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

Amnesty International analysed a video, published on 17 November 2022, showing protesters chanting while gunshots are audible in the background.[904]

On the evening of 17 November 2022, two other protesters, **Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam** and **Azad Hosseinpouri**, were also fatally wounded by the security forces during a crackdown on protests in Posht Tap Street and Shoan Street.

904. IRN0223, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Omid Barin, X post: بر اساس گفته شاهدان عینی امشب در مهاباد درگیری های گسترده رخ داده و نیروهای امنیتی به سوی مردم انقلابی تیراندازی کرده‌اند ["According to eyewitnesses, widespread clashes took place tonight in Mahabad, and security forces have fired on the revolutionary people"], 17 November 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1593378288113782784 (in Persian).

SOLEYMAN (SHOURESH) NIKNAM AND AZAD HOSSEINPOURI



Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam (left) and Azad Hosseinpouri (right)
© Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam, aged 34, and Azad Hosseinpouri, aged 31, both belonging to Iran's Kurdish minority, on 17 November 2022.

A protester, Erfan, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 17 November 2022, large numbers of members of the security forces, including uniformed agents from the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, as well as plain-clothes agents, were deployed in response to hundreds of protesters who had gathered in and around Posht Tap Street and Shoan Street near Mola Khalil Square and Police Station No. 13.

According to Erfan, throughout the evening, the security forces ruthlessly suppressed the protest, relentlessly firing lethal ammunition and metal pellets to intimidate and disperse the protesters. The security forces also flew surveillance drones over the protesters.

Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam was shot at around 9pm and died from his injuries 10 days later, on 27 November 2022. His burial certificate, reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he died as a result of "damage to organs in the abdomen" caused by "being struck with a projectile". His death certificate, which was also reviewed by the organization, cites the cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

Erfan told Amnesty International that, at around 9.30-10pm, while chanting through a megaphone, Azad Hosseinpouri collapsed after security forces shot him in the back. He noted that, during the protests in Mahabad, in addition to firing relentlessly, members of the security forces occasionally approached the crowd through side streets, firing at protesters, and then promptly left the scene. Shahou explained that it was not possible for him and other protesters to ascertain if that was the case in Azad Hosseinpouri's killing, given the chaos and power cuts. Another informed source, Negin, told Amnesty International that Azad Hosseinpouri played a prominent role in the protests, actively leading chants, and it is plausible that the security forces singled him out for this reason.

Amnesty International analysed a video, published on 17 November 2022, which captures the immediate aftermath of the shooting, showing chaotic scenes as protesters attempt to assist Azad Hosseinpouri.[905] In the footage, protesters lift the back of his clothing, revealing blood on his back and on the ground beneath him.

The funeral of Azad Hosseinpouri, which was held on 18 November 2022, triggered further protests. On the morning of 18 November 2022, Azad Hosseinpouri's body was carried in a procession to Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery in Mahabad with the support of thousands of protesters and mourners. Amnesty International reviewed a video, published on 18 November 2022, which captures the peaceful nature

905. IRN0224, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: لحظه جان باختن #آزاد_حسین_پوری در مهاباد ["Moment of #Azad_Hossein_Pouri's death in Mahabad"], 17 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1593370375152361481 (in Persian).

of the funeral procession.[906] The video shows some mourners carrying his body while others are chanting.

According to Erfan and Negin, upon returning from the cemetery to the central areas of Mahabad, security forces confronted the mourners and protesters, firing handguns, assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets at them.

During this crackdown, security forces killed three other men – **Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash**, **Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour** and **Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour**.

MOHAMMAD AHMADI GAGASH, KHALEGH (KAMAL) AHMADPOUR AND MOHAMMAD AMIN (SHAMAL) KHADIRIPOUR



Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash (left), Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour (centre) and Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour (right)
© Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash, aged 43, and Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour, aged 34, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 18 November 2022. On the same day, another man from Iran's Kurdish minority, Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour, aged 33, sustained fatal injuries and died six days later.

Three protesters, Shahou, Erfan and Kamal, told Amnesty International that, from around 9am that day, security forces, including the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, established a presence on Ghabrestan Street to prevent thousands of mourners and protesters reaching Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery to attend the funeral of Azad Hosseinpouri. However, many people managed to reach the cemetery using side streets that connected Nobovat Sharghi Street to Ghabrestan Street and the cemetery.

Shahou recalled that, while he was at the cemetery, he heard that the security forces had killed Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash. According to information obtained by Shahou, Kamal and Erfan, who separately talked to eyewitnesses, an IRGC agent deliberately shot Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash in retaliation for throwing stones at security forces from the rooftop of a one-storey house in a side street near Nobavat Sharghi Street, Showan Street and Ghabrestan Street. Shahou and Erfan said that an IRGC agent, with the help of another agent, went to the rooftop, shot Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash in the neck with an AK-pattern rifle and then swiftly departed. Amnesty International reviewed a video filmed in the immediate aftermath of the shooting, which shows Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash lying on the rooftop with his face and chest covered in blood.[907]

According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International who reviewed the video, the footage shows there is bleeding from the nose and mouth of Mohammad Ahmadi Gagash, as he lies on his back, with blood soiling of the neck and the front of his upper clothing.

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906. IRN0224, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Ammar Goli, X post: لحظه جان باختن #آزاد_حسین_پوری در مهاباد ["Moment of #Azad_Hossein_Pouri's death in Mahabad"], 17 November 2022, https://x.com/goliammar/status/1593370375152361481 (in Persian).

907. IRN0225, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: SedayeShahrivar, X post: تصاویر لحظه‌ی کشته شدن #محمد_احمدی_گاگش در مهاباد ["Images of the moment #Mohammad_Ahmadi_Gagash was killed in Mahabad"], 18 November 2022, https://x.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1593686749271703552 (in Persian).

Shahou, Erfan and Kamal recalled that, from around 11.30am, after Azad Hossenpouri was buried, thousands of protesters attempted to gather in and around Nobavat Sharghi Street and Showan Street near Esteghlal Square. In response, uniformed agents from the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, as well as plain-clothes agents, waged a crackdown. Shahou, Erfan and Kamal each described to Amnesty International how the security forces relentlessly fired tear gas and metal pellets to disperse the protesters, injuring women, men and children, including Shahou and Kamal. Erfan said: "The security forces kept firing metal pellets. It felt like metal pellets were raining down in the area. Hundreds of people sustained injuries."

Kamal similarly recalled: "Metal pellets whirled through the air like sand particles in a storm. It was a day when many were injured. I was struck by metal pellets in my back. The oppressors seemed to rain down on us from everywhere."

Shahou said:

"The agents were shooting in every way imaginable and doing whatever they wanted. Some of the agents firing metal pellets were on motorcycles. I was hit by metal pellets in my back. I saw a 17-year-old girl who was struck in the head by metal pellets and a 28-year-old man who was hit in the eye by a metal pellet."

Kurdpa, a human rights organization based outside Iran, shared with Amnesty International 26 images showing multiple victims from Mahabad with metal pellet injuries. Kurdpa told Amnesty International that all the victims were injured during the protests in Mahabad on 18 November 2022 and that the images were received from a nurse who treated them at home. One of the victims is seen with a large number of metal pellet injuries, which, according to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International, most likely reflects close-range discharge of a weapon loaded with metal pellets.

An informed source, Nastaran, told Amnesty International that, at around 12.30pm, Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour, who was among the protesters gathered on Nobavat Sharghi Street, was fatally struck by a barrage of metal pellets, some of which penetrated his heart, lungs and liver. Nastaran said that, according to information gathered from an eyewitness, at the time of the fatal incident, some protesters were fleeing into side streets while others, including Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour, were seeking to erect barriers to block security forces from advancing further into the side streets where the protesters were regrouping. According to the eyewitness account given to Nastaran, Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour had picked up a stone when an agent from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA approached him and fired a shotgun at him from a distance of less than 20m.

Nastaran told Amnesty International that, due to the ongoing shootings, fellow protesters were unable to take Mohammad Amin (Shamal) Khadiripour to a hospital immediately. Instead, they placed him in a nearby shelter where numerous protesters had sought refuge. After several hours, some protesters managed to inform his family of his condition and whereabouts. Nasratan reported that his family was initially hesitant to take him to a hospital due to fear of arrest and he was only moved to a hospital at around 6pm, by which time he was unconscious. He was in a coma for several days and declared dead on 24 November 2022.

Amnesty International analysed two videos, published on 18 November 2022, which show protesters on Showan Street while the sound of gunfire is audible.[908]

908. IRN0226, IRN0227, videos on file with Amnesty International.

Shahou and Kamal told Amnesty International that, despite the shootings, throughout the afternoon, hundreds of protesters continued to regroup in and around Nobavat Sharghi Street, Showan Street and side streets. In response, the crackdown intensified, with some IRGC agents firing AK-pattern rifles and other machine guns from both street level and rooftops. Shahou and Kamal mentioned witnessing agents in black uniforms firing from the rooftops of several buildings, including two residential houses and the Bodagh Soltan mosque on Showan Street near Esteghlal Square, and the rooftop of Hassanzadeh School on Nobovat Sharghi Street. In addition, Kamal recalled the presence of multiple armoured personnel carriers and pickup trucks equipped with machine guns, near Esteghlal Square.

Shahou described what he witnessed on 18 November 2022: "The agents… fired their rifles relentlessly. That day was a historic day. It was sheer cruelty and savagery. The streets were littered with empty cartridges that people kept picking up."



Photographs of empty cartridges that protesters picked up during the protests in the streets of Mahabad, sent by an eyewitness to Amnesty International in November 2022 © Private

An informed source, Farideh, told Amnesty International that, at around 5pm, the crackdown against the protesters in and around Nobavat Sharghi Street claimed the life of a third protester, Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour. Kamal told Amnesty International that he was standing near Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour in the vicinity of Nabi Mosque when he saw him falling to the ground. Kamal said that he and several other protesters realized that a bullet had struck Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour in the torso. He added that, at the time, the security forces were firing from both street level and rooftops, so they could not determine from which direction the shot came. Kamal recounted how, amid the ongoing shooting, they took Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour to his house, which was about 300m away.

> Farideh told Amnesty International that his family then took him to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead before 7pm. Amnesty International reviewed a medical document which cites the cause of Khalegh (Kamal) Ahmadpour's death as being "struck by a bullet in his stomach".

Shahou and Kamal told Amnesty International that, for a week after 18 November 2022, the security forces launched a series of attacks on residential houses in the side streets around Nobavat Sharghi Street and Posht Tap. According to Shahou and Kamal, the attacks involved dozens of agents aggressively entering residential streets both on foot and in vehicles. They used the handles of their guns and batons to smash windows and doors, kicked in doors and repeatedly fired tear gas and metal pellets into and towards houses. They also carried out surveillance of neighbourhoods using drones and conducted mass arbitrary arrests, targeting, among others, the residents of homes that had many visitors. Shahou noted that those arrested included children as young as 14 and elderly individuals in their seventies. Shahou added that, on 19 November 2022, he saw armoured vehicles and multiple pickup trucks equipped with DShK heavy machine guns patrolling the streets or positioned at central intersections. He also noted that, for a week, the authorities cut off electricity for hours each day. Shahou said:

> **"The scale of the forces brought into Mahabad on 18 November 2022 was astonishing; it was like a military army had invaded the city. It was due to this way of encircling and militarizing the city that, from that day onwards, protests began to die down in Mahabad. We feared that, if we continued, they [the authorities] would carry out a massacre."**

Consistent with Shahou's account, Amnesty International received from Kurdpa a photograph, taken on 19 November 2022, which shows an armoured vehicle belonging to the Anti-Terror Special Forces (known by their Persian acronym, NOPO), part of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, loaded onto a truck travelling towards central Mahabad.[909] The vehicle bears an insignia on its side displaying the Persian word "NOPO". In official statements and articles published by state-affiliated social media accounts, this vehicle has been identified as a Haregh mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicle.[910]

909. For more information on the organizational and command structure and mandate of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, including its NOPO Forces, see sections 10.2.1(I)(ii) and 10.2.2(I)(ii).

910. Defender_iran, Telegram post: در این کلیپ میتونین به ابعاد نفربر زرهی حارق (جسور سابق) در مقایسه با خودروی محافظت شده ای مثل فاتق ۱ یا فاتق ۳ پی ببرین ["In this clip, you can see the dimensions of the Haregh Armoured Personnel Carrier (formerly Jasur) compared to a protected vehicle like Fategh 1 or Fategh 3"], 14 January 2023, https://t.me/defender_iran/31554 (in Persian); Mashregh News, عکس نمایشگاه بین المللی تجهیزات پلیسی و ایمنی ["Photograph of International Exhibition of Police and Security Equipment"], 30 September 2019, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/997265/عکس-نمایشگاه-بین-المللی-تجهیزات-پلیسی-و-ایمنی (in Persian); Alef, نابودگر جدیدترین خودرو یگان ویژه رونمایی شد+عکس ["Special Cohort's latest vehicle unveiled + photos"], 13 October 2017, https://www.alef.ir/news/3960721114.html (in Persian). See also BBC Persian, چگونه از خودروهای زره‌پوش امرپ در مهار اعتراضات ایران استفاده شد؟ ["How were armoured vehicles used in controlling protests in Iran?"], 19 September 2024, https://www.bbc.com/persian/articles/clyny8z5pppo (in Persian).



A photograph, captured on 19 November 2022, which shows an armoured vehicle belonging to the Anti-Terror Special Forces (known by their Persian acronym, NOPO), part of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, loaded onto a truck travelling towards central Mahabad. The vehicle bears an insignia displaying the Persian word "NOPO". © Private

Amnesty International analysed multiple videos published on 19 November 2022 that show members of the security forces patrolling neighbourhoods in Mahabad on foot and in armoured vehicles. They thereby corroborate witness testimony that security forces maintained a large and active presence in Mahabad.

One of the videos, filmed at night and published online on 19 November 2022, shows an armoured vehicle moving along a street, with members of the security forces following on foot.[911]

Another of the videos, published online on 20 November 2022, shows a deployment of armed agents, including IRGC agents, in Mola Khalil Square, an area that was a focal point of protests.[912] In the footage, dozens of agents are seen wearing beige or green camouflage uniforms, many of whom have their faces covered. The agents are positioned throughout the square in a manner that conveys a sustained and intimidating security presence. The video also shows several armoured vehicles of the same type as the one depicted in the photograph above, as well as pickup trucks equipped with DShK heavy machine guns.

911. IRN0228, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Truske Sadeghi, X post: مهاباد با خطر سرکوب جدی مواجه است ["Mahabad faces a serious threat of suppression"], 19 November 2022, https://x.com/truskesadeghi/status/1594063843424374784?s=46&t=-NnCP5wTxv00GOQB6XWIHw (in Persian).
912.



Stills from a video, published online on 20 November 2022, showing armed security forces, including IRGC agents, on armoured vehicles in Mola Khalil Square in Mahabad © Private

A third video, published online on 20 November 2022, shows a large convoy of over a dozen pickup trucks and armoured vehicles carrying IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, and agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Mahabad. Some of the vehicles bear insignia displaying the name "NOPO" in Persian. Several pickup trucks are equipped with DShK heavy machine guns, while armed agents are visible in the rear of the vehicles.[913]

913. IRN0230, video on file with Amnesty International; IRN0231, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: barin_omid, X post: ["Following the failure of the Islamic Republic's 'reverse engineering' scenarios in Mahabad, and the return of thousands of revolutionaries to the streets again"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1594302811155603456 (in Persian).



A still from a video, published on 20 November 2022, showing part of a convoy of pickup trucks and armoured vehicles belonging to security forces in Mahabad © Private



A still from a video, published on 20 November 2022, showing part of a convoy of pickup trucks and armoured vehicles belonging to security forces in Mahabad. The yellow frame shows a machine gun mounted on a pickup truck being operated by IRGC agents, as identifiable by their uniforms. © Private

The violence continued until the end of November 2022, according to the videos analysed by Amnesty International. One video, published on 24 November 2022 shows security forces patrolling a street at

night, firing into a parked car multiple times and attempting to break into it, while the sound of gunshots is audible.[914]

8.4 PIRANSHAHR

Protests erupted in Piranshahr on 19 September 2022. According to reports from independent media outlets and Kurdish human rights groups, that day armoured vehicles carrying members of the security forces were seen moving towards Piranshahr from nearby cities.[915] From the outset, the security forces repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets and rifles to disperse, terrorize and punish protesters.

As happened in other cities, the crackdowns in Piranshahr intensified during mass protests coinciding with the 40th day following the death of Zhina Mahsa Amini in late October 2022 and the three-year anniversary of the nationwide November 2019 protests.

Amnesty International recorded the unlawful killing of seven individuals by the security forces in Piranshahr between 20 September and 20 November 2022: three children – **Zakaria Khial**, **Koumar Daroftadeh** and **Karvan Ghader Shokri**; and four men – **Samad Barginia**, **Amir Ferasatishad, Taher Azizi Ghorbani** and **Jalal Ghorbani**.

8.4.1 PROTESTS ON 20 SEPTEMBER

On the evening of 20 September 2022, thousands of women, men and children peacefully gathered on and around Saheli Street and 24 Metri Street near Mohammad Oraz Square and Keshavarz Square in the area of Kohneh Khaneh in Piranshahr.

The protesters were met with a crackdown that resulted in the unlawful killing of 16-year-old **Zakaria Khial** and 52-year-old **Samad Barginia**, and injuries to many others.

ZAKARIA KHIAL AND SAMAD BARGINIA



Zakaria Khial (left) and Samad Barginia (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed 16-year-old Zakaria Khial, from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 20 September 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Piranshahr. On the same day, security forces unlawfully fired metal pellets at 52-year-old Samad Barginia, also from Iran's Kurdish minority, who died from his injuries eight days later.

Two protesters, Karim and Farid, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 20 September 2022, the security forces repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with

914. IRN0232, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kolbarnews, X post: گسیل نیروهای سرکوبگر از ارومیه به مهاباد برای سرکوب اعتراضات پیش‌رو [Deployment of repressive forces from Urumieh to Mahabad to suppress protests ahead], 4 December 2022, https://x.com/Kolbarnews/status/1599436949193752576 (in Persian).

915. Radio Farda, درگیری شدید معترضان و پلیس ضدشورش در تهران؛ گزارش‌ها از کشته شدن چند معترض در کردستان ["Severe clashes between protesters and riot police in Tehran: Reports of several protesters being killed in Kurdistan"], 19 September 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/mahsa-amini-protests/32040689.html (in Persian).

metal pellets, AK-pattern rifles and handguns to disperse, terrorize and punish the protesters gathered on and around Saheli Street and 24 Metri Street near Mohammad Oraz Square and Keshavarz Square. According to Karim and Farid, the security forces included plain-clothes agents and uniformed agents from the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA. They recounted how most of the agents had covered their faces with masks.

Amnesty International analysed a video published on 20 September 2022, which shows agents from the Prevention Police and Special Cohorts of FARAJA wearing helmets and protective gear on one side of Saheli Street and protesters on the other. Tear gas can be seen near the protesters and the sound of gunshots is audible in the background.[916]

Farid and Karim told Amnesty International that the protesters were peaceful when the security forces began using firearms. Farid remembered an elderly bystander who spoke out against the shootings, addressing the security forces, saying, "What do people want other than bread, water and freedom? Why do you kill people?"

Farid said that, as a result of the relentless shootings, Zakaria Khial was struck by multiple metal pellets in his chest and hands, while Farid sustained metal pellet injuries to one of his legs. Amnesty International reviewed a video showing the ambulance returning Zakaria Khial's body for the funeral a day later.[917]

Karim and Farid told Amnesty International that they were several metres from a school called Mohammad Rasulullah School (also known as Shabaneh Roozi School) on Shakhevan Street near Mohammad Oraz Square when Zakaria Khial was struck by bullets fired by IRGC agents using AK-pattern rifles. According to Karim, the agents were approximately 20m from the protesters. Karim told Amnesty International that, after Zakaria Khial collapsed, he and several other protesters took him away from the site amid ongoing gunfire.

The same evening, the security forces fired metal pellets at Samad Barginia. According to information obtained from Karim and another source in Piranshahr, Sahand, who spoke to those present near the incident, the fatal shooting also happened near Mohammad Oraz Square. Sahand told Amnesty International that, according to information circulating among protesters who were near the incident, members of the security forces targeted Samad Barginia because he was at the front of the protests and had intervened to help a teenager who had been shot.

Amnesty International reviewed a video of the immediate aftermath of the fatal shooting, which shows Samad Barginia lying on the ground with his face and chest heavily covered in blood. The organization also reviewed a picture of him in a hospital bed and another after his death.[918] According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International, the video shows heavy bleeding from the face, particularly the nose. The photograph in hospital shows a medical dressing covering the right eye and probable shotgun pellet injuries on his face. The photograph taken after death shows a swollen right eye. These images strongly suggest that Samad Barginian sustained injuries caused by one or more shotgun pellets that penetrated one of his eyes and possibly his brain.

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916. IRN0342, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: OmidAzadi, X post: پیرانشهر هم اکنون بامداد چهارشنبه ۳۰ شهریور ماه، جنگ و گریز خیابانی ["#Piranshahr, now, on the morning of Wednesday 21 September, street fighting and fleeing"], 20 September 2022, https://x.com/OmidAzadi2021/status/1572315883816751105 (in Persian).

917. IRN0283, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: iranintltv, Instagram post: ویدیوهای رسیده به ایران اینترنشنال نشان می‌دهد زکریا خیال (سلیمانی) جوانی که روز گذشته در اعتراض‌های پیرانشهر به دست ماموران امنیتی کشته شده بود ["Videos obtained by Iran International show that Zakaria Khial (Soleimani), a young man who was killed by security agents during the protests in Piranshahr yesterday..."], 21 September 2022, https://www.instagram.com/reel/Ciw8GcqsonR/ (in Persian).

918. IRN0218, video on file with Amnesty International.

> Sahand told Amnesty International that, due to fears of arrest, those present at the scene first took Samad Barginia to a private house. After several hours, as his condition deteriorated, he was taken to the main hospital in Piranshahr, and from there, he was immediately transferred to Imam Khomeini Hospital in Urumieh, where he died a week later.
>
> Samad Barginia's burial certificate, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, states that he died as a result of "damage to brain tissue" caused by "being hit with a projectile".

Despite the crackdown on 20 September 2022, protests persisted in Piranshahr in the following days, and the security forces continued to unlawfully use force and firearms to suppress them, injuring many protesters and bystanders.

In a video, published on 23 September 2022, protesters are seen in the street in Piranshahr; smoke is visible in the background, while gunshot sounds are audible.[919]

In an interview with Amnesty International, Farid recalled witnessing a young man being struck by a metal pellet in his eye and losing his vision during a crackdown in late September 2022. He mentioned that the victim was among a group of protesters who had just gathered on 32 Metri Street when a group of IRGC agents emerged from a minibus and began shooting at the crowd. Farid noted that most of the agents had covered their faces. He said that, on the same day, he witnessed a woman being struck by metal pellets on her chest, shoulders and neck.

Farid also recalled that several days after Zakaria Khial was unlawfully killed, he witnessed multiple plain-clothes agents disembark from a Peugeot and a Samand car and attack a 16-year-old boy and a 20-year-old man near Keshavarz Square. According to Farid, the plain-clothes agents severely beat both of them with batons before arresting the young man and driving away. Farid noted that the attack appeared unprovoked, and the two victims were not participating in any protest at the time.

8.4.2 PROTESTS ON 26-30 OCTOBER

Piranshahr experienced another intensification of the crackdown between 26 and 30 October 2022, which was intended to deter protests marking the 40th day following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. This period also coincided with ceremonies marking the 40th day following the killing of 16-year-old Zakaria Khial.

In interviews with Amnesty International, protesters Karim and Farid recounted the heavy deployment of plain-clothes agents and uniformed agents from the IRGC and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at key intersections, as well as residential neighbourhoods affected by protests. They noted that, whenever the security forces suspected that people were attempting to gather for protests, they would draw their firearms and begin random shooting, putting everyone in the vicinity at risk. Farid stated: "They [the security forces] were firing at everyone, both bystanders and protesters. Stepping out of your home meant they could shoot you. They mercilessly fired at women, children and older people."

Information obtained by Amnesty International indicates that many women, men and children were injured during this period. Karim mentioned, as an example, the case of one of his close friends, who was struck by a bullet in his leg in late October 2022 around 100m from his house in Sardasht Road. The incident took place near Mamousta Hazhar Square where protests were taking place.

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919. IRN0235, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: شلیک مستقیم نیروهای حکومتی به مردم معترض پیرانشهر ["Government forces shoot directly at protesters in Piranshahr"], 23 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1573404917154582529 (in Persian).

Amnesty International also learned that security forces fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at protesters and bystanders on the morning of 27 October 2022.

One of the many victims of these shootings was 17-year-old Zaniar Tondro, who sustained severe injuries, including the loss of sight in one eye. Protester Farid told Amnesty International that Zaniar Tondro joined peaceful protests near Mohammad Oraz Square in the Kohneh Khaneh area. According to Farid, the security forces, including plain-clothes agents and uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse the crowd and deter others from joining the protests. Farid said that, after Zaniar Tondro fell to the ground, members of the security forces kicked him and then arrested him and put him in a car. After Zaniar Tondro vomited blood a few minutes later, the members of the security forces threw him out of their car. For months later, Zaniar Tondro still had multiple metal pellets lodged in his throat, eyes and forehead, resulting in impaired vision and balance.

According to reports from Kurdish human rights defenders, another victim was 12-year-old Sekala Ghanavi, who sustained gunshot wounds to his stomach and one of his hands on 29 October 2022 but survived. Kurdish human rights defenders published a video on 2 November 2022 showing the injured child recovering in a hospital.[920]

Protesters Karim and Farid told Amnesty International that members of the security forces routinely chased protesters into side streets while firing randomly and assaulting anyone they encountered, even children. For instance, Karim recounted an incident where he witnessed IRGC agents approaching a child who was playing with his phone while standing on a corner approximately 500m from protests near Valfajr intersection. He said that the agents beat the child on the head with the butts of their assault rifles before apprehending him and taking him away.

Farid reported to Amnesty International that, in October 2022, metal pellets injured his mother while she was standing in the front yard of her house. According to Farid, this occurred as uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, and plain-clothes agents fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets towards fleeing protesters. Some of these pellets entered the yard, striking his mother. He noted that, like most houses at the time, the front door of his mother's house had been left open to assist protesters to escape.

Farid further stated that, on 29 October 2022, several children, some as young as 10, sought refuge in the front yard of his own house due to shooting in the neighbourhood. According to Farid's wife and daughter, the children's legs were visibly injured by metal pellets.

As part of this intensified crackdown in Piranshahr in late October 2022, security forces unlawfully killed a 16-year-old boy, **Koumar Daroftadeh**.

920. IRN0343, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Sattar Ebrahimi, X post: سکالا غنوی ۱۲ ساله فرزند رحمان اهل پیرانشهر [“Sekala Ghanavi, a 12-year-old child from Piranshahr, the son of Rahman, who sustained severe injuries to the hand and stomach due to gunfire by security forces during the protests on Saturday 29 October”], 2 November 2022, https://x.com/sattarebrahimi1/status/1587743511771840513 (in Persian).

KOUMAR DAROFTADEH



Koumar Daroftadeh © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Koumar Daroftadeh, aged 16, from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 30 October 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Piranshahr.

An informed source in Iran, Houman, and an Iranian Kurdish human rights defender in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Shamal, told Amnesty International that plain-clothes agents fired metal pellets at Koumar Daroftadeh's chest and stomach from close range. Shamal spoke to an eyewitness who said the incident took place at around 8pm in Mohammad Oraz Square.

According to the eyewitness account given to Shamal, Koumar Daroftadeh was in the square with four or five friends, all of them children. The eyewitness recalled that several plain-clothes agents approached the children in a vehicle with a private licence number, and one of the agents fired a shotgun towards Koumar Daroftadeh through the car window, which resulted in metal pellets striking him. According to the eyewitness, Koumar Daroftadeh collapsed and his friends fled the scene in distress. Shamal told Amnesty International that a fellow human rights defender in Iran had seen video footage showing the plain-clothes agent shooting Koumar Daroftadeh before kicking him and dragging him into their car. Due to security concerns, it was not possible for Shamal to access the video directly and share it with Amnesty International.

Shamal noted that, based on information from the eyewitness and other local residents, there were no protests happening in the square at the time of the incident. Despite this, plain-clothes agents were patrolling the streets to monitor the situation.

Amnesty International obtained and reviewed medical documents prepared by the emergency department of Imam Khomeini Hospital in Piranshahr, where Koumar Daroftadeh was declared dead that evening. At the time, his identity was unknown to the emergency staff and he is referred to in the documents as an unidentified patient. The documents reviewed by Amnesty International reveal that, after Koumar Daroftadeh was shot, instead of being urgently transferred to a hospital for emergency medical care, agents took him to the office of the Investigation Police of FARAJA in Piranshahr.

The medical records indicate that he was only admitted to the hospital around 105 minutes later, at 9:46pm, after officers from the Investigation Police called for an ambulance. The medical documents also record that officers from the Investigation Police, as well as other members of the security forces, prevented the paramedics who arrived at the office of the Investigation Police from giving the boy any form of first aid. The emergency file includes the following statement:

"The unidentified patient suffered severe injuries due to trauma and being struck by metal pellets and showed no signs of life. After the Investigation Police office contacted us and assigned the mission, the team promptly arrived and transferred the lifeless injured [individual] to the hospital. It must be noted that the security forces and Investigation Police forces prevented any form of intervention for the patient and insisted that, according to orders, we were obliged to immediately transfer the individual in need of help to the hospital. Ultimately, the patient was transferred to the hospital without the support of the security forces and Investigation Police. The patient was handed over to the emergency department without intravenous access, vital signs, or airway management through intubation or a laryngeal mask."

Amnesty International has reviewed three photographs which show injuries on Koumar Daroftadeh's back and chest, as well as one of his arms, that are consistent with the spray patterns of metal pellet wounds. An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International who reviewed the photographs observed a scattering of shotgun pellet wounds to the right side and back of the torso extending from the buttock to the armpit. Similar pellet injuries extend from the base of the right small finger up the arm to the middle of the upper arm. Over the right iliac crest (hip ridge) is a prominent graze of about 4cm by 1.5cm, likely representing the impact of wadding from a shotgun cartridge and indicating close-range discharge of the weapon.

The death certificate of Koumar Daroftadeh, reviewed by Amnesty International, lists his cause of death as "operation of combat equipment outside combat" and "internal bleeding [due to] collision with multiple high-velocity projectiles".

8.4.3 PROTESTS ON 18-21 NOVEMBER

The crackdown in Piranshahr reached a peak between 18 and 21 November 2022, when mass protests took place to commemorate the third anniversary of the November 2019 protest killings.

A protester, Farid, compared the situation of the city on 20 November 2022 to a war zone, saying: "They [the security forces] continuously fired bullets, as if two states were engaged in a war with each other. Piranshahr was soaked in blood."

Amnesty International analysed videos, published between 18 and 22 November 2022, showing the violent suppression of protests in Piranshahr and the brutality of security forces deployed throughout the city. One video, published online on 20 November 2022, shows large numbers of members of the security forces in trucks, cars and other vehicles deployed in the city.[921] Numerous videos recorded at night capture the sound of sustained gunfire and the sight of tear gas in the street and crowds fleeing as shots are heard.[922] Footage also shows protesters collecting spent ammunition cartridges from the streets, injured protesters being carried away and security forces firing in the direction of protesters.[923]

During this crackdown, according to information obtained by Amnesty International, the security forces unlawfully killed **Amir Ferasatishad**, **Karvan Ghader Shokri**, **Taher Azizi** and **Jalal Ghorbani**.

921. IRN0236, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: اعزام نیروهای نظامی به پیرانشهر، این نیروها با سلاح نیمه سنگین صبح روز یک‌شنبه ۲۹ آبان ۱۴۰۱ از ارومیه وارد شهر پیرانشهر شده‌اند] "Deployment of military forces to Piranshahr: These forces, armed with semi-heavy weapons, entered the city of Piranshahr from Urumieh on the morning of Sunday 20 November 2022"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594243947395792896 (in Persian).
922. IRN0237, IRN0238, IRN0239, videos available on file with Amnesty International; IRN0240, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Omid Barin, X post: [Opening fire on grieving and defenceless people in Piranshahr by Islamic Republic's repressive forces], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1594643118992793600 (in Persian).
923. IRN0242, IRN0238, IRN239, videos available on file with Amnesty International; IRN0241, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1593975100554072064.

AMIR FERASATISHAD



Amir Ferasatishad © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Amir Ferasatishad, a 22-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 18 November 2022 during a crackdown on protesters in Piranshahr.

That evening, hundreds of protesters, including Amir Ferasatishad, gathered in and around Sardaran Street near Mohammad Oraz Square. An informed source in Piranshahr, Abed, who spoke with several eyewitnesses, told Amnesty International that uniformed and plain-clothes members of the security forces unlawfully fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets and AK-pattern rifles to intimidate, disperse and punish the protesters. According to Abed, members of the security forces chased fleeing protesters while continuing to fire at them. During this crackdown, Amir Ferasatishad sustained fatal injuries to his back, chest and one of his kidneys.

According to information gathered by Amnesty International, Amir Ferasatishad was taken to a hospital shortly after he was shot but died within 30-40 minutes. Abed told Amnesty International that he saw the body of Amir Ferasatishad in the immediate aftermath of his death and observed injuries that appeared to be from both metal pellets and gunshot. Out of concern that the authorities would seize his body and prevent a dignified burial, his relatives took the body from the hospital to Hazrat-e Esmail Mosque in Piranshahr. Many protesters and mourners subsequently gathered in front of the mosque peacefully.[924] According to Abed, who was there, members of the security forces once again used firearms to disperse the crowd, injuring several people. He added that the authorities deliberately cut off electricity to facilitate the crackdown in the dark.

924. IRN0243, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: تجمع مردم پیرانشهر مقابل مسجد "حضرت اسماعیل". پیکر امیر فراستی شاد که غروب امروز با شلیک مستقیم نیروهای حکومتی کشته شد به این مسجد منتقل شده است ["People of Piranshahr gathered in front of the 'Hazrat-e Esmail' mosque. The body of Amir Ferasatishad, who was killed this evening by direct fire from government forces, has been transferred to the mosque…"], 18 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1593658751625699329 (in Persian); IRN0219, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Omid Barin, X post: هزاران نفر از مردم پیرانشهر با حمل پیکر «امیر فراست شاد» بر دوش، به سمت آرامستان شهر حرکت میکنند ["Thousands of people in Piranshahr carrying the body of 'Amir Ferasatishad' on their shoulders as they march towards the city cemetery…"], 18 November 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1593666746170351620 (in Persian).

TAHER AZIZI, KARVAN GHADER SHOKRI AND JALAL GHORBANI



Taher Azizi (left), Karvan Ghader Shokri (centre) and Jalal Ghorbani (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Taher Azizi, aged 29, Karvan Ghader Shokri, aged 15, and Jalal Ghorbani, aged 45, all belonging to Iran's Kurdish minority, within a few hours on 20 November 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Piranshahr.

Two sources in Piranshahr, Heydar and Parvaneh, who spoke with eyewitnesses, told Amnesty International that, at around 6.30pm that day, a plain-clothes agent used an AK-pattern rifle to fire lethal ammunition towards a group of protesters and bystanders, including Taher Azizi and Karvan Ghader Shokri, to disperse and terrorize them. Heydar and Parvaneh said that the agent was known in the local community to be a member of the IRGC. According to Parvaneh, the incident took place in a side street called Kholafaee Street near Mohammad Oraz Square, where protests frequently took place. Heydar stated that, according to information obtained from eyewitnesses and local residents, the agent fired from the balcony of his private house and that the distance between him and the crowd was about 20m.

According to Heydar, Taher Azizi collapsed after sustaining gunshot wounds to his chest. The same agent subsequently fired at Karvan Ghader Shokri with an AK-pattern rifle when he raised his voice in protest and picked up a stone to throw towards the house. Amnesty International reviewed a graphic video showing a bleeding gunshot wound on Karvan Ghader Shokri's left buttock.[925] According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International, the video shows a bleeding penetrating round wound to the upper left buttock, which is likely a gunshot entry wound. There is no visible exit wound.

Heydar told Amnesty International that those present were unable to immediately take Karvan Ghader Shokri to a hospital due to the heavy presence of IRGC agents who were continuously shooting. Instead, he was given first aid at a private house. After his condition deteriorated, he was taken to Imam Khomeini Hospital in Piranshahr, where he died shortly afterwards.

Farid, who was in a crowd behind the location where Karvan Ghader Shokri and Taheri Aziz were shot, described the atmosphere in Piranshahr that evening as harrowing, with IRGC agents patrolling the streets on foot and in vehicles and repeatedly firing lethal ammunition.

Later that evening, after Karvan Ghader Shokri succumbed to his injuries, his family managed to persuade hospital staff to release his body, which they transported to a mosque in the Shin Abad area of Piranshahr. Hundreds of mourners and protesters peacefully gathered in front of the mosque in solidarity with the family who wanted to carry the body of Karvan Ghader Shokri in a procession to Zargatan cemetery. Karim and Farid, who were there, told Amnesty International that IRGC agents once again used firearms, including AK-pattern rifles, to disperse the mourners and protesters. Karim said that indiscriminate shots were fired from both street level and from the rooftop of an IRGC agent's private house near the mosque. Karim told Amnesty International that

925. IRN0354, video on file with Amnesty International

these shootings resulted in the unlawful killing of another protester, Jalal Ghorbani. Karim also reported seeing three other people who had sustained gunshot wounds but survived.

Despite the violent response, the mourners and protesters remained defiant and pressed on with the procession. Karim recalled that, after walking for several metres and reaching Shin Abad Square, another group of protesters and mourners, who were carrying the body of Taher Azizi, joined the procession. This combined gathering then walked towards Zargatan cemetery to bury both victims. However, security forces, including IRGC agents, obstructed the procession as it reached Valfajr intersection, firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse the crowd. As a result, the protesters retreated and took the body of Karvan Ghader Shokri to another mosque in Shin Abad. People continued to gather in front of the mosque until the early hours of the morning.

Amnesty International analysed a video published on 20 November 2022 that corroborates the witness accounts. The video shows mourners and peaceful protesters carrying Karvan Ghader Shokri's body and chanting on their way to the mosque.[926] In the last 20 seconds of the video, loud gunshots are audible. Protesters are seen running to escape the bullets and are heard screaming.

According to Heydar, throughout the night, agents called Karvan Ghader Shokri's family, instructing them to return the body of Karvan Ghader Shokri to the authorities and agree to bury him quietly. The family refused and hid the body in a private garden in Piranshahr overnight.

Farid told Amnesty International that throughout the night, sounds of gunfire echoed around the city.

The next morning, hundreds of protesters and mourners once again joined Karvan Ghader Shokri's family in a procession to Zargatan cemetery in Piranshahr, which is near the city centre. Heydar told Amnesty International that agents from the Prevention Police of FARAJA, who were based at the nearby Police Station No. 12, and IRGC agents blocked the procession and that IRGC agents once again opened fire on mourning protesters, using AK-pattern rifles. According to Heydar, this resulted in at least five further people sustaining gunshot injuries.

Heydar said that eventually, after several hours, FARAJA agents at Police Station No. 12 told Karvan Ghader Shokri's family that they were not allowed to bury him in Zargatan cemetery and instead had to take the body to Kohneh Khaneh cemetery on the outskirts of Piranshahr. Heydar said that, to avoid further tension, the family complied. The family, along with thousands of protesters, walked to Kohneh Khaneh cemetery, where Karvan Ghader Shokri was eventually buried.

Karim told Amnesty International that, in the days following the crackdown of 18-20 November 2022, Piranshahr remained heavily militarized. IRGC agents and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA positioned themselves on main streets and intersections or set up ad hoc checkpoints, with their intimidating armoured vehicles often parked nearby. Karim also recalled that pickup trucks equipped with machine guns patrolled the streets. He noted an occasion in late November 2022 when he saw one of these trucks chasing a group of fleeing protesters and bystanders on Mirabad-Piranshahr Road (also knowns as Sardasht Road) near Keshavarz Square, with an IRGC agent standing in the back firing towards them.

926. IRN0244, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: نیروهای سرکوبگر حکومتی شرکت کنندگان در مراسم تشییع پیکر کاروان قادر شکری نوجوان ۱۶ ساله اهل پیرانشهر را به رگبار بستند ["Government repressive forces opened fire on participants in funeral procession of Karvan Ghader Shokri, a 16-year-old teenager from Piranshahr"], 20 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1594435159994298368 (in Persian).

Videos published on 21 November 2022 and analysed by Amnesty International show the continuation of the security forces' violent crackdown on protesters, with videos capturing security forces using unlawful force through firearms and shotguns, as well as tear gas, and protesters fleeing amid sustained gunfire.[927]

8.5 OSHNAVIEH

Protests in Oshnavieh started on 19 September 2022. Consistent with patterns documented elsewhere in West Azerbaijan province, security forces used firearms and prohibited weapons to quell protests in Oshnavieh city as soon as they erupted.

A protester, Rahman, told Amnesty International that, at around 6.30pm on 19 September 2022, several hundred men and women gathered at a three-way intersection known locally as Melli Bank Three-Way Intesection, near Enghelab Square, and walked peacefully to the nearby Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh. Rahman recalled that, near the Office of the County Governor, the protesters were met by uniformed agents from the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, as well as plain-clothes agents, who fired firearms to disperse them. He also recalled seeing a pickup truck equipped with a machine gun parked in the front yard of the Office of the County Governor.

According to Rahman, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA were armed with shotguns loaded with metal pellets while the uniformed IRGC agents carried assault rifles and the plain-clothes agents carried handguns. Rahman mentioned that he could identify by name three plain-clothes agents known within the community as working with local Basij units of the IRGC. He noted that one of these agents fired a shot at them using a handgun. The reported names of three agents are on file with Amnesty International. Rahman said that, because the crowd was small, they were forced to disperse after the shooting.

8.5.1 PROTESTS ON 21 SEPTEMBER

Mass protests next erupted in Oshnavieh two days later, on 21 September 2022. In response, the security forces waged a crackdown resulting in the unlawful killing of **Sadroddin Litani**, **Amin Marefat**, **Milan Haghighi** and **Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan**. Scores more were seriously injured.

927. IRN0245, IRN0239, IRN0246, IRN0247, videos on file with Amnesty International; IRN0248, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Mohammad Ali Taheri Movement, X post: داعش سپاهی در #پیرانشهر به شکل ممتد به خانه های مردم و به هر مکانی که میتواند گلوله شلیک میکند ["ISIS-like IRGC forces in #Piranshahr continuously firing at people's homes and at any place they can shoot"], 21 November 2022, https://x.com/Taheri_Movement/status/1594825962956341250 (in Persian).

SADRODDIN LITANI



Sadroddin Litani © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Sadroddin Litani, a 27-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 September 2022 during a crackdown on protesters in Oshnavieh.

Two protesters, Keywan and Rahman, told Amnesty International that, at around 7.30pm that day, around 2,000 men, women and children gathered in and around Halabcheh Square. The protesters were swiftly met by large numbers of uniformed IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, uniformed agents from FARAJA, including its Special Cohorts, and plain-clothes agents. According to Keywan and Rahman, the uniformed agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA were armed with shotguns loaded with metal pellets while the uniformed IRGC agents and plain-clothes agents carried AK-pattern rifles and handguns.

Keywan and Rahman recounted how IRGC agents initially fired rifles into the air many times to disperse the peaceful protesters. After the protesters refused to leave, the agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to intimidate, disperse and punish the protesters. Rahman told Amnesty International that a group of uniformed IRGC agents and plain-clothes agents also fired AK-pattern rifles and handguns at protesters, some doing so from their positions in Sheykh Abdolaziz Park, near Halabcheh Square.

At around 7.30-8pm, Rahman witnessed Sadroddin Litani sustaining gunshot wounds to his right shoulder. Protesters carried him to a nearby cafe where he died shortly afterwards.

Amnesty International analysed two videos showing Sadroddin Litani after he was shot. The first video shows protesters carrying Sadroddin Litani amid the sound of gunfire, seemingly in the moments immediately after he was shot.[928] Blood is visible on the upper right side of his back, near his right shoulder blade. As the protesters place him on the ground, blood can be seen on his torso and face, with a trail of blood along the ground where the protesters have carried him. The second video shows him lying on the floor inside a building alongside three other injured protesters.[929] Sadroddin Litani's body appears lifeless, with his face and torso covered in blood and blood staining the ground beneath him.

Rahman told Amnesty International that, following the shooting that killed Sadroddin Litani, the protesters dispersed and some moved towards the intersection of Imam Khomeini Street and Shaheed Beheshti Street, near Saderat Bank and several blocks from the Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh. There, he said, the protesters once again came under fire. According to Rahman, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets at the protesters while IRGC agents fired AK-pattern rifles and handguns.

Rahman said that, despite this crackdown, which injured numerous protesters, the protesters remained defiant and hundreds of them headed towards the Office of the County Governor of

928. IRN0250, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Kurdistan Human Rights Network, X post: دست‌کم ۱۰ معترض در اشنویه در اثر تیراندازی نیروهای ضدشورش زخمی شدند. ["At least 10 protesters in Oshnavieh injured by gunfire from riot-control forces"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/KurdistanHRN/status/1572632811881783297 (in Persian).
929. IRN0251, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Farzad Fattahi, X post: تیراندازی مستقیم به شهروندان در #اشنویه ["Direct gunfire at citizens of Oshnavieh"], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/FattahiFarzad/status/1572638574297620482 (in Persian).

Oshnavieh and an adjacent police station at the intersection of Shohada Boulevard and Shaheed Rajaiee Street. According to Rahman and another protester, Keywan, the shootings there were carried out by the security forces from various locations, including street level and elevated areas. A crackdown subsequently unfolded that resulted in the unlawful killing of three further protesters – **Amin Marefat**, **Milan Haghighi** and **Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan**.

AMIN MAREFAT, MILAN HAGHIGHI AND ABDOLSALAM GHADER GOLVAN



Amin Marefat (left), Milan Haghighi (centre) and Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan (right) © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed a 16-year-old boy, Amin Marefat, and a 21-year-old man, Milan Haghighi, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 September 2022 during a crackdown on protesters in Oshnavieh. The same evening, they shot Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan, aged 32, who succumbed to his injuries four days later.

According to two protesters, Keywan and Rahman, and another informed source in Iran, Ezzat, the three victims were among the hundreds of protesters who had gathered near the Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh during the evening of 21 September 2022. Rahman and Keywan recounted how security forces repeatedly used firearms to disperse, punish and terrorize the protesters. Rahman mentioned that the authorities deliberately cut off electricity to facilitate the crackdown in the dark.

Rahman added that IRGC agents fired from the second or third-floor window of the Office of the County Governor, as well as from its rooftop, using AK-pattern rifles, among other weapons. He added that, to intensify the climate of fear, plain-clothes agents fired into the air from moving vehicles that were typically Peugeot or white Samand cars. Rahman told Amnesty International that he also saw at least two agents carrying rifles on the first floor of a partially constructed eight-storey building near the Office of the County Governor and Kileh Shin Park.

Despite the violent response, which led to numerous injuries, the protesters continued to chant defiantly, refusing to disperse.

According to Rahman and Keywan, at around 9-9.30pm, the crackdown escalated to a deadly level as IRGC agents, positioned on the rooftops of the Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh and other elevated areas, began firing live ammunition directly at protesters using AK-pattern rifles. Keywan described the shootings as relentless, lasting some 45 minutes, as well as random and unjustified:

"None of the protesters possessed firearms. They were merely protesting and chanting… They [security forces] opened fire on everyone. They did not care who their targets were or what they were doing. They fired senselessly into the crowds. Their distance from the protesters in the front was approximately 100m. It was purely a matter of luck as to who would get struck by the gunfire."

In addition to the shootings from elevated areas, Keywan described how security forces, including agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at street level, simultaneously continued their assault on the protesters. He said: "They repeatedly fired metal pellets and tear gas. The streets were constantly engulfed in thick clouds of tear gas."

Keywan recalled that some members of the security forces positioned themselves in Kileh Shin Park in front of the Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh and from there launched tear gas towards protesters. Other agents chased fleeing protesters into side streets and fired tear gas towards houses that had left their doors open to aid protesters' escape.

Keywan emphasized that protesters were unarmed, while noting that some protesters threw stones and hurled back tear gas canisters that security forces had fired towards them.

Keywan said that, within less than 45 minutes, Amin Marefat and Milan Haghighi sustained fatal gunshot wounds. An informed source in Iran, Ahmad, shared with Amnesty International a graphic video, filmed in a morgue, which shows a bullet hole in the back of Amin Marefat's torso.[930] According to an independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International who reviewed the video, on the right side of Amin Marefat's back at the inner margin of the shoulder blade in its mid-part, is a small round penetrating wound with well-defined margins. The appearance is strongly suggestive of a high-velocity gunshot entry wound from a military rifle. At the front of the left armpit is a small bloodied medical dressing likely covering the exit wound and suggesting an almost horizontal bullet trajectory within the body so that the shooter was most likely at street level firing from behind and to the right of Amin Marefat.

Amnesty International also reviewed a video showing a funeral procession in which mourners carry a body wrapped in a burial shroud.[931] During the procession, one mourner can be heard stating that the deceased individual was a child, while the person filming identifies the deceased as being 16 years old.

The organization reviewed the certificate of Amin Marefat, which states his cause of death as "operation of combat equipment outside combat".

Milan Haghighi was struck by at least two bullets, causing injuries to one of his legs and one of his arms.

Keywan told Amnesty International that, due to the heavy presence of security forces at hospitals as well as reports of arrests targeting those seeking medical care for themselves or other injured individuals, protesters present at the scene were unable to take Amin Marefat and Milan Haghighi to hospital. Instead, other protesters took them to a nearby private house. According to Keywan, after about 90 minutes, Amin Marefat and Milan Haghighi were taken to Imam Khomeini Hospital in Oshnavieh. They died shortly afterwards following excessive blood loss and other complications.

Numerous other protesters sustained gunshot wounds to parts of their bodies including their hands, legs, backs and buttocks. Among them were Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan, who died from his injuries four days later, on 25 September 2022, and Rahman, who survived. Amnesty International reviewed Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan's death certificate, which cites his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed images showing a severe injury to Rahman's left arm, which has undergone extensive surgery. Rahman told Amnesty International that over the following years he has continued to suffer from medical complications, including pain, numbness and impaired mobility.

The deaths of Sadroddin Litani, Amin Marefat, Milan Haghighi and Abdolsalam Ghader Golven and the injuries to many more protesters on 21 September 2022 resulted in mass protests in central

930. IRN0252, video on file with Amnesty International.
931. IRN0253, video on file with Amnesty International.

Oshnavieh, including the area near the Office of the County Governor, between 22 and 26 September 2022. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, in response, security forces continued to use firearms to suppress the protests.

Keywan told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 22 September 2022, security forces once again fired lethal ammunition from both street level and the rooftops of the Office of the County Governor, the building of the Municipality of Oshnavieh near Enghelab Square and the private residence of an IRGC agent to which some protesters had set fire. Several people sustained gunshot wounds.

Amnesty International analysed two videos, published on 22 September 2022, showing protesters in the street amid the sound of gunfire.[932]

Rahman told Amnesty International that the protests in Oshnavieh began to subside around 27 September 2022 after the authorities deployed reinforcements from other locations and security forces carried out mass arrests. According to Rahman, arrests often took place during night-time raids of residential neighbourhoods and at checkpoints where security forces randomly stopped vehicles and detained their occupants. Rahman said that the resulting atmosphere made the city feel as though it was under military curfew, deterring people from leaving their homes.

8.6 URUMIEH AND BALOU VILLAGE

The provincial capital of West Azerbaijan, Urumieh, was another place where security forces unlawfully used firearms and prohibited weapons from the first days of the protests, which began on 19 September 2022.

8.6.1 PROTESTS ON 20-21 SEPTEMBER

Amnesty International recorded the unlawful killing of two protesters in Urumieh – **Amir (Farjad) Darvishi** and **Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost** – as a result of fatal shootings on 20 and 21 September 2022. In response to the killing of Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, protests flared in his village of origin, Balou, near Urumieh, where he was buried on the morning of 21 September 2022. The security forces once again resorted to violence involving indiscriminate shootings aimed at dispersing, terrorizing and punishing the protesters. This resulted in the unlawful killing of **Abdollah Mahmoudpour** and **Danesh Rahnama**.

932. IRN0254, video on file with Amnesty International and available at: Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, درگیری خیابانی شدید مردم معترض اشنویه (شنو) با نیروهای حکومتی و تیراندازی مستقیم این نیروها به سوی مردم ["Intense street clashes between protesters in Oshnavieh and government forces, with those forces firing directly at people"], 22 September 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1572992452830629888 (in Persian). IRN0255, video on file with Amnesty International.

AMIR (FARJAD) DARVISHI



Amir (Farjad) Darvishi © Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, a 22-year-old man from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 20 September 2022 during a crackdown on protests in Urumieh.

An eyewitness, Mohammad, and another informed source in Iran, Mahyar, who spoke to several other eyewitnesses, told Amnesty International that, during the evening of 20 September 2022, agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets to disperse hundreds of protesters who had peacefully gathered in the area of Valiasr in Urumieh. Mohammad recalled that agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA fired metal pellets at Amir (Farjad) Darvishi from a distance of 4-5m and that, after he fell to the ground, several agents kicked him and beat him with batons.

Mahyar told Amnesty International that, later that evening, Amir (Farjad) Darvishi's family learned that he had been taken to Imam Khomeini Hospital, although they did not know who had taken him there. According to Mahyar, as many as 10 agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA were monitoring Amir (Farjad) Darvishi at the hospital, apparently intending to arrest him should he regain consciousness. Mahyar added that he also saw a man at the hospital who had sustained serious eye injuries caused by metal pellets fired by security forces.

Amnesty International reviewed a video clip, confirmed as authentic by Mahyar, which shows the immediate aftermath of the shooting.[933] A group of people can be seen congregating around a body on the ground and expressing shock at his injuries.

Amnesty International also reviewed Amir (Farjad) Darvishi's burial certificate, which states that he died as a result of bleeding caused by "being struck with metal pellets in his heart and lungs". His death certificate, which the organization also reviewed, cites his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

933. IRN0256, video on file with Amnesty International.

ASLAN (NIMA) SHAFAGHDOOST



Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost
© Private

Security forces shot Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost, a 17-year-old boy from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 September 2022 during the crackdown on protests in Urumieh. He died 12 days later on 5 October 2022.

In a video statement published by the Kurdistan Human Rights Network on 3 January 2023, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost's mother, Parvin Hassan Abadi, stated that security forces shot her son in both legs during a crackdown on protests in the Islam Abad area of Urumieh on 21 September 2022.

An informed source in Iran, Mehrdad, told Amnesty International that, on the night of 21 September 2022, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost left home and walked to the Islam Abad area of Urumieh, which was a short distance away. According to Mehrdad, after a small object struck him on the side of the head near his ear, several protesters ran towards him and warned him to flee because security forces would soon arrive. Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost replied that he would not run because he had done nothing wrong. He then saw a Toyota vehicle carrying security forces, including agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions, approaching at high speed. Mehrdad reported that Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost then started to run away while members of the security forces pursued him. As he turned into a side alley, he suddenly became dizzy, his vision blurred, and he fell to the ground, losing consciousness. According to Mehrdad, he had been shot in the legs and was bleeding heavily. He was later found by protesters, who took him home, where he tied cloth around his legs to stop the bleeding.

In her video statement, Parvin Hassan Abadi noted that protesters initially brought her son to a private residence, where he received first aid. He was then taken to his uncle's house and subsequently to his own home. His family decided to take him to a hospital but, upon reaching it, saw a significant presence of security forces at the entrance. Fearing that Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost might be apprehended, his family opted to take him back home. According to Parvin Hassan Abadi, over the following days, Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost was intermittently taken from his home to an ill-equipped private clinic. His condition deteriorated on 5 October 2022 due to an infection so he was rushed to a hospital but died around 30 minutes later.

Amnesty International reviewed graphic images that show severe gunshot wounds on Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost's legs. An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International assessed that two wounds to the right leg most likely represent a gunshot entry to the knee and an exit at the inner thigh. Another wound to the left thigh may represent a re-entry wound from the bullet exiting the right thigh, or alternatively an exit wound from a second gunshot, the entry wound of which is not shown in the photographs.

Amnesty International obtained a copy of Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost's death certificate, which cites his cause of death as "unknown".

In a report to member states of the UN Human Rights Council shared ahead of the Special Session on Iran on 24 November, the Iranian authorities claimed that the death of Nima Shafaghdoost "was caused by Capnocytophaga infection due to dog bites and had nothing to do with the riots" and that this version of events has been accepted by a statement by "the deceased's parents produced at the police station". The authorities added that "his relatives, including his uncle, have stated that the information published in cyberspace about the death of Aslan during the riots is entirely false."

On 16 October 2022, the FARAJA commander of Urumieh, Hassan Sheikhnejad, publicly reiterated the same false narrative about the death of Nima Shafaghdoost and claimed that, "by pumping false news among the people and carrying out psychological operations, opposition media has tried to mislead the people about the death of… Nima Shafaghdoost." He added that "enemies with evil intentions are always seeking to create division and create disturbance in the public mind."[934]

ABDOLLAH MAHMOUDPOUR AND DANESH RAHNAMA



Abdollah Mahmoudpour (left) and Danesh Rahnama (right)
© Private

Security forces unlawfully killed Abdollah Mahmoudpour, aged 16, and Danesh Rahnama, aged 22, both from Iran's Kurdish minority, on 21 September 2022 during a crackdown on protests in the village of Balou near Urumieh.

A protester, Mousa, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 21 September 2022, protesters peacefully gathered in the main street of the village to express outrage at the unlawful killing of Amir (Farjad) Darvishi. Mousa said that, shortly after the protesters gathered, agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions stationed at Balou's Basij Resistance Base, located near the main street, fired lethal ammunition into the air to intimidate and disperse them. Mousa said that this provoked protesters to gather near the Basij base, with some throwing stones towards it. Mousa told Amnesty International that he knew of at least one agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions who was hit by a stone on the head and injured.

Amnesty International examined a video, confirmed as authentic by Mousa, that records the night-time scenes of shootings and stone-throwing in front of the Basij base.[935] The footage captures a flash when a weapon is fired through the front door of the Basij base and then shows a small group of young protesters standing a short distance away behind a wall. They are seen throwing stones while chanting, against a backdrop of sounds of gunfire. Towards the end of the video, bright lights are seen, suggesting that some protesters might have thrown Molotov cocktails towards the base.

According to Mousa, the situation escalated when plain-clothes agents stationed on the rooftops of several shops around the base opened fire on the protesters without warning. As a result, the protesters fled into side streets. Mousa stated that plain-clothes agents then descended from the rooftops and pursued the protesters while continuing to fire towards them repeatedly, using AK-pattern rifles. Mousa shared with Amnesty International a video that shows protesters taking cover behind a wall, expressing outrage at the gunshots fired by the plain-clothes agents, who are seen standing near them in an adjacent side street.

According to Mousa, Abdollah Mahmoudpour was fatally shot in the back while running away. Mousa spoke to witnesses who said that Abdollah Mahmoudpour was on his way back from work that evening and that, to reach his house, he had to pass the Basij base. The witnesses said that,

934. Etemad Online, نیما شفیق دوست بر اثر سگ گزیدگی فوت کرده؛ نه تجمعات اخیر ارومیه [Nima Shafighdoost died from a dog bite, not during the recent protests in Urumieh], 16 October 2022, https://www.etemadonline.com/بخش-سیاسی-9/578070-اعتراضات-ایران (in Persian).
935. IRN0261, video on file with Amnesty International.

when Abdollah Mahmoudpour reached the protest, he paused to consult with them about an alternative route to his house. At that moment, unexpectedly, gunfire from the rooftops began, causing him to flee alongside other protesters.

Seconds after Abdollah Mahmoudpour was shot and fell to the ground, Danesh Rahnama tried to move him. Mousa learned from other eyewitnesses that agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions shot Danesh Rahnama at that moment, fatally wounding him. According to Mousa, several other people also sustained gunshot wounds, but survived.

Mousa told Amnesty International:

"It was an extremely frightening situation. We did not expect such an event to happen to us at all. The crowd that had assembled on the street had not come to cause any harm… yet they [the Basij agents] began using heavy firearms against young individuals who were merely chanting and protesting... They were firing from very close range, leaving the protesters with no chance to escape."

Amnesty International spoke to two other sources, Yahya and Amir, who corroborated Mousa's account based on information obtained from other eyewitnesses. Yahya mentioned that the protesters moved Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour to another side street and attempted to find a driver willing to take them to a hospital. As Yahya explained, due to fears of reprisal, most drivers were reluctant to make the journey. Eventually, the driver of a pickup truck agreed to help. Protesters told Yahya that agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions fired multiple rounds at the truck, resulting in bullet holes. Abdollah Mahmoudpour died en route to the hospital, while Danesh Rahnama died shortly after reaching the hospital following significant loss of blood. Yahya mentioned that he subsequently learned from locals that agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions beat the driver of the pickup truck after he drove back from the hospital.

Mousa told Amnesty International that protesters saw the commander of the Basij Resistance Base in Balou and other prominent agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions participating in the shooting. The names and pictures of these reported agents are on file with Amnesty International.

Amnesty International reviewed four videos showing Abdollah Mahmoudpour after he was shot and taken to hospital to receive medical care.[936] An independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed one of the videos, which shows a small but heavily bleeding wound on Abdollah Mahmoudpour's back.[937] The person filming is heard saying that he was shot dead. Two of the videos show Abdollah Mahmoudpour's body being put into a black body bag.[938]

The independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International also reviewed a photograph that shows the body of Danesh Rahnama after an autopsy has been conducted, as indicated by the sutured incision to the torso. There is extensive bruising to the front of the left shoulder and the adjacent armpit and lateral chest wall. Immediately adjacent to the bruising and at the front of the left chest just below the collar bone is a prominent sutured wound, the precise nature of which is obscured by the suturing. The independent forensic pathologist consulted by Amnesty International reviewed another photograph taken in hospital, which shows this wound actively bleeding. A plastic drainage tube has been inserted into the left chest cavity, which would explain the sutured wound visible in the photograph taken after the autopsy. The images corroborate eyewitness accounts that a high-velocity gunshot struck Danesh Rahnama in the back and exited his body through his chest. A video depicting the same scene shows Danesh Rahnama lying motionless, with his chest and trousers saturated in blood, while medical staff attempt to

936. IRN0263, IRN0264, IRN0265, IRN0266, videos on file with Amnesty International.
937. IRN0264, video on file with Amnesty International.
938. IRN0265, IRN0266, videos on file with Amnesty International.

resuscitate him.[939]

Amnesty International reviewed the burial certificate of Danesh Rahnama, which states that he died as a result of bleeding caused by "being struck with a pointed projectile in his chest". His death certificate, also reviewed by the organization, states his cause of death as "collision with hard or sharp objects".

The organization also reviewed a ruling issued by Branch 1 of the Criminal Court in Urumieh, dated 14 January 2023, which details the fatal injuries sustained by Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour on the basis of police reports and forensic records.[940] According to the ruling, Danesh Rahnama was fatally struck by a bullet, fired from a "Kalashnikov rifle", which entered the back of his upper left arm and exited through his chest, while Abdollah Mahmoudpour was fatally struck by "a bullet with the calibre of 7.62 [fired] from a Kalashnikov rifle", which struck the middle of his back, ricocheted and lodged in the upper front part of the right side of his chest.

The ruling overturns an order issued by an investigator at Branch 7 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Urumieh on 19 December 2022.[941] This order, reviewed by Amnesty International, had dismissed the complaints of the victims' families and terminated investigations. It stated that Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour were "among the rioters" and were shot and killed "near the site of the riots, where rioters intended to attack the Basij [Resistance] Base" of the village of Balou. The order stated that "it was unclear from which direction the shots were fired and by whom." On this basis, the investigator concluded that the investigation should be discontinued, citing the absence of an identified suspect.[942] The criminal court in Urumieh overturned this order and mandated further investigations. According to its ruling, further investigations should determine if there were armed individuals among the "rioters" who fired towards the security forces, whether there was any evidence of shooting by "enemies and rioters" near the Basij Base, whether the security forces possessed firearms and if these firearms were AK-pattern rifles.[943] However, as of 2026, the family had been provided with no update on the investigations.

939. IRN0262, video on file with Amnesty International.
940. IRN0471, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
941. IRN0470, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
942. For more information on the pattern of prosecution authorities terminating investigations, see section 11.3.1.
943. For more detailed information, see section 9.4.3.

9. VIOLATIONS AGAINST RELATIVES OF THOSE KILLED

The unlawful killing of hundreds of protesters and bystanders during the Woman Life Freedom uprising marked the beginning of a relentless campaign of repression, silencing and cruelty against victims' families. Amnesty International's research concludes that the authorities subjected the families of those killed to a wide range of human rights violations, including pressure to accept false narratives about the causes and circumstances of their loved ones' deaths and coercion to comply with severe and cruel restrictions on funerals and memorial ceremonies. Compliance was enforced through surveillance and threats, while defiance was punished with arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment in custody, and the unlawful use of firearms, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and other means of force during funeral processions and memorial ceremonies.

As part of efforts to enforce impunity, authorities also denied families access to autopsy reports, imposed restrictions on viewing and photographing injuries on their loved ones' bodies, failed to issue death and burial certificates or issued certificates that were incomplete or inaccurate, and concealed key evidence, including CCTV footage of the incidents. Furthermore, authorities denied families their right to justice by issuing rushed public statements with predetermined conclusions in the absence of genuine investigations, pressuring families to abandon complaints, and prematurely terminating investigations.

Amnesty International found that a wide range of senior officials, commanders and agents, spanning multiple entities within the security apparatus, were involved in human rights violations against victims' families. The entities included the Ministry of Intelligence; the Special Cohorts and the Prevention Police of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA), including its Assistance Cohorts; and the Intelligence Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and entities operating under the IRGC's regional headquarters and provincial corps, including operational divisions, Basij battalions and Basij Resistance Bases. Senior officials and commanders involved included provincial and county governors, provincial and county FARAJA commanders, provincial heads of the Investigation Police and commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps. Other officials involved were judicial and prosecution officials and representatives of the Supreme Leader, including county prosecutors and county Friday Prayer leaders.

The patterns of violations documented by Amnesty International reveal a deliberate effort by the authorities to conceal the crimes under international law committed by security forces, coerce families into silence, and suppress and punish their pursuit of truth and justice. The organization considers that

the cumulative impact of such violations, causing intentional anguish and distress to mourning families, violates the absolute prohibition on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section focuses on the various ways through which authorities pressured families to endorse false state narratives about the circumstances of their loved ones' deaths. The second section documents the violations that families experienced when seeking to conduct dignified funerals and memorial ceremonies for their loved ones in accordance with their religious and cultural traditions. The third section documents the various ways in which authorities sought to deny families their right to the truth about the causes and circumstances of their loved ones' deaths. The fourth section documents why many families viewed filing complaints as futile and how those who attempted to pursue justice through the domestic judicial system were either pressured to abandon their complaints or faced unjust termination of investigations.

Throughout the chapter, the cases of the families of 42 victims are featured for illustrative purposes. Each case highlights a range of violations, including those relevant to the section in which it appears, as well as patterns of violations that are discussed in other sections. The cases concern the treatment of victims' relatives in Kurdistan, West Azerbaijan and Kermanshah provinces between September and December 2022. This scope corresponds to that of the detailed documentation presented in Chapters 6-8, which focuses on the timeline of protest crackdowns and incidents of unlawful killings in these provinces. While this chapter focuses on these three provinces, Amnesty International's previous research, published ahead of the first anniversary of the Woman Life Freedom uprising in September 2023, showed that the authorities' campaign of repression against victims' families occurred nationwide.[944] The organization's research into the circumstances surrounding the deaths of protesters and bystanders who died in state custody, following release from custody or in suspicious circumstances pointing to the involvement of state agents reveals that their families were subjected to similar patterns of violations.[945]

9.1 PRESSURE TO ACCEPT FALSE STATE NARRATIVES

Amnesty International found that the pattern of repression against victims' families typically began immediately after the unlawful killings of their loved ones. This often involved concealing victims' bodies and conditioning their return upon the families' acceptance of funeral restrictions or state narratives about the causes and circumstances of the victims' deaths. This cruel practice deprived families of the possibility to honour their loved ones through proper burials and commemorations in accordance with their cultural and religious traditions. It also compounded their grief and hindered their ability to find closure.

Iranian authorities routinely pressured bereaved families to endorse false state narratives about the causes and circumstances surrounding the deaths of their loved ones, aimed at absolving the authorities of responsibility. The pressure to accept false state narratives was frequently accompanied by other human rights violations, including harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, and various kinds of threats. These included threats to secretly bury victims' bodies in unidentified locations, exhume victims already buried and re-bury them in unidentified locations, destroy victims' grave sites, and kill, imprison, rape or otherwise harm surviving family members. These tactics were used by the authorities to intensify the pressure on families and force them into compliance.[946]

944. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Harassment of families of victims unlawfully killed during protests must end" (Index: MDE 13/7084/2023), 21 August 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7084/2023/en
945. See section 5.3.
946. See, for example, the case of Peyman Manbari in section 6.2.1.

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, the narratives that authorities forced families to endorse followed recognizable scripts. Grieving families were typically forced to attribute the deaths to non-state actors such as "rioters", "anti-revolutionary" agents, "terrorists", "hostile individuals", Kurdish opposition groups, or "*monafeghin*" (hypocrites), or blame the deaths on suicides, illnesses, car accidents, or drug use. They were also pressured to disassociate themselves and the victims from the protests, refer to the protests as "riots", urge the public not to criticize the authorities or "exploit" the deaths to support the protests. Some were also compelled to accept that their loved ones had been "assassinated" by "hostile groups" as a part of "a coordinated plan" aimed at falsely accusing security forces of unlawful killings.[947]

Informed sources described to Amnesty International how the pressure to endorse false state narratives intensified families' anguish and suffering. Families of protesters experienced this coercion not only as a distortion of truth but also as an assault on the memory of their loved ones, who had courageously taken to the streets to demand a future of freedom and dignity for people in Iran.

9.1.1 PRESSURE THROUGH WITHHOLDING BODIES

Grieving families were often threatened by the authorities that the bodies of their loved ones would be withheld if they did not endorse state narratives.

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, this patten emerged in circumstances where security forces had established control over victims' bodies, either by heavily guarding the hospital where the bodies had been taken or by transferring the bodies, without the families' knowledge, to an unidentified location or a security facility. In these cases, the authorities withheld victims' bodies from their families and conditioned their return on relatives signing false written statements or making scripted declarations on camera which were then broadcast by state media outlets.

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947. See the case of Foad Ghadimi in section 6.4.1.

FAMILY OF FOAD GHADIMI



Foad Ghadimi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Foad Ghadimi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 19 September 2022 in Divandareh, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[948] On 21 September 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi, confirmed in a media interview that Foad Ghadimi was killed with firearms during protests, but claimed that he had been targeted by "hostile groups" as a part of a "coordinated assassination plan".[949] Ali Azadi stated:

"Unfortunately, another individual named Foad Ghadimi was killed today, and the nature of these killings suggests that they were targeted as part of a coordinated assassination plan… Hostile groups have committed these crimes as part of a project for staging killings… We request that [people] refrain from attending protests and be aware that, these days, counter-revolutionary [forces] have been pursuing a killing project in the province, and it is possible that the intensity of clashes and crimes may increase."[950]

An informed source, Shahla, told Amnesty International that, immediately after Foad Ghadimi's death in hospital, the authorities took his father to a television station belonging to the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Corporation (IRIB) and forced him to record a statement, threatening him that they would not release Foad Ghadimi's body to the family and that the lives of his remaining children would be at risk if he failed to comply. Amnesty International has previously documented how the IRIB is implicated in human rights violations by recording and broadcasting statements extracted through torture and other ill-treatment and other coercive means from victims and their families.[951] Foad Ghadimi's body was subsequently returned to his family.

On 22 September 2022, the father of Foad Ghadimi was shown in a propaganda video published by state media and quoted by the Islamic Republic News Agency repeating language used by the

948. See section 6.4.1 for details of Foad Ghadimi's case.
949. Tasnim News Agency, ["Exclusive: Details of suspicious killing of four people in Kurdistan: They were shot 'with combat bullets and from behind'"], 21 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/06/30/2777420/اختصاصی-جزئیات-کشته-شدن-مشکوک-4نفر-در-کردستان-با-گلوله-جنگی-و-از-پشت-تیر-خورده-اند (in Persian).
950. Tasnim News Agency, ["Exclusive: Details of suspicious killing of four people in Kurdistan: They were shot 'with combat bullets and from behind'"], 21 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/06/30/2777420/اختصاصی-جزئیات-کشته-شدن-مشکوک-4نفر-در-کردستان-با-گلوله-جنگی-و-از-پشت-تیر-خورده-اند (in Persian).
951. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: Execution Risk for Tortured Dissident Rapper: Toomaj Salehi" (Index: MDE 13/8055/2024) 16 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8055/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Swedish-Iranian at risk of retaliatory execution" (Index: MDE 13/5698/2022), 10 June 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5698/2022/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Sufi bus driver executed at dawn after grossly unfair trial", 18 June 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/06/iran-sufi-bus-driver-executed; Amnesty International, "Iran: Macabre propaganda videos feature forced 'confessions' of executed Sunni men", 17 November 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2016/11/iran-macabre-propaganda-videos-feature-forced-confessions-of-executed-sunni-men

authorities to denigrate protesters and propagate official state narratives about his death.[952]

On 23 September 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi, again mentioned Foad Ghadimi in a media interview, stating:

"The enemy is looking for an excuse to harm the security of our province and country, and this time they have used the death of Mahsa Amini as an excuse, although we ourselves are saddened and affected by the death of this girl from Kurdistan. The enemy is pursuing a project of staging killings in order to falsely accuse the security forces of carrying out killings, an example being the murder of Foad Ghadimi in Divandareh, who was killed in front of his workplace. During the recent protests in Kurdistan [province], the police have shown tolerance towards protesters, and efforts have been made to prevent illegal gatherings through requests and recommendations."[953]

According to Shahla, the authorities continued to subject Foad Ghadimi's family to harassment and intimidation in the days and weeks following his death.

Three days after his death, several officials from the Office of the County Governor of Divandareh and security forces came to the family's home under the pretext of offering their condolences but began filming the family without consent. Plain-clothes agents also kept Foad Ghadimi's grave site under surveillance and changed his gravestone multiple times to remove the inscription "martyr Foad", which was added by the family, and called the family multiple times to warn them against restoring it.

952. Mashregh News, ["Video: Statements by father of young man martyred in Divandareh riots"], 21 September 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1420238/فیلم-سخنان-پدر-جوانی-که-در-اغتشاشات-دیواندره-شهید-شد (in Persian); Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), ["Father of one of the victims of recent unrest: My son was killed by anti-revolutionary forces"], 22 September 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84895742/پدر-یکی-از-جان-باختگان-ناآرامی-های-اخیر-پسرم-توسط-ضد-انقلاب (in Persian); Javan Online, پدر یکی از کشته‌های اعتراضات اخیر کردستان: «فواد» توسط ضدانقلاب کشته شد ["Father of one of those killed in recent Kurdistan protests: 'Foad' was killed by anti-revolutionary forces"], 22 September 2022, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1105690 (in Persian).

953. Aftab News, ["General Azadi: A team that intended to stage killings has been arrested"], 23 September 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/796147/سردار-آزادی-یک-تیم-که-قصد-کشته‌سازی-داشتند-بازداشت-شدند (in Persian).

The authorities also made intimidating phone calls to the family warning them against holding a ceremony or visiting Foad Ghadimi's grave site to mark the 40th day following his death, and security forces used firearms and tear gas against relatives and supporters who turned up on the day.



The grave site of Foad Ghadimi © Private

FAMILY OF ARDALAN GHASEMI



Ardalan Ghasemi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Ardalan Ghasemi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 10 November 2022 in Kermanshah, Kermanshah province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[954]

An informed source outside Iran, Emad, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 10 November 2022, Ardalan Ghasemi's family went to Taleghani Hospital in Kermanshah after hospital staff informed them that he had been hospitalized there. However, when they arrived at the hospital, they were not allowed to see Ardalan Ghasemi and were informed that they had to come back the next morning. Emad said that, while in the hospital, agents told the family that they had ordered Ardalan Ghasemi and his friend, who were writing slogans, to stop. The agents claimed that, when the two did not stop and instead fled, they believed the two of them were armed and shot at them.

The next morning, Ardalan Ghasemi's family was informed that he had died, and they had to go to the hospital to identify his body. Emad told Amnesty International that, while there, an agent asked the family whether they planned to make a legal complaint about Ardalan Ghasemi's death, threatening that, if they did so, his body would be kept in the hospital morgue for seven to eight

954. See section 7.2.3 for details of Ardalan Ghasemi's case.

months. The agent even showed the family a decomposing corpse, threatening that this was what would happen to Ardalan Ghasemi's body.

In the hospital, agents warned that they would only release his body to the family if the family signed a document falsely stating that Ardalan Ghasemi was engaging in car theft when security forces shot him and promised not to speak out or lodge a legal complaint about his death.

Emad recounted how this claim directly contradicted what a FARAJA agent at the hospital told the family, namely that a member of the security forces had killed Ardalan Ghasemi "by mistake". Emad recalled the FARAJA agent saying that the perpetrator had not meant to shoot Ardalan Ghasemi and was remorseful as a result.

According to Emad, in yet another contradiction, agents told the family in a separate conversation that they could retrieve Ardalan Ghasemi's body immediately on condition that they accept that he died in a car accident.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International from Emad, in a further attempt to conceal the truth about the circumstances surrounding Ardalan Ghasemi's death, on 11 November 2022, security forces forcibly took Ardalan Ghasemi's family members to the medical centre where his friend, with whom he was writing political slogans on a wall when they were both shot, was being treated. There, the injured man claimed that he and Ardalan Ghasemi were shot while travelling in a car carrying weapons intended for protesters. Amnesty International has serious concerns that the man was coerced by the authorities into repeating the official state narrative. This is due to the circumstances in which the statement was made and the Iranian authorities' long-standing pattern of extracting false statements from victims under torture and other ill-treatment, or when they are in a state of distress while receiving medical care, to deny or distort the truth about the human rights violations committed by security forces.[955]

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, ultimately, on 11 November 2022, Ardalan Ghasemi's family was forced to sign several documents containing false statements in order to retrieve his body. The authorities threatened the family that, if they spoke out, they would detain Ardalan Ghasemi's brother and prosecute him for "being the leader of the riots".

Ardalan Ghasemi was buried on 11 November 2022 in Tagheil cemetery, located in the family's home town of Gilan-e Gharb in Kermanshah province, in the presence of agents.

In the weeks and months after Ardalan Ghasemi's death, agents continued to intimidate and harass his family to deter them from speaking out or seeking truth and justice. They also put the family under pressure to take part in an interview with state media outlets reiterating the authorities' narrative about the circumstances surrounding Ardalan Ghasemi's death, which the family refused.

955. See, for example, Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7480/2023), 6 December 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7480/2023/en, pp. 68-72; Amnesty International, "Iran: Child detainees subjected to flogging, electric shocks and sexual violence in brutal protest crackdown", 10 March 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/03/iran-child-detainees-subjected-to-flogging-electric-shocks-and-sexualviolence-in-brutal-protest-crackdown; Amnesty International, "Iran: Mother with baby denied proper care in jail: So'ada Khadirzadeh" (Index: MDE 13/5827/2022), 7 July 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5827/2022/en; Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity: Mass Arrests, Disappearances and Torture Since Iran's November 2019 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/2891/2020), 2 September 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2891/2020/en, pp. 44-45 and 53-56; Amnesty International, "Iran: Cruel campaign to extract propaganda 'confessions' from protesters against compulsory veiling", 15 July 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/07/iran-cruel-campaign-to-extract-propaganda-confessions-from-protestersagainst-compulsory-veiling

9.1.2 PRESSURE THROUGH ARBITRARY DETENTION, TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

Amnesty International's investigation found that families faced a serious risk of arbitrary arrest and detention if the authorities decided to coerce them into reiterating a false state narrative in written or video-recorded statements and the family refused.

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, family members who were detained were subjected to incommunicado detention, torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual violence, as well as breaches of their right to a fair trial, including the right of access to a lawyer. Authorities threatened detained relatives with prosecution on "national security" charges, carrying lengthy prison sentences, if they refused to comply with official demands.

FAMILY OF BAHAODDIN VEISI



Bahaoddin Veisi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Bahaoddin Veisi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 November 2022 in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[956]

An informed source in Iran, Sajad, told Amnesty International that, during the incident in which Bahaoddin Veisi was killed, IRGC agents arrested his brother, Najmoddin Veisi, and took him to an IRGC detention centre in Javanroud. There, agents denied Najmoddin Veisi access to medical care for the injuries sustained when the security forces had fired at the car in which he and his brother were travelling. Amnesty International learned that, while in detention, agents forced Najmoddin Veisi to give a statement denying that IRGC agents had killed Bahaoddin Veisi and falsely attributing responsibility to Kurdish opposition groups.[957] Najmoddin Veisi was released a month after his arrest.

Informed sources in Iran told Amnesty International that, after Bahaoddin Veisi was killed, hundreds of mourning protesters gathered in front of Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in Javanroud, where his body had been taken to prevent security forces from removing his body. Bahaoddin Veisi's family managed to retrieve his body from the hospital and carried it in a procession to their home with the support of dozens of other mourners and protesters.

956. See section 7.3.1 for details of Bahaoddin Veisi's case.
957. See also section 7.3.1 for the case of Erfan Kakaee, whose case is related to that of Bahaoddin Veisi.

A protester, Danesh, told Amnesty International that, as the mourning protesters reached Enqelab Square, they were met with gunfire from IRGC agents positioned both at street level and on the rooftop of the city's courthouse, which is located near the square. According to Danesh, several people were injured. Danesh added that the procession managed to push through to reach Taleghani Street where they once again came under fire from IRGC agents. At this juncture, Danesh stated that several protesters discreetly took Bahaoddin Veisi's body with them through quiet side streets while the remaining crowd stayed on the main road.



The body of 16-year-old Bahaoddin Veisi, placed on ice at his home on 20 November 2022 after he was unlawfully killed by IRGC agents. © Private

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network shared with Amnesty International the transcript of an interview with another protester, Morad, who reported that several older individuals bravely risked their lives and approached the IRGC agents to plead with them to halt the firing. The IRGC agents eventually allowed the procession to proceed.

Morad described how, after Bahaoddin Veisi was placed inside his family home, people brought as much ice as possible to slow the body's decomposition until the following morning, when the family intended to bury him.

Sajad told Amnesty International that security forces threatened Bahaoddin Veisi's family that, if his burial turned into a protest, they would kill his brother Najmoddin Veisi, who was arbitrarily detained. As a result, his family was forced to bury him quietly in a cemetery in Javanroud.



Bahaoddin Veisi's grave site © Aks-e Rooz

FAMILY OF FERESHTEH AHMADI



Fereshteh Ahmadi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Fereshteh Ahmadi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 27 October 2022 in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of her death.[958]

According to Fereshteh Ahmadi's brother, Ebrahim Ahmadi, who fled Iran following his sister's death to escape persecution, about half an hour after the family was informed by doctors of her death, four individuals dressed in nurse uniforms approached the family and claimed they were taking Fereshteh Ahmadi's body to the operating room. Suspicious of their intentions, the family began searching for her and discovered the individuals attempting to place her body into an ambulance outside the hospital. It was at this point that the family realized the four individuals were agents impersonating medical staff in an apparent attempt to deceive them and remove her body without consent. As the family pleaded with the individuals, still dressed in nurse uniforms, to release her body, one of the agents drew a firearm and held it to her husband's head. The agent threatened to kill the husband and the rest of his family, claiming that he and his colleagues had been ordered to take the body and could not hand it over.

Ebrahim Ahmadi told Amnesty International that, while still at the hospital, the family managed to contact the then county governor of Mahabad, Amir Ghaderi, and pleaded with him to authorize the return of Fereshteh Ahmadi's body to her family. The governor agreed to release the body on the condition that they did not take her body to Sardasht, where she was originally from, for burial. The governor told the family that they must bury her body in Mahabad that same night.

Fereshteh Ahmadi's family agreed but, in defiance of the governor's order, they started planning to take her body to Sardasht for burial, at which point they began receiving multiple phone calls from the governor of Mahabad and agents. During these calls, the governor of Mahabad warned the family that they would seize Fereshteh Ahmadi's body from them and never return it. The agents threatened her husband with unspecified repercussions in case any agents were injured or killed during her funeral.

Fearing that the authorities would carry out their threats and bury her in an unknown location, the family was ultimately forced to bury her in a cemetery in the village of Hamzehabad, just outside Mahabad, at night and in the presence of security forces.

According to Ebrahim Ahmadi, shortly after Fereshteh Ahmadi's death, security forces erected multiple checkpoints at the cemetery where she is buried and parked their pickup trucks on top of which DShK machine guns were mounted to prevent people from visiting her grave site.



Fereshteh Ahmadi's daughter at her grave site © Private

958. See section 8.3.2 for details of Fereshteh Ahmadi's case.

Several days after the death of Fereshteh Ahmadi, the head of the Justice Department of West Azerbaijan province, Naser Atabati, announced that the authorities had opened a criminal case to investigate her death and that, according to initial findings, the "shots were fired from inside this individual's [Fereshteh Ahmadi's] home".[959] He went on to falsely state that Fereshteh Ahmadi's family had corroborated this claim. Naser Atabati claimed that, during the incident in which Fereshteh Ahmadi was killed, "there were no protests, riots or police presence in the vicinity of this woman's house during the incident."[960]

Ebrahim Ahmadi told Amnesty International that, upon seeing these reports, he filmed himself stating that "the Islamic Republic regime killed my sister" and shared it publicly.[961] Several days later, in reprisal, plain-clothes agents arrested him in a violent manner, beating him repeatedly on his head with the end of an assault rifle and throwing him into a car belonging to the security forces, resulting in him sustaining a broken nose and injuries to his head, as well as cuts to his hands.

Ebrahim Ahmadi recalled that he was held in solitary confinement in the headquarters of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC in Sardasht, West Azerbaijan province, for 28 days, during which he was interrogated repeatedly without a lawyer present. Interrogators rebuked him for using the term "regime" to refer to the authorities of the Islamic Republic and claimed that they had arrested the individuals who had killed Fereshteh Ahmadi, ordered him to file a complaint about the individuals and said they would be executed. When Ebrahim Ahmadi refused to file such a claim, the agents then said they would register Fereshteh Ahmadi as a "state martyr" and give her family double the usual *diyeh* (blood money) if he collaborated with them. They ordered him to make a 30-second video of himself stating that his sister had been killed by the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran or the Komala Party of Kurdistan, both of which are banned Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. They also threatened him, saying that, if he continued to speak out, they would kill him. He refused and was eventually released after 28 days. Security forces briefly detained him again around April 2023 in Khoy, West Azerbaijan province, before releasing him after a day.

Ebrahim Ahmadi told Amnesty International that individuals whom he believed were affiliated with the state desecrated her grave site by erasing the inscription "Woman Life Freedom" from it.[962]

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959. Mashregh News, تشکیل پرونده قتل فرشته احمدی/ گلوله در داخل منزل شلیک شده ["Murder case opened for Fereshteh Ahmadi / Bullet was fired inside the house"], 1 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1431873/تشکیل-پرونده-قتل-فرشته-احمدی-گلوله-در-داخل-منزل-شلیک-شده (in Persian).

960. Mashregh News, تشکیل پرونده قتل فرشته احمدی/ گلوله در داخل منزل شلیک شده ["Murder case opened for Fereshteh Ahmadi / Bullet was fired inside the house"], 1 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1431873/تشکیل-پرونده-قتل-فرشته-احمدی-گلوله-در-داخل-منزل-شلیک-شده (in Persian).

961. See Hengaw Organization for Human Rights, X post: ابراهیم احمدی برادر فرشته احمدی از جانباختگان اعتراضات مهاباد: ما از هیچ کسی شکایت نداریم و خواهر ما توسط جمهوری اسلامی شهید شده است... ["Ebrahim Ahmadi, brother of Fereshteh Ahmadi, one of the victims of the Mahabad protests: We have no complaints against anyone. Our sister was martyred by the Islamic Republic..."], 2 November 2022, https://x.com/HengawO/status/1587688987304624130 (in Persian).

962. This is consistent with long-standing patterns documented by Amnesty International. See "Iran: Harassment of families of victims unlawfully killed during protests must end" (Index: MDE 13/7084/2023), 21 August 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7084/2023/en/

FAMILY OF ZAKARIA KHIAL



Zakaria Khial © Private

Authorities subjected the family of child protester Zakaria Khial, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 September 2022 in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[963]

An informed source who fled Iran following the Woman Life Freedom uprising, Farid, told Amnesty International that, hours after Zakaria Khial was killed, the Investigation Police arrested his father and arbitrarily detained him overnight. While in detention, the authorities pressured the father to accept the state narrative, which attributed the responsibility of his son's death to Kurdish opposition groups. Authorities released him the next morning, on 21 September 2022.

On the evening of 21 September 2022, the authorities released Zakaria Khial's body to his family and forced them to bury him in a rushed manner, in the presence of security forces, the same evening.

Farid told Amnesty International that the pressure on the family to publicly reiterate the authorities' false narrative continued after the burial of Zakaria Khial. According to Farid, the authorities who exerted the pressure included the then county governor of Piranshahr, Khezr Kak Darvishi, the county's then Friday prayer leader, Mostafa Mohammadi, and several other senior security officials. The family refused, insisting that he was killed by the security forces.

963. See section 8.4.1 for details of Zakaria Khial's case.

During a memorial ceremony marking the 40th day following Zakaria Khial's unlawful killing, security forces subjected his family to violence, resulting in his father sustaining an injury to his leg.



Zakaria Khial's grave site © Private

9.1.3 COERCIVE PARTICIPATION IN STATE PROPAGANDA EFFORTS

As part of their coercive attempts to enforce silence and submissions, Iranian authorities also made unannounced visits to the homes of victims' families. These visits were often carried out by county governors, county prosecutors, and county Friday Prayer leaders as well as FARAJA and IRGC commanders including the commanders of Basij Resistance Sector Corps and county FARAJA commanders.

The visits served as a means of exerting pressure on families to endorse the state's narrative, refrain from public mourning or media engagement, or participate in state-organized propaganda efforts.

In some instances, the officials who came to the homes of victims' families were accompanied by film crews who filmed grieving relatives without consent. State media outlets then broadcast videos of these intrusive visits to bolster propaganda efforts to portray families as supporting official narratives about the protests and the deaths of their loved ones.

Authorities also exerted pressure on families to attend meetings with high-ranking officials during which families were given no opportunity to speak freely. Instead, they were subjected to scripted statements that attributed the killings to non-state actors. These meetings were subsequently covered in state media, serving to reinforce official propaganda.

FAMILY OF REZA LOTFI



Reza Lotfi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Reza Lotfi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 19 September in Dehgolan, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[964]

On 20 September 2022, the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, Esmail Zareie Kousha, acknowledged in a media interview the death of three people during "unlawful protests" in Kurdistan province, but suggested that "anti-revolutionary" agents and "hostile grouplets" had carried out the killings and were now seeking to falsely attribute them to security forces, who, he said, had shown "tolerance towards protesters".[965]

Esmail Zareie Kousha did not name the victims, but the context of his statement and the reports published at the time by human rights groups outside Iran indicate that one of the victims concerned was Reza Lotfi.

964. See section 6.6.1 for details of Reza Lotfi's case.

965. Salameno, فوت ۳ نفر در اعتراضات اخیر تایید شد/ شهروند دیواندره ای با سلاح جنگی ناشناس کشته شده است ["Death of 3 people in recent protests confirmed / A citizen of Divandareh killed with unidentified military weapon"], 20 September 2022, https://www.salameno.com/news/55389400/فوت-۳-نفر-در-اعتراضات-اخیر-تایید-شد-شهروند-دیواندره-ای-با-سلاح (in Persian).

State media outlets subsequently aired a propaganda video which showed Esmail Zareie Kousha and several other officials visiting the relatives of Reza Lotfi at their home, with a voiceover saying that Reza Lotfi was "shot in suspicious circumstances".[966] The IRIB reiterated the same denials in an article published on its website on 25 September 2022, which stated that Reza Lotfi had been "shot in a suspicious manner and targeted in his back".[967]


Reza Lotfi's father © Private

On 29 September 2022, Reza Lotfi's father released a widely distributed video statement, firmly rejecting the authorities' narrative about his son's death.[968] He emphasized that the aforementioned clip in which the family members were featured was produced without their consent or knowledge. Reza Lotfi's father further revealed that 15 officials, including the then commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan county, Sadegh Jamali, came to their house without prior notice. According to the father, Sadegh Jamali claimed that Kurdish opposition parties had killed Reza Lotfi, a narrative which his father vehemently rejected in his video statement.

FAMILY OF SARINA SAEDI


Sarina Saedi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Sarina Saedi, a child protester who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 26 October 2022, in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of her death.[969]

Following Sarina Saedi's death, authorities immediately propagated implausible narratives about Sarina Saedi's death in order to absolve themselves of responsibility. Without carrying out an impartial and full investigation, they launched a propaganda campaign aimed at constructing a narrative that she had a history of mental health issues, including suicide attempts and self-harm. At the same time, they pressured her family to publicly endorse this official account.

On 28 October 2022, two days after Sarina Saedi's death, the then county governor of Sanandaj, Hassan Askari, announced: "Preliminary investigations show that the

966. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News), ["A march held by the people of Kurdistan on Tuesday to condemn norm-breaking behaviors"], 25 September 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3585281/راهپیمایی-مردم-کردستان-در-محکومیت-رفتارهای-هنجارشکنانه-دوشنبه-برگزار-می-شود (in Persian).
967. IRIB News, ["A march held by the people of Kurdistan on Tuesday to condemn norm-breaking behaviors"], 25 September 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3585281/راهپیمایی-مردم-کردستان-در-محکومیت-رفتارهای-هنجارشکنانه-دوشنبه-برگزار-می-شود (in Persian).
968. See Kurdistan Human Rights Network, ["Message from Kamal Lotfi, father of Reza Lotfi, the protester who was killed as a result of gunfire by anti-riot forces"], 29 September 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqDKzWoSjpo&feature=youtu.be
969. See section 6.2.2 for details of Sarina Saedi's case.

cause of death was the accidental use of drugs or psychedelics or suicide."[970]

On the same day, a state media outlet, Tasmin News Agency, quoted her father saying: "Preliminary investigations show that the cause of death was the accidental use of drugs or psychedelics or suicide."[971] His repetition of the official phrasing verbatim provides a strong indication that Sarina Saedi's father was interviewed under duress and told what to say.

On the same day, 29 October 2022, state media also broadcast a propaganda video in which Sarina Saedi's visibly distressed father was shown being questioned by several reporters about the cause of her death and her activities in the days leading up to it. When questioned whether she had left her home in the two days prior to her death, her father replied in the negative. In the same media appearance, he stated that the doctors said: "She committed suicide. There is a 90% probability that she committed suicide. She poisoned herself, but it is unclear what she ingested."[972]

In addition to pressuring Sarina Saedi's grieving family to publicly endorse the official narrative, state media reporters also aired statements from a neighbour and a member of staff from her school. These appeared to be part of a coordinated effort to back up the false claims about her presence at home in the days prior to her death and her mental health.



Sarina Saedi's father at her grave site © Private

9.1.4 PRESSURE TO REGISTER VICTIMS AS STATE 'MARTYRS'

Authorities also sought to enforce the official narrative by pressuring families to have their loved ones formally registered as "martyrs" under a regulation titled Regulation for Identification of Practical Examples of Martyrs and Families of Martyrs. In some cases, this pressure came directly from county governors, FARAJA officials, and other authorities during meetings with families. In other instances,

970. Mehr News Agency, ساریناساعدی موادمخدر مصرف کرده بود/اطلاع‌رسانی نتایج پزشکی قانونی ["Sarina Saedi had used drugs / Announcement of the forensic medical results"], 28 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5619159/ساریناساعدی-موادمخدر-مصرف-کرده-بود-اطلاع-رسانی-نتایج-پزشکی-قانونی (in Persian).

971. Tasnim News Agency, علت فوت "سارینا ساعدی" از زبان پدرش؛ دخترم در اغتشاشات حضور نداشت + فیلم ["Cause of Sarina Saedi's death from her father's perspective: My daughter was not present at the protests + video"], 29 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/07/2795263/علت-فوت-سارینا-ساعدی-از-زبان-پدرش-دخترم-در-اغتشاشات-حضور-نداشت-فیلم (in Persian).

972. See rooziato, صحبت های پدر سارینا ساعدی درباره مرگ دخترش ["Words of Sarina Saedi's father about his daughter's death"], 29 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/MebOB, minute 1:44.

plain-clothes agents, who did not identify themselves, either called the families or visited their homes to make the suggestion. Families experienced these approaches as harassment, particularly within the broader climate of fear and intimidation.

In the Iranian context, the term "martyr" has both official and unofficial meanings with significant legal and political implications. Under Iranian law, a state-recognized "martyr" is defined as someone whose death is attributed by the authorities to hostile non-state actors or whose death is seen as a form of collateral damage incurred during security operations carried out to defend the Islamic Republic system.[973]

Families of state-recognized "martyrs" are provided with *diyeh* (blood money) and other welfare benefits from state-funded foundations such as the Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs, which operates under the supervision of the Office of the Supreme Leader.

When the state designates someone as a "martyr", it signals alignment with the state narrative. Families of protesters or bystanders killed by security forces often rejected the "martyr" designation as it implied acceptance of the official account that absolved authorities of responsibility. However, some families accepted the label due to a mixture of factors including financial hardship and fear of reprisal.

By contrast, when victims' families independently describe their loved one as a "martyr", it is often an act of resistance, honouring the deceased as someone who died for justice and freedom. Authorities often suppress this unofficial usage because it challenges the state's narrative and implicates security forces in unlawful conduct. To enforce this suppression, security forces have repeatedly pressured families to remove the word "martyr" from their loved ones' gravestones. In cases where the term was inscribed, graves were subjected to destruction or threats thereof.

In its detailed findings, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) also concluded that that, in several cases it investigated, state officials attempted to entice the victims' families by promising them that, if they repeated the official narrative, including attributing the deaths to opposition groups, and refrained from blaming the state for the killings, their loved ones would be announced as state "martyrs" and the families would receive money and other benefits.[974]

973. Solh, آیین نامه تعیین مصادیق عملی شهید و خانواده های شاهد [Regulation on Identification of Practical Examples of Martyrs and Families of Martyrs], 2003, https://www.solh.ir/regulation/7/890 (in Persian).
974. UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1535.

FAMILY OF MOHSEN MOHAMMADI



Mohsen Mohammadi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Mohsen Mohammadi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 19 September 2022 in Divandareh, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[975]

An informed source in Iran, Hamid, told Amnesty International that, after Mohsen Mohammadi was shot, he was first taken to the main hospital in Divandareh and then moved to Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj, where he was declared dead.

According to information provided by Hamid, immediately after Mohsen Mohammadi's death, authorities moved his body from the hospital to Behesht Mohammadi cemetery in Sanandaj for burial, without his family's knowledge or consent.

His family learned about this and pleaded with the authorities, including the then county governor of Sanandaj, Hassan Askari, to allow them to bury him in their home town of Divandareh. Hamid told Amnesty International that Hassan Askari eventually granted the family's request on the condition that no chanting took place during the funeral ceremony. His burial took place at 2am on 20 September 2022.[976]

In the days following his death, an official from the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj called Mohsen Mohammadi's family and said that the authorities were prepared to have Mohsen Mohammadi formally registered as a state "martyr". According to Hamid, the family refused because such a formal registration would have meant endorsing the official narrative that non-state actors were responsible for Mohsen Mohammadi's killing.

According to Hamid, around the same time, several other officials, including the then commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh county, Ali Ahmad Safizadeh; the then FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county, Alireza Moradi, and the then FARAJA commander of Divandareh county, Alireza Karaji, came to Mohsen Mohammadi's family home to purportedly express their condolences and reiterate the official narrative that state agents were not responsible for his death.[977]



Mohsen Mohammadi's family members at his grave site © Private

975. See section 6.4.1 for details of Mohsen Mohammadi's case.
976. During the uprising, funerals and memorial ceremonies often became sites of peaceful protest and public outpouring of anger against the authorities, with mourners demanding accountability for the unlawful killings of victims.
977. See Chapter 10 for more information on these officials. See also Chapter 13, which names these officials as among those meriting criminal investigations.

FAMILY OF MOHSEN NIAZI



Mohsen Niazi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Mohsen Niazi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 November 2022 in Dehgolan, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[978]

An informed source in Iran, Arsalan, told Amnesty International that, following Mohsen Niazi's death, four plain-clothes agents initially attempted to transfer his body from Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj to a barracks of the 28 Division of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army) in Sanandaj without his family's consent. However, following defiant objections by the family, the authorities eventually handed over Mohsen Niazi's body to his relatives.

Arsalan reported that, during their journey from Sanandaj back to Dehgolan with Mohsen Niazi's body, the family was trailed by several cars that the family believed belonged to the security forces.

The news of Mohsen Niazi's killing sparked a public outcry in Dehgolan, leading to thousands of people joining the family in solidarity and mourning in the early morning of 20 November 2022 to accompany them to the cemetery for his burial. According to Arsalan, agents refrained from entering the cemetery during the burial ceremony but positioned themselves on top of a hill that overlooked the cemetery to monitor and intimidate mourners.

Information obtained by Amnesty International reveals that, following Mohsen Niazi's death and burial, his family received abusive and intimidating phone calls on multiple occasions from agents, who refused to disclose their names. During these calls, the agents pressured the family to accept the state narrative that armed Kurdish opposition groups had killed Mohsen by registering him as a state "martyr". After the family refused, the agents warned the family against posting commemorative or critical content on Instagram. They also threatened to destroy Mohsen Niazi's gravestone, which refers to him as a "martyr" and features a symbolic image of a dove multiplying after being shot by a rifle.



Mohsen Niazi's gravestone. The writing on the gravestone refers to him as a "martyr". © Private

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, in late November 2022, an official who did not identify himself by name or affiliation phoned Mohsen Niazi's family and said that they should attend a meeting on 1 or 2 December 2022 with the then president of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, who had gone to Sanandaj for an official visit. Amnesty International understands that Mohsen Niazi's family declined to attend the meeting.

The organization learned through other informed sources that during this meeting, the then county governor of Sanandaj,

978. See section 6.6.2 for details of Mohsen Niazi's case.

Hassan Askari, and Ebrahim Raisi, denied that security forces were responsible for the killings and falsely attributed the violence to Kurdish opposition groups. Amnesty International received information indicating that the victims' families were not given a meaningful opportunity to speak. When several families bravely intervened to challenge the official narrative, insisting that security forces were responsible for their loved ones' deaths, tensions escalated, and the governor abruptly ended the meeting.

FAMILY OF MOTALEB SAEED PEIRO



Motaleb Saeed Peiro © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Motaleb Saeed Peiro, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 27 October 2022 in Baneh, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[979]

An informed source outside Iran, Rahim, told Amnesty International that on the evening of the fatal incident, the then FARAJA commander of Baneh county, Rasoul Karami Chegini, and the then county governor of Baneh, Kamal Khedry, came to Razi Hospital in Baneh, where the body of Motaleb Saeed Peiro had been taken, and told the family that he must be buried immediately.

Initially, the family decided to bury Motaleb Saeed Peiro in his wife's village of origin, Khajeh Amir, as the authorities informed them that burying him in Baneh was not allowed. However, while in Khajeh Amir, a member of the security forces called the family and ordered them to bury Motaleb Saeed Peiro in the village of Choman, bordering the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, where the IRGC has a strong presence. Consequently, the family prepared the grave during the night and the burial took place under the surveillance of plain-clothes agents the next morning at around 6am.



Motaleb Saeed Peiro's mother at his grave site © Private

On 28 October 2022, IRGC agents opened fire on at least three distant relatives of Motaleb Saeed Peiro, who are Iraqi nationals, while they were passing on foot through a border crossing point between Iraq and Iran near the village of Choman to attend the memorial ceremony of Motaleb Saeed Peiro. One of them, Dastan Rasoul, aged 31, was killed and the two others were injured.[980]

In the weeks following the death of Motaleb Saeed Peiro, the same agent, who had previously called the family regarding the restrictions on

979. See section 6.5.2 for details of Motaleb Saeed Peiro's case.
980. See section 6.5.2 for details of Dastan Rasoul's case.

Motaleb Saeed Peiro's burial, phoned the family again and said that the then county governor of Baneh, Kamal Khedry, wanted to have Motaleb Saeed Peiro formally registered as a "martyr". The family refused, noting that this would mean accepting the authorities' false narrative that non-state actors were responsible for Motaleb Saeed Peiro's killing.

Consistent with long-standing patterns of denial and cover-up, in a media interview on 28 October 2022, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and security affairs of Kurdistan, Mehdi Ramezani, publicly acknowledged that two people had been killed in Baneh on 27 October 2022.[981] He did not name the victims, who were Fereydoon Faraji and Saeed Motaleb Peiro. Mehdi Ramezani referred to the two victims as "rioters" and claimed that "initial investigations point to the suspicious nature of these murders". Additionally, Mehdi Ramezani claimed that the killings occurred in the context of a "terrorist attack", which he said involved "several armed individuals" firing at security and FARAJA forces, resulting in a FARAJA agent and an IRGC agent sustaining injuries. These claims contradict audiovisual evidence from Baneh, which indicate that individuals using firearms belonged to the security forces. The official statements also distort the truth about the circumstances surrounding the death of Motaleb Saeed Peiro, who was shot dead in the context of street patrols and not during protests.

Rahim told Amnesty International that, in late November 2022, after Sky News published an investigative report analysing CCTV footage of the lethal attack on Motaleb Saeed Peiro on 24 November 2022,[982] Ministry of Intelligence agents in Baneh summoned the relatives of Motaleb Saeed Peiro for interrogations and extensively questioned them about how the footage was obtained and sent to Sky News, rebuked them for bringing the case of Motaleb Saeed Peiro to the attention of media outlets, and threatened them with imprisonment. According to Rahim, Ministry of Intelligence agents also arrested the owner of the property where the CCTV camera was installed and detained him for several weeks.

In the weeks after Motaleb Saeed Peiro's death, Ministry of Intelligence agents also made multiple phone calls to members of his family, summoning them for interrogation and detaining them for several days on one occasion.

9.2 VIOLATIONS LINKED TO FUNERALS AND MEMORIALS

Iranian authorities routinely subjected victims' families to a range of human rights violations in relation to funerals and memorial ceremonies. These included denying or restricting burial services and gatherings, engaging in surveillance, harassment and intimidation during funeral and memorial ceremonies, unlawfully using force and firearms against mourners, and targeting families with summons, interrogations, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and other ill-treatment.

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, authorities imposed the following restrictions on families' commemorative activities:

- moving victims' bodies to security facilities, locations far from families' place of residence or unspecified places without families' knowledge or consent;
- denying victims' families their cultural rights to perform burial rituals, including washing victims' bodies in accordance with their cultural and religious traditions;

981. IRNA, گزارش ایرنا از نا آرامی های شب گذشته در شهرستان بانه ["IRNA's report on last night's unrest in Baneh county"], 28 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84925664/گزارش-ایرنا-از-نا-آرامی-های-شب-گذشته-در-شهرستان-بانه (in Persian).
982. Sky News, "Iran protests: Who killed this man? CCTV offers vital evidence of lethal attack", 24 November 2022, https://news.sky.com/story/iran-protests-who-killed-this-man-cctv-offers-vital-evidence-of-lethal-attack-12748042

- preventing victims' families from seeing the bodies and/or faces of their loved ones before burial;
- forcing victims' families to bury loved ones in locations not of their choosing, sometime in remote areas far from their home towns;
- denying victims' families their cultural rights to conduct funerals and memorial ceremonies in accordance with their cultural and religious traditions and barring them from holding such ceremonies in public;
- forcing victims' families to conduct burials at irregular hours during the night and within hours of receiving the bodies of their loved ones;
- denying victims' families the possibility to mourn in privacy by forcing them to bury their loved ones under strict surveillance in the heavy presence of security forces;
- severely limiting the number of mourners at funeral and memorial services;
- limiting the number of funeral posters that families may publish and prohibiting the inclusion of phrases or words describing the victims as "martyrs" or indicating the causes and circumstances of death; and
- prohibiting and pulling down memorial banners erected in public spaces or outside the homes of victims' families.

These cruel practices constitute serious violations of multiple human rights, including cultural rights, the freedom to practise religious beliefs, and the rights to privacy and family. Through these violations, the authorities sought to stifle dissent and silence public expressions of collective grief and solidarity among bereaved families and protesters. The violations left relatives in a perpetual state of fear and anxiety and intensified their suffering by disrupting the natural grieving processes.

9.2.1 TRANSFER OF VICTIM'S BODIES TO UNDISCLOSED LOCATIONS

Security forces routinely sought to transfer victims' bodies to undisclosed locations without the families' knowledge or consent. This pattern was often successful in cases where authorities had heavily guarded the hospitals to which victims were taken, allowing them to move the bodies immediately after death. In other instances, where victims died in the streets, security forces removed the bodies directly from the scene.

In yet other cases, security forces intercepted ambulances en route to cemeteries or stopped funeral processions led by families, forcibly taking victims' bodies away. Families were then left in the dark for hours before being summoned to various locations, including the offices of county governors, the Ministry of Intelligence, military barracks, or the headquarters of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC and the Investigation Police. There, they were threatened with the secret burial of their loved ones in undisclosed locations unless they agreed to comply with restrictive conditions, such as refraining from public mourning or endorsing the official state narrative. In many cases, families were then instructed to go directly to cemeteries, where the body was already prepared for burial.

FAMILY OF ESMAIL GOLANBAR



Esmail Golanbar © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Esmail Golanbar, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 21 November 2022 in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[983]

An informed source in Iran, Davoud, told Amnesty International that, after Esmail Golanbar was shot dead, IRGC forces transferred his body from the site of the incident to the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, near the city of Kermanshah.



Esmail Golanbar's gravestone © Private

The IRGC agents only agreed to hand over his body to the family on the condition that they did not bury him in Javanroud. The family were forced to accept this condition and the burial was conducted at night in the presence of agents in their home village of Ilkhani, outside Javanroud.

FAMILY OF ARAM HABIBI



Aram Habibi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Aram Habibi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 17 November 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[984]

An informed source in Iran, Azadeh, told Amnesty International that, following Aram Habibi's death at Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj, security and intelligences forces moved his body to an unidentified location without his family's knowledge or consent. According to Azadeh, at around 9.30pm, an official from the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj called the family and instructed his immediate family members to go at once to Behesht Mohammadi cemetery. There, the family found the body of Aram Habibi washed and wrapped in a shroud. The burial took place in the dark in the presence of dozens of agents.

983. See section 7.3.2 for details of Esmail Golanbar's case.
984. See section 6.2.4 for details of Aram Habibi's case.

FAMILY OF HOSSEIN ABDPANAH



Hossein Abdpanah © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Hossein Abdpanah, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 19 November 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[985]

An informed source in Iran, Leila, told Amnesty International that, immediately after Hosseim Abdpanah died at hospital, security forces moved his body to an unidentified location without his family's knowledge. According to Leila, for the next 24 hours, his family sought information on his whereabouts from various authorities, including prosecution bodies and the Office of the Governor, but to no avail. The authorities claimed they had no information. Eventually, an official at the Office of the Governor told the family to go home and wait to be contacted for further information.

Leila said that at around 10.30pm on 20 November 2022, an official from the Office of the County Governor contacted the family and instructed them to go immediately to Behest-e Mohammadi cemetery. The official stressed that no more than 10 people should be present. At the cemetery, the family found Hossein Abdpanah's body washed and wrapped in a shroud. Agents did not allow the family to remove the shroud to examine his body or bid their final farewell. The burial was carried out in the presence of security and intelligence officials at night.



Hossein Abdpanah's grave site © Private

Leila recalled that, in an attempt to further intimidate mourners, a pickup truck on top of which a machine gun was mounted was parked near the cemetery. According to the source, during the memorial ceremonies that took place at the cemetery in the following days, security forces also flew an aerial drone over mourners.

9.2.2 RESTRICTIONS ON SIZE, LOCATION AND TIMING OF FUNERALS

Iranian authorities routinely imposed stringent restrictions on the size, location and timing of funerals, as well as the manner in which victims' families buried and commemorated their loved ones. Authorities thereby violated their ability to mourn, bury and memorialize their loved ones in accordance with their cultural and religious traditions.

According to Amnesty International's findings, restrictions on funerals and memorial ceremonies typically included limiting funeral attendance to immediate family members; forcing families to bury their loved ones quickly, often at night or dawn, and within hours of receiving the body; barring families

985. See section 6.2.4 for details of Hossein Abdpanah's case.

from viewing the body before burial; dictating burial locations; and forcing burials to take place under the heavy presence of security forces.

County governors and heads of the Investigation Police often played a leading role in communicating and enforcing these restrictions.

FAMILY OF HEZHAR MAMKHOSRAVI



Hezhar Mamkhosravi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Hezhar Mamkhosravi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 17 November 2022 in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[986]



Hezhar Mamkhosravi's bereaved parents © Private

An informed source in Iran, Soroush, told Amnesty International that, following the death of Hezhar Mamkhosravi at around midnight, his family was summoned to the office of the head of a hospital in Boukan. There, several agents were present and ordered the family to bury Hezhar Mamkhosravi in the main cemetery in Boukan the same night. The agents warned that, if the family did not comply, they would secretly bury Hezhar Mamkhosravi in Urumieh without informing the family of the burial location. Faced with these threatening circumstances, the family reluctantly agreed to proceed with the burial promptly, despite their own wishes to conduct the burial the following morning in their village of origin outside Boukan.

Soroush recalled that, as the family was transporting the body from the hospital to the cemetery, dozens of agents on motorcycles arrived at the hospital and subjected the grieving relatives to harassment, intimidation and physical violence. According to Soroush, the agents struck some relatives with the handles of the officers' guns.

The burial took place at around 4-5am in the presence of security forces.

986. See section 8.2.3 for details of Hezhar Mamkhosravi's case.

FAMILY OF FEREYDOON FARAJI



Fereydoon Faraji © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Fereydoon Faraji, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 27 October 2022 in Baneh, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[987]

The Kurdpa Human Rights Organization (Kurdpa), a Kurdish human rights organization based outside Iran, informed Amnesty International that the family of Fereydoon Faraji, who reside in Saqqez, approximately 60km away from Baneh, travelled to Salahoddin Hospital in Baneh on the same evening after learning from Fereydoon Faraji's friends that he had been shot. However, the security forces present at the hospital refused to return the body to the family.

According to Kurdpa, at around midnight, the then county governor of Baneh, Kamal Khedry, authorized the return of Fereydoon Faraji's body to his family on the condition that he be buried immediately.

Consequently, the body of Fereydoon Faraji was transferred to Aichee cemetery in Saqqez by an ambulance accompanied by security forces. The burial took place in the dark in the presence of agents.



Fereydoon Faraji's bereaved relatives © Private

987. See section 6.5.2 for details of Fereydoon Faraji's case.

FAMILY OF KOUMAR DAROFTADEH



Koumar Daroftadeh © Private

Authorities subjected the family of child protester Koumar Daroftadeh, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 30 October 2022 in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[988]

An informed source in Iran, Houman, told Amnesty International that Koumar Daroftadeh's family were forced to bury him quickly, without a proper funeral, in a village outside their home town.

On the evening of 30 October 2022, Koumar Daroftadeh's family had rushed to Piranshahr Hospital after a local resident called them to say that the body of a boy had been taken there. Hospital staff refused to provide them with any information and said that the office of the county governor of Piranshahr would be in contact with them.

Later that evening, the family went to the office of the county governor where they were met by the prosecutor of Piranshahr, Mojtaba Mahmoudi, the then county governor of Piranshahr, Khezr Kak Darvishi and several agents from the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC. There, the authorities told the family that they would return Koumar Daroftadeh's body on the condition that they took one hour maximum to wash it and bury him that night. After heated objections and repeated pleas from his family, the authorities eventually allowed the family to bury him the next morning on the condition that he was buried outside Piranshahr. The family agreed under pressure to bury him in their village of origin, Ziukeh, which is 25km away from Piranshahr.

In a video filmed during Koumar Daroftadeh's funeral ceremony on 31 October 2022, his father made an emotional and tearful speech, saying:

"My son was born on [16 August]. I named him Koumar [republic in Kurdish]. I am proud that he has been martyred for freedom and his nation... The anguish I am feeling is very difficult. You cannot understand it… They [security forces] could kill every one of you. I swear to God my son was innocent. My son had no health problems and they [security forces] killed him. They [the security forces] will not have mercy on anyone."[989]

In a media interview with Radio Zamaneh, an independent media outlet outside Iran, published on 12 November 2022, Koumar Daroftadeh's father shared his anguish about the cruel way in which his family was forced to bury their son:

"If I could have had my wish and they [the authorities] had not prevented us, I would have liked to bury Koumar in Piranshahr and hold the funeral ceremony here, but because of them [the authorities], we buried him in a village. We did not do this out of our own free will."[990]

988. See section 8.4.2 for details of Koumar Daroftadeh's case.

989. Kurdpa Human Rights Organization (Kurdpa), X post: سخنان پدر کومار درافتاده در مراسم خاکسپاری فرزندش: این پسرم ۲۵ مرداد به دنیا آمد اسمش را کومار گذاشتم، خوشبختم که در راه آزادی و وطن شهید شده است… ["Statements of Koumar Daroftadeh's father at his son's funeral: My son was born on 16 August. I named him Koumar. I am proud he was martyred for freedom and his nation…"], 31 October 2022, https://x.com/kurdpa_farsi/status/1587095382475038722 (in Persian).

990. See Radio Zamaneh, پدر کومار در افتاده: کسی که فرزندم را کشت چگونه می‌تواند به فرزندش نگاه کند؟ ["Koumar Daroftadeh's father: How can the one who killed my child look their own child in the eye?"], 12 November 2022, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/740740/ (in Persian).

Koumar Daroftadeh's father added that the family feared that, if they had held the funeral ceremony in Piranshahr in defiance of the authorities, the security forces would have attacked the ceremony and possibly caused further deaths or injuries:

"We also do not want anyone's blood to be shed. If we had buried him in the city, the matter might have escalated, because the blood of any person – any child – that is shed is still our blood, and there was a real possibility that people would protest."



The father and mother of Koumar Daroftadeh at his grave site (left), before his gravestone and headstone were installed (right). © Private

Following the funeral ceremony and in the weeks after Koumar Daroftadeh's death, agents in Piranshahr summoned his father for interrogation multiple times and put him under pressure to publicly deny the security forces' responsibility and attribute the killing of his son to Kurdish opposition groups.

In a 13 November 2022 interview with Radio Farda, an independent media outlet outside Iran, Koumar Daroftadeh's father described the harassment and intimidation to which he was subjected by the authorities:

"The [authorities] summoned me and told me that I should say whatever they dictate to me, but this is not in my character. They wanted me to insult [opposition] groups. The authorities killed my son and must be held accountable. They claimed that [opposition] groups shot [my son]. I told them that, if the [opposition] groups had really done this, then why were you [the security forces] there at the same time? Why did you take his body? Why are you in possession of his mobile phone? I told them that, when I called his phone, an agent answered. They [authorities] must tell the truth. They don't tell me anything."[991]

He added:

"I have lost my son for the cause of freedom and for this land. He sought freedom. I am proud of him… I want human rights [defenders] to fight for my right. I just want to tell government officials, those who are killing people's children who have children of their own: with what conscience does an agent [member of the security forces] buy clothes for his own child while killing my child? With what

991. Radio Farda, پدر کومار درافتاده: هیچ‌جا و با هیچ قانونی پسر ۱۶ ساله را با گلوله نمی‌زنند ["Koumar Daroftadeh's father: Nowhere, under any law, do they shoot a 16-year-old with bullets"], 13 November 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/iran-protests-victims-piranshahr-kumardaroftadeh/32126970.html (in Persian).

conscience does he embrace his own child while killing my child? With what conscience does he sit at home and tell his child to eat and promise to buy gifts but then kill my innocent child? The person who killed my child should sit and judge for himself how does he look at his own child when he killed mine? I will entrust that man's conscience to God."[992]

9.2.3 THREATS, ARBITRARY ARREST, TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

Iranian authorities routinely subjected victims' families and their supporters to surveillance, intimidation, summons, interrogations, arbitrary arrest and detention in the days, weeks and months following the deaths of their loved ones in order to suppress commemorative gatherings. The locations to which families were summoned included the Ministry of Intelligence, the headquarters of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC and the Investigation Police, police stations and the offices of provincial and county governors.

Security forces maintained an intimidating presence, including at hospitals where families sought to retrieve the bodies of their loved ones, during funeral processions and memorial gatherings, and in the vicinity of families' homes and neighbourhoods. Authorities also monitored families' social media accounts and made threatening phone calls when families posted about the death of their loved ones.

According to evidence gathered by the organization, security forces patrolled families' neighbourhoods and maintained a presence near their homes, particularly in the lead-up to and during funerals or memorial ceremonies. In the context of these patrols, they sometimes tore down memorial banners installed outside family residences, noticeably followed relatives on their way to and from cemeteries, and maintained an intimidating presence both at grave sites and around places of residence.

Amnesty International found that security forces used aerial drones and other surveillance equipment to monitor funerals and memorial ceremonies. To further intensify the climate of fear surrounding funerals and memorial gatherings, security forces maintained a presence at cemeteries, brandishing weapons and issuing threats of violence against those who chanted. Eyewitnesses told the organization that members of the security forces also took photographs and videos of victims' families, as well as other relatives, mourners and supporters attending the funerals or memorial gatherings or visiting families at their homes to offer condolences.

992. Radio Farda, پدر کومار درافتاده: هیچ‌جا و با هیچ قانونی پسر ۱۶ ساله را با گلوله نمی‌زنند ["Koumar Daroftadeh's father: Nowhere, under any law, do they shoot a 16-year-old with bullets"], 13 November 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/iran-protests-victims-piranshahr-kumardaroftadeh/32126970.html (in Persian).

FAMILY OF ZANIAR ABOUBAKRI



Zaniar Aboubakri © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Zaniar Aboubakri, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 27 October 2022 in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[993]

Following Zaniar Aboubakri's death, his family carried his body during his funeral procession to Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery in Mahabad with the support of hundreds of protesters and mourners. An informed source in Iran, Mahshid, told Amnesty International that in response, security forces, including the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, repeatedly fired tear gas, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and assault rifles to stop the procession.

Amnesty International reviewed a video which shows hundreds of distressed mourners and protesters during the funeral procession of Zaniar Aboubakri.[994] Several mourners are seen carrying his body above their heads while attempting to flee from constant gunfire. Others are observed running, crouching on the ground or taking cover behind walls and other structures as the sound of sustained gunfire is heard. A number of mourners are seen standing and looking towards the part of the street where the gunfire seems to be originating. Hundreds of gunshots are heard throughout the video.

According to eyewitnesses, the security forces did not enter the cemetery during Zaniar Aboubakri's burial, but they flew aerial drones over mourners and protesters, while sounds of repeated gunfire from the vicinity of the cemetery could be heard. On their way back from the cemetery, protesters and mourners once again came under fire, resulting in numerous people sustaining injuries on their bodies and faces.



Zaniar Aboubakri's gravestone and bereaved relative © Private

In early November 2022, the authorities convened a meeting between the head of the Justice Department of West Azerbaijan province, Naser Atbati, and the families of several victims, including Zaniar Aboubakri. During the meeting, Naser Atbati denied that security forces were responsible for the killings and assured the families that investigations would take place. Mahshid told Amnesty International that Zaniar Aboubakri's family objected to these denials and emphasized their lack of trust in the promised investigations. They also noted that surveillance drones were flying over protesters when the deadly incidents took place and that this should facilitate the identification of perpetrators.

993. See section 8.3.2 for details of Zaniar Aboubakri's case.
994. IRN0490, video on file with Amnesty International.

In reprisal against Zaniar Aboubakri's family's steadfast refusal to accept the official narrative, Ministry of Intelligence agents subsequently subjected the family to harassment and intimidation by summoning relatives for interrogations multiple times and warning them against holding memorial ceremonies.

Mahshid told Amnesty International that, on one occasion, two agents, who introduced themselves as "Abdi" and "Soleimani", threatened Zainar Aboubakri's sister with arrest and death. The agents further warned that, if the family continued to speak out, they would exhume the body of Zaniar Aboubakri and re-bury him in an unidentified location secretly.

FAMILY OF MOSTAFA SHABANI


Mostafa Shabani © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Mostafa Shabani, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 17 November 2022 in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[995]

An informed source in Iran, Majid, told Amnesty International that authorities returned the body of Mostafa Shabani to his family around 4am the following day on the condition that he be buried immediately and quietly. The burial was carried out in the presence of several plain-clothes agents. According to Majid, the authorities threatened Mostafa Shabani's family, saying that, if the family spoke out, they would harm Mostafa Shabani's brother, Kamil Shabani, who had been arrested about an hour before Mostafa Shabani was shot in another area of Boukan in connection with the protests. Amnesty International learned that Kamil Shabani was released four days later after suffering torture and other ill-treatment, including severe beatings, as a result of which his right hand was broken.

FAMILY OF MILAD MAROUFI


Milad Maroufi © Private

The authorities subjected the family of Milad Maroufi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 17 November 2022 in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[996]

An informed source in Iran, Farnaz, told Amnesty International that, after Milad Maroufi died at Shahid Gholipour Hospital in Boukan, his family convinced hospital staff to release the body to them. Out of concern that the security forces might relocate Milad Maroufi's body to an unknown location, the family promptly placed the body in a van and transported it to their village of origin, Kouseh, near Boukan and buried him there later that same evening. The funeral ceremony was attended by hundreds of protesters.

995. See section 8.2.3 for details of Mostafa Shabani's case.
996. See section 8.2.3 for details of Milad Maroufi's case.

Farnaz told Amnesty International that, on 25 December 2022, dozens of IRGC agents forcibly entered and raided a relative's home, breaking windows, and arbitrarily arrested the father of Milad Maroufi, Jafar Maroufi, and another male relative. The men were arrested shortly after they had returned home from a memorial ceremony marking the 40th day following the killing of three other protesters in Boukan.

Amnesty International learned that both men were transferred to a detention centre run by the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, where they said they were punched, kicked, interrogated, while blindfolded, about their association with families of protesters and bystanders who had been killed and rebuked for referring to protesters unlawfully killed as "martyrs". IRGC interrogators also accused them of attending "riots", in reference to their participation in memorial ceremonies in solidarity with victims' families.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, during these interrogations, IRGC agents initially denied any involvement in the killing of Milad Maroufi but later told Milad Maroufi's father and the other relative that Milad Maroufi might not have been innocent if he had taken part in the protests, implying that his killing was justified.

Before being released, Jafar Maroufi and the other relative were forced to sign an undertaking not to hold a memorial ceremony on 27 December 2022, the 40th day following Milad Maroufi's death, or to attend further memorial ceremonies or protests.

On 27 December 2022, agents repeatedly made intimidating phone calls to his family, warning them against holding a memorial ceremony for him. To further intimidate the family, IRGC agents surrounded the cemetery where Milad Maroufi was buried and parked there several vehicles upon which machine guns were mounted.



Milad Maroufi's grave site and mourning relative
© Private

9.2.4 UNLAWFUL USE OF FORCE AND FIREARMS AGAINST MOURNERS

Authorities subjected victims' families, mourners and supporters to unlawful use of firearms, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and other means of force as part of efforts to suppress families' attempts to retrieve the bodies of their loved ones from hospitals and conduct dignified burials and memorial ceremonies.

According to evidence gathered by Amnesty International, security forces unlawfully used assault rifles, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and tear gas to disperse peaceful gatherings of mourners. They also subjected mourners to physical assaults such as punching, kicking and beatings with batons and the handles of handguns. In some instances, this led to mourners, including the parents of victims and other older persons, sustaining injuries on their bodies and faces that needed medical care and admission to hospital.

FAMILY OF ERFAN KAKAEE



Erfan Kakaee © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Erfan Kakaee**,** who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 November 2022 in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, to human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[997]

According to eyewitness testimonies obtained by Amnesty International, after the death of Erfan Kakaee, his family managed to receive his body from Hazrat-e Rasoul Hospital in Javanroud and carried him in a procession to his family home, with the support of dozens of protesters and mourners.

One eyewitness, Shahram, told the organization that protesters stood guard at the front entrance of Erfan Kakaee's family home throughout the night, out of concern that the security forces might seize his body and prevent a dignified burial. According to Shahram, officials called the family multiple times throughout the night, pressuring them to return Erfan Kakaee's body and threatening further violence if the protesters in front of their house did not disperse. Shahram recalled that, at one point, a low-ranking plain-clothes agent arrived with an ambulance to take away Erfan Kakaee's body but was prevented from doing so by protesters.

Shahram told Amnesty International that, on the morning of 21 November 2022, following the burial of Erfan Kakaee, IRGC agents unlawfully fired their assault rifles into the air at a procession of mourning protesters who were marching from the cemetery towards his family home.[998]

FAMILY OF SHAHRIAR MOHAMMADI



Shahriar Mohammadi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Shahriar Mohammadi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 18 November 2022 in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[999]

Shahriar Mohammadi's brother, Milad Mohammadi, who was forced to flee Iran in February 2023 following persecution by authorities, told Amnesty International that their family learned Shahriar Mohammadi had been shot after someone unknown to the family transferred his body to Shahid Gholipour Hospital in Boukan. According to Milad Mohammadi, at the hospital, a plain-clothes agent who did not reveal his name approached the family while they were desperately trying to ensure that Shahriar Mohammadi received all the life-saving medical care he needed and told them that they should not try too hard and that "even if Shahriar Mohammadi survives [his injuries], he must die."

997. See section 7.3.1 for details of Erfan Kakaee's case.
998. See also the case of Bahaoddin Veisi whose case is related to Erfan Kakaee, in section 7.3.1.
999. See section 8.2.4 for details of Shahriar Mohammadi's case.

Shahriar Mohammadi died shortly after being admitted to the hospital. Concerned that the authorities might withhold his body and prevent a dignified burial, his family sought to discreetly remove his body from the hospital. However, Milad Mohammadi recalled that, as the family left the hospital with his body, security forces, including agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions and the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, arrived and fired tear gas and shotguns loaded with metal pellets at them.

Milad Mohammadi told Amnesty International that the security forces also beat him with batons and the handles of their handguns. He said that, when he lay over the body of his deceased brother to prevent the security forces from taking it away, the agents repeatedly struck his head and kicked his brother's body, hurling insults and referring to those killed during the protests as "terrorists". Milad Mohammadi recalled that one agent fired metal pellets at his left leg from close range, causing severe injuries that required hospitalization and resulted in long-term pain and numbness.

Several nurses and doctors intervened to put an end to the violence and, as a result, some of them also sustained injuries from the metal pellets striking their bodies or faces. Milad Mohammadi was admitted to the hospital's intensive care unit for his injuries. Meanwhile, Shahriar Mohammadi's mother was forcibly taken to the main cemetery in Boukan by agents, who forced her to bury him around 1am, without the possibility to perform the customary washing and preparation for burial in accordance with religious and cultural traditions.



Shahriar Mohammadi's mourning relative at his grave site © Private

FAMILY OF GHAFOUR MOLOUDI



Ghafour Moloudi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Ghafour Moloudi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 17 November 2022 in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death

An informed source in Iran, Barzan, told Amnesty International that after Ghafour Moloudi died at a hospital, the medical staff told Ghafour Moloudi's family that the situation was very sensitive and they had to wait for the prosecutor of Boukan to arrive and give the order for the bodies of the deceased protesters and bystanders to be released to their relatives. Barzan told Amnesty International that Ghafour Moloudi's son was allowed to see his father's body briefly in the hospital morgue before the prosecutor arrived.

According to Barzan, the family waited in the hospital grounds with other relatives of injured and killed individuals when security forces stormed the hospital grounds and shot at the electrical generator providing power to the grounds and parking lot, cutting off the electricity supply. In an attempt to forcibly remove the families from the hospital grounds, the security forces violently attacked the grieving families, beating them with batons and the butts of their weapons, causing injuries, including a broken leg to a relative, despite the pleas of medical staff to maintain calm due to the presence of patients.

According to Barzan, shortly afterwards, the prosecutor of Boukan, Ali Zahed, and a representative from the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran, the state forensic institute, visited the hospital. The Legal Medicine Organization representative took photographs of Ghafour Moloudi's body. Ali Zahed asked Ghafour Moloudi's family if they wanted to make an official complaint to the authorities about his death. In response, the family said they wanted to file a complaint against Ali Zahed himself and the authorities. Ali Zahed rebuked them, and, in retaliation, threatened not to return Ghafour Moloudi's body to the family.



Ghafour Moloudi's mourning relative at his grave site © Private

Barzan reported that, at around 2.30am on 18 November 2022, Ali Zahed, along with the head of the hospital and the heads of the IRGC, Ministry of Intelligence and other security forces in Boukan, summoned Ghafour Moloudi's son to the office of the head nurse and told him that the authorities would return his body to the family only on the condition that they bury him in secret within hours and with only the immediate family present. According to Barzan, Ali Zahed said that, if the family defied these conditions, leading to any troubles in the city, the authorities would hold the family responsible.

Ali Zahed also told the family that, if they wanted to make a complaint against any officials, the authorities would send Ghafour Moloudi's body for an autopsy in Tehran or Urumieh. He stated that, if the cause of death was determined as having been caused by metal pellets from a shotgun or shots from a rifle, the death would be referred to court and the prosecutor of the city where his case has been referred would decide if the family was entitled to *diyeh* (blood money). Ghafour Moloudi's son rejected this, stating that the family's complaint was against the state, not an individual.

Barzan told Amnesty International that after several hours of negotiations with the family, one of the security officials gave Ghafour Moloudi's son a handwritten document to sign. According to Barzan, in the document, the security official had written a statement in the first person on behalf of Ghafour Moloudi's son that he would bury his father that night without anyone else present and that he had no complaints against the authorities. Ghafour Moloudi's son was forced to sign the document in order to receive his father's body. The family buried his body in their home village of Sahulan, mid-way between Mahabad and Boukan, but defied official orders by holding a public funeral service.

9.3 DENIAL OF RIGHT TO TRUTH

RIGHT TO TRUTH IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND STANDARDS

Victims, including families of those unlawfully killed, have the right to know the truth about the human rights violations committed against them and their loved ones.[1000] The right to the truth implies knowing the full and complete truth as to the events that transpired and who participated in them, including knowing the circumstances in which the violations took place as well as the reasons for them.[1001]

According to Principle 24 of the Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law (Basic Principles):

> **"Victims and their representatives should be entitled to seek and obtain information on the causes leading to their victimization and on the causes and conditions pertaining to the gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law and to learn the truth in regard to these violations."[1002]**

Principle 4 of the Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Through Action to Combat Impunity (Updated Set of Principles to Combat Impunity) states:

> **"Irrespective of any legal proceedings, victims and their families have the imprescriptible right to know the truth about the circumstances in which violations took place and, in the event of death or disappearance, the victim's fate."[1003]**

The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has stated that, in cases of deaths or disappearances, "the right to know the truth about the fate and whereabouts includes… the right of the family to have the remains of their loved ones returned to them, and to dispose of those remains according to their own tradition, religion or culture".[1004]

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence has stated that in guaranteeing the right to the truth, states must undertake the following measures:

> **"States have the positive obligation to investigate, identify the patterns of joint action and identify all those who participated in various ways in human rights violations. This must be done with the appropriate participation of the victims in the proceedings, through wide-ranging possibilities of being heard. The investigations may relate to all persons, whether they ordered the violations or actually committed them…**

1000. See Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Report: *Study on the right to the truth*, 8 February 2006, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2006/91.
1001. See UN, International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims (24 March), https://www.un.org/en/observances/right-to-truth-day (accessed on 23 August 2026).
1002. UN General Assembly (UNGA), Resolution 60/147: *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*, adopted on 21 March 2006, UN Doc. A/RES/60/147, operative para. 24.
1003. UN Independent Expert to Update the Set of Principles to Combat Impunity, Report, 8 February 2005, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1, Principle 4.
1004. UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, General Comment on the Right to the Truth in Relation to Enforced Disappearance, 26 January 2011, UN Doc. A/HRC/16/48, para. 39 subsection (6).

"Also, investigations must be undertaken seriously and not as a mere formality predestined to be ineffective. The investigations… should not depend on the procedural initiative of the victims or of their next of kin, nor on their contributing evidence, and must be prompt, thorough, effective, credible and transparent."[1005]

Investigations of potentially unlawful deprivations of life must be conducted in accordance with technical standards, such as those of the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death, its precursor (the UN Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions) and the model autopsy protocol.[1006]

Authorities systematically denied victims' families the right to know the full and complete truth as to the events that led to the death of their loved ones, including the specific circumstances in which the killings took place and the identity of the perpetrators.

Authorities denied victims' families the right to the truth, including by coercing them into conducting immediate and rushed burials without autopsies or with autopsies that were inadequate and hurried. In cases where autopsies were conducted, families were generally denied access to the autopsy reports.

The authorities concealed, contaminated or destroyed evidence vital to establishing the causes and circumstances of deaths, including relevant CCTV footage. They also failed to provide families with burial and death certificates or issued documents that were misleading, incomplete or inaccurate.

9.3.1 LACK OF AUTOPSIES AND FORENSIC DOCUMENTATION

DOMESTIC FRAMEWORK ON THE CONDUCT OF AUTOPSIES

Under Iranian law, burials cannot proceed without a burial certificate recording the dates of birth and death, as well as the cause of death.

In cases where an autopsy is not legally required, a certified medical doctor affiliated with a public or private medical facility may issue the burial certificate. However, under 19 specific circumstances, the deceased must be first referred to the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran, which is the state's forensic institute operating under the judiciary.[1007] In these cases, the Legal Medicine Organization must conduct an autopsy and then issue the burial certificate necessary for burial.

Autopsies are not legally required where: the identity of the deceased is known; it is evident, based on preliminary medical examinations, that the death occurred due to natural causes; the

1005. UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence, Report: *International Legal Standards Underpinning the Pillars of Transitional Justice*, 10 July 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/54/24, paras 22-23.
1006. OHCHR, *The Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death (2016): The Revised United Nations Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions* (Minnesota Protocol), 2017. The Minesota Protocol updated the Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, which was issued in 1991 to support the implementation of the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, which was adopted in 1989.
1007. Iranian Students' News Agency, فرایند صدور جواز دفن در پزشکی قانونی ["The process of issuing burial permits at the Legal Medicine Organization"], 8 October 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402071610489/فرایند-صدور-جواز-دفن-در-پزشکی-قانونی (in Persian). For information about the establishment of the Legal Medicine Organization, see Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون تشکیل سازمان پزشکی قانونی کشور [Law on the Establishment of the National Legal Medicine Organization], 18 July 1993, available at https://www.ekhtebar.ir/28280-2/ (in Persian).

deceased's next of kin request a burial certificate without any inquiries or complaints regarding the death; and the death does not fall under the 19 circumstances requiring the involvement of the Legal Medicine Organization.

The 19 specified circumstances in which autopsies are required include deaths potentially resulting from: homicide; suicide; traffic or other accidents such as falls, burns, electrocution, drowning, hypothermia and heat strokes; unexpected incidents; and poisoning. Other specified circumstances include deaths following physical or verbal altercations, substance use or occupational accidents; deaths in custody or other collective places of residence such as dormitories, mental health hospitals, camps and barracks; and unexpected, sudden, inexplicable and suspicious deaths. Autopsies are also required in cases where there are complaints against an individual or entity, the identity of the deceased is unknown or there are suspicions that a crime may have been committed.

In conducting forensic examinations, the Legal Medicine Organization cooperates with a division of the Investigation Police called the Centre for Determination of Identity and Scientific Discovery of Crimes.[1008] The centre is responsible for the documentation and forensic analysis of crime scene evidence, including weapons, ammunition and chemical substances, in specialized laboratories.[1009]

The authorities' practice of coercing families into rushed burials often within hours of death had serious implications for the conduct of adequate autopsies and the families' right to know the truth. Amnesty International observed several key patterns.

As previously noted, in some cases, due to fears that security forces would seize victims' bodies, families moved the bodies to safe locations and proceeded with burial without a burial certificate. These burials often took place in local cemeteries, typically in rural areas, where bureaucratic procedures such as requiring burial certificates were not enforced. As a result, no autopsies were conducted, and the forensic causes of death were not documented, even in a minimal manner, in burial certificates.

In other cases where the authorities retained control over victims' bodies and dictated the conditions of burial, the circumstances surrounding autopsies varied, but consistently lacked transparency. Sometimes, the time between death and burial was less than a few hours, raising serious concerns that no autopsy was conducted, or that a hurried and inadequate one was performed simply to issue a burial certificate and formalize the burial. In other instances, even when more time had passed, families were not informed about whether autopsies were carried out or how they were conducted.

In its detailed findings, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran similarly found that victims' "families were pressured to bury their killed loved ones swiftly, hindering the possibility of adequate autopsies being carried out."[1010]

1008. See Mehr News Agency, آگهی استخدام در مرکز تشخیص هویت و کشف علمی جرم پلیس آگاهی فراجا ["Job advertisement at the Centre for Determination of Identity and Scientific Discovery of Crimes of the FARAJA Investigation Police"], 30 June 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6153027/آگهی-استخدام-در-مرکز-تشخیص-هویت-و-کشف-علمی-جرم-پلیس-آگاهی-فراجا (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, تفاهمنامه پلیس آگاهی با پزشکی قانونی ["Memorandum of Understanding between the Investigation Police and the Legal Medicine Organization"], 29 May 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/03/08/384803/تفاهمنامه-پلیس-آگاهی-با-پزشکی-قانونی (in Persian).
1009. Mashregh News, وظایف مرکز تشخیص هویت پلیس آگاهی چیست؟ +عکس ["What are the duties of the Investigation Police's Identity Verification Center? + photographs"], 14 October 2019, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1001325/وظایف-مرکز-تشخیص-هویت-پلیس-آگاهی-چیست-عکس (in Persian).
1010. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 607.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON THE CONDUCT OF AUTOPSIES

According to the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death, "the State is under the obligation to provide all relevant documentation to the family of the deceased, including the death certificate, medical report and reports on the investigation held into the circumstances surrounding the death".[1011]

The Minnesota Protocol states that conducting an autopsy is almost always essential to achieving the objectives of an effective investigation into potentially unlawful deaths.[1012] These objectives include: recovering and preserving all material relevant to determining the cause of death, identifying the perpetrators, and understanding the circumstances surrounding the death; and determining the cause, manner, place and time of death, including distinguishing between natural causes, accidents, suicides and homicides. The Minnesota Protocol states: "A decision not to undertake an autopsy should be justified in writing and should be subject to judicial review." [1013]

The Minnesota Protocol clarifies that, to ensure an adequate and unhurried autopsy, "the body should be made available to the forensic doctor for a reasonable minimum period (e.g. 12 hours)."[1014] It adds that a "complex autopsy may take an entire working day or even longer, as the examiner may need to return for further examinations."[1015]

The Minnesota Protocol also states:

> **"If unacceptable conditions are imposed, the forensic doctor should be able to refuse to perform a compromised examination and should prepare a report explaining this position. If the forensic doctor decides to proceed with the examination notwithstanding difficult conditions or circumstances, he or she should include in the autopsy report an explanation of the limitations or impediments."[1016]**

1011. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 17.
1012. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 25.
1013. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 25.
1014. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 155.
1015. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 250.
1016. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 155.

FAMILY OF DARIUSH ALIZADEH



Dariush Alizadeh © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Dariush Alizadeh, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 8 October 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1017]

An informed source in Iran, Farzad, told Amnesty International that, following Dariush Alizadeh's death, his family persuaded the staff in the hospital where he had been taken to hand over the body to them after expressing fears that the authorities might move the body to an unidentified location. They then immediately embarked on a journey to the village of their origin, Ghal'e Kohneh, in Kurdistan province, to have Dariush Alizadeh buried there. Farzad told Amnesty International that, on their way to the village, the family received a call from the Ministry of Intelligence, instructing them to return the body to Sanandaj and threatening that they would be in "trouble" if they did not comply. Later that evening, the Ministry of Intelligence called the family again and reiterated their requests and threats.

Farzad recounted how, despite the threats, the family remained defiant. However, they agreed to delay the burial until medical officials from the Legal Medicine Organization could come to the grave site in the village of Ghal'e Kohneh to authorize the burial. According to Farzad, forensic officials arrived at the grave site around 11pm and, after a hurried examination, authorized the burial to proceed.



Dariush Alizadeh's mother © Private

In the following days, security and intelligence officials prevented the family from holding a memorial ceremony at a mosque in Sanandaj, tearing down the memorial banners and posters they had put on walls and warning the administrators of the mosque against accepting the family's requests. As a result, the family was forced to hold a smaller private ceremony at their house.

In the following weeks, Ministry of Intelligence officials in Sanandaj summoned the family of Dariush Alizadeh for interrogations several times and put them under pressure to give media interviews to state media outlets and publicly state that "anti-revolutionary" agents working for Kurdish opposition groups killed him. His family refused.

1017. See section 6.2.1 for details of Dariush Alizadeh's case.

FAMILY OF KARVAN GHADER SHOKRI



Karvan Ghader Shokri © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Karvan Ghader Shokri, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 November 2022 in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1018]

An informed source in Iran, Heydar, told Amnesty International that, following Karvan Ghader Shokri's death, his family persuaded hospital staff to release his body. They then carried him in a procession to a mosque. According to Heydar, the procession to the mosque drew hundreds of protesters and mourners and was violently disrupted by security forces, including IRGC agents, who repeatedly fired lethal ammunition to stop the procession and disperse the crowd.

Heydar stated that, later the same day, agents called Karvan Ghader Shokri's family several times, instructing them to conduct the burial immediately, but the family refused to comply. Instead, they hid the body in a private garden in Piranshahr overnight. The next morning, hundreds of protesters and mourners joined Karvan Ghader Shokri's family in a procession to Zargatan cemetery in Piranshahr.



Karvan Ghader Shokri's grave site © Private

Eyewitness accounts indicate that FARAJA and IRGC forces opened fire on protesters and mourners, resulting in at least five people sustaining gunshot injuries. According to Heydar, some of the FARAJA agents involved belonged to a police station in Piranshahr known as Police Station No. 12. He reported that officials from Police Station No. 12 eventually told Karvan Ghader Shokri's family that they were not allowed to bury him in Zargatan cemetery and instead had to take the body to Kohneh Khaneh cemetery.

As Karvan Ghader Shokri's body was informally buried without an autopsy by the Legal Medicine Organization, a burial certificate was not issued for him.

In the weeks after Karvan Ghader Shokri's death, agents from the IRGC and the Ministry of Intelligence summoned his family at least twice. During the interactions that ensued, they warned the family against speaking out and pressured them to sign a document affirming their commitment to preventing any chanting or protests during memorial ceremonies.

1018. See section 8.4.3 for details of Karvan Ghader Shokri's case.

9.3.2 DENIAL OF ACCESS TO AUTOPSY RESULTS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON AUTOPSY REPORTS

The Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death provides detailed guidance on how forensic examinations should be conducted and documented.

Autopsy reports should record the date, time, and location of the procedure, as well as the names, qualifications, and affiliations of all individuals present.[1019] Comprehensive photographic documentation is essential, covering the body before and after examination, featuring all visible injuries or signs of disease, and including scales and autopsy numbers for reference. These photographs allow findings to be independently reviewed and verified.[1020]

According to the Minnesota Protocol, imaging techniques such as CT scans or X-rays should be used where available, especially in cases involving gunshot wounds. X-rays should be taken before and after undressing the body, and any projectiles or fragments identified must be recovered, photographed, and preserved as evidence.[1021] Fluoroscopy may also be used to detect hidden objects.[1022] All injuries must be carefully described in the autopsy report, including their size, shape, location, depth, and direction, and distinguished from any resulting from medical treatment.[1023] The internal examination should complement the external findings and be fully photographed.[1024]

The autopsy report must be detailed enough for another forensic expert to independently assess the findings. It should include a summary of results, the forensic pathologist's opinion on the cause and manner of death, and whether injuries were due to trauma, medical intervention, or other causes.[1025] Where relevant, the report should interpret injuries in the context of possible torture or ill-treatment.[1026] Without such thorough documentation and interpretation, the autopsy fails to serve its core purpose: uncovering the truth behind a death.

The Minnesota Protocol states that to the extent possible, family members should be consulted prior to an autopsy. Families should be also entitled to have a representative present during the autopsy.[1027]

The Minnesota Protocol adds that a full autopsy report should be given to the appropriate authorities as well as to the deceased's family, except if they are implicated in the cause of the death.[1028]

In cases where autopsies were carried out prior to burial, Iranian authorities consistently denied families access to the autopsy reports. The authorities' pattern of withholding autopsy reports is part of broader practices aimed at restricting transparency in cases of potentially unlawful deaths, particularly those occurring in custody or during security operations.

1019. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 254.
1020. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 255.
1021. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), paras 256 and 256(c).
1022. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 256.
1023. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 260(f).
1024. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 261.
1025. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 268.
1026. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 151.
1027. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 37.
1028. OHCHR, Minnesota Protocol (previously cited), para. 268.

Other relevant concerns included the absence of formal procedures that would allow families to request the presence of independent experts during autopsies conducted by the Legal Medicine Organization, to seek independent review of the autopsy findings, or to request exhumation of bodies for a second autopsy.

Sometimes, families were verbally given brief information about the content of autopsy reports. In some other instances, where families filed legal complaints regarding the death of their loved ones, court documents occasionally referenced autopsy findings from the Legal Medicine Organization or forensic reports prepared by the Investigation Police. However, Amnesty International is not aware of any case in which families were provided with copies of these reports.

FAMILY OF HOUMAN ABDOLLAHI



Houman Abdollahi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Houman Abdollahi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 7 December 2022 in the area of Hassanabad in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1029]

An informed source in Iran, Hamed, told Amnesty International that immediately after Houman Abdollahi died, a forensic doctor from the Legal Medicine Organization briefly examined Houman Abdollahi's body at Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj to authorize the burial. According to Hamed, the doctor verbally informed the family that they recorded the cause of death as being shot in the heart from close range. However, Houman Abdollahi's family was not provided with a forensic report or even a burial certificate.

Hamed said that in the following weeks and months, the family was referred from one official body to another and given empty promises that they would be contacted once the burial certificate was ready. Eventually, the family gave up on obtaining a copy of the burial certificate. The official bodies in Sanandaj that the family approached for obtaining a copy of the burial certificate included the Office of the Prosecutor, the police, the Legal Medicine Organization of Iran, and the Department of Justice.

The hospital handed over the body to his family for burial later that same day. However, according to Hamed, shortly afterwards, a group of armed FARAJA agents intercepted the ambulance carrying the body from the hospital to the main cemetery of Hassanabad and took it to an unidentified location. Hamed said that the then county governor of Sanandaj, Hassan Askari, and the then head of the Investigation Police of Kurdistan province, Abdollah Fatehi, were present when the ambulance carrying Houman Abdollahi's body was intercepted.

According to Hamed, these officials told Houman Abdollahi's family that the burial could not proceed that night due to the presence of several thousand people who had gathered in protest at the cemetery. The officials instructed the family to go to the barracks of the 28 Division of the Army in Sanandaj for further information.

1029. See section 6.2.5 for details of Houman Abdollahi's case.

Hamed recalled that, when the family went to the barracks, they were again met with the then county governor of Sanandaj, Hassan Askari, and the then head of the Investigation Police of Kurdistan province, Abdollah Fatehi. According to Hamed, the two officials told Houman Abdollahi's family that the body would only be returned for burial on the condition that the family publicly announce a false postponement of the burial to the next morning. This was intended to disperse the crowd of protesters gathered at the cemetery and ensure that the burial would take place quietly and with minimal public attention. Under duress, the family accepted.



Houman Abdollahi's parents at his grave site © Private

Houman Abdollahi was buried at around 3-4am on 8 December 2022 in the presence of agents. Hamed reported that in the following days, the family received an intimidating call from an official at the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj, warning them against any chanting during memorial ceremonies.

According to Hamed, Houman Abdollahi's family attempted to obtain CCTV footage from the cameras of Hassan Abad Jame' Mosque, which is located near the area where Houman was shot. However, local residents informed the family that, the day after the incident, two individuals holding senior positions at the mosque had taken the footage to a Basij Resistance Base approximately 600 meters away. The names of these individuals, as reported by an eyewitness, are on file with Amnesty International.

FAMILY OF MINOO MAJIDI



Minoo Majidi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Minoo Majidi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 September 2022 in Kermanshah, Kermanshah province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of her death.[1030]

Minoo Majidi's daughter, Mahsa Piraee, who resides outside Iran, told Amnesty International that, following her mother's death, Ministry of Intelligence officials stationed at the hospital only allowed Minoo Majidi's family to see her body after her family refrained from referring to her as a protester and said that she was a bystander who had not taken part in the protests.[1031]

Mahsa Piraee added that the forensic expert at the Legal Medicine Organization who examined Minoo Majidi's body told her family verbally that 167 pellets had penetrated her body, and that three of the pellets had ruptured her lungs and spleen and were likely to have caused her death. However, the family was not provided with an autopsy report.

According to Mahsa Piraee, the morning after her death, on 21 September 2022, Minoo Majidi's husband was interrogated twice by a FARAJA official, first at Taleghani Hospital, where her body was taken, and then at the Hafezieh No. 20 police station, which is near the location of the shooting incident in which she was killed. Mahsa Piraee told Amnesty International that during these interrogations, the FARAJA official denied that security forces were responsible for Minoo Majidi's death. This is despite the FARAJA official's own admission in a handwritten note dated 20 September 2022, which has been reviewed by Amnesty International, that no investigations into Minoo Majidi's death had yet taken place.

The FARAJA official initially asked Minoo Majidi's husband if she had any "personal enemies", suggesting that her death was in connection to a "private dispute". After Minoo Majidi's husband insisted that she had been killed during the protests, the FARAJA official claimed that the weapon which was used to kill her was not of the type carried by the security forces in Iran, even though comprehensive investigations had not taken place yet to enable this assessment. He attributed the responsibility for her death to the "*monafeghin*" (hypocrites), a derogatory term used by the Iranian authorities for members and supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, a banned opposition group based outside Iran.

Mahsa Piraee said that, during the interrogations, the FARAJA official also at times adopted an intimidating tone, asking intrusive and seemingly irrelevant questions such as why one of Minoo Majidi's daughters lived outside Iran. Mahsa Piraee assessed that this line of questioning was intended as an intimidation tactic to signal to the family that security forces had researched their profiles and backgrounds.

According to information available to Amnesty International, Minoo Majidi's family would have preferred to wait for her daughter, Mahsa Piraee, who lives outside Iran, to travel to Iran before holding the funeral ceremony and burying her body. However, due to concerns that the authorities might impose additional restrictions or seize her body, they proceeded with the burial on the

1030. See section 7.2.1 for details of Minoo Majidi's case.

1031. These intelligence officials worked for the Herasat office of the hospital. Herasat refers to a network of intelligence offices embedded within Iran's civilian institutions, including universities, hospitals, banks, government agencies, and other public and private organizations, which operate under the Ministry of Intelligence. These offices play a key role in enforcing the political and ideology of the Islamic Republic system through surveillance and suppression of dissent.

morning of 22 September 2022. The authorities transferred Minoo Majidi's body to a cemetery in Kermanshah, which was not the family's preferred burial site, and forced them to bury her there. Mahsa Piraee arrived the day after her mother's funeral.

Mahsa Piraee told Amnesty International that several days after Minoo Majidi's death, plain-clothes agents from the Ministry of Intelligence confiscated footage captured by the CCTV camera of Taban Pastry shop on 2nd Si Metri Street near Vahdat Boulevard and Nobahar Boulevard, in front of which the fatal shooting of her mother took place. They also confiscated CCTV footage captured by other cameras on the street.

The note written by the FARAJA official on 20 September 2022 included instructions to obtain and review CTTV footage of the incident in which Minoo Majidi was killed and to gather witness statements from residents and local shop owners willing to testify. The note also directed authorities to examine the type of weapon and munition used. However, in the months that followed, the authorities failed to provide Minoo Majidi's family with any information regarding investigative steps taken or findings. Due to a lack of trust in the legal system, the family chose not to pursue a complaint.

Mahsa Piraee told Amnesty International that in the days following Minoo Majidi's death, security forces also subjected their family to constant surveillance and intimidation, which involved, among other things, plain-clothes agents filming those who visited their house to offer their condolences and show solidarity. She added that plain-clothes agents also repeatedly drove up and down their street in the middle of the night on motorcycles or in cars and generated loud noises by rapidly alternating between pressing down hard on the accelerator and brake pedals in order to intimidate and terrorize them. The authorities also phoned the family and suggested to them that they should register Minoo Majidi as a state "martyr," but they refused.



Minoo Majidi's daughter Roya Piraee at her grave site © Private

According to Mahsa Piraee, plain-clothes agents also arrested Minoo Majidi's brother and sister-in-law after they attended further demonstrations, in part to protest the unlawful killing of Minoo Majidi. The next day, multiple agents took them both, with hands and feet in cuffs and dressed in prison clothes, before a prosecutor who asked them why Minoo Majidi was in a protest and why they themselves were protesting. There, the authorities forced them to sign an undertaking not to participate in protests again and told them that a case had been opened against them. They also told them they were not allowed to see Minoo Majidi's husband and children, to visit her grave site, or to attend the memorial ceremony marking the 40th day following her death.

In the days leading up to the 40th day following Minoo Majidi's death, agents made phone calls to several family members, including her husband and brother, and warned them not to hold a memorial ceremony or visit her grave site that day. They also summoned her brother and forced him to sign a similar undertaking.

9.3.3 INACCURATE DEATH AND BURIAL CERTIFICATES

DOMESTIC FRAMEWORK ON BURIAL AND DEATH CERTIFICATES

Under Iranian law, the official registration of a person's death is carried out through the issuance of several types of documents, most commonly burial certificates and death certificates.[1032]

A burial certificate is required for a burial to legally proceed. A death certificate serves broader administrative and legal purposes, including the annulment of the national identification booklet. The national identification booklet is a foundational civil registry document that records an individual's vital status from birth to death, including information on birth, marital status and parentage. The cancellation of the booklet upon death is a necessary legal step, as it prevents its further use in administrative, financial or legal transactions, and formally records the individual's passing in the state's civil registry system.

Burial certificates must be issued either by a certified medical doctor or, in cases requiring an autopsy, by the Legal Medicine Organization. Death certificates, by contrast, are issued by the National Organization for Civil Registration, which operates under the Ministry of Interior.

Both burial and death certificates record personal details such as the name, date and place of birth, and the date of death. Both documents also include a section on the cause of death. However, the level of detail provided in this section varies. Death certificates typically cite the cause of death in only a few words, if at all. In contrast, burial certificates contain four subsections for recording the cause of death. The first subsection is intended to capture the final illness or condition that directly resulted in death, while the remaining subsections are meant to document the sequence of contributing illnesses or events leading to death.

Amnesty International obtained copies of death and/or burial certificates for 95 protesters and bystanders who were killed in 17 provinces across the country during the Woman Life Freedom uprising.[1033] It obtained both death and burial certificates for 22 of the 95 victims. It obtained only death certificates for 39 of the 95 victims and only burial certificates for 34 others.

Of the 95 victims for whom Amnesty International obtained copies of death and/or burial certificates: 80 were killed by security forces during violent protest dispersals or in militarized areas; seven died in state custody; and eight others died in suspicious circumstances.[1034]

The organization's review of 61 death certificates and 56 burial certificates revealed a pattern of recording the causes, circumstances and dates of the death in an inaccurate, misleading or incomplete manner.

The primary concern with the accuracy of death certificates was the incomplete or misleading recording of causes of death. In addition, Amnesty International documented cases where the date of death listed on the death certificate was incorrect.

1032. Death certificates are issued by Iran's National Organization for Civil Registration, a state institution under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior. According to Article 23 of the Civil Registration Law, death certificates must include personal details of the deceased including their full name, date of birth and the cause of death, if it has been determined. See, Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون ثبت احوال [Civil Registration Law], 7 July 1976, available at https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/97466 (in Persian), Article 23.
1033. The provinces covered were Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Ghazvin, Gilan, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchistan, Tehran and West Azerbaijan.
1034. See Chapter 5 for more information on the categorizations of deaths recorded by Amnesty International.

Two of the 61 death certificates reviewed by Amnesty International contained falsified or misleading information, vaguely attributing deaths to "disease of the respiratory system"[1035] and "behavioural disorder disease".[1036] The certificates did not provide any further information on the circumstances that led to the victims purportedly experiencing fatal illnesses or organ failures. Eight listed the cause of death as "unknown".[1037]

In the remaining 51 death certificates, vague euphemisms were used to record the cause of death. For example, "collision with hard or sharp objects" was cited in 34 death certificates;[1038] "operation of combat equipment outside combat" was cited in 14 death certificates;[1039] "violence by others" was cited in two death certificates;[1040] and "murder" was cited in one certificate.[1041]

Of these 51 death certificates that used vague euphemisms to record the cause of death, some included additional vague phrases under their explanation section. These included phrases such as "being struck with a bullet", "being struck with a fast projectile object", "being struck with a fast projectile object (bullet)", "being struck with a penetrating projectile object (pellet)", "being struck with a fast metal projectile (bullet shrapnel) in the head", "being struck with multiple fast projectile objects", "being shot" and "being struck with metal projectile – combat weapon bullet".[1042] However, beyond these general terms, none of the certificates provided specific information about the type of weapons or ammunition used or the number of bullets or pellets striking the victim. The two certificates that cited "violence by others" as the cause of death provided no further details.

The certificates also failed to specify the type of injuries that led to the death, with the exception of one certificate which noted "damage to vital organs of the neck" under further explanation.[1043]

1035. The case of Mohammad Keywan Darvishi.
1036. The case of Saman Ghaderbeig.
1037. The cases of Aslan (Nima) Shafaghdoost, Erfan Sarikhani Dashti, Esmail Dezvar, Foad Ghadimi, Heyman Aman, Mehrshad Shahidinejad, Mohammadreza Bali Lashak and Sina Malayeri.
1038. The cases of Abdolrahman Bakhtiari, Abdolsalam Ghader Golvan, Ali Abbasi, Ali Molaei, Arman Emadi, Asghar Hazhir Lotf, Aylar Haghi, Borhan Karami, Danesh Rahnama, Dariush Alizadeh, Erfan Khazaei, Amir (Farjad) Darvishi, Foad Mohammadi, Hananeh Kia, Houman Abdollahi, Isa Biglari, Johar Fattahi, Kobra Sheikheh, Mehran Rahmani, Milad Khoshkam, Milad Ostad Hashem, Minoo Majidi, Mohammad Hossein Morovati, Mohammad Shariati, Mohammad Reza Eskandari, Shaban (Mohsen) Mohammadi Kouchaksaraei, Nima Nouri Famour, Rahim Kalij, Sepehr Biranvand, Sasan Ghorbani, Sepehr Azami, Sina Naderi, Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam and Zaniar Aboubakri.
1039. The cases of Amin Marefat, Aram Habibi, Erfan Rezaei, Ghazaleh Chalabi, Hadis Najafi, Hezhar Mamkhosravi, Hiva Janjan, Kan'an Aghaei, Koumar Daroftadeh, Mostafa Shabani, Parsa Rezadoost, Rouzbeh Khademian, Shahou Bahmani and Shahriar Mohammadi.
1040. The cases of Behnam Layeghpour and Javad Rezaei.
1041. The case of Pedram Azarnoush.
1042. The cases of Ali Abbasi, Ali Molaei, Arman Emadi, Erfan Khazaei, Hadis Najafi, Hezhar Mamkhosravi, Hiva Janjan, Kan'an Aghaei, Kobra Sheikheh, Koumar Daroftadeh, Mohammad Reza Eskandari, Mostafa Shabani, Nima Nouri Famour, Parsa Rezadoost, Pedram Azarnoush, Rouzbeh Khademian, Sepehr Azami, Shahriar Mohammadi and Zaniar Aboubakri.
1043. The case of Ali Abbasi.

FAMILY OF MOHAMMAD KEYWAN DARVISHI



Mohammad Keywan Darvishi
© Private

Authorities subjected the family of Mohammad Keywan Darvishi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces by beating him during the crackdown on protests on 24 October 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1044]

An informed source in Iran, Farzaneh, told Amnesty International that, following Mohammad Keywan Darvishi death, his family had wanted to see his body when it was being washed and prepared for burial so they could take photographs of his injuries. However, according to Farzeneh, the staff at the morgue where his body was being washed told the family that they were threatened by the authorities that they were not permitted to allow family members access to his body. Staff also informed the family that the injuries to Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's body were so severe that it would be better for them not to see it.

Farzaneh told Amnesty International that the authorities warned the family that if they publicly stated that he had been killed by security forces, they would not release his body, would be fined 200 million tomans, and would be denied permission to hold a funeral ceremony for him. The family was forced to hold his funeral in the presence of security forces who prohibited any chanting or public reference to him as a protest victim and repeatedly threatened to detain mourners.



Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's relatives at his grave site © Private

According to Farzaneh, three days after Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's death, two plain clothes officials went to his family home and said they knew he had taken part in protests but that the family would be offered a house, money and various welfare benefits. The family rejected the offer, told the officials to leave, and insisted they wanted nothing from the authorities.

Farzaneh reported that the family continued to face harassment, including the detention of Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's brother-in-law for 15 days and attempts to prevent landlords from renting to his mother.

1044. See section 6.2.2 for details of Mohammad Keywan Darvishi's case.

FAMILY OF HABIBOLLAH FATHI



Habibollah Fathi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Habibollah Fathi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 19 November 2022 in Divandareh, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1045]

An informed source in Iran, Aref, told Amnesty International that, after Habibollah Fathi died from a gunshot wound to his head, his family immediately transported his body to their village of origin, Haji Mousa, near Divandareh, and buried him there the same day out of concern that the authorities might seize the body and prevent a dignified burial.

In the following days, security forces mobilized their plain-clothes agents to create an atmosphere of intimidation and fear and spread warnings to the family that, if they spoke out or sought justice, Habibollah Fathi's children, especially his daughters, would be detained. Aref said that the warnings included veiled threats that his daughters could be subjected to rape or other forms of sexual violence while in detention.

As Habibollah Fathi's body was informally buried without an autopsy by the Legal Medicine Organization, a burial certificate was not issued for him. Aref told Amnesty International that his family applied for a death certificate about a week after his death. According to Aref, the National Organization for Civil Registration subsequently issued a death certificate, which mistakenly listed his date of death as 18 November 2022 instead of 19 November 2022 and listed the cause of death as "unknown". When the family requested a correction for both, a revised death certificate was issued, indicating the correct date of death but falsely recording the cause of death as "heart disease".

FAMILY OF SALAR MOJAVER



Salar Mojaver © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Salar Mojaver, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 16 November 2022 in Boukan, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1046]

An informed source in Iran, Bahman, told Amnesty International that, after Salar Mojaver was fatally shot, his family did not take his body to a hospital out of concern that the authorities might not return it to them and impose various restrictions. Instead, they immediately transported his body to their village of origin, Akhtetar, near Boukan.

According to Bahman, during the rest of the night, the family received multiple calls from officials, including officials at the Office of the County Governor of Boukan, instructing them to either return the body or bury it immediately. The authorities threatened to harm

1045. See section 6.4.2 for details of Habibollah Fathi's case.
1046. See section 8.2.2 for details of Salar Mojaver's case.

Salar Mojaver's surviving brothers or create "trouble" for the family if they did not comply. Despite these threats, the family refused to give in and arranged for the burial to take place at 10am the following day.

Bahman recounted how distressed relatives stayed up all night to guard Salar Mojaveri's body against possible raids by security forces attempting to seize the body. He described the scenes of the relatives having to continuously place ice on Salar Mojaver's body throughout the night and clear the area around it, which kept being covered in blood.

The funeral of Salar Mojaver in Akhtetar the next morning was attended by thousands of people in Boukan. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, security forces blocked the roads connecting Boukan to Akhtetar, forcing people to get out of their cars and walk the remaining distance to the village. Eyewitness accounts indicate that security forces, including plain-clothes agents and IRGC agents, damaged people's cars and fired tear gas and metal pellets, leaving many people injured.

As Salar Mojaver's body was not examined by the Legal Medicine Organization and buried informally, no burial certificate was issued. Bahman told Amnesty International that Salar Mojaver's family decided not to obtain a death certificate for him after officials at the National Organization for Civil Registration stated that the document would list "accident" or "collision with a hard object" as the cause of death.

Compared to death certificates, most of the 56 burial certificates reviewed by Amnesty International contained more detailed information about the types of bodily injuries that led to victims' deaths. However, like death certificates, they lacked specific details about the weapons or ammunition responsible for the fatal injuries. Additionally, Amnesty International reviewed five burial certificates that did not include any details on the cause of death, instead stating that the cause of death remained under investigation.[1047]

Fatal injuries were listed in burial certificates through brief phrases such as "severe breathing difficulties and damage to the neck spine", "damage to critical organs in the abdomen and bleeding", "damage to brain tissue", "brain injury (brain haemorrhage and skull fracture)", "extensive damage to brain tissue", "fractured and shattered skull bones", "haemorrhagic shock", "extensive internal bleeding", "damage to internal organs inside the chest and abdomen", "the crushing of brain tissue", "vital organ failure", "severe respiratory failure" resulting from "damage to the cervical spine" caused by "dislocation or severe movement of neck vertebrae", and "rupture of internal organs".

Despite describing the fatal injuries sustained, the certificates did not identify the original cause of those injuries. Instead, they used vague phrases, such as being struck with "hunting gun pellets", "objects" or "projectiles", occasionally qualified by adjectives like "hard", "penetrating" or "fast-moving", without specifying the weapons or ammunition used.

Amnesty International's findings regarding the authorities' refusal to issue families of victims with accurate or any death and/or burial certificates is consistent with those of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. In its March 2024 report, the mission found that, in some cases, the authorities simply refused to issue such certificates to families of victims.[1048]

1047. The cases of Abbas Shafiei, Behnaz Afshari, Esmail Dezvar, Fereydoon Mahmoudi and Foad Ghadimi.
1048. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), paras 1043, 1621 and 1830.

FAMILY OF ISA BIGLARI



Isa Biglari © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Isa Biglari, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 15 November 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1049]

An informed source in Iran, Yaser, told Amnesty International that, on the evening of 15 November 2022, after Isa Biglari died, many people gathered at Kowsar Hospital in Sanandaj to support Isa Biglari's family and prevent security forces from moving his body to an unidentified location. Despite their efforts, the authorities relocated the body to an unidentified location without the family's knowledge or consent and officials from the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC threatened to bury the body at a secret location unless the crowd at the hospital dispersed. As a result of the threats, the family left the hospital.



Isa Biglari's parents at his grave site © Private

Yaser said that, later that evening, at around 11.30pm, an official from the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj called Isa Biglari's family and told them to go to Behesht Mohammadi cemetery in Sanandaj to bury him. The authorities instructed them to carry out the burial quietly and in the presence of no more than 15 relatives. Despite this, in a show of support for Isa Biglari's family and to protest the crackdown, scores of people joined the night-time burial ceremony.

According to information obtained by Amnesty International, the authorities did not provided Isa Biglari's family with a burial certificate. The family has only received a death certificate.

9.3.4 RESTRICTIONS ON VIEWING VICTIMS' BODIES

As part of their efforts to conceal evidence, authorities further barred families from viewing the bodies of their loved ones before burial. In many cases, bodies were delivered by security forces already wrapped in shrouds, with instructions not to unwrap them. Families were also frequently prevented from taking photographs.

These restrictions not only compounded the suffering of grieving families by denying them the opportunity to perform customary burial rites, but also obstructed families from documenting or even observing visible gunshot wounds and other injuries on victims' bodies.

1049. See section 6.2.4 for details of Isa Biglari's case.

FAMILY OF PEYMAN MANBARI



Peyman Manbari © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Peyman Manbari, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 8 October 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1050]

An informed source in Iran, Arshia, told Amnesty International that, following Peyman Manbari's death at Towhid Hospital in Sanandaj, Ministry of Intelligence agents transferred his body from the hospital to an unidentified location without his family's consent.

According to Arshia, at around 1am on 9 October 2022, the family was told informally by contacts within the police system that they should go to the office of the Investigation Police in Sanandaj. There, the authorities pressured them to sign a document which stated that they had seen the body and were burying him in accordance with their wishes. The family was told that, if they did not sign the document, Peynam Manbari's body would never be returned to them. The authorities at the Office of the Investigation Police also denied the role of state agents in the fatal shooting of Peyman Manbari and said "anti-revolutionary" agents affiliated with Kurdish opposition groups were responsible.

Arshia recalled that, after signing the document, the family was told to go to Behesht Mohammadi cemetery in Sanandaj immediately. Security forces drove behind them. At the cemetery, the family found the body of Peyman Manbari washed and wrapped in a shroud. The burial was carried out in the presence of security forces at around 2.30-3am.

Arshia told Amnesty International that, in advance of the memorial ceremony marking three days following Peyman Manbari's death, which was held in their village of origin, Niar, the then FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county, Alireza Moradi, contacted the family and warned that as many as 20 mourners "could get killed" if the family failed to ensure that the memorial ceremony did not turn into a protest.

1050. See section 6.2.1 for details of Peyman Manbari's case.

FAMILY OF MOHAMMAD SHARIATI



Mohammad Shariati
© Private

Authorities subjected the family of Mohammad Shariati, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 26 October 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1051]

An informed source in Iran, Mohsen, told Amnesty International that the authorities refused to return Mohammad Shariarti's body to his family after he was declared dead at Towhid Hospital in Sanandaj and took it to an unknown location, without the family's consent or knowledge. The family subsequently gathered in front of the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj in protest. The family was told to return home and wait for the authorities to inform them of when they can receive his body.



Mohammad Shariati's gravestone
© Private

According to Mohsen, several hours later, around midnight, an official from the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj called Mohammad Shariati's family and instructed them to immediately go to Behesht Mohammadi cemetery in Sanandaj to bury him. The official emphasized that only eight to 10 relatives were allowed to attend the burial. Security forces, present at the cemetery, did not permit the family to access the room where Mohammad Shariati's body was washed and prepared for burial. The body was brought to the grave site wrapped in shrouds, and the family was only allowed to briefly remove the shroud from Mohammad Shariati's face and take a brief glimpse.

1051. See section 6.2.2 for details of Mohammad Shariarti's case.

FAMILY OF SAMAD BARGINIA



Samad Barginia © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Samad Barginia, who was unlawfully killed by security forces 20 September 2022 in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1052]

An informed source in Iran, Sahand, told Amnesty International that, immediately after his death, Samad Barginia's family received multiple calls from unknown agents who warned the family against speaking out and ordered them to bury him quickly in Urumieh. His family refused to carry out the order, insisting that they wished to bury him in their home town of Mahallat in Markazi province.

According to Sahand, Samad Barginia's family were told to go to the office of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC in Mahallat the next day to discuss the matter. There, an agent who introduced himself as "Abbasi" first told the family that the prosecutor of Mahallat had not permitted the burial to take place there. After several hours and repeated pleas, the agent informed Samad Barginia's family that his body might be transferred to Mahallat for burial on the condition that the family buried him quickly and quietly without inviting anyone to the ceremony. The family was further forced to sign multiple documents undertaking not to speak to anyone about the circumstances surrounding Samad Barginia's death and burial. During the same meeting, the agent denied that security forces had shot Samad Barginia and claimed that protesters were responsible for cases of deaths resulting from metal pellet injuries.

Later that evening, agents transferred the body of Samad Barginia from Urumieh to Mahallat by car. The journey took around 11 hours and the body arrived in Mahallat at around 4-5am on 30 September 2022. Sahand told Amnesty International that security forces did not permit the family to be present in the room where Samad Barginia's body was washed and prepared for burial. The body was brought to the grave site wrapped in shrouds, and agents did not allow the family to remove the shroud to see his body.

9.3.5 CONCEALMENT OF RELEVANT FOOTAGE

The authorities' concealment of evidence also involved deliberately removing or withholding CCTV footage from scenes where individuals were unlawfully killed by security forces, obstructing access to truth and justice and compounding the anguish of victims' families.

According to evidence gathered by the organization, security forces frequently visited shops, mosques, apartment buildings and other private sites near the location of the incident to forcibly confiscate CCTV footage that may have captured events leading to the victim's death. These confiscations were carried out without the presentation of a legal warrant and were often accompanied by threats of arrest and harm if the owners of the premises operating the cameras refused to comply. Families often discovered this practice during their search for the truth, as they attempted to access the same footage from these locations. Security forces carrying out the removal of CCTV footage included agents from the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC, including its Basij forces and Intelligence Organization.

Amnesty International documented a climate of fear among owners of private premises with cameras that may have captured relevant footage. This fear led many to share minimal information with victims'

1052. See section 8.4.1 for details of Samad Barginia's case.

families and to avoid cooperation. The fears were well founded, as illustrated by a case in Baneh, Kurdistan province, where Ministry of Intelligence agents arrested the owner of a private property where CCTV cameras had been installed and detained him for several weeks after footage from the cameras was leaked showing the circumstances surrounding the unlawful killing of Motaleb Saeed Peiro by IRGC agents on 27 October 2022.[1053]

In cases where footage was recorded by state-operated drones or cameras installed at the entrances of state establishments, such as Basij Resistance Bases or police stations, authorities in possession of the footage denied families' requests for access. At times, they cited "security" concerns; in other instances, they claimed the cameras had not been functioning at the time of the incident or that the footage had already been erased.

Amnesty International also documented instances where prosecution officials claimed that they had been unable to obtain the relevant footage from security forces and subsequently failed to process the complaint on grounds that the perpetrator could not be identified.

The authorities' blatant attempts at concealing evidence have also been documented by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, which found that the authorities removed CCTV footage from business premises and streets in the vicinity of which fatal shootings and killings had taken place. Victims' relatives reported that they were told by officials that no CCTV footage of the incidents existed as cameras were broken or the footage had already been erased.[1054]

Furthermore, in cases where security forces stood over victims as they died, they sometimes seized the victims' mobile phones, which may have contained evidence about the circumstances of their death and either refused to return them or returned them with their contents erased.

FAMILY OF ZANIAR ALLAHMORADI



Zaniar Allahmoradi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Zaniar Allahmoradi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 15 November 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violation in the aftermath of his death.[1055]

An informed source in Iran, Arian, told Amnesty International that security forces seized Zaniar Allahmoradi's phone after he was fatally shot. According to Arian, during Zaniar Allahmoradi's funeral, three plain-clothes agents approached his father and warned him not to insist on the return of his son's mobile phone.

Following Zaniar Allahmoradi's death, security forces informed his family that they intended to transfer his body to the barracks of the 28 Division of the Army in Sanandaj. They told the family that they could drive behind the ambulance carrying the body. However, shortly after leaving the hospital, a bus filled with dozens of agents from the Special Cohorts of FARAJA stopped the family on the road. The agents, many of them masked, were armed with batons and firearms. According to Arian, several agents told the family that they were acting on behalf of the county governor of Sanandaj and the Ministry of Intelligence.

1053. See section 6.5.2 for details of Motaleb Saeed Peiro's case.
1054. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 606.
1055. See section 6.2.4 for details of Zaniar Allahmoradi's case.

Arian recalled that the agents pointed a gun at Zaniar Allahmoradi's father's chest and threatened to shoot if the family insisted on retrieving the body. When Zaniar Allahmoradi's brother tried to intervene, the agents also pointed a gun at his forehead. Amid this tension, the ambulance carrying Zaniar Allahmoradi's body drove away.

Arian said that, at around midnight, an official called the family and instructed them to go to the Office of the County Governor of Sanandaj immediately. There, the authorities told the family that the burial must take place immediately. The family was then escorted to Behesht Mohammadi cemetery by security forces and the burial took place at around 1.30am on 16 November 2022.

Arian told Amnesty International that, in the weeks following Zaniar Allahmoradi's death, three strangers came to his family's house and insisted that Zaniar Allahmoradi be officially registered as a "martyr". According to Arian, the men claimed to be the relatives of "martyrs", but the family believed that they were agents as they carried pistols on their waists.

FAMILY OF MOHAMMAD AMINI



Mohammad Amini © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Mohammad Amini, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 8 October 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1056]

An informed source in Iran, Mehran, told Amnesty International that Mohammad Amini's family filed a judicial complaint about a week after his killing, which was then referred to the Office of the Military Prosecutor. The authorities of the Office of the Military Prosecutor have yet to process the complaint. They have repeatedly told the family that they have not been able to secure access to the CCTV and drone footage that could identify the perpetrators.

According to Mehran, the prosecution authorities have also told the family that the security forces were not responsible for the shootings that led to the death of Mohammad Amini, despite eyewitness accounts that the protesters were unarmed at the time of the incident and those who fired at Mohammad Amini were members of the security forces.

9.4 DENIAL OF RIGHT TO JUSTICE

Amnesty International has found that the pattern of human rights violations against victims' families did not cease in December 2022 when large-scale protests subsided. Security forces often continued to perpetrate human rights violations against victims' families for months and years after their loved ones' deaths, seeking to silence them, stop their calls for justice and accountability, suppress their association with other victims' families to prevent public expressions of solidarity and erase the memories of victims from public consciousness.[1057]

1056. See section 6.2.1 for details of Mohammad Amini's case.
1057. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Harassment of families of victims unlawfully killed during protests must end" (Index: MDE 13/7084/2023), 21 August 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7084/2023/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Killings of children during youthful anti-establishment protests" (Index: MDE 13/6104/2022), 9 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6104/2022/en, pp. 8-9; Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent international action needed to ensure accountability for Mahsa Amini's death in custody" (Index: MDE 13/6060/202), 27 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6060/2022/en, p. 4.

Victims' families and survivors who filed complaints with police and prosecution authorities were subjected to further human rights violations, including reprisals, rather than being granted justice, truth and reparation.

9.4.1 LACK OF TRUST AND PREDETERMINED OUTCOMES

Amnesty International's investigations into the unlawful killings of protesters and bystanders in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan has revealed a widespread reluctance among victims' families to lodge complaints with prosecution offices. This reluctance stemmed from deep-rooted concerns about the judiciary's lack of independence and its complicity in human rights violations and repression.[1058] Families consistently noted the futility of pursuing complaints due to institutional flaws arising from the judiciary's integration into the security apparatus that orchestrated and carried out the killings.[1059]

The sense of futility was reinforced by the fact that security forces and judicial authorities routinely issued public statements within hours or days of the incidents, before any formal investigations, that exonerated security forces and attributed them to non-state actors or blamed them on accidents or suicides.[1060]

Many families also feared that they would face reprisals or that their complaints would be manipulated by the authorities to fabricate charges against protesters or others rather than hold members of security forces accountable.[1061] A relative of a man unlawfully killed by security forces in November 2022 in Kurdistan province told Amnesty International that an official at the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan explicitly warned the family that any complaints would be futile and would only expose them to reprisals. He recounted how the official warned him that filing a complaint would only lead to one of two outcomes. If the family was too persistent, the authorities would fabricate charges against them. Alternatively, they might acknowledge that the child was innocent and offer *diyeh* (blood money), but they would never identify the perpetrator. The official claimed that naming the perpetrator would undermine the morale of the security forces, who might then refuse to participate in future operations. He advised the family not to pursue the complaint, saying the outcome was already predetermined.

Families of those killed were not alone in their reluctance to pursue complaints. Amnesty International's previous research found that this hesitation was shared by other victims of the protest crackdown, including survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Out of the 45 survivors whose cases were previously documented by Amnesty International, all but three refrained from filing complaints because they feared further harm from the authorities and believed the judiciary to be a tool of repression rather than redress.[1062] Amnesty International found that their fears were justified as the judicial authorities not only consistently dismissed or covered up evidence of sexual violence, but also relied on forced "confessions" extracted under sexual violence and other torture and other ill-treatment to unjustly prosecute and convict the survivors.[1063]

The three survivors who filed complaints with police and prosecution authorities were subjected to further human rights violations, rather than being granted justice, truth and reparation. They were

1058. See section 11.3 for details on these structural concerns.
1059. See section 11.4.3 for details.
1060. See section 5.3.1 for details on state narratives.
1061. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: Further information: Man facing imminent protest-related execution: Mojahed Kourkouri" (Index: MDE 13/7565/2024), 5 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7565/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Man at risk of protest-related execution: Mojahed (Abbas) Kourkouri" (Index: MDE 13/6935/2023), 5 July 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6935/2023/en
1062. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 82 and 88-91.
1063. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 82-85.

forced to withdraw or stop pursuing their complaints after repeated threats by security forces or months of inaction by the prosecution. One of them was told by a high-ranking official that he had mistaken a body search for sexual violence.

The victims and survivors' lack of trust in the justice system and their well-founded fears about facing reprisals were also documented by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. In its report, the mission stated that victims and their families consistently referred to "prevailing impunity", "the absence of avenues for accountability", the serious risks arising from filing complaints, and the "futility" of complaining as reasons for which they had not lodged complaints.[1064] It stated that victims had reported that they found the question of filing complaints to resemble a "joke"; that all state officials "were members of a coordinated oppression system"; and that it was futile "as the authorities 'were responsible for [the] attacks themselves'".[1065]

FAMILY OF FOAD MOHAMMADI



Foad Mohammadi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Foad Mohammadi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 15 November 2022 in Kamyaran, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1066]

An informed source in Iran, Saba, told Amnesty International that, after Foad Mohammadi's family discovered from neighbours that he had been killed and taken to Sina Hospital in Kamyaran, security forces positioned outside the hospital prevented them from entering the building. According to Saba, when family members loudly objected to being denied access, security forces punched and kicked them and beat them with batons. Saba said that security forces also fired shotgun loaded with metal pellets at them, resulting in Foad Mohammadi's father, uncle and three brothers sustaining injuries. Amnesty International obtained a photograph which shows several people treating the injuries of Foad Mohammadi's father at a private residence.[1067]

According to Saba, security forces broke the glass door of the hospital's entrance using the handles of their guns to create a climate of fear and intimidation. Saba also reported that the security forces fired tear gas to disperse protesters who had peacefully gathered at the entrance of the hospital to express solidarity with Foad Mohammadi's family.

Subsequently, the authorities forced Foad Mohammadi's family to return home and wait for instructions to collect his body. Several hours later, at around 4am, an official called the family and instructed them to go immediately to the morgue of Kamyaran's cemetery. There, agents only allowed Foad Mohammadi's three brothers to enter the room where his body was washed. The authorities informed the family that the burial must take place immediately.

Foad Mohammadi's body was then transported to Mavian village, near Kamyaran, where the family wished to bury him. The family was forced to bury his body at dawn in the presence of

1064. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 613.
1065. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 613.
1066. See section 6.7 for details of Foad Mohammadi's case.
1067. See Omid Barin, X post: خانواده« «فواد محمدی» برای بازپسگیری جنازه پسرشان به بیمارستان #کامیاران رفتند. نه تنها جنازه را تحویل نگرفتند، بلکه به گلوله هم بسته شدند... ["The family of 'Foad Mohammadi' went to Kamyaran Hospital to retrieve their son's body. Not only were they denied the body, but they were also shot at..."], 15 November 2022, https://x.com/barin_omid/status/1592635600363888642 (in Persian).

security forces.

On 17 November 2022, just two days after Foad Mohammadi's death, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported that the head of the justice department in Kurdistan province, Hossein Hosseini, had announced that an investigation had been opened into Foad Mohammadi's "suspicious" death.[1068] His statement exonerated security forces of responsibility and signalled a predetermined outcome. He stated:

"According to preliminary investigations, this person was killed during the riots with a combat bullet [fired] from a distance of 20m. Following the moment of this individual's death, a judicial case was opened at the Department of Justice in Kamyaran and investigations will continue until the issue is clarified. According to the issued directive, military and police forces in Kamyaran, absolutely do not carry combat weapons during riots and their presence in the city."[1069]

Since then, the authorities have also not issued any follow-up public statements about the investigation announced by Hossein Hosseini.

According to Saba, about a week after Foad Mohammadi's death, an official from the Department of Justice in Kamyaran contacted his family and suggested that they file a complaint to identify the perpetrator. Amnesty International understands that the family did not pursue this course of action due to a lack of trust in the judiciary and concerns that the authorities might falsely target an innocent person and unjustly convict them of Foad Mohammadi's killing. Their concerns are justified as Amnesty International has previously documented how the Iranian authorities blame the unlawful killing of protesters and bystanders on non-state actors in order to absolve themselves of any responsibility.[1070]

1068. Tasnim News Agency, ["Judicial case filed for the suspicious death of Foad Mohammadi in Kamyaran / Officers were not carrying military weapons"], 17 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/26/2805723/تشکیل-پرونده-قضایی-برای-مرگ-مشکوک-فواد-محمدی-در-کامیاران-ماموران-سلاح-جنگی-همراه-ندارند (in Persian).

1069. Tasnim News Agency, ["Judicial case filed for the suspicious death of Foad Mohammadi in Kamyaran / Officers were not carrying military weapons"], 17 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/26/2805723/تشکیل-پرونده-قضایی-برای-مرگ-مشکوک-فواد-محمدی-در-کامیاران-ماموران-سلاح-جنگی-همراه-ندارند (in Persian).

1070. Amnesty International, "Iran: Arbitrary execution of Woman Life Freedom protester after sham trial and torture", 11 June 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/06/iran-arbitrary-execution-of-woman-life-freedom-protester-after-sham-trial-and-torture/; Amnesty International, "Iran: Further information: Man facing imminent protest-related execution: Mojahed Kourkouri" (Index: MDE 13/7565/2024), 5 January 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7565/2024/en

FAMILY OF SOLEYMAN (SHOURESH) NIKNAM



Solyeman (Shouresh) Niknam
© Private

Authorities subjected the family of Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam, who was unlawfully shot by security forces on 17 November 2022 in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, and died on 27 November 2022, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1071]

An informed source in Iran, Shahrzad, told Amnesty International that following Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam's death on 27 November 2022, his family waited outside the office of the Legal Medicine Organization in Urumieh for several hours, unsure of when they would receive his body. Eventually, at around 1am, the authorities summoned the family and agreed to return the body on certain conditions. They forced the family to sign an undertaking stating that they would conduct the burial immediately and discreetly on the same night in a village outside Mahabad. According to Shahrzad, the authorities further threatened the family, warning that disobedience or speaking out would result in imprisonment or a fine.

Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam's family buried him in the village of Ghal'e Jouqeh, near Mahabad, at around 4am in the presence of agents.

On 27 November 2022, the same day Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam died and before any investigations had been conducted, the prosecutor general of Mahabad, Mehrab Pourakbar, described his death as "suspicious" in a media interview, and claimed that "no evidence has been provided that security forces shot" him.[1072]



Soleiman (Shouresh) Niknam's wife holding his picture
© Private

Later that year, the family filed a complaint with the police about his killing, seeking the identification and prosecution of the perpetrators. Shahrzad told Amnesty International that during one of the follow-up inquiries with the police, an official again denied any involvement by security forces and instead attributed Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam's death to a "personal enemy" driven by "personal motives". The authorities have not taken any meaningful action in response to the complaint and the case remains unresolved.

1071. See section 8.3.3 for details of Soleyman (Shouresh) Niknam's case.
1072. Mashregh News, مرگ مشکوک یکی از کشته شدگان مهاباد/متهم بازداشت شد ["Suspicious death of one the killed of Mahabad/Suspect arrested"], 22 November 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1440677/مرگ-مشکوک-یکی-از-کشته-شدگان-مهاباد-متهم-بازداشت-شد (in Persian).

9.4.2 PRESSURE TO ABANDON COMPLAINTS AND ACCEPT 'BLOOD MONEY'

Amnesty International found that authorities routinely subjected victims' families to harassment and intimidation to dissuade them from filing formal judicial complaints. This pattern of violations often began immediately after the death, with authorities conditioning the return of victims' bodies on the family's silence and requiring them to sign documents stating that they had no complaints or accepted the state narrative regarding the causes and circumstances of the deaths.

In some cases, harassment and intimidation of victims' families was followed by pressure to accept *diyeh* (blood money) under Iranian law, which allows for financial compensation from government funds when the perpetrator cannot be identified or apprehended. Authorities repeatedly told families that efforts to identify the perpetrators would be futile. These statements, often delivered alongside threats and emotional manipulation, were designed to induce despair and compel families to abandon their pursuit of justice either by accepting financial compensation or by giving up entirely.

Amnesty International found that, in several cases where families of victims in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan filed complaints, the prosecution officials either refused to process complaints, leaving the cases dormant while denying families information and updates, or providing contradictory accounts. In some instances, while authorities refused to act on complaints inside the country, they falsely claimed in international forums that investigations had been conducted and that state actors were not responsible.

For example, after the family of Zakaria Khial, a child protester who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 20 September 2022 in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan province, filed a complaint, prosecution officials ignored the complaint and failed to inform the family about the progress and outcome of the investigation.[1073] However, in a report to member states of the UN Human Rights Council shared ahead of the Special Session on Iran on 24 November 2022, the Iranian authorities claimed that they had investigated the death of Zakaria Khial and "found that law enforcement agents present at the scene had not used combat weapons. Therefore, the terrorist groups and enemies committed the killing in order to fuel the riots and discompose public opinion in line with their killing project."[1074]

In its detailed findings, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran also found that, in some cases, the authorities pressured family members to either not lodge criminal complaints or withdraw them in exchange for receiving *diyeh* (blood money).[1075]

1073. See section 8.4.1 for details of Zakaria Khial's case.
1074. The High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *A Collection of Explanatory Reports Regarding the Death of Mahsa Amini and the Recent Riots in Iran,* 30 October 2022, p. 104.
1075. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1535.

FAMILY OF KOBRA SHEIKHEH



Kobra Sheikheh © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Kobra Sheikheh, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 27 October 2022 in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of her death.[1076]

An informed source in Iran, Nader, told Amnesty International that, after Kobra Sheikheh's family was able to persuade the staff at the hospital she was taken to in Mahabad to release her body to them before security officials could seize it and as they were nearing the family home, more than a dozen members of the security forces on motorcycles began to chase the car in which they were travelling and repeatedly fired shotguns loaded with metal pellets towards them.

According to Nader, who witnessed the incident, the security forces targeted the bereaved family after they noticed Kobra Sheikheh's husband sitting next to the body of his wife in the uncovered rear of a pickup truck. As described by Nader, her husband was crying and loudly condemning the authorities for the killing of his wife, which drew the attention of the security forces and prompted their violent response. Kobra Sheikheh's husband and several other relatives sustained metal pellet injuries on their bodies and faces. The body of Kobra Sheikheh was also riddled with metal pellets. Eventually, the security forces stopped firing and left after Kobra Sheikheh's family promised to take her body quietly into their house.

Later that day, Kobra Sheikheh's family was joined by thousands of protesters and mourners who carried her body in a peaceful procession to Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery in Mahabad. Nader told Amnesty International that security forces, including the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, once again attacked the mourners and protesters with shotguns and tear gas. Nader recounted how mourners were forced to put Kobra Sheikheh's body on the ground after her brother, who was one of the individuals carrying the coffin, was injured by metal pellets fired from shotguns by the security forces and several relatives lost consciousness due to excessive exposure to tear gas. Eventually, after repeated appeals from the family, the security forces allowed the procession to continue.

Nader told Amnesty International that, shortly before arriving at the cemetery, Kobra Sheikheh's husband received a call from an agent who tried to persuade her family to falsely declare to those present at the funeral that several non-state actors had shot Kobra Sheikheh from inside a private vehicle. Her husband refused and insisted that he saw the agents who shot his wife and that they were dressed in uniforms.

Amnesty International learned that, several days after Kobra Sheikheh's death, several officials came to her family home without prior notification and falsely claimed to her relatives that her death was a case of "murder" carried out by "terrorist groups". Nader told the organization that the officials included the prosecutor of Mahabad, Mehrab Pourakbar; a senior intelligence official introducing himself as "Abdi"; the Friday prayer leader of Mahabad, Abdolsalam Emami; and the then county governor of Mahabad, Amir Ghaderi. The officials pushed the family to pursue *diyeh* (blood money).

1076. See section 8.3.2 for details of Kobra Sheikheh's case.

In the following weeks and months, the family was repeatedly pressured by the authorities, including the subsequent county governor of Mahabad, Hassan Abbasi, to forego seeking justice by filing a criminal complaint and instead to request *diyeh* (blood money). The family refused, demanding the identification and prosecution of the state agents suspected of criminal responsibility. Despite pressures, her family lodged a complaint with the prosecution authorities of Mahabad, but have been denied information every time they have sought an update. Relatives have persistently been told that the "government has not yet made a decision" on their case.

FAMILY OF YAHYA RAHIMI


Yahya Rahimi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Yahya Rahimi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 8 October 2022 in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1077]

An informed source in Iran, Pouya, told Amnesty International that Yahya Rahimi's family learned that he had been shot after several videos showing his bloodied body in his car went viral and were shared by Persian-language media outlets outside Iran. Yahya Rahimi's family went to various hospitals in search for information but were not able to find any trace of him. They then went to the morgue of Behesht Mohammadi cemetery in Sanandaj. There, the family was told that Yahya Rahimi's body had not been brought to the cemetery, but they later learned that his body had been in the cemetery's morgue at the time of their visit.

According to Pouya, later that night, the family received a phone call from the Ministry of Intelligence, instructing them to go to the office of the Investigation Police in Sanandaj immediately. There, the then head of the Investigation Police of Kurdistan province, Abdollah Fatehi, told the family that Yahya Rahimi had to be buried immediately in either Behesht Mohammadi cemetery in Sanandaj or a remote village near Sanandaj called Naneleh. This was against the wishes of Yahya Rahimi's family to bury him the following day in their village of origin, Sarab Shahrak Olia, also in Kurdistan province.

Pouya told Amnesty International that the authorities further coerced Yahya Rahimi's father, who is illiterate, to sign several documents without understanding their content. The authorities threatened to bury Yahya Rahimi at a secret location if he refused to bury him immediately and sign the documents. Under duress, the family acquiesced to the authorities' demands.

According to Pouya, under the presence of security forces, including plain-clothes agents, the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the then head of the Investigation Police of Kurdistan province, Abdollah Fatehi, Yahya Rahimi was buried in Behesht Mohammadi cemetery around 2am on 9 October 2022. Pouya told Amnesty International that the plain-clothes agents prevented Yahya Rahimi's family from removing the shroud to observe his body and kiss his face as a final goodbye. Pouya further stated that, during the burial, Abdollah Fatehi denied that the police was responsible for Yahya Rahimi's death.

Pouya told Amnesty International that a local shop owner told Yahya Rahimi's family that, on 9 October 2022, agents from the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC seized from him and other

1077. See section 6.2.1 for details of Yahya Rahimi's case.

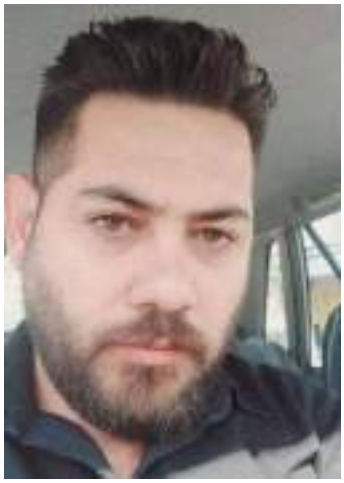
local shop owners the footage of the CCTV cameras that were installed at their entrances and might have recorded the events leading to Yahya Rahimi's death.

According to Pouya, in the following days, the family faced further harassment and intimidation from the authorities in reprisal for seeking to file a complaint about his death. Pouya recalled that, immediately after meeting with the lawyer with a view to filing a complaint, Yahya Rahimi's family received an intimidating phone call with a sinister undertone from an individual who identified himself as a Ministry of Intelligence agent and asked them whether the family was following up on his case and if they had found out any information about the circumstances of his death.

The authorities refused to provide the family of Yahya Rahimi with information after they filed a complaint with the prosecution authorities in Sanandaj in late 2022. Every time the family sought updates, the authorities gave them various explanations for their refusal to provide any information, saying, for example, that the official responsible for processing the complaint was on leave or that the complaint had to be reassigned to a new judicial official.

The authorities also gave the family conflicting information about who was responsible for Yahya Rahimi's death. According to Pouya, on one occasion, a prosecution official told Yahya Rahimi's family that Kurdish opposition groups were responsible for his killing, without providing any further details. On another occasion, the deputy prosecutor of Sanandaj, Roghieh Fatahi, told his family that another protester, Ramin Fatehi, was responsible for Yahya Rahimi's death and that he had committed suicide while held in a Ministry of Intelligence detention centre in Sanandaj. Yahya Rahimi's family rejected this narrative, insisting that security forces were responsible for his killing, and subsequently visited the grave site of Ramin Fatehi in Sanandaj to show their solidarity with his family and challenge the authorities' false narratives.[1078]

FAMILY OF ESMAIL (SIMKO) MOLOUDI



Esmail (Simko) Moloudi © Private

Authorities subjected the family of Esmail Moloudi, who was unlawfully killed by security forces on 26 October 2022 in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of his death.[1079]

An informed source in Iran, Erfan, told Amnesty International that, following Esmail Moloudi's death, agents initially attempted to send his body to Urumieh, West Azerbaijan province, without notifying his family. However, the medical personnel at the hospital in Mahabad where he had been taken bravely objected to this plan and, consequently, his body was moved to the hospital morgue. Esmail Moloudi's family managed to retrieve his body shortly afterwards and brought it back to their home.

The morning after 26 October 2022, at around 3-4am, Esmail Moloudi's family was summoned to the office of the Ministry of Intelligence in Mahabad. There, they were met with several plain-clothes agents who put them under pressure to bury his body during the night. The family refused to accept, noting the mourning rituals of people in Mahabad.

1078. See section 5.3.3(I) for details of Ramin Fatehi's case and Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en

1079. See section 8.3.2 for details of Esmail (Simko) Moloudi's case.

The next morning, the family carried Esmail Moloudi's body in a procession to Bagh-e Ferdows cemetery in Mahabad for burial, accompanied by thousands of mourners and protesters. After returning from the cemetery, a group of mourners and protesters peacefully gathered near Esmail Moloudi's family residence. An eyewitness, Erfan, told Amnesty International that security forces, including the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, fired metal pellets at the group, resulting in injuries to several individuals. Erfan recalled that, at one point, a FARAJA agent aimed his rifle at mourners and that it was only due to the physical intervention of Esmail Moloudi's older father that the agent fired shots into the air rather than at mourners. Erfan recounted how the security forces also extensively fired tear gas, which led to the street where Esmail Moloudi's family home was located becoming engulfed in smoke. Amnesty International reviewed a video filmed near his family home and published on 27 October 2022. The video shows people screaming and running away in distress amid constant sounds of gunfire.[1080]

Following Esmail Moloudi's death, his family filed a complaint with the Investigation Police. In their complaint, the family requested, among other things, that the authorities open an investigation against the commander of Police Station No. 13, which is located near the place where Esmail Moloudi was killed.



Esmail (Simko) Moloudi's relative at his grave site
© Private

Since then, the family has yet to receive any update. Instead, officials, including officials from the IRGC, the Investigation Police and the provincial Justice Department, have made several statements, both publicly and in private, denying that the security forces were responsible for the killing and blaming Esmail Moloudi's death on "anti-revolutionary groups and malicious individuals" and "armed Kurdish opposition groups", all while claiming that investigations were underway and that authorities were "diligently following up on the identification of the shooter(s)".[1081]

At the time the family filed their complaint, a senior official at the Investigation Police advised the family that, rather than pursuing criminal investigations, they should request the payment of *diyeh* (blood money) from government funds pursuant to laws which provide for state-funded financial compensation in cases where the perpetrator cannot be identified and apprehended.

On 27 October 2022, the head of the Justice Department of West Azerbaijan province, Naser Atbati, issued a statement announcing that Esmail Moloudi's family had filed a complaint for "murder" in relation to his death, and claimed that the authorities had opened an investigation to identify the perpetrator. However, before any investigation had taken place, he made remarks aimed at exonerating security forces. He stated that Esmail Moloudi's body "had been found in an area that was not the site of gatherings and riots", a claim that contradicted eyewitness accounts and audiovisual evidence confirming that Esmail Moloudi was shot during the protests. Naser Atbati

1080. Rafiq Hossein Panahi, X post: نیروهای حکومتی در محله گمرک مهاباد که منزل اسماعیل مولودی آنجا واقع شده است، مردم را به رگبار بسته‌اند ["Government forces in Mahabad's Gomrok neighbourhood where Esmail Moloudi's home is located and have opened fire on people"], 27 October 2022, https://x.com/PanahiRafiq/status/1585549541117513729 (in Persian).
1081. See section 10.3.4.

further described reports concerning the killing of Esmail Moloudi as "anti-revolutionary propaganda" and asserted that "security forces do not use firearms at all."[1082] He added, "Yesterday, there were protests and riots in several parts of Mahabad, but live ammunition was not fired."[1083]

On 1 November 2022, the head of the Investigation Police in West Azerbaijan province, Sadegh Shokri, publicly attributed responsibility for the killing of protesters to "anti-revolutionary groups and malicious individuals" who, he said, had "shot at security forces and people from within the crowd".[1084] Sadegh Shokri stated that the police were "diligently following up on the identification of the shooter(s)" and emphasized that it was important "to refrain from making false statements".

Erfan told Amnesty International that, in early November 2022, the authorities convened a meeting between Naser Atbati and the families of several victims, including Esmail Moloudi. During the meeting, Naser Atbati reiterated his denial that security forces were responsible for the killings of protesters and gave assurances that investigations would take place. The families expressed their objection to these denials and emphasized their lack of trust in the promised investigations.

Amnesty International learned that, in late 2022, an agent from the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC called Esmail Moloudi's family and attributed the responsibility of his killing to the Komala Party of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, two armed Kurdish opposition groups. The agent also questioned the family on why they held memorial gatherings and visited the grave sites of the other victims killed in Mahabad.

To date, the authorities have not taken any meaningful action in response to the complaint and the case remains unresolved.

9.4.3 TERMINATION OF INVESTIGATIONS

Of the dozens of cases of unlawful killings documented in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, Amnesty International is aware of only two in which a formal investigation process was initiated following complaints by victims' families. In both cases, however, investigations were eventually terminated without any meaningful steps taken to examine the causes and circumstances of the deaths and to identify those responsible.

These include the cases of Fereydoon Mahmoudi from Saqqez, Kurdistan province, and Danesh Rahnama from Balou, West Azerbaijan province. Legal documents reviewed by Amnesty International show that, in Fereydoon Mahmoudi's case, prosecution officials closed the investigation on the grounds that it was not possible to identify the specific agent responsible.[1085] In Danesh Rahnama's case, the investigation was terminated based on the reasoning that the victim himself was himself at fault for participating in "riots".

In its detailed findings, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran drew a similar conclusion in the few cases in which the mission saw evidence of an investigation being initiated:

1082. Basirat, امروز در مهاباد چه گذشت... ["What happened in Mahabad today..."], 27 October 2022, https://basirat.ir/fa/news/340770/امروز-در-مهاباد-چه-گذشت (in Persian).
1083. Aftab News, در مهاباد چه خبر است؟ ["What's happening in Mahabad?"], 27 October 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/804095/در-مهاباد-چه-خبر-است (in Persian).
1084. Borna News, بررسی قتل‌های مشکوک مهاباد و پیرانشهر توسط پلیس آگاهی آذربایجان غربی ["Investigation of suspicious murders in Mahabad and Piranshahr by the West Azerbaijan Investigation Police"], 1 November 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1393362/بررسی-قتل‌های-مشکوک-مهاباد-و-پیرانشهر-توسط-پلیس-آگاهی-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian).
1085. See section 11.3.2 for more information on the details of the proceedings and the legal framework governing them.

"Offices of prosecutors generally terminated the investigations on the grounds that the individual member of the security forces could not be identified or that victims were effectively guilty as they had taken part in the 'riots'".[1086]

FAMILY OF FEREYDOON MAHMOUDI



Fereydoon Mahmoudi © Private

Authorities unjustly dismissed a complaint filed by Fereydoon Mahmoudi's family about his unlawful killing on 19 September 2022 in Saqqez, Kurdistan province.[1087]

According to information received from Fereydoon Mahmoudi's brother, Farhad Mahmoudi, who lives outside Iran, and another informed source, Rojin, hours after Fereydoon Mahmoudi was shot, an Iranian official summoned them to a police station in Saqqez. At the police station, the authorities informed the family that Fereydoon Mahmoudi had been fatally shot and pressured them to sign a statement attributing responsibility for his death to "anti-revolutionary agents", as a condition to retrieve his body. The authorities then referred the family to Shafa Hospital in Saqqez.

At the hospital, the family was told that Fereydoon Mahmoudi's body had not been brought to the hospital. At around 2.30am on 20 September 2022, a nurse told the family in private that Fereydoon Mahmoudi's body had been brought to the hospital earlier in the evening and then taken away to an unidentified location. The family then loudly protested and pleaded with security officials present at the hospital to reveal the whereabouts of Fereydoon Mahmoudi's body.

In response, the agents told the family to follow an ambulance that was going to transfer the body of Fereydoon Mahmoudi from the hospital to Aichee cemetery in Saqqez. Upon arrival at the cemetery, sometime between 3am and 4am, the family learned from a worker at the cemetery's morgue that his body had been brought to the cemetery hours earlier.

1086. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 607.
1087. See section 6.3.1 for details of Fereydoon Mahmoudi's case.

Farhad Mahmoudi told Amnesty International that about a dozen agents were present at Aichee cemetery in the early morning of 20 September 2022 and that they told the family that the burial had to take place before dawn. The family asked for the burial to take place later in the afternoon on that day, but the officials refused. Eventually, after heated negotiations, the burial took place at 8.30am in the presence of about a dozen agents, who seized the mobile phones of the bereaved relatives to prevent filming and warned them against speaking out.



Fereydoon Mahmoudi's wife at his grave site
© Private

On 21 September 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi, confirmed in a media interview that Fereydoon Mahmoudi had been fatally shot with metal pellets at close range. However, he denied any involvement by security forces and claimed that "anti-revolutionary groups" were responsible for the fatal shooting. He stated that several individuals who had covered their faces with masks transported him in a Peugeot 405 car without a licence plate to a hospital in Saqqez where he died 15 minutes after arrival.

Several days later, Farhad Mahmoudi gave a media interview about the killing of his brother to Iran International, a Persian-language media outlet based outside Iran.[1088] In the interview, Farhad Mahmoudi rejected the official narrative and accused the security forces of unlawfully killing his brother. The prosecution authorities in Saqqez subsequently summoned his parents in reprisal and threatened them, saying that Farhad Mahmoudi would be harmed if he did not "shut his mouth".[1089]

Farhad Mahmoudi told Amnesty International that, during a memorial ceremony marking three days after Fereydoon Mahmoudi's death, the then county governor of Saqqez, Jafar Tavan, approached a relative and said that, if the family "stays silent", he would ensure that they would be paid *diyeh* (blood money) and given land.

Despite the pressure, the family filed a complaint with the prosecution authorities on 22 September 2022.[1090] Several months later, on 11 April 2023, Branch One of the Office of the Military Prosecutor in Saqqez and Baneh, issued an order terminating the investigation.[1091] The order, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, confirmed that FARAJA forces, including the Special Cohorts, had been deployed to the protest site where Fereydoun Mahmoudi was fatally shot and that they were armed with and fired weapons loaded with metal pellets. More specifically, the order cited an official communiqué by the Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA stating that the Special Cohorts had fired over 40 cartridges loaded with metal pellets. Despite asserting that "it was evident" that an agent of the Special Cohorts was responsible for fatally shooting Fereydoun

1088. Iran International, X post: فرهاد محمودی، برادر جان‌باخته در اعتراضات سقز در برنامه #چشم‌انداز_با_سیماثابت می‌گوید... ["Farhad Mahmoudi, the brother of a protest victim in Saqqez, said on the programme #*Cheshm Andaz* _with_Sima Sabet..."], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1572638026773434369 (in Persian).

1089. Iran International, X post: فرهاد محمودی، برادر جان‌باخته در اعتراضات سقز در برنامه #چشم‌انداز_با_سیماثابت می‌گوید... ["Farhad Mahmoudi, the brother of a protest victim in Saqqez, said on the programme #*Cheshm Andaz* _with_Sima Sabet..."], 21 September 2022, https://x.com/IranIntl/status/1572638026773434369 (in Persian).

1090. See section 11.3.2 for details of the outcome of the complaint.

1091. IRN0473, legal document on file with Amnesty International.

Mahmoudi, the order stated that it was not possible to identify the specific individual agent responsible for the shooting. As such, the order concluded that the investigations should be terminated. The order further stated that the case should be referred to a military court solely to determine the issue of *diyeh* (blood money), to be paid by the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, without assigning specific criminal responsibility to any individual agent.[1092]

FAMILIES OF DANESH RAHNAMA AND ABDOLLAH MAHMOUDPOUR



Abdollah Mahmoudpour (left) and Danesh Rahnama (right)
© Private

Authorities subjected the families of Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour, who were unlawfully killed by security forces on 21 September 2022 in the village of Balou, West Azerbaijan province, to various human rights violations in the aftermath of their deaths.[1093]

An informed source in Iran, Yahya, told Amnesty International that officials confiscated crucial footage captured by the CCTV camera of a local shop which likely recorded the events leading to the unlawful killings of Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour.

1092. See section 11.3.2 for the domestic legal framework underpinning the ruling.
1093. See section 8.6.1 for details on Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour's cases.

Official legal documents reviewed by Amnesty International reveal the failure of prosecution authorities to conduct independent, impartial and transparent investigations and their efforts to shield security forces from accountability.



Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour's grave site
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The first of the documents, dated 19 December 2022, is the final order from an investigator at Branch 7 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Urumieh.[1094] In his order, the investigator states that a forensic report by the Legal Medicine Organization confirmed that Danesh Rahnama died from a haemorrhage resulting from injuries to major blood vessels in the chest and arm caused by the impact of a bullet. Similarly, he states that Abdollah Mahmoudpour died from internal bleeding resulting from damage to internal thoracic organs due to the impact of a bullet.

The investigator then proceeds to cite the ruling of a biased body, composed of the Investigation Police and the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC in West Azerbaijan province, which concluded that Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour were "among the rioters" and were shot and killed "near the site of the riots, where rioters intended to attack the Basij [Resistance] Base" of the village of Balou.[1095] However, according to the prosecutor, "it was unclear from which direction the shots were fired and by whom." On this basis, the investigator issued an order to discontinue the prosecution, citing the absence of an identified suspect.[1096]

The family of Danesh Rahnama appealed against the order before the Criminal Court in Urumieh on 28 December 2022. In their appeal, the family stated that Danesh Rahnama was not among the protesters but was inside an alley behind the Basij Resistance Base of Balou, about 200m away, when agents from the base fatally shot him from behind in his left shoulder blade with a bullet fired from a Kalashnikov rifle.[1097] Other legal documents reviewed by Amnesty International indicate that the Investigation Police confirmed the type of rifle used in the shooting. In their appeal, the family alleged that, following the fatal shooting, agents from Balou's Basij Resistance Base removed cameras and CCTV footage from the scene of the incident. The document reviewed by Amnesty International did not provide further information regarding the evidence supporting this allegation. The family asked for the order to be overturned and for the authorities to investigate and identify the perpetrators.

On 14 January 2023, Branch 1 of the Criminal Court in Urumieh issued its verdict.[1098] The court held that Danesh Rahnama was shot with a bullet from a Kalashnikov rifle, which entered the back of the upper left arm and exited through the chest. Similarly, it stated that Abdollah Mohammadpour was shot with a bullet from a Kalashnikov rifle, which struck the middle of his

1094. IRN0470, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
1095. For more information on the legal framework governing the formation of such bodies, see section 11.2.3.
1096. For more information on the pattern of prosecution authorities terminating investigations, see section 11.3.1.
1097. IRN0469, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
1098. IRN0471, legal document on file with Amnesty International.

back, ricocheted and lodged in the upper front part of the right side of his chest. After extraction, it was determined that the bullet which struck Abdollah Mohammadpour had a specific calibre and markings showing it had been fired from a rifle with grooves that spin the bullet from left to right.

According to other documents cited by the court verdict, the family of Abdollah Mohammadpour made a complaint in which they noted that he was on his way home when he was caught in the protests and was subsequently killed by agents from the Basij Resistance Base in Balou.

The court verdict also cited a report by the Investigation Police, which alleged that Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour had exploited the death of Zhina Mahsa Amini to participate in protests alongside "armed illegal anti-regime elements", with "the intention of attacking the Basij Resistance Base of Balou". The report further alleged that they were killed during an exchange of "blind fire". These assertions contradicted the forensic findings and the families' testimonies and served to shift blame from the security forces to the victims and protesters.

However, the court held that the investigator had closed the case without sufficient evidence and observed that the case file indicated that complete answers from the Investigation Police had either not been received or had not been recorded. The court also noted that the investigator had failed to interview the families of the two victims.

Accordingly, the court found the investigation to be inadequate and returned the case to Branch 7 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Urumieh with extensive instructions for further investigations. The court ordered the authorities to review all available CCTV footage from the area where Danesh Rahnama and Abdollah Mahmoudpour were shot to determine whether any protesters carried firearms or shot at security forces.

The court further instructed the investigator to establish whether there was any evidence of gunfire by protesters in the vicinity of the Basij base and to examine reports from FARAJA, the IRGC and other agencies to determine whether any evidence existed of an attack on the Basij base on the day of the killings. The court emphasized that the authorities had to verify whether security forces were armed and, if so, identify the type of firearms they carried, although it also repeated the official claim that security forces deployed during protests were not supposed to carry firearms and were only equipped with batons and tear gas. Finally, the court requested ballistic analysis to match the recovered bullets with any weapons possessed by security forces.

The court held that the investigator's decision to close the case had no legal basis and ordered the case to be returned to the prosecutor's office for rectification of the "investigative deficiencies". However, in the following years and as of 2026, the family was provided with no update on the investigations.

10. COMMAND STRUCTURE OF SECURITY BODIES INVOLVED IN REPRESSING 2022 PROTESTS

> **"We, the commanders and officials of the General Staff of the Armed Forces… the Army, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Police Command and the Ministry of Defence… following the absolute leadership of the Supreme Leader… will give a response that serves as a lesson to seditionists [protesters] … and the main enemies of the [Islamic Republic] system."**
>
> Excerpt from a joint open letter, dated 6 October 2022, addressed to the then Supreme Leader by the then commanders of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA, on the one hand, and the minister of defence, on the other, regarding the repression of the Woman Life Freedom protests[1099]

Iranian authorities deployed thousands of agents from various branches of the country's security forces to repress the Woman Life Freedom uprising, which gripped Iran from September through the end of 2022. Amnesty International's research concludes that the two main security forces responsible for the lethal dispersal of protests during this period were the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA), both of

1099. Mehr News Agency, فرماندهان نیروهای مسلح با فرمانده معظّم کل قوا تجدید بیعت کردند ["Commanders of armed forces renewed their allegiance to commander-in-chief of all armed forces"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603568/فرماندهان-نیروهای-مسلح-با-فرمانده-معظّم-کل-قوا-تجدید-بیعت-کردند (in Persian).

which operated under the General Staff of the Armed Forces.[1100] These forces implemented repressive policies and strategies formulated by a hierarchy of security councils including the Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council), the State Security Council, and subsidiary councils at provincial and county levels known as provision councils. The resolutions adopted by these councils were made enforceable through orders from the Ministry of Interior. All entities were unified by a single overarching mandate: to crush dissent and preserve the Islamic Republic system in strict adherence to directives from the then Supreme Leader.

This chapter is divided into four sections, each focusing in turn on the General Staff of the Armed Forces; FARAJA including its connection with the Ministry of Interior; the IRGC; and the security councils, including the Supreme Council, the State Security Council, and the provincial and county provision councils. Each section describes the command and organizational structure of the entity concerned and its mandate, followed by an overview of official statements made by its top commanders during the protest period and, wherever available, leaked official documents that reveal the role of the entity and its leadership in the repression.

Due to the organizational complexity of FARAJA and the IRGC and the focus of this report on in-depth documentation of incidents of lethal protest dispersals, the sections dedicated to these forces include, in addition to a broad overview of their overall structure and mandate, a detailed examination of the structure, mandate and uniforms[1101] of the specific branches within these forces, which were involved in the dispersal of protests during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. In the case of FARAJA, the branches examined include the Prevention Police and the Special Cohorts. In the case of the IRGC, the branches examined include the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, operational divisions and brigades, Security Cohorts and Special Forces. The chapter does not cover entities which were responsible for human rights violations committed in detention settings.

The selection of official statements reflects the structure of this report, which provides in-depth documentation of the lethal protest dispersals carried out by the IRGC and FARAJA forces in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and West Azerbaijan, while situating these events within a broader nationwide context of unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations. Accordingly, the selected statements include those made by the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces at the time of the 2022 protests and 24 other senior officials including five FARAJA commanders, 11 IRGC commanders and eight Ministry of Interior officials.

As for leaked official documents, 10 are examined in total. Five are national in scope, while one pertains to Kurdistan province, three to Greater Tehran, and one to Mazandaran province. Although the latter four do not correspond to the report's focus on the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, they are included because they offer valuable insight into possible orders issued in other parts of the country and help illustrate how command was exercised.

1100. As explained in section 10.1, the General Staff of the Armed Forces in Iran oversees four entities which are collectively referred to as the "armed organizations" or "armed forces" of the Islamic Republic of Iran under Iranian law. The four entities are the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army), the IRGC, FARAJA, which is the country's police force, and the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Ministry of Defence). Official statements point to the cooperation of Army agents with the IRGC and FARAJA in the suppression of the protests. However, eyewitness testimonies and video evidence gathered by Amnesty International during its in-depth investigations into the repression of protests in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan contained no information regarding the involvement of the Army. The Ministry of Defence was not involved in protest dispersal operations on the ground. For these reasons, this report only focuses on the roles of FARAJA and the IRGC.
1101. While focusing on the specific uniforms used by these security forces, Amnesty International notes that agents of these branches may also operate in plain clothes, a practice the organization has repeatedly documented.

10.1 GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES

The General Staff of the Armed Forces in Iran oversees four entities which are collectively referred to as the "armed organizations" or "armed forces" of the Islamic Republic of Iran under Iranian law.[1102] The four entities are the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army), the IRGC, FARAJA, which is the country's police force, and the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Ministry of Defence). The General Staff of the Armed Forces in turn falls under the command of the Supreme Leader. As the commander-in-chief, the Supreme Leader appoints and dismisses the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the general commanders of the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA, and exercises command over them.[1103] The minister of defence is appointed by the president, with the approval of the Supreme Leader and after receiving a vote of confidence from the parliament.[1104]

The term "armed forces", as used by Iranian authorities, refers to entities authorized to carry firearms either for military operations in armed conflicts or for domestic security operations. As such, the term does not solely denote military bodies as understood in a global context. In this report, except when quoting Iranian authorities directly, Amnesty International uses the broader term "security forces".

1102. See, for example, the Law on the Recruitment of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Recruitment Law), the Law on the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Army Law), the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces.
1103. Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Article 110.
1104. According to Article 19 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defence is subject to the laws and regulations of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and is responsible for supporting the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA in accordance with the law and the directives of the commander-in-chief.



The second Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Khamenei (third from the left), who was the commander-in-chief of all armed forces, standing with commanders of those forces at the time of the 2022 protests. The officials standing to his left are, in order: the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami; and the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari. The officials standing to his right are, in order: the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri; and the then general commander of the Army, Abdolrahim Mousavi. © Jahan News[1105]

10.1.1 COMMAND AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

According to Article 17 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, the General Staff of the Armed Forces has command authority over the Army, the IRGC (including the Basij forces) and FARAJA, as well as the Ministry of Defence, and "must perform its duties based on the mandate, commands and measures issued by the Supreme Leader."

Based on Article 110 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (the constitution), the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces is appointed by the Supreme Leader. Official media statements indicate that the Supreme Leader also appoints the deputy head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.[1106]

Articles 21 and 37 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces state that the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces is the "highest-ranking official in the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran" and they "assist the commander-in-chief [the Supreme Leader] in directing the affairs of the armed forces."

The orders issued by the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces to the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA may originate from different sources. According to experts in Iran's security apparatus, the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces may receive orders from the Supreme Leader via the

1105. Jahan News, حضور رهبر انقلاب در دانشگاه امام حسین ["Supreme Leader's presence at Imam Hossein University"], 30 June 2018, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/623646/2/حضور-رهبر-انقلاب-دانشگاه-امام-حسین-ع (in Persian).
1106. Donya-e-Eqtesad, امیر آشتیانی جانشین رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح شد ["Amir Ashtiani becomes deputy head of General Staff of the Armed Forces"], 28 August 2024, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-62/4099384-امیر-آشتیانی-جانشین-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-شد (in Persian).

Military Office of the Supreme Leader and then reissue them to the relevant force and oversee their effective implementation.

Alternatively, the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces may issue orders to any of the three forces based on decisions of the Supreme Council, which in turn must be approved by the Supreme Leader. As per Article 176 of the constitution, the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces is one of the members of the Supreme Council.

The head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces can also devise and issue their own orders to the forces in line with the orders and directives of the Supreme Leader.

Within the General Staff of the Armed Forces, there is also an entity called the Ideological and Political Office of the Commander-in-Chief, which provides another avenue for the Supreme Leader to exercise authority over the armed forces and enforce adherence to the ideological and religious tenets of the Islamic Republic system.[1107] The head of this office is appointed by the Supreme Leader and also referred to as the representative of the Supreme Leader within the General Staff of the Armed Forces.[1108]

10.1.2 MANDATE

Article 176 of the constitution refers to the "Command Staff of All Armed Forces", but does not elaborate on its mandate. Instead, the mandate is derived from the orders issued by the first Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Rouhollah Khomeini, and his successor, Ali Khamenei.

In a written decree issued on 2 June 1988, Rouhollah Khomeini appointed Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as his deputy commander-in-chief and tasked him with establishing what he then called the "Command Staff of All Forces" to ensure "full coordination between the Army, the IRGC, the Basij,[1109] and police forces in all areas related to the sacred defence of Islam."[1110] Rouhollah Khomeini set the context for his order by referring to "the direct confrontation of the oppressive America against Islam and Iran, as well as the coordination between the West, the East and regional reactionaries in their struggle against the Islamic Revolution and to prevent the victory of Islam."[1111]

In a media interview two days later, on 4 June 1988, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani explained the necessity of establishing the entity as follows:

1107. Gholamreza Safaei, Mehdi Kamkar and Ebrahim Golfam, مقاله پژوهشی: تدوین دکترین نمایندگی ولیفقیه و عقیدتی سیاسی نیروهای مسلح بر اساس گفتمان امامین انقالب و قانون اساسی ["Research article: Developing the doctrine of the Supreme Leader's representation and the Ideological and Political Organization of the Armed Forces based on the discourse of the two leaders of the Islamic Revolution and the Constitution"], 2019, Quarterly Journal of Strategic Defence Studies, https://sds.sndu.ac.ir/article_435_16b910008bf7877ee537038a4c4c526e.pdf (in Persian).

1108. Entekhab News, نماینده ولی‌فقیه در ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح: سه هدف دشمن در جنگ اخیر، نابودی فیزیکی، تضعیف قدرت موشکی و فروپاشی نظام جمهوری اسلامی بود / هدف نهایی آن‌ها فروپاشی جمهوری اسلامی از درون بود، اما این خیال خام هرگز محقق نشد ["Representative of the Supreme Leader within the General Staff of the Armed Forces: The enemy had three objectives in recent war - physical destruction, weakening Iran's missile capabilities, and the collapse of the Islamic Republic; their ultimate goal was the internal collapse of the Islamic Republic, but this wishful thinking never came to pass"], 1 July 2025, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/873087 (in Persian); Khamenei.ir, انتصاب نماینده ولی‌فقیه در سپاه و رئیس دفتر عقیدتی سیاسی فرماندهی کل قوا ["Appointment of the Representative of the Supreme Leader to the IRGC and head of the Ideological and Political Office of the Commander-in-Chief"], 5 March 2018, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=39105 (in Persian).

1109. At the time, the Basij was a separate entity from the IRGC.

1110. Defa Press, تشکیل ستاد فرماندهی کل: قوا تدبیری تاریخی برای ایجاد هماهنگی بین نیروهای مسلح ["Establishment of Command Staff of All Forces: A historic measure for creating coordination among armed forces"], 3 July 2017, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/245756/تشکیل-ستاد-فرماندهی-کل-قوا-تدبیری-تاریخی-برای-ایجاد-هماهنگی-بین-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian).

1111. Defa Press, تشکیل ستاد فرماندهی کل قوا: تدبیری تاریخی برای ایجاد هماهنگی بین نیروهای مسلح ["Establishment of Command Staff of All Forces: A historic measure for creating coordination among armed forces"], 3 July 2017, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/245756/تشکیل-ستاد-فرماندهی-کل-قوا-تدبیری-تاریخی-برای-ایجاد-هماهنگی-بین-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian).

"Even in the absence of war, the presence of a unified command to manage the armed forces is essential. This is especially true given the current situation of the country, where several separate armed forces exist in the form of the Army, the IRGC, the Basij and [other] armed units. Before appointing a unified command for the armed forces, each of these forces operated in different ways with the authority granted to them by the Imam [Supreme Leader]. Recently, it was felt that this method had drawbacks, and that these forces needed to be managed in a centralized manner."[1112]

In a written decree issued on 15 January 1992, Iran's second Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, directed that the entity's name should be changed from the Command Staff of All Forces to the General Staff of the Armed Forces and clarified that the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces holds a position equivalent to that described in Article 176 of the constitution as the head of the Command Staff of All Armed Forces. In the same command, Ali Khamenei reiterated that the mandate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces is to ensure that the Army, the IRGC, and FARAJA act in "unison" as they carry out their "diverse missions" while "collectively holding the responsibility of safeguarding national security and the Islamic Republic system".[1113]

According to information published by state media, the General Staff of the Armed Forces has since become the country's "most important entity" in military and security affairs, with its responsibilities described as follows:

"The General Staff of the Armed Forces is responsible for integrating, completing and coordinating intelligence assessments prepared by the Joint Staff of the Army and the General Staff of the IRGC; determining the overall policies and strategies of the armed forces in areas pertaining to personnel, training, intelligence, operations, logistics, planning and budgeting, based on measures coming from the commander-in-chief; and communicating these policies to the Joint Staff of the Army, the General Staff of the IRGC and the police force [FARAJA].

"The mandate of the General Staff also includes providing guidelines for developing the organizational chart and equipment of the armed forces in accordance with strategic plans and ensuring that the charts prepared by each organization [the Army, the IRGC, and FARAJA] conform to the guidelines and measures provided [to facilitate] approval by the commander-in-chief.

"The General Staff is further responsible for reviewing proposals from the IRGC and the Army regarding weapon systems, establishing and guiding operational command centres of armed forces, considering and developing long-term policies and programmes in order to achieve consistency and uniformity across all areas related to training, organization, logistics, personnel, intelligence, and operations within the armed forces."[1114]

1112. Defa Press, ["Establishment of Command Staff of All Forces: A historic measure for creating coordination among armed forces"], 3 July 2017, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/245756/تشکیل-ستاد-فرماندهی-کل-قوا-تدبیری-تاریخی-برای-ایجاد-هماهنگی-بین-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian).

1113. Khamenei.ir, ["Command to Dr Firouzabadi and Major General Mohsen Rezaei for the change of title from 'Command Staff of All Forces' to 'General Staff of the Armed Forces' and 'General Staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' to 'Joint Staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps'"], 15 January 1992, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=2556 (in Persian).

1114. Defa Press, ["Establishment of Command Staff of All Forces: A historic measure for creating coordination among armed forces"], 3 July 2017, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/245756/تشکیل-ستاد-فرماندهی-کل-قوا-تدبیری-تاریخی-برای-ایجاد-هماهنگی-بین-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian); Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA), ["Details of the change to the structure of the most important military institution in the country"], 29 June 2016, https://www.isna.ir/news/95040105223/جزئیات-تغییر-ساختار-مهم-ترین-نهاد-نظامی-کشور (in Persian).

On 10 July 2016, the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, emphasized that it must be able "to effectively respond in a timely manner to any type and level of threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran, given the enemies' various conspiracies… to infiltrate and spread unrest within the country."

Mohammad Bagheri stated: "This will be pursued by enhancing the capabilities and readiness of the armed forces and completing efficient processes of intelligence, operations, readiness, and proper command and control."[1115]

From the statements of Rouhollah Khomeini in the 1980s referring to "the struggle of enemies against the Islamic Revolution and Islam" to the recent statements by Mohammad Bagheri referring to the need to confront any perceived "conspiracies and threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran", the central role of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, together with the three forces under its command, has remained consistent. Its mandate has been to preserve the existence of the Islamic Republic's theocratic system and to defend it against any challenges, especially those arising from alternative political visions based on freedom of religion and belief, pluralism and democracy. This approach fails to distinguish between acts of violence against the Islamic Republic system and exercises of the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, association and peaceful assembly, which are guaranteed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party. These rights include the right to criticize the political and social system promoted by the authorities and to peacefully advocate, including through street protests, for any political ideas or visions, provided those ideas do not incite hatred or violence.[1116]

10.1.3 OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

After the protests erupted on 16 September 2022, the General Staff of the Armed Forces, as well as its then head, Mohammad Bagheri, issued multiple statements praising the security forces for quelling the protests. Given the hierarchical structure of Iran's security apparatus and the political sensitivity of the nationwide protests, it is reasonable to deduce that Mohammad Bagheri was directly involved in approving the statements issued by the General Staff of the Armed Forces.

On 23 September 2022, the General Staff of the Armed Forces issued its first statement since the protests began on 16 September. The statement criminalized protesters, labelling them as "chaos makers", "hired terrorists", "mercenaries" and "anti-revolutionary elements" engaged in "abnormalities" and "disrupting order and social health" pursuant to "the enemies' conspiracies". It declared "the readiness of armed forces to confront conspiracies" and warned that "it will not tolerate any insecurity" and that "it will respond severely to anyone disrupting public order and security." It also sought to legitimize the use of repressive tactics by framing the protests as national security threats that undermined the historical sacrifices of "thousands of martyrs and veterans for the security and tranquillity of the nation".

By 23 September 2022, when the General Staff of the Armed Forces released this first statement, the security forces had already carried out a lethal crackdown, killing at least 83 protesters and bystanders in 42 counties across 17 provinces in Iran, according to information gathered by Amnesty

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1115. ISNA, ۴ وظیفه اساسی ستادکل نیروهای مسلح در دوره جدید پاسخگویی به تهدیدات در هر سطحی حیاتی است ["Fundamental duty of the General Staff of the Armed Forces in the new era: responding to threats at any level is vital"], 10 July 2016, https://www.isna.ir/news/95040110874/۴-وظیفه-اساسی-ستادکل-نیروهای-مسلح-در-دوره-جدید-پاسخگویی-به-تهدیدات (in Persian).

1116. Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), General comment 34: Freedoms of opinion and expression (Article 19), 29 July 2011, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/34; OHCHR, General comment 37: Right of peaceful assembly (Article 21), 17 September 2020, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/37.

International.[1117] Despite this, it claimed in its statement that the security forces had exercised "restraint" and unequivocally praised them as "guardians of the country's psychological and social security", asserting that they deserve respect and support from "any fair-minded and patriotic Iranian".

This praise, combined with references to "the readiness of the armed forces", a policy of "not tolerating any insecurity" and warnings that it would "deal severely" with protesters, indicates that it had instructed the security forces under its command to continue the lethal crackdown.

The statement reads:



Logo of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"The efforts of the police force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as guardians of the country's psychological and social security, at the forefront of combating abnormalities and confronting those disrupting order and societal health, are not a matter that any fair-minded and patriotic Iranian would overlook. However, unfortunately, in the events of recent days, it has been sometimes observed how the restraints exercised led chaos makers and hired terrorists into thinking delusionally that with a few disruptive moves involving attacks against the guardians of order and people's tranquillity, they can challenge the authority of the police and the security of the country… The vigilant people of Islamic Iran, by distinguishing their line of protests from that of these hired and mercenary rioters, quickly exposed the latter's anti-security nature…

"The General Staff of the Armed Forces declares the readiness of armed forces organizations to confront the enemies' conspiracies, and states that it will not allow the current security and tranquillity of the nation, which is the result of the struggles of thousands of martyrs and veterans, to be jeopardized.

"Finally, while offering condolences for the passing of the late [Zhina] Mahsa Amini to her family, the General Staff of the Armed Forces warns hostile and anti-revolutionary grouplets and anti-revolutionary elements inside the country that it will not tolerate any aggression or insecurity and will severely deal with those disrupting public order and security."[1118]

On 6 October 2022, amid a nationwide lethal crackdown, Mohammad Bagheri, the commanders of the three forces he oversaw – the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA – and the minister of defence issued an open letter, addressed to the then Supreme Leader, that reaffirmed their intense and unwavering resolve to continue the same course of action to preserve the Islamic Republic system, using phrases such as "until the last drop of blood, the last breath, and to the end of our lives".[1119]

1117. See Chapter 5.

1118. Young Journalists Club, با برهم‌زنندگان نظم و امنیت عمومی برخورد قاطعانه خواهد شد ["Disruptors of order and public security will be dealt with decisively"], 23 September 2022, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8245548/با-برهم‌زنندگان-نظم-و-امنیت-عمومی-برخورد-قاطعانه-خواهد-شد (in Persian).

1119. Mehr News Agency, فرماندهان نیروهای مسلح با فرمانده معظّم کل قوا تجدید بیعت کردند ["Commanders of armed forces renewed their allegiance to commander-in-chief of all armed forces"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603568/فرماندهان-نیروهای-مسلح-با-فرمانده-معظّم-کل-قوا-تجدید-بیعت-کردند (in Persian).

In addition to using the terms commonly used by the authorities to demonize protesters such as "seditionists" and "conspirators", in their open letter, Mohammad Bagheri and his subordinates presented the actions of the security forces as fulfilling their religious duty to pursue "jihad" against "enemies of God's religion", "infidels" and "polytheists".

They also conveyed that they were "closely monitoring and observing any actions and conspiracies" and signalled preparedness for a "severe response that serves as a lesson to seditionists, conspirators and the main enemies of the system".

Finally, they emphasized that in all their operations, the forces under their command were firmly committed to following the "commands, measures, wise guidance and brilliant objectives" and "absolute leadership" of the Supreme Leader, whom they described as "a divine and highly esteemed leader".[1120] The emphasis on absolute adherence to the orders and strategies of the Supreme Leader indicates that the actions carried out during the lethal crackdown were based on and aligned with the instructions and strategic plans originating from the highest authority in the state. Their statement reads:



Logos of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (top) and the four entities over which it has authority: the Army, the IRGC, FARAJA and the Ministry of Defence (from right to left).

"We, the commanders and officials of the armed forces, including the General Staff… the Army, the IRGC, FARAJA and the Ministry of Defence… once again pledge to the Guardian of the Muslims, our master and leader, and our brave, powerful, and dearly beloved commander [the Supreme Leader], that in the luminous path of the Islamic Revolution and its lofty ideals, we will continue the jihad and struggle against the enemies of God's religion, the infidels, polytheists, *monafeghin* [hypocrites], seditionists, and those wishing malice for… the Islamic Iran. We will defend the Islamic nation and the resistance front in

1120. Mehr News Agency, فرماندهان نیروهای مسلح با فرمانده معظّم کل قوا تجدید بیعت کردند ["Commanders of armed forces renewed their allegiance to commander-in-chief of all armed forces"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603568/فرماندهان-نیروهای-مسلح-با-فرمانده-معظّم-کل-قوا-تجدید-بیعت-کردند (in Persian); Defa Press, تش تشکیل ستاد فرماندهی کل قوا: تدبیری تاریخی برای ایجاد هماهنگی بین نیروهای مسلح ["Establishment of Command Staff of All Forces: A historic measure for creating coordination among armed forces"], 3 July 2017, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/245756/تشکیل-ستاد-فرماندهی-کل-قوا-تدبیری-تاریخی-برای-ایجاد-هماهنگی-بین-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian).

every place and at every point under your leadership, until the last drop of blood, the last breath, and to the end of our lives…

"The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran… following the absolute leadership of the Supreme Leader… will not allow any harm to come to the security of the people, the country, the Islamic Revolution, and its achievements. They will closely monitor and observe any actions and conspiracies of the enemies, both domestically and abroad, and will give a response that serves as a lesson to seditionists, conspirators, and especially the main enemies of the system…

"In the end, we acknowledge that we have taken as our guiding principles the commands, measures, wise guidance, and brilliant objectives of that divine and highly esteemed leader who is our brave and wise commander [the Supreme Leader]. By the grace of God, we will not be inattentive for a moment to the plots of the enemies."[1121]

Two days later, on 8 October 2022, Mohammad Bagheri emphasized the "responsibility" of the forces under his command to continue their conduct at full steam to "restore complete security" and "achieve convincing results in the field". He also revealed that in repressing the protests, FARAJA forces were to cooperate with the IRGC forces, including both their permanent personnel and Basij agents. He stated:



The head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Bagheri © Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)

"It is the responsibility and mission of FARAJA, in cooperation with the IRGC [including] the Basij, to restore complete security… Armed forces are a unified entity and a cohesive ensemble, differing only in the colour of their uniforms, all marching in line to ensure security…

"Commanders of the armed forces must pay close attention to the consequences and effectiveness of their actions and achieving convincing results in the field."[1122]

In his 8 October 2022 statement, Mohammad Bagheri reiterated that the Supreme Leader described the protests as a "hybrid war" encompassing "military, security and cultural threats". He stated:

1121. Mehr News Agency, ["Commanders of armed forces renewed their allegiance to commander-in-chief of all armed forces"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603568/فرماندهان-نیروهای-مسلح-با-فرمانده-معظّم-کل-قوا-تجدید-بیعت-کردند (in Persian).

1122. ISNA, ["Head of General Staff of Armed Forces emphasized necessity of preparedness against a hybrid war"], 8 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071607747/تاکید-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-بر-لزوم-آمادگی-در-برابر-جنگ-ترکیبی (in Persian).



The head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Bagheri (left), and the then Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Khamenei (right) © Hawzah News Agency[1123]

"The commander-in-chief of all armed forces [Ali Khamenei] has repeatedly emphasized the need to address combined threats, and today we are indeed facing such threats: military, security, cultural… The commander-in-chief of all armed forces has stated that the war effort we are engaged in should be aimed at combating hybrid warfare, a tremendously challenging and complex task entrusted to us and other commanders of the armed forces."[1124]

This reference to the instructions of the Supreme Leader and his emphasis on framing the protest response as warfare signal that the militarized response carried out by the security forces against the protesters was ordered and authorized by the Supreme Leader, which the General Staff of the Armed Forces subsequently endorsed and enforced.

By 8 October 2022, human rights groups and media outlets had published numerous reports about the commission of unlawful killings and other crimes by FARAJA forces.[1125] The Iranian authorities were aware of these reports, as indicated by their public denials blaming the killings on non-state actors.[1126] Despite this mounting evidence, in his 8 October statement, Mohammad Bagheri expressed "gratitude to FARAJA commanders and employees for their services and efforts in establishing order and security across the country" and presented their actions as "honourable" and approved by God. He stated:

1123. Hawzah News Agency, قرارگاه بهداشتی و درمانی برای سازماندهی خدمات به مردم تشکیل شود ["Health and medical headquarters should be established to organize services to the people"], 12 March 2020, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/890492/-قرارگاه-بهداشتی-و-درمانی-برای-سازماندهی-خدمات-به-مردم-تشکیل-شود (in Persian).

1124. ISNA, تأکید رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح بر لزوم آمادگی در برابر جنگ ترکیبی ["Head of General Staff of Armed Forces emphasized necessity of preparedness against a hybrid war"], 8 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071607747/-تاکید-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-بر-لزوم-آمادگی-در-برابر-جنگ-ترکیبی (in Persian).

1125. See section 13.2.2(II) for details.

1126. See Chapter 11.



The head of the General Staff of the Armed Force at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Bagheri (right), and the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari (left) © Mehdi Bolourian / Fars News Agency

"Given the security conditions the country faces today due to the enemies' conspiracy, it is fitting to express gratitude to the commanders and employees of FARAJA for their services and efforts in establishing order and security across the country. And certainly, these struggles and efforts will be recorded and preserved in the presence of the Almighty."[1127]

On 28 December 2022, after months of lethal repression ended the protests, the General Staff of the Armed Forces issued a statement in which it expressed pride that "this sinister scheme of the enemies… was neutralized" and gratefully attributed this victory "to the vigilance, awareness, and steadfastness of the vigilant people of the Islamic Iran, who are obedient to the Supreme Leader".[1128]

Consistent with long-standing narratives of cover-up and denial aimed at enforcing impunity, the General Staff of the Armed Forces accused the protesters of "staging killings". This phrase has long been used by the authorities during successive waves of lethal protest crackdowns to either deny that any killings occurred or claim that protesters themselves carried out the killings and then blamed the security forces in order to influence public opinion and further fuel popular outrage and protests. The statement reads:

> **"The enemies of the Islamic system, under the guise of false defence of women's rights, once again mobilized all their capabilities in a new sedition with the aim of overthrowing the system… staging killings and martyring the defenders of security… However, thanks to the vigilance, awareness and steadfastness of the vigilant people of the Islamic Iran, who are obedient to the Supreme Leader, this**

1127. ISNA, تأکید رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح بر لزوم آمادگی در برابر جنگ ترکیبی ["Head of General Staff of the Armed Forces emphasized necessity of preparedness against a hybrid war"], 8 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071607747/تاکید-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-بر-لزوم-آمادگی-در-برابر-جنگ-ترکیبی (in Persian).

1128. Tasnim News Agency, بیانیه ستادکل نیروهای مسلح: اجازه نمی‌دهیم آسیبی به امنیت وارد شود ["Statement of General Staff of the Armed Forces: We will not allow any harm to security"], 28 December 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/10/07/2828266/بیانیه-ستادکل-نیروهای-مسلح-اجازه-نمی-دهیم-آسیبی-به-امنیت-وارد-شود (in Persian).

sinister scheme of the enemies, like previous conspiracies, was neutralized."[1129]

The statement proceeded to emphasize the allegiance of all forces to the Supreme Leader and their readiness to forcefully quash any further challenge to the Islamic Republic system:

"The entirety of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran… in obeying the esteemed leadership of the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Imam Khamenei (may his high shadow endure), stand ready and firm to not allow any harm to the security of the people and the Islamic Revolution."[1130]

On 9 January 2023, Mohammad Bagheri reiterated his narrative of victory in a speech given at a ceremony welcoming the new general commander of FARAJA, Ahmadreza Radan, and honouring the leadership of the outgoing general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, particularly during the period of nationwide protests.[1131] In his speech, Mohammad Bagheri once again misrepresented the protests as a "combined war" involving "military threats" to justify the militarized response from his forces. He extended appreciation to FARAJA, the IRGC, including its Basij forces, and the Army for "restoring security and calm". He stated:

"The events of the past three and a half months highlight the significance of security in the country… During these three and a half months, the beloved police forces… took to the streets across the country to restore security and calm. The IRGC and the Basij provided the most assistance to the police during these months… We faced a combined war in which enemies employed various defensive and military threats as well as economic and political sanctions, but the enemies failed."[1132]

10.1.4 LEAKED OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

Amnesty International obtained a leaked official document, along with testimony from an insider, indicating that, on 21 September 2022, an order was transmitted from the General Staff of the Armed Forces through FARAJA's command and control centres (known by the Persian acronym, MARFOUK), and received by local police stations.[1133] The leaked document originates from a notebook at a local MARFOUK that logged the sequence of orders issued by higher authorities and relayed through the MARFOUK system.

The leaked document records that, at 5.25pm on 21 September 2022, an order was received from the General Staff of the Armed Forces instructing a "firm and severe response to any gathering, the dispersal of rioters and their arrest and transfer to bases for obtaining undertakings."

The order revealed in the leaked document can explain the reasons behind a significant escalation in the use of lethal ammunition against protesters across the country from 21 September 2022 onwards,

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1129. Tasnim News Agency, بیانیه ستادکل نیروهای مسلح اجازه نمی‌دهیم آسیبی به امنیت وارد شود ["Statement of General Staff of the Armed Forces: We will not allow any harm to security"], 28 December 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/10/07/2828266/بیانیه-ستادکل-نیروهای-مسلح-اجازه-نمی-دهیم-آسیبی-به-امنیت-وارد-شود (in Persian).

1130. Tasnim News Agency, بیانیه ستادکل نیروهای مسلح اجازه نمی‌دهیم آسیبی به امنیت وارد شود ["Statement of General Staff of the Armed Forces: We will not allow any harm to security"], 28 December 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/10/07/2828266/بیانیه-ستادکل-نیروهای-مسلح-اجازه-نمی-دهیم-آسیبی-به-امنیت-وارد-شود (in Persian).

1131. See also Fars News Agency, سازمان انتظامی کشور در اغتشاشات اخیر مظلوم مقتدر بود ["Police organization of country was a powerful victim in the recent riots"], 9 January 2023, https://farsnews.ir/social/1673267777000946219/سازمان-انتظامی-کشور-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-مظلوم-مقتدر-بود (in Persian).

1132. Young Journalists Club, نیروی‌های پلیس در اغتشاشات اخیر جانفدایی کردند تا امنیت به کشور بازگردد ["Police forces sacrificed their lives in recent riots to restore security to country"], 9 January 2023, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8330749/نیروهای-پلیس-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-جانفدایی-کردند-تا-امنیت-به-کشور-باز-گردد (in Persian).

1133. The document is on file with Amnesty International.

leading to the killing of at least 60 protesters and bystanders by the security forces on the evening of 21 September alone.[1134]

10.2 FARAJA

The law enforcement body known today as FARAJA was first established in 1990 by the Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Law).[1135] Between 1990 and 2021, the name of this entity was the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, NAJA). In December 2021, following the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan for the Structure and Organization of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was prepared by the General Staff of the Armed Forces and approved by the Supreme Leader, NAJA was restructured and renamed as the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA).[1136]

As far as Amnesty International is aware, the Iranian authorities have not made the text of the comprehensive plan publicly available. The organization was, therefore, unable to examine the impact of this plan on the Police Force Law, which legally remains in force. According to official statements and state media reports, the change from "force" to "command" was significant, elevating the status and resources of this law enforcement body within the country's political and security structures, and making the general commander of FARAJA equal in rank to the general commanders of the Army and the IRGC.[1137]

10.2.1 COMMAND AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The command structure of FARAJA is complex and multilayered. On the one hand, it is one of the three forces operating under the General Staff of the Armed Forces and is led by the general commander of FARAJA, who is appointed by the Supreme Leader. The general commander of FARAJA holds authority over the entire police force nationwide. They appoint a FARAJA commander for every province and county, each of whom exercises command and control over police operations within their respective jurisdictions. On the other hand, FARAJA is institutionally linked to the minister of interior at the national level and to provincial governors and county governors, who are the local representatives of the minister of interior.[1138]

1134. See section 5.3.2(I) for details.

1135. This law merged three security bodies, namely the Shahrbani and the Gendarmerie, which pre-dated the 1979 Revolution, and the Revolutionary Committees, which were established in its aftermath. See Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون نیروی انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران [Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran], 1990, https://iranarze.ir/storage/uploads/2016/07/-قانون-نیروی-انتظامی-جمهوری-اسلامی-ایران.pdf (in Persian), Article 1.

1136. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News), تشریح طرح جامع ساختار و سازمان فرماندهی انتظامی ["Explanation of comprehensive plan for structure and organization of the police command"], 8 January 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3328620/تشریح-طرح-جامع-ساختار-و-سازمان-فرماندهی-انتظامی (in Persian).

1137. Mehr News Agency, چرایی تغییر ناجا به فراجا؛ تغییراتی هم در ساختار هم در عمل ["Reasons for the change from NAJA to FARAJA; changes in both structure and practice"], 16 May 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5491100/-چرایی-تغییر-ناجا-به-فراجا-تغییراتی-هم-در-ساختار-هم-در-عمل (in Persian); IRIB News, تشریح طرح جامع ساختار و سازمان فرماندهی انتظامی ["Explanation of comprehensive plan for structure and organization of the police command"], 8 January 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3328620/-تشریح-طرح-جامع-ساختار-و-سازمان-فرماندهی-انتظامی (in Persian).

1138. This is stipulated in a binding regulation by the Supreme Administrative Council entitled Responsibilities of Provincial Governors and County Governors. The Supreme Administrative Council in Iran is responsible for driving the "transformation of the country's administrative system", including reforms to the organizational structure of executive bodies, except those defined by the constitution or established by the Supreme Leader. The Council addresses issues related to government size, human resources, bureaucratic workflows and the responsibilities of various executive bodies. For more information about its composition and mandate, see Islamic Republic of Iran, Civil Services Management Law, 2008, available at https://natlex.ilo.org/dyn/natlex2/natlex2/files/download/91490/IRN91490.pdf, Articles 114-117.

The relationship between the general commander of FARAJA and the minister of interior – as well as those between provincial and county FARAJA commanders, on the one hand, and provincial and county governors, on the other – is complicated. While some aspects of their powers and interactions are defined by publicly available laws and other official documents, as outlined below, many others are governed by internal official documents that have not been made public.[1139]

The command structure of FARAJA becomes further complicated by the established practice of the Supreme Leader delegating some of his powers regarding FARAJA to the minister of interior by formally appointing them as his deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs.[1140] With this delegation, the general commander of FARAJA is placed under the command authority of the individual serving as both the minister of interior and the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs.

ADMINISTRATIVE TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS IN IRAN

The province is the largest administrative division in Iran. Typically, the largest city in the province is recognized as the provincial capital.

Provinces are further divided into counties, each with a population of at least 80,000.[1141] Counties generally consist of one city and several towns and villages. In each county, the city that has been traditionally the hub of economic, cultural and political activities is recognized as the county centre.

Counties are further divided into districts, with each county comprising two or more districts. A district may encompass one or several cities and villages. District boundaries are set such that the population of each district is at least 20,000.[1142]

According to official sources, as of May 2025, Iran had 31 provinces, 484 counties, and 1191 districts.[1143]

Large cities may be divided into boroughs due to their population size.

10.2.1(I) FARAJA COMMANDERS

The general commander of FARAJA heads the General Command Staff of FARAJA, based in Tehran.

1139. According to experts on Iran's security apparatus, the interactions between the minister of interior and the general commander of FARAJA may be influenced by political dynamics, particularly the Supreme Leader's favourable view of the minister of interior and the sitting government, as well as the minister's background, including their affiliations with centres of power such as the IRGC and whether they have formally held any military rank. For example, the then minister of interior at the time of the 2022 protests, Ahmad Vahidi, was a high-ranking intelligence official within the IRGC in the 1980s and was the commander of the Qods Force of the IRGC between 1988 and 1997. See the Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian), آیا انتخاب وزیر کشور بدون صلاحدید رهبر صورت می‌گیرد؟ ["Is the minister of interior appointed without Supreme Leader's discretion?"], 29 June 2017, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-features-40765016 (in Persian); Bourse News, مهر - 5 وزیر با نظر رهبر انتخاب می شوند ["Mehr – Five ministers to be appointed with Supreme Leader's input"], 16 August 2009, https://www.boursenews.ir/fa/news/22992/مهر-5-وزیر-با-نظر-رهبر-انتخاب-می-شوند (in Persian).

1140. See, for example, Iran's Metropolises News Agency (IMNA), انتصاب اسکندر مومنی به عنوان جانشین فرماندهی کل نیروهای مسلح در نیروی انتظامی ["Eskandar Momeni appointed deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs in the police force"], 28 August 2024, https://www.imna.ir/news/785047/انتصاب-اسکندر-مومنی-به-عنوان-جانشین-فرماندهی-کل-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, وحیدی جانشین فرماندهی کل نیروهای مسلح در امور نیروی انتظامی شد ["Vahidi appointed deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs in the police force"], 8 September 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5300291/وحیدی-جانشین-فرماندهی-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-در-امور-نیروی-انتظامی-شد (in Persian).

1141. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون تقسیمات کشوری ["Law on National Administrative Divisions"], 1983, available at https://noandishaan.com/forums/topic/108493-1362-قانون-تقسیمات-کشوری (in Persian), Article 7(1).

1142. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون تقسیمات کشوری ["Law on National Administrative Divisions"], 1983, available at https://noandishaan.com/forums/topic/108493-1362-قانون-تقسیمات-کشوری (in Persian), Article 6(1).

1143. Iran Statis, تعداد شهر، شهرستان، بخش و آبادی هر استان ["Number of cities, counties, districts and villages in each province"], https://iranstatis.com/downloads/h01010001 (in Persian) (accessed on 3 August 2026).

The general commander of FARAJA is supported by several deputy commanders, each appointed by the general commander of FARAJA and responsible for a specific area of operations. These include the coordination deputy,[1144] who oversees the nationwide coordination of all FARAJA units, and the operations deputy,[1145] who is responsible for operational matters.[1146]

In each province, the Provincial Command Staff of FARAJA operates under the leadership of the respective provincial FARAJA commander.[1147] Similar to the national structure, this commander is supported by a provincial coordination deputy and an operations deputy. State media reports indicate that the coordination deputy is appointed by the general commander of FARAJA[1148] while the operations deputy is appointed by the provincial FARAJA commander.[1149]

According to Article 23 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, wherever command staff exist, they serve as the channel through which commanders communicate with their subordinate units. The article clarifies that command staff are not part of the formal chain of command but function to facilitate the execution of command responsibilities by commanders.

Each of Iran's 31 provinces, except for Tehran province, has a provincial police command staff, falling under the provincial FARAJA commander, who is appointed by the general commander of FARAJA. This commander is responsible for overseeing police operations within their respective province.

In the case of Tehran province, due to its large population, territorial size and strategic importance, there are three FARAJA command staffs, responsible for Greater Tehran, Eastern Tehran, and Western Tehran.[1150] These three headquarters are treated like provincial police command staffs and their commanders are likewise appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1151]

1144. See Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), هشت تغییر در مدیران ارشد فرماندهی کل نیروی انتظامی ["Eight senior leadership changes in police force"], 4 March 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85047272/هشت-تغییر-در-مدیران-ارشد-فرماندهی-کل-نیروی-انتظامی (in Persian); Fars News Agency, معاون هماهنگ‌کننده و معاون نیروی انسانی ناجا منصوب شدند ["Police command coordination deputy and deputy for human resources appointed"], 16 December 2015, https://farsnews.ir/social/14502607800009048 58/معاون-هماهنگ‌کننده-و-معاون-نیروی-انسانی-ناجا-منصوب-شدند (in Persian).

1145. See ISNA, معاون عملیات فراجا منصوب شد ["Operations deputy of FARAJA appointed"], 24 October 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403080302250/معاون-عملیات-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Defa Press, سردار ساجدی نیا معاون عملیات ناجا شد ["General Sajedinia appointed operations deputy of NAJA"], 7 August 2017, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/251514/سردار-ساجدی-نیا-معاون-عملیات-ناجا-شد (in Persian).

1146. See Khabarban, معاون عملیات فراجا توسط فرمانده کل انتظامی منصوب شد ["Operations deputy of FARAJA appointed by general commander of police"], 24 October 2024, https://41812910.khabarban.com (in Persian); ISNA, ساجدی نیا معاون عملیات ناجا شد ["Sajedinia appointed as operations deputy of NAJA"], 7 August 2017, https://www.isna.ir/news/96051609816/ساجدی-نیا-معاون-عملیات-ناجا-شد (in Persian).

1147. In FARAJA terminology, a police sector (*nahieh entezami*) generally corresponds to a province and a police district (*mantagheh entezami*) generally corresponds to a county.

1148. See, for example, Defa Press, معاون جدید هماهنگ کننده استان اصفهان معرفی شد ["New coordination deputy of Esfahan province introduced"], 13 July 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/678400/معاون-جدید-هماهنگ-کننده-استان-اصفهان-معرفی-شد (in Persian); IRIB News, انتصاب معاون هماهنگ کننده فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان غربی ["Coordination deputy of West Azerbaijan police commander appointed"], 19 December 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4095038/انتصاب-معاون-هماهنگ-کننده-فرمانده-انتظامی-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian).

1149. See, for example, IRIB News, انتصاب معاون عملیات انتظامی استان کرمانشاه ["Operations deputy of the police command in Kermanshah province appointed"], 14 October 2017, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/1849858/انتصاب-معاون-عملیات-انتظامی-استان-کرمانشاه (in Persian).

1150. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ایجاد ساختار جدید نیروی انتظامی استان‌های تهران و البرز ["Establishment of a new structure for police forces in Tehran and Alborz provinces"], 27 June 2011, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/1345975/ایجاد-ساختار-جدید-نیروی-انتظامی-استان‌های-تهران-و-البرز (in Persian).

1151. See Tasnim News Agency, سردار دلاور القاصی مهر فرمانده جدید فراجا شرق استان تهران شد ["General Delavar Alghasi Mehr appointed as new commander of FARAJA in East Tehran province"], 15 May 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/02/25/2895292/سردار-دلاور-القاصی-مهر-فرمانده-جدید-فراجا-شرق-استان-تهران-شد (in Persian); Etemad Online, با حکم فرمانده کل؛ سردار محمدیان فرمانده انتظامی تهران شد ["By order of general commander, General Mohammadian was appointed commander of Tehran's police force"], 28 January 2023, https://www.etemadonline.com/.../سردار-محمدیان-فرمانده-انتظامی-تهران-بزرگ (in Persian); Borna News, سرهنگ علیزاده فرمانده انتظامی ویژه غرب استان تهران شد ["Colonel Alizadeh appointed as special police commander of Western Tehran province"], 21 October 2025, https://borna.news/fa/news/2270622/سرهنگ-علیزاده-فرمانده-انتظامی-ویژه-غرب-استان-تهران-شد (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, سردار عزیزی فرمانده انتظامی شرق استان تهران شد + سوابق ["General Azizi appointed commander of police force in East Tehran province + background"], 7 July 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/04/16/2048406/سردار-عزیزی-فرمانده-انتظامی-شرق-استان-تهران-شد-سوابق (in Persian).

In each county, there exists a local police command staff headed by the county FARAJA commander, who is also appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1152] This commander is responsible for overseeing police operations within the county for which they have responsibility.

At the district level, depending on the size and population of the area and the number of cities and villages in it, the FARAJA base may be organized as a command staff or a police station.[1153] State media reports indicate that provincial FARAJA commanders appoint district FARAJA commanders as well as the heads of police stations.[1154]

Districts may have one or several police stations. In rural areas outside cities, the local FARAJA unit responsible for ensuring order and security is based in a security post. In a media interview in April 2019, the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, stated:

> **"There are 2,000 police stations and security posts in the country, and we have a shortage of approximately 1,950 police stations and security posts that need to be addressed as soon as possible, according to the forecasts made."[1155]**

FARAJA is a complex entity that consists of numerous branches. They include the Public Security Police,[1156] the Investigation Police,[1157] the Special Cohorts and the Prevention Police, which carries out regular policing functions, including patrolling and first response to incidents of unrest.

Many of these branches are organized hierarchically at national, provincial and, in some cases, county levels. Depending on the organizational structure and missions of these branches, including their involvement in field operations, the official in charge may be called a head or a commander.[1158] The national heads or commanders are appointed by the general commander of FARAJA. The appointment

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1152. See, for example, Nabaapress, فرمانده انتظامی شهرستان رباط‌کریم منصوب شد ["Police commander of Robat Karim county appointed"], 8 June 2024, https://nabaapress.ir/فرمانده-انتظامی-شهرستان-رباط‌کریم-من/ (in Persian); Rokna Press, انتصاب فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان کرمانشاه ["Appointment of new police commander of Kermanshah county"], 17 March 2024, https://www.rokna.net/-245/981156-بخش-حادثه (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, انتصاب جدید در مدیران سطح یک پلیس ۲۶ ["New 26 appointments among top-level police manager"], 13 November 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5937728/۲۶-انتصاب-جدید-در-مدیران-سطح-یک-پلیس (in Persian); Khabarban, فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان پردیس منصوب شد ["New police commander of Pardis county appointed"], 25 September 2023, https://38753396.khabarban.com (in Persian).

1153. See, for example, IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید پلیس میمه ["Introduction of new police commander for Meymeh"], 14 December 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4090285/معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-پلیس-میمه (in Persian); Bakhshdari Rayen, تودیع و معارفه فرماندهی انتظامی بخش راین ["Farewell and introduction of police command in Rayen district"], 12 December 2013, https://bakhshdarirayen.blogfa.com/post/94 (in Persian); Ettehad Khabar, رئیس شورای اسلامی شهر آبپخش خواستار شد - تبدیل کلانتری آبپخش به فرماندهی انتظامی در این بخش ["Head of Abpakhsh city council called for upgrade of Abpakhsh police station into a police command in this district"], 27 January 2013, https://www.ettehadkhabar.ir/fa/posts/9279 (in Persian).

1154. See, for example, javad_shiripour, Instagram post: انتصاب سروان مسلم بهمنی به سمت رئیس کلانتری مرکزی فرماندهی انتظامی شهرستان منوجان ["Appointment of captain Moslem Bahmani as head of the central police station of the police command in Manujan county"], 22 January 2024, https://www.instagram.com/p/C2ZROoTORcg (in Persian); Kebna News, رئیس کلانتری ۱۱ علی آباد گچساران منصوب شد ["Head of Police Station 11 in Aliabad, Gachsaran appointed"], 26 May 2020, https://www.kebnanews.ir/gallery/421303/2/-رئیس-کلانتری-۱۱-علی-آباد-گچساران-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Resalat News, انتصاب فرمانده کلانتری ۱۲ مهربان ["Commander of Police Station 12 in Mehrban appointed"], 15 June 2006, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/1104510 (in Persian).

1155. Mizan News Agency, هزار و ۹۵۰ پاسگاه و کلانتری نیاز داریم: تعداد نیروهای پلیس دست کم باید دو برابر شود ["We need 1,950 security posts and police stations: Number of police forces must at least double"], 7 April 2019, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/507620/-هزار-و-۹۵۰-پاسگاه-و-کلانتری-نیاز-داریم-تعداد-نیروهای-پلیس-دست-کم-باید-دو-برابر-شود (in Persian).

1156. See also Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7480/2023), 6 December 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7480/2023/en

1157. See Chapter 9 on how officials from this unit were sometimes involved in cover-ups and harassment of families.

1158. The terms "commander" and "head" both refer to leadership positions. The Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces and the Law on the Recruitment of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Recruitment Law) distinguish between two categories of leadership positions: joint positions (*mashaghel-e moshtarak*) and military or police positions (*mashaghel-e nezami ya entezami*). According to Article 6 of the Police Force Recruitment Law, military or police positions refer to "a set of specific duties and powers designated for law enforcement personnel as outlined in the organizational charts" while joint positions refer to "a set of specific duties and powers categorized under this title in the organizational charts which are not exclusive to either law enforcement personnel or civilian employees and may be assigned to both." According to Article 33 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces "command positions are considered military positions, while managerial positions at all levels are classified as joint positions." Amnesty International is not aware that the organizational charts of FARAJA have been made publicly available.

process for provincial heads or commanders varies across different branches. The heads or commanders of branches such as the Special Cohorts are appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1159]

The structure of FARAJA also includes two entities that support intelligence gathering, facilitate coordination at the top of the command chain, and seek to prevent dissent, diversion and espionage within FARAJA. These are the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA, sometimes referred to by its Persian acronym, SAFA, and the Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA.

The Intelligence Organization of FARAJA was established following the 2021 restructuring of FARAJA. The national head of this organization is appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1160]

The Intelligence Protection Organization was established at the time of FARAJA's establishment in 1990 pursuant to Articles 4(25) and 5 of the Police Force Law. Article 5 provides that this organization must have its own "separate and centralized hierarchy". Note 2 of Article 5 states that the national head of the Intelligence Protection Organization is appointed by the Supreme Leader.[1161]

Within FARAJA, there is also an entity called the Ideological and Political Organization of FARAJA, which was created at the time of FARAJA's establishment in 1990 pursuant to Articles 4(26) and 5 of the Police Force Law. Based on Article 5, this organization must also have its own "separate and centralized hierarchy". Note 2 of Article 5 states that the national head of the Ideological and Political Organization is appointed by the Supreme Leader. State media articles suggest that the national head, in turn, appoints the heads of the organization's provincial branches.[1162] In state media, the head of the Ideological and Political Organization of FARAJA is also referred to as the representative of the Supreme Leader within FARAJA.[1163]

At the national level, communication, coordination and implementation throughout FARAJA's operations are facilitated by the national MARFOUK of FARAJA. This centre has a head who works under the operations deputy of FARAJA. Each province has an equivalent entity known as the provincial MARFOUK,[1164] run a by a head who operates under the authority of the provincial operations deputy. Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles indicating the authority who appoints the head of a MARFOUK.

10.2.1(I)(i) Prevention Police

The Prevention Police is the largest branch within FARAJA, which is responsible for regular policing functions across the country. The general commander of FARAJA appoints and holds command

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1159. See Akharin Khabar, جدید در فراجا ۲۶ انتصاب ["26 new appointments in FARAJA"], 13 November 2023, https://akharinkhabar.ir/social/9827950 (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ادامه تغییرات در نیروی انتظامی: انتصاب رئیس پلیس استان اصفهان ["Continuation of changes in police force: Appointment of head of police for Esfahan province"], 7 May 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/02/18/2258950/ادامه-تغییرات-در-نیروی-انتظامی-انتصاب-رئیس-پلیس-استان-اصفهان (in Persian).
1160. Etemad Online, انتصاب سردار رضائیان رئیس اطلاعات فراجا ["Appointment of General Rezaian as head of Intelligence Organization of FARAJA"], 29 January 2023, https://www.etemadonline.com/بخش-اجتماعی-23/594202-انتصاب-سردار-رضائیان-رئیس-اطلاعات-فراجا (in Persian).
1161. In Iranian law, a note is an explanatory provision attached to a legal article that clarifies its scope and, in some cases, provides exceptions. It is common for many articles to include one or more numbered notes.
1162. See, for example, Kayhan, حجت الاسلام شکری رئیس عقیدتی سیاسی نیروی انتظامی البرز شد ["Hijjat ol-Islam Shakouri appointed as political and ideological head of police force in Alborz"], 6 August 2017, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/3611234 (in Persian).
1163. See, for example, ISNA, نماینده ولی فقیه در فراجا: حضور در انتخابات راه‌حل برون رفت از مشکلات است ["Representative of Supreme Leader in FARAJA: Participation in elections is the solution for overcoming problems"], 1 March 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402121107715/نماینده-ولی-فقیهر-در-فراجا-حضور-در-انتخابات-راه-حل-برویم-از (in Persian); Khabar Online, نماینده ولی فقیه در «فراجا»: نیروهای انتظامی حاضر در صحنه، تحت فشار هستند ["Representative of Supreme Leader in FARAJA: 'Police forces on the ground are under pressure'"], 22 November 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1698265/نماینده-ولی-فقیه-در-فراجا-نیروهای-انتظامی-حاضر-در-صحنه-تحت (in Persian).
1164. IRIB News, مرکز فوریت‌های پلیس فارس رتبه اول در کشور ["Fars Police Emergency Centre ranked first in country"], 12 May 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2714835/مرکز-فوریت‌های-پلیس-فارس-رتبه-اول-در-کشور (in Persian).

authority over the national head of the Prevention Police.[1165]

Each province has a provincial head of the Prevention Police, also appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1166] This official operates under the provincial FARAJA commander and is accountable to both the provincial FARAJA commander and the national head of the Prevention Police.

The province of Tehran is an exception to this structure. As mentioned previously, this province has three provincial FARAJA commanders, responsible for Greater Tehran, Eastern Tehran and Western Tehran, who are appointed directly by the general commander of FARAJA. Similarly, there is a head of the Prevention Police for each of these three areas in Tehran province, who is likewise appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1167]

The Prevention Police oversees the establishment and functioning of police stations and security posts.[1168] Furthermore, it comprises nearly two dozen sections, each with distinct mandates,[1169] including the Assistance Cohorts. According to experts in Iran's security apparatus, the Assistance Cohorts in turn consist of various units, including the Police Patrol Unit, the Special Operations Unit, the Bomb Disposal and Explosive Device Neutralization Unit, and the Assembly Control Unit.[1170] The latter supports ordinary police officers stationed at police stations in their operations when additional assistance is needed.[1171]

According to a state media report reviewed by Amnesty International, each county has an Assistance Cohort, which operates under the command of the respective county FARAJA commander.[1172]

Official statements and state media reports suggest that the Assistance Cohort of each county has a commander.[1173] State media reports also suggest that Assistance Cohorts from different counties

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1165. Serat News, رئیس پلیس پیشگیری فراجا منصوب شد ["Head of Prevention Police of FARAJA appointed"], 14 November 2022, https://www.seratnews.com/fa/news/599958/رئیس-پلیس-پیشگیری-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1166. Mehr News Agency, انتصاب جدید در مدیران سطح یک پلیس ۲۶ ["26 new appointments among top-level police managers"], 13 November 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5937728/انتصاب-جدید-در-مدیران-سطح-یک-پلیس-۲۶ (in Persian).

1167. Mehr News Agency, انتصاب جدید در مدیران سطح یک پلیس ۲۶ ["26 new appointments among top-level police managers"], 13 November 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5937728/انتصاب-جدید-در-مدیران-سطح-یک-پلیس-۲۶ (in Persian); IRNA, رئیس پلیس پیشگیری پایتخت منصوب شد ["Head of Prevention Police of capital appointed"], 4 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85247940/رئیس-پلیس-پیشگیری-پایتخت-منصوب-شد (in Persian),

1168. Defa Press, گسترش کلانتری، پاسگاه‌ها و بخش‌های انتظامی ارتقاء امنیت را در پی دارد ["Expanding police stations, security posts and police districts to enhance security"], 15 January 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/645137/گسترش-کلانتری-پاسگاه‌ها-و-بخش‌های-انتظامی-ارتقاء-امنیت-را-در-پی-دارد (in Persian); Resalat News, رئیس پلیس پیشگیری ناجا خبر داد: آمایش جدید کلانتری‌ها و پاسگاه‌ها در آینده نزدیک ["NAJA Prevention Police head announces: New mapping of police stations and security posts in near future"], 17 November 2012, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/2625329 (in Persian).

1169. These include the Physical Protection Forces of Public Places, the Airport Police, the Railway Police, the Protection Forces of Natural Resources, the Protection Forces of the Atomic Energy Organization, and the Protection Forces of the Prisons and Security and Correctional Measures Organization. The Prisons and Security and Correctional Measures Organization, commonly referred to as the Prisons Organization, is a state entity in Iran that falls under the judiciary and is responsible for the administration and management of prisons in Iran. According to Article 14 of the Regulations of the State Prisons Organization, the Protection Unit of the Prisons Organization is "responsible for the physical protection of its affiliated institutions, the transfer of prisoners, maintaining order and security [within prisons], preventing and preventing prisoner escapes, controlling any disturbances, riots, or actions that disrupt security [within prisoners], as well as training and managing guards, [conscript] soldiers, and other personnel under its command."

1170. Ghafoor Sheikhi, تشکیلات ناجا و مشکلات اجتماعی آن ["NAJA organization and its social problems"], Sedaye Ashna Biweekly, Issue 110, p. 3.

1171. Defa Press, برقراری امنیت ره‌آورد مجاهدت‌های فراجاست ["Establishing security is result of FARAJA's efforts"], 6 April 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/581574/برقراری-امنیت-ره‌آورد-مجاهدت‌های-فراجاست (in Persian).

1172. Student News Network, بخش اول: با رسته‌ها و تخصص‌های نیروی انتظامی بیشتر آشنا شوید+ تصاویر ["Part one: Get to know branches and specialties of police force + images"], 19 August 2018, https://snn.ir/fa/news/704435/بخش-اول-با-رسته‌ها-و-تخصص‌های-نیروی-انتظامی-بیشتر-آشنا-شوید-تصاویر (in Persian).

1173. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, فرمانده یگان امداد شیراز به شهادت رسید ["Commander of Assistance Cohort of Shiraz martyred"], 6 February 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6015981/فرمانده-یگان-امداد-شیراز-به-شهادت-رسید (in Persian); Defa Press, برقراری امنیت ره‌آورد مجاهدت‌های فراجاست ["Establishing security is result of FARAJA's efforts"], 6 April 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/581574/برقراری-امنیت-ره‌آورد-مجاهدت‌های-فراجاست (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رد رشوه ۵۰۰ میلیونی توسط پلیس کرمانشاه ["Police in Kermanshah reject 500 million rial bribe"], 4 September 2017, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4079402/رد-رشوه-۵۰۰-میلیونی-توسط-پلیس-کرمانشاه (in Persian).

within a province fall under a provincial Assistance Cohorts commander.[1174] Based on state media reports, the commander of the Assistance Cohort of Greater Tehran is appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1175] Amnesty International was unable to find any information online indicating the authority who appoints the provincial and county commanders of the Assistance Cohorts elsewhere in the country.

10.2.1(I)(ii) Special Cohorts

The general commander of FARAJA appoints the national commander of the Special Cohorts.[1176] Official statements by the national commander of the Special Cohorts indicate that the role leads the organization, training, equipping and operational performance of the Special Cohorts across the country, and exercises control and oversight over their activities in accordance with the orders and directives of the general commander of FARAJA.[1177]

According to official sources, the Special Cohorts are organized in at least three national brigades, which are stationed in Tehran province, but can be deployed to any part of the country at the orders of the national commander of the Special Cohorts.[1178] The names of these three brigades are the Amir Al-Mo'menin Brigade, the Musa Ibn Ja'far Brigade and the Imam Hossein Brigade.[1179] The commanders of these brigades are appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1180]

In addition to these three national brigades, there is a provincial formation of the Special Cohorts in each of Iran's 31 provinces, except Tehran. State media reports and official statements indicate that in Tehran province, three Special Cohorts are assigned to Greater Tehran, Eastern Tehran and Western

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1174. See, for example, Regional Water Company of Alborz, تقدیر شرکت آب منطقه‌ای البرز از فرمانده یگان امداد استان ["Regional Water Company of Alborz commends provincial commander of Assistance Cohort"], 22 September 2025, https://www.albrw.ir/cs/News/118/1202/تقدیر-شرکت-آب-منطقه‌ای-البرز-از-فرمانده-یگان-امداد-استان (in Persian); Basij News Agency, دیدار با فرمانده یگان امداد استان قم توسط بسیجیان ["Meeting with commander Assistance Cohort of Qom province by Basijis"], 13 October 2021, https://www.basijnews.ir/fa/news/9382389/دیدار-با-فرمانده-یگان-امداد-استان-قم-توسط-بسیجیان (in Persian).

1175. See, for example, Tabnak, انتصاب فرمانده یگان امداد نیروی انتظامی تهران بزرگ ["Appointment of commander of Assistance Cohort of Greater Tehran police force"], 5 January 2021, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1026038/انتصاب-فرمانده-یگان-امداد-نیروی-انتظامی-تهران-بزرگ (in Persian).

1176. See, for example, Entekhab, سردار مصدق جانشین سردار کرمی در فرماندهی یگان‌های ویژه شد ["General Mosadegh replaces General Karami in command centre of Special Cohorts"], 7 December 2024, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/837215/سردار-مصدق-جانشین-سردار-کرمی-در-فرماندهی-یگان‌های-ویژه-شد (in Persian).

1177. See, for example, Mashregh News, روایت فرمانده یگان ویژه پلیس از اعتراضات خوزستان ["Commander of Special Cohort of police recounts Khuzestan protests"], 14 October 2021, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1285467/روایت-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-پلیس-از-اعتراضات-خوزستان-درگیری (in Persian); IRNA, هوشمندسازی یگان ویژه در چارچوب اجرای مطلوب ماموریت ها است ["Modernization of the Special Cohort through smart systems is part of the effective execution of missions"], 10 September 2020, https://www.irna.in/news/84033981/هوشمندسازی-یگان-ویژه-در-چارچوب-اجرای-مطلوب-ماموریت-ها-است (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, آموزش ۱۳۵۰۰ نفر از ماموران یگان ویژه برای مقابله با ناآرامی‌ها ["Training of 13,500 Special Cohort officers to counter unrest"], 25 August 2020, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5007813/آموزش-۱۳۵۰۰-نفر-از-ماموران-یگان-ویژه-برای-مقابله-با-ناآرامی-ها (in Persian); Mizan News Agency, مدیریت هوشمندانه در میدان عمل و صحنه: اولویت اول یگان ویژه ["Smart management in operations and on the ground: Top priority of the Special Cohort"], 10 May 2018, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/418399/مدیریت-هوشمندانه-در-میدان-عمل-و-صحنه-اولویت-اول-یگان-ویژه (in Persian).

1178. See, for example, ISNA, همه چیز درباره «یگان ویژه» در ایران ["Everything about the 'Special Cohort' in Iran"], 14 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400072215773/همه-چیز-درباره-یگان-ویژه-در-ایران (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, آموزش ۱۳۵۰۰ نفر از ماموران یگان ویژه برای مقابله با ناآرامی‌ها ["Training of 13,500 Special Cohort officers to counter unrest"], 25 August 2020, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5007813/آموزش-۱۳۵۰۰-نفر-از-ماموران-یگان-ویژه-برای-مقابله-با-ناآرامی-ها (in Persian); IRNA, فرمانده ناجا: نیروی انتظامی تضمین نظم و امنیت انتخابات را برعهده دارد ["Commander of NAJA: Police force guarantees order and security in elections"], 23 December 2015, https://www.irna.ir/news/81890615/فرمانده-ناجا-نیروی-انتظامی-تضمین-نظم-و-امنیت-انتخابات-را-برعهده (in Persian).

1179. ISNA, همه چیز درباره «یگان ویژه» در ایران ["Everything about the 'Special Cohort' in Iran"], 14 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400072215773/همه-چیز-درباره-یگان-ویژه-در-ایران (in Persian).

1180. ISNA, همه چیز درباره «یگان ویژه» در ایران ["Everything about the 'Special Cohort' in Iran"], 14 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400072215773/همه-چیز-درباره-یگان-ویژه-در-ایران (in Persian); Moj News Agency, یگان ویژه نیروی انتظامی ایران یک نیروی واکنش سریع راهبردی است ["Special Cohort of Iran's police is a strategic rapid response force"], 29 August 2019, https://www.mojnews.com/پخش-اجتماعی-5/294902-یگان-ویژه-نیروی-انتظامی-ایران-یک-نیروی-واکنش-سریع-راهبردی-است (in Persian).

Tehran.[1181] The formation responsible for Greater Tehran is organized as a brigade and is known as the Imam Khomeini Brigade.

Amnesty International was unable to find official statements or state media reports specifying the average size of provincial Special Cohorts or the number of battalions they typically maintain. Official statements, including some by the national commander of the Special Cohorts, suggest that each battalion typically consists of around 300-500 agents.[1182] The signboard of a building in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, belonging to the Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province, indicates that each battalion of the provincial Special Cohorts is divided into subsidiary companies.

In March 2013, the then general commander of FARAJA, Esmail Ahmadi Moghaddam, stated that they "have 60,000 ready forces [agents] in the Special Cohorts."[1183]

In July 2019, the then commander of the Special Cohorts of South Khorasan province, Alireza Kazemi, stated that "increasing the manpower of the Special Cohorts is one of the strategies of the General Staff of the Armed Forces."[1184]

In October 2021, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, stated:

> **"The Special Cohorts have always been a priority for the armed forces. Equipment is procured on time… We have never experienced a shortage of personnel. Currently, the construction of bases for the Special Cohorts is underway in 21 locations across the country."[1185]**

In March 2023, Hassan Karami stated: "Our vision is to cover… at least 400 cities and areas[1186] throughout the country. Therefore, we must double our capacity from the current level… to simultaneously cover 400 points across the country."[1187]

This statement suggests that, as of March 2023, the Special Cohorts were able to cover at least 200 locations across the country simultaneously.

1181. See Mehr News Agency, وعده مسئولان برای تامین زمین برای استقرار یگان ویژه ورامین ["Officials promise land allocation for establishment of Special Cohort in Varamin"], 2 September 2020, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5012603/وعده-مسئولان-برای-تامین-زمین-برای-استقرار-یگان-ویژه-ورامین (in Persian).

1182. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, به کارگیری ۱۰هزار مامور یگان ویژه برای برقراری نظم در مرزها ["Deployment of 10,000 Special Cohort officers to maintain order at the borders"], 7 October 2019, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4739834/به-کارگیری-۱۰هزار-مامور-یگان-ویژه-برای-برقراری-نظم-در-مرزها (in Persian);Tasnim News Agency, ناگفته‌هایی درباره یگان ویژه ناجا ["Untold stories about NAJA's Special Cohort"], 23 August 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/06/01/470363/ناگفته-هایی-درباره-یگان-ویژه-ناجا (in Persian).

1183. Mehr News Agency, ناگفته‌های احمدی مقدم از فتنه ۸۸؛ ۷۰ میلیون خسارت به مردم پرداخت ["Ahmadi Moghaddam's untold accounts of 2009 sedition: 70 million damages paid to people"], 2 March 2013, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/2009462/ناگفته-های-احمدی-مقدم-از-فتنه-۸۸-۷۰-میلیون-خسارت-به-مردم-پرداخت (in Persian).

1184. IRNA, ارتقای یگان ویژه خراسان جنوبی در دستور کار است ["Upgrading the Special Cohort of South Khorasan is on the agenda"], 8 July 2019, https://www.irna.ir/news/83386242/ارتقای-یگان-ویژه-خراسان-جنوبی-در-دستور-کار-است (in Persian).

1185. ISNA, همه چیز درباره «یگان ویژه» در ایران ["Everything about the 'Special Cohort' in Iran"], 14 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400072215773/همه-چیز-درباره-یگان-ویژه-در-ایران (in Persian).

1186. Given the reference to the figure of 400, the term "area" in his statement can be understood as referring to counties considering that according to latest official figures, Iran has 484 counties. See Iran Statis, تعداد شهر، شهرستان، بخش و آبادی هر استان ["Number of cities, counties, districts and villages in each province"], https://iranstatis.com/downloads/h01010001 (in Persian) (accessed on 3 August 2026).

1187. Aftab News, فرمانده یگان ویژه: ظرفیت خود را باید به ۲ برابر وضع موجود در سال ۱۴۰۲ افزایش دهیم تا بتوانیم ۴۰۰ نقطه در کشور را همزمان پوشش دهیم ["Commander of the Special Cohort: We must double our current capacity in 1402 to simultaneously cover 400 locations in the country"], 25 March 2023, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/831496/فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-ظرفیت-خود-را-باید-به-۲-برابر-وضعیت-موجود-در-سال-۱۴۰۲-افزایش-دهیم-تا-بتوانیم-۴۰۰-نقطه-در-کشور-را-همزمان-پوشش-دهیم (in Persian).



A building belonging to the Second Company of the Imam Hossein Battalion of the Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province, according to the signboard © Private[1188]

The commanders of the provincial Special Cohorts are appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1189] Amnesty International was unable to find information detailing the appointment process for Special Cohorts commanders at the county level.

The commanders of provincial Special Cohorts are subject to the authority of both the national commander of the Special Cohorts and provincial FARAJA commanders. Publicly available information indicates that, at the national level, there is a Command Staff of the Special Cohorts, based in Tehran, which is headed by the national commander of the Special Cohorts. Similar command staffs exist at the provincial level, headed by the provincial commander of the Special Cohorts.[1190] As stated previously, according to Article 23 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, wherever command staffs exist, they serve as the channel through which superior commanders communicate with their subordinate forces.

1188. See image at Neshan سقز شهرستان ویژه یگان ["Special Cohort of Saqqez county"], 1 December 2024, https://neshan.org/maps/places/a6a17bc3602b5c14ed4ee1db2e29e196#c36.231-46.373-11z-0p (accessed on 3 August 2026).
1189. See, for example, Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید یگان ویژه فارس معرفی شد ["New commander of Special Cohort in Fars province appointed"], 3 January 2015, https://farsnews.ir/news/13931013000584/فرمانده-جدید-یگان-ویژه-فارس-معرفی-شد (in Persian). See also ISNA, همه چیز درباره یگان ویژه در ایران ["Everything about the 'Special Cohort' in Iran"], 14 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400072215773/همه-چیز-درباره-یگان-ویژه-در-ایران (in Persian).
1190. See, for example, Neshan, ستاد فرماندهی یگان ویژه استان گیلان ["Command Staff of the Special Cohort of Gilan province"], https://neshan.org/maps/places/dadc78e1ff5fd94bc00e621baea83299 (accessed on 3 August 2026); Balad, ستاد فرماندهی یگان‌های ویژه ["Command Staff of the Special Cohorts"], https://balad.ir/p/ستاد-فرماندهی-یگانهای-ویژه_educational-institutions-P6z2QqUHcY3FWr#15/35.68944/51.50251 (accessed on 3 August 2026).

There are no publicly available documents detailing the relationship between the national commander of the Special Cohorts, provincial FARAJA commanders and provincial Special Cohorts commanders. However, official statements and Article 26 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces offer some insight.

In a media interview in August 2014, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, stated that some Special Cohorts were deployed at the order of provincial FARAJA commanders, implying that other units were deployed based on national-level orders. He said:

> **"As we are Special Cohorts, we intervene at times when there is a real possibility of issues or problems. However, some of our units are under the control of provincial FARAJA commanders. We provide them [the units under the control of provincial FARAJA commanders] with training and equipment and provincial commanders deploy these units based on anticipated needs… Sometimes, we remind provincial commanders not to create an overly police-like atmosphere, especially in Tehran."[1191]**

Article 26 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces states that "when fixed assignments… or the implementation of orders requires the participation and coordination of multiple commanders," a superior who holds authority over all of them must issue what is termed a "coordination order" specifying "the responsibilities and limits of authority of each commander." This suggests that the general commander of FARAJA or his deputies have likely issued such orders to define the relationship between provincial FARAJA commanders and the national commander of the Special Cohorts, clarifying their respective scopes of authority and coordination responsibilities as well as the duties of provincial Special Cohorts commanders in relation to both authorities.

In his various media interviews since 2013, Hassan Karami has indicated that the agents of the Special Cohorts are organized in various sections, which include the Anti-Riot Battalions, the Anti-Terror Special Forces (known by their Persian acronym, NOPO), the Women's Units and Mounted Forces.[1192]

The Anti-Riot Battalions are the oldest and most established section within the Special Cohorts. They were created in response to widespread street protests in various cities, which had been triggered by socio-economic grievances, at the time of the formation of the Special Cohorts in the early 1990s.[1193] For this reason, the authorities and state media reports frequently use the umbrella term "Special Cohorts" to refer specifically to the Anti-Riot Battalions.

NOPO is responsible for "counterterrorism" operations and was organized in the mid-1990s. The Persian acronym NOPO was widely understood to stand for the Anti-Terror Special Forces. However, in separate media interviews in 2014, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, and the then national commander of NOPO, Hossein Amjadian, stated that the correct full title is the Guardians of the Islamic Jurist Special Forces.[1194]

1191. Aftab News, ۸۸ اظهارات فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه ناجا درباره یروهای نوپو، حوادث سال ["Statements of Special Cohorts commander on 'NOPO forces', events of 2009, and more"], 22 August 2014, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/258016/اظهارات-فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-ناجا-درباره-نیروهای-نوپو-و-حوادث-سال-۸۸ (in Persian).

1192. See Aftab News, ۸۸ اظهارات فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه ناجا درباره یروهای نوپو، حوادث سال ["Statements of Special Cohorts commander on 'NOPO forces', events of 2009, and more"], 22 August 2014, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/258016/اظهارات-فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-ناجا-درباره-نیروهای-نوپو-و-حوادث-سال-۸۸ (in Persian).

1193. Donya-e-Eqtesad, پلیس ضدشورش ایران چگونه شکل گرفت ["How Iran's anti-riot police came into existence"], 25 July 2016, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/پخش-سایت-خوان-62/3081116-پلیس-ضدشورش-ایران-چگونه-شکل-گرفت (in Persian).

1194. See Tasnim News Agency, نوپو، سرزمین ناشناخته ناجا؛ مهارت هدف‌گیری و شلیک در ۳ ثانیه و تسلط به تمام گویش‌ها ["NOPO, the unknown land of NAJA: Targeting and shooting skills in 3 seconds and mastery of all dialects"], 26 August 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/06/04/469338/نوپو-سرزمین-ناشناخته-ناجا-مهارت-هدف-گیری-و-شلیک-در-3-ثانیه-و-تسلط-به-تمام-گویش-ها (in Persian); ISNA, ناگفته‌هایی درباره یگان ویژه ناجا ["Untold stories about the Special Cohort of NAJA"], 23 August 2014, https://www.isna.ir/news/93060100430/ناگفته-هایی-درباره-یگان-ویژه-ناجا (in Persian); Aftab News, اظهارات فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه ناجا درباره یروهای نوپو، حوادث سال ۸۸ ["Statements of Special Cohorts commander on 'NOPO forces', events of 2009, and more"], 22 August 2014, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/258016/اظهارات-فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-ناجا-درباره-نیروهای-نوپو-حوادث-سال-۸۸-و (in Persian)..

In a media interview in August 2014, the then national commander of NOPO, Hossein Amjadian, stated that NOPO agents are selected "from among the best of the Special Cohorts" and "undergo special trainings, including parachuting, shooting, jumping from buildings, rappelling, diving, navigation, paragliding, as well as courses known as water and land training."[1195]

Hossein Amjadian added that in addition to passing "many tests and examination", the "most important criteria" for NOPO recruitments is the demonstration of "a deep commitment and adherence to religious beliefs and the principle of the Supreme Leadership of the Islamic Jurist."[1196]

In a media interview on 21 June 2020, the then national commander of NOPO, Mohsen Ebrahimi, stated: "A unit of NOPO agents is based in the county's capital and other NOPO teams of the Special Cohorts of NAJA are present in large cities and provincial centres, [with their size] proportionate to the population."[1197]

Official statements and state media reports indicate that NOPO has a national commander who is subject to the authority of the national commander of the Special Cohorts but is appointed by the general commander of FARAJA.[1198] Reports from state media regarding the death of a NOPO commander in Zanjan province, during a training exercise in December 2023, further suggest that there are local NOPO commanders at provincial and/or city levels.[1199] Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles indicating which authority appoints these commanders.

In a media interview in August 2014, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, stated:

> **"A women's Anti-Riot Unit has been established in Tehran, with most of its members serving on a voluntary basis, while the core members are from the police personnel. We have launched a trial unit in Tehran consisting of a battalion-sized group of around 500 people, who have received the necessary training."[1200]**

In April 2021, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, announced that "Women's Units will become operationalized in Tehran and nine [other] provinces of the country during the first three months of this year and, in the near future, [they] will be established in other provinces."[1201]

In a media interview in July 2014, the then commander of the Mounted Forces of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Farzad Kianian, stated that the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of

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1195. Donya-e-Eqtesad, پلیس ضدشورش ایران چگونه شکل گرفت ["How Iran's anti-riot police came into existence"], 25 July 2016, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-62/3081116-پلیس-ضدشورش-ایران-چگونه-شکل-گرفت (in Persian).

1196. Donya-e-Eqtesad, پلیس ضدشورش ایران چگونه شکل گرفت ["How Iran's anti-riot police came into existence"], 25 July 2016, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-62/3081116-پلیس-ضدشورش-ایران-چگونه-شکل-گرفت (in Persian).

1197. Mashregh News, روایتی از سیاه‌پوشان ضدتروریست ناجا ["A narrative of the black-clad Anti-Terrorist Forces of NAJA"], 21 June 2020, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1086170/روایتی-از-سیاه-پوشان-ضدتروریست-ناجا-عکس (in Persian).

1198. See, for example, Defa Press, فرمانده نوپو تغییر کرد ["Commander of NOPO changed"], 17 April 2016, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/78213/فرمانده-نوپو-تغییر-کرد (in Persian).

1199. Fars News Agency, فرمانده نوپو زنجان به 3 بیمار جان دوباره بخشید ["Zanjan NOPO commander saved life of 3 patients"], 13 December 2023, https://farsnews.ir/zanjan/news/14020922001042/فرمانده-نوپو-زنجان-به-3-بیمار-جان-دوباره-بخشید (in Persian). Zanjan is the name of both a city and a province in Iran. The media reports do not specify whether the deceased was the commander of NOPO in the city of Zanjan or Zanjan province.

1200. Aftab News, اظهارات فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه ناجا درباره یروهای نوپو، حوادث سال ۸۸ ["Statements of Special Cohorts commander on 'NOPO forces', events of 2009, and more"], 22 August 2014, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/258016/اظهارات-فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-ناجا-درباره-نیروهای-نوپو-و-حوادث-سال-۸۸ (in Persian).

1201. Amnesty International has not focused further on the Women's Unit of the Special Cohorts as they were not involved in the human rights violations documented in this report. See also Asr-e Iran, راه اندازی واحد زنان یگان ویژه ["Establishment of a Women's Unit in the Special Cohort"], 27 April 2021, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/781375/راه-اندازی-واحد-زنان-یگان-ویژه (in Persian); Aftab News, اظهارات فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه ناجا درباره یروهای نوپو، حوادث سال ۸۸ ["Statements of Special Cohorts commander on 'NOPO forces', events of 2009, and more"], 22 August 2014, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/258016/اظهارات-فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-ناجا-درباره-نیروهای-نوپو-حوادث-سال-۸۸-و (in Persian).

FARAJA, Hassan Karami, ordered the formation of the Mounted Forces in around May 2013. In response to a question on plans to use these forces for protest control, Farzad Kianian stated:

> **"In the coming years, these forces will be used in ceremonial parades and at Azadi Stadium. For now, they will not be used in riots, as these horses need to be trained. Nevertheless, their use in riots is on the agenda but this will take time to implement."[1202]**

10.2.1(II) MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIALS

The minister of interior is integrated into the FARAJA command structure through two interconnected roles. First, they head the Ministry of Interior, which is responsible for domestic security; their orders to FARAJA regarding the fulfilment of the ministry's security responsibilities are binding. Article 2 of the Police Force Law states that FARAJA is "an armed organization under the authority of the commander-in-chief and affiliated with the Ministry of Interior." As detailed below, this institutional affiliation mandates joint oversight of FARAJA affairs by both FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior across a wide range of domains, including organizational structure, recruitment, training, budgeting, weapons and equipment, performance evaluation, promotion, disciplinary procedures, and the reporting of field situations and intelligence.

Second, the minister of interior holds a concurrent appointment by the Supreme Leader as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, which places them above the general commander of FARAJA within the FARAJA chain of command. This command structure is confirmed in a directive from the General Staff of the Armed Forces, dated 23 January 2000, which is available in the *County Governor's Handbook*, a book produced in consultation with various state officials and published on government websites.[1203]

The complex and overlapping authority between FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior, coupled with insufficiently clear legal provisions governing their respective powers, has necessitated the adoption of resolutions by the State Security Council. According to the available information detailed below, these resolutions extend the minister of interior's authority to strategic and operational oversight, while excluding tactical decision-making.

Additionally, the authority of the minister of interior over security operations is reinforced through a third concurrent role as the head of the State Security Council, a key body tasked with formulating national security policies and strategies. Under Iranian law, the council's resolutions are advisory by nature and become binding orders only when communicated for implementation by the minister of interior. In this capacity, the minister of interior exercises significant power not only over FARAJA but also the IRGC.

10.2.1(II)(i) Ministerial capacity

The minister of interior is appointed by the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran following a vote of confidence from the parliament. State media articles and commentary by experts in

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1202. Amnesty International has not focused further on the Mounted Forces of the Special Cohorts as they were not involved in the human rights violations documented in this report. For more information about them, see Khabar Online, استفاده از یگان اسب سوار در نیروی انتظامی ["Use of Mounted Forces in police force"], 5 July 2014, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/363674/استفاده-از-یگان-اسب-سوار-در-نیروی-انتظامی-پلیس-سوار (in Persian).

1203. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش فرماندار20%کتاب.pdf, p. 268.

Iran's security apparatus indicate that the president selects the candidate with the approval of the Supreme Leader.[1204]

Within the Ministry of Interior, the deputy minister of interior for police and security is responsible for "supervision over the implementation of missions assigned to the police force by the commander-in-chief [the Supreme Leader] and the State Security Council as well as [the enforcement] of the Police Force Law and other duties assigned to the police force by competent authorities."[1205]

The deputy minister is appointed by the minister of interior.[1206]

The deputy minister of interior for police and security is supported by two offices: the Office for Security Affairs and the Office for Police Affairs and Enhancement of Public Order (Office for Police Affairs). Their responsibilities encompass coordination between FARAJA commanders and Ministry of Interior officials, including provincial and county governors. The minister of interior appoints the heads of both offices.

Various provisions in the Police Force Law, the Law on the Recruitment of the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Recruitment Law) and other official documents highlight the substantial role of the Ministry of Interior in FARAJA affairs and emphasize the need for FARAJA commanders to coordinate with the Ministry of Interior, including in areas such as organizational structure, recruitment, training, budget, weapons and equipment, evaluation, promotion and disciplinary processes as well as reporting on field situations and intelligence.

For example, Article 8 of the Police Force Law provides that "the statute and organizational structure of this force [FARAJA] shall be prepared by the Ministry of Interior and approved by the commander-in-chief."

The Note to Article 15 of the Police Force Recruitment Law provides that the recruitment processes of FARAJA shall be based on regulations which are prepared by FARAJA in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and are finalized with the approval of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and ratification by the commander-in-chief.

Article 31 of the same law adds:

> **"The number and composition of personnel, as well as the distribution of ranks and grades within the police force, shall be determined… in accordance with organizational schedules… prepared by FARAJA in coordination with the Ministry of Interior, and approved by the commander-in-chief through the General Staff [of the Armed Forces]."**

The Note to Article 71 of the same law states:

> **"Promotions and the method of implementing them shall be determined by regulations which are prepared by FARAJA in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and approved by the commander-in-chief through the General Staff [of the Armed Forces]."**

On the official website of the Ministry of Interior, an official document titled Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior provides that the Ministry of Interior, through the deputy minister of interior for police

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1204. See also BBC Persian, آیا انتخاب وزیر کشور بدون صلاحدید رهبر صورت می‌گیرد؟ ["Is the minister of interior appointed without Supreme Leader's discretion?"], 29 June 2017, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-features-40765016 (in Persian); Bourse News, مهر - 5 وزیر با نظر رهبر انتخاب می شوند ["Mehr – Five ministers to be appointed with Supreme Leader's input"], 16 August 2009, https://www.boursenews.ir/fa/news/22992/مهر-5-وزیر-با-نظر-رهبر-انتخاب-می-شوند (in Persian).

1205. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, p. 31.

1206. IRNA, «علی اکبر پورجمشیدیان «معاون امنیتی و انتظامی وزیر کشور شد ["Ali Akbar Pourjamshidian appointed deputy minister of interior for security and police"], 30 September 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85613202 (in Persian).

and security, must support the operational effectiveness of FARAJA forces.[1207] This includes "facilitating control, guidance and support for the command staff of the police force, including in the areas related to organization, training, budgeting, equipment, and human resources." The document adds that the deputy minister must work to "establish an optimal organizational structure and system for the police force and its subordinate units."

According to the *County Governor's Handbook*, in situations involving "high death tolls with national consequences", the minister of interior can authorize the deputy minister of interior for police and security to dispatch a representative to prepare a report. FARAJA is obligated to cooperate with representatives from the Ministry of Interior in such cases.[1208]

10.2.1(II)(ii) Deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs

The minister of interior's control over FARAJA is further strengthened by their parallel role as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs. According to official correspondence published on the website of the Supreme Leader, the process for appointing the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs has typically involved the minister of interior submitting a letter to the Supreme Leader, formally requesting that "the commander-in-chief's authorities over police affairs be delegated to the minister of interior".[1209] The Supreme Leader typically responds in writing, formally granting the delegation.

A directive from the General Staff of the Armed Forces, dated 23 January 2000, states that as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, the minister of interior is in a position of superiority to the general commander of FARAJA.[1210]

Publicly available laws lack clear provisions specifying how the superior authority of the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs intersects with FARAJA's internal command structure, including with respect to operational matters such as deployments, tactics, and use of force and the extent to which the minister may intervene in field-level decisions. This lack of clarity historically led to tensions, escalating to the Supreme Leader and prompting the issuance of State Security Council resolutions intended to delineate the respective powers of the individual holding the dual roles of minister of interior and deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs with respect to FARAJA commanders.[1211] Two such resolutions, dated 28 December 1998 and 10 May 2015, outline the working relationship between the minister of interior, as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, and FARAJA, as referenced in the *County Governor's Handbook*.[1212] To Amnesty International's knowledge, these resolutions are not publicly available.

According to the *County Governor's Handbook*, the resolution dated 10 May 2015 confirms that the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs holds the power to issue binding orders to the general commander of FARAJA. However, the resolution also specifies that the responsibility for "implementing

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1207. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, pp. 30-37.
1208. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other//آموزش فرماندار20%کتاب.pdf, p. 267. The book is on file with Amnesty International.
1209. Khamenei.ir, انتصاب وزیر کشور به عنوان جانشین فرماندهی کل قوا در امور نیروی انتظامی ["Appointment of minister of interior as deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs"], 8 November 2009, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=8379 (in Persian); Khamenei.ir, انتصاب جانشین فرمانده کل قوا در امور نیروی انتظامی ["Appointment of deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs"], 2 August 1998, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=11429 (in Persian).
1210. This is cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*, a book produced in consultation with various state officials and published on government websites. See Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش/کتاب20%فرماندار.pdf, p. 268. The book is on file with Amnesty International.
1211. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other//آموزش فرماندار20%کتاب.pdf, pp. 295-269. The book is on file with Amnesty International.
1212. See Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other//آموزش فرماندار20%کتاب.pdf, p. 268. The book is on file with Amnesty International.

these orders lies "solely with the general commander of FARAJA". It further clarifies that the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs "must not interfere in tactical and command matters" and that "the command on the ground and the manner of implementation of decisions rest with FARAJA commanders."[1213]

In terms of oversight and performance monitoring of FARAJA forces, the *County Governor's Handbook* states that the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs has the power to authorize investigation teams to assess the conduct of FARAJA forces and commanders. It adds that the General Staff of the Armed Forces has issued a directive outlining the procedures for conducting such inspections.

10.2.1(II)(iii) Provincial and county governors

Note 2 to Article 1 of the Regulations on Duties and Responsibilities of Provincial Governors and County Governors and the Manner of their Appointment and Dismissal (Regulations on Governors) describes the provincial governor "as the representative of the Ministry of Interior… who is responsible for carrying out the duties and powers of the ministry in the province and is accountable to the minister of interior."[1214] Article 24 of the Regulations on Governors states that "all duties and authorities assigned to provincial governors are likewise granted to county governors within their respective county of responsibility".

Provincial governors are appointed by the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on a proposal by the minister of interior and the approval of the cabinet.[1215] County governors are appointed by the minister of interior upon the recommendation of the respective provincial governor, who is their immediate superior.[1216]

State media reports indicate that, in cases where no individual is formally appointed as provincial governor, the responsibilities of this role may be carried out by an official holding a similar position, referred to as the head of the office of provincial governor. The minister of interior holds the authority to make appointments to this position.[1217]

The working relationship between governors and FARAJA commanders at the provincial or county level mirrors the complexities of the dynamic at the national level between the minister of interior and the general commander of FARAJA. However, a distinction is that, unlike the minister of interior, who holds the concurrent role of the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs and thus possesses formal authority over the general commander of FARAJA, provincial governors and county governors do not hold an equivalent role.

Governors' relationships with FARAJA commanders are grounded in their dual roles: as local representatives of the Ministry of Interior and as heads of provincial and county provision councils. Like the minister of interior at the national level, the first role grants them institutional oversight over FARAJA, which is formally affiliated with the Ministry of Interior. The second role within the provision councils extends their authority beyond FARAJA to include military forces, including the IRGC, and

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1213. See Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other//آموزش_کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, p. 268. The book is on file with Amnesty International.
1214. Regulations on Duties and Responsibilities of Provincial Governors and County Governors and the Manner of their Appointment and Dismissal (Regulations on Governors), adopted by the Supreme Administrative Council, 20 October 1998, Article 1(2).
1215. Regulations on Governors, Article 3. Article 4 of the same regulations adds that the dismissal of the provincial governor is carried out by the decree of the minister of interior, following the approval by the president.
1216. Regulations on Governors, Article 5.
1217. See, for example, Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA), ["Head of the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan appointed"], 22 October 2024, https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-استان-ها-15/سرپرست-استانداری-آذربایجان-غربی-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

other entities since, as with the State Security Council, resolutions of the provision councils, which apply to a wide range of entities, only become binding once communicated by the governor for implementation.

Article 1 of the Regulations on Governors states: "Provincial governors, within the scope of their jurisdiction, are the highest-ranking representatives of the government and responsible for implementing national public policies in relation to… the police force".

The Note to Article 1 adds that "military forces [the Army and the IRGC], within the scope of their duties in relation to the security of [certain] regions, will operate under the supervision of provincial governors."

Article 2(2)(1) of the Regulations on Governors stipulates: "All member organizations of the provision council and other executive bodies in the province are obligated to implement… the security orders of provincial governors."

This grants provincial governors authority over FARAJA and the IRGC, commanders of which are members of the provision council.

Article 8 of the Regulations on Governors provides that the appointment of provincial and county FARAJA commanders by the general commander of FARAJA[1218] shall take place in coordination with provincial governors.

As with the concerns raised regarding the authority of the minister of interior, the legal framework lacks clarity on whether the authority that provincial governors may exercise over provincial FARAJA commanders extends to command-related issues. Consequently, resolutions of the State Security Council, including one dated 10 May 2015 and entitled the Directive on the Relationship between Police Commanders in a Province and the Provincial Governor and the Provincial Provision Council and Coordination Orders (Directive on Police Commanders and Provincial Governor), have sought to delineate the division of powers.[1219]

As cited in the *District Governor's Handbook*, another book produced in consultation with various state officials and published on government websites, Article 31 of the Directive on Provincial Police Commanders and Provincial Governor stipulates that the provincial FARAJA commander "holds legal responsibility and is accountable to the provincial governor for matters falling within the governor's authority over security and police affairs."[1220]

However, according to the *County Governor's Handbook*, the Directive on Police Commanders and Provincial Governor clarifies that while provincial governors and county governors are empowered to issue orders to FARAJA commanders in matters related to public order and security, FARAJA commanders must retain operational command and determine how such orders are implemented. According to the handbook, the directive indicates that governors' orders must not go as far as "impairing FARAJA's operational capacity", and that tactical and operational matters must remain within the domain of FARAJA commanders.[1221]

Conversely, according to the *County Governor's Handbook*, FARAJA commanders are obligated to carry

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1218. The phrase used in Article 8 is "FARAJA commanders of sectors and districts." As stated previously, in FARAJA terminology, a "police sector" generally corresponds to a province and a "police district" generally corresponds to a county.

1219. See Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش%20کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, p. 268; Darioush Ghasemi, *District Governor's Handbook*, https://ostan-hm.ir/Upload/50462/کتاب%20بخشدار.pdf, p. 89.

1220. Darioush Ghasemi, *District Governor's Handbook*, https://ostan-hm.ir/Upload/50462/کتاب%20بخشدار.pdf, p. 90.

1221. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش%20کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, p. 268.

out "major plans related to police affairs and the maintenance of order with the knowledge of the provincial governor".[1222] Furthermore, FARAJA commanders are required to take the necessary measures to provide provincial governors with statistics and information related to security and police matters and prepare periodic reports requested by the provincial governor or their deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs, and to report daily incidents and events occurring within the province.[1223]

The *County Governor's Handbook* notes that, as per Article 40(3) of the Directive on Police Commanders and Provincial Governor, "the relationship between the county governor and the county FARAJA commander is similar to the relationship between the provincial governor and the provincial FARAJA commander."[1224]

The *County Governor's Handbook* also sheds light on how governors may exercise oversight over FARAJA forces within their jurisdiction. Provincial governors can submit their evaluations and recommendations directly to both the minister of interior and the general commander of FARAJA. Additionally, provincial governors and their deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs may communicate their assessments to provincial FARAJA commanders, who are obligated to review these communications, take action, and report back in formal responses personally signed by the respective provincial FARAJA commander.[1225]

With respect to complaints concerning county FARAJA commanders, the handbook outlines the following hierarchical and multi-tiered process:

> **"The objections or concerns of a county governor or provincial governor regarding the performance of a county FARAJA commander must be submitted by the provincial governor to the provincial FARAJA commander. The provincial FARAJA commander is obligated to address and rectify the issue and report the outcome to the provincial governor. If they [provincial governor or county governor] deem the commander's actions insufficient, the matter is referred by the provincial governor to the Ministry of Interior for further review. In such cases, a joint team from the Office of the Deputy Commander-in-Chief [for Police Affairs] and FARAJA will investigate the matter. If the disagreement persists, the issue is escalated to the General Staff of the Armed Forces."[1226]**

Mirroring the role of deputy minister of interior for police and security within the Ministry of Interior at the national level, equivalent positions exist at provincial and county levels: namely, the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs, and the deputy county governor for political, security and social affairs. State media reports indicate that the former is appointed by the minister of interior, based on a recommendation from the provincial governor.[1227] The latter is appointed by the

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1222. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش_فرماندار_کتاب%20.pdf, p. 268.
1223. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش_فرماندار_کتاب%20.pdf, p. 269.
1224. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش_فرماندار_کتاب%20.pdf, p. 269.
1225. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش_فرماندار_کتاب%20.pdf, p. 269.
1226. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش_فرماندار_کتاب%20.pdf, p. 269.
1227. See, for example, Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan, معاون سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Deputy governor for political, security and social affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah"], 1 June 2023, http://www.ostan-ks.ir/home/news/معاون-سیاسی-امنیتی-و-اجتماعی-استانداری-کرمانشاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian); KurdPress, مهدی رمضانی معاون سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کردستان شد ["Mehdi Ramezani appointed as deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan"], 3 February 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/26721 (in Persian).

provincial governor.[1228] State media reports indicate that, in cases where no individual is formally appointed as deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs, the responsibilities of this role may be carried out by an official holding a similar position, referred to as the head of the office of the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs. The provincial governor holds the authority to make appointments to this position.[1229]

Similar to the Office for Security Affairs and the Office for Police Affairs that supports the deputy minister of interior for police and security at the national level, the equivalent structure at the provincial level is a single entity known as the Office for Security and Police Affairs of the office of the provincial governor.[1230] The head of this office is appointed by the provincial governor.[1231] In some cases, the head of this office concurrently acts as the head of the office of the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs.[1232]

Amnesty International was unable to obtain information on whether equivalent entities exist at the county level. However, state-run or state-affiliated websites indicate that, within the office of a county governor, there is a position titled the expert in police and security affairs who carries responsibilities similar to those assigned to the Office for Security and Police Affairs of the office of the provincial governor.[1233] It remains unclear how many individuals may be appointed to this position within each county. State-run or state-affiliated websites further suggest that this county expert oversees counterparts holding the same title at the district level within the county.[1234]

10.2.2 MANDATE

FARAJA is Iran's police force and the first responder to protests.

The Police Force Law states:

1228. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, انتصاب معاون سیاسی انتظامی فرمانداری اسلامشهر ["Appointment of deputy county governor for political and police affairs of the Office of the County Governor of Eslamshahr"], 25 April 2025, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6447319 (in Persian); Fars News Agency, انتصابات جدید در فرمانداری‌های سنندج و دهگلان ["New appointments in offices of the county governors of Sanandaj and Dehgolan"], 14 April 2025, https://farsnews.ir/rozitaghadri/1744634519481255065 (in Persian); Jahan News, معاون امنیتی و انتظامی فرمانداری تهران منصوب شد ["Deputy county governor for security and police affairs of the Office of the County Governor of Tehran appointed"], 17 January 2023, https://www.jahannews.com/news/826219 (in Persian).

1229. Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah, سرپرست معاونت سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شدُ ["Head of the office of the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kermanshah province"], 19 May 2022, https://www.ostan-ks.ir/84114 (in Persian).

1230. Office of the Provincial Governor of Esfahan, ساختار سازمانی ["Organizational structure"], https://ostan-es.ir/ساختار-سازمانی (in Persian).

1231. See, for example, Khabarban, حکم انتصاب مدیرکل دفتر امور امنیتی و انتظامی استانداری مرکزی صادر شد ["Appointment decree issued for head of Office for Security and Police Affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Markazi"], 8 May 2025, https://44593754.khabarban.com (in Persian); Borna News, مدیرکل دفتر امور امنیتی و انتظامی استانداری اصفهان منصوب شد ["Head of Office for Security and Police Affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Esfahan appointed"], 13 August 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1363205 (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, مدیرکل امنیتی و انتظامی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Head of Office for Security and Police Affairs in the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah appointed"], 14 May 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/02/24/2710741 (in Persian).

1232. Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah, سرپرست معاونت سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شدُ ["Head of the office of the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kermanshah province"], 19 May 2022, https://www.ostan-ks.ir/84114 (in Persian); Milkan Online, مدیرکل امنیتی و انتظامی استانداری منصوب شد ["Head of the security and police of the office of the provincial governor appointed"], 15 May 2022, https://milkanonline.ir/25190/مدیرکل-امنیتی-و-انتظامی-استانداری-منصوب (in Persian).

1233. See, for example, Iran Arze, منابع استخدامی کارشناس امور امنیتی و انتظامی فراگیر دوازدهم ["Employment-related resources for expert in police and security affairs 12th general exam"], https://iranarze.ir/blog/estekhdam498 (accessed on 3 August 2026); Administrative and Recruitment Affairs Organization, دفترچه فراگیر دستگاه‌های اجرایی ۱۴۰۳ ["Comprehensive guidebook for executive agencies exam 2024-2025"], 2024, https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/daftarche-faraghir-dastgah-ejrayi-1403.pdf (in Persian); Shanasname.ir, مشاغل اختصاصی وزارت کشور ["Specialized job positions of the Ministry of Interior"], https://shenasname.ir/jobs/7134--مشاغل-وزارت-کشور#عنوان_شغل_کارشناس_امور_امنیتی_و_انتظامی (in Persian) (accessed on 6 August 2026).

1234. Memargold, مقاله شرح وظایف کارشناس امور امنیتی و انتظامی ["Article on job description of the expert in police and security affairs"], available at https://memargold.ir/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/شرح-وظایف-کارشناس-امور-امنیتی-و-انتظامی-معمار-گلد.pdf (accessed on 3 August 2026).

"The purpose of establishing the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to establish order and security, ensure public and individual tranquillity, and safeguard and protect the achievements of the Islamic Revolution within the framework of this law in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Under Article 4(2) of the Police Force Law, FARAJA is tasked with "resolutely and continuously confronting and combating any kind of sabotage, terrorism, insurrection, and elements and movements that disrupt the country's security, in collaboration with the Ministry of Intelligence".[1235]

Article 4(3) obliges FARAJA to "prevent and stop any unpermitted associations, marches, and gatherings, and combat riots, disorder, and unpermitted activities."

The broad and vaguely defined mandate of FARAJA fails to distinguish between violent acts and non-violent forms of dissent and fails to provide a definition for "elements and movements that disrupt the country's security". This ambiguity enables the misuse of FARAJA to supress the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and justifies the use of force against peaceful demonstrators and political dissidents.

The UN Human Rights Committee and other international and regional human rights mechanisms have stated that disruption is inherent in protest and that, provided the protest remains peaceful, the authorities must tolerate that disruption and only impose restrictions in narrowly defined circumstances related to the protection of others' human rights.[1236]

The Police Force Law also unduly restricts the right to freedom of peaceful assembly by tasking FARAJA with suppressing "unpermitted" gatherings. Organizing and participating in peaceful assemblies is a right, not a privilege. According to international human rights law and standards, authorities should not impose prior authorization or advance permit requirements on the exercise of this right.[1237] Moreover, a lack of notification should not be relied upon as the basis for dispersing a peaceful assembly, arresting organizers or participants, or imposing undue sanctions. Rather, the authorities retain their obligations to facilitate the assembly and protect participants.[1238]

Furthermore, by conflating "riots" with "disorder and unauthorized activities", the law enables FARAJA to prevent a wide range of peaceful protest activities, including gatherings, chanting, distributing pamphlets, and writing slogans on walls, in violation of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

As noted previously, communication and coordination across the FARAJA chain of command is facilitated through the national MARFOUK of FARAJA headed by the operations deputy of FARAJA. In a media interview in February 2019, the then operations deputy of FARAJA, Hossein Sajedinia, described the activities carried out by his office to ensure a well-functioning and coordinated command chain. He stated:

"Preparing and evaluating operational plans, directing and supervising the execution of operations, keeping the MARFOUK active and up to date… have been among the activities of the Office of the Deputy this year… Developing a comprehensive operational manual in a modern format and operational books for provinces based on geography and [types of] crime are also among the key tasks of the Office of the Deputy… Measures have also been taken in the area of passive defence and today the Roadmap for the General Command of [FARAJA] and the Tactical Manual for the Police Command of

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1235. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون نیروی انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران [Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran], 1990, https://iranarze.ir/storage/uploads/2016/07/قانون-نیروی-انتظامی-جمهوری-اسلامی-ایران.pdf (in Persian), Article 4(2).
1236. UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), General Comment 37: Right of peaceful assembly (Article 21), 17 September 2020, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/37, paras 7, 15, 44, 47 and 85.
1237. UN HRC, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 70.
1238. UN HRC, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 71.

Provinces Across the Country will be launched."[1239]

According to Amnesty International's knowledge, neither document mentioned by Hossein Sajedinia was made available publicly.

He also emphasized that, through all these efforts, the national MARFOUK of FARAJA was trying to diligently serve and comply with the orders of the Supreme Leader. He said:

"Our attempt is to be a worthy soldier for the commander-in-chief of all armed forces, the Supreme Leader (may his shadow be exalted), and we strive to serve the people sincerely. With readiness and maximum utilization of capacities, we will authoritatively pursue and execute missions."[1240]

In February 2019, the general commander of FARAJA announced the launch of an advanced video surveillance system within the national MARFOUK of FARAJA, which he said ensures that "all missions involving the specialized police forces are consolidated at the centre [MARFOUK], and monitoring is conducted both visually and in writing across the country."[1241]

The Intelligence Organization of FARAJA provides intelligence support to FARAJA forces in their operations. This mandate derives from Article 4(4) of the Police Force Law which provides that FARAJA has a responsibility to undertake "necessary actions to gather news and information within the scope of assigned duties and to collaborate with other organizations and intelligence units of the country within the limits of their responsibilities."[1242]

According to a study published by a FARAJA-affiliated police academy, official internal FARAJA documents, which have not been made publicly available, stipulate, in three paragraphs, that the mandate of the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA covers tasks related to policy development, operational readiness and centralized operations. The study describes those tasks as "formulating policies, strategies, plans, directives and regulations related to the collection and processing of intelligence; maintaining the capabilities and operational power of the Investigation Police nationwide through continuous oversight and control, as well as planning for promoting operational excellence and professionalism; carrying out assigned centralized tasks and directing and managing public security operations in specific cases and as per orders."[1243]

The Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA derives its mandate from Articles 4(25) and 5 of the Police Force Law. Article 4(25) stipulates that FARAJA has a responsibility to undertake "continuous and persistent efforts towards ensuring the protection and safeguarding of the organization in security areas". Article 5 provides that the implementation of Article 4(25) requires the establishment of the Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA. Note 1 to Article 5 states that the mandate and responsibilities of the Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA shall mirror those of the Army's equivalent organization, as outlined in the Law on the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Army Law).

Article 16(1) of the Army Law states that the mandate of its Intelligence Protection Organization is to "prevent, detect, identify, and neutralize subversive activities, espionage, sabotage, matters leading to dissent, infiltration of political movements and disruption in execution of missions to safeguard the

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1239. Mizan News Agency, تشریح اهم اقدامات معاونت عملیات ناجا ["Explanation of key activities of NAJA's operations deputy"], 20 February 2019, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/495752/تشریح-اهم-اقدامات-معاونت-عملیات-ناجا-تدوین-کتاب-جامع-عملیاتی-به-صورت-نوین (in Persian).
1240. Mizan News Agency, تشریح اهم اقدامات معاونت عملیات ناجا ["Explanation of key activities of NAJA's operations deputy"], 20 February 2019, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/495752/تشریح-اهم-اقدامات-معاونت-عملیات-ناجا-تدوین-کتاب-جامع-عملیاتی-به-صورت-نوین (in Persian).
1241. Kayhan, سامانه پایش تصویری مرکز فرماندهی و کنترل ناجا افتتاح شد ["Video monitoring system of NAJA's national command and control centre inaugurated"], 27 February 2019, https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/155613/سامانه-پایش-تصویری-مرکز-فرماندهی-و-کنترل-ناجا-افتتاح-شد (in Persian).
1242. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون نیروی انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران [Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran], 1990, https://iranarze.ir/storage/uploads/2016/07/قانون-نیروی-انتظامی-جمهوری-اسلامی-ایران.pdf (in Persian), Article 4(4).
1243. Mariam Pasandeh and Saeed Atzadeh, آشنایی با سازمان‌های اطلاعاتی ["Familiarity with Intelligence Organizations"], 2021, p. 244.

Army… through protecting personnel, information, documents, places, facilities, equipment and communication security".

According to Article 16(2), key responsibilities include: gathering, analysing, and classifying intelligence; uncovering and neutralizing conspiracies; creating and overseeing security protocols; educating personnel on protective measures; reporting non-military security information to the Ministry of Intelligence; uncovering the political activities of the personnel and the infiltration of political movements and associations into the organization; and identifying and reporting cases of poor performance, sabotage and violations. security qualifications.

Additionally, Article 16(2) provides that the Intelligence Protection Organization must inform commanders of issues that are necessary to the execution of their missions. It also provides that the Intelligence Protection Organization is responsible for all matters related to issuing licenses for carrying shotgun, handguns and related munitions.

Note 3 to Article 16 states: "The head of the Intelligence Protection Organization must promptly inform the prosecutor general and the general commander of the IRGC about subversive activities or major sabotage incidents."

Note 4 to Article 16 states: "The Intelligence Protection Organization is required to report any ideological, political or ethical deviations of personnel discovered during its operations to the Ideological and Political Organization."

The Ideological and Political Organization of FARAJA seeks to enforce absolute adherence to the Supreme Leader and the Islamic Republic at all levels. This organization derives its mandate from Articles 4(26) and 5 of the Police Force Law. Article 4(26) provides that FARAJA has a responsibility to undertake "continuous and persistent efforts towards ensuring the full dominance of Islamic culture and rules within the police force". Article 5 provides that the implementation of Article 4(26) requires the establishment of the Ideological and Political Organization of FARAJA. Note 1 to Article 5 states that the mandate and responsibilities of the Ideological and Political Organization of FARAJA shall mirror those of the Army's equivalent organization, as outlined in the Army Law.

Article 14(1) of the Army Law provides that the mandate of its Ideological and Political Organization is to "promote and expand Islamic culture and values within the Army… based on Islamic standards and rules and the strategies, directives and orders of the Supreme Leader".

According to Article 14(2), key responsibilities include: providing religious and political education to personnel; conducting promotional activities; offering written policies to ensure that organizational structures and regulations align with Islamic principles; monitoring adherence to Islamic standards in all areas and reporting violations, including if necessary to the Supreme Leader; and evaluating personnel for ideological suitability in appointments, promotions and international assignments. Article 15 of the same law provides that officials in charge of the Ideological and Political Organization must be clerics.

10.2.2(I) FARAJA COMMANDERS

The Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces outline the responsibilities of commanders across all of Iran's "armed forces", without distinguishing between FARAJA, the IRGC or the Army.

Article 51 states: "The acceptance of command and leadership roles within the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on religious duty and obedience to the system of the Guardianship of

the Islamic Jurist."[1244]

Article 52 states:

> **"The core inherent responsibilities of commanders… include: striving to elevate the Islamic and human character of personnel and maintain and strengthen the collective morale of the forces; aiming to achieve the highest efficiency and effectiveness in fulfilling the mission of [their] unit or organization; and ensuring the training and development of qualified and capable personnel".**

Article 58 states that commanders "must strengthen the sense of belief and loyalty to the noble religion of Islam and the Islamic homeland among their personnel".

Article 25 provides that commanders must, in accordance with regulations, bylaws and the conditions of their units, issue orders and ensure that their forces are familiar with proper implementation of regulations and assigned duties.

Article 27 stipulates that orders must be clear, explicit, executable and in full compliance with Islamic law and the directives of the commander-in-chief. Article 28 adds that "orders directed to higher ranks should be general in nature, whereas for lower ranks, they must be detailed in proportion to the recipient's position in the hierarchy."

Article 64 states that commanders "must constantly be aware of the current status of their unit, organization or relevant section, and have knowledge of the personnel count, weapons, ammunition, transportation equipment and other government property under their responsibility."

Article 24 states that commanders at all levels are responsible for the continuous supervision of their respective units.

Article 55 states:

> **"Any form of indiscipline, negligence or laxity in duty is unacceptable. Commanders… are obligated to promptly identify the causes of deficiencies with vigilance and repress them immediately using their lawful authority and effective management."**

Article 6 defines "discipline within the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran" as "practical allegiance to the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist, as well as Islamic morals, traditions and laws, and adherence to the commands of the commander-in-chief of all forces, as well as the laws, regulations and orders issued by commanders, heads and managers throughout the chain of command".

Article 116 outlines a broad range of offences that personnel may be disciplined for, covering areas such as personal appearance and hygiene, absenteeism, adherence to orders, operational performance, and the handling of weapons, equipment, and classified information. Notably, the list of offences makes no mention of respect for human rights standards or obligations. On the contrary, it lists vague and broadly worded offences such as "negligence and carelessness in countering the propaganda and psychological operations of the enemy" and confronting "anti-revolutionary elements", which provide a basis for repressing peaceful dissent.

Article 121 provides:

> **"When commanders… realize that their authority is not sufficient to impose an appropriate punishment on an offender, they shall impose a punishment within their powers and request further punishment from a higher authority if it exceeds their jurisdiction."**

1244. The Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist is a foundational principle of the Islamic Republic system in Iran, which grants absolute power to the Supreme Leader.

The responsibilities of FARAJA commanders include implementing the resolutions of the Supreme Council, the State Security Council and, in the case of provincial and county FARAJA commanders, the resolutions of provincial and county provision councils. The instructions of the minister of interior and their representatives at subsidiary levels – provincial governors and county governors – are also binding upon FARAJA commanders.

Article 39 of the Law on the Punishment of Crimes by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Law on Crimes by Armed Forces) provides that any FARAJA commander "who fails to implement, as applicable in the circumstances concerned, the resolutions of the Supreme Council, the State Security Council and the Provision Councils of provinces or counties, which they are obligated by law to enforce, shall be subject to imprisonment from six months to two years" unless subject to other legal provisions warranting a harsher penalty.

With respect to the responsibilities of operations deputies within FARAJA's command structure at both national and provincial levels, official statements describe the operations deputy as "the central pillar of FARAJA's mission to maintain public order and security"[1245] and as "the driving force behind the specialized police units." Official statements also describe the role of the operations deputy as "inter-departmental", responsible for "directing all operational and mission-related areas" and ensuring the "timely implementation of command decisions and the successful execution of operations".[1246] On 18 June 2024, the general commander of FARAJA, Ahmadreza Radan, stated:

> **"The operations deputy plays an unparalleled role in implementing the country's police policies and directives… This highlights the deputy's function as a true driving force within the organization… The operations deputy is responsible for integrating… the activities of all specialized police units… into a unified and cohesive operation… The operations deputy, through second-by-second control and, when necessary, issuing orders during the execution of missions, effectively ensures coordination and synergy among the specialized police units."[1247]**

As stated previously, operations deputies also oversee the development and effective performance of the MARFOUKs of FARAJA at the national level and in provinces.

Regarding the coordination deputy, Amnesty International was unable to find official sources detailing this deputy's responsibilities. However, official statements by national and provincial coordination deputies of FARAJA highlight their role in representing the police and its ideology in public relations, as well as coordinating and reporting on various areas, including the organization and deployment of FARAJA agents and the execution of missions.[1248]

1245. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, معاونت عملیات محور ماموریتهای ناجا است ["Operations deputy is the core of NAJA's missions"], 6 December 2018, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4477945 (in Persian).

1246. See, for example, ISNA, معاون عملیات فرماندهی انتظامی کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Operations deputy of Kermanshah province police command appointed"], 24 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400080201018 (in Persian); Dana News, جانشین فرماندهی انتظامی خراسان رضوی خبرداد؛ انتصاب سرهنگ روحی بعنوان معاونت عملیات فرمانده انتظامی استان ["Deputy commander of Khorasan Razavi police command announced: Colonel Rouhi appointed as operations deputy of province's police command"], 26 July 2016, https://www.dana.ir/829016 (in Persian).

1247. Serat News, کنترل لحظه‌به‌لحظه مأموریت‌های پلیس توسط معاونت عملیات فراجا ["Minute-by-minute monitoring of police missions by FARAJA's operations deputy"], 18 June 2024, https://www.seratnews.com/fa/news/662163 (in Persian).

1248. See, for example, Hamshahri Online, استقرار بیش از ۳۰ هزار نیروی انتظامی در مرزهای سه‌گانه ["Over 30,000 police deployed to the three borders"], 25 October 2018, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/amp/420066 (in Persian); Mizan News Agency, نظام به داشتن نیروهای مؤمن و متدین نیروی انتظامی افتخار می‌کند ["System takes pride in having faithful and devout members in police force"], 10 October 2018, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/458796 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, هفته ناجا، فرصت ارائه کارنامه ناجا ["NAJA Week: An opportunity to present NAJA's report card"], 30 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/2928385 (in Persian).

10.2.2(I)(i) Prevention Police

While the Police Force Law does not regulate the deployment of FARAJA forces in response to "unauthorized activities", according to official statements, during small scale and "manageable" protests, regular police officers stationed at police stations, operating under the Prevention Police, are deployed to the protest scene and order the protesters to disperse.[1249]

If the regular police are unable to end the gatherings, the Assistance Cohorts intervene to support them.[1250] As stated above, in each county there is an Assistance Cohort that takes part in operations under the direct command of the FARAJA commander of the county concerned.[1251] If both the Prevention Police and the Assistance Cohorts fail to end the protests, the Special Cohorts intervene.

10.2.2(I)(ii) Special Cohorts

To Amnesty International's knowledge, there are no publicly available laws or regulations stipulating the mandate and responsibilities of the Special Cohorts. Official statements, including by the general commander of FARAJA and the national commander of the Special Cohorts, describe the mandate of the Special Cohorts as "combating riots and terrorism"[1252] and "confronting terrorists, saboteurs, hostage-takers, and disrupters of order and security".[1253] In these official statements, the Special Cohorts are typically described as a specialized force trained to provide assistance and specialized skills to enhance the effectiveness of regular police operations.[1254] The authorities have also described the Special Forces as the "system's iron fist for critical situations."[1255]

The former national commander of the Special Cohorts, Hassan Karami, has stated that, since their establishment in 2012, the Special Cohorts have played an "exemplary" role in suppressing "riots" and become the true embodiment of the Quranic passage, "firm against the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves."[1256]

In a media interview on 22 August 2014, Hassan Karami described the processes leading to the intervention of the Special Cohorts as follows:

> **"In the first stage, [ordinary police officers stationed at] police stations must arrive and control the situation. After that, the Assistance Cohort comes in, and the third step and final word is the Special**

1249. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ["Deployment of 10,000 Special Cohort officers to maintain order at the borders"] به کارگیری ۱۰هزار مامور یگان ویژه برای برقراری نظم در مرزها, 7 October 2019, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4739834/به-کارگیری-۱۰هزار-مامور-یگان-ویژه-برای-برقراری-نظم-در-مرزها (in Persian); ISNA, ["Anti-riot operational maneuver held at Police Park"] مانور عملیاتی ضد اغتشاش در پارک پلیس برگزار شد, 2 October 2005, https://www.isna.ir/news/8407-04747/مانور-عملیاتی-ضد-اغتشاش-در-پارک-پلیس-برگزار-شد-فرمانده-یگان (in Persian).

1250. Mehr News Agency, ["Deployment of 10,000 Special Cohort officers to maintain order at the borders"] به کارگیری ۱۰هزار مامور یگان ویژه برای برقراری نظم در مرزها, 7 October 2019, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4739834/به-کارگیری-۱۰هزار-مامور-یگان-ویژه-برای-برقراری-نظم-در-مرزها (in Persian).

1251. Student News Network, ["Part one: Get to know branches and specialties of police force + images"] بخش اول: با رسته‌ها و تخصص‌های نیروی انتظامی بیشتر آشنا شوید+ تصاویر, 19 August 2018, https://snn.ir/fa/news/704435/بخش-اول-با-رسته‌ها-و-تخصص‌های-نیروی-انتظامی-بیشتر-آشنا-شوید-تصاویر (in Persian).

1252. IRNA, ["Commander of NAJA: Police force guarantees order and security in elections"] فرمانده ناجا: نیروی انتظامی تضمین نظم و امنیت انتخابات را برعهده دارد, 23 December 2015, https://www.irna.ir/news/81890615/فرمانده-ناجا-نیروی-انتظامی-تضمین-نظم-و-امنیت-انتخابات-را-برعهده (in Persian).

1253. Fars News Agency, ["Details of the performance and achievements of the 'Zaynabi Cohort' during the riots"] جزئیات عملکرد و دستاوردهای «یگان زینبی» در اغتشاشات, 16 October 2022, https://farsnews.ir/social/1665918203000544666/جزئیات-عملکرد-و-دستاوردهای-«یگان-زینبی»-استفاده-از-ترددشمارها-برای-شناسایی-لیدرهای-آشوبگران-Fدر-اغتشاشات2%

1254. Defa Press, ["Special Cohort as the reserve unit supports and operates for all missions"] یگان ویژه به عنوان یگان احتیاط همه ماموریت‌ها پشتیبانی و عملیاتی می‌کند, 9 October 2015, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/54709/یگان-ویژه-به-عنوان-یگان-احتیاط-همه-ماموریت-ها-پشتیبانی-و-عملیاتی-می-کند (in Persian).

1255. IRNA, ["Upgrading the Special Cohort of South Khorasan is on the agenda"] ارتقای یگان ویژه خراسان جنوبی در دستور کار است, 8 July 2019, https://www.irna.ir/news/83386242/ارتقای-یگان-ویژه-خراسان-جنوبی-در-دستور-کار-است (in Persian).

1256. ISNA, ["Untold stories about the Special Cohort of NAJA"] ناگفته‌هایی درباره یگان ویژه ناجا, 23 August 2014, https://www.isna.ir/news/93060100430/ناگفته-هایی-درباره-یگان-ویژه-ناجا (in Persian).

Cohorts. When the gathering turns violent, we take action. However, we cannot wait until the disturbance turns into a crisis, fire or conflict and then intervene because control will be lost. Therefore, from the outset, with knowledge of the news, we are placed in the prediction stage, positioned in a cautious state, but we do not establish a physical presence."[1257]

Five years later, in a media interview on 7 October 2019, Hassan Karami similarly said:

"The first stage for handling riots and conflicts involves the intervention of local police stations. The local police must reason with, guide and warn the individuals involved. The second stage involves the Assistance Cohort… If the situation escalates beyond their control, the third stage is the deployment of the Special Cohorts, who then take over the mission… We [the Special Cohorts] intervene if they [protesters] cross the red lines, chant subversive slogans, cause damage to public property, and harass the people and the crowd."[1258]

In his statements throughout the years, Hassan Karami has consistently conflated peaceful acts of protest expressing opposition to the political establishment, such as "chant[ing] subversive slogans", with "riots" causing damage to public property, indicating that the Special Cohorts tolerate neither, and instead aim to disperse unauthorized assemblies even if peaceful.[1259]

Official statements indicate that the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts lead on protest dispersals while NOPO, which is formed from the "most skilled" members of the Special Cohorts, engage in "hostage rescue and counterterrorism operations".[1260]

The extent to which NOPO supports the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts in suppressing protests remains unclear.

In the late 1990s or early 2000s, the Supreme Council issued a report about the violent repression of student protests at the University of Tehran on 9 July 1999, which confirmed the involvement of NOPO commanders and agents.[1261]

However, in recent years, the former national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, and the then national commander of NOPO, Mohsen Ebrahimi, have provided conflicting responses to questions regarding the involvement of NOPO in repressing protests.

For example, in a media interview on 7 October 2019, Hassan Karami claimed that "NOPO is not deployed during riots because it is an armed combat unit for operational tasks."[1262] However, in another interview on 8 June 2014, Hassan Karami stated that NOPO has been provided with advanced

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1257. Aftab News, اظهارات فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه ناجا درباره یروهای نوپو، حوادث سال ۸۸ ["Statements of Special Cohorts commander on 'NOPO forces', events of 2009, and more"], 22 August 2014, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/258016/اظهارات-فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-ناجا-درباره-نیروهای-نوپو-و-حوادث-سال-۸۸ (in Persian).

1258. Mehr News Agency, به کارگیری ۱۰هزار مامور یگان ویژه برای برقراری نظم در مرزها ["Deployment of 10,000 Special Cohort officers to maintain order at the borders"], 7 October 2019, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4739834/به-کارگیری-۱۰هزار-مامور-یگان-ویژه-برای-برقراری-نظم-در-مرزها (in Persian).

1259. See, for example, ISNA, همه چیز درباره «یگان ویژه» در ایران ["Everything about the 'Special Cohorts' in Iran"], 14 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400072215773/همه-چیز-درباره-یگان-ویژه-در-ایران (in Persian).

1260. Due to this mandate, the authorities also refer to NOPO as the "liberation unit" (*vahed rahayee*). See, for example, ISNA, ناگفته‌هایی درباره یگان ویژه ناجا ["Untold stories about the Special Cohort of NAJA"], 23 August 2014, https://www.isna.ir/news/93060100430/ناگفته-هایی-درباره-یگان-ویژه-ناجا (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, واحد نوپو ی ناجا در سطح منطقه حرف اول را می‌زند ["NAJA's NOPO unit leads in the region"], 8 June 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/03/18/393725/واحد-نوپو-ی-ناجا-در-سطح-منطقه-حرف-اول-را-می-زند (in Persian).

1261. See Asr-e Iran, بازخوانی وقایع ۱۸ تیر ۷۸ به روایت شورای عالی امنیت ملی ["Re-examination of the events of 9 July 1999, according to the Supreme National Security Council"], 9 July 2019, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/677743/بازخوانی-وقایع-18-تیر-78-به-روایت-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی (in Persian). Amnesty International was unable to ascertain when exactly this report was issued.

1262. Mehr News Agency, به کارگیری ۱۰هزار مامور یگان ویژه برای برقراری نظم در مرزها ["Deployment of 10,000 Special Cohort officers to maintain order at the borders"], 7 October 2019, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4739834/به-کارگیری-۱۰هزار-مامور-یگان-ویژه-برای-برقراری-نظم-در-مرزها (in Persian).

"anti-riot equipment", which suggests that they may also be deployed to suppress protests.[1263] He said: "Our forces in the NOPO unit excel professionally, physically, and in terms of capabilities and anti-riot and hostage rescue equipment."[1264]

In another interview on 11 October 2023, Hassan Karami stated that NOPO agents "do not carry lethal or military weapons during social unrest".[1265] This suggested that NOPO may serve in various capacities, supporting hostage rescue and counterterrorism operations, on the one hand, and suppressing street protests along with other members of the Special Cohorts, on the other.

In a similar vein, in a media interview on 21 June 2021, the then national commander of NOPO, Mohsen Ebrahimi, was asked if NOPO agents respond to "riots". He provided an unclear response which suggested that the main mandate of these forces is not responding to protests, but they may be instructed to take part in such operations, particularly if the situation involves "armed threats or terrorism". His answer reads as follows:

> **"The deployment of 'NOPO forces' is based on orders. [They do] not [respond] to riots, but due to the specialized equipment and skills of NOPO agents, they are deployed in response to situations where there are armed threats or terrorism."[1266]**

10.2.2(II) MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIALS

10.2.2(II)(i) Ministerial capacity

Article 2 of the State Security Council Law states:

> **"Domestic security and protection of [public] figures, places and facilities are the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior and, whenever necessary, the Army and the IRGC must act in coordination with the Ministry of Interior to protect and ensure the country's domestic security."**

On the official website of the Ministry of Interior, an official document titled Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior describes the mandate of the ministry as "ensuring and maintaining internal security, establishing order and calm in the country and coordinating among intelligence, police and military agencies… as well as managing the affairs of the police force."[1267]

Section 2 of this document states that the deputy minister of interior for police and security is responsible for "supervision over the implementation of missions assigned to the police force… with the aim of maintaining security, establishing order and calm, and preventing and countering movements and incidents that disrupt the country's security."[1268]

The duties of the deputy minister of interior for police and security include "preparing and reviewing bills, laws, regulations, directives and expert strategies and cooperating in the preparation and

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1263. Tasnim News Agency, واحد نوپو ی ناجا در سطح منطقه حرف اول را می‌زند ["NAJA's NOPO unit leads in the region"], 8 June 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/03/18/393725/واحد-نوپو-ی-ناجا-در-سطح-منطقه-حرف-اول-را-می-زند (in Persian).
1264. Tasnim News Agency, واحد نوپو ی ناجا در سطح منطقه حرف اول را می‌زند ["NAJA's NOPO unit leads in the region"], 8 June 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/03/18/393725/واحد-نوپو-ی-ناجا-در-سطح-منطقه-حرف-اول-را-می-زند (in Persian).
1265. Defa Press, لزوم آگاهی مردم نسبت به مجازات توهین و درگیری در اغتشاشات ["Necessity of public awareness regarding punishments for insult and disturbance during riots"], 11 October 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/622348/لزوم-آگاهی-مردم-نسبت-به-مجازات-توهین-و-درگیری-در-اغتشاشات-هیچ-گروگانی-در-کشور-نداشته‌ایم (in Persian).
1266. Mashregh News, روایتی از سیاه‌پوشان ضدتروریست ناجا ["A narrative of the black-clad Anti-Terrorist Forces of NAJA"], 21 June 2020, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1086170/روایتی-از-سیاه-پوشان-ضدتروریست-ناجا-عکس (in Persian).
1267. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, p. 4.
1268. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2, para. 1.

formulation of the country's security strategy within the framework of the country's security strategy and presenting it to the relevant authorities."[1269]

Another key responsibility of the deputy minister is to support the operational effectiveness of FARAJA forces. This includes "facilitating control, guidance, and support for the General Command Staff of FARAJA, including in areas related to organization, training, budgeting, equipment, and human resources."[1270] Additionally, the Office of the Deputy must work to establish an optimal organizational structure for the police force and its subordinate units with a view to achieving the overall objectives of the Ministry of Interior.[1271]

In pursuing its activities, the deputy minister is required to "cooperate and exchange views with the Ideological and Political [Organization of FARAJA], the Intelligence Protection Organization [of FARAJA] and the General Staff of the Armed Forces".[1272]

As mentioned above, the deputy minister is supported by two key offices: the Office for Security Affairs and the Office for Police Affairs. The duties of these offices are outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the document titled Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior.

The duties of the Office for Security Affairs include "reviewing and developing plans related to domestic security and crisis situations, as well as preparing necessary security and police directives for specific periods or special circumstances and overseeing their implementation."[1273]

In addition, the document places strong and repeated emphasis on the continuous collection, classification and analysis of security-related information to support coordinated decision-making at all levels. Key tasks include "collecting, classifying, and analysing news and incoming reports and organizing an archive to facilitate the retrieval and intelligence support needed by officials at both national and provincial levels… Gathering statistics on crimes and political and security issues in the country from relevant sources to accurately depict the current situation, predict future developments, and plan preventive measures and responses."[1274]

The emphasis on information gathering and processing is further reinforced by responsibilities such as "managing affairs related to the collection, production, compilation, classification, planning, organization, coordination and processing of information related to tasks on an ongoing basis at various levels, with the aim of enabling appropriate decision-making at different levels of management and providing the necessary information to responsible authorities regarding the domestic situation of the country."[1275]

The Office for Security Affairs is further tasked with ensuring effective communication and information flow, both top-down and bottom-up, in order to support "the security and protection needs of the offices of the provincial governors" and coordinate the consistent application of security policies nationwide. As stated in the mandate, this involves "reviewing security and police matters in the

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1269. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2, para. 2.
1270. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2, para. 3.
1271. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2, para. 9.
1272. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2, para. 12.
1273. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, para. 2.
1274. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, paras 10-11.
1275. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, para. 16.

provinces and maintaining continuous communication with the offices of the provincial governors and provincial provision councils to ensure the receipt of periodic reports, guide their actions in line with the decisions of the State Security Council and general security policies, and follow up on the implementation of directives while evaluating performance and outcomes."[1276]

In addition, it requires "coordinating and taking necessary actions to provide management information services to officials and managers at the central headquarters and offices of the provincial governors who are authorized to receive such information… establishing coordination, integration and synchronization of multi-level information systems operations based on the current needs of the Ministry of Interior… [and] publishing periodic [internal] news bulletins containing the progression of events and incidents, analyses and the official viewpoints of the Ministry of Interior, and sending them to responsible authorities."[1277]

Furthermore, the office must "rapidly relay incoming reports from the offices of the provincial governors and other relevant bodies during sudden incidents to the Office of the Deputy and conduct necessary follow-ups."[1278] This includes "dispatching inspection teams and presenting findings and recommendations to the Office of the Deputy for further action."[1279]

The duties of the Office for Police Affairs also include strategic planning and intelligence collection, as well as coordination, budgeting, logistical support, and oversight with respect to FARAJA.[1280]

In terms of strategic planning, the Office for Police Affairs is tasked with "reviewing and providing strategies for policymaking, developing guidelines, decision-making methods and mechanisms related to public order, tailored to the country's conditions and context."[1281]

In support of this goal, the office must undertake "necessary studies to develop specialized indicators for measuring public order by region and time period, for approval by competent authorities."[1282] Additionally, the office must "conduct studies and reviews for the purpose of policymaking in the areas of recruitment, selection, deployment, qualitative improvement, and retention of human resources in the police force."[1283]

In terms of information gathering, the Office for Police Affairs is tasked with monitoring and analysing the state of public order across the country. Its duties include "reviewing and analysing reports received regarding offences related to public order… as well as reports of disorder across the country", and "monitoring and prioritizing all issues related to public order in the country for referral to relevant authorities."[1284]

1276. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, para. 5.
1277. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, paras 17-19.
1278. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, para. 12.
1279. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.1, para. 9.
1280. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2.
1281. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 1.
1282. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 2.
1283. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 28.
1284. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, paras 5-6.

In terms of logistical and operational support to FARAJA, the Office for Police Affairs is responsible for "collecting, retrieving and analysing statistics and information related to buildings, facilities, weapons, equipment, vehicles and personnel of the police force."[1285] Additionally, it must support FARAJA's needs related to weapons procurement and foreign purchases, including by determining the required budget and collaborating with the Ministry of Defence to facilitate these acquisitions.[1286] The office is also responsible for "reviewing and providing input on the police budget, taking necessary steps for its approval, and monitoring expenditure performance."[1287]

Coordination between FARAJA commanders and provincial governors is another critical aspect of the work of the Office for Police Affairs. It is tasked with "overseeing the interaction between the police and the offices of the provincial governors to improve public order nationwide",[1288] and "supervising police activity in accordance with the regulations and mandates specified for the Ministry of Interior."[1289] Furthermore, it must "monitor the implementation of directives on cooperation and working relations between Ministry of Interior political officials (provincial, county and section governorates) and police commanders and officers."[1290]

Finally, the Office for Police Affairs is responsible for "reviewing and investigating reports and complaints concerning the police force, conducting inspections and providing expert assessments."[1291]

10.2.2(II)(ii) Deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs

There are no publicly available laws outlining the powers and responsibilities of the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs. Appointment orders published on the website of the Supreme Leader reveal that the Supreme Leader sometimes stated that "the details and scope of the delegated powers shall be communicated in a letter issued by the General Staff of the Armed Forces".[1292] These letters from the General Staff of the Armed Forces have not been made publicly available.

1285. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 16.
1286. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 26.
1287. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 25.
1288. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 19.
1289. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 20.
1290. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 23.
1291. Ministry of Interior, مجموعه اهداف و وظایف وزارت کشور [Objectives and Duties of the Ministry of Interior], https://iranarze.ir/blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ahdaf-vazayef-vezarat-keshvar.pdf, section 2.2, para. 29.
1292. Office of the Supreme Leader, موافقت رهبر معظم انقلاب با تفویض اختیارات فرماندهی کل قوا در امور انتظامی به وزیر کشور ["Supreme Leader approves delegation of power of commander-in-chief for police affairs to minister of interior"], 29 December 2008, http://www.leader.ir/fa/content/4613 (in Persian).

In some other appointment letters addressed by the Supreme Leader to the minister of interior appointing him as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, the Supreme Leader explicitly clarified that the delegation did not include the authority to "appoint or dismiss commanders, which shall be carried out based on your recommendation [that of the minister of interior, as the deputy commander-in-chief] and my approval."[1293]

The text of the appointment order for every minister of interior has not been consistently published.[1294]

The requests submitted by the minister of interior to the Supreme Leader for appointment as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs provide further insight into the mandate. In the requests, the minister typically seeks the appointment "in order to strengthen the close coordination that, according to law, must exist between the Ministry of Interior and police forces for… the establishment of public order and protection of public security", and to ensure that "the minister of interior, who holds responsibility for the country's domestic security, may more effectively fulfil their legal duties."[1295]

Article 213 of the Police Force Recruitment Law provides that, wherever legal provisions require the approval of the commander-in-chief for FARAJA's policies, programmes and activities to be finalized and operationalized, the minister of interior, as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, may exercise this approval authority, provided it falls within the scope of delegated powers.

10.2.2(II)(iii) Provincial and county governors

Article 1 of the Regulations on Governors defines the overall mandate of provincial governors as follows:

> **"Provincial governors, within the scope of their jurisdiction, serve as the highest representative of the government. They are responsible for implementing the country's public policies in relation to ministries, government institutions, state-owned companies and other entities that use public funds, as well as revolutionary organizations, police force, city councils, municipalities and public non-governmental organizations."**

Articles 2(1)-2(40) detail the responsibilities of provincial governors, which include matters related to internal security.

Article 2(1) states that "the provincial governor is responsible for establishing and maintaining order and security in the province". The Note to Article 2(1) adds that "the State Security Council determines the security duties of provincial governors."

Article 2(2) tasks the provincial governor with "directing and organizing the regular sessions of the provincial provision council and overseeing the proper implementation of its resolutions".

1293. Office of the Supreme Leader, ["Approval of delegation of powers of commander-in-chief of police forces to the Ministry of Interior"], 10 September 1989, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/153 (in Persian). According to the *County Governor's Handbook*, until the early 1990s, the minister of interior, as the deputy commander-in-chief, was fully delegated the Supreme Leader's authority over the police, including the power to appoint commanders and approve promotions and disciplinary actions. However, appointment and dismissal powers are no longer delegated today. See Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/فرماندار%20کتاب/آموزش.pdf, p. 266.

1294. Amnesty International was unable to locate the one related to the minister of interior serving during the 2022 protests, who was appointed as the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs on 4 September 2021.

1295. See Office of the Supreme Leader, ["Supreme Leader approves delegation of power of commander-in-chief for police affairs to minister of interior"], 29 December 2008, http://www.leader.ir/fa/content/4613 (in Persian); Office of the Supreme Leader, ["Approval of delegation of powers of commander-in-chief of police forces to the Ministry of Interior"], 10 September 1989, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/153 (in Persian).

Note 1 to Article 2(2) adds that "all member organizations of the Provision Council and other executive bodies in the province are obligated… to report security and political events to the provincial governor." The member organizations include FARAJA and the IRGC.

Note 2 to Article 2(2) further tasks the provincial governor with "guiding and supervising the performance of county provision councils, the security actions of county governors and other local executive bodies, as well as coordinating to maintain the preparedness of security forces."

This means that county governors are accountable to and carry out their security-related actions under the supervision of provincial governors.

Article 2(3) states that the provincial governor is responsible for "anticipating and preventing security challenges in the province, determining and formulating security priorities and policies, and defining the scope of security duties and powers of all executive bodies in the province within the framework of their legal responsibilities."

Article 2(4) further tasks the provincial governor with "providing the necessary conditions for the implementation of general security and police plans and policies, resolutions of legal authorities, and security directives and notifications."

Article 13 states that "provincial governors may directly communicate with high-level officials of the Islamic Republic and raise issues within the scope of their jurisdiction."

Article 16 states:

> **"Provincial governors may, in the implementation of the duties of executive units in the province related to… security issues, and public order, as well as creating coordination between these units and optimizing their resources, issue and communicate executive directives, while adhering to laws and regulations."**

Article 17 states that "all judicial units in the province are required to coordinate with the provincial governors regarding matters related to public order and security in the province."

Article 18 states that "all executive bodies are required to ensure that provincial governors are informed about organizational missions, actions taken, and the latest issued directives, regulations, and circulars."

According to Article 24, county governors bear duties and responsibilities analogous to the provincial governors but at the county level.

Article 14 states that county governors are required to go through provincial governors to raise their concerns with high-ranking state officials.

Note 1 to Article 4 of the Law on the Use of Firearms by Armed Forces in Necessary Incidents stipulates that the provincial governor or county governor has the authority to determine when the use of firearms is necessary for the dispersal of protests.[1296]

With respect to the responsibilities of deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs, the written appointment orders issued by the minister of interior provide insight. As cited in one order published by state media outlets, the deputy's responsibilities regarding security-related matters include "ensuring and maintaining security, order and calm in the province, and creating coordination among intelligence, police and military agencies; studying and assessing factors that threaten the security and tranquillity of society and presenting provincial plans; continuously planning and

1296. For more information on the legislative framework governing the use of firearms, see section 11.2.2.

safeguarding classified sites and facilities in the province, particularly sensitive and vital locations, and following up on the implementation of directives from the State Security Council and the Supreme National Security Council."[1297]

The order emphasizes that, in pursuing provincial plans, provincial governors are responsible for coordinating and directing county governors to ensure the unified implementation of policies and programmes across the province. The order also stresses the requirement of adherence to the leadership of the Supreme Leader.[1298]

The responsibilities of the Office for Security and Police Affairs within the offices of the provincial governors closely align with those of the national-level Office for Security Affairs, on the one hand, and the Office for Police Affairs, on the other. While individual websites belonging to the office of the provincial governor present these duties with slight variations, they emphasize key functions such as coordinating and supervising police operations, ensuring the effectiveness of communication between FARAJA and the offices of the provincial governors, presenting policy directives issued by the State Security Council at the Provincial Security Council, transmitting orders and directives from the State Security Council and provincial governors to county governors and county provision councils, continuously monitoring and reporting on "security and policing incidents" to prevent "crisis and riots".[1299]

Job descriptions on government websites indicate that the responsibilities of experts in police and security affairs at County Governates closely mirror those of the Office for Security and Police Affairs within the offices of the provincial governors. These duties include collecting information and preparing reports on the county's security conditions for the county security council; following up on the implementation of county provision council resolutions; communicating security and police matters to the offices of the county and provincial governors; obtaining reports from FARAJA in coordination with higher authorities; and implementing policies and programmes issued by the Provincial Office for Security and Police Affairs.[1300]

10.2.3 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

10.2.3(I) PREVENTION POLICE

Regular police officers are typically recognized by their light green shirts paired with dark green trousers or dark green uniforms. The patch sewn onto the sleeves of the uniforms bears the insignia of the Prevention Police. In images published by state media from marches and exercises, these police

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1297. Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan, معاون سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Deputy governor for political, security and social affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah appointed"], 1 June 2023, http://www.ostan-ks.ir/home/news/معاون-سیاسی-امنیتی-و-اجتماعی-استانداری-کرمانشاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1298. Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan, معاون سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Deputy governor for political, security and social affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah appointed"], 1 June 2023, http://www.ostan-ks.ir/home/news/معاون-سیاسی-امنیتی-و-اجتماعی-استانداری-کرمانشاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1299. See, for example, Office of the Provincial Governor of Mazandaran, شرح وظایف دفترامور امنیتی و انتظامی ["Duties of the Office for Security and Police Affairs"], 3 May 2018, https://ostan-mz.ir/Home/ShowDetailsMenuContent (in Persian); Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah, شرح وظایف و اهداف ["Duties and objectives"], 9 April 2017, http://www.ostan-ks.ir/دفتر-انتظامی-و-امنیتی/شرح-وظایف-و-اهداف/ (in Persian); Office of the Provincial Governor of Ardabil, امور امنیتی و انتظامی ["Security and police affairs"], https://www.ostan-ag.gov.ir/fa/wagov/amniyati (in Persian); Office of the Provincial Governor of Yazd, دفتر امور امنیتی و انتظامی ["Office for Security and Police Affairs"], https://ostanyazd.ir/دفتر-امور-امنیتی-و-انتظامی (in Persian).

1300. See, for example, Information portal of the Office of Jokar District, امنیتی انتظامی و امور کارشناس شرح وظایف ["Duties of the expert in security and police affairs"], 24 May 2016, https://bakhshdari-jokar-politics.blog.ir/1395/03/04/شرح-وظایف-کارشناس-امور-امنیتی-و-انتظامی (in Persian); Memargold, مقاله شرح وظایف کارشناس امور امنیتی و انتظامی ["Article on job description of the expert in police and security affairs"], available at https://memargold.ir/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/شرح-وظایف-کارشناس-امور-امنیتی-و-انتظامی-معمار-گلد.pdf (accessed on 3 August 2026).

forces are seen carrying batons, handguns, Type 56 or other AK-pattern assault rifles. They are sometimes seen with protective helmets.



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police, recognizable by their light green shirts paired with dark green trousers. The patch sewn onto the sleeve of the uniform bears the insignia of the Prevention Police. © Iran's Metropolises News Agency (IMNA)[1301]



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police, recognizable by their light green shirts and dark green trousers. The police officers are holding tonfa batons, during the joint morning parade ceremony of the Greater Tehran Police Force on the occasion of NAJA Week at the General Command Staff of FARAJA in Tehran on 8 October 2018. © Rokna Press[1302]

1301. IMNA, نیروی انتظامی مظهر اقتدار در برابر اخلالگران نظم و امنیت عمومی است ["Police force is a symbol of authority against disruptors of public order and security"], 18 October 2020, https://www.imna.ir/news/450433/نیروی-انتظامی-مظهر-اقتدار-در-برابر-اخلالگران-نظم-و-امنیت-عمومی (in Persian).

1302. Rokna Press, روزانه 13 هزار تماس عملیاتی با پلیس تهران برقرار می‌شود/کشف ۹ تن مواد مخدر در ۶ ماهه نخست سال ["Daily, 13,000 operational calls are made to Tehran police / 9 tonnes of drugs seized in the first half of the year"], 8 October 2018, https://www.rokna.net/بخش-اجتماعی-95/423287-روزانه-هزار-تماس-عملیاتی-با-پلیس-تهران-برقرار-می-شود-کشف-تن-مواد-مخدر-در-ماهه-نخست-سال (in Persian).



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police, recognizable by their light green shirts paired with dark green trousers, at the armed forces parade ceremony in Khorramabad city, Lorestan province, on 22 September 2019 © Aziz Babanezhad / Tasnim News Agency[1303]



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police seen marching, while holding AK-pattern rifles © M.Mahdi Pourarab / IRNA[1304]

1303. Tasnim News Agency, مراسم رژه نیروهای مسلح در سراسرکشور-۳ ["Armed forces parade ceremony across the country – 3"], 22 September 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1398/06/31/2101917/3-مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-سراسرکشور (in Persian).
1304. IRNA, مهمترین اولویت امروز تربیت نیرو در تراز انقلاب اسلامی است ["Most important priority today is training forces in line with the Islamic Revolution's standards"], 10 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85253721/مهمترین-اولویت-امروز-تربیت-نیرو-در-تراز-انقلاب-اسلامی-است (in Persian).



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police, recognizable by their light green shirts paired with dark green trousers. The police officers are holding Type 56 AK-pattern rifles, marching during the annual military parade in September 2023. © Majid Asgaripour / West Asia News Agency[1305]



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police, recognizable by their dark green uniforms. The patch on their uniforms bears the phrase "Prevention Police" in Persian. © Edik Hartounian / Sefr Do Yek[1306]

1305. West Asia News Agency (WANA), "The annual military parade", 22 September 2023, https://wanaen.com/the-annual-military-parade/#lg=1&slide=15

1306. Sefr Do Yek, سارقین بعنف زورگیر حاملین سلاح سرد طرح پلیس پیشگیری ["Prevention Police operation against violent thieves, muggers, and carriers of cold weapons"], 26 August 2022, https://sefrdoyek.ir/سارقین-بعنف-زورگیر-حاملین-سلاح-سرد-طرح (in Persian).



Regular police officers operating under the Prevention Police, recognizable by their dark green uniforms. The patch on their uniforms bears the phrase "Prevention Police" in Persian. © Edik Hartounian / Sefr Do Yek[1307]

The Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police typically wear dark navy or dark jade green shirts and trousers. However, images published by state media show that some agents of the Assistance Cohorts wear greyish black uniforms and cover their faces with black balaclavas. According to state media reports, these agents belong to the Police Patrol Unit of the Assistance Cohorts responsible for apprehending "violent" offenders.[1308] The patch on the uniform's sleeve bears the insignia of the Assistance Cohorts. The Assistance Cohorts generally use white pickup trucks with a green stripe displaying their title and insignia. In images published on state media, the Assistance Cohorts are seen carrying MP5 pattern sub-machine guns or 12-gauge shotguns.

1307. Sefr Do Yek, سارقین بعنف زورگیر حاملین سلاح سرد طرح پلیس پیشگیری ["Prevention Police operation against violent thieves, muggers, and carriers of cold weapons"], 26 August 2022, https://sefrdoyek.ir/سارقین-بعنف-زورگیر-حاملین-سلاح-سرد-طرح (in Persian).
1308. Sefr Do Yek, گشت ویژه پلیس برخورد با جرائم خشن تهران ["Special police patrol to address violent crimes in Tehran"], 3 September 2022, https://sefrdoyek.ir/گشت-ویژه-پلیس-برخورد-با-جرائم-خشن-تهران (in Persian).



Agents of the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police in greyish black uniforms. The patch on their uniform bears the phrase "Assistance Cohorts" in Persian. According to state media, these agents belong to the Police Patrol Unit of the Assistance Cohorts, responsible for apprehending "violent offenders". The agents are seen carrying shotguns. © Mohsen Bakhshandeh Zahmati / IRNA[1309]



Agents of the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police and a white pickup truck belonging to the Assistance Cohorts. The insignia and title on the vehicle bear the phrase "Assistance Cohorts" in Persian. © Young Journalists Club[1310]

1309. IRNA, صبحگاه مشترک نیروی انتظامی خراسان رضوی ["Joint morning ceremony of Khorasan Razavi police force"], 19 October 2020, https://www.irna.ir/photo/84079959/صبحگاه-مشترک-نیروی-انتظامی-خراسان-رضوی (in Persian).
1310. Young Journalists Club, حلاوت سفره افطار در خدمت ["Sweetness of serving the *iftar* table"], 6 May 2020, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/7344078/حلاوت-سفره-افطار-در-خدمت (in Persian).



Agents of the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police in dark navy shirts and trousers. The patch on their uniform bears the phrase "Assistance Cohorts" in Persian. The agents are holding Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © Mansooreh Azimi / Moj News Agency[1311]



Agents of the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police in dark jade green shirts and trousers. The patch on their uniforms bears the phrase "Assistance Cohorts" in Persian. The agents are armed with Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © Edik Hartounian / Sefr Do Yek[1312]

1311. Moj News Agency, صبحگاه مشترک فرماندهی نیروی انتظامی تهران بزرگ ["Joint morning ceremony of the Greater Tehran police force command"], 19 October 2020, https://www.mojnews.com/بخش-عکس-95/350074-صبحگاه-مشترک-فرماندهی-نیروی-انتظامی-تهران-بزرگ (in Persian).
1312. Sefr Do Yek, گشت ویژه پلیس برخورد با جرائم خشن تهران ["Special police patrol to address violent crimes in Tehran"], 3 September 2022, https://sefrdoyek.ir/گشت-ویژه-پلیس-برخورد-با-جرائم-خشن-تهران (in Persian).

10.2.3(II) SPECIAL COHORTS

Agents belonging to the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts wear either green camouflage or all-black uniforms along with black bulletproof vests. They are often equipped with protective helmets, arm and knee pads, and shields. A patch sewn onto the uniform's sleeve displays the phrase "Special Cohorts" in Persian. The word "police" is sometimes written in English on the agents' vests or shields. In addition to forming horizontal rows on foot with their black armoured vehicles parked nearby in several columns, the agents frequently approach protest scenes or patrol the streets around protest sites on motorcycles.

In a media interview in May 2020, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, stated:

> **"Our motorcyclists are equipped with audio devices connected to their uniforms to stay in communication with each other, as the sound of the motorcycle affects their ability to hear. Additionally, our other personnel, meaning commanders, have cameras that discreetly record the operational scene. The use of these cameras is common, and they are also used by police officers at stations and on patrols."[1313]**

Hassan Karami added that they have extensive video footage documenting the conduct of the Special Cohorts due to the use of cameras discreetly installed on the helmets or uniforms of the agents:

> **"We have extensive footage from the scenes of many of our operations because many of the operations are documented. Special cameras are installed on the helmets or uniforms of our agents for us to later analyse the [recorded videos] and identify problems. The conduct of our forces is recorded for utilization."[1314]**

In images published on state media, the Special Cohorts are seen equipped with protective gear and carrying batons, shields, shotguns and MP5-pattern sub-machine guns (locally known as Tondar).

In May 2020, Hassan Karami stated that the Special Cohorts are equipped with "water cannons, various electronic systems and other deterrent equipment to sweep protests with the most minimal cost." He boasted about the successful domestic mass production of tear gas launchers, removing reliance on imports, and revealed plans to install them on the Special Cohorts' vehicles.

In the same interview, regarding the munitions used by the Special Cohorts, Hassan Karami stated: "We produce various types of non-lethal bullet. It must be noted that in operations, we do not use combat bullets[1315] because carrying combat weapons to the scene is prohibited for the Special Cohorts."[1316]

In another interview in January 2022, Hassan Karami stated: "The organizational weapon[1317] of the Special Cohorts is Kalashnikov rifles but… we do not carry combat weapons during social unrest; our

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1313. IRNA, از خودروهای صوت و آب‌پاش تا مردمی بودن یگان ویژه ["From sound and water cannon vehicles to the people's Special Cohort"], 11 May 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/83783263/از-خودروهای-صوت-و-آب-پاش-تا-مردمی-بودن-یگان-ویژه (in Persian).
1314. IRNA, از خودروهای صوت و آب‌پاش تا مردمی بودن یگان ویژه ["From sound and water cannon vehicles to the people's Special Cohort"], 11 May 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/83783263/از-خودروهای-صوت-و-آب-پاش-تا-مردمی-بودن-یگان-ویژه (in Persian).
1315. Iranian authorities, as well as the general public, commonly use the term "combat bullets" (*golouleh jangi*) to refer to lethal ammunition that is loaded in firearms such as handguns or rifles. In contrast, they use terms like "metal bullets" (*golouleh sachmeh*) and "plastic bullets" (*golouleh plastiki*) to describe metal pellets and kinetic impact projectiles, respectively. For the terminology used by Amnesty International in this report, based on international standards, see Chapter 4.
1316. IRNA, از خودروهای صوت و آب‌پاش تا مردمی بودن یگان ویژه ["From sound and water cannon vehicles to the people's Special Cohort"], 11 May 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/83783263/از-خودروهای-صوت-و-آب-پاش-تا-مردمی-بودن-یگان-ویژه (in Persian).
1317. The term "organizational weapon" refers to firearms or weapons that are officially issued to the Army, FARAJA and the IRGC and authorized for their use in the course of certain duties.

heaviest weapon for such situations in the streets is a shotgun."[1318]

Additionally, in an interview in October 2022, Hassan Karami stated that "all the battalions of the Special Cohorts are equipped with drones" used for identifying and arresting leading protesters. He stated:

> **"We have used drones to identify key agents in riots. When agitators flee into narrow streets and alleys during unrest, drones are deployed to locate these individuals, and we subsequently carry out operations to apprehend them after identification."[1319]**



Agents of the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts in their distinctive green camouflage uniforms, equipped with protective helmets, vests, arm and knee pads, batons and shields. The word "police" is written in English on the agents' shields. © AFP/File Photo[1320]

1318. Hamshahri Online, ناگفته‌های فرمانده یگان ویژه از ناآرامی‌های اصفهان ["Untold stories of the Special Cohort commander on the Esfahan unrest"], 9 January 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/648806/ناگفته-های-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-از-ناآرامی-های-اصفهان-سنگین-ترین (in Persian).

1319. Mashregh News, فرمانده یگان ویژه: تمام گردان‌ها مجهز به ریزپرنده هستند ["Special Cohort commander: All battalions equipped with drones"], 12 October 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1425551/فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-تمام-گردان-ها-مجهز-به-ریزپرنده-هستند (in Persian).

1320. See Arab News, "Amnesty slams Iranian state violence, calls for UN action", 13 August 2021, https://www.arabnews.jp/en/middle-east/article_52800



Agents of the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts in their distinctive green camouflage uniforms, equipped with protective helmets, vests, arm and knee pads, riding motorcycles. The word "police" is written in English on some of the agents' vests. © Tasnim News Agency[1321]



Agents of the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts in their distinctive green camouflage uniforms, riding motorcycles and equipped with protective helmets. The agents sitting to the rear are carrying shotguns. © Sarallah Ankooti / Tasnim News Agency[1322]

1321. Tasnim News Agency, تمرین نوپو و یگان ویژه نیروی انتظامی- قم ["NOPO and Special Cohort police force drill – Qom"], 30 September 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1398/07/08/2107479/تمرین-نوپو-و-یگان-ویژه-نیروی-انتظامی-قم (in Persian).
1322. Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش هلی برن نیروهای یگان ویژه - کرمان ["Special Cohort forces heliborne exercise – Kerman"], 10 October 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1400/07/18/2586942/رزمایش-هلی-برن-نیروهای-یگان-ویژه-کرمان (in Persian).



Agents of the Anti-Riot Battalions of the Special Cohorts in their distinctive black uniforms, equipped with protective helmets, arm and knee pads, and shields, standing next to their distinctive black armoured vehicles © Khabar Online[1323]



Agents of the Special Cohorts in their distinctive black uniforms. The patch sewn onto the sleeves of their uniform bears the phrase "Special Cohorts" in Persian. They are armed with Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © Tasnim News Agency[1324]

1323. Khabar Online, رونمایی از تجهیزات جدید یگان ویژه ناجا/ از پلیس های در آسمان تا پلیس اسب سوار ["Unveiling new equipment for NAJA Special Cohort: From airborne police to mounted police"], 23 December 2015, https://www.khabaronline.ir/photo/491900/رونمایی-از-تجهیزات-جدید-یگان-ویژه-ناجا-از-پلیس-های-در-آسمان (in Persian).

1324. Tasnim News Agency, صبحگاه مشترک نیروی انتظامی - مشهد و بوشهر ["Joint morning ceremony of police force – Mashhad and Bushehr"], 6 October 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1393/07/14/520000/صبحگاه-مشترک-نیروی-انتظامی-مشهد-و-بوشهر (in Persian).



Agents of the Special Cohorts in their distinctive black uniforms. The patch sewn onto the sleeves of their uniform bears the phrase "Special Cohorts" in Persian. They are armed with Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © Ali Shirband / Mizan News Agency[1325]

Agents belonging to NOPO, part of the Special Cohorts, wear black uniforms and black bulletproof vests along with black balaclavas. For members of the public, the distinguishing feature of NOPO has typically been their black balaclavas, which add to their intimidating presence. However, this alone cannot reliably establish affiliation, as some security units within the IRGC also wear similar black uniforms and balaclavas.[1326] To reliably establish affiliation, the determining factor is the logo with insignia on the patch sewn onto the uniform sleeve. For NOPO, this patch specifically bears the phrase "NOPO" in Persian with the word "police" written below it in English, and FARAJA written above it in Persian.

Images published on state media often show members of the NOPO carrying Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns.

1325. Mizan News Agency, رونمایی از تجهیزات جدید یگان ویژه ناجا ["Unveiling new equipment for NAJA Special Cohort"], 23 December 2014, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/112970/رونمایی-از-تجهیزات-جدید-یگان-ویژه-ناجا (in Persian).
1326. See, for example, Naharnet, "Iran says guard fatally shot on anniversary of Amini death", 17 September 2023, https://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/300375-iran-says-guard-fatally-shot-on-anniversary-of-amini-death; aimrpom22, یگان صابرین سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Sabereen Cohort of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 28 July 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/m57ugr9 (in Persian); A.REZVAN, کلیپی از مخوف ترین گردان سپاه پاسداران ["Clip of the Revolutionary Guards' most terrifying battalion"], 27 April 2020, https://www.aparat.com/v/q56jz86 (in Persian).



Agents of NOPO, part of the Special Cohorts, in their black uniforms and bullet proof vests and balaclavas. The insignia on the vehicle bears the phrase "NOPO" in Persian. One agent is seen aiming with a Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine gun. © Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA)



Agents of NOPO, part of the Special Cohorts, in their black uniforms and bullet proof vests and balaclavas. The vehicle bears the words "NOPO" and "police" in English. The agents are armed with Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © Mizan News Agency[1327]

1327. Mizan News Agency, شهادت یکی از نیروهای نوپو در حین سقوط آزاد ["Martyrdom of a NOPO officer during free fall"], 1 September 2017, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/344833/شهادت-یکی-از-نیروهای-نوپو-در-حین-سقوط-آزاد (in Persian).



Agents of NOPO, part of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, in their black uniforms and bulletproof vests and balaclavas. The patch sewn to the sleeves of their uniform bears the phrase "NOPO" in Persian. The agents are armed with Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News)[1328]

In a media interview in October 2022, the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, stated that the uniforms, equipment, and vehicles of the Special Cohorts are all intentionally designed to create fear and intimidation:

> **"Our tactic is to carry ourselves visibly and position ourselves somewhere that the rioters can see us; the whole philosophy of the Special Cohorts is to instil fear in the hearts of those who create insecurity. We line up our vehicles and equipment in a column and move forward to be seen and have a psychological impact."[1329]**

10.2.4 OFFICIAL STATEMENTS RELATED TO 2022 REPRESSION

This section documents the statements made by five FARAJA commanders and eight Ministry of Interior officials in connection with the repression of the Woman Life Freedom uprising between September and December 2022.

The FARAJA commanders include the two highest national commanders and the three highest commanders responsible, respectively, for the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. Their names and titles at the time of the 2022 protests are:

1. Hossein Ashtari, the general commander of FARAJA
2. Hassan Karami, national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA
3. Ali Azadi, the FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province
4. Ali Akbar Javidan, the FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province

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1328. IRIB News, مردان ماموریت سخت ["Men of a tough mission"], 18 October 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2868032/-مردان-ماموریت-سخت (in Persian).

1329. Fars News Agency, جزئیات عملکرد و دستاوردهای «یگان زینبی» در اغتشاشات ["Details of the performance and achievements of the 'Zaynabi Cohort' during riots"], 16 October 2022, https://farsnews.ir/social/1665918203000544666/-جزئیات-عملکرد-و-دستاوردهای-«یگان-زینبی»-در-اغتشاشات%2Fآشوبگران-استفاده-از-ترددشمارها-برای-شناسایی-لیدرهای (in Persian).

5. Rahim Jahanbakhsh, FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province

The eight Ministry of Interior officials whose statements were reviewed include the two highest officials at the national level and the governors and deputy governors for the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. Their names and titles at the time of the 2022 protests are:

1. Ahmad Vahidi, the minister of interior and deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs
2. Majid Mir Ahmadi, the deputy minister of interior for police and security
3. Esmail Zareie Kousha, the provincial governor of Kurdistan
4. Mehdi Ramezani, the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan
5. Bahman Amiri Moghaddam, the provincial governor of Kermanshah
6. Mohammad Pourhashemi, the head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah
7. Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan
8. Reza Ebrahimi, the head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan

10.2.4(I) NATIONAL LEVEL

10.2.4(I)(i) General commander of FARAJA

Throughout the September-December 2022 period, the general commander of FARAJA at the time of the 2022 protests, **Hossein Ashtari**, made multiple statements demonizing the protesters, labelling them as "rioters" and "seditionists" linked to "foreign enemies" who "threaten people's lives", while mobilizing FARAJA forces to maintain repression. His statements warning against protests and expressing appreciation to FARAJA forces coincided with periods of escalating protests, accompanied by intensified repression and waves of unlawful killings.

On 26 September 2022, after the first wave of unlawful killings by the security forces resulting in the death of at least 87 protesters and bystanders during protest dispersals since 19 September 2022,[1330] Hossein Ashtari expressed gratitude to FARAJA forces for "guarding security with their entire being" and directed them to continue "their critical mission".

He made no reference to the serious violations widely reported by international and independent Persian-language media outlets outside of Iran as well as by human rights groups.[1331] Instead, he warned protesters, whom he labelled as "rioters", that "national security is a red line for the police". He stated:

1330. See Chapter 5.
1331. See section 13.3.2(II).



The general commander of FARAJA at the time of 2022 protests, Hossein Ashtari © Tasnim News Agency

"The rioters must know that national security is the red line for the police…

"I sincerely thank [our] dear colleagues for… making selfless sacrifices to uphold and ensure social order, security and peace, and protect people's lives and property…

"I express my thanks to the families of police personnel who have raised such brave children, who stood masculinely and did not allow any harm to befall the security of the country…

"God willing, may those who have been injured recover fully as soon as possible and continue their critical mission in ensuring… security".[1332]

In October 2022, which witnessed two further waves of unlawful killings – one from 8-15 October 2022 and another from 26-30 October 2022 – Hossein Ashtari issued several statements warning against protests and reaffirming a policy of zero tolerance towards protesters. In these statements, he consistently demonized the protesters as "rioters" linked to "foreign enemies" who had waged an "intense hybrid warfare" against the Islamic Republic system, and accused them of "threatening the lives… of the people",[1333] despite overwhelming evidence that the protesters were not armed and the majority of them were peaceful.

Along with these inflammatory statements, he repeatedly underscored the "duty of the police" to "show a severe response" and confront protesters "firmly" and "without leniency".[1334] These statements served to boost the morale of FARAJA agents while instilling fear in the population. Amnesty International observes that the statements had implicit connotations of instructing and approving violent actions, considering that Hossein Ashtari had information in his possession that FARAJA forces were already committing serious violations.

For example, on 6 October 2022, he stated:

> **"Foreign media and enemies of the people sought to bring insecurity to the country and disrupt public tranquillity… It is the duty of the police to confront those who threaten the lives, property, honour of**

1332. Entekhab, ["General Ashtari: We safeguard the country's security with all our being"], 26 September 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/696481/سردار-اشتری-با-تمام-وجود-از-امنیت-کشور-حراست-می‌کنیم (in Persian).

1333. See Tasnim News Agency, ["General Ashtari's account of enemy's effort to stage killings during riots"], 21 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/29/2791485/روایت-سردار-اشتری-از-تلاش-دشمن-برای-کشته-سازی-در-اغتشاشات (in Persian); Faraz News, ["In recent incidents, police used plastic bullets"], 7 October 2022, https://www.faraz.ir/fa/news/54401/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-در-حوادث-اخیر-پلیس-از-گلوله-های-پلاستیکی-استفاده-کرد (in Persian); ISNA, ["General Ashtari: Enemy's strategy is to stage killings using non-lethal weapons"], 6 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071406516/سردار-اشتری-راهبرد-دشمن-کشته-سازی-است-در-میدان-اسلحهٔ-غیرکشنده (in Persian).

1334. See Faraz News, ["In recent incidents, police used plastic bullets"], 7 October 2022, https://www.faraz.ir/fa/news/54401/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-در-حوادث-اخیر-پلیس-از-گلوله-های-پلاستیکی-استفاده-کرد (in Persian); ISNA, ["General Ashtari: Enemy's strategy is to stage killings using non-lethal weapons"], 6 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071406516/سردار-اشتری-راهبرد-دشمن-کشته-سازی-است-در-میدان-اسلحهٔ-غیرکشنده (in Persian).

the people, and state properties. The police intervened promptly, and our colleagues were truly committed to ensuring public safety."[1335]

The next day, he stated:

"For the police, the disruption of security by several rioters is intolerable. We must establish order and security, and we will not allow the peace and tranquillity of the people to be disturbed by certain groups with specific agendas, *monafeghin* [hypocrites], monarchists, Americans, and the Zionist regime… The police's red line is the security and peace of the people. Anyone who disrupts this peace, under any guise, will be confronted by the police and we will respond to them with firmness and intelligence."[1336]

On 21 October 2022, he stated:

"As the Supreme Leader has emphasized, our enemies have waged an intense hybrid warfare against us… The police behave with mercy to the extent possible but when someone takes to the streets with the intention of waging war against the people, the police will not comprise… and will respond with severity wherever necessary."[1337]

In parallel, despite mounting evidence that FARAJA forces were committing unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations, Hossein Ashtari consistently denied such facts, claiming that FARAJA agents did not use lethal force except for defending police bases. He attributed the deaths of protesters and bystanders to illnesses or accidents or claimed that non-state actors killed victims and then blamed them on the security forces to provoke unrest.[1338]

Hossein Ashtari's blanket denials were coupled by praise for the "steadfastness" and "commitment" of FARAJA agents, whom he portrayed as "victims of oppression" rather than as perpetrators.[1339]

For example, on 6 October 2022, Hossein Ashtari stated:

"The enemy's strategy is to stage killings. In these assemblies, individuals were murdered with stones, knives, or firearms not available to our forces. Our firearms in the field are shotguns loaded with plastic bullets. Our forces, who combat riots, carry non-lethal weapons."[1340]

Two days later, on 8 October 2022, he stated:

"Perhaps in the history of the police, they have never been so favoured by the people… I am grateful for the kindness that the esteemed Supreme Leader has shown to FARAJA. He has stated that… the

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1335. ISNA, سردار اشتری: راهبرد دشمن کشته سازی است در میدان اسلحه غیرکشنده ["General Ashtari: Enemy's strategy is to stage killings using non-lethal weapons"], 6 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071406516/سردار-اشتری-راهبرد-دشمن-کشته-سازی-است-در-میدان-اسلحهٔ-غیرکشنده (in Persian).

1336. Faraz News, در حوادث اخیر پلیس از گلوله‌های پلاستیکی استفاده کرد ["In recent incidents, police used plastic bullets"], 7 October 2022, https://www.faraz.ir/fa/news/54401/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-در-حوادث-اخیر-پلیس-از-گلوله-های-پلاستیکی-استفاده-کرد (in Persian).

1337. Tasnim News Agency, روایت سردار اشتری از تلاش دشمن برای کشته سازی در اغتشاشات ["General Ashtari's account of enemy's effort to stage killings during riots"], 21 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/29/2791485/روایت-سردار-اشتری-از-تلاش-دشمن-برای-کشته-سازی-در-اغتشاشات (in Persian).

1338. Tasnim News Agency, روایت سردار اشتری از تلاش دشمن برای کشته سازی در اغتشاشات ["General Ashtari's account of enemy's effort to stage killings during riots"], 21 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/29/2791485/روایت-سردار-اشتری-از-تلاش-دشمن-برای-کشته-سازی-در-اغتشاشات (in Persian).

1339. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, روایت سردار اشتری از تلاش دشمن برای کشته سازی در اغتشاشات ["General Ashtari's account of enemy's effort to stage killings during riots"], 21 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/29/2791485/روایت-سردار-اشتری-از-تلاش-دشمن-برای-کشته-سازی-در-اغتشاشات (in Persian); Asr-e Iran, فرمانده ناجا: در طول تاریخ پلیس هیچگاه به این اندازه مورد لطف مردم نبوده علاقه مردم به نیروی انتظامی افزایش یافته ["Commander of NAJA: The police have never been as favoured by the people as they are now"], 8 October 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/861050/فرمانده-ناجا-در-طول-تاریخ-پلیس-هیچگاه-به-این-اندازه-مورد-لطف-مردم-نبوده-علاقه-مردم-به-نیروی-انتظامی-افزایش-یافته (in Persian).

1340. ISNA, سردار اشتری: راهبرد دشمن کشته سازی است در میدان اسلحه غیرکشنده ["General Ashtari: Enemy's strategy is to stage killings using non-lethal weapons"], 6 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071406516/سردار-اشتری-راهبرد-دشمن-کشته-سازی-است-در-میدان-اسلحهٔ-غیرکشنده (in Persian).

police have been oppressed and we could indeed see this matter [oppression] on the faces of our colleagues. Certainly, their steadfastness was also evident in their faces. Our pride today lies in standing alongside the people and for the people."[1341]

On 21 October 2022, Hossein Ashtari stated:

"Staging killings was among the other complexities of this sedition; the death of anyone during this period… was publicized and blamed on the system. Whether it resulted from suicide, a heart attack, or [other reasons] they [protesters and their supporters] quickly blamed it on the system… In these recent events, individuals truly took to the streets to harm and kill and… overthrow [the Islamic Republic system]. But with the help of God, the support of the people, the wise leadership of the Supreme Leader, and the steadfastness of police and security forces, they were unable to achieve their goals."[1342]



The then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, attending an assembly of FARAJA forces in Tehran on 8 October 2022, during FARAJA Appreciation Week. The week's slogan, "The police serving the people, the people supporting the police", is prominently displayed alongside the image of Iran's first Supreme Leader, Rouhollah Khomeini, on the banner behind the agents. This official occasion coincided with a surge in protests across the county from 8 October 2022 onwards. In response, the security forces, including FARAJA, escalated their unlawful use of firearms and other means of force. © Akbar Tavakoli / IRNA[1343]

On 17 November 2022, amid a renewed wave of protests being met with mass unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations, Hossein Ashtari again celebrated the "determination" of FARAJA

1341. Asr-e Iran, ["Commander of NAJA: The police have never been as favoured by the people as they are now"], 8 October 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/861050/فرمانده-ناجا-در-طول-تاریخ-پلیس-هیچگاه-به-این-اندازه-مورد-لطف-مردم-نبوده-علاقه-مردم-به-نیروی-انتظامی-افزایش-یافته (in Persian).

1342. Tasnim News Agency, ["General Ashtari's account of enemy's effort to stage killings during riots"], 21 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/29/2791485/روایت-سردار-اشتری-از-تلاش-دشمن-برای-کشته-سازی-در-اغتشاشات (in Persian).

1343. IRNA, ["Joint morning assembly of FARAJA cohorts"], 8 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/photo/84906360/صبحگاه-مشترک-یگان-های-فراجا (in Persian).

forces to "defeat" the protesters' "hybrid warfare" and triumphantly declared that any remaining protests "shall also end in defeat". He also indicated that the conduct of FARAJA was in line with the vision and directives of the Supreme Leader and signalled his and his subordinates' reverence of the Supreme Leader.[1344] He stated:

> **"For some time now, some have been creating challenges through chaos and riots, but with… the power of those maintaining order and security, all conspiracies were thwarted. They [protesters] initiated a hybrid war, yet they were defeated… with the determination of the security guardians. Their remaining actions shall also end in defeat. Our security and intelligence capabilities today surpass those of the past. We will have a good future and with the vigilance of the people and the wisdom of our esteemed Supreme Leader, we will reach the summit of honour."[1345]**

In late December 2022 and early January 2023, as the protests subsided after months of unlawful killings, mass arbitrary arrests, torture and other ill-treatment, Hossein Ashtari once again made multiple statements expressing gratitude to FARAJA forces across the county for their months-long "efforts and sacrifices" and their "steadfastness against enemies".[1346]

For example, on 1 January 2023, he said:

> **"By the grace and favour of God, the enemies' conspiracies have failed. It is fitting… to commend and thank all my colleagues across the country for their struggles and sacrifices in standing against the enemies. Truly, our colleagues in the police body of the country have selflessly dedicated their lives to defending the lives, property, and honour of the people, and to safeguarding the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran."[1347]**

Following the end of Hossein Ashtari's eight-year term on 7 January 2023, the Supreme Leader appointed Ahmadreza Radan as the new general commander of FARAJA.[1348] Hossein Ashtari has since become the supreme adviser to the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces in police and security affairs.[1349]

10.2.4(I)(ii) National commander of the Special Cohorts

The national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at the time of the September-December 2022 protests, **Hassan Karami**, made multiple statements, proudly emphasizing the orchestrated

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1344. Entekhab, فرمانده نیروی انتظامی: تحرکات توطئه‌گران به سمت میرایی شدید می‌رود ["Commander of the police force: Conspirators' movements are becoming severely lethal"], 17 November 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/703570/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-تحرکات-توطئه‌گران-به-سمت-میرایی-شدید-می-رود-اگر-حافظان-امنیت-سکوت-می-کنند-از-صبر-و-درایت-آنهاآست-پلیس-ایران-با-تمام-دنیا-متفاوت-است-زیر (in Persian).

1345. Entekhab, فرمانده نیروی انتظامی: تحرکات توطئه‌گران به سمت میرایی شدید می‌رود ["Commander of the police force: Conspirators' movements are becoming severely lethal"], 17 November 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/703570/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-تحرکات-توطئه‌گران-به-سمت-میرایی-شدید-می-رود-اگر-حافظان-امنیت-سکوت-می-کنند-از-صبر-و-درایت-آنهاآست-پلیس-ایران-با-تمام-دنیا-متفاوت-است-زیر (in Persian).

1346. See Tasnim News Agency, نیروهای پلیس در اغتشاشات اخیر جانفشانی کردند تا امنیت به کشور باز گردد ["Police forces made sacrifices in recent riots to restore security to the country"], 9 January 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/10/19/2834370/نیروهای-پلیس-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-جانفدایی-کردند-تا-امنیت-به-کشور-باز-گردد (in Persian); Didban Iran, فرمانده نیروی انتظامی: اغتشاشات کار دشمنان نظام بود / مردم به ما اعتماد دارند ["Commander of the police force: The riots were the work of the enemies of the system – the people trust us"], 20 December 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/پخش-اجتماعی-حوادث-5/145841-فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-اغتشاشات-کار-دشمنان-نظام-بود-مردم-به-ما-اعتماد-دارند (in Persian).

1347. Donya-e-Eqtesad, هشدار سردار اشتری به دشمنان: لحظه‌ای از دفاع از جان، مال و ناموس مردم دریغ نخواهیم کرد ["General Ashtari's warning to enemies: We will not hesitate for a moment in defending the lives, property and honour of the people"], 1 January 2023, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/پخش-سایت-خوان-62/3931209-هشدار-سردار-اشتری-به-دشمنان-لحظه-ای-از-دفاع-از-جان-مال-ناموس-مردم-دریغ-نخواهیم-کرد (in Persian).

1348. Office of the Supreme Leader, انتصاب سردار رادان به فرماندهی کل انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران ["Appointment of General Radan as general commander of the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran"], 7 January 2023, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/26235/انتصاب-سردار-رادان-به-فرماندهی-کل-انتظامی-جمهوری-اسلامی-ایران (in Persian).

1349. Iran Student Correspondents Association, اشتری مشاور ارشد رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح شد: سوابق ["Ashtari appointed supreme adviser to the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces in police and security affairs: Background"], 10 January 2023, https://www.iscanews.ir/news/1166903/اشتری-مشاور-ارشد-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-شد-سوابق (in Persian).

deployment of the Special Cohorts under his command to end protests swiftly.

On 15 October 2022, during an event marking FARAJA Appreciation Week, Hassan Karami praised the Special Cohorts as "servants of the people" who "have spared no effort… to ensure security" and entrusted them with a mandate to "continue to be present on the scene with full force".[1350] He stated:



The national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at the time of the 2022 protests, Hassan Karami © IRNA

"The Special Cohorts demonstrated their utmost dedication to serving the people in a concrete way by establishing a presence in the streets and public spaces.

"The public witnessed first-hand how their children [agents of the Special Cohorts] are truly acting as servants of the people for creating security…

"The Special Cohorts have been and continue to be present on the scene with full force, authority, and intelligence to ensure the security of the people."[1351]

In a two-part interview on 14 and 16 October 2022, Hassan Karami detailed the operational tactics of the Special Cohorts in response to the nationwide protests, justifying protest repression operations causing widespread harm to large numbers of protesters and bystanders, and employed disturbing words such as "mop up" which imply eradication.

Hassan Karami said that the Special Cohorts' interventions in response to "unauthorized" protests start with warnings to disperse; proceed to the use of "soft" tactics and equipment, such as water cannons, to "persuade" the crowd to scatter; and end with "lightning-speed operations" to "mop up" remaining pockets of resistance. Hassan Karami classified protesters who comply with the initial dispersal orders as "people" and "genuine protesters" and labelled those who persist in their protests, despite warnings, as "rioters". He stated:

> **"The Special Cohorts, upon arriving at scenes of unrest and turmoil, initially engage in a phase of deterrence, where actions are taken to disperse the formed core… They utilize a sound system… to address the crowd and ask them to disperse and vacate the area… In this way, people and those who are only there to protest are distinguished from rioters, and the small portion of the population that remains in front of us is then pursued. The second stage is the soft stage, which involves persuasion following warnings and discussions. Sometimes water cannons are used to disperse individuals, and the final stage is the lightning-speed operation, which is a mop-up."[1352]**

1350. Eghtesad News, ناگفته‌های سردار کرمی از اعتراضات ایران ["General Karami's insights on Iran's protests"], 15 October 2022, https://www.eghtesadnews.com/بخش-اخبار-سایر-رسانه-ها-61/527589-ناگفته-های-سردار-کرمی-از-اعتراضات-ایران-ناارامی-ها-تمام-شده-است (in Persian).
1351. Eghtesad News, ناگفته‌های سردار کرمی از اعتراضات ایران ["General Karami's insights on Iran's protests"], 15 October 2022, https://www.eghtesadnews.com/بخش-اخبار-سایر-رسانه-ها-61/527589-ناگفته-های-سردار-کرمی-از-اعتراضات-ایران-ناارامی-ها-تمام-شده-است (in Persian); Entekhab, سردار اشتری: با تمام وجود از امنیت کشور حراست می‌کنیم ["General Ashtari: We safeguard the country's security with all our being"], 26 September 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/696481/سردار-اشتری-با-تمام-وجود-از-امنیت-کشور-حراست-می‌کنیم (in Persian).
1352. Fars News Agency, تاکتیک‌های یگان ویژه در مقابل اغتشاشات برق‌آسا: مزدوران چگونه پاداش برپایی اغتشاش و تخریب را دریافت می‌کنند؟ ["Special Cohort tactics against flash riots: How were mercenaries rewarded for riots and destruction?"], 14 October 2022, https://farsnews.ir/news/14010722000349/تاکتیک‌های-یگان-ویژه-در-مقابل-اغتشاشات-برق‌آسا-مزدوران-چگونه-پاداش (in Persian).

Hassan Karami did not specify the precise equipment used during the final "lightning-speed operation", but admitted that the force deployed would likely pose harm to anyone within the protest area:

> **"Those who remain on the scene are undoubtedly problematic individuals; a bystander who hears the voice of the field commander listens to the warning and knows that after the warning, the police will not engage in pleasantries. However, the person who stays on the scene is obviously there with a purpose that makes them not vacate the area. Of course, it should be stated that, in some instances, a number of bystanders or vendors fall within our operational area…**
>
> **"Note that when the Special Cohorts enter the operational mode, it becomes challenging for them to distinguish [between protesters and other members of the public]; there is absolutely no intent [to harm other members of the public] because prior to conducting lightning-speed operations, we issue warnings and alerts, provide opportunities [for dispersal] and exercise patience. However, during the operation, it is no longer possible to discern who is innocent and who is a rioter."[1353]**

In outlining these violent operational procedures, Hassan Karami conflated peaceful expression of opposition to the Islamic Republic system and non-peaceful actions, such as vandalism and arson, characterizing all such actions as meriting violent repression:

> **"The police cannot stand by and watch as someone comes to insult the pillars [of the Islamic Republic system] and the revolution; set public and private property on fire; and disrupt peace and tranquillity. We confront these [actions]."[1354]**

On 31 January 2023, Hassan Karami expressed full confidence in his subordinates not being responsible for "erroneous" killings. At the same time, he restated his directives for the Special Cohorts and his warnings to the protesters in highly charged emotional language, which hinted at violence and causing the protesters to suffer consequences so severe that they would "regret" taking part in the protests. He demonized the protesters as "the enemy's main agents, lawbreakers, and those who destroy public property" and warned that his forces "have a firm and regret-inducing response" to the protesters.

Hassan Karami also reiterated his warnings that "anyone who remains on the scene despite the Special Cohorts' warnings... may be harmed."[1355] He stated:

> **"I have so much confidence in the capabilities of the Special Cohorts that I have repeatedly said if anyone can prove that an individual was killed due to the error of our personnel, I would reward them. The first action of the Special Cohorts is to separate the crowd [into those dispersing and those defiantly remaining]. Although the officers' task is very difficult, they patiently and carefully execute this separation to prevent harm to the people and get to the few instigators. Our main focus is on these instigators, and we have a firm and regret-inducing response against this small group. If anyone remains on the scene despite the Special Cohorts' warnings… they may be harmed. Therefore, people**

1353. Fars News Agency, تاکتیک‌های یگان ویژه در مقابل اغتشاشات برق‌آسا مزدوران چگونه پاداش گرفتند ["Special Cohort tactics against flash riots: How were mercenaries rewarded for riots and destruction?"], 14 October 2022, https://farsnews.ir/news/14010722000349/تاکتیک‌های-یگان-ویژه-در-مقابل-اغتشاشات-برق‌آسا-مزدوران-چگونه-پاداش (in Persian).

1354. Fars News Agency, جزئیات عملکرد و دستاوردهای «یگان زینبی» در اغتشاشات ["Details of the performance and achievements of the 'Zaynabi Cohort' during the riots"], 16 October 2022, https://farsnews.ir/social/1665918203000544666/جزئیات-عملکرد-و-دستاوردهای-«یگان-زینبی»-استفاده-از-ترددشمارها-برای-شناسایی-لیدرهای- آشوبگران-F-در-اغتشاشات2%

1355. Asr-e Iran, فرمانده یگان‌های ویژه: کسی ثابت کند، فردی با خطای یگان ویژه کشته شده، جایزه می‌گیرد ["Commander of the Special Cohorts: Anyone who can prove that someone was killed due to the Special Cohorts' mistake will be rewarded"], 31 January 2023, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/876753/فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-کسی-ثابت-کند-فردی-با-خطای-یگان-ویژه-کشته-شده-جایزه-می‌گیرد-مردم-باید-به-محض-حضور-یگان‌های-ویژه-صحنه-را-ترک-کنند (in Persian).

should quickly move away from the Special Cohorts' operational area. We take serious action without any leniency against the enemy's main agents, lawbreakers, and those who destroy public property."[1356]

In a subsequent media interview on 25 March 2023, Hassan Karami revealed that the nationwide operations of the Special Cohorts in response to the 2022 protests had been carried out under the code name "At your service, O Zaynab".[1357] The use of a nationwide code name further suggests that that a central command was issuing orders to the Special Cohorts and overseeing their operations.

In the months following the ending of the protests in December 2022, Hassan Karami repeatedly praised his forces for their "vital role" and "intelligence and effective performance" in "countering enemy sedition" and for "dedicating themselves selflessly day and night to ensure the security and well-being of the people".[1358] He further celebrated the deadly repression, which had caused hundreds of families across the country to mourn the loss of their loved ones and left thousands injured from gunshot wounds or scarred by torture, as "victories" which "injected hope into society".[1359]

For example, on 1 January 2023, he stated:

"The effective and intelligent performance of the Special Cohorts during recent incidents had a significant impact on portraying the true face of the police to the public. It solidified the position and value of the Special Cohorts at the national level, strengthening their place in the minds and beliefs of both the people and officials more than ever before."[1360]

On 25 March 2023, he stated:

"In the recent mega sedition, which we overcame triumphantly… we managed to ground the enemy with all our capabilities... You, warriors in the Special Cohorts, played a vital role in these victories. You

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1356. Asr-e Iran, ["Commander of Special Cohorts: Anyone who can prove that someone was killed due to the Special Cohorts' mistake will be rewarded"], 31 January 2023, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/876753/فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-کسی-ثابت-کند-فردی-با-خطای-یگان-ویژه-کشته-شده-جایزه-می‌گیرد-مردم-باید-به-محض-حضور-یگان‌های-ویژه-صحنه-را-ترک-کنند (in Persian).

1357. Entekhab, ["Commander of Special Cohorts: In 2023, we must double our capacity to cover 400 points for dealing with unrests"], 25 March 2023, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/720187/فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-پلیس-در-سال-۱۴۰۲-باید-ظرفیت-خود-را-دو-برابر-کنیم-تا-بتوانیم-برای-مقابله-با-ناآرامی‌ها-۴۰۰-نقطه-را-پوشش-دهیم (in Persian).

"At your service, O Zaynab" (*Labbayk ya Zaynab*) is a phrase used by Shia Muslims, expressing their readiness to support and follow the example of Zaynab bint Ali, the granddaughter of the Prophet Muhammad. The phrase signifies a commitment to uphold resilience and faith, as purportedly demonstrated by Zaynab during the battle of Karbala, which took place in 680 AD.

1358. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ["Special Cohort's authority is a source of hope and peace for society"], 17 May 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5781831/اقتدار-یگان-ویژه-مایه-تزریق-امید-و-آرامش-به-جامعه-است (in Persian); Entekhab, ["Commander of the Special Cohorts: In 2023, we must double our capacity to cover 400 points for dealing with unrests"], 25 March 2023, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/720187/فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-پلیس-در-سال-۱۴۰۲-باید-ظرفیت-خود-را-دو-برابر-کنیم-تا-بتوانیم-برای-مقابله-با-ناآرامی‌ها-۴۰۰-نقطه-را-پوشش-دهیم (in Persian); Eghtesad News, ["General Karami's comments on the Special Cohort performance in recent incidents"], 1 January 2023, https://www.eghtesadnews.com/بخش-اخبار-سیاسی-57/545784-اظهارات-سردار-کرمی-درباره-عملکرد-یگان-ویژه-در-حوادث-اخیر (in Persian).

1359. Entekhab, ["Commander of Special Cohorts: In 2023, we must double our capacity to cover 400 points for dealing with unrests"], 25 March 2023, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/720187/فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-پلیس-در-سال-۱۴۰۲-باید-ظرفیت-خود-را-دو-برابر-کنیم-تا-بتوانیم-برای-مقابله-با-ناآرامی‌ها-۴۰۰-نقطه-را-پوشش-دهیم (in Persian).

1360. Eghtesad News, ["General Karami's comments on the Special Cohort performance in recent incidents"], 1 January 2023, https://www.eghtesadnews.com/بخش-اخبار-سیاسی-57/545784-اظهارات-سردار-کرمی-درباره-عملکرد-یگان-ویژه-در-حوادث-اخیر (in Persian).

should take pride in serving in this organization during such times and restoring peace and security to the country in the face of great sedition."[1361]

On 17 May 2023, he stated:

"The performance of FARAJA in countering enemy sedition was commendable and praiseworthy. The personnel of the Special Cohorts dedicated themselves selflessly day and night to ensure the security and well-being of the people… Against the sedition designed by enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Special Cohorts injected hope into society with their full capability, spirit of self-belief, and insight."[1362]



The then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami (right), attending a nationwide drill on 25 March 2023, for the "security enhancement plan and the fight against public crimes and theft prevention", conducted by the Special Cohorts of FARAJA © Koosha Mashid Falahi / Mizan News Agency[1363]

10.2.4(I)(iii) Minister of interior and deputy minister of interior for police and security

Throughout and in the aftermath of the 2022 protest periods, the then minister of interior, **Ahmad Vahidi**, and the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, **Majid Mir Ahmadi**, issued multiple statements demonizing the protesters as "rioters", "terrorists" and "mosquitoes" while signalling instructions to security forces to maintain repression. These statements were particularly issued during or in the immediate aftermath of waves of unlawful killings.

1361. Entekhab, ["Commander of Special Cohorts: In 2023, we must double our capacity to cover 400 points for dealing with unrests"], 25 March 2023, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/720187/فرمانده-یگان‌های-ویژه-پلیس-در-سال-۱۴۰۲-باید-ظرفیت-خود-را-دو-برابر-کنیم-تا-بتوانیم-برای-مقابله-با-ناآرامی‌ها-۴۰۰-نقطه-را-پوشش-دهیم (in Persian).

1362. Mehr News Agency, ["Special Cohort's authority is a source of hope and peace for society"], 17 May 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5781831/اقتدار-یگان-ویژه-مایه-تزریق-امید-و-آرامش-به-جامعه-است (in Persian).

1363. Mizan News Agency, ["Nationwide exercise to enhance public security"], 25 March 2023, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4704879/رزمایش-سراسری-ارتقای-امنیت-اجتماعی (in Persian).

On 23 September 2022, after the first wave of unlawful killings by the security forces resulting in the death of at least 83 protesters and bystanders during violent protest dispersals across the country between 19 and 22 September 2022,[1364] Ahmad Vahidi gave his first media interview. He described the protesters as members of "organized groups and cells… who engage in sabotage… and set public property on fire", claiming that "they are not genuinely concerned with the case of Ms [Zhina Mahsa] Amini, but are merely using it as a pretext to create chaos."[1365]

In his interview, Ahmad Vahidi categorized those killed into several groups, blaming many deaths on "rioters" or "personal vendettas".[1366] He acknowledged that some killings were carried out by security forces, though he framed these as occurring in the context of security forces preventing individuals from entering "sensitive headquarters" or targeting members of outlawed Kurdish opposition groups.[1367] Ahmad Vahidi provided no specific breakdown of the fatalities, stating that detailed statistics would be released at a later time. He stated:



The minister of interior at the time of the 2022 protests, Ahmad Vahidi © Khamenei.ir

"Organized groups and cells… engaged in staging killings, killing individuals and leaving the bodies elsewhere. There were multiple cases of this…

"The fatalities fall into several groups: the first group consists of members of [Kurdish opposition] grouplets in the west and north-west; the second includes ordinary citizens, either killed by rioters or murdered for personal vendettas and left in [various] places; the third group is composed of police and security officers; and the fourth group includes individuals who intended to enter sensitive headquarters and were killed by security forces defending those sites."[1368]

Ahmad Vahidi proceeded to signal the state's strategy for continued repression, expressing confidence in the ability of the police to crush the protests and warning that those involved in the "riots" would be identified and prosecuted by the judiciary:

> **"Enemies… mistakenly believe they can destabilize the Islamic Republic through these riots, which is a childish notion. All those who participated in the riots will be identified… If it weren't for the police, certain individuals taking particular [critical] stances wouldn't be able to sleep peacefully now… These protests will end… and the judiciary will deal with the offenders."[1369]**

The next day, on 24 September 2022, the Ministry of Interior issued a statement describing the protesters as "rioters" and "enemy agents" who were "spreading terror among citizens, disrupting

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1364. See Chapter 5.

1365. Nour News, اولین واکنش رسمی وزیر کشور به تحولات اخیر ["Minister of interior's first official response to recent developments"], 23 September 2022, https://nournews.ir/fa/news/109200/اولین-واکنش-رسمی-وزیر-کشور-به-تحولات-اخیر (in Persian).

1366. Nour News, اولین واکنش رسمی وزیر کشور به تحولات اخیر ["Minister of interior's first official response to recent developments"], 23 September 2022, https://nournews.ir/fa/news/109200/اولین-واکنش-رسمی-وزیر-کشور-به-تحولات-اخیر (in Persian).

1367. Nour News, اولین واکنش رسمی وزیر کشور به تحولات اخیر ["Minister of interior's first official response to recent developments"], 23 September 2022, https://nournews.ir/fa/news/109200/اولین-واکنش-رسمی-وزیر-کشور-به-تحولات-اخیر (in Persian).

1368. Nour News, اولین واکنش رسمی وزیر کشور به تحولات اخیر ["Minister of interior's first official response to recent developments"], 23 September 2022, https://nournews.ir/fa/news/109200/اولین-واکنش-رسمی-وزیر-کشور-به-تحولات-اخیر (in Persian).

1369. Nour News, اولین واکنش رسمی وزیر کشور به تحولات اخیر ["Minister of interior's first official response to recent developments"], 23 September 2022, https://nournews.ir/fa/news/109200/اولین-واکنش-رسمی-وزیر-کشور-به-تحولات-اخیر (in Persian).

public order, disturbing the public's peace of mind… making city commutes unsafe, destroying public property, and causing traffic disruptions".[1370] Given the hierarchical structure of Iran's Ministry of Interior and the political sensitivity of the nationwide protests, it is reasonable to deduce that the minister of interior was directly involved in approving the statements issued by the ministry. In its 24 September statement, the Ministry of Interior asserted that it will "combat the riots", adding:

> **"According to available evidence, under current conditions, any gatherings are certain to be exploited by enemies and lawbreakers. In line with its mandate to prevent incidents leading to the violation of citizens' rights, the Ministry of Interior has not authorized street gatherings."[1371]**

The Ministry of Interior called for the prosecution and punishment of protesters and their supporters. In contrast, the Ministry of Interior did not mention the patterns of unlawful killings, torture and other ill-treatment by security forces, including FARAJA, which had already been reported by both domestic and foreign media, as well as human rights organizations.[1372] The Ministry of Interior stated:

> **"Alongside the direct perpetrators and on-the-ground agents of the riots who commit visible crimes, the designers and instigators are also legally responsible as accomplices… and they must be prosecuted and held accountable for their role in creating conditions that harmed the lives and property of the people."[1373]**

On 26 September 2022, amid ongoing unlawful use of lethal force against protesters across the country, Ahmad Vahidi paid a visit to the central office of the MARFOUK of FARAJA in Tehran. In the context of this visit, he expressed appreciation about the "timely", "effective" and "appropriate" response of the FARAJA command to the protests, stating:

> **"The totality of the police command has performed very very well and appropriately during the recent riots… These dear individuals [FARAJA commanders and forces] effectively thwarted the conspiracies and sedition of the enemies in a timely manner."[1374]**

1370. Etemad Online, بیانیه وزارت کشور در خصوص اعتراضات اخیر در کشور ["Ministry of Interior statement on recent protests in the country"], 24 September 2022, https://www.etemadonline.com/بخش-سیاسی-575335/9-بیانیه-وزارت-کشور-در-خصوص-اعتراضات-اخیر-در-کشور (in Persian).
1371. Etemad Online, بیانیه وزارت کشور در خصوص اعتراضات اخیر در کشور ["Ministry of Interior statement on recent protests in the country"], 24 September 2022, https://www.etemadonline.com/بخش-سیاسی-575335/9-بیانیه-وزارت-کشور-در-خصوص-اعتراضات-اخیر-در-کشور (in Persian).
1372. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: Leaked official documents ordering deadly crackdown highlight need for international action" (Index: MDE 13/6070/2022), 30 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6070/2022/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent international action needed to ensure accountability for Mahsa Amini's death in custody" (Index: MDE 13/6060/2022), 27 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6060/2022/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: World must take meaningful action against bloody crackdown as death toll rises", 23 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/iran-world-must-take-meaningful-action-against-bloody-crackdown-as-death-toll-rises; UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, "Iran: UN experts demand accountability for death of Mahsa Amini, call for end to violence against women", 22 September 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/09/iran-un-experts-demand-accountability-death-mahsa-amini-call-end-violence; Amnesty International, "Iran: Deadly crackdown on protests against Mahsa Amini's death in custody needs urgent global action", 21 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/iran-deadly-crackdown-on-protests-against-mahsa-aminis-death-in-custody-needs-urgent-global-action
1373. Etemad Online, بیانیه وزارت کشور در خصوص اعتراضات اخیر در کشور ["Ministry of Interior statement on recent protests in the country"], 24 September 2022, https://www.etemadonline.com/بخش-سیاسی-575335/9-بیانیه-وزارت-کشور-در-خصوص-اعتراضات-اخیر-در-کشور (in Persian).
1374. Entekhab, وزیر کشور: نیروی انتظامی در اتفاقات اخیر بسیار بسیار خوب و مناسب عمل کرد؛ توانست توطئه‌ها را نقش بر آب کند ["Minister of interior: Police forces performed very well in recent events: they were able to thwart the conspiracies"], 26 September 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/696446/وزیر-کشور-نیروی-انتظامی-در-اتفاقات-اخیر-بسیار-بسیار-خوب-و-مناسب-عمل-کرد-توانست-توطئه‌ها-را-نقش-بر-آب-کند (in Persian).

On 6 October 2022, several days after a deadly crackdown on the protests in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, on 30 September 2022,[1375] Ahmad Vahidi visited Zahedan.[1376] Amnesty International has been able to record the names of 87 protesters and bystanders, including 15 children, who were unlawfully killed by the security forces on this day, which is widely referred to by Iranians as "Bloody Friday". During his visit, despite overwhelming evidence establishing the responsibility of the security forces, Ahmad Vahidi once again shifted the blame to unspecified "enemies" and "terrorist grouplets", stating:

> **"As Sistan and Baluchistan had remained calm during recent days when there were riots elsewhere in the country, the enemy attempted and planned to disrupt this calm, and infiltrating elements and agents managed to cause damage with the support of terrorist groups and foreign assistance."[1377]**

The same day, Ahmad Vahidi also issued a statement on the occasion of FARAJA Appreciation Week, in which he praised the FARAJA forces for their role in repressing the protests. He stated:

> **"At a time when enemies... under the false pretext of defending women's rights seek to disrupt the country's peace and encourage insecurity and unrest... the defenders of security have neutralized the enemies' plans... and once again demonstrated to the world that protecting and defending public security is a red line for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Along this difficult path, FARAJA [agents] have played a prominent and active role on the frontlines of security with courage and self-sacrifice... I express my deepest appreciation for the efforts of those protecting and safeguarding the people's security who have stood firm with divine conviction during this historic period."[1378]**

On 9 October 2022, amid another surge in unlawful killings, which resulted in the death of at least 15 protesters and bystanders during protest dispersals and in militarized areas between 8 and 15 October 2022,[1379] the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, expressed satisfaction with "FARAJA's intelligent, prudent and decisive management of the situation", which he said was successfully "neutralizing the enemies' conspiracies."[1380]

Majid Mir Ahmadi further repeated the state narrative referred to as the "project of staging killings", asserting that protesters themselves carried out the killings and then blamed the security forces in order to influence public opinion and further popular outrage and protests

Signalling instructions to FARAJA forces to continue the crackdown, he stated:

1375. See section 5.3.2(II). See also Amnesty International, *Iran: Killings of Children During Youthful Anti-Establishment Protests* (Index: MDE 13/6104/2022), 9 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6104/2022/en, pp. 19-30; Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 82 Baluchi protesters and bystanders killed in bloody crackdown", 6 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-82-baluchi-protesters-and-bystanders-killed-in-bloody-crackdown

1376. Mehr News Agency, وزیر کشور وارد استان سیستان و بلوچستان شد ["Minister of interior arrived in Sistan and Baluchistan province"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603254/وزیر-کشور-وارد-استان-سیستان-و-بلوچستان-شد (in Persian).

1377. Mehr News Agency, مغازه در اغتشاشات زاهدان تخریب شد: مردم خواستار شناسایی عاملان ۱۲۴ ["124 shops destroyed in Zahedan riots: People demand identification of perpetrators"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603475/مغازه-در-اغتشاشات-زاهدان-تخریب--۱۲۴-شد-مردم-خواستار-شناسایی-عاملان (in Persian).

1378. MawaKhabar, وحیدی: نیروی انتظامی نشان داد دفاع از امنیت عمومی خط قرمز جمهوری اسلامی است [Vahidi: Police force has demonstrated that defending public security is a red line for the Islamic Republic], 6 October 2022, https://mawakhabar.ir/وحیدی-نیروی-انتظامی-نشان-داد-دفاع-ازام (in Persian).

1379. See Chapter 5.

1380. Tabnak, هشدار وزارت کشور به دستگیرشدگان ["Ministry of Interior's warning to those arrested"], 9 October 2022, http://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1144256/هشدار-وزارت-کشور-به-دستگیرشدگان (in Persian).



The deputy minister of interior for police and security at the time of the 2022 protests, Majid Mir Ahmadi © Ana News Agency

"Today, one of the people's key demands is that FARAJA confront the agents who disrupt security with greater strength, speed, and decisiveness… FARAJA is fully capable of dealing firmly with rioters and has done so up to this point, and wherever necessary, dear Basijis have provided support as needed…

"On the previous day [8 October], except for minor incidents of unrest in Tehran and Sanandaj,[1381] complete peace and security prevailed across the country and, truly, the enemy has faced defeat in this new conspiracy as well… God willing, these recent issues will soon be resolved and any remaining rioters will be dealt with to mop up the remaining unrest…

Certainly, the intelligence and security agencies, with their identification methods and techniques, will locate…all agents of the riots… and will undoubtedly deal with them… Going forward, those arrested at the scenes of riots will not be released under any circumstances until their trials, which will be held swiftly, and very severe and deterrent sentences will be issued against them."[1382]

Two days later, on 11 October 2022, Majid Mir Ahmadi described the protests as a threat to national security and Iran's territorial integrity, linking them to the activities of armed Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.[1383] He said:



The deputy minister of interior for police and security at the time of the 2022 protests, Majid Mir Ahmadi © Ana News Agency

"Our red line is the security of the people, and any tool that threatens the nation's security must be dealt with firmly…

"The Islamic Republic of Iran cannot remain indifferent to separatists and, certainly, if anti-revolutionary groups continue their activities and the Kurdistan Region [of Iraq] fails to fulfil its responsibilities, there will inevitably be further confrontations."[1384]

1381. See section 6.2.1 which documents the unlawful killing of four people during the lethal repression of the protests of 8 October 2022 in Sanandaj.

1382. Pishkhan, معاون امنیتی و انتظامی وزیر کشور مطرح کرد هشدار وزارت کشور به دستگیرشدگان ["Deputy minister of interior for police and security discussed the Ministry of Interior's warning to those arrested"], 10 October 2022, https://www.pishkhan.com/news/280404 (in Persian).

1383. Fardaye Eghtesad, معاون امنیتی وزارت کشور عربستان را تهدید کرد ["Deputy minister of interior threatens Saudi Arabia"], 11 October 2022, https://www.fardayeeghtesad.com/news/4903/معاون-امنیتی-وزارت-کشور-عربستان-را-تهدید-کرد (in Persian).

1384. Fardaye Eghtesad, معاون امنیتی وزارت کشور عربستان را تهدید کرد ["Deputy minister of interior threatens Saudi Arabia"], 11 October 2022, https://www.fardayeeghtesad.com/news/4903/معاون-امنیتی-وزارت-کشور-عربستان-را-تهدید-کرد (in Persian).

Majid Mir Ahmadi also confirmed the deployment of plain-clothes agents to suppress the protests, saying:

> **"We explicitly state that surveillance agencies are among the rioters, conducting facial recognition and filming… People think they escape after attacking officers and setting fire to police stations. I clearly state that plain-clothes persons have identified them and will go after them at the appropriate time… Our plain-clothes personnel are present in the heart of the protests."[1385]**

At the same time, he denied allegations of wrongdoing by the security forces. For example, he specifically denied that the security forces were responsible for the death of 16-year-old girl Nika Shakarami,[1386] blaming it on suicide. In likely response to reports by human rights groups and independent Persian-language media outlets outside Iran that families of victims, including the family of Nika Shakarami, were being forced to endorse state narratives, including through appearances in state-produced videos,[1387] he claimed that "absolutely no one has been pressured to release a video expressing remorse, and any film released is entirely voluntary."[1388]

Additionally, Majid Mir Ahmadi expressed outrage toward Persian-language media outlets based outside of Iran that were reporting on the protests and the violations committed by the security forces. He described these outlets as a "war operation room" and called on the governments of the countries where they are located to shut them down.

On 11 October 2022, Ahmad Vahidi visited Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, where he made similar statements, characterizing the protests in Kurdish areas as "riots supported and designed by terrorist and separatist grouplets". He once again signalled instructions to FARAJA to continue the repression, stating:

> **"The riots are supported and designed by terrorist and separatist grouplets [including] the Komala [Party of Kurdistan], the [Kurdish] Democratic [Party of Iran] and PJAK [Kurdistan Free Life Party]… The people of Kurdistan should not worry about their security, as the police force is dealing and will continue to deal with the agents of unrest… We must all… stand alongside the security forces."[1389]**

On 27 October 2022, amid the third wave of unlawful killings, which resulted in the death of at least 22 protesters and bystanders between 26 and 30 October 2022, including 12 Kurdish victims in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan,[1390] Ahmad Vahidi again stated that

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1385. Fardaye Eghtesad, معاون امنیتی وزارت کشور عربستان را تهدید کرد ["Deputy minister of interior threatens Saudi Arabia"], 11 October 2022, https://www.fardayeeghtesad.com/news/4903/معاون-امنیتی-وزارت-کشور-عربستان-را-تهدید-کرد (in Persian).
1386. See Amnesty International, "Iran authorities covering up their crimes of child killings by coercing families into silence", 9 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-authorities-covering-up-their-crimes-of-child-killings-by-coercing-families-into-silence, pp. 30-31.
1387. Iran International, اعتراف اجباری از خانواده نیکا شاکرمی، گفت‌وگو با علی هریسچی، وکیل دادگاه فدرال ["Forced confessions by Nika Shakarami's family: Interview with Ali Harischi, Federal Court Attorney"], 7 October 2022, https://www.iranintl.com/video/ott_bbb50a73769c4028882bd8b6d424c0a1 (in Persian); BBC Persian, «برای اعتراف بستگان نیکا شاکرمی؛ تهدید شده‌اند» ["Nika Shakarami: Relatives 'threatened to make forced confessions'"], 6 October 2022, https://www.bbc.com/persian/articles/cjmelrlgxjpo (in Persian); Radio Farda, مادر نیکا شاکرمی: دخترم را کشتند و مرا برای اعتراف اجباری تهدید می‌کنند ["Nika Shakarami's mother: They killed my daughter and are threatening me to make a forced confession"], 6 October 2022, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32068260.html (in Persian); Iran Wire, اعترافات اجباری خاله و دایی نیکا؛ تناقض‌های آشکار سناریوی تکراری حکومت ["Forced confessions of Nika's aunt and uncle: Obvious contradictions in the government's repeated narrative"], 6 October 2022, https://iranwire.com/fa/features/اعترافات-اجباری-خاله-و-دایی-نیکا-تناقضهای-آشکار-سناریوی-تکراری-حکومت (in Persian); Amnesty International, "Iran: Leaked official documents ordering deadly crackdown highlight need for international action" (Index: MDE 13/6070/2022), 30 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6070/2022/en
1388. Fardaye Eghtesad, معاون امنیتی وزارت کشور عربستان را تهدید کرد ["Deputy minister of interior threatens Saudi Arabia"], 11 October 2022, https://www.fardayeeghtesad.com/news/4903/معاون-امنیتی-وزارت-کشور-عربستان-را-تهدید-کرد (in Persian).
1389. Asr-e Iran, سفر وزیر کشور به سنندج سردار وحیدی: اغتشاشات توسط کومله دموکرات و پژاک طراحی و حمایت می‌شود ["Minister of interior's visit to Sanandaj: General Vahidi states riots are planned and supported by Komala, the Democratic Party and PJAK"], 11 October 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/861532/سفر-وزیر-کشور-به-سنندج-سردار-وحیدی-اغتشاشات-توسط-کومله-دموکرات-و-پژاک-طراحی-و-حمایت-می-شود (in Persian).
1390. See Chapter 5.

"security officials will stand guard with intensity and vigilance", signalling continuity of approach in repressing any protests.[1391] He attempted to justify the repression by claiming that "the riot movement... was taking dangerous paths, with the terrorist current exploiting the climate of riot."[1392]

On 15 November 2022, as the use of lethal force again escalated in response to protests marking the anniversary of the November 2019 protests, Ahmad Vahidi again stressed that "we must not allow the enemy to act", while also stating that, "fortunately, we have stable and good security conditions in the provinces across the country."[1393]

On 30 November 2022, following a lethal crackdown in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan, and West Azerbaijan between 15 and 21 November 2022, which resulted in the unlawful killing of at least 45 Kurdish protesters and bystanders,[1394] Ahmad Vahidi expressed satisfaction with the "calm state" of the cities in these areas and stated that they remained under "constant monitoring".[1395]

Ahmad Vahidi made no reference to the serious violations committed by the security forces, which had been widely reported by human rights organizations, as well as independent Persian-language and other media outlets, and instead claimed that "the majority, if not all, of the damage has been caused by the rioters."[1396]

He also reiterated the baseless claim that the protests were incited by "terrorist and separatist currents", stating:



The minister of interior at the time of the 2022 protests, Ahmad Vahidi
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"The country's western and border cities… are currently calm, and there are no issues. Hostile, terrorist, and separatist currents outside our borders are trying to disrupt conditions in the border areas; however, the situation is calm, and there are no problems.

"Constant monitoring is being conducted by the responsible agencies… The important thing is that monitoring is conducted to ensure they cannot cause any problems."[1397]

1391. Khabar Online, هشدار وزیر کشور اغتشاشات به مسیر خطرناکی می‌رود ["Minister of interior warns riots are heading down a dangerous path"], 27 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1688126/هشدار-وزیر-کشور-اغتشاشات-به-مسیر-خطرناکی-می-رود (in Persian).
1392. Khabar Online, هشدار وزیر کشور اغتشاشات به مسیر خطرناکی می‌رود ["Minister of interior warns riots are heading down a dangerous path"], 27 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1688126/هشدار-وزیر-کشور-اغتشاشات-به-مسیر-خطرناکی-می-رود (in Persian).
1393. Aftab News, سردار وحیدی: وضعیت امنیتی کشور پایدار و مطلوب است ["General Vahidi: The country's security situation is stable and desirable"], 15 November 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/808303/سردار-وحیدی-وضعیت-امنیتی-کشور-پایدار-و-مطلوب-است (in Persian).
1394. See section 5.3.2(III) and Chapters 6-8.
1395. Tasnim News Agency, وزیر کشور کسانی که در اغتشاشات اخیر خسارت دیدند اعلام شکایت کنند ["Minister of interior: Those who suffered damage in recent riots should file complaints"], 30 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/09/2814416/وزیر-کشور-کسانی-که-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-خسارت-دیدند-اعلام-شکایت-کنند (in Persian).
1396. Tasnim News Agency, وزیر کشور کسانی که در اغتشاشات اخیر خسارت دیدند اعلام شکایت کنند ["Minister of interior: Those who suffered damage in recent riots should file complaints"], 30 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/09/2814416/وزیر-کشور-کسانی-که-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-خسارت-دیدند-اعلام-شکایت-کنند (in Persian).
1397. Tasnim News Agency, وزیر کشور کسانی که در اغتشاشات اخیر خسارت دیدند اعلام شکایت کنند ["Minister of interior: Those who suffered damage in recent riots should file complaints"], 30 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/09/2814416/وزیر-کشور-کسانی-که-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-خسارت-دیدند-اعلام-شکایت-کنند (in Persian).

On 15 December 2022, after months of lethal repression brought the protests to an end, Ahmad Vahidi compared the protesters to "mosquitos", unable to pose a real challenge to the Islamic Republic.[1398] He described the protests as a "serious conspiracy against the Islamic Republic with the United States, the Zionist regime [Israel], England [the UK], Saudi Arabia and France being among the players behind the recent riots."[1399]

He also once again framed the protests as being driven by the "enemy's objective to create ethnic and religious division", in likely reference to the prominent participation of Kurdish and Baluchi minorities in the protests.[1400]

Two days later, on 17 December 2022, Ahmad Vahidi again took pride in the "defeat" of the protests. This time, he described the protests as "riots" stirred by "enemies" to "distance the youth from the [Islamic Republic] system".[1401] He claimed that "those who took part in the riots… were now expressing remorse for their actions, with only a few remaining steadfast, and the enemy's plan had been defeated."

Reaffirming instructions to security forces to maintain the repression, he added: "The security and intelligence agencies are monitoring and preventing the enemy's conspiracies… Teams and cells pursuing terrorist and subversive activities are being effectively detected and controlled."[1402]

10.2.4(II) KURDISTAN PROVINCE

10.2.4(II)(i) Provincial commander of FARAJA

During and in the aftermath of the September-December 2022 protests, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, **Ali Azadi**, made multiple statements reiterating the objective of FARAJA forces to "severely respond" to the protesters,[1403] whom he described as "rioters affiliated with anti-

1398. Khabar Online, ["Minister of interior: The Islamic system is so strong that the recent movements are like a mosquito landing on a hand – it goes away with a slight movement"], 15 December 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1707379/وزیر-کشور-نظام-اسلامی-آنچنان-قوی-است-که-حرکات-اخیر-مانند-حرکت (in Persian).

1399. Khabar Online, ["Minister of interior: The Islamic system is so strong that the recent movements are like a mosquito landing on a hand – it goes away with a slight movement"], 15 December 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1707379/وزیر-کشور-نظام-اسلامی-آنچنان-قوی-است-که-حرکات-اخیر-مانند-حرکت (in Persian).

1400. IRNA, ["Minister of interior: Recent incidents were aimed at preventing the influence of Iran's power"], 15 December 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84971218/وزیر-کشور-حوادث-اخیر-برای-جلوگیری-از-نفوذ-قدرت-ایران-بود (in Persian).

1401. Alef, ["Minister of interior: The focus and priority of the government is addressing the fundamental issues of the country"], 17 December 2022, https://www.alef.ir/news/4010926037.html?show=text (in Persian).

1402. Alef, ["Minister of interior: The focus and priority of the government is addressing the fundamental issues of the country"], 17 December 2022, https://www.alef.ir/news/4010926037.html?show=text (in Persian).

1403. Tasnim News Agency, ["Exclusive: 150 individuals with minor involvement in Kurdistan riots released"], 2 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/10/2782435/اختصاصی-150-نفر-از-افراد-کم-تقصیر-در-اغتشاشات-کردستان-آزاد-شدند (in Persian).

revolutionary grouplets",[1404] "disrupters of public order and security",[1405] and "mercenaries of the enemy".[1406]

On 21 September 2022, in response to the unlawful killing of four protesters on 19 September 2022 – Mohsen Mohammadi and Foad Ghadimi in Divandareh;[1407] Fereydoon Mahmoudi in Saqqez;[1408] and Reza Lotfi in Dehgolan[1409] – Ali Azadi attributed responsibility to "anti-revolutionary grouplets",[1410] while simultaneously warning about FARAJA's "severe" and "uncompromising" response. He stated:



The FARAJA commander of Kurdistan Province at the time of the 2022 protests, Ali Azadi © Tasnim News Agency

"We had warned citizens to avoid unlawful gatherings because anti-revolutionaries aim to enter the protests and engage in 'staging killings'… Out of the four individuals killed, three were shot with combat bullets and one was killed at close range by metal pellets [fired from] a hunting rifle. However, the grouplets seek to blame FARAJA for these deaths…

"The police's response to rioters is severe because it aims to protect citizens' safety, with no compromises."[1411]

On 2 October 2022, amid ongoing protests and in advance of civil society calls for a coordinated day of demonstrations on 8 October, Ali Azadi indicated that the orders issued to the forces under his command required "a severe response" to those "disrupting public safety and tranquillity". He stated:

> **"Severely confronting thugs and those disrupting public safety and tranquillity is on the agenda of the Kurdistan police… To protect and promote security and tranquillity in society, we will remain in the field even at the cost of our lives."[1412]**

1404. Asr-e Iran, ["Commander of Kurdistan police: Four killed in protests by combat bullets, the police force does not use combat bullets"], 21 September 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/859042/فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان-4-کشته-مربوط-به-اعتراضات-با-گلوله-جنگی-بود-نیروی-انتظامی-از-گلوله-جنگی-استفاده-نمی-کند-کشته-سازی-کار-ضد-انقلاب-است (in Persian).

1405. KurdPress, ["Commander of police force in Kurdistan: Arrest of two leaders of unrest in Sanandaj"], 3 December 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/40074/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-کردستان-دستگیری-۲-لیدر-ناآرامی-ها-در (in Persian).

1406. Tasnim News Agency, ["Exclusive: 150 individuals with minor involvement in Kurdistan riots released"], 2 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/10/2782435/اختصاصی-150-نفر-از-افراد-کم-تقصیر-در-اغتشاشات-کردستان-آزاد-شدند (in Persian).

1407. See section 6.4.1 for details of Mohsen Mohammadi and Foad Ghadimi's case.

1408. See section 6.3.1 for details of Fereydoon Mahmoudi's case.

1409. See section 6.6.1 for details of Reza Lotfi's case.

1410. Fars News Agency, ["Kurdistan police commander: Enemy killed a citizen of Divandareh in front of his workplace..."], 22 September 2022, https://farsnews.ir/kordestan/news/14010631000301/فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان-دشمن-شهروند-دیواندره‌ای-را-مقابل-محل-کارش-به (in Persian).

1411. Asr-e Iran, ["Commander of Kurdistan police: Four killed in protests by combat bullets, the police force does not use combat bullets"], 21 September 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/859042/فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان-4-کشته-مربوط-به-اعتراضات-با-گلوله-جنگی-بود-نیروی-انتظامی-از-گلوله-جنگی-استفاده-نمی-کند-کشته-سازی-کار-ضد-انقلاب-است (in Persian).

1412. Tasnim News Agency, ["Exclusive: 150 individuals with minor involvement in Kurdistan riots released"], 2 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/10/2782435/اختصاصی-150-نفر-از-افراد-کم-تقصیر-در-اغتشاشات-کردستان-آزاد-شدند (in Persian).

On 9 October 2022, following a lethal crackdown by FARAJA and the IRGC forces during the mass protests of the day before in Kurdistan province, resulting in the unlawful killing of four protesters and bystanders, and injuries to many more,[1413] Ali Azadi once again blamed deaths on "counter-revolutionaries". Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, he denied that FARAJA agents engaged in shootings against the "people" and portrayed them as "protecters of public order and security" and "victims of attacks by rioters". However, he simultaneously reiterated FARAJA's strong intention to respond forcefully "until our last drop of blood", implying a readiness to suppress dissent at any cost. He stated:

> **"When the police force is the guardian of the people's lives, property, and honour, how could it shoot at the people? In recent events, despite all the insults and attacks by the rioters who aimed to disrupt public order and create insecurity, we exercised restraint. Even though my colleagues were injured, we did not allow any harm to come to the people. We will protect the order and security of the people and the province until our last drop of blood, and we will not allow anyone to disturb the peace of our fellow citizens in the province."[1414]**

On 3 December 2022, as the protests in Kurdistan province were subsiding following weeks of deadly repression and ongoing mass arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and torture, Ali Azadi triumphantly pronounced that "a desirable calm prevails throughout Kurdistan province" while reiterating his warnings that "the police will act severely against those who destroy property and disrupt public order and security."[1415]

10.2.4(II)(ii) Provincial governor and deputy governor for political, security and social affairs

On 17 September 2022, after the Special Cohorts of FARAJA extensively used metal pellets to suppress protests following Zhina Mahsa Amini's funeral in her home town of Saqqez, causing injuries, including loss of eyesight, to several protesters,[1416] the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, **Mehdi Ramezani**, concealed the truth about the nature and context of the serious violations committed by the Special Cohorts, dismissing reports of these violations as "rumours spread by anti-revolutionary media outlets". He stated:

1413. See Chapter 6.

1414. Hamshahri Online, ["First images of the person killed in the Sanandaj protests, moments after being shot" اولین تصاویر فرد کشته شده در اغتشاشات سنندج, لحظاتی بعد از اصابت], 9 October 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/710822/اولین-تصاویر-فرد-کشته-شده-در-اغتشاشات-سنندج-لحظاتی-بعد-از-اصابت (in Persian).

1415. KurdPress, ["Commander of Kurdistan police force: Arrest of two leaders of unrest in Sanandaj" فرمانده نیروی انتظامی کردستان: دستگیری ۲ لیدر ناآرامی‌ها در سنندج], 3 December 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/40074/فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-کردستان-دستگیری-۲-لیدر-ناآرامی-ها-در (in Persian).

1416. See section 6.3 for details.



The deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Mehdi Ramezani © IRNA

"A few individuals who had thrown stones in front of the Office of the County Governor sustained minor injuries… A few police officers were slightly injured as well. However, the overall condition of all of them, both members of the public and officers, is good, and they are receiving treatment…

"Complete security has been established in the city of Saqqez… People should not pay attention to the rumours spread by anti-revolutionary media outlets."[1417]

On 19 September 2022, the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, **Esmail Zareie Kousha**, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Mehdi Ramezani, and the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, Sadegh Hosseini, attended the memorial ceremony of Zhina Mahsa Amini. While state media reported that the purpose of the visit was to express condolences and promise an investigation into Zhina Mahsa Amini's death,[1418] Esmail Zareie Kousha revealed in an interview on 20 September 2022 that, during the visit, he asked Zhina Mahsa Amini's family to "clarify" that the family is "distinct" from the "enemies" behind the protests, which he described as "a widespread conspiracy… to harm the [Islamic Republic] system and the people".[1419]

In his statement on 20 September 2022, Esmail Zareie Kousha acknowledged the death of three individuals during the protests in Kurdistan province.[1420] However, he described the deaths as "suspicious" and attributed responsibility to "counter-revolutionaries" and "hostile grouplets" pursuing "scenarios of staging killings".[1421] He was quoted stating:

1417. Fararu, معاون استاندار کردستان: چند نفر در سقز زخمی شدند ["Deputy provincial governor of Kurdistan: Several people injured in Saqqez"], 17 September 2022, https://fararu.com/fa/news/575379/معاون-استاندار-کردستان-چند-نفر-در-سقز-زخمی-شدند (in Persian). See also Khabar Online, معاون استاندار کردستان: کسی در تجمع امروز سقز کشته نشده، چند نفر زخمی شدند ["Deputy provincial governor of Kurdistan: No one killed in today's Saqqez gathering, several injured"], 17 September 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1674982/معاون-استاندار-کردستان-کسی-در-تجمع-امروز-سقز-کشته-نشده-چند (in Persian).

1418. See Jamaran, دیدار فرمانده سپاه کردستان با خانواده مهسا امینی + تصاویر ["Meeting of the IRGC commander of Kurdistan province with Mahsa Amini's family + images"], 19 September 2022, https://www.jamaran.news/بخش-بازنشر-59/1567842-دیدار-فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-با-خانواده-مهسا-امینی-تصاویر (in Persian); Alef, استاندار کردستان به منزل مهسا امینی رفت ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan visited Mahsa Amini's home"], 18 September 2022, https://www.alef.ir/news/4010627061.html (in Persian); Mashregh News, عکس: استاندار کردستان به خانه مهسا امینی رفت ["Photograph: Provincial governor of Kurdistan visited Mahsa Amini's home"], 18 September 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1419058/عکس-استاندار-کردستان-به-خانه-مهسا-امینی-رفت (in Persian).

1419. Khabar Online, استاندار کردستان اعلام کرد: مرگ مشکوک سه نفر در جریان اعتراضات ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan announced: Suspicious deaths of three individuals during protests"], 20 September 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1676176/استاندار-کردستان-اعلام-کرد-مرگ-مشکوک-سه-نفر-در-جریان-اعتراضات (in Persian).

1420. See Chapter 6.

1421. KurdPress, استاندار کردستان: دستور کار دشمن کشته‌سازی در تجمعات است/ مرگ مشکوک سه نفر در اعتراضات ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan: The enemy's agenda is staging killings in protests / suspicious deaths of three in protests"], 20 September 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/38588/استاندار-کردستان-دستور-کار-دشمن-کشته-سازی-در-تجمعات-است-مرگ (in Persian); Khabar Online, استاندار کردستان اعلام کرد: مرگ مشکوک سه نفر در جریان اعتراضات ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan announced: Suspicious deaths of three individuals during protests"], 20 September 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1676176/استاندار-کردستان-اعلام-کرد-مرگ-مشکوک-سه-نفر-در-جریان-اعتراضات (in Persian).



The provincial governor of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Esmail Zareie Kousha © ISNA

"Anti-Revolutionaries and hostile groups are seeking scenarios of staging killings, so families must be vigilant and protect their children... The individual from Divandareh[1422] … was killed with a military-grade weapon and none of the armed forces have used this type of weapon… This was certainly an enemy scenario, as the individual's details and image were immediately broadcast on satellite outlets… They [the enemies] left another individual in his [injured] state in a vehicle near Saqqez hospital. This calls for us to remain vigilant and not allow enemies to exploit the emotions of the youth, adding to our grief."[1423]

Despite mounting evidence about the unlawful use of lethal force by FARAJA and the IRGC forces, resulting in the unlawful killing of four protesters in Saqqez,[1424] Dehgolan[1425] and Divandareh[1426] on 19 September 2022, Esmail Zareie Kousha further claimed that "security and police had been showing tolerance towards protesters", but warned of "firm" action against "enemies" who "use [Zhina] Mahsa Amini's death as a code to create insecurity in Kurdistan and spread it to other provinces."[1427]

On 12 October 2022, following a period of intensified repression, particularly in Sanandaj, where five people were unlawfully killed by security forces during protests between 8 and 12 October 2022, Esmail Zareie Kousha again sought to deflect responsibility for the killings. He claimed that the "IRGC, Basij, and police force defend unarmed and exercise restraint", and attributed the use of lethal force to "an armed and premeditated operation" by "grouplets", referring to armed Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.[1428] He stated:

> **"On Saturday night [8 October 2022], we faced an armed and premeditated operation orchestrated by these grouplets and their agents. To keep the flames of what has emerged burning, they kill innocent young people in the streets. A 30-year-old man [referring to Yahya Rahimi[1429]] was shot at close range in his car with a military-grade bullet, shattering his brain, solely to fuel this flame. Meanwhile, the children of the people in the IRGC, Basij, and police force defend unarmed and exercise restraint to**

1422. See section 6.4.

1423. Khabar Online, ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan announced: Suspicious deaths of three individuals during protests"], 20 September 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1676176/استاندار-کردستان-اعلام-کرد-مرگ-مشکوک-سه-نفر-در-جریان-اعتراضات (in Persian).

1424. See section 6.3.1 for details.

1425. See section 6.6.1 for details.

1426. See section 6.4.1 for details.

1427. Khabar Online, ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan announced: Suspicious deaths of three individuals during protests"], 20 September 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1676176/استاندار-کردستان-اعلام-کرد-مرگ-مشکوک-سه-نفر-در-جریان-اعتراضات (in Persian). See also KurdPress, ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan: The enemy's agenda is staging killings in protests / suspicious deaths of three in protests"], 20 September 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/38588/استاندار-کردستان-دستور-کار-دشمن-کشته-سازی-در-تجمعات-است-مرگ (in Persian).

1428. Aftab News, ["Kurdistan unrests according to officials: What is happening in Sanandaj?"], 12 October 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/800503/ناآرامی‌های-کردستان-به-روایت-مسئولان-در-سنندج-چه-خبر-است (in Persian).

1429. See section 6.2.1 for details of Yahya Rahimi's case.

avoid harming youths influenced by propaganda. In contrast, the other side uses military-grade weapons to martyr and injure the children of the people."[1430]

On 13 October 2022, Esmail Zareie Kousha once again demonized the protesters, stating:

"The majority of those who took to the streets were affiliated with terrorist grouplets and many of them were arrested… Many of those arrested had a history of crimes or [affiliation with] grouplets, and these gatherings were no longer popular."[1431]

On 22 October 2022, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Mehdi Ramezani, reiterated the state narrative, describing the protests as "ideological and cultural sedition" and linking them to Kurdish opposition groups, including the Komala Party of Kurdistan, which he said were responsible for killing two state agents. He stated:

"The 2022 sedition is ideological and cultural sedition. If the enemy wields a sword today, it is not something sudden or recent; they had been preparing and waiting for an excuse, and the death of Ms [Zhina] Mahsa Amini provided the excuse… Komala is chanting the slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadi' ['Woman, Life, Freedom' in Kurdish]."[1432]

Mehdi Ramezani omitted any mention of the killing of protesters by the security forces, instead focusing on alleged acts of damage to property and stone-throwing, while claiming that the security forces had shown "leniency". He stated:

"On 8 October [2022], barricades were set up on Shohada Street in Sanandaj. A cooperative store was attacked, with washing machines and refrigerators pulled out and set on fire… Protesters broke street light poles and brought stones weighing around 250kg into the streets. What political system would show such leniency to those who claw at its face?"[1433]

On 26 October 2022, as a new wave of intensified repression began in response to protests marking the 40th day since the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini – leading to the unlawful killing of at least six protesters and bystanders across Kurdistan province between 26 and 28 October 2022 – Esmail Zareie Kousha expressed satisfaction with the "stable and secure" situation in Kurdistan province, and noted that security forces were on standby to respond to any further "turmoil". He stated:

"The enemy and their media… are trying to use the 40th day of the deceased's [Zhina Mahsa Amini's] death as an excuse to incite renewed turmoil. However, fortunately, the situation in the province is completely stable and secure, and the people are genuinely tired of the disturbances and disruptions to their daily lives and businesses… In all counties, security forces are maintaining their usual readiness

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1430. Aftab News, ["Kurdistan unrests according to officials: What is happening in Sanandaj?"], 12 October 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/800503/ناآرامی‌های-کردستان-به-روایت-مسئولان-در-سنندج-چه-خبر-است (in Persian).

1431. Asr-e Iran, استاندار: تکذیب آمدن تانک یا هواپیمای جنگی به کردستان / در 3 شب گذشته هیچ تجمعی نداشتیم / در شنبه و یکشنبه گذشته تعدادی تجمع داشتیم ["Provincial governor: Denial of tanks or fighter jets coming to Kurdistan / No gatherings in the past three nights / some gatherings last Saturday and Sunday"], 13 October 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/861769/استاندار-تکذیب-آمدن-تانک-یا-هواپیمای-جنگی-به-کردستان-در-3-شب-گذشته-هیچ-تجمعی-نداشتیم-در-شنبه-و-یکشنبه-گذشته-تعدادی-تجمع-داشتیم (in Persian).

1432. Fararu, ["Deputy provincial governor of Kurdistan: On the night of 8 October, Shohada Street in Sanandaj had been barricaded: Nayser had become like Deir Al-Zor"], 22 October 2022, https://fararu.com/fa/news/581829/معاون-استاندار-کردستان-شب-۱۶-مهرماه-در-خیابان-شهدای-سنندج-سنگربندی-شده-بود-نایسر-دیرالزور-شده-بود (in Persian).

1433. Fararu, ["Deputy provincial governor of Kurdistan: On the night of 8 October, Shohada Street in Sanandaj had been barricaded: Nayser had become like Deir Al-Zor"], 22 October 2022, https://fararu.com/fa/news/581829/معاون-استاندار-کردستان-شب-۱۶-مهرماه-در-خیابان-شهدای-سنندج-سنگربندی-شده-بود-نایسر-دیرالزور-شده-بود (in Persian).

to ensure the safety of the people."[1434]

Two days later, on 28 October 2022, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Mehdi Ramezani, denied reports that a 15-year-old girl, Sarina Saedi, had died on 27 October 2022 due to a fatal beating by security forces during the protests on 26 October 2022.[1435] Like his superior, Esmail Zareie Kousha, he also expressed a sense of triumph and control. Mehdi Ramezani stated:

> **"The death of Sarina Saedi… has no connection to the recent protests and riots while anti-revolutionary elements falsely announced that she was killed during the riots… All efforts by counter-revolutionaries are focused on creating insecurity in the province… but security prevails across every corner of Kurdistan."[1436]**

In another statement on the same day, Mehdi Ramezani again addressed reports about the death of Sarina Saedi, without referring to her name, claiming that "a young girl from Sanandaj had committed suicide the previous day, but the counter-revolutionaries have falsely announced that the girl was killed during the riots."[1437]

Mehdi Ramezani also responded to reports about the unlawful killings of two men in Baneh – Fereydoon Faraji and Saeed Motaleb Peiro – without naming them, labelling them as "rioters" and claiming that "initial examinations point to the suspicious nature of these murders".[1438] This statement contradicts available evidence, including eyewitness accounts and video footage, which show that the victims were not even present at a protest when security forces shot and killed them.[1439]

On 26 November 2022, Esmail Zareie Kousha, along with the then commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj county, Morteza Miraghayee, attended a ceremony marking the anniversary of the establishment of the Basij Organization. The event was held a week after security forces brutally repressed protests marking the anniversary of the protests of November 2019, resulting in the unlawful killing of 16 protesters and bystander in Kurdistan province between 15 and 22 November 2022.

Esmail Zareie Kousha attributed the killings once again to non-state actors whom he said pursue a "project of staging killings". He also labelled the protesters as "rioters" who "attacked Islam and national symbols" under the influence of "a media offensive via channels and outlets funded by Zionists". He stated:

> **"After the death of the late [Zhina] Mahsa Amini, the enemies used this pretext and, through a media offensive via channels and networks funded by Zionists, aimed to implement their plans… to challenge the people and the sacred Islamic Republic system… The recent events in the country and in Kurdistan province were and are not a social movement… Rioters attacked Islam and national symbols… The current that claims to advocate for freedom has tried to keep the flames of riots burning in the country and in the province through distortion, provocation, and the implementation of a project of**

1434. Faraz, استاندار کردستان: موضوع برگزاری مراسم چهلم مهسا امینی منتفی است ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan: The 40th day memorial ceremony for Mahsa Amini will not take place"], 26 October 2022, https://www.faraz.ir/fa/news/55519/استاندار-کردستان-موضوع-برگزاری-مراسم-چهلم-مهسا-امینی-منتفی-است (in Persian).

1435. See section 6.2.2 for details of Sarina Saedi's case.

1436. Entekhab, فرمانده انتظامی کردستان: کشتن دختر سنندجی توسط پلیس با ضربات باتوم صحت ندارد/ معاون استاندار فوت سارینا سعدی هیچ ارتباطی با تجمعات اخیر ندارد ["Commander of Kurdistan police: Killing of Sanandaj girl by police with batons is false / Deputy provincial governor: Sarina Saedi's death has no connection to recent protests"], 28 October 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/700749/فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان-کشتن-دختر-سنندجی-توسط-پلیس-با-ضربات-باتوم-صحت-ندارد-معاون-استاندار-فوت-سارینا-ساعدی-هیچ-ارتباطی-با-تجمعات-اخیر-ندارد (in Persian).

1437. Kebna News, گزارشی از ناآرامی‌های شب گذشته شهرستان بانه ["Report on last night's unrest in Baneh county"], 28 October 2022, https://www.kebnanews.ir/report/453847/گزارشی-ناآرامی-های-شب-گذشته-شهرستان-بانه (in Persian).

1438. Kebna News, گزارشی از ناآرامی‌های شب گذشته شهرستان بانه ["Report on last night's unrest in Baneh county"], 28 October 2022, https://www.kebnanews.ir/report/453847/گزارشی-ناآرامی-های-شب-گذشته-شهرستان-بانه (in Persian).

1439. See section 6.5.2 for details.

staging killings."[1440]

On 5 December 2022, during the visit of the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, to Sanandaj, where he met with the families of several victims and denied the state's responsibility for the killings,[1441] Esmail Zareie Kousha said:

"Following the recent unrest and riots, the province's image was unfairly damaged, while the reality in the province was different from what was reflected in the hostile media and social media… The president's visit to Sanandaj resulted in correcting some of the misconceptions about the current situation in the province."[1442]

10.2.4(III) KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

10.2.4(III)(i) Provincial commander of FARAJA

Like his counterpart in Kurdistan province, during and in the aftermath of the September-December 2022 protests, the then FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province, **Ali Akbar Javidan**, made multiple statements asserting FARAJA's decisive role in quelling the protests, framing it as a battle against "armed enemies", and lauding FARAJA forces for their "sacrifices".

He also frequently praised the unity of the FARAJA forces, along with their collaboration with the IRGC and their dedication to the Supreme Leader, indicating the coordinated nature of the repressive response.

On 5 October 2022, just weeks after security forces, including FARAJA, unlawfully killed at least six protesters and bystanders on 20 and 21 September 2022 and injured many more during protest dispersals and in militarized areas in Kermanshah province,[1443] Ali Akbar Javidan claimed that "enemies were smuggling weapons… to destabilize the country… and engage in staging killings".[1444] He made these assertions without presenting any evidence and despite abundant proof that those using firearms during the protests were members of the security forces. He further reported the arrest of a gang and the confiscation of 32 handguns, which he claimed were extensively used during the "riots".

1440. KurdPress, ["Commander of the IRGC in Sanandaj: The Basij is enemy-aware and supports the system and leadership"], 26 November 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/39834/فرمانده-سپاه-سنندج-بسیج-دشمن-شناس-و-پشتیبان-نظام-و-رهبری-است (in Persian).

1441. See section 9.1.4.

1442. Borna News, ["Provincial governor of Kurdistan: The president's visit to Sanandaj is a valuable opportunity for the province's growth and development"], 5 December 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1406909/استاندار-کردستان-سفر-رئیس‌جمهور-به-سنندج-فرصتی-مغتنم-برای-رشد-و-توسعه-این-استان-است (in Persian).

1443. See Chapter 7.

1444. Akharin Khabar, ["Discovery of 37 military weapons during recent riots in Kermanshah"], 5 October 2022, https://akharinkhabar.ir/local/9304591 (in Persian).



The FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province at the time of the 2022 protests, Ali Akbar Javidan © Mehr News Agency

"In the recent riots in the country, there was a significant increase in the use of illegal weapons and shooting towards the people, as well as towards police and military forces…[1445]

"During these recent riots, we discovered a gang with 32 military-grade handguns… These individuals, amid the circumstances of the sedition, were procuring and distributing weapons with the intent to engage in staging killings and agitate the situation."[1446]

On 16 November 2022, amid an intensified lethal crackdown in Kermanshah province,[1447] Ali Akbar Javidan expressed "gratitude" to FARAJA forces for their "dedication, sacrifice, and efforts… over the past two months to restore security and peace" and asserted that "99% of people are satisfied with performance of police officials".[1448] He stated:

> **"It is necessary to express gratitude for the dedication, sacrifice, and efforts of all police personnel who have diligently worked over the past two months to restore security and peace… Contrary to some malicious remarks, today the police have gained a very high status among most people and, boldly, it can be claimed that 99% of the people are satisfied with the performance of police officers."**

Additionally, Ali Akbar Javidan described the response of FARAJA to the protests as a "critical mission" aimed at protecting the Islamic Republic system and revolution".[1449] He praised the forces for successfully carrying out this mission, together with the IRGC, stating that they collectively "caused the enemies to leave the battlefield empty-handed".[1450] These statements reflect his view of protests as an existential threat to the Islamic Republic system requiring a militarized "battlefield" response. He stated:

> **"The efforts of police officials… alongside the very fine presence of the IRGC and [its] Basij forces… caused them [protesters] to leave the battlefield empty-handed… Our enemies have well understood that our system of the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist is far more steadfast than to have its beautiful face even scratched by such actions… The sacred system of the Islamic Republic has successfully and effortlessly navigated through this twist."**[1451]

1445. In their official statements, Iranian authorities frequently classify the forces involved in the repression of protests as police (*entezami*), military (*nezami*) and security (*amniati*) forces. The police forces refer to FARAJA. The military forces denote the operational divisions of the provincial IRGC corps. The term "security forces" is a broad label used for various bodies, including the IRGC's Basij Battalions and Security Cohorts.

1446. Akharin Khabar, كشف ۳۷ قبضه سلاح جنگی طی اغتشاشات اخیر در کرمانشاه ["Discovery of 37 military weapons during recent riots in Kermanshah"], 5 October 2022, https://akharinkhabar.ir/local/9304591 (in Persian).

1447. See Chapter 7.

1448. ISNA, در اغتشاشات اخیر چهره دوست و دشمن مشخص شد ["In recent riots, faces of friends and enemies have been revealed"], 16 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082518019/در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-چهره-دوست-و-دشمن-مشخص-ش (in Persian).

1449. ISNA, در اغتشاشات اخیر چهره دوست و دشمن مشخص شد ["In recent riots, faces of friends and enemies have been revealed"], 16 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082518019/در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-چهره-دوست-و-دشمن-مشخص-ش (in Persian).

1450. ISNA, در اغتشاشات اخیر چهره دوست و دشمن مشخص شد ["In recent riots, faces of friends and enemies have been revealed"], 16 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082518019/در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-چهره-دوست-و-دشمن-مشخص-ش (in Persian).

1451. ISNA, در اغتشاشات اخیر چهره دوست و دشمن مشخص شد ["In recent riots, faces of friends and enemies have been revealed"], 16 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401082518019/در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-چهره-دوست-و-دشمن-مشخص-ش (in Persian).

A month later, on 20 December 2022, Ali Akbar Javidan once again emphasized the "round-the clock" efforts of FARAJA forces to quell "the sedition and riot", and said they are destined to "be remembered with honour" for their critical role in the lethal crackdown which he described as a "golden chapter in the distinguished record of the defenders of security".[1452] He stated:



The then FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province at the time of the 2022 protests, Ali Akbar Javidan © ISNA

"During the past three months, our country faced hardships, as sworn enemies of the Revolution and the [Islamic Republic] system, along with some internal mercenaries, orchestrated events that pleased no group or class. Throughout this period, the police and Basij forces were present in the field round-the-clock, preserving the values of the Revolution and the system… With the steadfastness and determination of the soldiers of the Supreme Leader… especially within FARAJA, the sedition and riot in the country have been quelled. Certainly, this period will be recorded as a golden chapter… all the warriors… will be remembered with honour."[1453]

In 2023, after the protests ended, Ali Akbar Javidan repeatedly reaffirmed this narrative of authority and achievement. He emphasized that FARAJA forces worked "day and night alongside their comrades in the Basij and the IRGC… to restore security… in our province",[1454] "playing an effective role in controlling the seditions in the province",[1455] and "leaving behind a brilliant record".[1456]

10.2.4(III)(ii) Provincial governor and deputy for political, security and social affairs

On 24 September 2022, several days after the unlawful killing of three protesters in Kermanshah on 20 and 21 September, an official rally was held in the same area where the killings had occurred. Officials present at the rally included the then head of the Islamic Propagation Organization[1457] in Kermanshah province, Yousef Ahmadi, the then representative of the Supreme Leader and Friday prayer leader of Kermanshah province, Mostafa Olama, and the then provincial governor of Kermanshah, **Bahman Amiri Moghaddam**. Those attending the rally chanted "Death to the rioter", "Death to those opposing the Supreme Leader", and "All these troops have come out of love for the leader". Yousef Ahmadi delivered a speech at the rally stating:

1452. Khabarban, مظلومیت و اقتدار پلیس در ناآرامی‌های اخیر به خوبی دیده شد ["Martyrdom and authority of the police clearly seen in recent unrest"], 20 December 2022, https://36661744.khabarban.com (in Persian).
1453. Khabarban, مظلومیت و اقتدار پلیس در ناآرامی‌های اخیر به خوبی دیده شد ["Martyrdom and authority of the police clearly seen in recent unrest"], 20 December 2022, https://36661744.khabarban.com (in Persian).
1454. Mehr News Agency, نیروهای مسلح با تمام توان حافظ نظام اسلامی هستند ["Armed forces are protecting the Islamic system with all their might"], 5 January 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5674583/نیروهای-مسلح-با-تمام-توان-حافظ-نظام-اسلامی-هستن (in Persian).
1455. ISNA, جاویدان رفت؛ حاجیان آمد ["Javidan leaves, Hajiyan arrives"], 10 May 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402022013039/جاویدان-رفت-حاجیان-آمد (in Persian).
1456. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی استان: شاخص امنیت در کرمانشاه بالاتر از میانگین کشوری است ["Commander of the police in the province: Security indicators above national average"], 8 May 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85105198/فرمانده-انتظامی-استان-شاخص-امنیت-در-کرمانشاه-بالاتر-از-میانگین (in Persian).
1457. The organization explains its history and mandate at its official website, available at: https://nehzat.ir/en/about

"Today, we held this gathering in this location so that the counter-revolutionaries do not think there is a safe corner in this land for executing their evil plans… We will take revenge against those responsible for the recent events [protests]."[1458]

On 29 September 2022, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam described the protests as "riots" orchestrated by armed Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and welcomed missile attacks by the IRGC targeting the bases of the opposition groups in Iraq. He said:



The provincial governor of Kermanshah at the time of the 2022 protests, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam © Mehr News Agency

"Our brave military men have destroyed with missiles the bases of foreign forces who have acted against the country and betrayed it during these riots. This demonstrates the power of Islamic Iran in the face of those who threaten the country's security."[1459]

On 11 October 2022, amid ongoing repression in Kermanshah province, the then head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah, **Mohammad Pourhashemi**, asserted control over the situation, acknowledging that the Provision Council of Kermanshah province was actively "managing" the protest response through the adoption of resolutions. Mohammad Pourhashemi also dismissed the agency of the protesters, portraying them as "deceived youths". He stated:

1458. ISNA, کرمانشاهیان بار دیگر اغتشاشات اخیر را محکوم کردند ["People of Kermanshah once again condemned recent riots"], 24 September 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401070200905/کرمانشاهیان-بار-دیگر-اغتشاشات-اخیر-را-محکوم-کردند (in Persian).
1459. IRNA, استاندار کرمانشاه: ملت ایران قدردان خون شهدا هستند ["Provincial governor of Kermanshah: The Iranian nation is grateful for the blood of martyrs"], 29 September 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84900010/استاندار-کرمانشاه-ملت-ایران-قدردان-خون-شهدا-هستند (in Persian).



The head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Pourhashemi © IRNA

"In Kermanshah province, we were never caught off guard. We monitored the movements with full preparedness and, in the Provision Council meetings, we had a council resolution in place before any event occurred. This played a crucial role in managing the recent events [protests] in the province.

"The enemy's psychological operations room, utilizing media tools, had deceived youths that the Islamic Republic was finished… The enemy seeks to ensure that this fire [protests] does not die down by any means possible."[1460]

In a similar vein, on 16 October 2022, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam described the protesters as "rioters" who had been "deceived" by "enemies". He stated:

> **"Most of those who participated in these riots were deceived by the enemy, and the leaders of these riots based abroad are certainly not concerned about the well-being of the people… The enemies cannot tolerate the power, progress, and self-sufficiency of Islamic Iran."[1461]**

Several days later, on 19 October 2022, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam once again described the protests as the work of the "enemies of Islam and the Revolution" and denied the agency of the schoolchildren who had a visible participation in the protests. He suggested that these children had been manipulated by the "enemies", without mentioning the serious human violations committed against them by the security forces, including unlawful killings, torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary arrest and detention and enforced disappearances.[1462] Instead, he expressed confidence and pride in the ability of the Islamic Republic to "stand firm against all enemies". He stated:

> **"The enemies thought that the country was finished in these events, unaware that the Islamic Revolution is not a fragile reed to be shaken by such winds and that, with the support of the blood of the martyrs, it will stand firm against all enemies… We should not allow enemies to take control of the mind of our children."[1463]**

On 7 November 2022, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam announced that "500 military-grade weapons… including handguns and Kalashnikov rifles had been seized in the riots", in an apparent attempt to falsely suggest that the protesters were armed and incited by "foreigners" and "enemies based on the

1460. ISNA, رسانه‌ها واقعیت‌های جمهوری اسلامی را بیان کنند ["Media should convey the realities of the Islamic Republic"], 11 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071909711/رسانه-ها-واقعیات-جمهوری-اسلامی-را-بیان-کنند (in Persian).
1461. Mehr News Agency, ۲ بزرگراه شهری کرمانشاه طی مدت ۴۵ روز آماده بهره‌برداری شد ["Two urban highways in Kermanshah ready for use in 45 days"], 16 October 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5610289/بزرگراه-شهری-کرمانشاه-طی-مدت-۴۵-روز-آماده-بهره-برداری-شد-۲ (in Persian).
1462. See Chapter 5.
1463. ISNA, دشمنان در اغتشاشات اخیر از هیچ تلاشی برای ایجاد ناامنی در کشور دریغ نکردند ["Enemies left no effort untried during recent riots to cause insecurity in the country"], 19 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401072715391/دشمنان-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-از-هیچ-تلاشی-برای-ایجاد-ناامنی-در-کشور (in Persian).

country's borders".[1464] He also asserted control over the situation, emphasizing joint repression efforts by the IRGC, FARAJA, intelligence agencies, and the judiciary while warning of a "severe" response. He stated:

> **"The IRGC, police force and intelligence and security bodies are monitoring, with their full capacity, the activities of rioters and those who have been deceived, and the judicial apparatus of the province will be also responding to them with severity… The defenders of security, through [their] vigilance and sacrifice, will defeat foreigners in their efforts to damage the security and tranquillity of the Iranian nation."[1465]**

On 21 November 2022, following the deadly events of 20 and 21 November in Javanroud, where IRGC forces unlawfully killed seven protesters and injured scores,[1466] Mohammad Pourhashemi acknowledged the deaths and injuries among protesters.[1467] However, he claimed that the deaths and injuries occurred during "clashes" after "agents of anti-revolutionary groups… based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq… some of whom were armed, entered Javanroud county and, taking advantage of public gatherings, carried out acts of sabotage."[1468] He did not clarify who these supposed agents were clashing with. Like many FARAJA and IRGC commanders who referred to their subordinates as "the people", Mohammad Pourhashemi described the security forces in the same way, stating: "Today, with the help of the people themselves, security has been restored."[1469]

On 15 December 2022, after months of lethal repression brought the protests to an end, Mohammad Pourhashemi denied the agency of the protesters, while expressing triumph over the "defeat of the enemies' conspiracies". He again referred to the security forces as the "people" and "guarantors of the survival of the Islamic system". He attributed the protests to unregulated access to social media. Mohammad Pourhashemi stated:

> **"In the recent events, we face a young generation… whose minds have been influenced by destructive waves, and this stems from the unbounded nature of social media in our country… We must acknowledge that, due to neglect in certain areas, including the online space… Westerners were able to take over during the recent riots… It has been the constant presence of the people [security forces] that has thwarted the enemy's plans and, in fact, the people are the guarantors of the survival and**

1464. See Iran Student Correspondence Association, ۵۰۰ قبضه سلاح و مهمات جنگی در اغتشاشات کرمانشاه کشف شد] "500 pieces of weapons and ammunition discovered in riots in Kermanshah"], 7 November 2022, https://www.iscanews.ir/news/1158962/۵۰۰--قبضه-سلاح-و-مهمات-جنگی-در-اغتشاشات-کرمانشاه-کشف-شد (in Persian); Pupils Association News Agency, ۵۰۰ قبضه سلاح جنگی در اغتشاشات اخیر کرمانشاه کشف شد] "500 pieces of military weapons discovered in the recent riots in Kermanshah"], 7 November 2022, https://www.pana.ir/بخش-سیاسی-27/1322177-قبضه-سلاح-جنگی-در-اغتشاشا (in Persian); Afkar News, ۵۰۰ کشف ۵۰۰ قبضه انواع سلاح و مهمات جنگی در اغتشاشات کرمانشاه] "500 pieces of various weapons and ammunition discovered in the riots in Kermanshah"], 7 November 2022, https://www.afkarnews.com/بخش-اجتماعی-5/1148035-کشف-قبضه-انواع-سلاح-مهمات-جنگی-در-اغتشاشات-کرمانشاه (in Persian); Al Alam News, ۵۰۰ قبضه سلاح جنگی در اغتشاشات اخیر کرمانشاه کشف شد ۵۰۰] "500 pieces of military weapons discovered in the recent riots in Kermanshah"], 7 November 2022, https://fa.alalam.ir/news/6430643/۵۰۰-قبضه-سلاح-جنگی-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-کرمانشاه-کشف-شد (in Persian).

1465. Iran Student Correspondence Association, ۵۰۰ قبضه سلاح و مهمات جنگی در اغتشاشات کرمانشاه کشف شد] "500 pieces of weapons and ammunition discovered in the riots in Kermanshah"], 7 November 2022, https://www.iscanews.ir/news/1158962/۵۰۰--قبضه-سلاح-و-مهمات-جنگی-در-اغتشاشات-کرمانشاه-کشف-شد (in Persian); Al Alam News, ۵۰۰ قبضه سلاح جنگی در اغتشاشات اخیر کرمانشاه کشف شد] "500 pieces of military weapons discovered in the recent riots in Kermanshah"], 7 November 2022, https://fa.alalam.ir/news/6430643/۵۰۰--قبضه-سلاح-جنگی-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-کرمانشاه-کشف-شد (in Persian).

1466. See sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2.

1467. See IRIB News, اطلاعات دقیقی از عوامل خرابکاری در جوانرود کرمانشاه داریم] "We have precise information on the saboteurs in Javanroud, Kermanshah"], 21 November 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3645709/اطلاعات-دقیقی-از-عوامل-خرابکاری-در-جوانرود-کرمانشاه-داریم (in Persian).

1468. IRIB News, اطلاعات دقیقی از عوامل خرابکاری در جوانرود کرمانشاه داریم] "We have precise information on the saboteurs in Javanroud, Kermanshah"], 21 November 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3645709/اطلاعات-دقیقی-از-عوامل-خرابکاری-در-جوانرود-کرمانشاه-داریم (in Persian).

1469. IRIB News, اطلاعات دقیقی از عوامل خرابکاری در جوانرود کرمانشاه داریم] "We have precise information on the saboteurs in Javanroud, Kermanshah"], 21 November 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3645709/اطلاعات-دقیقی-از-عوامل-خرابکاری-در-جوانرود-کرمانشاه-داریم (in Persian).

foundation of the Islamic system."[1470]

10.2.4(IV) WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

10.2.4(IV)(i) Provincial commander of FARAJA

Like his counterparts in Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces, during and in the aftermath of the September-December 2022 protests, the FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province, **Rahim Jahanbakhsh,** made multiple statements labelling the protesters as "seditious agents", "enemies of Muslim unity" and "separatists" while mobilizing FARAJA forces to repress the protests in the name of "preventing Iran's disintegration" and "safeguarding religious and divine values."

On 2 October 2022, by which time the security forces, including FARAJA, had unlawfully killed at least 10 protesters and bystanders and injured others during protest dispersals and in militarized areas in West Azerbaijan province, Rahim Jahanbakhsh took pride in the swift repression of the protests, which he described as "the work of enemies and seditious agents".[1471] Adopting a dual narrative of denying wrongdoing against the "people" while justifying "powerfully dealing with the agents of riots", he stated:

"In recent events, there were many scenes of police showing compassion towards people present at the protests… However, we powerfully dealt with the agents of riots… Complete security is established in the province. I must recall that protest is the right of the people, but rioting is the work of enemies and seditious agents."[1472]

The same day, in another event, Rahim Jahanbakhsh misrepresented the protests as "riots" that were "entirely ethnic and separatist" in nature and discredited opposition to discriminatory, degrading and abusive compulsory veiling laws as "a pretext used by the enemy to create unrest in the county".[1473] He stated:

1470. Tabnak Kermanshah, همراهی مردم عامل اصلی شکست تمام توطئه‌های دشمنان علیه نظام اسلامی است ["Support of the people is main factor in defeating all enemies' conspiracies against Islamic System"], 15 December 2022, https://www.tabnakkermanshah.ir/fa/news/1082238/همراهی-مردم-عامل-اصلی-شکست-تمام-توطئه‌های-دشمنان-علیه-نظام-اسلامی-است (in Persian).

1471. Mehr News Agency, امنیت کامل در آذربایجان غربی برقرار است ["Complete security is maintained in West Azerbaijan"], 2 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5601006/امنیت-کامل-در-آذربایجان-غربی-برقرار-است-پلیس-ملجا-مردم (in Persian).

1472. Mehr News Agency, امنیت کامل در آذربایجان غربی برقرار است ["Complete security is maintained in West Azerbaijan"], 2 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5601006/امنیت-کامل-در-آذربایجان-غربی-برقرار-است-پلیس-ملجا-مردم (in Persian).

1473. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان‌غربی: تجزیه طلبان میدان دار اغتشاشات بودند ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: Separatists were key players in the riots"], 2 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84902158/فرمانده-انتظامی-آذربایجان-غربی-تجزیه-طلبان-میدان-دار-اغتشاشات (in Persian).



The FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province at the time of the 2022 protests, Rahim Jahanbakhsh © Tasnim News Agency

"Behind the unrest and these riots are separatists who care little for the veil and veil wearers… Veiling has been a pretext for enemies to create unrest in the country, while their real agenda is something else.

"Veiling represents national unity against separatists… Unfortunately, the behaviour of some unveiled girls has become a tool to create insecurity in the country… The riots in Urumieh were entirely ethnic and separatist."[1474]

In the same statement, Rahim Jahanbakhsh further highlighted the coordinated efforts between FARAJA and the IRGC forces in suppressing the protests, praising their effectiveness in jointly "preventing the unrest from spreading from the outskirts to the city centre" and proudly stating that "history will remember us favourably".[1475] He stated:

> **"With full vigilance, we prevented the unrest from spreading from the outskirt to the city centre… The vigilance of the IRGC and FARAJA prevented sabotage by separatists in West Azerbaijan… History will remember us favourably and write that the Islamic Republic and its supporters prevented Iran's disintegration."[1476]**

Over a week later, during a Conference on Authority, Security and Development on 10 October 2022, Rahim Jahanbakhsh again emphasized the "effective and vital role" of FARAJA forces in crushing with "exemplary unity" and "revolutionary spirit" what he described as "conspiracies" concocted by "enemies of the sacred Islamic Republic system… to ignite the fire of sedition".[1477] He also reaffirmed the obedience of FARAJA forces to the Supreme Leader and their readiness as "humble soldier[s]… to defend the values of the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran system to our last breath", indicating a resolve to engage in further repression.[1478]

1474. IRNA, ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: Separatists were key players in the riots"], 2 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84902158/فرمانده-انتظامی-آذربایجان-غربی-تجزیه-طلبان-میدان-دار-اغتشاشات (in Persian).

1475. IRNA, ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: Separatists were key players in the riots"], 2 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84902158/فرمانده-انتظامی-آذربایجان-غربی-تجزیه-طلبان-میدان-دار-اغتشاشات (in Persian).

1476. IRNA, ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: Separatists were key players in the riots"], 2 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84902158/فرمانده-انتظامی-آذربایجان-غربی-تجزیه-طلبان-میدان-دار-اغتشاشات (in Persian).

1477. ISNA, ["Protection and defence of public security is a red line for the police"], 10 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071808723/حراست-و-دفاع-از-امنیت-عمومی-خط-قرمز-انتظامی-است (in Persian).

1478. ISNA, ["Protection and defence of public security is a red line for the police"], 10 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071808723/حراست-و-دفاع-از-امنیت-عمومی-خط-قرمز-انتظامی-است (in Persian).



The FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province at the time of the 2022 protests, Rahim Jahanbakhsh, at the Conference on Authority, Security and Development in the city of Sardasht, West Azerbaijan province, on 10 October 2022 © ISNA

"Enemies of the sacred Islamic Republic of Iran system and enemies of Muslim unity sought to ignite the fire of sedition in the country. However, with the concerted efforts of security and police agencies, these conspiracies were thwarted… The police, always with open eyes and aware of the intentions and goals of enemies, with revolutionary spirit and safeguarding religious and divine values, neutralized the enemies' plots. Protecting and defending public security is the red line for the police personnel. We will defend the values of the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran to our last breath, and as humble soldier[s], we will serve the people and the Guardian of Muslims and commander-in-chief of all [armed] forces [Ali Khamenei]."[1479]

On 10 November 2022, as the number of protesters and bystanders unlawfully killed in West Azerbaijan province rose to at least 19,[1480] and ahead of calls for further mass protests in mid-November 2022, Rahim Jahanbakhsh held a press conference. During the conference, he once again portrayed the participation of the Kurdish minority, who bore the brunt of the repression, in negative terms, stating, "the primary goal of the enemy behind these riots was separatism and creating ethnic divisions."[1481]

Additionally, Rahim Jahanbakhsh reiterated denials regarding FARAJA's involvement in unlawful killings, along with warnings of a zero-tolerance policy towards "rioters", whom he suggested were

1479. ISNA, حراست و دفاع از امنیت عمومی خط قرمز انتظامی است ["Protection and defence of public security is a red line for the police"], 10 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071808723/حراست-و-دفاع-از-امنیت-عمومی-خط-قرمز-انتظامی-است (in Persian).
1480. See Chapter 8.
1481. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان‌غربی: نسخه اغتشاشات در آذربایجان غربی پیچیده شد ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: The riot scenario in West Azerbaijan was foiled"], 10 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84938294/فرمانده-انتظامی-نسخه-اغتشاشات-در-آذربایجان-غربی-پیچیده-شد (in Persian).

using "insurgency weapons smuggled into the county" to fuel the unrest.[1482] He stated:

> **"Over the past two months, 580 illegal weapons have been discovered in West Azerbaijan, indicating the enemy's intent to create insecurity in the country. Among the discovered weapons, more than 320 were insurgency weapons brought into the country for the purpose of injection into the riots… The police exercise restraint and have sufficient tolerance towards protests but not towards rioters! If some toy with the lives and security of the people, we will confront them."[1483]**

Rahim Jahanbakhsh also reasserted the narrative of accomplishment, stating that "99% of the sedition plot in this province has been foiled with… the efforts of police and security forces".[1484]



The FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province at the time of the 2022 protests, Rahim Jahanbakhsh, at a press conference held on 10 November 2022 © IRNA[1485]

1482. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان‌غربی: نسخه اغتشاشات در آذربایجان غربی پیچیده شد ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: The riot scenario in West Azerbaijan was foiled"], 10 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84938294/فرمانده-انتظامی-نسخه-اغتشاشات-در-آذربایجان-غربی-پیچیده-شد (in Persian).

1483. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان‌غربی: نسخه اغتشاشات در آذربایجان غربی پیچیده شد ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: The riot plot in West Azerbaijan was foiled"], 10 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84938294/فرمانده-انتظامی-نسخه-اغتشاشات-در-آذربایجان-غربی-پیچیده-شد (in Persian).

1484. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان‌غربی: نسخه اغتشاشات در آذربایجان غربی پیچیده شد ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: The riot plot in West Azerbaijan was foiled"], 10 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84938294/فرمانده-انتظامی-نسخه-اغتشاشات-در-آذربایجان-غربی-پیچیده-شد (in Persian).

1485. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی آذربایجان‌غربی: نسخه اغتشاشات در آذربایجان غربی پیچیده شد ["Commander of West Azerbaijan police: The riot plot in West Azerbaijan was foiled"], 10 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84938294/فرمانده-انتظامی-نسخه-اغتشاشات-در-آذربایجان-غربی-پیچیده-شد (in Persian).

10.2.4(IV)(ii) Provincial governor and deputy governor for political, security and social affairs

On 25 September 2022, after the first wave of deadly repression in West Azerbaijan province, which resulted in the unlawful killing of at least 10 protesters and bystanders in Piranshahr,[1486] Oshnavieh,[1487] Urumieh,[1488] and the nearby Balou village[1489] on 20-21 September 2022, the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, **Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian**, issued a statement expressing "gratitude" for "the efforts and sacrifices of military, police and security forces", and signalled their ongoing readiness to continue protecting the political and religious establishment. Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian's statement specifically noted the death of a Basij agent, Abbas Fatemieh, who sustained fatal injuries during the protests in Urumieh on 20 September 2022,[1490] but failed to acknowledge any of the victims unlawfully killed by the security forces. He added: "The followers of the Prophet, relying on God and supported by the efforts and sacrifices of military, police, and security forces, remain steadfast in defending the values of Islam and the Revolution."[1491]

On 18 November 2022, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian issued a statement that referred to the protesters as "heartless terrorists and rioters" involved in "evil schemes" and emphasized the state's resolve to continue the repression. This statement was issued during a period of intensified repression, which resulted in the unlawful killing of 12 victims in Boukan,[1492] six victims in Mahabad,[1493] and four victims in Piranshahr[1494] between 16 and 20 November 2022. He stated:



The provincial governor of West Azerbaijan at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian © Mehr News Agency

"The intelligence community and the powerful security forces of the Islamic Republic, with coordination, synergy and unwavering determination, will deepen their surveillance of the activities of heartless terrorists and rioters, and with intelligence and forcefulness, they will neutralize their conspiracies and evil schemes to protect the security and peace of the people."[1495]

In his 18 November statement, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian did not acknowledge any deaths among the protesters or bystanders. Instead, he referenced the deaths of two state agents, whom

1486. See section 8.4 for details.
1487. See section 8.5 for details.
1488. See section 8.6 for details.
1489. See section 8.6 for details.
1490. See section 5.3.1.
1491. Hawzah News Agency, امنیت ایران اسلامی مرهون مجاهدت و خون هزاران شهید همچون، شهید فاطمیه است ["Security of the Islamic Iran is owed to the struggles and blood of thousands of martyrs, including the martyr, Fatimiyyah"], 25 September 2022, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1045474/امنیت-ایران-اسلامی-مرهون-مجاهدت-و-خون-هزاران-شهید-چون-شهید-فاطمیه-است (in Persian).
1492. See section 8.2.
1493. See section 8.3.3.
1494. See section 8.4.3.
1495. Borna News, پیام تسلیت استاندار آذربایجان‌غربی بی شهادت شهیدان مهدی اثنی عشری و رحیم صحابی ["Condolence message from provincial governor of West Azerbaijan on the martyrdom of Mehdi Asna Ashari and Rahim Sahabi"], 18 November 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1400425/پیام-تسلیت-استاندار-آذربایجان‌غربی-بی-شهادت-شهیدان-مهدی-اثنی-عشری-و-رحیم-صحابی (in Persian).

authorities claimed were shot by "unidentified armed rioters" in Boukan on 17 November 2022.[1496] He addressed these deaths while glorifying the security forces, framing the repression as a "radiant path" that must be pursued with "self-sacrifice" and "pride", even until death, to "protect the values of the sacred Islamic Republic".[1497]

Two days later, on 20 November 2022, state media reported that Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, along with several other members of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province, travelled to Mahabad to assess the situation in the county and issued "the necessary orders for ensuring security and tranquillity". State media added:

> **"The Provision Council of Mahabad county convened last night in the presence of the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan to prove that the city has enough security for the highest-ranking officials of the province to go there for their meeting… In this meeting, emphasis was placed on ensuring maximum security by using the capabilities of the police force, and it was decided that this would be a serious priority for the police."[1498]**

On 21 November 2022, the head of the Office of the Ministry of Intelligence in West Azerbaijan province revealed that the resolutions of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan addressed the use of lethal force by the security forces during the protests. He claimed the resolutions did not authorize shootings by the security agents. However, he further specified that "shootings and violent response" were not authorized when "security sites" were not under attack, implying that such responses may be permitted or justified when such sites were "under attack". He stated:

> **"According to the discussions and resolutions of the provincial provision council, no agents or defenders of security have been authorized to engage in shooting and it has been emphasized that, unless there is an attack on a security site, the default should not include shooting or violent response."[1499]**

Amnesty International considers that the vague concept of "an attack on a security site" is not a sufficient basis on which to justify the use of firearms. Such attacks must reach the level of threat that permits the use of firearms under international law and standards, which establish that security forces are only allowed to use firearms when strictly necessary to confront an imminent threat of death or of serious injury, and only when less harmful means are unavailable or unlikely to be effective. The intentional lethal use of firearms may only be authorized when strictly unavoidable to protect life.[1500]

On 30 November 2022, as the protests subsided after months of lethal repression, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian expressed satisfaction with the security forces for suppressing the protests, which he described as "conspiracies aimed at stoking riots and making the province unsafe". He stated: "With the unity and timely actions of the armed, security, and judicial forces, complete tranquillity and

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1496. See section 5.3.1.

1497. Borna News, ["Condolence message from provincial governor of West Azerbaijan on the martyrdom of Mehdi Asna Ashari and Rahim Sahabi"], 18 November 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1400425/پیام-تسلیت-استاندار-آذربایجان‌غربی-پی-شهادت-شهیدان-مهدی-اثنی-عشری-و-رحیم-صحابی (in Persian).

1498. IRNA, ["Mahabad residents welcome police officers + video / Provincial governor of West Azerbaijan among citizens"], 20 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84948425/استقبال-مردم-مهاباد-از-ماموران-انتظامی-فیلم-استاندار-آذربایجان (in Persian).

1499. Borna News Agency, ["Head of Intelligence of West Azerbaijan: No more leniency towards rioters"], 21 November 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1401526/مدیرکل-اطلاعات-آذربایجان-غربی-مماشات-با-اغتشاشگران-تمام-شد (in Persian).

1500. See Chapter 4. Amnesty International Netherlands, *Use of Force: Guidelines for Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement*, August 2016, https://www.amnesty.nl/content/uploads/2017/01/ainl_guidelines_use_of_force_short_version_0.pdf

security have been established in West Azerbaijan today."[1501]

On 7 December 2022, state media reported on a meeting chaired by the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan and attended by county governors from across the province as well as the deputies and advisers and staff managers of the governor's office. The then head of the office of the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of West Azerbaijan, **Reza Ebrahimi**, referred to the measures taken by the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan to supress the protests and acknowledged the efforts of county governors in this regard. He also emphasized the "strong resolve" of provincial authorities to "defeat the enemy" and called on county governors to remain "prepared" and "in coordination with provincial authorities". He stated:

> **"The measures taken at the provincial level and the efforts of the county governors… have played a crucial role in neutralizing the enemies' conspiracies to cause insecurity in the province and the country… The enemies' conspiracies to destabilize Islamic Iran continue, and county governors, in coordination with provincial authorities, must be prepared to defeat the enemy."[1502]**

On 17 December 2022, Reza Ebrahimi delivered a speech at an event in Mahabad marking the appointment of the new county governor of Mahabad. The event occurred after months of deadly repression in Mahabad and amid an ongoing climate of heightened security in the city.[1503] Reza Ebrahimi referred to the protests as the "conspiracy of the enemies" that warrant a "revolutionary and jihadist" response and, in line with the state narrative, he described the security forces as the "people". He stated:

> **"During the recent conspiracy of the enemies, the people [security forces] stood up for the Revolution and the ideals of the martyrs, defending them with full resolve… It is incumbent upon everyone to respond to these conspiracies wisely and make decisions in a revolutionary and jihadist manner."[1504]**

On 23 December 2022, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, along with the then minister of intelligence, Esmail Khatib, spoke at an official event marking the appointment of the new head of the Office of the Ministry of Intelligence in West Azerbaijan province.[1505] After the minister of intelligence celebrated the "defeat" of the "riots" claiming they were orchestrated by "enemies supported by western intelligence services and media outlets", Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian again expressed a sense of triumph.

He also reiterated the state narrative, claiming that the protests were the work of "anti-revolutionary movements" operating near Iran's borders – an apparent reference to armed Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq – and emphasized the determination to continue repression. He stated:

1501. International Quran News Agency, ["Introduction of the new head and prosecutor of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces in West Azerbaijan"], 30 November 2022, https://orumiyeh.iqna.ir/fa/news/4103651/معرفی-رئیس-و-دادستان-جدید-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian).

1502. KurdPress, ["Deputy provincial governor of West Azerbaijan: County governors should seriously investigate the causes of dissatisfaction"], 7 December 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/40205/معاون-استاندار-آذربایجان-غربی-فرمانداران-علت-نارضایتی-ها-را (in Persian).

1503. See section 8.3.

1504. IRNA, ["Deputy provincial governor of West Azerbaijan: People stood by the Revolution in the recent enemy conspiracy"], 17 December 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84972138/معاون-استاندار-آذربایجان-غربی-مردم-در-توطئه-اخیر-دشمنان-پای (in Persian).

1505. Rokna Press, ["Minister of Intelligence: Enemies want to reestablish ties with Iran by exonerating themselves from the riots"], 23 December 2022, https://www.rokna.net/بخش-اخبار-سیاسی-74/855198-وزیر-اطلاعات-دشمنان-می-خواهند-با-تبرئه-خود-از-اغتشاشات-دوباره-با-ایران-ارتباط-بگیرند (in Persian).



The head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan at the time of the 2022 protests, Reza Ebrahimi © IRNA

"Today, with the full insight of the armed and security forces into the enemy's strategic depth, we have stood up against the enemy… With all these efforts, complete and sustainable security has been established in the province…

"Anti-Revolutionary movements have retreated from the borders of Islamic Iran, which is due to the strength of the armed forces… Until the complete disarmament of counter-revolutionaries and their expulsion from the region, deterrent actions against the enemies will continue."[1506]

10.2.5 LEAKED OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

10.2.5(I) ORDER BY PROVINCIAL FARAJA COMMANDER ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

Amnesty International obtained a leaked document which indicates that, at around 6.50pm on 23 September 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province, Morteza Mirzaee, issued an order stating that "any riot by troublemakers is considered anti-revolutionary [conduct]" and instructing agents to "respond mercilessly and go as far as causing death."[1507] The leaked document originates from a notebook at a local MARFOUK which records the sequence of orders issued by higher authorities and transmitted through the MARFOUK system.

While Amnesty International does not have access to similar official documents from other provinces or time periods, this leaked document highlights one example of a deadly order and provides insight into how local FARAJA commanders elsewhere may have exercised their authority through the chain of command, as well as how orders were transmitted through FARAJA's MARFOUK system.

The document records that, at 4pm on 23 September 2022, the MARFOUK of Mazandaran province initially instructed all police stations to ensure that agents positioned in central squares do not carry "combat weapons" and authorized the use of weapons loaded with metal pellets and rubber bullets in locations where this was identified as necessary by the FARAJA commander of the respective county.

The document then records that, over two hours later, at 6.50pm, the MARFOUK of Mazandaran province communicated an order from the FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province, stating that "any riot by troublemakers is considered anti-revolutionary [conduct]" and ordering agents stationed in central squares in the province to "respond mercilessly and go as far as causing death."

Subsequent entries in the document, recording the sequence of developments and instructions between 8pm and 11.30pm, reveal that updates on the situation of the city were sought from police

1506. Rokna Press, وزیر اطلاعات: دشمنان می خواهند با تبرئه خود از اغتشاشات دوباره با ایران ارتباط بگیرند ["Minister of Intelligence: Enemies want to reestablish ties with Iran by exonerating themselves from the riots"], 23 December 2022, https://www.rokna.net/بخش-اخبار-سیاسی-74/855198-وزیر-اطلاعات-دشمنان-می-خواهند-با-تبرئه-خود-از-اغتشاشات-دوباره-با-ایران-ارتباط-بگیرند (in Persian).
1507. The document is on file with Amnesty International.

stations. Instructions were also issued for all FARAJA bases to be alert and on standby while all officers were ordered to use "long-barrelled weapons" and to be vigilant against potential "infiltration" into FARAJA bases.

10.2.5(II) LETTER FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR ON 8 JANUARY 2023

Amnesty International reviewed a leaked official document, dated 8 January 2023,[1508] which was published by an opposition group called Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni (Uprising till Overthrow) on its Telegram channel.[1509] The document, which is a letter written by the then minister of interior, **Ahmad Vahidi**, to the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, **Ebrahim Raisi**, reveals that the minister of interior, along with provincial governors and county governors, were actively managing the significant financial costs arising from the prolonged deployment of thousands of security forces across the country throughout the protest period.



Leaked document, dated 8 January 2023, containing a letter from the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, to the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, regarding the costs of protest repression operations © Ministry of Interior

In his letter, Ahmad Vahidi reiterates the derogatory state narrative concerning the protests, referring to the areas where protests were taking place as "regions contaminated by riots" and describing the protests as a form of "hybrid warfare". He states that offices of provincial governors and offices of county governors were covering the following expenses during the "hybrid war of the last three months", referring to the three-month protest period: "contributing to the transportation costs of [public] order and security agents to and from regions contaminated by riots; contributing to the food costs of order and security agents and maintaining their preparedness; contributing to the accommodation costs of order and security forces for confronting insecurity; and contributing to other necessary costs of security and order forces who, during periods of readiness [for deployment] and beyond contractual working hours, served at command staff and operational levels."[1510]

Additionally, the letter affirms that over the past three months, provincial governors and county governors were "directing and steering provision councils", confirming that the powers granted to governors by law were indeed exercised in practice.

1508. Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni, Telegram post: نامه خیلی محرمانه احمد وحیدی وزیر کشور به رئیسی ["Very confidential letter from minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, to Raisi"], 26 June 2023, https://t.me/ghyamsarnegouni/1508 The document is also on file with Amnesty International.
1509. Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni, Telegram channel, https://t.me/ghyamsarnegouni
1510. Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni, Telegram post: نامه خیلی محرمانه احمد وحیدی وزیر کشور به رئیسی ["Very confidential letter from minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, to Raisi"], 26 June 2023, https://t.me/ghyamsarnegouni/1508 (in Persian).

10.2.5(III) RESOLUTION OF A COMMITTEE FALLING UNDER THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR OF KURDISTAN

Amnesty International reviewed a leaked official document, undated and marked as classified, which summarizes the action points adopted during a session of a provincial committee operating under the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan.[1511] The document addresses matters related to the employment schemes for teachers in the province. It begins by recording that, at the end of the session, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Mehdi Ramezani, stated: "With appreciation for the efforts taken to date, we have moved beyond the peak and excited outbursts of the riots, and there is now an opportunity to plan for confronting the enemies' plots."



Leaked document summarizing the action points adopted during a session of a provincial committee operating under the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan © Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan

The document then proceeds to present the adopted action points in a tabular form. The first action point stipulates that, as part of implementing a State Security Council resolution from 7 November 2022, teachers arrested during the protests are to be excluded from a merit-based scheme governing the grading and promotion of teachers.

The document then lists several other categories of individuals, including education-sector employees, targeted by security bodies for their involvement in the protests and notes that decisions regarding their treatment will be made in subsequent sessions following further review by committee members. The categories listed include: "those with open cases in security bodies; members of the board of directors of teachers' trade unions… present [protest] leaders in schools; and school principals who did not carry out their legal duties."

It bears recalling that schoolchildren actively participated in the Woman Life Freedom uprising, removing their headscarves and engaging in protest activities in and around their schools. In response, the authorities subjected them to violent arrests, including on school premises, and unlawful shootings, as well as suspensions, expulsions and threats of violence. Some school principals were implicated in facilitating or carrying out these serious human rights violations against children.[1512]

The document further records that "the prosecution office and security bodies shall provide the necessary cooperation for the implementation of this action point."

1511. The document was published by the Coordinating Council of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Associations on Telegram. See Coordinating Council of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Associations Channel, Telegram post: شورای تامین و استانداری کردستان در اقدامی رذیلانه به جای پیگیری مطالبات به حق جامعه معلمان کردستان، تحت امر نهادهای امنیتی به شیوه‌های مختلف به سرکوب فعالین اقدام کرده است ["In a disgraceful move, the Provincial Council and the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan, instead of addressing legitimate demands of Kurdistan's teaching community, have acted under direction of security agencies to suppress activists through various means"], 14 June 2023, https://t.me/kashowra/16812 (in Persian). The document is also on file with Amnesty International.
1512. See the illustrative case of Niaz in section 6.2.1.

10.3 IRGC

The IRGC was initially established by a decree of the first Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Rouhollah Khomeini, shortly after the 1979 Revolution with a view to unifying and organizing the various paramilitary forces that had emerged during the chaotic revolutionary period.[1513] Over the subsequent years and decades, the IRGC evolved into the most powerful entity within the security apparatus of the Islamic Republic of Iran and acts as its primary custodian. An employee of the IRGC is called a "guard".

The IRGC's influence extends far beyond traditional security and military roles, permeating nearly every aspect of Iranian society. Domestically, the IRGC holds significant sway over the political landscape, often exerting power and influence over state policies and the appointment of key political figures. In recent decades, an ever-increasing number of civilian positions, including the minister of interior, their deputies and provincial governors, have been held by individuals with a background in the IRGC.[1514]

Economically, the IRGC has become a formidable entity, controlling a vast network of businesses and industries, ranging from construction and telecommunications to oil and gas.[1515] Internationally, the IRGC has been instrumental in advancing the geopolitical and military strategies of the Islamic Republic of Iran across the Middle East and beyond.[1516] Its extensive reach and multifaceted role have solidified the IRGC's status as a cornerstone of Iran's power structure.[1517]

1513. Donya-e Eqtesad, ["Imam Khomeini's historic decision concerning the IRGC"], 4 September 2017, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/تصمیم-تاریخی-امام-خمینی-درباره-سپاه-62/3749628-بخش-سایت-خوان (in Persian); Khomeini.ir, ["Editorial: Imam said go and establish the IRGC 'Abbas Duzduzani' one of the founders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 4 September 2017, http://www.imam-khomeini.ir/fa/c75_20923/سرمقاله_امام_فرمود_بروید_سپاه_را_تشکیل_دهید_عباس_دوزدوزانی_از_پایه_گذاران_سپاه_پاسداران_انقلاب_اسلامی گاهنامه/امام_ارتش-_سپاه_و_سیاست/ (in Persian).

1514. See Hamshahri Online, ["Officials who entered the country's administration from the IRGC"], 25 April 2025, https://newspaper.hamshahrionline.ir/id/253613 (in Persian); Shargh Daily, ["The Ministry of Interior is not accountable because it is controlled by military personnel"], 27 November 2023, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-وزارت-کشور-پاسخگو-نیست-چون-در-اختیار-نظامیان-است-بدنه-وزارت-کشور-استانداران-فرمانداران-را-نظامیان-تشکیل-می-دهند-6/907429-بخش-سیاست (in Persian). For example, the minister of interior at the time of the 2022 protests, Ahmad Vahidi, previously had various high positions within the IRGC, including the commander of the Qods Force, which leads the operations of the IRGC abroad. In December 2025, Ahmad Vahidi was appointed by the Supreme Leader as the deputy general commander of the IRGC and, in March 2026, he was appointed by the Supreme Leader as the general commander of the IRGC. See Jamaran News, ["Biography of Ahmad Vahidi"], https://www.jamaran.news/مؤلف-284-احمد-وحیدی (accessed on 5 August 2026); Tabnak, ["Read more about Ahmad Vahidi on Tabnak Wiki"], https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/tags/5499/1/احمد-وحیدی (accessed on 5 August 2026); Tabnak, ["General Vahidi appointed as new IRGC commander"], 1 March 2026, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1360433/سردار-وحیدی-فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-شد (in Persian); IRNA, ["General Vahidi appointed as deputy general commander of IRGC"], 31 December 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/86041271/سردار-وحیدی-به-جانشینی-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1515. See, for example, BBC Monitoring, "Explainer: Iran's Revolutionary Guards and the economy – a complex web", 27 September 2018, https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/product/c2008x14; BBC, "Expanding business empire of Iran's Revolutionary Guards", 26 July 2010, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-10743580; Frederic Wehrey and others, "Economic expansion: The IRGC's business conglomerate and public works", *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, 2009*, pp. 55-76.

1516. See Tasnim News Agency, ["Commander of Central Imam Hossein Headquarters of the IRGC: The martyrdom of Hajj Ghasem was a strategic mistake by the US: We will take severe revenge"], 30 January 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/10/11/2422168/فرمانده-قرارگاه-مرکزی-امام-حسین-ع-سپاه-شهادت-حاج-قاسم-اشتباه-استراتژیک-آمریکا-بود-انتقام-سختی-می-گیریم (in Persian).

1517. See, for example, Britannica, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (updated on 9 November 2024), https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamic-Revolutionary-Guard-Corps; Council on Foreign Relations, Iran's Revolutionary Guards (updated on 12 November 2024), https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/irans-revolutionary-guards; Maryam Alemzadeh, David Patel and Kelly Stedam, "Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon after Soleimani", 2020, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Crown Conversations, no. 1; Maryam Alemzadeh, "Vanguard of the Imam: Religion, Politics, and Iran's Revolutionary Guards" by Afshon Ostovar, 2018, Global Change, Peace & Security, 31(3), pp. 371-373.

10.3.1 COMMAND AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Like FARAJA, the IRGC operates under the ultimate authority of the Supreme Leader, who appoints the general commander of the IRGC and their deputy.[1518]

The IRGC is a complex entity with its military personnel divided into four forces: the Navy Force, the Ground Resistance Force,[1519] the Aerospace Force and the Qods Force, which leads the operations of the IRGC abroad. Like FARAJA, the structure of the IRGC also includes two organizations that support intelligence gathering, facilitate coordination at the top of the command chain, and seek to prevent dissent, diversion and/or espionage within the IRGC. These are the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC[1520] and the Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC.[1521] Additionally, there is an organization within the IRGC called the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, the role and mandate of which are detailed below.[1522]

The Supreme Leader appoints the commanders and deputy commanders of each of the IRGC forces,[1523] as well as the heads of the Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC and the Basij-e

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1518. See Office of the Supreme Leader, انتصاب سردار سلامی به فرماندهی کل سپاه ["Appointment of General Salami as the general commander of the IRGC"], 21 April 2019, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/22928/انتصاب-سردار-سلامی-به-فرماندهی-کل-سپاه (in Persian).
1519. Prior to 2009, the Ground Resistance Force was called the Ground Force (known by its Persian acronym, NAZSA). Despite this change, in many state media reports and official statements, the previous name and its acronym continue to be used.
1520. The Intelligence Organization of the IRGC is a parallel organization to the Ministry of Intelligence. Amnesty International has long documented the role of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC in suppressing dissent. The organization has long been on the forefront of subjecting protesters, human rights defenders, civil society activists, dissidents, writers and artists, and members of oppressed ethnic and religious minorities to widespread and systemic patterns of harassment and intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, and unfounded criminal proceedings resulting in lengthy unjust prison sentences and arbitrary death sentences based on torture-tainted "confessions". See, for example, Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me' (previously cited)*, pp. 37-38, 39-40, 43-44, 58-59, 85-87 and 89; Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity: Mass Arrests, Disappearances and Torture Since Iran's 2019 November Protests* (Index: MDE 13/2891/2020), 2 September 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2891/2020/en, pp. 8-10, 18-19, 22-23, 26-27, 30-33, 36-37, 41-47 and 52-53; Amnesty International, "Iran: Release Ahwazi Arab man forcibly disappeared in reprisal for his relatives' activism" (Index: MDE 13/4334/2021), 24 June 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/4334/2021/en; Amnesty International, "Urgent international action needed to secure release of Kurdish activists and others arbitrary detained in Iran" (Index: MDE 13/3624/2021), 3 February 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/3624/2021/en, pp. 1-2; Amnesty International, "Iran: Fears of secret execution mount for disappeared prisoners from minority groups" (Index: MDE 13/2309/2020), 12 May 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2309/2020/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Release Azerbaijani Turkic minority rights activists detained for peaceful cultural gatherings" (Index: 13/8889/2018), 11 August 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8889/2018/en, p. 5; Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression: Iran's Human Rights Defenders Under Attack* (Index: MDE 13/6446/2017), 2 August 2017, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6446/2017/en, pp. 37-38.
1521. The Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC is the counter-intelligence organization of the IRGC. For each security and intelligence body in Iran, there typically exists an affiliated counter-intelligence organization which operates under the command of the Supreme Leader. The Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC is tasked with countering espionage within the IRGC, preventing the infiltration of those opposing the IRGC's policies, preventing the leakage of confidential information outside the IRGC, and maintaining political and security oversight over the commanders and personnel of the IRGC. See Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون تأسیس وزارت اطلاعات جمهوری اسلامی ایران [Law on the Establishment of the Ministry of Intelligence of the Islamic Republic of Iran], available at http://ilawyou.ir/8-اسلا-جمهوری-اطلاعات-وزارت-تأسیس-قانون-نهادها-و-خانه-وزارت-تاسیس/مقررات (in Persian); ISNA, آیین تکریم و معارفه رئیس سازمان حفاظت اطلاعات سپاه برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony held for head of the Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC"], 30 June 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401040906159/آیین-تکریمی-و-معارفه-رئیس-سازمان-حفاظت-اطلاعات-سپاه-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, حفاظت اطلاعات سپاه، پنجاه در پنجاه سپاه و موساد انداخته‌ایم، تلاش سرویس‌های جاسوسی برای نفوذ به سپاه ["Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC: We've locked horns with the CIA and Mossad amid ongoing efforts by foreign intelligence services to infiltrate the IRGC"], 7 February 2018, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1396/11/18/1650746/-حفاظت-اطلاعات-سپاه-پنجه-در-پنجه-سپاه-و-موساد-انداخته-ایم-تلاش (in Persian); BBC Persian, پیچیدگی‌های سه سازمان مجزا: اطلاعات سپاه، حفاظت اطلاعات سپاه و حفاظت سپاه ["Complexities of three separate organizations: the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, the Intelligence Protection Organization of the IRGC, and IRGC Protection"], 28 December 2016, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-38452352 (in Persian).
1522. See also Mashregh News, آیا اطلاعات سپاه، قوی‌ترین سرویس اطلاعاتی منطقه است؟ ["Is the IRGC Intelligence the strongest intelligence service in the region?"], 24 June 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1391052/آیا-اطلاعات-سپاه-قوی-ترین-سرویس-اطلاعاتی-منطقه-است (in Persian).
1523. See, for example, Khamenei.ir, انتصاب فرمانده نیروی دریایی و معاون هماهنگ‌کننده سپاه ["Appointment of the commander of the Navy Force and coordination deputy of the IRGC"], 23 August 2018, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=40329 (in Persian); Khamenei.ir, انتصاب فرماندهی نیروی زمینی سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Appointment of the commander of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC"], 13 March 2010, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=9004 (in Persian).

Mostaza'fin Organization.[1524] The head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC is appointed by the general commander of the IRGC.[1525]

In addition, the Supreme Leader exercises authority over the IRGC by appointing a clerical representative within the IRGC, a position that mirrors the role of the heads of the Ideological and Political Organizations in the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Army and FARAJA. Beyond this senior representative, the Supreme Leader also appoints clerical representatives in every IRGC entity at the national, provincial and county levels. Such IRGC entities include the various forces and organizations noted above, as well as the provincial and county corps and the operational divisions and brigades described in the rest of this chapter. This creates a vast network of clerics integrated throughout the entire IRGC apparatus. They run offices that are typically called the office of the representative of the Supreme Leader for the entity concerned.[1526]

The Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC consists of units that operate primarily on land, including those that are deployed to repress street protests.

Since 2008, the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC has been organized through the IRGC's 32 provincial corps.[1527] In Tehran province, there are two such corps, one for the city of Greater Tehran and another for the rest of the province. In each of Iran's other 30 provinces, there is one provincial corps.[1528]

The commander and deputy commander of each of the IRGC's provincial corps are appointed by the general commander of the IRGC.[1529] The commander leads the provincial corps from a provincial headquarters often located in the capital of the province. Both the provincial corps and their

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1524. Office of the Supreme Leader, انتصاب جانشین رئیس ستادکل نیروهای مسلح ورئیس سازمان بسیج مستضعفین ["Appointment of the deputy head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization"], 2 July 2019, https://web.archive.org/web/20190702093518/https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/23159/www.leader.ir (in Persian).

1525. ISNA, انتصاب رئیس جدید سازمان اطلاعات سپاه ["Appointment of the new head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC"], 23 June 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401040201250/انتصاب-رئیس-جدید-سازمان-اطلاعات-سپاه (in Persian).

1526. Tabnak, مسئول حوزه نمایندگی ولی فقیه در سپاه تهران بزرگ معرفی شد ["Head of the Office of the Representative of the Supreme Leader in the Greater Tehran Corps appointed"], 7 June 2026, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1377564/مسئول-حوزه-نمایندگی-ولی-فقیه-در-سپاه-تهران-بزرگ-معرفی-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آیین تکریم و معارفه مسئول دفتر نمایندگی ولی فقیه در لشکر عملیاتی ۷ ولیعصر (عج) ["Ceremony honouring the outgoing and introducing the incoming Head of the Office of the Office of the Representative of the Supreme Leader in the 7th Vali Asr Operational Division"], 1 March 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9671683/آیین-تکریم-و-معارفه-مسئول-دفتر-نمایندگی-ولی-فقیه-در-لشکر-عملیاتی-۷-ولیعصر-عج (in Persian); Hawzah News, تکریم و معارفه مسئول دفتر نمایندگی ولی فقیه در یگان امنیتی امام علی (ع) ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the Head of the Office of the Representative of the Supreme Leader in the Imam Ali Security Cohort"], 30 October 2024, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1197454/تکریم-و-معارفه-مسئول-دفتر-نمایندگی-ولی-فقیه-در-یگان-امنیتی-امام-علی (in Persian); Hawzah News, حجت‌الاسلام رئیسی مسئول دفتر نمایندگی ولی فقیه در سپاه ناحیه بستک شد ["Hijjat ol-Islam Raisi becomes Head of the Office of the Representative of the Supreme Leader in the Bastak Sector Corps"], 22 July 2024, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1171858/حجت-الاسلام-رئیسی-مسئول-دفتر-نمایندگی-ولی-فقیه-در-سپاه-ناحیه-بستک-شد (in Persian).

1527. The IRGC provincial corps were established in their current form around June 2008 following the approval of the Supreme Leader. The then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, described the aims of the new structure as advancing "organizational coordination and synergy of the IRGC in the provinces, decentralization, the expansion of the powers of the provincial IRGC corps". See Mehr News Agency, آغاز عملیات اجرایی تشکیل ۳۱ سپاه استانی با تصویب فرماندهی کل ["Launch of operations to form 31 provincial corps, approved by the General Command"], 27 June 2008, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/706639/آغاز-عملیات-اجرایی-تشکیل-31-سپاه-استانی-با-تصویب-فرماندهی-کل (in Persian).

1528. See Vista, سپاه؛ عصر جدید ساختار تازه ["The IRGC: New era, new structures"], https://vista.ir/m/a/pg5pu/سپاه؛-عصر-جدید-ساختار-تازه (in Persian).

1529. See Hamshahri Online, حکم جدید فرمانده کل سپاه؛ فرمانده سپاه روح الله منصوب شد ["New decree by general commander of the IRGC: Commander of the Rouhollah Corps appointed"], 27 May 2024, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/855310/حکم-جدید-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-فرمانده-سپاه-روح-الله-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه سلمان سیستان و بلوچستان معرفی شد ["New commander of the Salman Corps in Sistan and Baluchistan introduced"], 14 July 2018, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4346205/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سیستان-و-بلوچستان-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

headquarters are usually named after religious figures, events or combatants killed during the Iran-Iraq war, who are officially recognized as martyrs.[1530]

Above the 32 provincial corps, there are 11 IRGC regional headquarters, with each responsible for overseeing several provincial corps.

The general commander of the IRGC is himself commander of the Sarallah Headquarters, which oversees the two corps of Tehran province and the Provincial Corps of Alborz.[1531] The Sarallah Headquarters has been described by the authorities as "the most important headquarters" of the IRGC, given the strategic importance of Greater Tehran as Iran's capital.[1532] The general commander of the IRGC appoints the deputy commander of the Sarallah Headquarters to assist him in managing the operations of the Sarallah Headquarters.[1533]

The commanders and deputy commanders of the remaining 10 regional headquarters are appointed by the general commander of the IRGC and they report to him and the commander of the Ground Resistance Force.[1534]

According to a comprehensive review of official sources undertaken by Amnesty International, at the time of publication, the names of these 10 headquarters, which are responsible for a total of 30 provinces, are the Ashoura Headquarters (covering the provinces of Ardabil, East Azerbaijan, and Zanjan), the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters (covering the provinces of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan), the Karbala Jonoub-e Gharb Headquarters (covering the provinces of Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, and Lorestan), the Madineh Headquarters (covering the provinces of Bushehr, Fars and Hormozgan), the Najaf Ashraf Headquarters (covering the provinces of Hamedan, Ilam and Kermanshah), the Ghadir Headquarters (covering the provinces of Gilan, Golestan and Mazandaran), the Qods Jonoub-e Shargh Headquarters (covering the provinces of Sistan and Baluchistan and Kerman), the Saheb Al-Zaman Headquarters (covering the provinces of Markazi, Ghazvin, Qom and Semnan), the Samen Al-A'ameh Headquarters (covering the provinces of Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan and South Khorasan) and the Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters (covering the provinces of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Esfahan and Yazd).

The names of the 32 provincial corps falling under these regional headquarters are as follows:

	PROVINCE	IRGC PROVINCIAL CORPS	OVERSEEING IRGC REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
1.	Alborz	Imam Hassan Corps	Sarallah Headquarters

1530. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده و جانشین جدید قرارگاه استانی شهید شهرامفر کردستان معرفی شدند+سوابق+تصاویر ["New commander and deputy of the Shaheed Shahramfar Headquarters in Kurdistan province introduced + background + images"], 29 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/02/10/2253924/فرمانده-و-جانشین-جدید-قرارگاه-استانی-شهید-شهرامفر-کردستان-معرفی-شدند-سوابق-تصاویر (in Persian).

1531. Borna News, الزاماته مدیریتی در کشور باعث تشکیل سپاه‌های استانی شده است ["Managerial requirements in the country have led to the formation of IRGC provincial corps"], 30 April 2011, https://borna.news/fa/news/42459/الزامات-مدیریتی-در-کشور-باعث-تشکیل-سپاه-های-استانی-شده-است (in Persian).

1532. Tasnim News Agency, رحیم صفوی: قرارگاه ثارالله تهران مهمترین قرارگاه سپاه پاسداران است ["Rahim Safavi: Sarallah Headquarters in Tehran is the most important IRGC headquarters"], 21 June 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/03/31/2732189/رحیم-صفوی-قرارگاه-ثارالله-تهران-مهمترین-قرارگاه-سپاه-پاسداران-است (in Persian).

1533. Fars News Agency, سردار نجات جانشین فرمانده قرارگاه ثارالله تهران شد ["General Najat becomes deputy commander of the Sarallah Headquarters in Tehran"], 21 June 2020, https://farsnews.ir/news/13990401000198/سردار-نجات-جانشین-فرمانده-قرارگاه-ثارالله-تهران-شد (in Persian).

1534. IRNA, یادواره شهدای اطلاعات قرارگاه سیدالشهداء(ع)در اصفهان برگزار شد ["Commemoration of the martyrs of the Intelligence unit of the Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters held in Esfahan"], 12 December 2016, https://www.irna.ir/news/82343591/یادواره-شهدای-اطلاعات-قرارگاه-سید-الشهداء-ع-در-اصفهان-برگزار (in Persian); IRNA, فرمانده قرارگاه سیّدالشهداء و وجه تمایز سپاه با نیروهای مسلح دنیا ["Commander of the Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters and the distinction between the IRGC and world's other armed forces"], 6 February 2013, https://www.irna.ir/news/80532841/فرمانده-قرارگاه-سیّدالشهداء-و-وجه-تمایز-سپاه-با-نیروهای-مسلح-دنیا (in Persian).

PROVINCE		IRGC PROVINCIAL CORPS	OVERSEEING IRGC REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
2.	Ardabil	Hazrat-e Abbas Corps	Ashoura Headquarters
3.	Bushehr	Imam Sadeq Corps	Madineh Headquarters
4.	Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari	Ghamar Banihashem Corps	Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters
5.	East Azerbaijan	Ashoura Corps	Ashoura Headquarters
6.	Fars	Fajr Corps	Madineh Headquarters
7.	Gilan	Qods Corps	Ghadir Headquarters
8.	Golestan	Neinava Corps	Ghadir Headquarters
9.	Hamedan	Ansar Al-Hossein Corps	Najaf Ashraf Headquarters
10.	Hormozgan	Imam Sajad Corps	Madineh Headquarters
11.	Ilam	Amir Al-Momenin Corps	Najaf Ashraf Headquarters
12.	Esfahan	Saheb Al-Zaman Corps	Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters
13.	Kerman	Sarallah Corps	Qods Jonoub-e Shargh Headquarters
14.	Kermanshah	Nabi Akram Corps	Najaf Ashraf Headquarters
15.	Khuzestan	Vali Asr Corps	Karbala Jonoub-e Gharb Headquarters
16.	Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad	Fath Corps	Karbala Jonoub-e Gharb Headquarters
17.	Kurdistan	Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps	Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters
18.	Lorestan	Hazrat-e Abolfazl Corps	Karbala Jonoub-e Gharb Headquarters
19.	Markazi	Rouhollah Corps	Saheb Al-Zaman Headquarters
20.	Mazandaran	Karbala Corps	Ghadir Headquarters
21.	North Khorasan	Javad Al-A'ameh Corps	Samen Al-A'ameh Headquarters
22.	Ghazvin	Saheb Al-Amr Corps	Saheb Al-Zaman Headquarters
23.	Qom	Ali Ibn Ali Taleb Corps	Saheb Al-Zaman Headquarters
24.	Khorasan Razavi	Imam Reza Corps	Samen Al-A'ameh Headquarters
25.	Semnan	Ghaem Al Mohammad Corps	Saheb Al-Zaman Headquarters
26.	Sistan and Baluchistan	Salman Corps	Qods Jonoub-e Shargh Headquarters
27.	South Khorasan	Ansar Al-Reza Corps	Samen Al-A'ameh Headquarters
28.	Tehran (Greater Tehran)	Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps	Sarallah Headquarters
29.	Tehran (rest of the province)	Seyed Al-Shohada Corps	Sarallah Headquarters

PROVINCE		IRGC PROVINCIAL CORPS	OVERSEEING IRGC REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
30.	West Azerbaijan	Shohada Corps	Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters
31.	Yazd	Al-Ghadir Corps	Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters
32.	Zanjan	Ansar Al-Mehdi Corps	Ashoura Headquarters



A map of Iran's 31 provinces. Under the name of each province is the name or, in the case of Tehran, names of the IRGC provincial corps responsible for it. The map's legend lists the names of the 11 IRGC regional headquarters, identified by different colours, which oversee two or more provincial corps. © Amnesty International

Each IRGC provincial corps comprises county Basij Resistance Sector Corps and provincial operational divisions or brigades. Additionally, many provincial corps include one or more units known as Security Cohorts. Under each IRGC provincial corps, there are also dozens of sector-specific Basij organizations spanning educational, industrial, agricultural, administrative, judicial, medical and religious fields. Together, these entities form the core components of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force. In addition, the Ground Resistance Force has certain Special Forces units. Amnesty International was unable to determine whether these Special Forces operate within the structure of the provincial corps or function separately under IRGC regional headquarters.

The command structure of the IRGC provincial corps with respect to security operations includes subsidiary command centres referred to as operational headquarters. These headquarters are assigned to specific regions; however, there is very limited publicly available information regarding their names

and locations across the country.[1535] The most detailed information pertains to the operational headquarters in Tehran, as revealed by state media reports and leaked official documents obtained by Amnesty International.

According to these official sources, the Security Cohorts and brigades of the Corps of Greater Tehran are placed under four such subsidiary command centres, each responsible for a distinct region within Greater Tehran. These four operational headquarters are named Qods, Nasr, Fath and Ghadr. According to state media reports and information published by political dissidents investigating Iran's security apparatus,[1536] the Nasr Headquarters covers north-eastern Tehran,[1537] the Qods Headquarters north-western Tehran,[1538] the Fath Headquarters south-western Tehran,[1539] and the Ghadr Headquarters south-eastern Tehran.[1540]

The personnel composition of the IRGC entities mentioned above is governed by the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law and is broadly divided into two categories: official guards and Basijis.[1541] Provincial operational divisions or brigades and Special Forces units are primarily composed of official guards while Basij Resistance Sector Corps and Security Cohorts are primarily composed of Basijis. However, this distinction is not absolute; some official guards serve in Basij entities, often in command roles, and some Basij members are integrated into the IRGC operational divisions or brigades.

Official guards are defined in Article 8 as "the personnel who are employed by the IRGC… [and] after completing the necessary training courses, they attain one of the ranks specified in this law and use military uniforms and insignia."

Basijis are defined in Article 13, which refers to ordinary Basijis, active Basijis and special Basijis. Ordinary Basijis are "individuals from various segments of society who believe in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the goals of the Islamic Revolution. After completing general training, they join and are organized within the 20-million-strong army."[1542]

Article 93 provides that children below 15 years of age can become ordinary Basijis.

1535. See Defa Press, ["Shaheed Naseri Operational Headquarters is active in the fields of 'security' and 'eliminating depravation'"], 21 November 2018, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/319845/قرارگاه-عملیاتی-شهید-ناصری-در-بحث-امنیت-و-محرومیت‌زدایی-فعالیت-دارد (in Persian)

1536. Sarkoobgaran, ["Which are the IRGC's operational headquarters in Tehran?"], available at https://sarkoobgaran.com/قرارگاههای-عملیاتی-سپاه-تهران-کدامند (in Persian).

1537. Basij News Agency, ["Consultation gathering of judicial leadership and police ranks held in Greater Tehran"], 21 November 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9080313/محفل-هم-اندیشی-مسئولین-قضایی-و-رده-های-انتظامی-تهران-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1538. Shahr News, ["Mayor of District 22 of Tehran appointed Tehran Municipality's representative to the Qods Headquarters"], 14 March 2022, https://shahr.ir/news/19057/شهردار-منطقه-۲۲-نماینده-شهرداری-تهران-در-قرارگاه-قدس-شد (in Persian).

1539. Fars News Agency, ["Security maintained at Ghadir celebration"], 7 July 2023, https://farsnews.ir/social/1688739665000944923/امنیت-در-میهمانی-غدیر-برقرار-است (in Persian).

1540. Basij News Agency, ["Nation's unity and solidarity demonstrated to the world and adversaries on 30 December"], 31 December 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9095872/نهم-دی-ماه-اتحاد-و-همبستگی-ملت-را-به-رخ-جهانیان-و-بدخواهان-کشید (in Persian).

1541. It is important to clarify that these are not, however, the only personnel categories defined under the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law. Article 6 provides that "the IRGC personnel… include permanent staff, conscripts, contractual staff and Basijis". According to Article 7, "Permanent staff refer to personnel who are employed for continuous service in the IRGC, and they include official guards… employees, and students." According to Article 9, employees refer to the "personnel who are employed based on their educational qualifications or practical and specialized skills… and do not use military uniforms or insignia." According to Article 10, students are "personnel who pursue their education at one of the IRGC's educational centres or other educational institutions at the expense of the IRGC for the purpose of being employed to serve in the in the permanent staff as either official guards or employees."

1542. The term 20-million-strong army originates from a speech given by the first Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Rouhollah Khomeini, on 26 November 1979, in which he called for young people to "learn how to use weapons and to teach this to their friends" and for the authorities to ensure that, over the years, "a country with 20 million young people would have 20 million gun-bearers, a 20-million-strong army."

Active Basijis are "those ordinary Basijis who volunteer to be organized… after completing training courses… and collaborate with the IRGC in carrying out assigned missions." Article 94 provides that children above 15 years of age can qualify as active Basijis.

Special Basijis are honorary guards who "possess the qualifications of an [official] guard and after the completion of training stipulated in this law, they are organized and commit to being available full-time to the IRGC when needed."

Article 16 provides that children as young as 16 can join the permanent staff, the contractual staff or the personnel of special Basijis.

Article 34 indicates that the training courses that special Basijis (honorary guards) and official guards must complete, in order to qualify initially as enlisted combatants and subsequently move up the military ranks, are the same. Article 73 mandates the IRGC to conduct formal performance assessments for both the official guards and the special Basijis.

The Iranian authorities refer to Basijis as the "popular forces" or the "people's forces" of the IRGC, creating the impression that they are a voluntary paramilitary force. However, in fact, Basijis receive financial compensation for their activities. Article 169 of the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law states:

> **"The salary and benefits of the Basiji personnel during their training and deployment are equivalent to the salary and continuous benefits of the permanent staff of the same rank or grade, which are paid from the funds allocated annually in the IRGC budget."**

Article 170 of the same law indicates that even when not deployed for a specific mission, special Basijis receive a monthly allowance:

> **"Special Basijis who have completed training and been assigned military ranks will receive a monthly allowance based on their responsibilities, rank, and connection to the organization. This allowance will be between 10% and 30% of salaries and continuous benefits."[1543]**

Article 201 of the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law further states:

> **"The government is required to provide the Basij personnel, based on the extent and type of their activities and cooperation, their qualifications, competencies, and ranks, with services such as priority in employment, access to housing facilities and loans, priority in the allocation of employment opportunities, and special facilities for entry into higher education institutions."**

Numerous other laws and regulations entrench these socio-economic benefits and privileges.[1544]

10.3.1(I) BASIJ RESISTANCE SECTOR CORPS

The Basij Resistance Sector Corps are the enforcement arm of the IRGC provincial corps at the county level, implementing their policies and orders within cities and neighbourhoods, including those pertaining to the repression of protests.

In state and independent media articles, they are sometimes referred to simply as the Sector Corps or the corps of the county concerned. In some counties, the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the county

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1543. The provision does not clarify whose salaries this percentage is based on.

1544. See, for example, Shora News, درآمدی بر جایگاه حقوقی بسیج مستضعفین: بسیج می‌تواند حلّال بسیاری از مشکلات کشور باشد ["An introduction to the legal status of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin: The Basij can solve many of the country's problems"], 25 November 2020, https://www.shora-gc.ir/fa/news/7273/درآمدی-بر-جایگاه-حقوقی-بسیج-مستضعفین-بسیج-می‌تواند-حلّال-بسیاری-از-مشکلات-کشور-باشد (in Persian); Basirat, معرفی قوانین مربوط به نیروهای مقاومت بسیج ["Introduction to laws related to the Basij Resistance Forces"], 3 June 2010, https://basirat.ir/fa/amp/news/75248 (in Persian).

bears the name of a specific religious figure, while in others it is simply called the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the county concerned.

EVOLUTION OF BASIJ STRUCTURES WITHIN IRGC

The Basij was first established by law in 1980 under the name of the National Basij Organization.[1545] A subsequent law adopted in January 1981 placed the National Basij Organization under the IRGC and renamed it the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Unit of the IRGC, which can be literally translated as the "Unit of the Mobilization of the Disempowered".[1546]

In 1990, the then Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, ordered the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Unit to be restructured as the Basij Resistance Force, elevating its status and placing it on a par with the four other forces of the IRGC, which were at that time the Navy Force, the Ground Force, the Air Force[1547] and the Qods Force.[1548] The commander of each of these five forces was appointed by the Supreme Leader and reported to the general commander of the IRGC.[1549]

In September 2009, the authorities announced that the Basij Resistance Force had been merged with the Ground Force of the IRGC, forming the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC.[1550] Following this change, Basij structures were integrated into the structure of the IRGC provincial corps.

The structural changes in 2009 also involved the establishment of an organization within the IRGC, called the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, which contains dozens of subsidiary sector-specific organizations spanning educational, industrial, agricultural, administrative, judicial, medical and religious fields.[1551]

The Basij Resistance Sector Corps are generally organized at the county level. However, they may be occasionally organized in lower administrative divisions as well. Smaller counties typically have one Basij Resistance Sector Corps responsible for the entire county. In larger counties with major urban centres, such as Esfahan, Shiraz, Mashhad and Tehran, the number of Basij Resistance Sector Corps

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1545. See Khomeini.ir, فرمان امام خمینی مبنی بر تشکیل بسیج ["Imam Khomeini's command on the establishment of the Basij"], 25 November 2014, http://www.imam-khomeini.ir/fa/n25082//سرویس_های_اطلاع_رسانی/امام_خمینی_و_انقلاب_اسلامی/روز_نگار_فرمان_امام_خمینی_مبنی_بر_تشکیل_بسیج (in Persian).

1546. Islamic Republic of Iran Law Website, قانون ادغام سازمان بسیج ملی (مستضعفین) در سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی [Law on the Integration of the National Mobilization Organization (Mostaza'fin) into the IRGC], 18 February 1981, https://law-ir.ir/law/cat/430 (in Persian).

1547. In 2009, following the establishment of a space division within the IRGC, the IRGC Air Force was merged with this division, resulting in the creation of the Aerospace Force. See enghelabtazohoor, شهید حاجی زاده - چگونگی شکل گیری نیروی هوافضای سپاه با فناوریهای روز ["Martyr Hajizadeh: How the IRGC Aerospace Force was formed using modern technologies"], 2 September 2025, https://www.aparat.com/v/ggf3246 (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, سپاه چگونه وارد عرصه فضا شد؟ ["How did the IRGC enter the space sector?"], 23 April 2020, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/504159/سپاه-چگونه-وارد-عرصه-فضا-شد (in Persian).

1548. Tabnak, مروری بر سیر تکوین 34 ساله بسیج ["Review of the 34-year evolution of the Basij"], 24 November 2013, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/359762/مروری-بر-سیر-تکوین-34-ساله-بسیج (in Persian); Office of the Supreme Leader, انتصاب آقای علی رضا افشار به سمت فرماندهی نیروی مقاومت بسیج ["Appointment of Mr Ali Reza Afshar as commander of the Basij Resistance Force"], 2 January 1990, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/230/انتصاب-آقای-علی-رضا-افشار-به-سمت-فرماندهی-نیروی-مقاومت-بسیج (in Persian).

1549. The Supreme Leader appointed the first Commander of the Basij Resistance Force on 2 January 1990.

1550. See Fars News Agency, از واحد بسیج سپاه تا سازمان بسیج مستضعفین ["From the IRGC Basij unit to the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization"], 24 November 2013, https://farsnews.ir/news/13920821000361/از-واحد-بسیج-سپاه-تا-سازمان-بسیج-مستضعفین (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, بسیج در نیروی زمینی سپاه ادغام می‌شود؛ ۳ کاندیدای فرماندهی نیروی زمینی سپاه ["Basij to be integrated into the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC: Three candidates for command of the Ground Resistance Force"], 2 October 2009, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/956675/بسیج-در-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-ادغام-می-شود-۳-کاندیدای-فرماندهی-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه (in Persian).

1551. See Young Journalists Club, تجلیل از مدیران جهادی آذربایجان غربی ["Honouring revolutionary-minded managers in West Azerbaijan"], 23 November 2024, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8872737/تجلیل-از-مدیران-جهادی-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, کارمندان نمونه بسیجی استان کردستان تجلیل شدند ["Exemplary Basij employees of Kurdistan province honoured"], 24 August 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1403/06/03/3147199/کارمندان-نمونه-بسیجی-استان-کردستان-تجلیل-شدند (in Persian).

within them has grown over time.[1552]

According to official figures, there are 10 counties in Kurdistan province,[1553] 14 counties in Kermanshah province,[1554] and 20 counties in West Azerbaijan province.[1555] A comprehensive review of state media reports by Amnesty International indicates that, in each of these counties, there is one Basij Resistance Sector Corps.

State media reports reviewed by Amnesty International indicate that the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of each county[1556] is appointed either by the general commander of the IRGC, based on a proposal from the commander of the respective provincial corps,[1557] or directly by the commander of the provincial corps.[1558] The patterns of appointments suggest that the IRGC's general commander typically appoints the commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of counties that are provincial capitals, but Amnesty International was unable to confirm this possible rule.

The commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps reports to the commander of the IRGC provincial corps. Consequently, the commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps are the equivalent of county commanders within FARAJA.

According to Article 42 of the Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC Statute), the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps shall be either an official guard or a special Basiji, referred to otherwise as an honorary guard.[1559]

The Basij Resistance Sector Corps consist of various Basij battalions which are organized through subsidiary entities called Basij Resistance Domains and Basij Resistance Bases.

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, Ashoura Battalions were the most prominent Basij battalions, working alongside FARAJA to suppress street protests. These battalions still exist and engage in what

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1552. See, for example, ISNA, تغییر ساختار در بسیج شیراز با ایجاد قرارگاههای ثارالله و بقیه الله ["Structural change in Shiraz Basij with the establishment of Sarallah and Baghiollah headquarters"], 7 September 2009, https://www.isna.ir/news/fars-8763/تغییر-ساختار-در-بسیج-شیراز-با-ایجاد-قرارگاه-های-ثارالله-و-بقیه (in Persian). Greater Tehran currently has 22 Resistance Sector Corps corresponding to each of its 22 municipal districts. Javan Online, تشکیل ۲۲ ناحیه بسیج در تهران بزرگ ["Formation of 22 Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Greater Tehran"], 23 February 2010, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/207403/تشکیل-22-ناحیه-بسیج-در-تهران-بزرگ- (in Persian).

1553. The 10 counties are Baneh, Bijar, Dehgolan, Divandareh, Kamyaran, Mariwan, Sanandaj, Saqqez, Sarvabad, and Qorveh. Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan, تقسیمات کشوری ["Administrative divisions"], 17 June 2021, https://ostan-kd.ir/تقسیمات-کشوری (in Persian).

1554. The 14 counties are Dalahu, Ghasr-e Shirin, Gilan-e Gharb, Harsin, Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Javanroud, Kangavar, Kermanshah, Paveh, Ravansar, Sahneh, Salas-e Babajani, Sarpol-e Zahab, and Sanghar. See also Regional Water Company of Kermanshah, اطلاعات آماری استان کرمانشاه ["Statistical information of Kermanshah province"], 3 December 2014, https://www.kshrw.ir/st/19 (in Persian).

1555. The 20 counties are Barogh, Boukan, Chaldoran, Chaharrborj, Chaypareh, Khoy, Mahabad, Makou, Miandoab, Mirabad, Naghadeh, Oshnavieh, Piranshahr, Poldasht, Salmas, Sardasht, Shahin Dezh, Shout, Takab and Urumieh. Iraniju, شهرهای استان آذربایجان غربی به ترتیب جمعیت، شلوغ ترین و خلوت ترین شهر ["Cities of West Azerbaijan province by population, the most crowded and least crowded city"], https://iraniju.ir/west-azerbaijan-cities (accessed on 25 June 2026).

1556. State media articles refer to the commander of this county corps interchangeably as the commander of the county corps, the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector of the county, the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the county or simply the IRGC commander of the county concerned.

1557. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, فرمانده ناحیه مقاومت بسیج سپاه قشم معرفی شد ["Commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Gheshm introduced"], 13 April 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5188680/فرمانده-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-سپاه-قشم-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

1558. See, for example, Estahb Online, انتصاب یک استهبانی به سمت فرماندهی سپاه آباده ["Appointment of an Estehbani as commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Abadeh"], 29 August 2024, http://estahbanefarda.ir/1403/06/08/یک-استهبانی-فرمانده-سپاه-آباده-شد (in Persian); Asr Dena, فرمانده ناحیه مقاومت بسیج شهرستان باشت منصوب شد ["Commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Basht county appointed"], 28 May 2024, https://asrdena.ir/fa/news/24357/فرمانده-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-شهرستان-باشت-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, فرمانده سپاه ناحیه مقاومت بسیج کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah appointed"], 27 December 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5385400/فرمانده-سپاه-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-کرمانشاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده جدید ناحیه مقاومت سپاه بندرعباس منصوب شد + تصاویر ["New commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Bandar Abbas appointed + images"], 6 April 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1400/01/17/2479653/فرمانده-جدید-ناحیه-مقاومت-سپاه-بندرعباس-منصوب-شد-تصاویر (in Persian).

1559. See Islamic Republic of Iran, اساسنامه سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 1982, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595, Article 42.

authorities describe as the "defence of neighbourhoods and localities."[1560]

Since 2008-2009, when the IRGC was restructured through the creation of provincial corps and Basij forces were integrated into their structure, additional Basij battalions have emerged, featuring a more standardized structure and identity nationwide. Three such prominent Basij battalions are the Imam Hossein Battalions, the Imam Ali Battalions and the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions.[1561] Each of these battalions operates under the same name in every county across the country, aligning with the standardized character that each battalion maintains regardless of their location. Official statements suggest that each battalion often consists of 200-300 members.[1562]

The commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps is responsible for making decisions regarding the deployment of Basij battalions in response to protests and controls their operations, in accordance with orders from superior commanders at the IRGC provincial corps.[1563]

10.3.1(II) SECTORAL BASIJ ORGANIZATIONS

Under each IRGC provincial corps, there are dozens of sectoral Basij organizations spanning educational, industrial, agricultural, administrative, judicial, medical and religious fields.[1564] These include the School Students Basij Organization, the University Students Basij Organization, the Scientific, Research and Technological Basij Organization, the Medical Community Basij Organization, the Industrial and Mining Engineers Basij Organization, the Lawyers Basij Organization, the Professors of Universities and Higher Education and Research Institutes Basij Organization, the Teachers Basij Organization, the Athletes Basij Organization, the Media Basij Organization, the Artists Basij Organization, the Eulogists Basij Organization, the Women's Community Basij Organization, the Offices and Employees Basij Organization, the Mosques and Neighbourhoods Basij Organization, the Clerical Students and Clergymen Basij Organization, the Guilds Basij Organization, the Workers and Factories Basij Organization, the Nomadic Community Basij Organization, the Veterans Basij Organization, the Excursion, Caravan of Light[1565] and Tourism Basij, and the Construction Basij Organization.

1560. Pupils Association News Agency, ["Organization of over 100 Basij security battalions named after Imam Ali"], 28 September 2012, https://www.pana.ir/بخش-اخبار-2/6582-سازماندهی-بیش-از-گردان-امن (in Persian).
1561. See Fars News Agency, ["Training of the Basij's defensive and security battalions in line with current threats: Large-scale exercise held in Tehran"], 16 December 2013, https://farsnews.ir/politics/13871724000008273392/برگزاری-رزمایش-بزرگ-در-تهران-Fآموزش-گردان‌های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز% (in Persian); Tabnak, ["Formation of security and military battalions within the Basij"], 28 September 2012, www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/275279/تشکیل-گردانهای-امنیتی-و-نظامی-در-بسیج (in Persian).
1562. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, ["Commander of Provincial Corps of Bushehr: 80 Basij battalions organized in Bushehr province"], 26 November 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1400/09/05/2614982/فرمانده-سپاه-استان-بوشهر-80-گردان-بسیجی-در-استان-بوشهر-سازماندهی-ش (in Persian); Defa Press, ["Formation of the Imam Hossein Battalion within the 12 Ghaem Brigade in Semnan province"], 10 December 2016, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/216876/تشکیل-گردان-ویژه-امام-حسینع-در-تیپ-12-قائمعج-استان-سمنان (in Persian).
1563. See IRNA, ["Tactical exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion conducted in the general area of Ghasr-e Shirin"], 6 March 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85049053/رزمایش-تاکتیکی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-در-منطقه-عمومی-قصرشیرین-اجرا (in Persian); IRNA, ["Imam Ali operational and security headquarters exercise to be held in Bam"], 29 September 2021, https://www.irna.ir/news/84488196/رزمایش-قرارگاه-عملیاتی-و-امنیتی-امام-علی-ع-در-بم-برگزار-می-شود (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion held in Marand county"], 2 October 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/2929962/رزمایش-گردان-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-شهرستان-ویژه-مرند-برگزار-شد (in Persian).
1564. See Young Journalists Club, ["Honouring revolutionary-minded managers in West Azerbaijan"], 23 November 2024, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8872737/تجلیل-از-مدیران-جهادی-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ["Exemplary Basij employees of Kurdistan province honoured"], 24 August 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1403/06/03/3147199/کارمندان-نمونه-بسیجی-استان-کردستان-تجلیل-شدند (in Persian).
1565. These refer to large-scale, state-organized programmes of group visits to sites associated with the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.

These sectoral Basij organizations at the provincial level derive their overall strategies from identically named bodies at the national level, organized under the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization.[1566] The heads of these national sectoral Basij organizations are appointed either by the IRGC general commander[1567] or by the head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, who is turn appointed by the Supreme Leader.[1568]

The head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization is supported by several deputies, with the deputy head, operations deputy and coordination deputy among the most significant. State media reports indicate that these deputies are appointed by the IRGC General Commander.[1569] State media reports suggest that the heads of at least some national sectoral Basij organizations are supported by identically titled deputies.[1570]

The provincial sectoral Basij organizations fall under the authority of the respective provincial corps, which is responsible for implementing the national strategies within the relevant province. State media reports indicate that the heads of the provincial sectoral Basij organizations are typically appointed by the commander of the relevant provincial corps.[1571] However, Amnesty International has also identified an instance in which the appointment was reportedly made by the deputy general commander of the IRGC in Basij affairs.[1572]

1566. Tabnak, تصویب ساختار جدید سپاه توسط رهبر انقلاب ["Approval of the IRGC's new structure by the Supreme Leader"], 19 October 2009, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/69137/تصویب-ساختار-جدید-سپاه-توسط-رهبر-انقلاب (in Persian).

1567. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, رئیس بسیج مساجد و محلات منصوب شد ["Head of the Mosques and Neighbourhoods Basij appointed"], 14 July 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1400/04/23/2538271/رئیس-بسیج-مساجد-و-محلات-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, هادی قاسمی رئیس سازمان بسیج دانشجویی شد ["Hadi Ghasemi was appointed head of the University Students Basij Organization"], 15 August 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5862131/هادی-قاسمی-رئیس-سازمان-بسیج-دانشجویی-شد (in Persian); Professors Basij Organization, انتصاب رئیس جدید سازمان بسیج اساتید کشور ["Appointment of the new head of the Professors Basij Organization"], 28 June 2021, https://basijasatid.ir/story/67118 (in Persian).

1568. See, for example, Defa Press, مسئول جدید سازمان بسیج ادارات استان هرمزگان معرفی شد ["New head of Hormozgan province Basij Organization of Offices appointed"], 17 February 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/727257/-مسئول-جدید-سازمان-بسیج-ادارات-استان-هرمزگان-معرفی-شد (in Persian); ISNA, سرهنگ صنعتکاران رئیس سازمان بسیج ادارات کشور شد ["Colonel Son'atkaran becomes head of the Offices and Employees Basij Organization"], 13 March 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402122316412/-سرهنگ-صنعتکاران-رئیس-سازمان-بسیج-ادارات-کشور-شد (in Persian); ISNA, رئیس سازمان بسیج جامعه پزشکی منصوب شد ["Head of the Medical Community Basij Organization appointed"], 13 April 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400012413220/رئیس-سازمان-بسیج-جامعه-پزشکی-منصوب-شد (in Persian); ISNA, رئیس سازمان بسیج علمی، پژوهشی و فناوری منصوب شد ["Head of the Scientific, Research and Technological Basij Organization appointed"], 3 September 2018, https://www.isna.ir/news/97061206087/رییس-سازمان-بسج-علمی-پژوهشی-و-فناوری-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1569. Basij News Agency, آیین تکریم و معارفه معاون عملیات و مقاومت مردمی سازمان بسیج مستضعفین ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the operations deputy and Basij Organization"], 18 October 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9718306/آیین-تکریم-و-معارفه-معاون-عملیات-و-مقاومت-مردمی-سازمان-بسیج-مستضعفین (in Persian); Defa Press, معاون عملیات سازمان بسیج: وحدت ملت ایران سیلی محکمی به دشمن زد ["Basij Organization operations deputy: Unity of Iranian people delivered a strong blow to the enemy"], 18 September 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/800666/معاون-عملیات-سازمان-بسیج-وحدت-ملت-ایران-سیلی-محکمی-به-دشمن-زد (in Persian); Donya-e Eqtesad, سردار معروفی معاون هماهنگ کننده سازمان بسیج شد ["General Maroufi appointed coordination deputy of the Basij Organization"], 17 July 2022, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/سردار-معروفی-معاون-هماهنگ-کننده-سازمان-بسیج-شد-62/3882600-بخش-سایت-خوان (in Persian); IRIB, انتصاب جانشین و معاون هماهنگ کننده جدید سازمان بسیج مستضعفین ["Appointment of new deputy commander and coordination deputy of the Basij Mostaza'fin Organization"], 1 March 2021, https://www.irib-news.ir/fa/news/3035526/انتصاب-جانشین-و-معاون-هماهنگ-کننده-جدید-سازمان-بسیج-مستضعفین (in Persian); Kebna News, انتصاب سرهنگ انصاری به عنوان جانشین عملیات سازمان بسیج مستضعفین ["Colonel Ansari appointed as deputy operations deputy of the Basij Mostaza'fin Organization"], 11 June 2020, https://www.kebnanews.ir/news/421946/-انتصاب-سرهنگ-انصاری-به-عنوان-جانشین-عملیات-سازمان-بسیج-مستضعفین (in Persian).

1570. Basij News Agency, سرهنگ بهرامی معاون هماهنگ کننده سازمان بسیج اساتید، طلاب و روحانیون کشور شد ["Colonel Bahrami becomes coordination deputy of country's Clerical Students and Clergymen Basij Organization"], 27 April 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9683086/سرهنگ-بهرامی-معاون-هماهنگ-کننده-سازمان-بسیج-اساتید-طلاب-و-روحانیون-کشور-شد (in Persian).

1571. See Razi University, دکتر فریبرز پیرو به عنوان رئیس سازمان بسیج اساتید استان کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Dr Fariborz Pirou appointed as head of the Professors and Higher Education and Research Basij Organization in Kermanshah province"], 5 November 2024, https://razi.ac.ir/fa/w/-دکتر-فریبرز-پیرو-به-عنوان-رئیس-سازمان-بسیج-اساتید (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, مسئول سازمان بسیج ادارات استان همدان معرفی شد ["Head of the Offices and Employees Basij Organization in Hamedan province introduced"], 16 March 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/12/25/2868810/مسئول-سازمان-بسیج-ادارات-استان-همدان-معرفی-شد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, مسئول جدید بسیج کارگری و کارخانجات البرز منصوب شد ["New head of the Alborz Workers and Factories Basij appointed"], 17 June 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5812634/مسئول-جدید-بسیج-کارگری-و-کارخانجات-البرز-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Tabrize Bidar, انتصاب مسئول جدید سازمان بسیج اساتید آذربایجان شرقی ["New head of the East Azerbaijan Professors Basij Organization appointed"], 7 March 2020, https://tabrizebidar.ir/1078461 (in Persian).

1572. Dehdasht News, مسئول جدید سازمان بسیج کارگری کهگیلویه و بویراحمد منصوب شد ["New head of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Workers Basij Organization appointed"], 11 July 2020, https://dehdashtnews.ir/?p=14013 (in Persian).

Mirroring the national structure, the head of each provincial sectoral Basij organization is supported by positions referred to as the coordination head and the operations head.[1573]

In each province, the strategies and activities of the various provincial sectoral Basij organizations are coordinated by an entity called the Specialized Staff of Sectoral and Specialists Basij of the corresponding provincial corps.[1574] State media reports indicate that the head of this entity is appointed either by the national head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, following a recommendation from the commander of the relevant provincial corps,[1575] or by the deputy general commander of the IRGC in Basij affairs.[1576]

At the county level, the activities of sectoral Basij organizations are organized by entities that may be referred to as the Hub or Resistance Domain of the relevant sectoral Basij of the county concerned, such as the Resistance Domain of the Workers and Factories Basij of [county name] or the Hub of the Athletes Basij of [county name].[1577] However, state media reports suggest that these entities can be also referred to simply by the sectoral name followed by the county name, such as the Workers and Factories Basij of [county name] or the Offices and Employees Basij of [county name].[1578]

The individual leading these county sectoral Basij entities is usually referred to as the "head", although the terms "manager" and "commander" are also occasionally used.[1579] State media reports indicate that these individuals are appointed either by the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of

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1573. Basij News Agency, ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion live-fire exercise held by Mazandaran province Workers and Factories Basij Organization"], 17 October 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9547484/میدان-تیر-گردان-بیت-المقدس-سازمان-بسیج-کارگران-و-کارخانجات-استان-مازندران-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1574. Basij News Agency, ["Sectoral Basij should help government agencies address the people's problems"], 18 July 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9661151/بسیج-اقشار-به-دستگاه-های-دولتی-برای-رفع-مشکلات-مردم-کمک-کند (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["Media Basij is an unparalleled asset for taking the initiative in the cultural war"], 30 May 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5797944/بسیج-رسانه-ظرفیت-بی-نظیر-برای-ابتکار-عمل-در-جنگ-فرهنگی-است (in Persian).

1575. Hawzah News, ["New head of the Sectoral and Specialists Basij introduced"], 18 July 2024, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1171003/مسئول-بسیج-اقشار-و-متخصصان-معرفی-شد (in Persian); Jam-e Jam Online, ["New head of the Specialized Sectoral Basij Staff of Imam Sajad Corps appointed"], 18 July 2024, https://jamejamonline.ir/fa/news/1465164/مسئول-جدید-ستاد-تخصصی-اقشار-بسیج-سپاه-امام-سجاد-علیه-السلام-معرفی-شد (in Persian); Moj News Agency, ["New head of the Specialized Sectoral Basij Staff of Hormozgan Corps introduced"], 18 July 2024, https://www.mojnews.com/بخش-هرمزگان-86/566419-مسئول-جدید-ستاد-تخصصی-اقشار-بسیج-سپاه-هرمزگان-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

1576. Basij News Agency, ["Colonel Ehsan Ahangar appointed head of the Specialized Staff of Sectoral and Specialists Basij of Karbala Corps"], 6 January 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9658847/سرهنگ-احسان-آهنگر-بعنوان-مسئول-ستاد-تخصصی-بسیج-اقشار-و-متخصصین-سپاه-کربلا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1577. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ["Basiji athletes promote culture of chivalry in society"], 26 May 2025, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6479795/ورزشکاران-بسیجی-مروج-فرهنگ-پهلوانی-در-جامعه-هستند (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for head of the Hub of Teachers Basij of Tangestan held"], 5 December 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9561289/آیین-تکریم-و-معارفه-مسئول-کانون-بسیج-فرهنگیان-تنگستان-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Shabestan News, ["Addressing the concerns of producers and workers is the top priority of the Resistance Domain of the Workers Basij"], 25 November 2020, https://www.shabestan.news/news/997198/رفع-دغدغه-تولیدکنندگان-و-کارگران-اولویت-اول-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-کارگری (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ["Hub of the Professors of Universities Basij of Dehloran County inaugurated"], 22 July 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1393/04/31/438508/کانون-بسیج-اساتید-دانشگاه-های-شهرستان-دهلران-افتتاح-شد (in Persian).

1578. Sobh Damavand, ["Farewell and introduction ceremony of Resistance Domain Offices Basij of Damavand county held"], 9 March 2025, https://sobhdamavand.ir/مراسم-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-حوزه-مقاو (in Persian); Dana.ir, ["Head of Workers and Factories Basij of Babol appointed"], 15 January 2018, https://dana.ir/1279853/مسئول-بسیج-کارگران-و-کارخانجات-بابل-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["New head of Offices Basij of Meshginshahr county introduced"], 24 August 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8559333/مسئول-جدید-بسیج-ادارات-شهرستان-مشگین-شهر-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

1579. Mehr News Agency, ["Basiji athletes promote culture of chivalry in society"], 26 May 2025, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6479795/ورزشکاران-بسیجی-مروج-فرهنگ-پهلوانی-در-جامعه-هستند (in Persian); Sobh Damavand, ["Farewell and introduction ceremony of Resistance Domain Offices Basij of Damavand county held"], 9 March 2025, https://sobhdamavand.ir/مراسم-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-حوزه-مقاو (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["New head of Offices Basij of Meshginshahr county introduced"], 24 August 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8559333/مسئول-جدید-بسیج-ادارات-شهرستان-مشگین-شهر-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

the relevant county[1580] or by the commander of the relevant provincial corps, following a recommendation from the provincial head of the corresponding sectoral Basij organization.[1581]

Mirroring the provincial structure, in each county, there is an entity known as the Specialized Staff of the Sectoral and Specialists Basij, operating under the relevant Basij Resistance Sector Corps, which coordinates the strategies and activities of the sectoral Basij entities across the county.

10.3.1(III) BASIJ RESISTANCE DOMAINS AND BASES

In each county, the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps oversees entities called the Basij Resistance Domains, which are organized either on a territorial basis, covering specific geographic areas, or on a sectoral basis, covering institutions falling under the remit of a particular sectoral Basij organization. State media reports suggest that, in the case of territorially organized Basij Resistance Domains, their geographical area of responsibility typically aligns with a district, a subdivision of a county in Iran.[1582]

State media reports suggest that the commander of the Basij Resistance Domain is appointed by the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the county concerned.[1583]

Each Resistance Domain in turn oversees and coordinates the activities of several entities called the Basij Resistance Bases, which are the smallest units of the Basij structure.

The majority of Basij Resistance Bases are established within neighbourhoods, often in mosques or their immediate vicinity. The responsibility for managing and supervising these neighbourhood-based Bases and Domains rests with the Mosques and Neighbourhoods Basij Organization.[1584]

Official statements indicate that, for every 500 people, there must be at least one neighbourhood-level Basij Resistance Base.[1585]

1580. See, for example, Basij News Agency, مدیر کانون بسیج مهندسین صنعت ناحیه پلدختر منصوب شد ["Head of the Hub of the Industrial Engineers Basij of Poldokhtar appointed"], 3 March 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9672203/مدیر-کانون-بسیج-مهندسین-صنعت-ناحیه-پلدختر-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آیین تکریم و معارفه مسئول کانون بسیج فرهنگیان تنگستان برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for head of the Hub of Teachers Basij of Tangestan held"], 5 December 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9561289/آیین-تکریم-و-معارفه-مسئول-کانون-بسیج-فرهنگیان-تنگستان-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Shabestan, انتصاب مسئول جدید کانون بسیج مداحان آران و بیدگل ["New head of the Hub of the Eulogists Basij of Aran and Bidgol appointed"], 7 September 2022, https://www.shabestan.news/news/1213579/انتصاب-مسئول-جدید-کانون-بسیج-مداحان-آران-و-بیدگل (in Persian).

1581. See, for example, Sedaye Jonoob, مدیر کانون بسیج رسانه شهرستان کهگیلویه معرفی شد ["Head of the hub of the Media Basij of Kohgiluyeh introduced"], 2 February 2023, https://sedayejonoob.ir/?p=131088 (in Persian); ILNA, رسول احدی مدیر کانون بسیج رسانه شهرستان زنجان شد ["Rasoul Ahadi appointed head of the hub of the Media Basij in Zanjan county"], 9 June 2020, https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-زنجان-95/924475-رسول-احدی-مدیر-کانون-بسیج-رسانه-شهرستان-زنجان-شد (in Persian).

1582. Defa Press, برگزاری کارگاه مهارت‌های زندگی در حوزه مقاومت بسیج ریحانه النبی در بخش پلان ["Life skills workshop held at the Reyhaneh Al-Nabi Basij Resistance Domain in Palan district"], 23 November 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/632810/برگزاری-کارگاه-مهارت‌های-زندگی-در-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-ریحانه-النبی-در-بخش-پلان (in Persian); IRIB News, بهره برداری حوزه مقاومت بسیج بخش شمیل ["Inauguration of Basij Resistance Domain in Shamil district"], 22 November 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4063998/بهره-برداری-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-بخش-شمیل (in Persian); Nedaye Borkhar News Agency, فرمانده جدید حوزه مقاومت بسیج امام علی (ع) بخش حبیب آباد معارفه شد + تصاویر ["New commander of the Imam Ali Basij Resistance Domain in Habibabad district introduced + images"], 10 February 2023, https://nedayeborkhar.ir/فرمانده-جدید-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-امام-علی (in Persian).

1583. See, for example, Basij News Agency, آیین تکریم و معارفه فرمانده حوزه مقاومت بسیج امام حسین علیه السلام شهرستان پارسیان ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the commander of the Imam Hossein Basij Resistance Domain in Parsian county"], 18 March 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9675694/آیین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-امام-حسین-علیه-السلام-شهرستان-پارسیا (in Persian).

1584. Javan Online, مأموریت هر پایگاه مقاومت بسیج تحقق محله اسلامی است ["Mission of each Basij Resistance Base is to realize an Islamic neighbourhood"], 25 November 2022, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1118202/مأموریت-هر-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-تحقق-محله-اسلامی-است (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, نقش آفرینی تخصصی اقشار بسیج باید از پایگاه‌ها شروع شود ["Specialized engagement by Basij sectors should begin at local bases"], 6 September 2016, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/345631/نقش-آفرینی-تخصصی-اقشار-بسیج-باید-از-پایگاه-ها-شروع-شود (in Persian).

1585. See, for example, IRNA, هویت بخشی به پایگاه های بسیج از اهداف شورای محله اسلامی است ["Identity building of Basij Resistance Bases is among the goals of the Islamic Neighbourhood Council"], 21 May 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85117941/هویت-بخشی-به-پایگاه-های-بسیج-از-اهداف-شورای-محله-اسلامی-است (in Persian).

On 25 November 2022, Heidar Baba Ahmadi, the national head of the Mosques and Neighbourhoods Basij Organization, announced a five-year goal to establish over 80,000 Basij Resistance Bases across the country, emphasizing that no neighbourhood should be without a Basij Resistance Base and that they should be located in mosques.[1586] He noted that, at the time, 60,000 had already been established. By 20 August 2024, he reported that 79% of Basij Resistance Bases were in mosques and 5% in other sacred sites.[1587]

Other sectoral Basij organizations also manage Basij Resistance Bases in the institutions falling under their remit.[1588] For example, on 23 September 2014, the operations deputy of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization stated that 30,000 Basij Resistance Bases had been established within "the county's offices and organizations".[1589]

State media reports reviewed by Amnesty International indicate that commanders of neighbourhood-level Basij Resistance Bases, who must be special Basijis,[1590] are appointed by the commander of the relevant Basij Resistance Sector Corps.[1591] However, state media reports suggest that their direct superior is the commander of the relevant Basij Resistance Domain, who supervises commanders of Basij Resistance Bases and holds meetings with them.[1592]

In the case of sectoral Basij Resistance Bases, state media reports suggest that the appointing authority depends on whether the base is established within a county-level or provincial-level institution. Commanders of Basij Resistance Bases related to county-level institutions appear to be appointed by the commander of the relevant Basij Resistance Sector Corps,[1593] while commanders of bases related to provincial-level institutions appear to be appointed either by the provincial head of the

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1586. Javan Online, مأموریت هر پایگاه مقاومت بسیج تحقق محله اسلامی است ["Mission of each Basij Resistance Base is to realize an Islamic neighbourhood"], 25 November 2022, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1118202/مأموریت-هر-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-تحقق-محله-اسلامی-است (in Persian).

1587. ISNA, استقرار ۷۹ درصد پایگاه‌های مقاومت بسیج در مساجد ["79% of Basij Resistance Bases are established in mosques"], 20 August 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403053020814/استقرار-۷۹-درصد-پایگاه-های-مقاومت-بسیج-در-مساجد (in Persian).

1588. See Basij News Agency, افتتاح سه پایگاه مقاومت بسیج کارگران و کارخانجات ["Three Workers and Factories Basij Resistance Bases inaugurated"], 30 April 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9683896/افتتاح-سه-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-کارگران-وکارخانجات (in Persian); Defa Press, فیلم/ افتتاح پایگاه مقاومت بسیج ادارات و کارمندان بخشداری لاریجان ["Video: Opening of the Basij Resistance Base for Lahijan district governor's office staff"], 22 November 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/707459/فیلم-افتتاح-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-ادارات-و-کارمندان-بخشداری-لاریجان (in Persian); Basij News Agency, پایگاه مقاومت بسیج در زاوه افتتاح شد ۳ ["Three Basij Resistance Bases inaugurated in Zaveh"], 29 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8785137/3-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-در-زاوه-افتتاح-شد (in Persian).

1589. Mehr News Agency, فعالیت 30 هزار پایگاه بسیج در ادارات و سازمانهای کشور ["Operation of 30,000 Basij bases in government offices and organizations nationwide"], 17 October 2014, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/2390618/فعالیت-30-هزار-پایگاه-بسیج-در-ادارات-و-سازمانهای-کشور (in Persian).

1590. See Islamic Republic of Iran, اساسنامه سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 1982, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595, Article 42.

1591. See Khabar Online, حکم فرمانده پایگاه بسیج سازمان منطقه آزاد قشم اهدا شد ["Appointment decree for the commander of the Basij Resistance Base of the Gheshm Free Zone Organization presented"], 17 November 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1695917/حکم-فرمانده-پایگاه-بسیج-سازمان-منطقه-آزاد-قشم-اهدا-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, مراسم تودیع و معارفه فرمانده پایگاه مقاومت بسیج شهید عقیل سراج ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the commander of the Aghil Seraj Basij Resistance Base"], 24 April 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9594022/مراسم-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-شهید-عقیل-سرا (in Persian).

1592. See, for example, Basij News Agency, فرمانده حوزه امام حسین علیه السلام با جمعی از فرماندهان پایگاه های بخش گوهران دیدارکرد ["Commander of the Imam Hossein Basij Resistance Domain met with a group of commanders of Basij Resistance Bases in the Goharan district"], 13 October 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9635562/فرمانده-حوزه-امام-حسین-علیه-السلام-با-جمعی-از-فرماندهان-پایگاه-های-بخش-گوهران-دیدارکر (in Persian); Basij News Agency, دیدار فرمانده حوزه شهید شهرام فر با فرماندهان پایگاه های مقاومت بخش پلان ["Meeting between the commander of the Shahramfar Basij Resistance Domain and the commanders of Basij Resistance Bases in the Palan district"], 24 November 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9557744/دیدار-فرمانده-حوزه-شهید-شهرام-فر-با-فرماندهان-پایگاه-های-مقاومت-بخش-پلا (in Persian).

1593. See Gozaresh Khabar, انتصاب فرمانده جدید بسیج پایگاه حضرت نوح (ع) شرکت پایانه‌ها و مخازن پتروشیمی ["Appointment of new Basij commander for Hazrat Noah Base of the Petrochemical Terminals and Tanks Company"], 1 December 2023, https://gozareshekhabar.ir/fa/content/471898/فرمانده-جدید-بسیج-پایگاه-حضرت-نوح-ع-شرکت (in Persian); Bandar Imam Petrochemical Co., سرپرست پایگاه مقاومت بسیج کارگری پتروشیمی بندرامام منصوب شد ["Head of the Workers Basij Resistance Base of Bandar Imam Petrochemical appointed"], 31 May 2017, https://bipc.ir/fa/سرپرست-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-کارگری-پتروشیمی-بندرامام-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

relevant sectoral Basij organization[1594] or by the commander of the relevant provincial corps.[1595]

The scope of powers granted to the commanders of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases are defined in IRGC directives that are not publicly available.[1596] Official statements and state media reports indicate that commanders of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases receive their directives and overarching programmes from the commander of the relevant Basij Resistance Sector Corps, who regularly holds meetings with commanders of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases to supervise their activities.[1597]

According to official statements, "commanders of Basij [Resistance] Bases and Domains can request authorization to carry weapons."[1598] Information published by state media indicates that these weapons include AK-pattern rifles and handguns, the use of which is routinely taught at the premises of Basij Resistance Bases and Basij Resistance Domains to the Basij members recruited there, who include children.[1599]

1594. Miras Aria News Agency, معارفه فرمانده پایگاه مقاومت بسیج اداره‌کل میراث‌فرهنگی خراسان رضوی ["Introduction ceremony for commander of the Basij Resistance Base of the Khorasan Razavi Provincial Directorate of Cultural Heritage], 9 November 2022, https://www.chtn.ir/news/14010818770431/معارفه-فرمانده-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-اداره-کل-میراث-فرهنگی-خراسان (in Persian).

1595. State Welfare Organization of Iran, لیلا امامی سوادکوهی به عنوان فرمانده پایگاه مقاومت بسیج فاطمه زهرا(س) اداره کل بهزیستی استان مازندران منصوب شد ["Leila Emami Savadkoohi appointed commander of Fatemeh Zahra Basij Resistance Base of Mazandaran Welfare Department"], 20 October 2024, https://www.behzisti.ir/news/120330/لیلا-امامی-سوادکوهی-به-عنوان-فرمانده-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-فاطمه (in Persian).

1596. Amozesh Sadeh, وظایف و اختیارات فرمانده پایگاه بسیج چیست؟ توضیح کامل ["What are the duties and powers of the commander of a Basij Resistance Base? Full explanation"], https://amozeshsadeh.ir/وظایف-و-اختیارات-فرمانده-پایگاه-بسیج-چ (in Persian).

1597. See, for example, Basij News Agency, ابلاغ برنامه های بسیج سال ۱۴۰۳ به حوزه های مقاومت ["Notification of Basij programmes for the year 2024-2025 to the Basij Resistance Domains"], 15 May 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9598261/ابلاغ-برنامه-های-بسیج-سال-1403-به-حوزه-های-مقاوم (in Persian); Basij News Agency, دیدار فرماندهان پایگاه ها و گردان بیت المقدس با فرمانده ناحیه مقاومت بسیج خمینی شهر ["Meeting of the commanders of Basij Resistance Bases and Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion with the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Khomeini Shahr"], 19 June 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9249817/دیدار-فرماندهان-پایگاه-ها-و-گردان-بیت-المقدس-با-فرمانده-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-خمینی-شه (in Persian).

1598. Ensaf News, قانون به چه کسانی اجازه حمل اسلحه می‌دهد؟ ["Who does the law permit to carry weapons?"], 30 May 2017, https://ensafnews.com/63066/قانون-چه-کسانی-اجازه-حمل-اسلحه-می‌د (in Persian).

1599. See, for example, Basij Resistance Base of Ashagh Al-Hossein (Mabare Hosain), آموزش اسلحه کلت کمری و سلاح کلاشینکف ["Colt pistol and Kalashnikov rifle weapon training"], 19 October 2018, https://mabarehosain.blog.ir/1397/07/27/آموزش-اسلحه-کلت-کمری-و-سلاح-کلاشینکف (in Persian); Basij News Agency, برگزاری کلاس آموزش سلاح در پایگاه بسیج شهید بازوی شاهرود+ عکس ["Weapons training class at the Bazou'i Basij Resistance Base in Shahroud + photographs"], 29 October 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8769233/برگزاری-کلاس-آموزش-سلاح-در-پایگاه-بسیج-شهید-بازوی-شاهرود-عک (in Persian); Basij News Agency, برگزاری دوره ی آموزش بازوبست اسلحه کلاشینکف ["Training course on the assembly and disassembly of Kalishnikov rifles"], 10 February 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8635482/برگزاری-دوره-ی-آموزش-بازوبست-اسلحه-کلاشینک (in Persian).



A weapons training session held at the premises of a Basij Resistance Base. The training is teaching Basij members recruited there, who include children, about the use of firearms, including AK-47 pattern rifles and handguns. © Basij Resistance Base of Ashagh Al-Hossein / mabarehosain.blog.ir[1600]



A weapons training session held at the premises of a Basij Resistance Base. The training is teaching Basij members recruited there, who include children, about the use of AK-47 pattern rifles. © Basij News Agency[1601]

1600. Basij Resistance Base of Ashagh Al-Hossein (Mabare Hosain), آموزش اسلحه کلت کمری و سلاح کلاشینکف ["Colt pistol and Kalashnikov rifle weapon training"], 19 October 2018, https://mabarehosain.blog.ir/1397/07/27/آموزش-اسلحه-کلت-کمری-و-سلاح-کلاشینکف (in Persian).
1601. Basij News Agency, برگزاری دوره ی آموزش بازوبست اسلحه کلاشینکف ["Training course on the assembly and disassembly of Kalashnikov rifles"], 10 February 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8635482/برگزاری-دوره-ی-آموزش-بازوبست-اسلحه-کلاشینک (in Persian).



A weapons training session held at the premises of a Basij Resistance Base located in a mosque. The training is organized by a Basij Resistance Domain operating under the Mosques and Neighbourhoods Basij of the relevant county. The training teaches Basij members recruited there about the use of weapons, including AK-47 pattern rifles and handguns. Basij members receive demonstrations and practise assembling and disassembling AK-47 pattern rifles. © Basij News Agency[1602]

Within each Basij Resistance Base, the commander is responsible for maximizing recruitment from the local neighbourhood or, in the case of a sectoral Basij Resistance Base, from among the personnel of the institutions. Individuals formally join by completing a membership form and become classified as ordinary Basijis. According to state-affiliated websites, these members are generally expected to participate in the activities of the Basij Resistance Base for at least six hours per month.[1603]

Basij Resistance Bases then aim to encourage recruited members to increase their level of engagement and undergo military and ideological training to qualify as "active Basijis". This status is certified through an official card, which must be periodically renewed.

From among the active Basijis, depending on their military training and level of commitment, the commander of the Basij Resistance Base then organizes one or more units, traditionally referred to by the authorities as "combat groups".[1604] Active Basijis selected for "combat groups" are formally assigned to what is referred to as a "combat function". This assignment requires approval by the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps. Once approved, the designation is officially

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1602. Basij News Agency, برگزاری کلاس آموزش سلاح در پایگاه بسیج شهید بازوی شاهرود + عکس ["Weapons training class at the Bazou'i Basij Resistance Base in Shahroud + photographs"], 29 October 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8769233/برگزاری-کلاس-آموزش-سلاح-در-پایگاه-بسیج-شهید-بازوی-شاهرود-عک (in Persian).

1603. See Avije, چگونه عضو فعال بسیج شویم؟ مسیر صدور کارت بسیج فعال چیست؟ ["How to become an active Basij member? What is the process for obtaining an active Basij membership card?"], 9 December 2024, https://avije.org/بسیج-فعال (in Persian).

1604. Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش نمایش اقتدار توسط یگان‌های بسیج استان فارس در ۲۲ بهمن اجرا می‌شود ["Power exercise demonstration to be conducted by Basij cohorts of Fars province on 10 February"], 7 February 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/11/19/2448640/رزمایش-نمایش-اقتدار-توسط-یگان-های-بسیج-استان-فارس-در-22-بهمن-اجرا-می-شو (in Persian); Basij News Agency, فراخوان دسته‌های رزمی پایگاه‌های مقاومت بسیج مهریز ["Call-up of 'combat groups' of Basij Resistance Bases in Mehriz"], 4 July 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9253986/فراخوان-دسته-های-رزمی-پایگاه-های-مقاومت-بسیج-مهری (in Persian). Information available on state-affiliated websites indicates that, if a unit known as a "group" grows in size, it may be reclassified as a "company", which results in higher military ranks for both their members and commanders. See Amozesh Sadeh, شرح وظایف پایگاه بسیج محله: وظیفه پایگاه بسیج چیست؟ ["Duties of a neighbourhood Basij Resistance Base: What is the role of a Basij Resistance Base?"], 25 July 2025, https://amozeshsadeh.ir/شرح-وظایف-پایگاه-بسیج-محله-وظیفه-پایگا/#wzayf_janshyn_frmand (in Persian); Eitaa post: باسلام خدمت بسیجیان محترم پایگاه مقاومت بسیج قمر بنی هاشم ["Greetings to the respected Basij members of the Ghamar Bani Hashem Basij Resistance Base"], 15 November 2024, https://eitaa.com/pbasijgh/6134 (in Persian).

communicated to the members and recorded in their personal files.[1605]

The commander of the Basij Resistance Base introduces members of the "combat groups" organized in their Base to the Basij Resistance Domain, which then merges the "combat groups" from various Basij Resistance Bases to organize Imam Ali Battalions and Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions at the domain level.

Despite being labelled "combat groups", these units carry out domestic security operations within local communities and neighbourhoods, including the repression of protests. The involvement of "combat groups" in security operations is further highlighted by official statements describing the battalions formed from these groups at the domain level as "security battalions".[1606]

Commanders of Basij Resistance Bases typically coordinate closely with the commander of the relevant Basij Resistance Domain to ensure the training and maintenance of the battalions formed by that domain.[1607]

Furthermore, commanders of Basij Resistance Bases are required to maintain contact with battalion members who originate from their base. When orders are issued from higher levels of the chain of command to deploy Basij battalions to confront an "illegal gathering", the commanders of Basij Resistance Bases are expected to support the execution of these orders within their neighbourhoods by contacting their members.[1608]

10.3.1(III)(i) Imam Ali Battalions

The formation of the Imam Ali Battalions was first announced by the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, during an event on 7 October 2011.[1609] According to state media, the event was attended by 31,000 Basijis who had been organized as the Imam Ali Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran.[1610]

Around a year later, on 28 September 2012, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari announced that "more than 100 security battalions under the name of Imam Ali had been organized".[1611]

Nearly a decade later, on 24 February 2021, the then deputy general commander of the Central Imam Ali Headquarters, Gholamhossein Gheibparvar, stated that 1,000 Imam Ali Battalions had been

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1605. Basij Kolah Syah, آشنایی با نظام خدمتی بسیج انواع عضویتهای بسیج ["Introduction to the Basij service structure and types of Basij membership"], 17 November 2016, https://basijkolahsyah.blogfa.com/post/8 (in Persian).

1606. See, for example, Basij News Agency, فراخوان گردان امنیتی حوزه مقاومت نبی اکرم قزوین برگزار شد ["A call-up of the security battalion of Nabi Akram Basij Resistance Domain in Ghazvin was held"], 15 May 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9688011/ - -فراخوان-گردان-امنیتی (in Persian); Basij News Agency, فراخوان گردان رزمی پایگاه‌های بسیج در گلوگاه + تصاویر ["A call-up of the combat battalion from Basij Resistance Bases in Galugah + images"], 4 July 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9254035/-فراخوان-گردان-رزمی-پایگاه-های-بسیج-در-گلوگاه-تصاوی (in Persian).

1607. Basij News Agency, گردان بیت المقدس حوزه جزو برترین گردان های ناحیه ری است ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion of the Basij Resistance Domain is among the top battalions of Resistance Sector Corps of Rey"], 26 July 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8717887/-گردان-بیت-المقدس-حوزه-جزو-برترین-گردان-های-ناحیه-ری-است (in Persian).

1608. Amozesh Sadeh, شرح وظایف پایگاه بسیج محله: وظیفه پایگاه بسیج چیست؟ ["Duties of a neighbourhood Basij Resistance Base: What is the role of a Basij Resistance Base?"], 25 July 2025, https://amozeshsadeh.ir/شرح-وظایف-پایگاه-بسیج-محله-وظیفه-پایگا/#wzayf_janshyn_frmand (in Persian).

1609. Mashregh News, فهمیدن ارتباط انقلاب‌های منطقه با انقلاب اسلامی ایران چشم بصیرت ["Understanding the connection between regional revolutions and the Islamic Revolution of Iran: A vision of insight"], 7 October 2011, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/70794/فهمیدن-ارتباط-انقلاب-های-منطقه-با-انقلاب-اسلامی-ایران-چشم-بصیرت (in Persian).

1610. Mashregh News, فهمیدن ارتباط انقلاب‌های منطقه با انقلاب اسلامی ایران چشم بصیرت ["Understanding the connection between regional revolutions and the Islamic Revolution of Iran: A vision of insight"], 7 October 2011, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/70794/فهمیدن-ارتباط-انقلاب-های-منطقه-با-انقلاب-اسلامی-ایران-چشم-بصیرت (in Persian).

1611. Pupils Association News Agency, سازماندهی بیش از ۱۰۰ گردان امنیتی بسیج به نام امام علی ["Organization of over 100 Basij security battalions named after Imam Ali"], 28 September 2012, https://www.pana.ir/بخش-اخبار-2/6582-سازماندهی-بیش-از-گردان-امن (in Persian).

organized across the country.[1612]

As stated above, the formation of Imam Ali Battalions begins at the level of a Basij Resistance Domain, merging "combat groups" from several Basij Resistance Bases. State media reports indicate that the commander of the Basij Resistance Domain oversees the consolidation of Basij agents within the Domain into an Imam Ali Battalion through training and exercises.[1613] State media reports suggest that each Imam Ali Battalion within a Resistance Domain has an operational commander. Amnesty International was unable to confirm whether they are appointed by the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the relevant county or the commander of the relevant provincial corps.[1614]

The collective of Imam Ali Battalions from various Basij Resistance Domains across a county fall under an operational commander, appointed by the commander of the respective provincial corps.[1615] The county operational commander of the Imam Ali Battalions reports to the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, who exercises authority over all the Imam Ali Battalions within their county of responsibility.

On 16 December 2013, the then coordination deputy of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Mohammad Rivandi, stated:

> **"Imam Ali Battalions… undergo training on a weekly basis at their local sites and on a monthly basis within Security Cohorts to stay updated and prepared… The training received by the Imam Ali Battalions is tailored to the threats that are identified on a periodic basis, in order to ensure the necessary level of preparedness."[1616]**

An official statement by the then deputy commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Asaluyeh county, Hossein Tamiminia, on 4 September 2016, reiterated the training arrangements for the Imam Ali Battalions. He clarified that weekly training sessions are conducted through programmes designed and implemented at the level of the Basij Resistance Domains and Basij Resistance Sector Corps, while monthly training sessions are carried out by the Security Cohorts.[1617]

1612. Mehr News Agency, هر تهدید امنیتی را به‌شدت پاسخ می‌دهیم/فعالیت ۱۰۰۰ گردان امام علی ["We will respond firmly to any security threat: 1,000 Imam Ali Battalions are active"], 24 February 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5155375/هر-تهدید-امنیتی-را-به-شدت-پاسخ-می-دهیم-فعالیت-۱۰۰۰-گردان-امام (in Persian).

1613. See, for example, Basij News Agency, فراخوان گردان امام علی فاتحان قدس حوزه مقاومت بسیج فتح ["Call-up of the Imam Ali Fatehan Qods Battalion of the Fath Basij Resistance Domain"], 17 December 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9304038/فراخوان-گردان-امام-علی-ع-فاتحان-قدس-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-فتح (in Persian); Basij News Agency, اولین فرخوان گردان امنیتی امام علی(ع) حوزه مقاومت بسیج مالک اشتر ناحیه چناران ["First call-up for Imam Ali Security Battalion of Malek Ashtar Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Chenaran"], 14 November 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9293344/اولین-فرخوان-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علی-ع-حوزه-مقاومت-بسیج-مالک-اشتر-ناحیه-چناران (in Persian); IRIB News, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی(ع) در دیشموک ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Security Battalion in Dishmook"], 4 October 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2845978/رزمایش-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علیع-در-دیشموک (in Persian).

1614. See, for example, Basij News Agency, تکریم و معارفه فرمانده محترم گردان امام علی (ع) ["Farewell and introduction of the esteemed commander of Imam Ali Battalion"], 6 November 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9466417/تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-محترم-گردان-امام-علی-ع (in Persian).

1615. Basij News Agency, آئین تکریم و معارفه فرمانده گردان امام علی (ع) در هندیجان ["Farewell and introduction ceremony of Imam Ali Battalion commander in Hendijan"], 13 August 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9533168/آئین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-گردان-امام-علی-ع-در-هندیجان (in Persian); Basij News Agency, فرمانده جدید گردان امام علی(ع) پیشوا منصوب شد ["New commander appointed for Imam Ali Battalion in Pishveh"], 2 March 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9418620/فرمانده-جدید-گردان-امام-علیع-پیشوا-منصوب-شد (in Persian). State media articles sometimes refer to the lead commander of the Imam Ali Battalions in a county as the commander of the Imam Ali Battalions of a particular sector, in reference to the geographical scope of responsibility of a Basij Resistance Sector Corps.

1616. Fars News Agency, آموزش گردان‌های دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز/ برگزاری رزمایش بزرگ در تهران ["Training of the Basij's defensive and security battalions in line with current threats: Large-scale exercise held in Tehran"], 16 December 2013, https://farsnews.ir/politics/آموزش-گردان‌های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز/برگزاری-رزمایش-بزرگ-در-تهران (in Persian).

1617. Basij News Agency, آموزش گردان دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز ["Training of Basij defensive and security battalion in line with current threats"] 4 September 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8739254/آموزش-گردان--دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز (in Persian); Basij News Agency, اجرای رزمایش اقتدار و صلابت گردان امام علی علیه السلام در خوشاب ["Power and stability exercise of Imam Ali Battalion in Khoshab"], 24 September 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9541586/اجرای-رزمایش-اقتدار-و-صلابت-گردان-امام-علیعلیه-السلام-در-خوشاب-عکس (in Persian).

The Imam Ali Battalions also comprise provincial and national entities overseeing the standardized organization, training and conduct of these battalions across the country.

State media articles suggest that there is a provincial IRGC Imam Ali headquarters[1618] in several provinces, including Ghazvin[1619] and Lorestan.[1620] Amnesty International could not find information online confirming such headquarters exist in every province. The organization was also unable to find any information about the commanders of these headquarters and their relationship with the commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps and the operational commanders of the Imam Ali Battalions within counties.

At the national level, the Central Imam Ali Security Headquarters, based in Tehran, oversees the development of Imam Ali Battalions throughout the country, ensuring they are uniformly equipped and trained.[1621] The existence of this national headquarters was first made public on 7 September 2019 when state media outlets published a decree by the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, appointing Gholamhossein Gheibparvar as the deputy general commander of the Central Imam Ali Headquarters.[1622] The term deputy in the title indicates that the general commander of the IRGC is the commander of the headquarters, but that he has delegated these command responsibilities to a deputy.

Additionally, state media reports mention a "regional Imam Ali headquarters in the west of the country", with its commander, Morteza Moradi, visiting Imam Ali Battalions in Kermanshah and Hamedan provinces.[1623] Amnesty International also found an article on state media referring to the "Imam Ali headquarters in the south of the country" and its commander, Abolfazl Gazani,[1624] but uncovered no further information about its activities or similar headquarters in other regions.

1618. These headquarters should not be mistaken with entities that FARAJA has organized under a similar name in several provinces.

1619. Velaiat News, تجلیل از فرماندهان و عوامل قرارگاه امنیتی امام علی (ع) سپاه استان ["Honoring commanders and personnel of Imam Ali security headquarters of provincial IRGC"], 25 April 2023, https://velaiatnews.com/تجلیل-از-فرماندهان-و-عوامل-قرارگاه-امن/ (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, اشراف اطلاعاتی قرارگاه امام علی (ع) سبب تثبیت امنیت در قزوین شده است ["Intelligence oversight of Imam Ali headquarters has stabilized security in Ghazvin"], 19 April 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/01/30/2882688/اشراف-اطلاعاتی-قرارگاه-امام-علی-ع-سبب-تثبیت-امنیت-در-قزوین-شده-است (in Persian).

1620. Mehr News Agency, تشکیل یگان‌های ویژه و گردان‌های بیت المقدس در لرستان ["Formation of Special Cohorts and Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Lorestan"], 16 July 2018, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4348458/تشکیل-یگان-های-ویژه-و-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-در-لرستان (in Persian).

1621. See Basij News Agency, پیشرفت و آبادانی حق همه مردم با هر گرایش و مذهبی است ["Progress and development is the right of all people, regardless of their beliefs and religions"], 15 October 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9382796/پیشرفت-و-آبادانی-حق-همه-مردم-با-هر-گرایش-و-مذهبی-است (in Persian); Basij News Agency, بازدید سردار غیب‌پرور از گردان‌های امام علی (ع) سپاه ناحیه همدان ["Visit of General Gheibparvar to Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Hamedan"], 24 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9323830/بازدید-سردار-غیب‌پرور-از-گردان‌های-امام-علی-ع-سپاه-ناحیه-همدان (in Persian); Eslamabad Khabar, بازدید جانشین قرارگاه امنیتی مرکزی امام علی سپاه از گردان‌های امنیتی امام علی ناحیه اسلام آبادغرب ["Deputy of Central Imam Ali Security Headquarters visits Imam Ali Security Battalions in Eslam Abad-e Gharb"], https://eslamabadkhabar.ir/index.php/news/307355/بازدید-جانشین-قرارگاه-امنیتی-مرکزی-امام-علی-سپاه-از-گردان-های-امنیتی-امام-علی-ناحیه-اسلام-آبادغرب (in Persian).

1622. IRNA, غیب‌پرور جانشین فرمانده سپاه در قرارگاه امام علی (ع) شد ["Gheibparvar appointed as deputy general commander of the IRGC in the Central Imam Ali Headquarters"], 7 September 2019, https://www.irna.ir/news/83468173/غیب-پرور-جانشین-فرمانده-سپاه-در-قرارگاه-امام-علی-ع-شد (in Persian).

1623. See, for example, IRNA, رزمایش تاکتیکی گردان‌های امام علی (ع) در قصرشیرین برگزار شد ["Tactical exercises of Imam Ali Battalions held in Ghasr-e Shirin"], 16 August 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85261403/رزمایش-تاکتیکی-گردان-های-امام-علی-ع-در-قصرشیرین-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, بازدید سردار مرادی از گردان شهید رسول حیدری ملایر ["Visit of General Moradi to the Rasoul Heidari Battalion of Malayer"], 22 July 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9446530/بازدید-سردار-مرادی-از-گردان-شهید-رسول-حیدری-ملایر (in Persian).

1624. Milad-e Lorestan, حضور نماینده قرارگاه امنیتی امام علی(ع) در جنوب کشور در جمع بسیجیان لارستان+تصاویر ["Presence of the representative of Imam Ali headquarters in southern Iran with Basij members of Lorestan + images"], 24 November 2021, http://mldl.ir/?p=122829 (in Persian).

10.3.1(III)(ii) Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions

As stated previously, Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are formed at the level of a Basij Resistance Domain.[1625] Active Basijis form "combat groups" within their local Basij Resistance Base. The Domain then issues regular calls to recruit and train members of these groups to create a Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion.[1626]

State media reports indicate that the commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion of each Basij Resistance Domain is appointed by the commander of the relevant IRGC provincial corps.[1627] However, the more immediate superior of the commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion of each Domain is the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of the relevant county, who usually delivers speeches at the inauguration ceremonies of Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion commanders.[1628]

According to an academic article published in a state-affiliated journal, the "security" missions of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are conducted under the operational control of the Imam Ali Battalions.[1629]

On 20 November 2015, the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, stated that 1,500 Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions had been formed across the country.[1630] Three years later, on 22 September 2018, the authorities announced that the number of Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions across the country had increased to 2,000.[1631]

According to official statements, members of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions receive regular training from the Basij Resistance Domains in their respective areas to maintain operational readiness.[1632] Additionally, the Basij Resistance Sector Corps and IRGC provincial corps periodically call for and

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1625. See Basij News Agency, دفاع از کوی و برزن مهمترین وظیفه گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس ["Defense of neighbourhoods and streets is the most important duty of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 1 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8771177/دفاع-از-کوی-و-برزن-مهمترین-وظیفه-گردان-های-بیت-المقد (in Persian); Mashregh News, گزارش فعالیت های پنج ساله بسیج ["Report on five years of Basij activities"], 26 November 2014, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/366173/گزارش-فعالیت-های-پنج-ساله-بسیج (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, آموزش گردان‌های دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز ["Training of Basij defence and security battalions in line with daily threats"], 16 November 2013, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/242686/آموزش-گردان-های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز (in Persian).

1626. See, for example, Basij News Agency, برگزاری مرحله اول فراخوانی آمادگی دسته‌های رزمی گردان‌های بیت المقدس ["Holding the first phase of readiness call for the 'combat groups' of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 3 July 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9523771/برگزاری-مرحله-اول-فراخوانی-آمادگی-دسته-های-رزمی-گردان‌های-بیت-المقدس (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, آموزش گردان‌های دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز ["Training of Basij defence and security battalions in line with daily threats"], 16 November 2013, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/242686/آموزش-گردان-های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز (in Persian).

1627. See, for example, Tarood News, مراسم تکریم و معارفه فرمانده گردان امنیتی بیت المقدس حوزه مقاومت بسیج علی ابن ابیطالب علیه السلام بخش رودهن ["Ceremony to honour and introduce the commander of the Al-Qods Security Battalion, Ali Ibn Abi Taleb Basij Resistance Domain, Roudhan district"], 6 March 2024, https://tarood.ir/مراسم-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-گردان-امن (in Persian); Khuzestan Water and Power Organization News, فرمانده گردان ۱۲۶ بیت‌المقدس حوزه شهید عباسپور منصوب شد ["Commander of the 126 Al-Qods Battalion, Abbaspour Basij Resistance Domain appointed"], 12 August 2013, https://news.kwpa.ir/-فرمانده-گردان-بیت-المقدس-حوزه-شهید-عباسپور-منصوب-5/8003-بخش-عمومی شد (in Persian).

1628. Haft Cheshmeh News, فرمانده جدید گردان بیت‌المقدس حوزه مقاومت بسیج شهری اردل معرفی شد ["New commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion of the Basij Resistance Domain in Ardal introduced"], http://haftcheshme.com/news/172102/فرمانده+جدید+گردان+بیت+المقدس+حوزه+مقاومت+بسیج+شهری+اردل+معرفی+شد (in Persian).

1629. See, for example, Basij News Agency, هدف اصلی گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس دفاعی و امنیتی است ["Primary goal of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions is defensive and security operations"], 30 June 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9253010/هدف-اصلی-گردانالی-بیت-المقدس-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-است (in Persian); Dr. Mehdi Bozorgzadeh, Dr. Seyed Hossein Hosseini, and Ali Ghasemi Zadeh, بررسی میزان آمادگی گردانهای بیت المقدس سپاه تهران بزرگ برای مقابله با بحرانهای امنیتی ناشی از زلزله احتمالی شهر تهران ["Study on the Preparedness of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Greater Tehran Corps to Counter Security Crises Resulting from a Potential Earthquake in Tehran"], May 2016, Quarterly Journal of Crisis Management, https://journals.ihu.ac.ir/article_201973_60a80e9bdebddb0d1294fcdaf18c0a51.pdf (in Persian).

1630. Balagerivehei News, تکریم و معارفه فرمانده گردان بیت‌المقدس ["Farewell and introduction of the commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion"], 20 November 2015, https://balagerivehei.ir/index.php?newsid=1699 (in Persian).

1631. Mashregh News, بسیج ۲ هزار گردان بیت‌المقدس دارد ["Basij has 2,000 Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 22 September 2018, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/895228/بسیج-۲-هزار-گردان-بیت-المقدس-دارد (in Persian).

1632. Hamshahri Online, آموزش گردان‌های دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز ["Training of Basij defence and security battalions in line with daily threats"], 16 November 2013, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/242686/آموزش-گردان-های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز (in Persian).

organize large-scale coordinated training activities across counties or entire provinces.[1633]

Official statements and state media reports indicate that, in each county, the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps oversees the training and development of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions, following the instructions and established programmes of the IRGC and its provincial corps. Many state media reports indicate that the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps frequently attends some of the larger-scale training exercises.[1634]

10.3.1(IV) OPERATIONAL DIVISIONS AND BRIGADES

Each IRGC provincial corps has at least one operational division or brigade.[1635] The authorities and state media outlets generally refer to these operational divisions and brigades as the combat or military forces of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force.

Each division or brigade of the provincial corps has a lead commander heading an operational headquarters. State media reports indicate that this commander is appointed by the commander of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC.[1636] This structure means that the commanders of operational divisions and brigades report to the commander of the provincial corps and are subject to the superior authority and oversight of the commander of the relevant IRGC regional headquarters and, above them, the national commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force and the general commander of the IRGC.

The IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran[1637] and the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Alborz[1638] are the exceptions, with the commanders of their operational divisions appointed directly by the commander of the relevant IRGC regional headquarters, who is also the general commander of the IRGC. Given that the IRGC's corps for the rest of Tehran province falls within the responsibility of the same IRGC regional headquarters, it is likely that the commander of its operational division is also appointed by the general commander of the IRGC, though Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports

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1633. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت‌المقدس در آذربایجان شرقی برگزار شد (فیلم)] "Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in East Azerbaijan (video)"], 30 September 2016, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/07/09/1200561/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس-در-آذربایجان-شرقی-برگزار-شد-فیلم (in Persian); Balagerivehei News, تکریم و معارفه فرمانده گردان بیت‌المقدس] "Farewell and introduction of the commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion"], 20 November 2015, https://balagerivehei.ir/index.php?newsid=1699 (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, آموزش گردان‌های دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز] "Training of Basij defence and security battalions in line with daily threats"], 16 November 2013, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/242686/آموزش-گردان-های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز (in Persian).

1634. See, for example, ISNA, رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس در صومعه‌سرا برگزار شد] "Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in Someh Sara"], 20 December 2019, https://www.isna.ir/news/98092921984/رزمایش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-در-صومعه-سرا-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت‌المقدس در آذربایجان شرقی برگزار شد (فیلم)] "Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in East Azerbaijan (video)"], 30 September 2016, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/07/09/1200561/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس-در-آذربایجان-شرقی-برگزار-شد-فیلم (in Persian); ISNA, بسیجیان با گردان بیت‌المقدس ارتباط زیادی داشته باشند] "Basij members should have close ties with Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion"], 20 November 2015, https://www.isna.ir/news/gilan-87648/بسیجیان-با-گردان-بیت-المقدس-ارتباط-زیادی-داشته-باشند (in Persian).

1635. At the time of publication, most IRGC provincial corps had one division. However, there were exceptions such as the Provincial Corps of Esfahan, which is a relatively larger corps with two divisions, and the Provincial Corps of Golestan and the Provincial Corps of Ardabil, which are relatively small corps with forces reaching the size of one brigade rather than a division.

1636. See, for example, IRIB News, انتصاب فرمانده جدید لشکر هشت نجف اشرف] "Appointment of the new commander of 8 Najaf Ashraf Division"], 1 June 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3463288/انتصاب-فرمانده-جدید-لشکر-هشت-نجف-اشرف (in Persian); Defa Press, فرمانده جدید لشکر ۱۷ امام علی بن ابی طالب معرفی شد] "New commander of 17 Imam Ali Division introduced"], 29 December 2021, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/497288/فرمانده-جدید-لشکر-۱۷-امام-علی-بن-ابی-طالبع-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

1637. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده جدید لشکر ۲۷ محمد رسول الله (ص) منصوب شد] "New commander of 27 Mohammad Rasoul Allah Division appointed"], 19 June 2018, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1397/03/29/1753438/فرمانده-جدید-لشکر-27-محمد-رسول-الله-ص-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

1638. Basij News Agency, آئین تکریم و معارفه فرمانده لشکر ۱۰ حضرت سیدالشهدا (ع) برگزار شد] "Ceremony to honour and introduce the commander of 10 Seyed Al-Shohada Division held"], 14 July 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9357575/آئین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-لشکر-10-حضرت-سیدالشهدا-ع-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آئین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده لشکر ۱۰ حضرت سیدالشهدا (ع) استان البرز برگزار شد] "Farewell and introduction ceremony of the 10 Seyed Al-Shohada Division of Alborz province held"], 20 May 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9018548/آئین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-لشگر-10-حضرت-سیدالشهداع-استان-البرز (in Persian).

confirming this.

The names of operational divisions often combine a number and the name of a religious figure, event or location. The combat forces of the operational divisions and brigades of provincial corps are typically organized in subsidiary battalions, which are assigned to barracks in one or more cities across a province.[1639] Detailed information about the number of divisions, brigades and battalions within each provincial corps and the location of their barracks across each province is not publicly available.

The operational divisions and brigades of provincial corps include IRGC agents classified as official guards, who hold permanent employment contracts with the IRGC, as well as agents contracted for five years of service. IRGC personnel classified as special Basijis and active Basijis may also form part of the operational divisions and brigades of provincial corps.[1640] As noted above, according to the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law, special Basijis are on the payroll of the IRGC and must make themselves available to the IRGC full-time, while active Basijis are given the option to take part in specific operations and receive financial renumeration accordingly.

The name of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan is the Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps and its command headquarters is located in Sanandaj, the capital of Kurdistan province.[1641] As mentioned above, the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, together with the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, fall under the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters of the IRGC, based in Urumieh, the capital of West Azerbaijan province.[1642]

The name of the main operational division of the IRGC Provincial Corps of Kurdistan is the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division.[1643] The command centre of this operational division is also located in Sanandaj.[1644]

The name of the IRGC Provincial Corps of Kermanshah is the Nabi Akram Corps and its command headquarters is located in Kermanshah, the capital of Kermanshah province.[1645] As mentioned above, the IRGC Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, together with the IRGC provincial corps of Ilam and Hamedan, fall under the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, which is also based in the city of Kermanshah, Kermanshah province.[1646] The name of the main operational division of the IRGC

1639. Fash News, نگاهی به عملکرد لشکر 27 محمد رسول‌الل ["A look at the performance of the 27 Mohammad Rasoul Allah Division"], 9 July 2016, https://fashnews.ir/news/47324/نگاهی-به-عملکرد-لشکر-27-محمد-رسول‌الله-ص (in Persian).

1640. See, for example, the following article, in which the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Esfahan states that the Imam Hossein Division within this corps consists of 25 battalions, which are all formed of Basij agents, and that in the near future the number of battalions will increase to 50. ISNA, تشکیل دو یگان آرام‌سازی مردم پس از فتنه ۸۸ در اصفهان ["Formation of two cohorts for the pacification of the people after the 2009 sedition in Esfahan"], 23 November 2013, https://www.isna.ir/news/Esfahan-24803/تشکیل-دو-یگان-آرام-سازی-مردم-پس-از-فتنه-88-در-اصفهان (in Persian). This article also refers to the death of a Basij agent belonging to the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.

1641. Balad, سپاه بیت المقدس کردستان ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps of Kurdistan"], https://balad.ir/p/سپاه-بیت-المقدس-کردستان-sanandaj_government-organization-and-agency-22cfs05NjuqUTy#15/35.32987/46.98609 (accessed on 6 August 2026).

1642. See also Balad, قرارگاه حمزه سیدالشهدا ["Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters"], https://balad.ir/p/قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-uromia_military-center-5DrNoaCrkXfwQS#15/37.56383/45.09644 (accessed on 6 August 2026).

1643. Kurd Press, جانشین سپاه بیت‌المقدس و فرمانده لشکر ۲۲ کردستان معرفی شدند ["Deputy commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps and commander of the 22 Kurdistan Division introduced"], 12 December 2023, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2764320/جانشین-سپاه-بیت-المقدس-و-فرمانده-لشکر-۲۲-کردستان-معرفی-شدند (in Persian).

1644. Balad, لشکر ۲۲ سپاه بیت المقدس کردستان ["22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of Kurdistan"], https://balad.ir/p/لشکر-۲۲-سپاه-بیت-المقدس-کردستان-sanandaj_military-center-3pAmedu3D0Y7rL#15/35.32818/46.98912 (accessed on 6 August 2026).

1645. Balad, سپاه پاسداران حضرت نبی اکرم استان کرمانشاه ["IRGC Nabi Akram Corps of Kermanshah province"], https://balad.ir/p/سپاه-پاسداران-حضرت-نبی-اکرم-استان-کرمانشاه-kermanshah_government-organization-and-agency-3YaZdAbMtARE1E#15/34.34581/47.11239 (accessed on 6 August 2026).

1646. Neshan, قرارگاه منطقه ای نجف اشرف سپاه ["Regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters of the IRGC"], https://neshan.org/maps/places/da7f71eeaab32a4a05599c0b4ea93e7f#c34.353-47.208-15z-0p (accessed on 6 August 2026).

Provincial Corps of Kermanshah is the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division. The command centre of this operational division is also located in Kermanshah.[1647]

The name of the IRGC Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan is the Shohada Corps and its command headquarters is located in Urumieh, the capital of West Azerbaijan province.[1648] As mentioned above, the IRGC Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, together with the IRGC Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, fall under the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, based in Urumieh.[1649] The name of the main operational division of the IRGC Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan is the 3 Hamzeh Operational Division.[1650] The command centre of this operational division is known as the Alhmadi Barracks, located in Urumieh.[1651]

10.3.1(IV)(i) Imam Hossein Battalions

Imam Hossein Battalions are organized at the county level, with each county typically having one such battalion,[1652] based in the county capital.[1653] Official statements indicate that the commander of each Imam Hossein Battalion is appointed by the commander of the relevant IRGC provincial corps and that they "coordinate with the Basij Resistance Domains [across the county] to identify capable and combat-ready individuals. After recruitment and training, these forces are organized [into an Imam Hossein Battalion]".[1654]

Iranian authorities and state media frequently refer to the Imam Hossein Battalions as combat battalions, stating that they are highly skilled forces, trained to be ready for combat in situations of armed conflict.[1655] However, as explained below, the Imam Hossein Battalions also participate in domestic security operations, including protest repression.

1647. Neshan, لشکر ۲۹ حضرت نبی اکرم "29 Nabi Akram Operational Division"], https://neshan.org/maps/places/40fc9dc5056d1ab4017d85c64cebb968#c35.689-51.389-11z-0p (accessed on 6 August 2026).
1648. Balad, سپاه شهدا استان آذربایجان "IRGC Shohada Corps of West Azerbaijan province"], https://balad.ir/p/سپاه-شهدا-استان-آذربایجان-uromia_government-organization-and-agency-2apBrhpREga9VV#15/37.5363/45.07433 (accessed on 6 August 2026).
1649. Balad, قرارگاه حمزه سیدالشهدا "Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters"], https://balad.ir/p/قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-uromia_military-center-5DrNoaCrkXfwQS#15/37.56383/45.09644 (accessed on 6 August 2026).
1650. Basij News Agency, آزادی زندانی توسط سرباز وظیفه سپاه شهدای استان در ارومیه "Prisoner freed by conscription soldier of Shohada Corps of the province, in Urumieh"], 14 May 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9432274/آزادی-زندانی-توسط-سرباز-وظیفه-سپاه-شهدای-استان-در-ارومیه (in Persian).
1651. See IRNA, تعمیق معنویت از اهداف فعالیتهای عقیدتی در لشکر ۳ حمزه (س) است "Deepening spirituality as one of the goals of ideological activities in the 3 Hamzeh Division"], 5 May 2014, https://www.irna.ir/news/81151852/تعمیق-معنویت-از-اهداف-فعالیتهای-عقیدتی-در-لشکر-3-حمزه-س-است (in Persian).
1652. Basij News Agency, تشکیل گردان امام حسین (ع) با هدف تقویت اقتدار و صلابت نظام است "Formation of the Imam Hossein Battalion to strengthen the power and authority of the system"], 2 August 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8558371/تشکیل-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-با-هدف-تقویت-اقتدار-و-صلابت-نظام-است (in Persian); Tabnak, بکارگیری گردان امام حسین(ع) در مباحث امنیتی "Deployment of the Imam Hossein Battalion in security issues"], 9 January 2010, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/80473/بکارگیری-گردان-امام-حسینع-در-مباحث-امنیتی (in Persian).
1653. Basij News Agency, دفاع از کوی و برزن مهمترین وظیفه گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس "Defence of neighbourhoods and streets is the most important duty of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 1 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8771177/دفاع-از-کوی-و-برزن-مهمترین-وظیفه-گردان-های-بیت-المقد (in Persian).
1654. Basij News Agency, تشکیل گردان امام حسین (ع) با هدف تقویت اقتدار و صلابت نظام است "Formation of the Imam Hossein Battalion to strengthen the power and authority of the system"], 2 August 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8558371/تشکیل-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-با-هدف-تقویت-اقتدار-و-صلابت-نظام-است (in Persian). See also Tabnak, بکارگیری گردان امام حسین(ع) در مباحث امنیتی "Deployment of the Imam Hossein Battalion in security issues"], 9 January 2010, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/80473/بکارگیری-گردان-امام-حسینع-در-مباحث-امنیتی (in Persian).
1655. Basij News Agency, فراخوان دسته‌های رزمی گردان امام حسین(ع) "Call for Imam Hossein Battalion 'combat groups'"], 4 July 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9523761/فراخوان-دسته-های-رزمی-گردان-امام-حسینع (in Persian); Defa Press, تشکیل گردان ویژه امام حسین در تیپ 12 قائم استان سمنان "Formation of the Imam Hossein Battalion within the 12 Ghaem Brigade in Semnan province"], 10 December 2016, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/216876/تشکیل-گردان-ویژه-امام-حسینع-در-تیپ-12-قائمعج-استان-سمنان (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) سربازان انقلاب و ولایت هستند "Imam Hossein Battalions are soldiers of the Revolution and guardians of the jurisprudence"], 21 October 2013, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1392/07/29/171625/گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-سربازان-انقلاب-و-ولایت-هستند (in Persian); Tabnak, بکارگیری گردان امام حسین(ع) در مباحث امنیتی "Deployment of the Imam Hossein Battalion in security issues"], 9 January 2010, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/80473/بکارگیری-گردان-امام-حسینع-در-مباحث-امنیتی (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, تشکیل گردان‌های عملیاتی امام حسین(ع) در سراسر آذربایجان شرقی "Formation of Imam Hossein Operational Battalions across East Azerbaijan"], 3 August 2008, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/726238/تشکیل-گردانهای-عملیاتی-امام-حسین-ع-در-سراسر-آذربایجان-شرقی (in Persian).

Unlike the Imam Ali and Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions, which are integrated into the structure of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, the Imam Hossein Battalions are often referred to in official statements and state media reports as belonging to a specific operational division of an IRGC provincial corps.[1656] However, official statements and state media reports suggest that Basij Resistance Sector Corps collaborate with operational divisions in the training and maintenance of Imam Hossein Battalions and support their commanders.[1657]

Furthermore, a leaked official document obtained by Amnesty International and dated 12 October 2022 shows that the commander of an IRGC provincial corps may order its Imam Hossein Battalions to be placed under the operational control of a Basij Resistance Sector Corps.

In August 2008, the then commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Abdollah Araghi, announced the formation of the first Imam Hossein Battalion within this corps and indicated that this marked the beginning of the organization of Imam Hossein Battalions within the IRGC provincial corps across the country.[1658]

In February 2010, a senior IRGC official, Ali Jebreili, announced that 270 Imam Hossein Battalions had been formed across the country.

In September 2012, the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, stated that more than 400 Imam Hossein Battalions had been organized.[1659]

In October 2013, the then commander of the Imam Sajad Provincial Corps of Hormozgan, Mohammad Marani, indicated that the number of Imam Hossein Battalions across the country had increased to

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1656. See, for example, Basij News Agency, برگزاری اردوی رزمی بسیجیان گردان سوم امام حسین لشکر عملیاتی 17 امام علی بن ابی‌طالب] "Holding combat training camp of Basijis of the 3 Imam Hossein Battalion of 17 Imam Ali Ibn Abi Taleb Operational Division"], 18 May 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9513233/برگزاری-اردوی-رزمی-بسیجیان-گردان-سوم-امام-حسین-ع-لشکر-عملیاتی-17-امام-علی-بن-ابی-طالب (in Persian); Basij News Agency, حضور گردان دوم بسیج امام حسین لشکر عملیاتی ۱۷ علی بن ابی طالب قم در راهیان نور] "Presence of the 2 Imam Hossein Battalion of the 17 Imam Ali Ibn Abi Taleb Operational Division of Qom, in the Caravan of Light"], 18 March 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9499560/حضور-گردان-دوم-بسیج-امام-حسین-ع-لشکر-عملیاتی-۱۷-علی-بن-ابی-طالبع-قم-در-راهیان-نو (in Persian); Defa Press, پیام مشترک فرماندهان محور شهید محمدزاده و گردان امام حسین به مناسبت روز مقاومت] "Joint message of the commanders of martyr Mohammadzadeh and the Imam Hossein Battalion on the occasion of Axis of Resistance Day"], 2 January 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/565104/پیام-مشترک-فرماندهان-محور-شهید-محمدزاده-و-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-به-مناسبت-روز-مقاوم (in Persian); Nakhl Photo Agency, تصاویر رزمایش بزرگ تاکتیکی عملیاتی گردان ۴۰۳ امام حسین علیه السلام] "Images of the large tactical operational exercise of the 403 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 17 November 2022, https://nakhllarestan.ir/?p=19184 (in Persian); Sepah News سپاه نیوز: فرمانده لشکر عملیاتی ۱۶ استان گیلان گفت: ۱۵۰ نفر از بسیجیان گردان امام حسین رشت و پاسداران لشکر عملیاتی ۱۶ قدس گیلان در بیمارستان رازی رشت مستقر هستند و به‌صورت شیفتی به بیماران خدمات ارائه می‌دهند] "Sepah News: Commander of the 16 Operational Division of Gilan said: 150 Basijis of the Imam Hossein Battalion of Rasht and the guards of the 16 Qods Operational Division of Gilan are stationed at Razi Hospital in Rasht and provide shift-based services to patients"], 2 March 2020, https://sepahnews.ir/fa/news/9746/سپاه-نیوز-فرمانده-لشکر-عملیاتی-۱۶-استان-گیلان-گفت-۱۵۰-نفر-از-بسیجیان-گردان-امام-حسینع-رشت-و-پاسداران-لشکر-عملیاتی-۱۶-قدس-گیلان-در-بیمارستان-رازی-رشت-مستقر-هستند-و-به‌صورت-شیفتی-به-بیماران-خدمات-ارائه-می‌دهن (in Persian).

1657. See, for example, Basij News Agency, آیین تکریم و معارفه فرمانده گردان ۱۲۳ امام حسین(علیه السلام) تیران وکرون] "Ceremony to honour and introduce commander of the 123 Imam Hossein Battalion of Tiran and Karun"], 2 December 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9560302/آیین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-گردان-۱۲۳-امام-حسینعلیه-السلام-تیران-وکرو (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آئین افتتاحیه دوره آموزشی تکمیلی بسیج گردان امام حسین در سپاه ناحیه پیشوا] "Opening ceremony of the supplementary training course for the Basij of the Imam Hossein Battalion at the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Pishva"], 9 July 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9525721/آئین-افتتاحیه-دوره-آموزشی-تکمیلی-بسیج-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-در-سپاه-ناحیه-پیشو (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آموزش بسیجیان گردان ۱۱۳ امام حسین علیه السلام جهت برگزاری ایست بازرسی در شرایط بحرانی امنیتی] "Training of Basijis of the 113 Imam Hossein Battalion for establishing checkpoints in critical security situations"], 22 May 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9434130/آموزش-بسیجیان-گردان-۱۱۳-امام-حسین-علیه-السلام-جهت-برگزاری-ایست-بازرسی-در-شرایط-بحرانی-امنیت (in Persian); Basij News Agency, پایان دوره آموزش تکمیلی بسیجیان گردان امام حسین)ع(در ابهر] "Conclusion of the supplementary training course for Basijis of the Imam Hossein Battalion in Abhar"], 18 August 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9267565/پایان-دوره-آموزش-تکمیلی-بسیجیان-گردان-امام-حسینع-در-ابه (in Persian).

1658. Fars News Agency, اولین گردان امام حسین (ع) در سپاه تهران بزرگ تشکیل شد] "First Imam Hossein Battalion formed in IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran"], 31 August 2008, https://www.farsnews.ir/news/8706100622/اولین-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-در-سپاه-تهران-بزرگ-تشکیل-شد (in Persian).

1659. ISNA, سردار جعفری: ۱۰۰ گردان امنیتی و ۴۰۰ گردان نظامی در بسیج تشکیل شد] "General Jafari: 100 security battalions and 400 military battalions formed in the Basij"], 28 September 2012, https://www.isna.ir/news/91070704488/سردار-جعفری-100-گردان-امنیتی-و-400-گردان-نظامی-در-بسیج-تشکیل (in Persian).

around 500.[1660]

At the national level, an entity in Tehran called the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters oversees the development and standardized training of Imam Hossein Battalions throughout the country, ensuring they are prepared for integration into the operational divisions and brigades of provincial corps.[1661]

Amnesty International reviewed state media reports announcing the appointment of the commander of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters on 20 December 2015,[1662] followed by the appointment of his successor on 25 November 2019.[1663] State media reports note that the general commander of the IRGC made the appointment.[1664]

10.3.1(IV)(ii) Fateheen Battalions

Fateheen Battalions are regarded as the most skilled among the Basij units, receiving advanced training like that provided to military commando forces, preparing them for high-risk missions.[1665] As the recruitment and training standards are strenuous and the most dedicated and physically and tactically capable Basij agents are selected, the total number of Fateheen Battalions across the country is fewer than those of the Imam Hossein and other Basij battalions. According to official statements, authorities have established at least one Fateheen Battalion under each IRGC provincial corps.[1666]

Like the Imam Hossein Battalions, the Fateheen Battalions are not formally part of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps structure. In official statements and media reports, the Fateheen Battalion of each province is described as belonging to a specific operational division of an IRGC provincial corps.[1667]

1660. Tasnim News Agency, گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) سربازان انقلاب و ولایت هستند ["Imam Hossein Battalions are soldiers of the Revolution and guardians of the jurisprudence"], 21 October 2013, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1392/07/29/171625/گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-سربازان-انقلاب-و-ولایت-هستند (in Persian).

1661. IRIB News, نمایش آمادگی و اقتدار بسیجیان ["Display of readiness and power by Basij forces"], 26 September 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2835889/نمایش-آمادگی-و-اقتدار-بسیجیان (in Persian). The article refers to a series of training military contests for over a dozen Imam Hossein Battalions in Yazd province, organized by the main operational brigade of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Yazd and conducted "according to the standards of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters".

1662. Defa Press, مراسم معارفه فرمانده قرارگاه امام حسین(ع) برگزار شد ["Appointment ceremony of the commander of Imam Hossein Headquarters held"], 20 December 2015, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/63022/مراسم-معارفه-فرمانده-قرارگاه-امام-حسینع-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1663. ISNA, سردار حق‌بین فرمانده قرارگاه مرکزی امام حسین (ع) شد ["General Haghbin appointed as commander of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters"], 25 November 2019, https://www.isna.ir/news/98090402465/سردار-حق-بین-فرمانده-قرارگاه-مرکزی-امام-حسین-ع-شد (in Persian).

1664. See, for example, YJC, سردار غیب‌پرور فرمانده قرارگاه امام حسین(ع) سپاه شد ["General Gheibparvar appointed commander of IRGC's Imam Hussein headquarters"], 9 December 2015, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/5421664/سردار-غیب‌پرور-فرمانده-قرارگاه-امام-حسینع-سپاه-شد (in Persian).

1665. See Tasnim News Agency, گفتگو با فرمانده یگان ویژه فاتحین: به دنبال کارهای نشدنی هستیم؛ استقبال نیروی قدس سپاه از عملیات‌های فاتحین در سوریه ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian); Mizan News Agency, پیشرفت خیره‌کننده یگان ویژه فاتحین در عرصه‌های آموزشی، عملیاتی و ستادی ["Impressive progress of the specialized Fateheen Cohort in educational, operational and administrative spheres"], 24 December 2019, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/579262/پیشرفت-خیره‌کننده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-در-عرصه‌های-آموزشی-عملیاتی-و-ستادی (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان فاتحین شرق تهران آغاز شد؛ حضور ۱۴۰ رزمنده در رزمایش ["Exercise of the Fateheen Battalion begins in East Tehran: 140 fighters participate"], 22 November 2017, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4151390/رزمایش-گردان-فاتحین-شرق-تهران-آغاز-شد-حضور-۱۴۰-رزمنده-در-رزمایش (in Persian); Mizan News Agency, فاتحین تهران: ۱۶ سال فعالیت یکی از حرفه‌ای‌ترین یگان‌های ویژه ["Tehran's Fateheen: 16 years of operations as one of the most professional specialized cohorts"], 28 September 2017, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/358643/فاتحین-تهران-۱۶-سال-فعالیت-یکی-از-حرفه‌ای‌ترین-یگان‌های-ویژه (in Persian).

1666. Tasnim News Agency, گفتگو با فرمانده یگان ویژه فاتحین: به دنبال کارهای نشدنی هستیم؛ استقبال نیروی قدس سپاه از عملیات‌های فاتحین در سوریه ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian).

1667. ISNA, فرمانده لشگر عملیاتی ۳۱ عاشورا: دشمنان جرأت حمله زمینی ندارند ["Commander of 31 Ashoura Operational Division: Enemies do not dare launch ground attack"], 26 May 2026, https://www.isna.ir/news/1405030503151/فرمانده-لشگر-عملیاتی-۳۱-عاشورا-دشمنان-جرأت-حمله-زمینی-ندارند (in Persian); IRIB News, برگزاری یادواره شهدای مدافع حرم گردان فاتحین یکم لشکر عملیاتی ولی عصر خوزستان ["Commemoration ceremony for the martyrs defending the shrine of the Fateheen Battalion 1 Vali Asr Operational Division of Khuzestan"], 25 December 2024, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4414835/برگزاری-یادواره-شهدای-مدافع-حرم-گردان-فاتحین-یکم-لشکر-عملیاتی-ولی-عصر-خوزستا (in Persian).

A review of official statements and media reports indicates that each Fateheen Battalion is led by a commander.[1668] Amnesty International was unable to find any state media reports noting which superior official appoints the provincial commander of the Fateheen Battalion. However, the organization identified state media reports mentioning the commander of the IRGC provincial corps and/or their coordination deputy introducing new commanders at inauguration ceremonies and delivering farewell and appreciation speeches to outgoing ones.[1669]

The collective of Fateheen Battalions across the country is referred to as the Fateheen Cohort or Cohorts.[1670] They fall under the authority of the national commander of the Fateheen Cohort.[1671] Amnesty International was unable to find any state media reports clarifying which superior official appoints the national commander of the Fateheen Cohort.

In a media interview on 19 April 2020, the then commander of the Fateheen Battalions of Tehran province, Mahmoud Hashemi, explained that while the most skilled Basijis in Tehran province had been organized into distinct, cohesive battalions for over a decade since July 1999, they were only formally named the Fateheen Cohort by the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, in 2012.[1672]

In October 2016, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari announced official efforts to "expand the Fateheen Battalions across the county."[1673]

1668. See, for example, Bartarinha, آماده‌باش گردان فاتحین سپاه پاسداران ["Fateheen Battalion of the IRGC on standby"], 9 October 2023, https://www.bartarinha.ir/یخش-اخبار-روز-20/1360407-آماده-باش-گردان-فاتحین-سپاه-پاسداران (in Persian); Defa Press, گردان فاتحین در تراز انقلاب اسلامی است ["Fateheen Battalion is at the level of the Islamic Revolution"], 16 August 2021, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/472051/-گردان-فاتحین-در-تراز-انقلاب-اسلامی-است (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, فرمانده گردان فاتحین کرمانشاه درگذشت ["Commander of Fateheen Battalion of Kermanshah passes away"], 12 July 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5255864/فرمانده-گردان-فاتحین-کرمانشاه-درگذشت (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آئین معارفه فرمانده جدید گردان فاتحین استان انجام شد ["Introduction of new commander of Fateheen Battalion in province takes place"], 18 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9313345/آئین-معارفه-فرمانده-جدید-گردان-فاتحین-استان-انجام-شد (in Persian).

1669. Basij News Agency, انتصاب فرمانده و جانشین یگان فاتحین استان البرز ["Appointment of commander and deputy commander of Alborz province Fateheen Cohort"], 3 November 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9721807/انتصاب-فرمانده-و-جانشین-یگان-فاتحین-استان-البرز (in Persian); Basij News Agency, آئین معارفه فرمانده جدید گردان فاتحین استان انجام شد ["Introduction of new commander of Fateheen Battalion in province takes place"], 18 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9313345/آئین-معارفه-فرمانده-جدید-گردان-فاتحین-استان-انجام-شد (in Persian).

1670. State media articles use the term "cohort" in both its singular and plural forms to refer to the collective. Occasionally, state media articles also use the term "Fateheen cohort" to refer to the Fateheen Battalion of a province. See, for example, Basij News Agency, انتصاب فرمانده و جانشین یگان فاتحین استان البرز ["Appointment of commander and deputy commander of Alborz province Fateheen Cohort"], 3 November 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9721807/انتصاب-فرمانده-و-جانشین-یگان-فاتحین-استان-البرز (in Persian); ISNA, فرمانده یگان‌های فاتحین: نتیجه جنگ با ما، فرار و شکست دشمن است ["Commander of Fateheen Cohorts: The outcome of war with us is the enemy's retreat and defeat"], 8 October 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402071610670/فرمانده-یگان-های-فاتحین-نتیجه-جنگ-با-ما-فرار-و-شکست-دشمن-است (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, گفتگو با فرمانده یگان ویژه فاتحین: به دنبال کارهای نشدنی هستیم؛ استقبال نیروی قدس سپاه از عملیات‌های فاتحین در سوریه ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/-گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian).

1671. Defa Press, فرمانده یگان فاتحین به شهادت رسید ["Commander of Fateheen Cohort martyred"], 2 April 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/824121/فرمانده-یگان-فاتحین-به-شهادت-رسید (in Persian); ISNA, فرمانده یگان‌های فاتحین: نتیجه جنگ با ما، فرار و شکست دشمن است ["Commander of Fateheen Cohorts: The outcome of war with us is the enemy's retreat and defeat"], 8 October 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402071610670/فرمانده-یگان-های-فاتحین-نتیجه-جنگ-با-ما-فرار-و-شکست-دشمن-است (in Persian).

1672. Tasnim News Agency, گفتگو با فرمانده یگان ویژه فاتحین: به دنبال کارهای نشدنی هستیم؛ استقبال نیروی قدس سپاه از عملیات‌های فاتحین در سوریه ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/-گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian).

1673. Basij News Agency, گردان‌های فاتحین در کشور توسعه می‌یابد ["Expansion of Fateheen Battalions in the country"], 22 October 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8766588/گردان-های-فاتحین-در-کشور-توسعه-می-یابد (in Persian).

Accordingly, under each IRGC provincial corps, at least one Fateheen Battalion has been organized.[1674] Sometimes, these Fateheen Battalions are named after a specific religious figure or event.[1675]

The Central Imam Hossein Headquarters oversees the development and training of the Fateheen Battalions, as well as that of the Imam Hossein Battalions, nationwide, ensuring their readiness for integration into the operational divisions and brigades of the IRGC provincial corps. A state media report dated 28 June 2023 refers to two officials from the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters – the "executive officer of Fateheen affairs" and the "officer in charge of jihadi training and education of Fateheen affairs" – visiting the base of the Fateheen Battalion of the Provincial Corps of Esfahan to assess the "combat capability" and "tactical skills" of the battalion and to "provide solutions, suggestions, and directives".[1676]

10.3.1(V) SECURITY COHORTS AND BRIGADES

A review of official statements and state media reports indicate that, in addition to provincial operational divisions or brigades and county Basjj Battalions working under the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, many IRGC provincial corps have established one or more Security Cohorts or Brigades.[1677] The term "cohort" is used to refer to a military unit that is composed of several battalions, collectively reaching a size that would be smaller than a division and may or may not be larger than a brigade.[1678] Security Cohorts may be named after a religious figure or event.[1679]

1674. Mizan News Agency, ["Tehran's Fateheen: 16 years of operations as one of the most professional specialized cohorts"], 28 September 2017, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/358643/فاتحین-تهران-۱۶-سال-فعالیت-یکی-از-حرفه‌ای‌ترین-یگان‌های-ویژه (in Persian).

1675. For example, the IRGC Provincial Corps of Esfahan has at least two Fateheen Battalions, which are called Hazrat-e Ali Akbar Fateheen Battalion and Hazrat-e Ghamar Bani Hashem Fateheen Battalion. See Basij News Agency, ["Inspection of two special Fateheen Battalions by the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters"], 28 June 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9522476/دیدار-و-کنترل-قرارگاه-مرکزی-امام-حسین-علیه-السلام-از-دو-گردان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

1676. Basij News Agency, ["Inspection of two specialized Fateheen Battalions by the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters"], 28 June 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9522476/دیدار-و-کنترل-قرارگاه-مرکزی-امام-حسین-علیه-السلام-از-دو-گردان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

1677. See, for example, Basij News Agency, ["Introduction of the representative of the Supreme Leader in the Security Cohort of the IRGC Provincial Corps of Lorestan"], 28 May 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9602239/معارفه-مسئول-نمایندگی-ولی-فقیه-در-یگان-امنیتی-سپاه-لرستان (in Persian); ["Imam Reza Mosque borough 17 Tehran"], Eitaa post: #فرصت_شغلی ["#Job_opportunity"], 1 September 2023, https://eitaa.com/emamreza17?q=تکاور (in Persian); Iranian Militarism, Telegram post: ["Laser printing design for security combat function"], 18 April 2023, https://t.me/Iranian_Militarism/28020 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["A few hours with the Security Cohorts: Are you on this side or that side"], 17 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5633933/چند-ساعت-همراه-یگان-امنیتی-تو-این-وری-هستی-یا-آن-وری (in Persian); Sayeh News, ["Tactical exercise of the Ansar Seyed Al-Shohada Security Brigade of Tehran province in the city of Andisheh"], 13 February 2022, https://www.sayeh-news.com/fa/main/detail/122869/برگزاری-تمرین-تاکتیکی-تیپ-امنیتی-انصار-سیدالشهدا(ع)-استان-تهران-در-شهر-اندیشه (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Statement of the Hazrat Bani Ghamar Hashem Security Cohort"], 1 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9308520/بیانیه-یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-قمر-بنی-هاشم-ع (in Persian); ISNA, ["Formation of two cohorts for the pacification of the people after the 2009 sedition in Esfahan"], 23 November 2013, https://www.isna.ir/news/Esfahan-24803/تشکیل-دو-یگان-آرام-سازی-مردم-پس-از-فتنه-88-در-اصفهان (in Persian).

1678. Amnesty International has used "cohort" to translate the Persian term *yegan*, which does not have an equivalent in standard terminology in English for the names of units in a military organization.

1679. For example, according to official statements, the IRGC Corps of Greater Tehran has two Security Brigades, the Hazrat-e Zahra Security Brigade and the Al Mohammad Security Brigade, and multiple Security Cohorts, including the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort, the Imam Reza Security Cohort, the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Security Cohort, the Imam Hadi Security Cohort and the Imam Sajad Security Cohort. The IRGC corps for the rest of Tehran province has at least once Security Cohort known to Amnesty International called the Hazrat Bani Ghamar Hashem Security Cohort. See Basij News Agency, ["Meeting with the families of martyrs from the spiritual Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Maghdad"], 15 May 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9432585/دیدار-با-خانواده-های-شهدای-روحانی-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-مقداد (in Persian); Farda News, ["Intelligence oversight by the IRGC at the level of Tehran"], 25 May 2013, https://www.fardanews.com/-80/264568-بخش-جامعه (in Persian).

State media reports indicate that the general commander of the IRGC appoints the commanders of the Security Cohorts.[1680] Leaked official documents obtained by Amnesty International, along with state media reports, indicate that the commander of the Security Cohort receives orders from and reports to the commander of the provincial corps, who typically attends the inauguration ceremonies of the commanders of its Security Cohorts.[1681]

Official statements and state media reports indicate that the Security Cohorts are organized and trained under the oversight of the provincial corps, with the commanders of the relevant provincial corps and regional headquarters visiting the headquarters of these Security Cohorts and holding meetings with their commanders to ensure "preparedness".[1682]

There is very little publicly available information on the number and names of the Security Cohorts organized under the IRGC provincial corps or on the number, types and distribution of the battalions they comprise. Nonetheless, leaked official documents, official statements and state media reports reviewed by Amnesty International indicate that Security Cohorts are organized into subsidiary battalions,[1683] as well as, in some cases, ranger companies or special operations teams.[1684] These sources suggest that Security Cohorts are primarily composed of Basij agents. However, references in state media reports to the presence of guards within Security Cohorts,[1685] along with information published by political dissidents investigating Iran's security apparatus,[1686] suggest that the Security Cohorts also include battalions formed from official guards.

1680. Sobhedana News Agency, ["Commander of the Security Cohorts of Fath Corps in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province appointed"], 22 December 2020, https://www.sobhedena.ir/News/Fa/10948/فرمانده-یگان-امنیتی-سپاه-فتح-استان-کهگ (in Persian).

1681. See, for example, Sobhe Delfan, ["Introduction of the commander of the Imam Ali Security Cohort"], 3 August 2024, https://sobhedelfan.ir/معرفی-فرمانده-یگان-امنیتی-امام-علی-علی/ (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["New commander of the Hazrat Ghamar Bani Hashem Operational Cohort introduced"], 7 June 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8869525/فرمانده-جدید-یگان-عملیاتی-قمر-بنی-هاشم-معرفی-شد (in Persian); Asr Khabar, ["Appointment of the commander of the Al Mohammad Security Brigade"], 6 January 2014, https://asrkhabar.com/fa/news/32746/انتصاب-فرمانده-تیپ-امنیتی-آل-محمدص (in Persian).

1682. See, for example, Basij News Agency, ["Preparedness of Basij Battalions guarantees the security stability of the province"], 11 July 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9034336/آمادگی-گردان-های-بسیج-ثبات-امنیت-استان-را-تضمین-می-کند (in Persian); basijpress.ir, ["Visit of General Kowsari to the Imam Reza Security Cohort"], 31 October 2017, https://www.aparat.com/v/h19g4w6 (in Persian); basijpress.ir, ["Visit of General Kowsari to the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 5 September 2017, https://www.aparat.com/v/q634shl (in Persian); basijpress.ir, ["Visit of Tehran IRGC commander to the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Security Cohort"], 22 August 2017, https://www.aparat.com/v/g81bc8h (in Persian); Mashregh News, ["Details of Basij Security Cohorts' activities in Tehran"], 6 January 2014, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/270964/جزئیات-فعالیت-یگان-های-امنیتی-بسیج-تهران (in Persian).

1683. See section 10.3.5(I) for leaked documents. See also Jahan News, ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Combat exercise of Basij forces in the IRGC Al-Ghadir Security Cohort in Yazd"], 19 November 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9078879/تمرین-رزمی-نیروهای-بسیجی-یگان-امنیتی-سپاه-الغدیر-یزد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Preparedness of Basij Battalions guarantees the security stability of the province"], 11 July 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9034336/آمادگی-گردان-های-بسیج-ثبات-امنیت-استان-را-تضمین-می-کند (in Persian); Donya-e-Eqtesad, ["IRGC's Intelligence (Organization's) oversight at the level of Tehran"], 25 May 2013, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-62/2724697-اشراف-اطلاعاتی-سپاه-در-سطح-تهران (in Persian).

1684. Radio Zamaneh, ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["A few hours with the Security Cohorts: Are you on this side or that side"], 17 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5633933/چند-ساعت-همراه-یگان-امنیتی-تو-این-وری-هستی-یا-آن-وری (in Persian).

1685. See Ham Qasam, ["Ceremony honouring the revolutionary-minded of the Imam Ali Security Cohort"], https://hamqasam.ir/مراسم-تجلیل-از-جهادگران-یگان-امنیتی-ام (in Persian).

1686. See Sarkoobgaran, ["Role of Mohammad Corps of Tehran in suppressing uprisings"], date unknown, https://sarkoobgaran.com/نقش-سپاه-محمد-تهران-در-سرکوب-قیامها-و (in Persian).

Based on state media reports, the Provincial Corps of Kermanshah has at least one Security Cohort called the Imam Ali Security Cohort.[1687] A group of political dissidents confidentially shared with Amnesty International a document prepared based on information received from several insiders within Iran's security apparatus, which states that the Imam Ali Security Cohort of Kermanshah province consists of at least five Imam Ali Battalions.

Amnesty International was unable to identify any state media reports indicating the names of the Security Cohorts organized under the Provincial Corps of Kurdistan or the Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan. However, the same group of political dissidents mentioned above also confidentially shared with Amnesty International a second document, prepared based on insider information, which states that the Security Cohort of the Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan comprises at least 11 Imam Ali Battalions.

Amnesty International was able to gather more details about the Security Cohorts of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran and their operational headquarters, offering insights into possibly similar arrangements across the country. It is worth noting, however, that owing to the strategic importance of Greater Tehran as Iran's capital, this corps appears to have an unparalleled number of Security Cohorts as well as two Security Brigades, and that these cohorts and brigades are comprised of multiple battalions and several ranger companies, including the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company.[1688]

On 24 March 2013, the then commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Mohsen Kazemini, announced the existence of several Security Cohorts within this corps. He said: "In the area of security, two brigades – Hazrat-e Zahra and Al Mohammad – and four Security Cohorts – Vali Asr, Imam Hassan Mojtaba, Imam Hadi and Imam Reza – are well prepared".[1689]

Since then, leaked official documents obtained by Amnesty International and state media reports indicate that more Security Cohorts have been formed in Greater Tehran, including the Imam Sajad Security Cohort and the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort.[1690]

State media reports and a leaked official document obtained by Amnesty International, dated 12 October 2022, indicate that both Security Cohorts and Basij Resistance Sector Corps maintain their own Imam Ali Battalions.[1691] This document contains an order from the commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, instructing the Security Cohorts and the Basij Resistance Sector Corps within Greater Tehran to deploy their respective Imam Ali Battalions in

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1687. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, پیکر شهیدگمنام در یگان امنیت امام علی (ع) کرمانشاه تشییع و تدفین ["Body of unknown martyr laid to rest at Imam Ali Security Cohort in Kermanshah"], 29 December 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5667930/پیکر-شهیدگمنام-در-یگان-امنیت-امام-علی-ع-کرمانشاه-تشییع-و-تدفین (in Persian); Jahan News, بوسه فرمانده بر دستان سرباز ["Commander's kiss on soldier's hands"], 15 December 2022, https://www.jahannews.com/video/840488/بوسه-فرمانده-دستان-سرباز-فیلم (in Persian).

1688. Jahan News, بوسه فرمانده بر دستان سرباز ["Commander's kiss on soldier's hands"], 15 December 2022, https://www.jahannews.com/video/840488/بوسه-فرمانده-دستان-سرباز-فیلم (in Persian); Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).

1689. Donya-e-Eqtesad, اشراف اطلاعاتی سپاه در سطح تهران ["IRGC's Intelligence (Organization's) oversight at the level of Tehran"], 25 May 2013, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-62/2724697-اشراف-اطلاعاتی-سپاه-در-سطح-تهران (in Persian).

1690. It is possible that the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort is the same as the Vali Asr Security Cohort, mentioned in the 2013 statement of Mohsen Kazemini, because both names refer to the 12th and final Shia Imam. For more information on leaked documents referring to Security Cohorts, see sections 10.3.5(I) and 10.3.5(II). See also Basij News Agency, رزمایش اقتدار امنیتی گردان‌های نمونه‌ی سپاه تهران بزرگ ["Power exercise of exemplary battalions of Greater Tehran Corps"], 23 November 2019, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9192400/رزمایش-اقتدار-امنیتی-گردان-های-نمونه-ی-سپاه-تهران-بزرگ (in Persian); Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان (عج) ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian); Basij News Agency, دیدار با خانواده‌های شهدای روحانی ناحیه مقاومت بسیج مقداد ["Meeting with the families of martyrs from the spiritual Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Maghdad"], 15 May 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9432585/دیدار-با-خانواده-های-شهدای-روحانی-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-مقداد (in Persian); Etelaf Bozorg, انتصاب جانباز اکبر غلامی به عنوان مسئول جهاد و سازندگی یگان امنیتی امام سجاد (ع) ["Appointment of veteran Akbar Gholami as head of Jihad and Construction of the Imam Sajad Security Cohort"], https://www.etelaf-bozorg-varzeshkaran.com/news/view/id/3707 (accessed on 11 August 2026) (in Persian).

1691. See section 10.3.5(I). See also Darab Online, تصاویر رزمایش تاکتیکی گردان امنیتی ۶۰۳ امام علی (ع) در داراب ["Images of the tactical exercise of 603 Imam Ali Security Battalion in Darab"], 12 September 2015, https://www.darabonline.com/3333 (in Persian).

response to the ongoing protests.[1692]

Amnesty International was unable to obtain further information on how the Imam Ali Battalions of the Security Cohorts differ from those under the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, including potential distinctions in uniforms, equipment, formation, mandate and deployment procedures. Additionally, the nature of the working relationship and operational coordination between the commanders of Security Cohorts and Basij Resistance Sector Corps remained unclear to Amnesty International.

Another leaked document obtained by the organization indicates that coordination tasks are carried out through operational headquarters. Dated 9 October 2022, the document is an order from the commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, instructing the four operational headquarters across Greater Tehran – Qods, Nasr, Fath and Ghadr – to pursue the maximum mobilization of all battalions of Security Cohorts, Security Brigades and Basij Resistance Sector Corps.[1693] The order contains directives regarding the positioning of various security forces, and instructs the operational headquarters to "take action with close attention and care in the arrangement and positioning of the Beit Al-Moghaddas, Imam Ali and Imam Hossein battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps and the Security Cohorts in hotspots of confrontation."

Furthermore, as stated previously, in a speech on 7 December 2014, the then coordination deputy of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Mohammad Rivandi, stated that Imam Ali Battalions receive weekly trainings at their local sites and monthly trainings through the Security Cohorts.[1694] While the statement offers limited detail, the reference to "local sites" likely refers to the trainings that Basij Resistance Sector Corps regularly organize for the Imam Ali Battalions of their respective county.[1695] This statement indicates cooperation between the Basij Resistance Sector Corps and the Security Cohorts of the IRGC, including on scheduling and content of training, assessment and performance standards and deployment readiness.

10.3.1(VI) SPECIAL FORCES

The IRGC's Ground Resistance Force includes, alongside its operational divisions and brigades, Special Forces units across the country.[1696] According to state media reports and official statements, these elite units consist of agents who undergo rigorous training in commando and special operations, focusing on unconventional warfare, "counterterrorism" and high-risk missions.[1697]

Some of the Special Forces units have reached the size of a division while others are organized as brigades. In official statements and state media reports, the brigades are often referred to as Special

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1692. For further details about the content of these leaked official documents, see section 10.3.5(I).

1693. See section 10.3.5(I). Leaked official documents reviewed by Amnesty International indicate that the Imam Hadi and Imam Sajad Security Cohorts fall under the Qods Operational Headquarters, the Al Mohammad Security Brigade and the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort fall under the Nasr Operational Headquarters, the Imam Reza Security Cohort falls under the Fath Operational Headquarters and the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Security Cohort and the Hazrat-e Zahra Security Brigade fall under the Ghadr Operational Headquarters.

1694. Hamshahri Online, آموزش گردان‌های دفاعی و امنیتی بسیج متناسب با تهدیدات روز ["Training Basij defence and security battalions in line with current threats"], 16 December 2013, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/242686/آموزش-گردان-های-دفاعی-و-امنیتی-بسیج-متناسب-با-تهدیدات-روز (in Persian).

1695. Basij News Agency, آموزش طرح بنیان مرصوص گردان امنیتی امام علی ["Training programme of the Bonyan-e Marsous plan for the Imam Ali Security Battalion"], 24 November 2014, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9646801/آموزش-طرح-بنیان-مرصوص-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علیع (in Persian).

1696. See ISNA, مسابقات مقدماتی طب رزم ["Preliminary combat medicine competitions"], 4 July 2023, https://www.isna.ir/photo/1402041308181/مسابقات-مقدماتی-طب-رزم (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, با تکاوران ویژه سپاه پاسداران بیشتر آشنا شوید ["Get to know the elite forces of the IRGC better"], 2 May 2017, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1396/02/12/1396160/با-تکاوران-ویژه-سپاه-پاسداران-بیشتر-آشنا-شوید (in Persian).

1697. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, با تکاوران ویژه سپاه پاسداران بیشتر آشنا شوید ["Get to know the elite forces of the IRGC better"], 2 May 2017, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1396/02/12/1396160/با-تکاوران-ویژه-سپاه-پاسداران-بیشتر-آشنا-شوید (in Persian); ISNA, مسابقات مقدماتی طب رزم ["Preliminary combat medicine competitions"], 4 July 2023, https://www.isna.ir/photo/1402041308181/مسابقات-مقدماتی-طب-رزم (in Persian).

Forces brigades or ranger brigades.[1698] These brigades typically have a religious name, sometimes combined with a number.

A review of state media reports by Amnesty International indicates that most of the Special Forces units primarily cover a specific geographic area while a prominent Tehran-based Special Forces unit, called the Sabereen Cohort, can be assigned to operations across the county.[1699] Special Forces units assigned to a geographic area include the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, and the 3 Division of Hamzeh Special Forces in Urumieh, West Azerbaijan province.[1700]

It remains unclear to Amnesty International whether the regional Special Forces units report to the provincial corps or directly to an IRGC regional headquarters. State media frequently quote the commanders of regional headquarters commenting on the status and achievements of the Special Forces units in their regions, suggesting that Special Forces most likely report to IRGC regional headquarters.[1701]

The commander of the national-level Sabereen Cohort is appointed by the commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force.[1702] Amnesty International was unable to ascertain whether the same official appoints the commanders of the regional Special Forces units. State media reports identified by the organization frequently mention the presence of the commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force or their deputy at ceremonies introducing the commanders of these regional Special Forces units.[1703]

1698. See, for example, Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید تیپ نیروی مخصوص ۱۱۰ سلمان فارسی نیروی زمینی سپاه معرفی شد ["New commander of the 110 Salman-e Farsi Special Force Brigade of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force introduced"], 20 October 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1697798428000321334/فرمانده-جدید-تیپ-نیروی-مخصوص-110-سلمان-فارسی-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-معرفی-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, تیپ تکاور ۱۱۰ سلمان فارسی یگان قدرتمند نیروی زمینی سپاه پاسداران است ["110 Salman-e Farsi Ranger Brigade is a powerful cohort of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force"], 9 July 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8538706/تیپ-تکاور-110-سلمان-فارسی-یگان-قدرتمند-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-پاسداران-است (in Persian).

1699. IRNA, یک مسئول در سپاه: دفاع تمام‌قد از انقلاب تکلیف همگان است ["An IRGC official: Defending the Revolution fully is a duty for everyone"], 24 April 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85455632/یک-مسئول-در-سپاه-دفاع-تمام-قد-از-انقلاب-تکلیف-همگان-است (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, تجهیزات پیشرفته‌ای در اختیار یگان صابرین است/ ناگفته‌هایی از عملیات‌های برون‌مرزی دفاع مقدس؛ گفتگو با فرمانده تیپ ویژه صابرین ["Advanced equipment available to the Sabereen Cohort: Untold stories of cross-border operations in the Sacred Defence: Interview with the commander of the Sabereen Special Force Brigade"], 4 October 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/07/13/2356223/تجهیزات-پیشرفته-ای-در-اختیار-یگان-صابرین-است-ناگفته-هایی-از-عملیاتهای-برون-مرزی-دفاع-مقدس-گفتگو-با-فرمانده-تیپ-ویژه-صابرین (in Persian).

1700. Other Special Forces units include the Saheb Al-Zaman Ranger Brigade, headquartered in Sirjan, Kerman province; the Ansar Al-Hojjah Ranger Brigade in Fasa, Fars province; the Imam Sajad Ranger Brigade in Kazeroun, Fars province; the Hazrat-e Mahdi Ranger Brigade in Dezful, Khuzestan province; the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade in Javanroud, Kermanshah province; the Mirza Kouchak Khan Special Force Brigade in Langarud, Gilan province; and the 110 Salman-e Farsi Ranger Brigade in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province.

1701. For example, in this article, the commander of the IRGC Qods Jonoub-e Shargh Regional Headquarters, overseeing the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Sistan and Baluchistan and the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kerman, comments on the achievements of the 110 Salman-e Farsi Special Forces Brigade, also referred to as the 110 Salman-e Farsi Ranger Brigade, in Sistan and Baluchistan province. See, for example, Basij News Agency, تیپ تکاور ۱۱۰ سلمان فارسی یگان قدرتمند نیروی زمینی سپاه پاسداران است ["110 Salman-e Farsi Ranger Brigade is a powerful cohort of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force"], 9 July 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8538706/تیپ-تکاور-110-سلمان-فارسی-یگان-قدرتمند-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-پاسداران-است (in Persian). Another example is this article in which the commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, overseeing the IRGC's provincial corps of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan comments on the death of a senior commander within the Division 3 of the Hamzeh Special Forces. See also Resalat News, بنا بر اعلام قرارگاه حمزه سیدالشهدا فرمانده لشکر 3 نیروی زمینی سپاه به شهادت رسید ["According to Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, commander of the 3 Division of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force martyred"], 27 February 2007, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/1358538 (in Persian).

1702. Mashregh News, انتصاب فرمانده جدید یگان صابرین ["Appointment of the new commander of the Sabereen Cohort"], 10 May 2020, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1071091/انتصاب-فرمانده-جدید-یگان-صابرین-عکس (in Persian).

1703. See, for example, Defa Press, فرمانده جدید تیپ نیروی مخصوص میرزاکوچک‌خان سپاه معرفی شد ["New commander of the Mirza Kouchak Khan Special Force Brigade of the IRGC introduced"], 8 September 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/689464/فرمانده-جدید-تیپ-نیروی-مخصوص-میرزاکوچک‌خان-سپاه-معارفه-شد (in Persian); Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید تیپ نیروی مخصوص ۱۱۰ سلمان فارسی نیروی زمینی سپاه معرفی شد ["New commander of the 110 Salman-e Farsi Special Force Brigade of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force introduced"], 20 October 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1697798428000321334/فرمانده-جدید-تیپ-نیروی-مخصوص-110-سلمان-فارسی-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-معرفی-شد (in Persian); IRIB News, داشتن انقلابی همچون انقلاب اسلامی آرزوی ملت‌های دیگر جهان است ["Having a Revolution like the Islamic Revolution is the wish of other nations around the world"], 31 October 2019, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2560539/داشتن-انقلابی-همچون-انقلاب-اسلامی-آرزوی-ملت-های-دیگر-جهان-است (in Persian).

The Special Forces units of the IRGC primarily consist of IRGC military personnel. However, state media reports suggest that Basij agents may also join some of these units. For example, an article from 6 June 2022 refers to the death of a Basij agent belonging to a battalion called the 112 Ghadr Battalion within the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade in Javanroud, Kermanshah province.[1704]

10.3.2 MANDATE

Article 1 of the IRGC Statute defines its purpose as follows:

> **"The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps [IRGC] is an organization under the supreme command of the Supreme Leader, whose purpose is to safeguard the Islamic Revolution of Iran and its achievements, to make continuous efforts to realize divine ideals, to expand the rule of God's law according to the laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to fully strengthen the defensive power of the Islamic Republic through cooperation with other armed forces, military training and the organization of popular forces."[1705]**

Articles 2 and 3 of the IRGC Statute state that the IRGC's mandate includes "struggle against agents and movements attempting sabotage, overthrow of the Islamic Republic system, or actions against the Islamic Revolution of Iran" as well as a "struggle against agents that, by resorting to force, seek to deny the rule of the laws of the Islamic Republic".

Article 8 of the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law defines the mandate of the IRGC personnel as "engaging in jihad for the sake of God, and guarding and defending the Islamic Revolution, its achievements, and the Islamic Republic of Iran through armed means."

Like the concerns raised previously about the abusive mandate of FARAJA, the use of overly broad and vaguely worded phrases, such as "actions against the Islamic Revolution", provide the IRGC with vast power to suppress any form of dissent towards the Islamic Republic system and its religio-political ideologies, in violation of the rights to freedom of religion or belief, expression, association and peaceful assembly.

The IRGC Statute and the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law present the Islamic Republic system as the embodiment of "divine ideals" and "God's law" and mandates the IRGC to "engage in jihad for the sake of God", "expand the rule of God's law" and suppress anyone "attempting actions against the Islamic Revolution of Iran". This broad mandate authorizes the repression of individuals who engage in acts protected under international human rights laws, including promoting alternative political visions and systems, or calling for different interpretations of Islam. This constitutes a direct violation of the right to freedom of religion and belief as well as the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which includes the right to disagree with those in power, criticize the political and social system promoted by the political authorities and peacefully advocate, including through street protests, for any political ideas or visions, provided those ideas do not constitute advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.[1706]

Multiple legal provisions authorize collaboration between the IRGC and FARAJA in security operations. For example, Article 5 of the IRGC Statute states that the IRGC's mandate includes "collaborating with

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1704. See IRNA, تیپ انصار الرسول از مرزنشینان اورامانات در تفحص پیکر مدافع امنیت این یگان قدردانی کرد ["Ansar Al-Rasoul Brigade thanks residents of Uramanat border region for assisting in recovery of body of a security defender"], 6 June 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84778166/تیپ-انصار-الرسول-از-مرزنشینان-اورامانات-در-تفحص-پیکر-مدافع-امنیت (in Persian).

1705. See Islamic Republic of Iran, اساسنامه سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 1982, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595, Article 1.

1706. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 20(2); UN HRC, General Comment 34 (previously cited), paras 11 and 48-52; UN HRC, General Comment 37 (previously cited), para. 50.

police forces [FARAJA] when necessary to establish order and security and [uphold] the rule of law in the country".

Article 2 of the Law Regarding the Determination of Duties and the Organization of the State Security Council (State Security Council Law) states that "when necessary… the IRGC must coordinate with the Ministry of Interior [which oversees FARAJA] to maintain and establish internal security."

The Note to Article 4(15) of the Police Force Law states that "the police force, in coordination with the IRGC, may utilize Basij Resistance Forces when necessary."

Note 2 to Article 23 of the Police Force Recruitment Law provides:

> **"The police force can, in necessary situations and for a limited duration, deploy Basijis as agents to carry out its [FARAJA's] legal missions. The procedures for their deployment, as well as their service status, salaries and benefits, shall be determined in accordance with instructions prepared by the police force in coordination with the IRGC, the Ministry of Interior, the Management and Planning Organization and the General Staff [of the Armed Forces], and shall be approved by the commander-in-chief."**

None of the laws cited above specify the criteria or process for determining in what situations it is necessary for FARAJA to work with the IRGC, including its Basij forces, to carry out its security operations.

However, according to the *County Governor's Handbook*, a publication produced in consultation with state officials and published on government websites, an executive directive of the State Security Council, dated 5 February 1985, has outlined four levels of alert for internal security operations – white, grey, yellow and red – with the degree of IRGC involvement escalating at each successive level or phase.[1707] Further insight into these alert levels and the IRGC's role is provided by official statements by senior IRGC officials, issued between 2007 and 2024,[1708] as well as a widely cited article published on 25 November 2008 by the Bagher Al-Oloum Alay-Hessalam Research Centre, an institution affiliated with the Office of the Supreme Leader.[1709]

The authorities responsible for determining when these levels of alert emerge and for assigning corresponding responsibilities to the IRGC are the State Security Council and its subsidiary provision councils at the provincial and county levels. Senior commanders of both the IRGC and FARAJA are among the members of these councils.

White (normal) level: According to the executive directive of the State Security Council dated 5 February 1985, as cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*, the "white" level refers to "normal" circumstances where, according to the authorities, there are no signs of "disruption to public order or security". In a similar vein, the Bagher Al-Oloum article states that at the "normal" (white) phase… there are no events, indications or evidence suggesting a disruption in public order and internal

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1707. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش_کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, pp. 251-253.

1708. See, for example, ISNA, ["Formation of two cohorts for the pacification of the people after the 2009 sedition in Esfahan"], 23 November 2013, https://www.isna.ir/news/Esfahan-24803/تشکیل-دو-یگان-آرام-سازی-مردم-پس-از-فتنه-88-در-اصفهان (in Persian); Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, ["Explaining the role of the IRGC and Basij in controlling disturbances"], 5 July 2009, https://dolat.ir/detail/178810 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, حفظ امنیت داخلی با اجازه فرمانده کل قوا و شورای عالی امنیت ملی بر عهده سپاه است ["Internal security responsibility lies with the IRGC, with permission of the Supreme Leader and Supreme National Security Council"], 1 October 2007, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/562126/ حفظ-امنیت-داخلی-با-اجازه-فرمانده-کل-قوا-و-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی (in Persian).

1709. See Bagher Al-Oloum Alay-Hessalam Research Centre, ["History of the establishment and activities of the Bagher Al-Oloum Alay-Hessalam Research Centre"], 8 October 2023, available at http://rbo.ir/پورتال-اصلی/پژوهشکده/آشنایی-با-پژوهشکده/تاریخچه-و-تاریخ-شفاهی/تاریخچه-تأسیس-و-فعالیت-پژوهشکده-باقرالعلوم-علیه‌السلام-a-315-92-248-93-3569.aspx (in Persian).

security. The enemies of the Revolution and their affiliated elements are not conducting overt and public activities against the country's security, except for propaganda actions." According to the article, in such circumstances, the Basij entities of the IRGC engage in "organizing and training popular forces[1710] and collaborate with FARAJA if necessary and upon request."[1711]

Grey (abnormal) level: According to the executive directive of the State Security Council dated 5 February 1985, as cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*, the "grey" level refers to "abnormal" circumstances where, according to the authorities, "there is a possibility that anti-system forces may engage in hostile acts, or they have already initiated uncoordinated anti-security operations." In this context, according to the executive directive, FARAJA is responsible for restoring order and security, but the IRGC may be assigned certain responsibilities by the county provision council in the area concerned. The Bagher Al-Oloum article clarifies that, during this phase, it is the Basij agents of the IRGC who must be prepared to take action if instructed to do so.

Yellow (extraordinary) level: According to the executive directive of the State Security Council dated 5 February 1985, as cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*, the "yellow" level refers to "extraordinary" circumstances where, according to the authorities, "large-scale, coordinated anti-security operations, whether armed or unarmed, have advanced." The Bagher Al-Oloum article echoes this description, mentioning situations which involve "large-scale and coordinated anti-security operations, armed or unarmed, which are disruptive to public order".[1712]

The *County Governor's Handbook* offers limited information regarding the role of the IRGC in this phase, stating only that FARAJA remains responsible for restoring order, while the IRGC is tasked with specific tasks assigned by the relevant provincial or county provision councils.

However, the Bagher Al-Oloum article crucially notes that during this phase, Basij forces "will intervene decisively while being under the operational control of FARAJA forces [while] the IRGC's Ground Forces will be prepared to intervene, if necessary and as ordered."[1713]

This article was written before the structural changes of 2009, which integrated Basij forces into the IRGC's Ground Force, creating the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC. For this reason, Amnesty International understands that, in the context of this article, the IRGC's Ground Forces refers to the involvement of the IRGC operational divisions and brigades in security operations.

Red (crisis) level: According to the executive directive of the State Security Council dated 5 February 1985, as cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*, the "red" level denotes "a progression from the yellow (extraordinary) level where the scope of activities by forces opposing the system has expanded, leading to organized anti-security operations."

In this situation, FARAJA forces shall come under the operational control of the IRGC or Army. The Bagher Al-Oloum article describes the "red" (crisis) phase in similar terms referring to "the continuation and escalation of the 'yellow' (extraordinary) situation where the scope of activities by forces opposing the regime expands… for the purpose of overthrowing the system."[1714]

1710. As already noted, the authorities refer to Basijis as the "popular forces" or "people's forces" of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force.
1711. Pajoohe, بسیج و مدیریت بحران‌های داخلی ["Basij and management of domestic crises"], 25 November 2008, http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018 (in Persian).
1712. Pajoohe, بسیج و مدیریت بحران‌های داخلی ["Basij and management of domestic crises"], 25 November 2008, http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018 (in Persian).
1713. Pajoohe, بسیج و مدیریت بحران‌های داخلی ["The Basij and management of domestic crises"], 25 November 2008, http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018 (in Persian).
1714. Pajoohe, بسیج و مدیریت بحران‌های داخلی ["Basij and management of domestic crises"], 25 November 2008, http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018 (in Persian).

According to the executive directive, in this situation, FARAJA forces are placed under the operational control of a military force designated by the Supreme Council.[1715] This would mean either the IRGC or the Army. The Bagher Al-Oloum article similarly states that during the "red" phase, the IRGC "will intervene based on an order the Supreme Leader or at the request of the Supreme Council". The article does not provide further clarification on what the intervention by the IRGC would entail.

Official statements over the years confirm the processes described in the *County Governor's Handbook* and the Bagher Al-Oloum article and that, during the "red" phase, the IRGC will assume control of the protest response upon the order of the Supreme Council.

For example, on 1 October 2007, the supreme adviser to the commander-in-chief in military affairs, Yahya Rahim Safavi, stated:

> **"Domestic security initially falls under the authority of the police force and other security forces. However, if the problems pass beyond a certain level, the IRGC takes control, with the approval of the Supreme National Security Council and the Supreme Leader."[1716]**

In a similar vein, on 5 July 2009, the then commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Abdollah Araghi, made a statement about the intervention of the IRGC in responding to the mass protests of 2009 in Tehran based on a resolution by the Supreme Council. Abdollah Araghi stated:

> **"In the turmoil on 30 June 2009, based on the resolution of the Supreme National Security Council, the responsibility for the matter was assigned to the IRGC… In this situation, the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran acted as the executive arm in Tehran, assisting FARAJA… Based on the division of tasks, from 2.30pm on Saturday, 30 June, the Basij, IRGC[1717] and FARAJA were organized throughout Tehran… By 9.30pm that night, with the efforts of the Basij, IRGC and FARAJA, the riots were rounded up, and a 'white' [normal] state was declared."[1718]**

On 23 November 2013, the then commander of the Saheb Al-Zaman Provincial Corps of Esfahan, Gholamreza Soleimani, also made a brief reference to the role of the IRGC during the "red" phase, stating: "During times of crisis and upon reaching the red alert level, especially in major cities, responsibility is transferred to the IRGC at the request of the government and by order of the Supreme Leader."[1719]

On 2 January 2018, in response to a question about whether the IRGC was assisting FARAJA in responding to the protests of December 2017-January 2018, the then spokesperson of the IRGC, Ramezan Sharif, stated:

> **"So far, there has been no specific request from the police force for the IRGC to intervene, as the incidents have been too minor to warrant the IRGC's involvement… However, in some counties, requests have been made to some parts of the Basij to assist the police, and the necessary**

1715. Pajoohe, بسیج و مدیریت بحران‌های داخلی ["Basij and management of domestic crises"], 25 November 2008, http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018http://pajoohe.ir/Product.aspx?ProductID=32018 (in Persian).
1716. Mehr News Agency, حفظ امنیت داخلی با اجازه فرمانده کل قوا و شورای عالی امنیت ملی بر عهده سپاه است ["Internal security responsibility lies with the IRGC, with permission of the Supreme Leader and Supreme National Security Council"], 1 October 2007, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/562126/ حفظ-امنیت-داخلی-با-اجازه-فرمانده-کل-قوا-و-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی (in Persian).
1717. While the Basij forces are formally part of the IRGC, Iranian authorities sometimes refer to the "Basij and the IRGC" – using "and" or a comma – instead of the more accurate "Basij of the IRGC". This phrasing appears to be an effort to present the Basij as a separate, voluntary popular force. In such contexts, the term "IRGC" typically refers to its operational divisions or brigades.
1718. Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, تشریح عملکرد سپاه و بسیج در مهار اغتشاشات ["Explaining the role of the IRGC and Basij in controlling disturbances"], 5 July 2009, https://dolat.ir/detail/178810 (in Persian).
1719. ISNA, تشکیل دو یگان آرام‌سازی مردم پس از فتنه ۸۸ در اصفهان ["Formation of two cohorts for the pacification of the people after the 2009 sedition in Esfahan"], 23 November 2013, https://www.isna.ir/news/Esfahan-24803/تشکیل-دو-یگان-آرام-سازی-مردم-پس-از-فتنه-88-در-اصفهان (in Persian).

coordination was carried out through Sardar Ghaibparvar, the respected head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, and they [Basij forces] assisted [their] friends [FARAJA forces]."[1720]

On 18 November 2019, Gholamreza Soleimani, the then head of the Basij-e Mostaz'afin Organization, publicly confirmed that IRGC provincial corps assist FARAJA in suppressing protests pursuant to resolutions issued by the relevant provincial security council.[1721]

In recent years, senior FARAJA and IRGC officials have made numerous statements emphasizing close cooperation and a sense of "unity" between FARAJA and the IRGC during both regular and crisis times.[1722] For example, on 10 August 2018, in a Conference on Unity and Brotherhood Between the FARAJA Command of Greater Tehran and the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, the then commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Mohammad Reza Yazdi, stated:

"Fortunately, the cooperation between the Basij forces, IRGC and police force is very good, and they carry out their assigned missions together very well… We are working to strengthen the cooperation between the Basij forces, IRGC and police force at lower levels to further enhance this collaboration compared to the past."[1723]

On 18 April 2021, the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Fars, Yadollah Bouali, stated: "The IRGC, the Army and police force stand together like brothers, and we are all united, hand in hand, firmly committed to the comprehensive defence of the Islamic Revolution."[1724]

Similarly, on 15 October 2022, the then FARAJA commander of Gilan province, Azizollah Maleki, stated:

"In the recent riots, the [IRGC] Qods Corps of Gilan province greatly assisted the police in resolving and controlling the riots… The police and the IRGC, both nationally and in Gilan province, stand together and have never felt any sense of separation from one another."[1725]

10.3.2(I) BASIJ RESISTANCE SECTOR CORPS

Official statements indicate that a key mandate of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps is to organize and train Basij battalions and to maintain their readiness for security operations, in line with the policies and directives issued by IRGC provincial corps.[1726]

1720. Mashregh News, واکنش سخنگوی سپاه به اغتشاشات اخیر ["Response of the IRGC spokesperson to recent riots"], 2 January 2018, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/816160/واکنش-سخنگوی-سپاه-به-اغتشاشات-اخیر (in Persian).

1721. Defa Press, عوامل اصلی اغتشاشات دستگیر شدند/ بسیج در کمک به دستگاه‌های کشور از هیچ تلاشی دریغ نمی‌کند ["Main instigators of unrest arrested / Basij spares no effort in assisting the country's institutions"], 18 November 2019, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/370479/عوامل-اصلی-اغتشاشات-دستگیر-شدند-بسیج-در-کمک-به-دستگاه‌های-کشور-از-هیچ-تلاشی-دریغ-نمی‌کند (in Persian).

1722. See, for example, IRNA, وحدت بین نیروهای مسلح جلوه‌ای از دوران دفاع مقدس است ["Unity among the armed forces: A reflection of the Sacred Defence era"], 13 September 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/84037419/وحدت-بین-نیروهای-مسلح-جلوه-ای-از-دوران-دفاع-مقدس-است (in Persian); Shabestan News, وحدت سپاه، ارتش و نیروی انتظامی خاری در چشم دشمنان انقلاب اسلامی ["Unity of the IRGC, the Army, and police force: A thorn in the eyes of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution"], 9 September 2020, https://www.shabestan.news/news/969509/وحدت-سپاه-ارتش-و-نیروی-انتظامی-خاری-در-چشم-دشمنان-انقلاب-اسلامی (in Persian); Kayhan, برگزاری همایش وحدت و اخوت فرماندهی انتظامی تهران بزرگ و سپاه محمد رسول‌الله ["Unity and brotherhood conference between Tehran Police Command and IRGC Mohammad Rasoul Allah"], 10 August 2018, https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/139359/برگزاری-همایش-وحدت-و-اخوت-فرماندهی-انتظامی-تهران-بزرگ-و-سپاه-محمد-رسول‌اللهص (in Persian).

1723. Kayhan, برگزاری همایش وحدت و اخوت فرماندهی انتظامی تهران بزرگ و سپاه محمد رسول‌الله ["Unity and brotherhood conference between Tehran Police Command and IRGC Mohammad Rasoul Allah"], 10 August 2018, https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/139359/برگزاری-همایش-وحدت-و-اخوت-فرماندهی-انتظامی-تهران-بزرگ-و-سپاه-محمد-رسول‌اللهص (in Persian).

1724. ISNA, وحدت نیروهای مسلح موجب ناامیدی دشمنان شده است ["Unity of the armed forces has caused despair among the enemies"], 18 April 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400012917074/وحدت-نیروهای-مسلح-موجب-ناامیدی-دشمنان-شده-است (in Persian).

1725. ISNA, مردم و نهادهای انتظامی و امنیتی با هم به رفع اغتشاش کمک می‌کنند ["People and police and security institutions collaborate to resolve riots"], 15 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401072312299/مردم-و-نهادهای-انتظامی-و-امنیتی-با-هم-به-رفع-اغتشاش-کمک-می-کنند (in Persian).

1726. See, for example, IRNA, ایجادآمادگی گردان ها از ماموریت های اصلی بسیج است ["Preparing the battalions is one of the main missions of the Basij"], 9 September 2015, https://www.irna.ir/news/81753812/ایجادآمادگی-گردان-ها-از-ماموریت-های-اصلی-بسیج-است (in Persian).

This mandate originates from a speech given by the first Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Rouhollah Khomeini, on 26 November 1979, in which he called for young people to "learn how to use weapons and to teach this to their friends" and for the authorities to ensure that, over the years, "a country with 20 million young people would have 20 million gun-bearers, a 20-million-strong army."[1727] Rouhollah Khomeini emphasized that "an Islamic country must be entirely militaristic and have military training. Such a country cannot be harmed."

Consistent with his rallying call, Article 151 of the constitution, which was adopted on 3 December 1979, stated:

> **"The government is obliged to provide all individuals in the country with military training programmes and resources in accordance with Islamic principles, such that everyone is always capable of militarily defending the country and the Islamic Republic system of Iran."[1728]**

In a speech given on 26 November 1990, the then Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, reiterated the instructions of his predecessor for the creation of "a 20-million-strong army", saying:

> **"Our men and women must have combat readiness and prepare themselves for military defence, and this is the decree of Islam. The country's officials are obligated to equip, prepare and provide the necessary facilities for the Basij, and I will defend the Basij, which is serving Islam, the country and the Revolution."[1729]**

In a meeting held on 29 November 1995 with commanders of various Basij Resistance Sector Corps from across the country, along with the commanders of subordinate entities – Basij Resistance Bases and Basij battalions – the then Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, was reported as "emphasizing the role of the Basij in eliminating the major diseases that threaten the Islamic world."[1730]

In 2008 and 2009, when the IRGC's Ground Force was restructured through the creation of 32 IRGC provincial corps, and Basij forces were integrated into these corps, the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, stated: "Strengthening the connection of the Basij with the combat body of the IRGC…[1731] and reinforcing the ranks of the [Basij] Resistance Force across the county… are key objectives and features of the new IRGC structure."[1732]

Mohammad Ali Ja'fari added that, with such increased interaction between the Basij forces and the "combat" units of the IRGC, "the readiness and capabilities of combat units and Basij battalions in executing IRGC's missions will increase more than before."[1733]

Throughout the past years and decades, the authorities have repeatedly emphasized that Basij forces operating under the Basij Resistance Sector Corps across the country play a crucial role in security

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1727. See Khomeini.ir, فرمان امام خمینی مبنی بر تشکیل بسیج ["Imam Khomeini's command on the establishment of the Basij"], 25 November 2014, http://www.imam-khomeini.ir/fa/n25082//سرویس_های_اطلاع_رسانی/امام_خمینی_و_انقلاب_اسلامی روز_نگار_فرمان_امام_خمینی_مبنی_بر_تشکیل_بسیج (in Persian).

1728. Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Article 151.

1729. Khamenei.ir, بیانات در مراسم ویژه‌ی روز بسیج در پادگان امام حسن مجتبی ["Remarks at the special ceremony on Basij Day at Imam Hassan Mojtaba barracks"], 26 November 1990, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/speech-content?id=2385 (in Persian). See also Khamenei.ir, بیانات در دیدار فرماندهان نیروی مقاومت بسیج ["Remarks at the meeting with the commanders of the Basij Resistance Force"], 22 November 1990, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/speech-content?id=2383 (in Persian).

1730. Office of the Supreme Leader, دیدار فرماندهان نواحی، پایگاهها و گردانهای نیروی مقاومت بسیج ["Meeting of commanders of the Basij Resistance Force's regions, bases and battalions"], 29 November 1995, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/1206 (in Persian).

1731. This refers to the operational divisions and brigades of the IRGC.

1732. IRNA, سپاه فجر استان فارس: گشایش فصل جدید افتخارآفرینی سلحشوران سرزمین ["Fajr Corps of Fars province: Opening a new chapter of glory for the warriors of the land"], 28 June 2008, https://www.irna.ir/news/7425059/-سپاه-فجر-استان-فارس-گشایش-فصل-جدید-افتخارآفرینی-سلحشوران-سرزمین (in Persian).

1733. IRNA, سپاه فجر استان فارس: گشایش فصل جدید افتخارآفرینی سلحشوران سرزمین ["Fajr Corps of Fars province: Opening a new chapter of glory for the warriors of the land"], 28 June 2008, https://www.irna.ir/news/7425059/-سپاه-فجر-استان-فارس-گشایش-فصل-جدید-افتخارآفرینی-سلحشوران-سرزمین (in Persian).

operations. On 27 November 2018, the then coordination deputy commander of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC, Ali Akbar Pourjamshidian, stated: "The Basij has been highly active in all arenas, including military and security fields… Its role in establishing lasting national security… is undeniable."[1734]

10.3.2(II) SECTORAL BASIJ ORGANIZATIONS

Sectoral Basij organizations have often adopted executive regulations that outline their mandate.[1735] Their mandate is primarily focused on promoting the ideologies of the Islamic Republic system and recruiting increasing numbers of Basiji members from personnel working in public sector institutions, state-owned enterprises, banks, insurance companies, municipalities and other entities that utilize public funds.[1736] Through this omnipresent apparatus, the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization and its subsidiary organizations seek to oversee the ideological training of employees and workers within state institutions, reinforcing surveillance and ensuring compliance with the Islamic Republic system.[1737]

Discussing the role of sectoral Basij organizations, the deputy commander of the IRGC's provincial corps of Markazi stated in a media interview on 26 April 2026:

> **"The enemies of the Revolution have concentrated their efforts on cognitive, media and cultural warfare, and our duty is to draw on the capacities of different sectors – from the Student Basij and Seminary Student Basij to the Guilds Basij, Workers Basij, Engineers Basij, Teachers Basij, and other sectoral groups – to appear stronger than before in defending [the Islamic Republic's] values… Each sector, in accordance with its specialized capacities, can play an unparalleled role in advancing the overarching objectives of the IRGC and the Basij."[1738]**

While sectoral Basij organizations are primarily known for enforcing compliance with the political and religious ideology of the Islamic Republic within the institutions of their respective sectors, members recruited by them may subsequently be selected to form one or more Basij battalions affiliated with the

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1734. Javan Online, نقش بسیج ایجاد آرامش و امنیت کشور است ["Role of the Basij is to create calm and security in the country"], 27 November 2018, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/935891/نقش-بسیج-ایجاد-آرامش-و-امنیت-کشور-است (in Persian).

1735. Ekhtebar, آیین‌نامه تشکیل بسیج اساتید دانشگاه‌ها و مراکز آموزش عالی و پژوهشی کشور ["Regulations on establishing the Professors of Universities and Higher Education and Research Institutes Basij Organization across country"], 23 July 2024, https://www.ekhtebar.ir/آیین‌نامه-تشکیل-بسیج-اساتید-دانشگاه/ (in Persian); Solh, آیین نامه اجرایی قانون تشکیل و توسعه بسیج دانش آموزی ["Executive regulations for the law on establishing and developing the Students Basij Organization"], 24 June 2007, https://www.solh.ir/regulation/7/1826 (in Persian); Solh, آیین نامه اجرائی قانون تشکیل ، تقویت و توسعه بسیج دانشجویی ["Executive regulations for the law on establishing, strengthening, and developing the Basij Students Organization"], 2 January 2001, https://www.solh.ir/regulation/7/101 (in Persian); Basij Resistance Base of the Government Trading Company, تعریف بسیج اداری ["Definition of the administrative Basij"], https://shahadat89.blogfa.com/post/5 (accessed on 11 August 2026) (in Persian).

1736. See Basij News Agency, بسیج پیشرو در زمینه هایی که نیاز انقلاب و نظام است ["Basij at forefront in areas needed by revolution and system"], 2 May 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9508696/بسیج-پیشرو-در-زمینه-هایی-که-نیاز-انقلاب-و-نظام-است-از-رسالت-اصلی-بسیج-فرهنگیان-تا-اجرای- (in Persian); Mizan News Agency, سازمان بسیج مستضعفین چند قشر و چند معاونت دارد؟ همزمان با تغییر نام بسیج، کدام گردان‌ها در طرح-تیم-پیشرفت-و-تحول-مدرسه ["How many sectors and deputy positions does the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization have? Which battalions were established in this organization alongside the change of its name?"], 6 May 2017, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/305704/سازمان-بسیج-مستضعفین-چند-قشر-و-چند-معاونت-دارد-همزمان-با-تغییر-نام-بسیج-کدام-گردان‌ها-در-این-سازمان-تشکیل-شد (in Persian); Organization of Agriculture Jahad Esfahan, آشنایی با بخش هایی از دستورالعمل تشکیل رده‌های مقاومت بسیج در ادارات ["Familiarity with parts of the guidelines for the formation of Resistance Basij units in government offices"], https://www.agri-es.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=8078 (in Persian).

1737. See IQNA, نقش راهبردی بسیج اساتید در تحقق تمدن اسلامی ["Strategic role of the Professors Basij Organization in realizing Islamic civilization"], 9 June 2026, https://iqna.ir/fa/news/4357118/نقش-راهبردی-بسیج-اساتید-در-تحقق-تمدن-اسلامی (in Persian); YJC, بسیج اقشار باید مردم‌سالاری را تقویت کند ["Basij groups should strengthen democracy"], 14 August 2023, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/amp/news/8521001 (in Persian); Pana, ستاد تخصصی بسیج، محلی برای راهبری اقشار مختلف بسیج است ["Basij specialized staff: A centre for guiding various Basij groups"], 16 August 2022, https://www.pana.ir/39/1301914-ستاد-تخصصی-بسیج-محلی-برای-راه-بخش-استانها (in Persian); Golestanema, هدف مجمع بسیج اقشار تعمیق اهداف انقلاب اسلامی و مقابله با جنگ نرم است ["Goal of Basij groups assembly is to deepen objectives of the Islamic Revolution and counter soft warfare"], 19 September 2014, https://golestanema.com/news/اجتماعی/هدف-مجمع-بسیج-اقشار-تعمیق-اهداف-انقلاب-اسلامی-و-مقابله-با-جنگ-نرم (in Persian).

1738. IRNA, برنامه‌محوری و هم‌افزایی؛ راهبرد اصلی اقشار بسیج در سال جاری است ["Programme-oriented planning and synergy are the main strategy of the Basij groups this year"], 26 April 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86137929/برنامه-محوری-و-هم-افزایی-راهبرد-اصلی-اقشار-بسیج-در-سال-جاری (in Persian).

relevant sectoral Basij organization. State media reports suggest that these Basij battalions are typically categorized as Beit al-Moghaddas battalions.[1739]

State media outlets have published reports indicating that sectoral Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions take part in training exercises, including shooting drills. These training exercises may be organized by the operations head of the relevant provincial sectoral Basij organization[1740] or, at the county level, by the operations deputy of the relevant Basij Resistance Sector Corps.[1741] Such exercises may also receive technical support from the operations deputy of the relevant provincial corps and its operational divisions or brigades.[1742]

Leaked official documents reviewed by Amnesty International indicate that sectoral Basij battalions take part in protest repression operations. One leaked document, dated 12 October 2022, contains a number of orders issued by the commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, including an order to the Workers Basij Organization and the Offices and Employees Basij Organization of Greater Tehran, to each deploy one battalion from a specified hour, in coordination with two specified operational headquarters. Another leaked document, dated 9 October 2022, contains instructions concerning the deployment of various forces and their positioning and mentions recipients including the Workers Basij Organization and the Offices and Employees Basij Organization of Greater Tehran.[1743]

Official statements also point to the role of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization and its subsidiary sectoral organizations in protest repression operations.

For example, on 2 January 2018, the then spokesperson of the IRGC, Ramezan Sharif, stated that, during the protests of December 2017-January 2018, the head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization coordinated efforts to ensure that Basij battalions assisted FARAJA in suppressing the protests.[1744]

On 18 November 2019, the then head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, Gholamreza Soleimani, stated that, "in relation to the recent unrest [November 2019 protests], wherever the police force has requested assistance from the Basij, we have provided it." He added that "every institution has an entity known as the 'Basij', which has been responsible for protecting that office during the recent unrest and similar situations."[1745]

1739. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ["Training courses for Tehran Municipality's Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions begin"], 6 September 2025, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6581633/آغاز-دوره-های-آموزشی-ویژه-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-شهرداری-تهران (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion live-fire exercise held by Mazandaran province Workers and Factories Basij Organization"], 17 October 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9547484/میدان-تیر-گردان-بیت-المقدس-سازمان-بسیج-کارگران-و-کارخانجات-استان-مازندران-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1740. Basij News Agency, ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion live-fire exercise held by Mazandaran province Workers and Factories Basij Organization"], 17 October 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9547484/میدان-تیر-گردان-بیت-المقدس-سازمان-بسیج-کارگران-و-کارخانجات-استان-مازندران-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1741. IRIB News, ["Shooting competition held for Offices Basij Organisation in Boyer-Ahmad county"], 1 March 2023, https://www.irib-news.ir/fa/news/3772961/برگزاری-مسابقات-تیراندازی-بسیج-ادارات-شهرستان-بویراحمد (in Persian).

1742. Defa Press, ["First call-up of 892 Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion held in Shiraz"], 11 September 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/615758/اولین-فراخوان-گردان-بیت-المقدس-۸۹۲-در-شیراز-برگزار-شد (in Persian); IRIB News, برگزاری مسابقات تیراندازی بسیج ادارات شهرستان بویراحمد ["Shooting competition held for Offices Basij Organisation in Boyer-Ahmad county"], 1 March 2023, https://www.irib-news.ir/fa/news/3772961/برگزاری-مسابقات-تیراندازی-بسیج-ادارات-شهرستان-بویراحمد (in Persian).

1743. See section 10.3.5(I).

1744. Mashregh News, ["Response of the IRGC spokesperson to recent riots"], 2 January 2018, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/816160/واکنش-سخنگوی-سپاه-به-اغتشاشات-اخیر (in Persian).

1745. Defa Press, ["Main instigators of unrest arrested / Basij spares no effort in assisting the country's institutions"], 18 November 2019, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/370479/عوامل-اصلی-اغتشاشات-دستگیر-شدند-بسیج-در-کمک-به-دستگاه‌های-کشور-از-هیچ-تلاشی-دریغ-نمی‌کند (in Persian).

10.3.2(III) BASIJ RESISTANCE DOMAINS AND BASES

The mandate of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases is both ideological and security-oriented and reflects the Iranian authorities' goal to embed their security and ideological apparatus within every community.

This vision was articulated by Heidar Baba Ahmadi, the head of the Mosques and Neighbourhoods Basij Organization, during a speech on 25 November 2022, where he declared: "The mission of each Basij base, in a nutshell, is to realize an Islamic neighbourhood. No neighbourhood must be without a base. Neighbourhoods must be guided toward becoming Islamic."[1746]

In the context of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the mission of realizing an "Islamic neighbourhood" entails the creation and maintenance of an extensive web of repression and control, where non-compliance with compulsory veiling laws and other regulations based on a strict interpretation of Shari'a, as well as any expressions of dissent against the Islamic Republic system and its Supreme Leader, is criminalized and suppressed.

As such, the ideological mandate of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases is intertwined with security operations, with "security" used by the authorities to mean the preservation of the Islamic Republic system under the Supreme Leader, and the suppression of alternative voices advocating governance models based on democracy, human rights or secularism. In this context, official statements repeatedly emphasize that the mission of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases is to establish "lasting security".[1747]

On 14 November 2023, the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Hossein Rajabi, stated: "[Basij Resistance] Bases, through… emphasizing commitment to Islamic goals and the unity of Basijis, have played an important role in defending lasting security… and promoting the values of the Islamic Revolution."[1748]

On 6 May 2025, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Hamedan, Mazaher Majidi, stated: "Attention to Basij Resistance Bases and Districts is one of the IRGC's key missions. These entities play a central role in maintaining security and social cohesion and must be continuously strengthened."[1749]

The security-related activities of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases involve recruiting and training Basij agents and organizing them into various Basij battalions. As explained previously, Basij Resistance Domains and Bases carry out these functions under the leadership of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps and the supervision of provincial corps.

The military training involves preparing Basij agents to use firearms and force for security operations, including the repression of protests. In this regard, the commanders of Basij Resistance Bases are responsible for procuring, organizing and distributing military equipment; coordinating military drills

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1746. Javan Online, مأموریت هر پایگاه مقاومت بسیج تحقق محله اسلامی است ["Mission of each Basij Resistance Base is to realize an Islamic neighbourhood"], 25 November 2022, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1118202/مأموریت-هر-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-تحقق-محله-اسلامی-است (in Persian).

1747. See, for example, Basij News Agency, تقویت تعامل نیروی انتظامی و بسیج برای حفظ امنیت پایدار ["Strengthening the cooperation between the police force and the Basij to maintain lasting security"], 27 March 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9655949/تقویت-تعامل-نیروی-انتظامی-و-بسیج-برای-حفظ-امنیت-پایدار (in Persian); Basij News Agency, راه اندازی گشت رضویون در راستای ارتقای امنیت پایدار در محله‌ها است ["Launch of the Razavioun patrol is aimed at enhancing sustainable security in neighbourhoods"], 26 November 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9297987/راه-اندازی-گشت-رضویون-در-راستای-ارتقای-امنیت-پایدار-در-محله-ها-است (in Persian).

1748. Zarin Khabar, پایگاه‌های بسیج در دفاع از امنیت پایدار نقش مهمی بر عهده دارند ["Basij Resistance Bases play an important role in defending sustainable security"], 14 November 2023, https://zarinkhabar.ir/پایگاههای-بسیج-در-دفاع-از-امنیت-پاید (in Persian).

1749. Basij News Agency, پایگاه‌ها و حوزه‌های مقاومت بسیج نقش کلیدی در حفظ امنیت و انسجام اجتماعی دارند ["Basij Resistance Bases and Resistance Domains play a key role in maintaining security and social cohesion"], 6 May 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9686130/پایگاه-ها-و-حوزه-های-مقاومت-بسیج-نقش-کلیدی-در-حفظ-امنیت-و-انسجام-اجتماعی-دارند (in Persian).

with higher-level authorities; and inviting superior commanders from their respective Basij Resistance Domains or the Basij Resistance Sector Corps for training sessions.[1750]

In addition to military trainings, the commanders of Basij Domains and Bases of Resistance are required to ensure that members' loyalty to the Islamic Republic are reinforced through "educational" courses, "religious" gatherings, sport events and social initiatives designed to integrate members into the broader goals of the Basij.[1751]

The security-related responsibilities of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases also include gathering and recording detailed information about the neighbourhoods where they operate, as well as monitoring and reporting on "anti-revolutionary" activities. Through these intelligence and surveillance functions, Basij Resistance Domains and Bases effectively function as neighbourhood-level intelligence outposts.

Commanders and members of Basij Resistance Domains and Bases also conduct patrols, deliver verbal warnings, and carry out arrests.[1752] Arrest powers are granted to Basijis pursuant to Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure and the Law on Judicial Support of Basij, which recognize Basij agents as eligible to be designated special judicial officers. These officers are authorized to take actions to uncover crimes, preserve and gather evidence, identify suspects and conduct investigations within the scope of their institution's mandate.[1753] The IRGC and the judiciary undertake the qualification process and issue identification cards to those recognized.[1754]

10.3.2(III)(i) Imam Ali Battalions

There is no law or regulation outlining the mandate of Basij battalions and their role and responsibilities in relation to the suppression of protests can only be inferred from official statements and state media reports.

According to official statements, the mandate of the Imam Ali Battalions includes "confronting riots, countering the enemy's psychological warfare and establishing urban security".[1755] In official statements and state media reports, the Imam Ali Battalions are frequently described as "security battalions", which further indicates that their mission involves the suppression of protests.

As explained elsewhere in this chapter, Basij battalions, including the Imam Ali Battalions, are deployed to suppress street protests when provision councils at county and provincial levels determine that

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1750. Amozesh Sadeh, ["Duties of a neighbourhood Basij Resistance Base: What is the role of a Basij Resistance Base?"], 25 July 2025, https://amozeshsadeh.ir/شرح-وظایف-پایگاه-بسیج-محله-وظیفه-پایگا/#wzayf_janshyn_frmand (in Persian).

1751. See Amozesh Sadeh, ["Duties of a neighbourhood Basij Resistance Base: What is the role of a Basij Resistance Base?"], 25 July 2025, https://amozeshsadeh.ir/شرح-وظایف-پایگاه-بسیج-محله-وظیفه-پایگا/#wzayf_janshyn_frmand (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Basij Resistance Bases and Resistance Domains play a key role in maintaining security and social cohesion"], 6 May 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9686130/پایگاه-ها-و-حوزه-های-مقاومت-بسیج-نقش-کلیدی-در-حفظ-امنیت-و-انسجام-اجتماعی-دارند (in Persian).

1752. See IRNA, ["Conducting Razavioun patrols plays an important role in maintaining security"], 10 January 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/84994809/برگزاری-گشت-های-رضویون-نقش-مهمی-در-ایجاد-امنیت-دارد (in Persian); Javan Online, ["Mission of each Basij Resistance Base is to realize an Islamic neighbourhood"], 25 November 2022, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1118202/مأموریت-هر-پایگاه-مقاومت-بسیج-تحقق-محله-اسلامی-است (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Launch of the Razavioun patrol is aimed at enhancing sustainable security in neighbourhoods"], 26 November 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9297987/راه-اندازی-گشت-رضویون-در-راستای-ارتقای-امنیت-پایدار-در-محله-ها-است (in Persian).

1753. See Amnesty International, *Flawed Reforms: Iran's new Code of Criminal Procedure* (Index: MDE 13/2708/2016), 11 February 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2708/2016/en, pp. 27-28.

1754. See Heyva Law, ["Judicial officer card"], https://www.heyvalaw.com/web/articles/view/3964/کارت-ضابط-قضایی.html (accessed on 6 August 2026); Mizan News Agency, ["Judicial officers: Duties and limitations"], 5 December 2023, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4747776/ضابطان-قضایی-وظایف-و-محدودیت‌ها (in Persian).

1755. IRNA, ["40 security battalions established in Kerman"], 4 October 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/84064249/گردان-امنیتی-در-کرمان-راه-اندازی-شد-۴۰ (in Persian).

FARAJA forces require additional support and the heads of these councils – county governors and provincial governors – issue the necessary orders.

When announcing the formation of the Imam Ali Battalions on 7 October 2011, the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, stated that "the performance of these battalions will have a significant impact on the state of the Revolution domestically".[1756] According to state media reports, the event concluded with "thousands of personnel from the Imam Ali Battalions of the [IRGC's]… Corps of Greater Tehran riding past the platform" in a procession on motorcycles.

The use of motorcycles has since become a prominent characteristic of the Imam Ali Battalions, who typically arrive at protest scenes in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and intimidate protesters and bystanders.

On 28 September 2012, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari stated:

> **"More than 100 security battalions under the name of Imam Ali have been organized for the purpose of confronting the domestic enemies of the Revolution and they stand ready to maintain security for the continuity of the Islamic Revolution."[1757]**

Official statements indicate that the establishment of the Imam Ali Battalions was initially prompted by the challenges posed to the Islamic Republic by the mass protests of 2009,[1758] which the authorities described as a "sedition".[1759] For example, on 29 December 2016, the then operations deputy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mehdi Rabani, stated:

> **"The path to strength in countering internal threats is through professionalizing the Basij. The formation of 180 Imam Ali Battalions… in the country is a consequence of the threats imposed on us by the sedition [2009 mass protests]."[1760]**

Official statements suggest that the formation of the Imam Ali Battalions across the country accelerated in the aftermath of the nationwide protests of December 2017-January 2018 and November 2019. For example, on 20 January 2022, during an event held for the appointment of a new commander of the Imam Ali Battalions in Lorestan province, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Lorestan, Morteza Kashkouli, stated: "From the movements and threats of 2017 and 2019, a powerful security unit emerged to not let the counter-revolutionaries breathe. We must be prepared at all times; any day we are not ready is a day of defeat."[1761]

On 24 February 2021, the then deputy general commander of the Central Imam Ali Headquarters, Gholamhossein Gheibparvar, stated that 1,000 Imam Ali Battalions had been organized across the

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1756. Mashregh News, فهمیدن ارتباط انقلاب‌های منطقه با انقلاب اسلامی ایران چشم بصیرت ["Understanding the connection between regional revolutions and the Islamic Revolution of Iran: A vision of insight"], 7 October 2011, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/70794/فهمیدن-ارتباط-انقلاب-های-منطقه-با-انقلاب-اسلامی-ایران-چشم-بصیرت (in Persian).

1757. Siasat Rooz, گردان‌های امام علی (ع) آماده مقابله با دشمنان داخلی ["Imam Ali Battalions ready to counter domestic enemies"], 28 September 2012, https://www.siasatrooz.ir/fa/news/77150/گردان-های-امام-علی-ع-آماده-مقابله-دشمنان-داخلی (in Persian).

1758. See Amnesty International, *Iran: Election Contested, Repression Compounded* (Index: MDE 13/123/2009), 10 December 2009, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/123/2009/en

1759. See, for example, ISNA, تشکیل دو یگان آرام‌سازی مردم پس از فتنه ۸۸ در اصفهان ["Formation of two cohorts for the pacification of the people after the 2009 sedition in Esfahan"], 23 November 2013, https://www.isna.ir/news/Esfahan-24803/تشکیل-دو-یگان-آرام-سازی-مردم-پس-از-فتنه-88-در-اصفهان (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, تشکیل ۲ یگان امنیتی بسیج در اصفهان برای ایجاد امنیت پایدار ["Formation of two Basij Security Cohorts in Esfahan to establish sustainable security"], 23 November 2013, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1392/09/02/200070/تشکیل-2-یگان-امنیتی-بسیج-در-اصفهان-برای-ایجاد-امنیت-پایدار (in Persian).

1760. IRNA, حرفه‌ای کردن بسیج برای مقابله با تهدیدات داخلی است ["Professionalizing the Basij aimed at countering domestic threats"], 29 December 2016, https://www.irna.ir/news/82366247/حرفه-ای-کردن-بسیج-برای-مقابله-با-تهدیدات-داخلی-است (in Persian).

1761. Ofogh Lorestan, یگان امنیتی لرستان با ۲۲ گردان، هم وزن یک تیپ ویژه کشور ["Lorestan Security Cohort with 22 battalions, equivalent to a special brigade in the country"], 20 January 2022, https://ofoghlorestan.ir/یگان-امنیتی-لرستان-با-۲۲-گردان،-هم-وزن-ی (in Persian).

country as "the IRGC has intervened into security matters more seriously than before".[1762] He added that this was based on the directives of the Supreme Leader, who is quoted as saying, "I want security from the IRGC".[1763]

Official statements by commanders of the IRGC's provincial corps and Basij Resistance Sector Corps frequently acknowledge the role of Imam Ali Battalions in suppressing protests nationwide. In provinces where a provincial Imam Ali headquarters exists, official statements also emphasize the critical role of these headquarters in providing intelligence oversight and enhancing the operational capabilities of the Imam Ali Battalions.[1764]

On 28 September 2024, the representative of the Supreme Leader in the Shohada Security Cohort of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Khorasan Razavi stated:

> **"Basijis from the Imam Ali Battalions are the frontline fighters against those who disrupt social security and lead those causing sedition. Indeed, during the recent events, including the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' sedition, these Basijis stood firm against the rioters and disruptors of public security, sacrificing their lives and property to ensure that not a moment of peace is lost for the people and that no harm is inflicted on Islam and the Islamic society."[1765]**

10.3.2(III)(ii) Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions

The formation of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions began in 2012 with authorities citing purposes such as military "defence", domestic "security" and "assistance" during natural crisis.[1766] Senior IRGC officials frequently refer to the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions as "rapid response battalions" composed of agents who are "physically, mentally and militarily capable and well prepared," standing ready to "confront security and defence threats and protect local neighbourhoods".[1767]

On 7 November 2013, the then deputy commander of the IRGC's Ansar Al-Hossein Provincial Corps of Hamedan, Mazaher Majidi, stated: "The purpose of forming the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions was providing support to the Imam Ali and Imam Hossein security battalions, with a focus on two main

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1762. Mehr News Agency, ["We will respond firmly to any security threat: 1,000 Imam Ali Battalions are active"], 24 February 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5155375/هر-تهدید-امنیتی-را-به-شدت-پاسخ-می-دهیم-فعالیت-۱۰۰۰-گردان-امام (in Persian).

1763. Mehr News Agency, ["We will respond firmly to any security threat: 1,000 Imam Ali Battalions are active"], 24 February 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5155375/هر-تهدید-امنیتی-را-به-شدت-پاسخ-می-دهیم-فعالیت-۱۰۰۰-گردان-امام (in Persian).

1764. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, ["Intelligence oversight of Imam Ali headquarters has stabilized security in Ghazvin"], 19 April 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/01/30/2882688/اشراف-اطلاعاتی-قرارگاه-امام-علی-ع- سبب-تثبیت-امنیت-در-قزوین-شده-است (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion held in Marand county"], 2 October 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/2929962/رزمایش-گردان-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-شهرستان-ویژه- مرند-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1765. Basij News Agency, ["Commendation of the commanders of Imam Ali(ع) Battalions during Sacred Defence Week"], 28 September 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9631813/تقدیر-از-فرماندهان-گردان-های-امام-علیع-همزمان-با-هفته-دفاع-مقدس (in Persian).

1766. See, for example, Defa Press, ["Main objective of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion is to enhance defensive capability"], 29 April 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/664286/هدف-اصلی-گردان-بیت-المقدس-افزایش-توان-دفاعی-است (in Persian); IRNA, ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion formed in Kermanshah"], 23 September 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/84051510/گردان-بیت-المقدس-در-کرمانشاه-تشکیل-شد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["Formation of Special Cohorts and Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Lorestan"], 16 July 2018, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4348458/تشکیل-یگان-های-ویژه-و-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-در-لرستان (in Persian).

1767. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ["Major exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Semnan province"], 28 November 2012, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/1753441/رزمایش-بزرگ-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-استان-سمنان (in Persian); IRNA, ["Mission of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions: Countering enemy threats"], 11 October 2012, https://www.irna.ir/news/80365390/ماموریت-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس-مقابله-با-تهدیدات-دشمنان (in Persian).

missions: security and defence."[1768]

On 20 November 2015, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Rasht, Majid Douhendou, emphasized the responsibilities of Basij agents to undergo military trainings and join the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions or one of the more advanced battalions, such as the Imam Hossein or Imam Ali Battalions. He stated:

> **"Basijis have two important duties: first, to attain readiness by undergoing training and joining a battalion, and second, to maintain that readiness by preserving their physical fitness. Basijis must maintain a close relationship with the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion."[1769]**

On 1 November 2016, the then deputy commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Nahavand county, Hamid Pourmehdi, stated:

> **"Four main missions have been assigned to the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions… The most important duty of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions is the defence of local neighbourhoods within their territorial jurisdiction, as part of the mosaic defence strategy implemented by the IRGC and the Basij… Their second mission is to provide combat support to the Imam Hossein Battalions stationed in county centres… The third mission… involves confronting unrest and riots during episodes of social sedition and their fourth mission is to assist citizens through emergency relief and rescue in response to unexpected natural disasters."[1770]**

State media outlets have published numerous reports, including photographs and videos, about the exercises of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in various counties across the country to prepare for confronting "riots and unrest", the terms used by the authorities for protests.[1771]

1768. IRNA, گردان های امام حسین و بیت المقدس آماده انجام ماموریت هستند ["Imam Hossein and Beit Al-Moghaddas battalions are ready to carry out missions"], 7 November 2013, https://www.irna.ir/news/80894757/گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-و-بیت-المقدس-آماده-انجام-ماموریت-هستند (in Persian).

1769. ISNA, بسیجیان با گردان بیت‌المقدس ارتباط زیادی داشته باشند ["Basij members should have close ties with Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 20 November 2015, https://www.isna.ir/news/gilan-87648/بسیجیان-با-گردان-بیت-المقدس-ارتباط-زیادی-داشته-باشند (in Persian).

1770. Basij News Agency, دفاع از کوی و برزن مهمترین وظیفه گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس ["Defense of neighbourhoods and streets is the most important duty of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 1 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8771177/دفاع-از-کوی-و-برزن-مهمترین-وظیفه-گردان-های-بیت-المقد (in Persian).

1771. See, for example, shahrdaadtv, نماهنگ رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در سپاه ناحیه حضرت مهدی موعود (عج) شهرستان قدس ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in the Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian); Basij News Agency, مقابله با اغتشاشات در رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس دلوار ["Confronting riots in exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar"], 15 February 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9219379/مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-در-رزمایش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-دلوار (in Persian); Basij News Agency, رزمایش مقابله با اغتشاشات و ناآرامی‌ها گردان بیت‌المقدس حوزه ۶۱۹ ابوذر غفاری ["Riot and unrest response exercise by Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion, Sector 619, Abu Dhar Ghafari"], 4 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8772699/رزمایش-مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-و-ناآرامی-ها-گردان-بیت-المقدس-حوزه-۶۱۹-ابوذر-غفاری (in Persian); Basij News Agency, رزمایش مقابله با اغتشاشات و ناآرامی‌های گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس سپاه امام حسین (ع) کرج ["Riot and unrest countering exercise by the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Imam Hossein Battalion in Karaj"], 4 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8772790/رزمایش-مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-و-ناآرامی-های-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-سپاه-امام-حسینع-کرج-عکس (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت‌المقدس در آذربایجان شرقی برگزار شد (فیلم) ["Exercises of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in East Azerbaijan (video)"], 30 September 2016, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/07/09/1200561/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس-در-آذربایجان-شرقی-برگزار-شد-فیلم (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رزمایش بزرگ گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت‌المقدس در استان سمنان ["Major exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Semnan province"], 28 November 2012, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/1753441/رزمایش-بزرگ-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-استان-سمنان (in Persian).

These photographs and videos show members of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions engaging in various training exercises, including shooting drills, mock physical confrontations with "rioters", anti-riot line formations and intimidating group arrivals on motorcycles.[1772]

10.3.2(IV) OPERATIONAL DIVISIONS AND BRIGADES

The specific mandate of the operational divisions and brigades of the IRGC's provincial corps is not defined in any publicly available laws and regulations. Official statements and state media reports indicate that the authorities define the mandate of the operational divisions and brigades broadly, encompassing both combat functions in case of armed conflict and security operations carried out in response to "threats" against "internal security".[1773] As stated throughout this report, in the context of the Islamic Republic of Iran, street protests and other forms of dissent by political activists, human rights defenders and civil society activists are considered to constitute such threats.[1774]

On 29 September 2007, the then general commander of the IRGC, Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, stated the following about the primary mission of the IRGC since the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, which he said is based on the instructions of the Supreme Leader: "The primary mission of the IRGC at present is to counter internal threats, and then, in the event of an external military threat, the IRGC will assist the Army."[1775]

This points to the growing role of the IRGC's military personnel in the suppression of protests and other forms of dissent.

On 21 November 2023, the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, stated:

> **"The Ground Forces of the IRGC are entrusted with the fundamental missions of safeguarding the country's borders and ensuring the security of the two critically important regions of the south-east and north-west of the country."[1776]**

The south-eastern region refers to Sistan and Baluchistan province, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, and is home to Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority. The north-western region refers to the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, which border Iraq and Turkey and are home to Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority. The operational divisions and brigades' task of "safeguarding

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1772. See, for example, shahrdaadtv, ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Confronting riots in exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar"], 15 February 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9219379/مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-در-رزمایش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-دلوار (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Riot and unrest countering exercise by the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Imam Hossein Battalion in Karaj"], 4 November 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8772790/رزمایش-مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-و-ناآرامی-های-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-سپاه-امام-حسینع-کرج-عکس (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in East Azerbaijan (video)"], 30 September 2016, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/07/09/1200561/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس-در-آذربایجان-شرقی-برگزار-شد-فیلم (in Persian).

1773. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, ["Maintaining and enhancing sustainable security in Kurdistan is the IRGC's primary mission"], 18 July 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5839570/استمرار-و-ارتقای-امنیت-پایدار-کردستان-رسالت-اصلی-سپاه-است (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["Internal security responsibility lies with the IRGC, with permission of the Supreme Leader and Supreme National Security Council"], 1 October 2007, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/562126/حفظ-امنیت-داخلی-با-اجازه-فرمانده-کل-قوا-و-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی (in Persian).

1774. See also Amnesty International, *Caught in a Web of Repression* (previously cited).

1775. Mehr News Agency, ["Main mission of the IRGC is confronting internal threats"], 29 September 2007, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/560662/ماموریت-اصلی-سپاه-مقابله-با-تهدیدهای-داخلی-است-فرماندهی-بسیج (in Persian).

1776. ISNA, ["The mission of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force is to secure country's borders and maintain regional security"], 21 November 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402083022301/نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-در-انجام-ماموریت-حفظ-مرزهای-کشور-و-امنیت-مناطق (in Persian).

borders' security" involves countering armed opposition groups that are based near the borders abroad and may attempt armed incursions into Iran.[1777]

On 11 December 2023, in the context of a "major security exercise for the IRGC's Ground Force in the west of the county", the authorities described the mission of their military forces as "countering security threats, criminal gangs, instability and terrorist groups that are extensively supported with intelligence and equipment by some dominant global and regional powers".[1778]

10.3.2(IV)(i) Imam Hossein Battalions

The Iranian authorities and state media frequently refer to the Imam Hossein Battalions as "combat" battalions, indicating that they are trained to be ready for combat in situations of armed conflict.[1779] However, a review of official statements over 15 years as well as a leaked official document from the 2022 protest period show that their functions also include countering internal "security threats", which in the context of the Islamic Republic of Iran means suppression of protests.

According to official statements, the Imam Hossein Battalions were formed in 2008 following the proposal of the then general commander of the IRGC and by the decree of the Supreme Leader to "provide Basij forces with advanced training and recruit capable and motivated individuals to counter hard threats and war".[1780]

On 10 January 2010, the then deputy commander of the IRGC's Ground Force, Abdollah Araghi, stated: "If the general commander of the IRGC approves and this is communicated to us, we will certainly be among the supporters of deploying the Imam Hossein Battalions in security matters."[1781]

A month later, in February 2010, a senior IRGC official in the IRGC's Ground Force, Ali Jebreili, made a statement which confirmed the use of the Imam Hossein Battalions in security operations, including those related to the suppression of protests. He stated:

> **"The objectives of forming the [Imam Hossein] Battalions include urban defence, confronting urban and local unrest, dealing with thugs and criminals, and providing assistance during disasters and crises such as floods and earthquakes."[1782]**

1777. See IMNA, امنیت مرزها خط قرمز سپاه پاسداران است ["Border security is the red line of the IRGC"], 2 August 2024 https://www.imna.ir/news/777322/امنیت-مرزها-خط-قرمز-سپاه-پاسداران-است (in Persian); Supreme National Defence University, رزمندگان سپاه امنیت مرزها را تضمین کرده‌اند ["IRGC forces have guaranteed border security"], 25 January 2022, https://sndu.ac.ir/fa/news/5707/رزمندگان-سپاه-امنیت-مرزها-را-تضمین-کرده-اند (in Persian).

1778. Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش بزرگ امنیتی نیروی زمینی سپاه در غرب کشور برگزار شد ["Large-scale security exercise by the IRGC's Ground Force held in the west of the country"], 11 December 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/09/20/3004620/رزمایش-بزرگ-امنیتی-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-در-غرب-کشور-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1779. See, for example, Basij News Agency, فراخوان دسته‌های رزمی گردان امام حسین(ع) ["Call for Imam Hossein Battalion 'combat groups'"], 4 July 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9523761/فراخوان-دسته-های-رزمی-گردان-امام-حسینع (in Persian); Defa Press, تشکیل گردان ویژه امام حسین در تیپ 12 قائم استان سمنان ["Formation of the Imam Hossein Battalion within the 12 Ghaem Brigade in Semnan province"], 10 December 2016, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/216876/تشکیل-گردان-ویژه-امام-حسینع-در-تیپ-12-قائمعج-استان-سمنان (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) سربازان انقلاب و ولایت هستند ["Imam Hossein Battalions are soldiers of the Revolution and guardians of the jurisprudence"], 21 October 2013, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1392/07/29/171625/گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-سربازان-انقلاب-و-ولایت-هستند (in Persian); Tabnak, بکارگیری گردان امام حسین(ع) در مباحث امنیتی ["Deployment of the Imam Hossein Battalion in security issues"], 9 January 2010, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/80473/بکارگیری-گردان-امام-حسینع-در-مباحث-امنیتی (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, تشکیل گردان‌های عملیاتی امام حسین(ع) در سراسر آذربایجان شرقی ["Formation of Imam Hossein Operational Battalions across East Azerbaijan"], 3 August 2008, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/726238/تشکیل-گردانهای-عملیاتی-امام-حسین-ع-در-سراسر-آذربایجان-شرقی (in Persian).

1780. Fars News Agency, وظیفه اصلی گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) مقابله با تهدیدات سخت است ["Primary duty of the Imam Hossein Battalions is to counter hard threats"], 12 March 2012, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/13315530600003559 87/وظیفه-اصلی-گردان‌های-امام-حسی-(ع)-مقابله-با-تهدیدات-سخت-است (in Persian).

1781. Kayhan, موافقت نیروی زمینی سپاه با به کارگیری گردان های امام حسین(ع) در موارد امنیتی ["Approval of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force for deploying Imam Hossein Battalions in security operations"], 10 January 2010, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/2020352 (in Persian).

1782. IRNA, گردان امام حسین (ع) در کشور تشکیل شده است ۲۷۰ ["270 Imam Hossein Battalions formed in the country"], 25 February 2010, https://www.irna.ir/news/7277466/گردان-امام-حسین-ع-در-کشور-تشکیل-شده-است-270 (in Persian).

In October 2013, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Hormozgan, Mohammad Marani, stated:

> **"The members of the Imam Hossein Battalions are the covert soldiers of the Revolution and the Supreme Leader… Among the most important advantages and characteristics of the Basijis of the Imam Hossein Battalions are their readiness for combat, possession of diverse equipment, and not being stationed in a specific military barracks but rather being dispersed across [various] cities."[1783]**

On 2 August 2015, the commander of the Khatam Al-Anbiya Operational Division, the operational division of the IRGC's corps for the rest of Tehran province, stated: "The purpose of establishing the Imam Hossein Battalions in the country is to enhance the readiness of various segments of the population to defend religion… and the sacred system of the Islamic Republic."[1784]

On 18 March 2023, the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kerman described the Imam Hossein Battalions as "combat-security" battalions, further highlighting that their official missions include both the suppression of protests and engagement in military operations.[1785]

During the nationwide protests of 2019, the authorities claimed that the then commander of the Imam Hossein Battalion of Malard county in Tehran province, Morteza Ebrahimi, was killed while suppressing the "riots", further indicating the participation of these battalions in the protest crackdowns.[1786]

Amnesty International reviewed several media articles reporting that the commanders of various Imam Hossein Battalions across Esfahan province, in collaboration with one of the operational divisions of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Esfahan, organized ideological classes for their forces between October and December 2022, focusing on "enemy recognition" and "determining the agents behind the latest riots".[1787] Statements from the commanders of the Imam Hossein Battalions regarding these sessions indicate that "organizing such sessions is one of the responsibilities of the Imam Hossein Battalions", as directed by the Supreme Leader.[1788]

For example, on 18 October 2022, the Basij News Agency reported that an official in charge of intelligence affairs at the 14 Imam Hossein Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Esfahan conducted a class focused on "enemy recognition and determining the agents behind recent

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1783. Tasnim News Agency, گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) سربازان انقلاب و ولایت هستند ["Imam Hossein Battalions are soldiers of the Revolution and guardians of the jurisprudence"], 21 October 2013, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1392/07/29/171625/گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-سربازان-انقلاب-و-ولایت-هستند (in Persian).

1784. Basij News Agency, تشکیل گردان امام حسین(ع) با هدف تقویت اقتدار و صلابت نظام است ["Formation of the Imam Hossein Battalion to strengthen the power and authority of the system"], 2 August 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8558371/تشکیل-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-با-هدف-تقویت-اقتدار-و-صلابت-نظام-است (in Persian).

1785. Khabarban, گردان رزمی _ امنیتی امام حسین(ع) در ریگان راه‌اندازی شد ["Imam Hossein security and combat battalion established in Rigan"], 18 March 2023, https://37355136.khabarban.com (in Persian).

1786. Hawzah, شهید مدافع امنیت عاشق سوریه ["Security defender martyr who loved Syria"], 23 November 2019, https://hawzah.net/fa/Article/View/117159/شهید-مدافع-امنیت-عاشق-سوریه (in Persian).

1787. See, for example, Basij News Agency, اجرای کلاس دشمن شناسی جهت بسیجیان گردان ۱۰۷ امام حسین (علیه السلام) ["Conducting an enemy recognition class for Basij members of the 107 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 18 December 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9476994/اجرای-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-جهت-بسیجیان-گردان-۱۰۷-امام-حسینعلیه-السلام (in Persian); Basij News Agency, برگزاری کلاس دشمن شناسی برای بسیجیان گردان ۱۰۳ امام حسین (علیه السلام) ["Enemy recognition class for Basij members of the 103 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 15 December 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9476366/برگزاری-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-برای-بسیجیان-گردان-۱۰۳-امام-حسینعلیه-السلام (in Persian); Basij News Agency, جلسه سیاسی بصیرتی و جهاد تبیین برای بسیجیان و پایوران گردان برگزار شد ["Political and awareness-raising session on Jihad of Clarification for Basij members and professional battalion forces"], 24 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9463548/جلسه-سیاسی-بصیرتی-و-جهاد-تبیین-برای-بسیجیان-و-پایوران-گردان-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, برگزاری کلاس دشمن شناسی و تبیین عوامل اغتشاشات اخیر برای نیروهای گردان ۱۱۲ امام حسین (ع) ["Enemy recognition and clarification of recent disturbances for the forces of 112 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 18 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9462732/برگزاری-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-و-تبیین-عوامل-اغتشاشات-اخیر-برای-نیروهای-گردان112امام- (in Persian).

1788. Basij News Agency, جلسه سیاسی بصیرتی و جهاد تبیین برای بسیجیان و پایوران گردان برگزار شد ["Political and awareness-raising session on Jihad of Clarification for Basij members and professional battalion forces"], 24 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9463548/جلسه-سیاسی-بصیرتی-و-جهاد-تبیین-برای-بسیجیان-و-پایوران-گردان-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

riots for the forces of the 112 Imam Hossein Battalion".[1789] The commander of the 112 Imam Hossein Battalion stated that this was done "in accordance with the directive of the commander-in-chief of all armed forces".[1790]

Later, on 24 October 2022, the commander of the 112 Imam Hossein Battalion in Esfahan province stated the following about what was described by the Basij News Agency as a session held "in condemnation of the recent riots and the disrespect shown to Islamic sanctities":

> **"Through enlightenment and increasing awareness, the occurrence of such riots must be prevented. Organizing such sessions is one of the responsibilities of the Iman Hossein Battalions to enhance the political awareness and knowledge of the Basijis… This is because the Supreme Leader stated in his remarks regarding the unrest: 'I say clearly that these incidents [2022 protests] are designed by the USA, the Zionist regime and their followers'."[1791]**

On 3 November 2022, in the context of a ceremony marking the inauguration of the new commander of the Imam Hossein Battalion in Behabad county, Yazd province, the commander of the 18 Al-Ghadir Operational Brigade of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Yazd described the ongoing protests as "riots" organized by "enemies to harm the Islamic Republic of Iran" and highlighted the preparation of the Imam Hossein Battalions for "defence". He stated:

> **"Enemies have resorted to mercenaries to harm the Islamic Republic of Iran, aiming to disrupt the peace of the people through riots… Islamic Iran will respond decisively to the hostile actions of the enemies, which are carried out for the purpose of creating insecurity and turmoil in the country… Currently, the Imam Hossein (peace be upon him) Battalions in each county, utilizing trained and ready Basij forces, are among the most prepared units for ground defence."[1792]**

On 4 November 2022, the Basij News Agency reported that the commander of the 106 Imam Hossein Battalion in Esfahan province, along with a group of Basij agents from this battalion, visited a member of their battalion who had been injured while "confronting the riots" in the city of Esfahan, Esfahan province. During the visit, the commander appreciated the role of the forces under his command, saying:

> **"These dear individuals acted in a truly self-sacrificial manner… They acted based on their conscience to protect the honour [referring to women and girls][1793] of the people, solely for the sake of God, with sincerity and bravery… This demonstrates that there are still such masculine men in our society, who stand firm, placing their lives on the line, with religious, national, and moral zeal as well as their zeal to protect their honour [referring to women and girls] and the security of the people. We all owe them a**

1789. Basij News Agency, ["Enemy recognition and clarification of recent disturbances for the forces of 112 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 18 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9462732/برگزاری-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-و-تبیین-عوامل-اغتشاشات-اخیر-برای-نیروهای-گردان112امام (in Persian).

1790. Basij News Agency, ["Enemy recognition and clarification of recent disturbances for the forces of 112 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 18 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9462732/برگزاری-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-و-تبیین-عوامل-اغتشاشات-اخیر-برای-نیروهای-گردان112امام (in Persian).

1791. Basij News Agency, ["Political and awareness-raising session on Jihad of Clarification for Basij members and professional battalion forces"], 24 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9463548/جلسه-سیاسی-بصیرتی-و-جهاد-تبیین-برای-بسیجیان-و-پایوران-گردان-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1792. Basij News Agency, ["Ceremony held in Bahabad to honour and introduce the new commander of the Imam Hossein Battalion"], 3 November 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9465623/آئین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-بهاباد-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

1793. The term used in Persian is *namous*. This term is used within a sexist patriarchal culture that defines women and girls as the possessions of their male relatives and places an expectation upon the male relatives to enforce a strict set of moral codes on their female family members to protect their "chastity".

debt of gratitude, and these acts of martyrdom and sacrifices are a source of pride for their families."[1794]

On 15 December 2022, the commander of the 103 Imam Hossein Battalion in Esfahan province stated:

"In the foggy climate resulting from the recent sedition [referencing the 2022 protests], Basijis need to recognize domestic and external enemies... As stated by the Supreme Leader and commander-in-chief of all armed forces, sedition must be extinguished through enlightenment. Creating increased awareness of the county's current circumstances… is crucial and necessary for all Basijis. Therefore, in line with this directive of the Supreme Leader, this battalion held a class on the topic of enemy recognition."[1795]

In a similar vein, on 18 December 2022, the commander of the 107 Imam Hossein Battalion in Esfahan province stated:

"Today, the sworn enemies of the system are attempting to exploit even the smallest opportunity to instil despair, hopelessness, and to weaken the position of the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran… Effective resistance against the enemy requires comprehensive knowledge of them; therefore, this battalion has organized enemy identification classes for this purpose… In the recent events [referencing the 2022 protests], the role of domestic, regional and transregional enemies was very evident, and understanding their nature plays a crucial role in appropriately dealing with these enemies… enemy identification sessions will be held in a structured and continuous manner to achieve this important goal."[1796]

10.3.2(IV)(ii) Fateheen Battalions

IRGC authorities describe the Fateheen Battalions as "highly flexible" forces capable of carrying out "defence, security and special operations missions"[1797] and "providing support wherever any of the… IRGC forces [Navy Force, Ground Resistance Force, Aerospace Force and Qods Force] request assistance".[1798]

In a media interview on 19 April 2020, the then national commander of the Fateheen Cohort, Mahmoud Hashemi, stated that the Fateheen Battalions were established with the aim of creating a rigorously trained and unified force with skills and capabilities comparable to military special operations

1794. Basij News Agency, ["Commanders of 106 Imam Hossein Battalion meet with a distinguished war veteran"], 4 November 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9465159/دیدار-فرماندهان-گردان-۱۰۶-امام-حسینع-با-یکی-از-جانبازان-سرافراز (in Persian).

1795. Basij News Agency, ["Enemy recognition class for Basij members of the 103 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 15 December 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9476366/برگزاری-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-برای-بسیجیان-گردان-۱۰۳-امام-حسینعلیه-السلام (in Persian).

1796. Basij News Agency, ["Conducting an enemy recognition class for Basij members of the 107 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 18 December 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9476994/اجرای-کلاس-دشمن-شناسی-جهت-بسیجیان-گردان-۱۰۷-امام-حسینعلیه-السلام (in Persian);

1797. Khabar Online, ["Fateheen Battalion of the IRGC on standby for deployment anywhere in the world"], 9 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1822794/آماده-باش-گردان-فاتحین-سپاه-پاسداران-برای-اعزام-به-هر-نقطه-جهان (in Persian).

1798. Tasnim News Agency, ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian).

and commando units operating on land, at sea and in the air, but consisting entirely of Basij agents.[1799]

In the same interview, Mahmoud Hashemi referred to the role of the Fateheen Cohort in repressing the 2009 protests, stating:

> **"In the sedition of 2009, our guys performed very well, and the Fateheen in Tehran became one of the most notable cohorts. Many within the IRGC ranks did not expect that a Basij cohort could operate with such cohesion."[1800]**

In another interview on 27 October 2021, Mahmoud Hashemi explained that Fateheen Battalions receive tactical trainings to prepare for operations against "terrorist and *takfiri* groups",[1801] including by "practising urban warfare… nighttime operations, ambushes and counter-ambushes, and specialized weapons training… under real combat conditions."[1802]

State media outlets have published pictures from the "security" exercises of the Fateheen Battalions between 2021 and 2024, depicting them in mock confrontations with protesters and engaging in long-distance shootings with precision rifles.[1803]

On 26 November 2022, Iran's then president, Ebrahim Raisi, paid a visit to the Fateheen Cohort in Greater Tehran and emphasized their security-related responsibilities. He stated:

> **"You have generated pride in all areas and shone brightly in confronting rioters and those disrupting the security of the people… Because of your critical mission and responsibility to safeguard the country's security, you chose to forgo time with family and the comfort of a Friday off, something everyone needs. In truth, you prioritized the well-being of others over your own comfort. This action is truly valuable and worthy of appreciation."[1804]**

Ebrahim Raisi added that he was conveying the Supreme Leader's "regards" to the Fateheen Cohort and emphasized their duty to protect the Islamic Republic system. He stated:

> **"Today, preserving the Islamic system is among the most essential duties… The enemies have stirred up numerous seditions against the Revolution to prevent the export of the Revolution and the Basij spirit. However, thanks to God and the resilience of the Iranian people, today the message and waves of**

1799. Tasnim News Agency, ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian).

1800. Tasnim News Agency, ["Interview with commander of the specialized Fateheen Cohort: Pursuing the impossible; Qods Force welcomes Fateheen operations in Syria"], 19 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536/گفتگو-با-فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-به-دنبال-کارهای-نشدنی-هستیم-استقبال-نیروی-قدس-سپاه-از-عملیات-های-فاتحین-در-سوریه (in Persian).

1801. The Iranian authorities use the term *takfiri* to refer to Sunni adversaries, who view Shia as deviating from what they consider true Islam, labeling them as unbelievers (*kaferan*). However, the authorities also apply the term to dissidents from persecuted Kurdish and Baluchi minorities who practise Sunni Islam, as a way to demonize them.

1802. ISNA, ["Commencement of tactical drills by the specialized Fateheen Cohort of the IRGC"], 27 October 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400080503147/آغاز-تمرین-تاکتیکی-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-سپاه (in Persian).

1803. See, for example, Tabnak, ["Security exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort in Greater Tehran"], 10 October 2023, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1197729/رزمایش-امنیتی-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-تهران-بزرگ (in Persian); Mashregh News, ["Photographs of anti-terrorism and hostage rescue drills conducted by the Fateheen Cohort"], 28 September 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1646454/عکس-تمرین-مقابله-با-تیم-های-تروریستی-و-رهای-گروگان-یگان-فاتحین (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, ["Images of security exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort's in the presence of General Hossein Nejat"], 27 September 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/photo/884433/تصاویر-رزمایش-امنیتی-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-با-حضور-سردار-حسین-نجات (in Persian).

1804. Didar News, ["Raisi's visit to the specialized Fateheen Special Cohort: Preserving the system is among the most important duties"], 26 November 2022, https://www.didarnews.ir/fa/news/140963/بازدید-رئیسی-از-یگان-ویژه- فاتحین-حفظ-نظام-از-اوجب-واجبات-است (in Persian).

the Islamic Revolution have crossed Iran's borders and have become a model for other nations, especially those in the region."[1805]



The president of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the time of the 2022 protests, Ebrahim Raisi (centre), during his visit to the Fateheen Cohort in Greater Tehran on the occasion of Basij Week on 26 November 2022 © Didar News[1806]

1805. Dana News, نظام اسلامی تنها نظامی است که پرچم مقابله با نظام سلطه را بر افراشته است ["Islamic system is the only one to raise the flag against the system of domination"], 26 November 2022, https://dana.ir/1913661/-نظام-اسلامی-تنها-نظامی-است-که-پرچم-مقابله-با-نظام-سلطه-را-بر-افراشته-است#gsc.tab=0 (in Persian).

1806. Didar News, بازدید رئیسی از یگان ویژه فاتحین، حفظ نظام از اوجب واجبات است ["Raisi's visit to the specialized Fateheen Special Cohort: Preserving the system is among the most important duties"], 26 November 2022, https://www.didarnews.ir/fa/news/140963/-بازدید-رئیسی-از-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-حفظ-نظام-از-اوجب-واجبات-است (in Persian).



A training "security" exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran in September 2024, depicting them in mock confrontations with protesters © M.Hasan Zarifmanesh / Fars News Agency[1807]



A "security" training exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, conducted in September 2024, depicting them making arrests © M.Hasan Zarifmanesh / Fars News Agency[1808]

1807. Fars News Agency, سومین رزمایش نبی اکرم(ص) یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://farsnews.ir/mh_zarifmanesh/1727190699135255023/سومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم(ص)-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

1808. Fars News Agency, سومین رزمایش نبی اکرم(ص) یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://farsnews.ir/mh_zarifmanesh/1727190699135255023/سومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم(ص)-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

On 9 October 2023, the commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hasanzadeh, reaffirmed that the activities of the Fateheen Battalions are aimed at protecting "the Islamic Republic system and Islamic Revolution". He stated:

> **"This [Fateheen] Cohort consists of borderless fighters who are ready to defend Islam and the Revolution anywhere in the world if necessary… Within the Fateheen Cohort, all forces and commanders understand both the strategies of the Revolution and the tactics of the enemy. For 44 years, the enemies of the Revolution have tried to undermine the Revolution… Today, they have failed in all their attempts. Since last year [2022 protests], they have come to the conclusion that, with our capable security forces and insightful people, this system and Revolution will endure and is undefeatable."[1809]**

10.3.2(V) SECURITY COHORTS

On 23 November 2013, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Esfahan, Gholamreza Soleimani, explained the mandate of the Security Cohorts as follows:

> **"After the experience of the 2009 sedition [protests], the formation of Security Cohorts in the major cities of Tehran, Esfahan, Mashhad, Shiraz and Tabriz has been part of the plan, with the responsibility of pacifying the public. For this purpose, the Provincial Corps of Esfahan has planned for two pacification cohorts in this metropolis."[1810]**

"Pacification" is a term employed by the Iranian authorities to describe security operations aimed at quashing protests and dispersing protesters.

On 3 December 2018, the Basij News Agency stated:

> **"Since their formation, the Security Cohorts of the Saheb Al-Zaman Corps [of Esfahan province] have played a crucial role in pacifying riots and protecting [public] figures and national and religious ceremonies in the province."[1811]**

In a similar vein, on 20 January 2022, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Lorestan, Morteza Kashkouli, stated:

> **"The Security Cohort of Lorestan, with 22 battalions, is equivalent to a division. It emerged from the movements and threats of [December 2017-January] 2018 and [November] 2019 [protests] to ensure that counter-revolutionaries are not allowed to breathe. We must be ready at all times; any day we are unprepared is a day of defeat."[1812]**

On 22 November 2019, during a visit with several "exemplary" battalions of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, the then deputy general commander of the IRGC, Ali Fadavi, celebrated the swift repression of the nationwide November 2019 protests in 48

1809. Bartarinha, آماده‌باش گردان فاتحین سپاه پاسداران ["Fateheen Battalion of the IRGC on standby"], 9 October 2023, https://www.bartarinha.ir/پخش-اخبار-روز-20/1360407-آماده-باش-گردان-فاتحین-سپاه-پاسداران (in Persian).

1810. ISNA, تشکیل دو یگان آرام‌سازی مردم پس از فتنه ۸۸ در اصفهان ["Formation of two cohorts for the pacification of the people after the 2009 sedition in Esfahan"], 23 November 2013, https://www.isna.ir/news/Esfahan-24803/تشکیل-دو-یگان-آرام-سازی-مردم-پس-از-فتنه-88-در-اصفهان (in Persian).

1811. Basij News Agency, دیدار فرماندهان یگان امنیتی حضرت ابوالفضل (ع) وذوالفقار ،با نمایندگی ولی فقیه در لشکر۱۴ امام حسین(ع) ["Meeting of commanders of the Hazrat Abolfazl and Zulfiqar Security Cohort with the Representative of the Supreme Leader in the 14 Imam Hossein Division"], 3 December 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9086281/دیدار-فرماندهان-یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-ابوالفضل-ع-و-ذوالفقار-با-نمایندگی-ولی-فقیه-در-لشکر۱۴-امام-حسینع (in Persian).

1812. Ofogh Lorestan, یگان امنیتی لرستان با ۲۲ گردان، هم وزن یک تیپ ویژه کشور ["Lorestan Security Cohort with 22 battalions, equivalent to a special brigade in the country"], 20 January 2022, https://ofoghlorestan.ir/یگان-امنیتی-لرستان-با-۲۲-گردان،-هم-وزن-ی (in Persian).

hours, in apparent appreciation of the role played by the agents he was addressing. He stated: "Devotees of the Islamic Revolution, warriors, guards and Basijis must uphold the principles of this Revolution and remain vigilant in protecting them at all times."[1813]

State media reports indicate that Security Cohorts may consist of various units with distinct mandates including to "counter terrorism… [and] counter riots".[1814]

A post that was published on 27 May 2023 on a pro-establishment Telegram channel entitled Iranian Armed Forces about the Navvab Security Ranger Company of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, stated that the commando unit "is legally tasked with confronting riots and has received the necessary training for this."[1815]

Amnesty International reviewed a video posted on state-affiliated social media accounts on or around 14 December 2022 that highlights the role of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company in repressing the 2022 protests.[1816]

The video begins by showing the phrase "Navvab Security Ranger Company" in English and the phrase "Navvab Security Ranger Company – Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort" in Persian. The number "725" is written in large font in the background. The video then shows agents from the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company gearing up, lining up on foot with a salute, and assembling in a motorcade. They then depart from their base on motorcycles, heading to protest sites. The footage later captures numerous agents in front of Tehran University and another group of agents chasing protesters on foot and motorcycles. The agents are seen carrying shields, on some of which the initials "S.R.C" are written, batons and shotguns.

1813. Donya-e-Eqtesad, ["Deputy commander of the IRGC's account of riots in 29 cities: Trump's viciousness became clear"], 22 November 2019, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-3596691/62-روایت- جانشین-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-از-اغتشاشات-در-شهر-کشور-پدرسوختگی-ترامپ-معلوم-شد (in Persian).

1814. Hamshahri Online, ["Images of special anti-terror drills by Al Mohammad Security Brigade of the IRGC"], 30 May 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/764164/-تصاویر-تمرینات-خاص-واحد-ضد-تروریسم-تیپ-امنیتی-آل-محمد-ص-سپاه (in Persian).

1815. Iranian Armed Forces (IR), Telegram post: ["First display of special combat units in Tehran"], 27 March 2023, https://t.me/Nirouhaye_mosallah312/88023 (in Persian).

1816. IRN0167, video on file with Amnesty International. See ["Unseen images of the Navvab Ranger Company of the Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps during the recent riots"], 15 December 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/f6935yz (in Persian).



A still from a video posted on state-affiliated social media accounts in December 2022 highlighting the role of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company in repressing the 2022 protests. Agents from the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company are seen lining up on foot before departing from their base on motorcycles, heading to protest sites. © Bisimchi Media[1817]

1817. The original post containing the video is not publicly accessible, but a repost is available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X post: ۸- اعلام رسمی حضور گروهان امنیتی نواب در سرکوب اعتراضات، همزمان با انتشار ویدیویی تبلیغاتی در کانال سپاه قدس به تاریخ ۲۳ آذر ۱۴۰۱ صورت گرفت. ["8- The official announcement of the presence of the Navvab Security Company in suppressing protests coincided with the release of a promotional video on the Qods Force channel on 14 December 2022..."], 16 January 2023, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1615087174239617029 (in Persian), minute 0:40.



A still from a video posted on state-affiliated social media accounts in December 2022 highlighting the role of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company in repressing the 2022 protests. Agents from the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company are seen chasing protesters on foot and motorcycles, carrying shields, on some of which the initials "S.R.C" are written, batons and shotguns. © Bisimchi Media[1818]

1818. The original post containing the video is not publicly accessible, but a repost is available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X post: ۸- اعلام رسمی حضور گروهان امنیتی نواب در سرکوب اعتراضات، همزمان با انتشار ویدیویی تبلیغاتی در کانال سپاه قدس به تاریخ ۲۳ آذر ۱۴۰۱ صورت گرفت. ["8- The official announcement of the presence of the Navvab Security Company in suppressing protests coincided with the release of a promotional video on the Qods Force channel on 14 December 2022..."], 16 January 2023, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1615087174239617029 (in Persian), minute 1:39.



A still from a video posted on state-affiliated social media accounts in December 2022 highlighting the role of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company in repressing the 2022 protests. Agents are seen confronting protesters. © Bisimchi Media[1819]

On 23 February 2023, an Instagram account called Navab 725 posted another video along with a caption, which again confirmed the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company's participation in repressing the 2022 protests.[1820] The video begins by showing the phrase "Navvab Security Ranger Company – Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort" in Persian with the number "725" writhen in the background. It then displays footage from the 2022 protests, featuring chanting protesters and a woman burning her headscarf on a stick. After that, it shows a physical altercation involving a group of plain-clothes individuals. Finally, it shifts to showing agents from the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company boarding their motorcycles, riding through busy streets or lining up alongside their motorcycles in the streets. The agents, including the ones sitting on the back of motorcycles, are seen carrying 37/38mm launchers.

The video's soundtrack includes songs with violent lyrics. Wording in the lyrics label the protesters as "*takfiris*"[1821] and "thugs" and threaten them with violence and even death:

> **"*Takfiris*, what foolish illusions [you have]… You thugs… swear to God, we will break your neck. How long will you persist down this path?… If Seyed Ali [Khamenei, the Supreme Leader] permits,**

1819. The original post containing the video is not publicly accessible, but a repost is available at: Farzad Seifikaran, X (post: اعلام ۸- رسمی حضور گروهان امنیتی نواب در سرکوب اعتراضات، همزمان با انتشار ویدیویی تبلیغاتی در کانال سپاه قدس به تاریخ ۲۳ آذر ۱۴۰۱ صورت گرفت.] "8- The official announcement of the presence of the Navvab Security Company in suppressing protests coincided with the release of a promotional video on the Qods Force channel on 14 December 2022…"], 16 January 2023, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1615087174239617029 (in Persian), minute 2:05.

1820. navab_725, Instagram post: حضور تکاوران مدافع امنیت در اغتشاشات ["Presence of ranger security defenders in the 2022 riots"], 23 February 2023, https://www.instagram.com/reel/CpAHZ0Tg3rv/?igsh=MTM4MXEwdmgxbmdiaQ%3D%3D (in Persian).

1821. The Iranian authorities use the term *takfiri* to refer to Sunni adversaries, who view Shia as deviating from what they consider true Islam, labelling them as unbelievers (*kafer*). However, the authorities also apply the term to dissidents from persecuted Kurdish and Baluchi minorities who practise Sunni Islam, as a way to demonize them.

shedding your blood will be lawful for us. We are soldiers of Hossein's barracks. Madly devoted to Bain Al-Haramain."[1822]



A still from a video posted on 23 February 2023 by an Instagram account called Navab 725, confirming the Navvab Security Ranger Company's participation in repressing the 2022 protests. Agents from the Navvab Security Ranger Company are seen aboard their motorcycles, riding through busy streets. Agents, including the ones sitting in the rear seat of motorcycles, are seen carrying 37/38mm launchers. © Navvab Security Ranger Company[1823]

1822. Hossein refers to Imam Hossein, the third Shia imam, who is highly revered in Shia Islam for his role in the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE. Bain Al-Haramain refers to the area between the Imam Hossein Shrine and the Al-Abbas Shrine. This location is traditionally believed to be where the Battle of Karbala occurred.

1823. See video at navab_725, Instagram post: حضور تکاوران مدافع امنیت در اغتشاشات ["Presence of ranger security defenders in the 2022 riots"], 23 February 2023, https://www.instagram.com/reel/CpAHZOTg3rv/?igsh=MTM4MXEwdmgxbmdiaQ%3D%3D (in Persian), minute 1:05.



A still from a video posted on 23 February 2023 by an Instagram account called Navab 725, confirming the Navvab Security Ranger Company's participation in repressing the 2022 protests. Agents from the Navvab Security Ranger Company are seen lining up alongside their motorcycles in the streets and are seen carrying 37/38mm launchers. © Navvab Security Ranger Company[1824]

Agents from the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company were first observed during the 2022 protests in Tehran. A video depicting the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company first circulated on social media on 8 October 2022.[1825] The video, verified by Amnesty International, showed a chaotic scene with multiple agents, both on foot and on motorcycles, gathered in front of Sepah Bank at the intersection of Ferdowsi Avenue and Enghelab Street in Tehran. The agents are seen carrying pepper ball guns.

1824. Still from video produced by the Navvab Security Ranger Company, available at: navab_725, Instagram post: حضور تکاوران مدافع امنیت در اغتشاشات ["Presence of ranger security defenders in the 2022 riots"], 23 February 2023, https://www.instagram.com/reel/CpAHZ0Tg3rv/?igsh=MTM4MXEwdmgxbmdiaQ%3D%3D (in Persian), minute 1:13.
1825. See Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).



An image circulating online on 16 November 2022 which shows four agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company in the streets during the protest period in front of the Darvazeh Dowlat metro station in Tehran © Private

Another image capturing the presence of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company in the streets during the protest period appeared online on 16 November 2022, which shows four agents in front of the Darvazeh Dowlat metro station in Tehran. The agents carry tonfas and, possibly, a shotgun, and the helmets of two of them appear to have cameras.

At that time, their organizational affiliation was uncertain but was later confirmed through an investigation by a journalist, Farzad Seifikaran, which was published by Radio Zamaneh, an independent Persian-language media outlet based outside Iran, on 16 January 2023.[1826]

10.3.2(VI) SPECIAL FORCES

The specific mandate of the Special Forces is not defined in any publicly available laws or regulations. In their official statements, senior IRGC officials have often praised the Special Forces units for their "victories and sacrifices for the sacred Islamic Republic system".[1827] They often describe these units as among the most "core and ground-breaking" forces of the IRGC, which have played an "astounding" role both during the Iran-Iraq war and in the missions of the following decades related to "sustaining security".[1828]

According to state media reports, the national-level Sabereen Cohort was formed around 2000, with a view to "accepting difficult missions and unique and special operations across all domains and spheres including land, air, sea and security both within the county's borders and externally."[1829]

State media has reported on the Sabereen Cohort carrying out operations against the armed wings of Kurdish opposition groups, including the Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK), the Komala Party of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, along Iran's western borders with Iraq and armed

1826. See Radio Zamaneh, ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).
1827. IRNA, ["An IRGC official: Defending the Revolution fully is a duty for everyone"], 24 April 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85455632/یک-مسئول-در-سپاه-دفاع-تمام-قد-از-انقلاب-تکلیف-همگان-است (in Persian).
1828. See, for example, Khabar Online, ["Deployment of the Mirza Kouchak Special Force Brigade to special missions"], 21 August 2024, https://www.khabaronline.ir/photo/1948065/اعزام-تیپ-مخصوص-میرزاکوچک-سپاه-به-ماموریت-های-ویژه (in Persian); IRNA, ["An IRGC official: Defending the Revolution fully is a duty for everyone"], 24 April 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85455632/یک-مسئول-در-سپاه-دفاع-تمام-قد-از-انقلاب-تکلیف-همگان-است (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["110 Salman-e Farsi Ranger Brigade is a powerful cohort of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force"], 9 July 2015, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8538706/تیپ-تکاور-۱۱۰-سلمان-فارسی-یگان-قدرتمند-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-پاسداران-است (in Persian).
1829. See Tasnim News Agency, ["Get to know the elite forces of the IRGC better"], 2 May 2017, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1396/02/12/1396160/با-تکاوران-ویژه-سپاه-پاسداران-بیشتر-آشنا-شوید (in Persian).

Baluchi opposition groups, including Jeish Al-Adl and Jundallah, along Iran's south-eastern borders with Pakistan.[1830]

Regional-level Special Forces units, such as the 3 Division of Hamzeh Special Forces in West Azerbaijan province and the 110 Salman-e Farsi Ranger Brigade in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, have also been involved in operations against the abovementioned Kurdish and Baluchi armed opposition groups.[1831] Official statements and state media reports often refer to these operations as "cleansing" areas of "anti-revolutionary elements" and "terrorist groups".[1832]

According to state media reports, regional-level Special Forces units also ensure "domestic security" through identifying and seizing illegal cargoes of satellite receivers,[1833] drugs,[1834] weapons and ammunition.[1835]

While official statements and state media reports do not explicitly mention the involvement of units of the IRGC's Special Forces in suppressing protests, information gathered by Amnesty International indicates that at least in connection with the crackdown in Javanroud on 21 November 2022, the Ansar Al-Rasoul Ranger Brigade was likely involved.[1836]

10.3.3 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

The IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law provides the general legal framework for the use of military uniforms by the IRGC. Article 8 provides that official guards use military uniforms and insignia after completing the necessary training courses and attaining one of the ranks specified in this law.

1830. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, تجهیزات پیشرفته‌ای در اختیار یگان صابرین است/ ناگفته‌هایی از عملیات‌های برون‌مرزی دفاع مقدس؛ گفتگو با فرمانده تیپ ویژه صابرین ["Advanced equipment available to the Sabereen Cohort: Untold stories of cross-border operations in the Sacred Defence: Interview with the commander of the Sabereen Special Force Brigade"], 4 October 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/07/13/2356223/تجهیزات-پیشرفته-ای-در-اختیار-یگان-صابرین-است-ناگفته-هایی-از-عملیاتهای-برون-مرزی-دفاع-مقدس-گفتگو-با-فرمانده-تیپ-ویژه-صابرین (in Persian).

1831. See IRNA, یک مسئول: شهید قهاری سعید ایران را از اسطوره‌سازی بی‌نیاز کرد ["An official: The martyr Ghahari Saeed freed Iran from the need for myth-making"], 5 December 2017, https://www.irna.ir/news/82753777/یک-مسئول-شهید-قهاری-سعید-ایران-را-از-اسطوره-سازی-بی-نیاز-کرد (in Persian).

1832. Kayhan, پاکسازی ارتفاعات کردستان از تروریست‌ها و اشرار در عملیات مقتدرانه سپاه پاسداران ["Cleansing the heights of Kurdistan of terrorists and criminals in a powerful operation by the IRGC"], 14 June 2023, https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/266979/پاکسازی-ارتفاعات-کردستان-از-تروریست‌ها-و-اشرار-در-عملیات-مقتدرانه-سپاه-پاسداران (in Persian).

1833. Mehr News Agency, کشف محموله بزرگ رسیور در پاوه توسط پاسداران گمنام تیپ انصارالرسول ["Discovery of a large shipment of receivers in Paveh by the unknown guards of Ansar Al-Rasoul Brigade"], 28 April 2020, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4912325/کشف-محموله-بزرگ-رسیور-در-پاوه-توسط-پاسداران-گمنام-تیپ-انصارالرسول (in Persian).

1834. Farda News, کشف یک تن مواد مخدر از قاچاقچیان در سراوان ["Seizure of one ton of narcotics from traffickers in Saravan"], 15 February 2021, https://www.fardanews.com/بخش-سیاست-73/1051156-کشف-یک-تن-مواد-مخدر-از-قاچاقچیان-در-سراوان (in Persian).

1835. Defa Press, کشف ۶۰ قبضه سلاح کمری به همراه مهمات ["Seizure of 60 handguns with ammunition"], 2 January 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/565190/کشف-۶۰-قبضه-سلاح-کمری-به-همراه-مهمات (in Persian); Donya-e-Eqtesad, عملیات تروریستی در آستانه انتخابات ناکام ماند: کشف سلاح‌های مخصوص ترور ["Terrorist operation failed ahead of elections: Discovery of special assassination weapons"], 13 May 2021, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/بخش-سایت-خوان-62/3763998-عملیات-تروریستی-در-آستانه-انتخابات-ناکام-ماند-کشف-سلاح-های-مخصوص-ترور (in Persian).

1836. See section 7.3.2.

Based on Article 29, the types of insignia, rank symbols and military uniforms are defined by directives issued by the coordination deputy general commander[1837] of the IRGC and approved by the commander-in-chief. To Amnesty International's knowledge, these directives are not publicly available.

10.3.3(I) BASIJ RESISTANCE SECTOR CORPS

Commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, like other senior IRGC officials, wear dark green uniforms outside of operational contexts. The IRGC insignia is typically patched on the left chest pocket, while shoulder pads display rank insignia.



Commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, wearing dark green uniforms outside of operational contexts, during a ceremony appointing the new commander of the Imam Ali Basij Resistance Domain of Amol county in June 2022. The IRGC insignia, which is typically contained in a patch on the left chest pocket, can be seen, while shoulder pads display rank insignia. © Haraz News[1838]

1837. The authority mentioned in Article 29 of the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law is the "General Staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps". In January 1992, the Supreme Leader ordered that the name of the authority should be changed to the "Joint Staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps". Following the structural changes of 2008, this entity was dismantled and its responsibilities were assigned to a new deputy position called the coordination deputy general commander. See Kayhan, تبدیل جایگاه ریاست ستاد مشترک سپاه به معاون هماهنگ کننده سپاه ["Conversion of the position of the Joint Staff of the IRGC to the coordination deputy general commander of the IRGC"], 26 February 2008, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/1580327 (in Persian); Khamenei.ir, فرمان به دکتر فیروزآبادی و سرلشکر محسن رضایی برای تغییر عنوان «ستاد فرماندهی کل قوا» به «ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح» و «ستاد کل سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی» به «ستاد مشترک سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Command to Dr Firouzabadi and Major General Mohsen Rezaei for the change of title from 'Command Staff of All Forces' to 'General Staff of the Armed Forces' and 'General Staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' to 'Joint Staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps'"], 15 January 1992, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=2556 (in Persian).

1838. Haraz News, فرمانده جدید حوزه مقاومت بسیج امام علی شهرستان آمل معرفی شد ["New commander of the Imam Ali Basij Resistance Domain of Amol county appointed"], 29 June 2022, https://haraznews.ir/313532 (in Persian).



The IRGC insignia comes in various shapes and colours, but the main element is a stylized fist holding a rifle.

Basij agents are usually identifiable by their camouflage uniforms, which feature a dominant green colour. The camouflage uniforms may feature two distinct patterns commonly referred to in Persian as "digital" and "tiger stripe". The former consists of a computer-generated pixelated block design, while the latter resembles irregular, organic stripes.

Outside operational contexts, such as during military marches and events, Basij agents often wear identifiable attire such as keffiyehs around their necks and headbands on their heads. The headbands typically bear messages commemorating religious events and figures.



Basij agents in their camouflage uniforms, featuring a dominant green colour and distinct "digital" pattern consisting of a computer-generated pixelated block design. Agents are seen wearing identifiable attire such as headbands on their heads bearing messages commemorating religious events and figures. © IRNA[1839]

1839. IRNA, بیست هزار نفر از بسیجیان یزد در رزمایش اقتدار حضور دارند ["Participation of 20,000 Basijis from Yazd in power exercise"], 2 October 2018, https://www.irna.ir/news/83052324/20-هزار-نفرباز-بسیجیان-یزد-در-رزمایش-اقتدار-حضور-دارند (in Persian).



Basij agents in their camouflage uniforms, featuring a dominant green colour and distinct "digital" pattern consisting of a computer-generated block design. Agents are seen wearing identifiable attire such as keffiyehs around their necks and headbands on their heads. The headbands typically bear messages commemorating religious events and figures. © Erfan Taghibeiglou / Fars News Agency[1840]



Basij agents, recognizable by their camouflage uniforms featuring a dominant green colour and distinct "tiger stripe" pattern © Ali Golchin / Kazeroon Nema[1841]

1840. See images at Khabar Online, تصاویری از رزمایش الی بیت المقدس /از موتورهای ضد شورش تا نقش آفرینی زنان و روحانیت ["Images from the Towards Jerusalem exercise: From riot control vehicles to the role of women and clergy"], 21 September 2024, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1960297/تصاویری-از-رزمایش-الی-بیت-المقدس-از-موتورهای-ضد-شورش-تا-حضور (in Persian).
1841. Kazeroon Nema, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی ["Security exercise of the Imam Ali Security Battalion"], 26 July 2012, http://www.kazeroonnema.ir/fa/print/9054 (in Persian).

However, the use of uniforms other than the common green-dominant camouflage does not exclude the possibility that an individual may be a Basij agent. Members of the Fateheen Battalions wear uniforms identical to those of the IRGC's military personnel, with their identification marked by logos referencing the Fateheen unit. Additionally, since the late 2000s and the formal organization of various standardized Basij battalions, some Basij agents belonging to the Imam Ali Battalion have been seen wearing all-black uniforms.

Furthermore, in numerous images published by state media from military marches or ceremonies involving Basij members or events held at Basij Resistance Bases and Domains, alongside the majority of Basij agents wearing green camouflage uniforms, other individuals can be seen wearing camouflage uniforms in khaki shades. Amnesty International was unable to determine the significance of this distinction. A state media report dated 3 December 2023 confirms that Basij forces use "camouflage military uniforms prepared… in either tiger style or digital patterns… and in two colours of khaki and green."[1842]



Basij members at a military march. Alongside agents wearing green camouflage uniforms, other individuals can be seen wearing uniforms in khaki shades. © Defa Press[1843]

1842. Hamshahri Online, قانون و فلسفه پوشش نظامی چیست؟ داستان جالب انتخاب لباس سبز برای سپاه, ماجرای لباس پلنگی بسیج, نظامی‌ها چه لباسی باید بپوشند ["Law and philosophy behind military uniforms: The fascinating story of choosing green uniforms for the IRGC, the origins of the Basij "tiger stripe" uniform, and what military personnel are required to wear"], 3 December 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/812325/داستان-جالب-انتخاب-لباس-سبز-برای-سپاه-ماجرای-لباس-پلنگی-بسیج (in Persian).
1843. Defa Press, تصاویر: رزمایش اقتدار بسیجیان تبریز ["Images: Power exercise of Basijis in Tabriz"], 2 November 2024, available at https://defapress.ir/fa/news/702540 (in Persian).



Basij members at a gathering. Alongside Basij agents wearing green camouflage uniforms, other individuals can be seen wearing uniforms in khaki shades. Agents can also be seen wearing identifiable attire such as headbands on their heads bearing messages commemorating religious events and figures. © IRNA[1844]



Basij members at a gathering. Alongside Basij agents wearing green camouflage uniforms, other individuals can be seen wearing uniforms in khaki shades. © Mohammadreza Farbood / Fars News Agency[1845]

1844. IRNA, اجتماع بسیجیان در مشهد ["Basij gathering in Mashhad"], 24 November 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85301408/اجتماع-بسیجیان-در-مشهد (in Persian).
1845. See images at Mashregh News, عکس: همایش اقتدار بسیجیان در شیراز ["Photographs: Basij power assembly in Shiraz"], 17 September 2020, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1119305/عکس-همایش-اقتدار-بسیجیان-در-شیراز (in Persian).



Basij members at a gathering. Alongside Basij agents wearing green camouflage uniforms, other individuals can be seen wearing uniforms in khaki shades. Agents can also be seen wearing identifiable attire such as headbands on their heads bearing messages commemorating religious events and figures. The majority are seen wearing the "digital" camouflage uniforms, with a couple in "tiger stripe" camouflage uniforms. © IRNA[1846]

10.3.3(I)(i) Imam Ali Battalions

Amnesty International reviewed scores of images published by state media outlets from the military exercises and marches of the Imam Ali Battalions between 2012 and 2024.[1847] The images and state

1846. IRNA, اجتماع بسیجیان در مشهد ["Basij gathering in Mashhad"], 24 November 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85301408/اجتماع-بسیجیان-در-مشهد (in Persian).

1847. Khabarban, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی (ع) سپاه شهرستان باروق برگزار شد ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Security Battalion in Barugh county"], 12 August 2024, https://40933209.khabarban.com (in Persian); Basij News Agency, اجرای رزمایش اقتدار و صلابت گردان امام علی علیه السلام در خوشاب ["Power and stability exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Khoshab"], 24 September 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9541586/اجرای-رزمایش-اقتدار-و-صلابت-گردان-امام-علیعلیه-السلام-در-خوشاب-عکس (in Persian); Basij News Agency, مرحله دوم رزمایش امنیتی گردان های امام علی (ع) برگزار شد ["Second stage security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions held"], 25 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9463791/مرحله-دوم-رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-برگزار-شد (in Persian); taheronline, فیلم: رژه اقتدار و امنیت گردان‌های امنیتی امام علی (ع) ["Video: Parade of power and security of the Imam Ali Security Battalions"], 16 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/bRPB5 (in Persian); Basij News Agency, برگزاری رزمایش دفاعی امنیتی گردان های امام علی (ع) در چابهار ["Security and defensive exercise of Imam Ali Battalions in Chabahar"], 20 September 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9374386/برگزاری-رزمایش-دفاعی-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-در-چابهار (in Persian); Basij News Agency, رزمایش گردان های امام علی (ع) بسیج در ایلام برگزار شد ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions held in Ilam"], 19 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9322607 (in Persian); u_10124741, رژه موتوری گردان امام علی (ع) شهرستان دلفان استان لرستان ["Motorcycle parade of the Imam Ali Battalion in Delfan county, Lorestan province"], 8 February 2021, https://www.aparat.com/v/Q1D28 (in Persian); Basij News Agency, رزمایش امنیتی گردان امام علی (ع) در طرقبه و شاندیز ["Security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Torghabeh and Shandiz"], 2 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9316765/رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-در-طرقبه-و-شاندیز (in Persian); Basij News Agency, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی (ع) و کوثر در شهرستان مرزی خواف ["Exercise of the Imam Ali and Kowsar Security Battalion in Khaf county"], 27 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9315246/رزمایش-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علیع-و-کوثر-در-شهرستان-مرزی-خواف (in Persian); Basij News Agency, فراخوان آموزشی گردان امام علی (ع) برگزار شد ["Educational call for the Imam Ali Battalion training programme held"], 2 September 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9271583/فراخوان-آموزشی-گردان-امام-علیعبرگزار-شد (in Persian); Basij News Agency, رزمایش گردان امام علی (ع) در لیسار تالش برگزار شد ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion held in Lisar Talesh"], 22 February 2019, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9114234/رزمایش-گردان-امام-علیع-در-لیسار-تالش-برگزار-شد-تصاویر (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش تاکتیکی گردان امام علی (ع) سپاه ثارالله کرمان ["Tactical exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion of Sarallah Corps in Kerman"], 20 August 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/05/29/466963/رزمایش-تاکتیکی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-سپاه-ثارالله-کرمان-تصاویر (in Persian); Kazeroon Nema, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی ["Security exercise of the Imam Ali Security Battalion"], 26 July 2012, http://www.kazeroonnema.ir/fa/print/9054 (in Persian).

media reports show the Imam Ali Battalions practising shooting drills, coordinated group arrivals on motorcycles, mock confrontations with "rioters" and mock arrests.[1848]

Agents of the Imam Ali Battalions are mostly shown wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns, camouflage protective vests that either blend with their uniforms or feature black stripes, and protective black helmets with face shields. In some images, they are also seen wearing balaclavas.

However, many images also depict groups of Imam Ali Battalions dressed in all-black uniforms, wearing balaclavas either on their own or under black security helmets with face shields.[1849] Agents in black uniforms mostly wear black protective vests, though some are equipped with vests that feature the green camouflage patterns described above.

The insignia of the IRGC is sometimes visible on the agents' vests or pads.

In many of the images reviewed by Amnesty International, agents of the Imam Ali Battalions in green camouflage uniforms are also seen carrying round-shaped black shields, with the word "police" written on some in English. In other images, agents are shown carrying transparent rectangular shields with a camouflage, white or yellow strip in the middle.

As explained previously, both Basij Resistance Sector Corps and Security Cohorts maintain their own Imam Ali Battalions. The authorities have not clarified any uniform differences between the Imam Ali Battalions associated with these two entities. However, based on images released by state media and official statements about the structure and mandate of the Security Cohorts, these entities appear to have better equipped agents with more advanced training.

1848. See, for example, Basij News Agency, ["Power and stability exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Khoshab"], 24 September 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9541586/اجرای-رزمایش-اقتدار-و-صلابت-گردان-امام-علیعلیه-السلام-در-خوشاب-عکس (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Security and defensive exercise of Imam Ali Battalions in Chabahar"], 20 September 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9374386/برگزاری-رزمایش-دفاعی-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-در-چابهار (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions held in Ilam"], 19 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9322607 (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Torghabeh and Shandiz"], 2 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9316765/رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-در-طرقبه-و-شاندیز (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Exercise of the Imam Ali and Kowsar Security Battalion in Khaf county"], 27 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9315246/رزمایش-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علیع-و-کوثر-در-شهرستان-مرزی-خواف (in Persian); Basij News Agency, ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion held in Lisar Talesh"], 22 February 2019, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9114234/رزمایش-گردان-امام-علیع-در-لیسار-تالش-برگزار-شد-تصاویر (in Persian).

1849. See, for example, taheronline, ["Video: Parade of power and security of the Imam Ali Security Battalions"], 16 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/bRPB5, minute 1:54-2:00.



A higher-level IRGC commander shaking hands with an agent of the Imam Ali Battalions, during a parade and military exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions conducted on 25 October 2022. The agents are recognizable by their green camouflage uniforms or all-black uniforms equipped with protective vests that feature the same green camouflage pattern. Agents are seen wearing protective black helmets with face shields and balaclavas. The insignia of the IRGC, depicting the stylized fist holding a rifle, is visible on the agents' uniform. © Basij News Agency[1850]

1850. Basij News Agency, مرحله دوم رزمایش امنیتی گردان های امام علی (ع) برگزار شد ["Second stage security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions held"], 25 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9463791/مرحله-دوم-رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-برگزار-شد (in Persian).



A parade of the armed forces conducted on 22 September 2018. Agents of the Imam Ali Battalions are seen on motorcycles, recognizable by their all-black or green camouflage uniforms, some wearing camouflage protective vests featuring black stripes, and protective black helmets with face shields and/or balaclavas. The black and white flag seen in the background reads "Imam Ali Security Battalion" and features the insignia of the IRGC, depicting the stylized fist holding a rifle. The insignia is also visible on some of the agents' uniforms. © Tasnim News Agency[1851]

1851. Tasnim News Agency, مراسم رژه نیروهای مسلح درگرگان و ساری ["Armed forces parade ceremony in Gorgan and Sari"], 22 September 2018, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1397/06/31/1833945/مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-درگرگان-و-ساری (in Persian).



A military exercise organized by the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran in Tehran on 24 November 2023. Agents of the Imam Ali Battalions are seen dressed in all-black uniforms and balaclavas, holding a green banner reading "605 Imam Ali Battalion". Beneath it appears the text "Hazrat-e Imam Hadi Security Cohort" and, in the lower left corner, the text "Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps of Greater Tehran". © Borna News[1852]



A tactical training exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions on 16 August 2019. Agents are seen performing mock arrests, wearing green camouflage uniforms in varying patterns, with some in black security helmets with face shields, and balaclavas. On the right, an agent can be seen carrying a round-shaped black shield, with the word "police" written on it in English. © Dana News[1853]

1852. Borna News, رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در تهران ["The Towards Jerusalem exercise in Tehran"], 24 November 2023, https://borna.news/fa/news/2023507/رزمایش-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-تهران#images-3 (in Persian).
1853. Dana News, رزمایش تمرین تاکتیکی گردان امام علی (ع) بسیج میبد ["Tactical training exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Meybod"], 16 August 2019, https://dana.ir/1513179/رزمایش-تمرین-تاکتیکی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-بسیج-میبد#gsc.tab=0 (in Persian).



A security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions held in Torghabeh and Shandiz county on 2 February 2021. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms in varying patterns and black security helmets with face shields and carrying round-shaped black shields, some with the word "police" written on them in English. © Basij News Agency[1854]



A military exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions in February 2019. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms and black security helmets with face shields and carrying round-shaped black shields with the word "police" written on them in English. © Basij News Agency[1855]

1854. Basij News Agency, رزمایش امنیتی گردان امام علی (ع) در طرقبه و شاندیز ["Security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Torghabeh and Shandiz"], 2 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9316765/رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-در-طرقبه-و-شاندیز (in Persian).
1855. Basij News Agency, رزمایش گردان امام علی (ع) در لیسار تالش برگزار شد ["Imam Ali Battalion exercise held in Lisar Talesh"], 22 February 2019, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9114234/رزمایش-گردان-امام-علیع-در-لیسار-تالش-برگزار-شد-تصاویر (in Persian).



A military exercise of the Imam Ali Anti-Riot Battalion practising mock confrontations with "rioters" on 16 April 2016. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms, protective vests and black helmets with face shields and carrying transparent rectangular shields featuring a camouflage strip in the middle. © Basij News Agency[1856]



A tactical marching exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion of the Sarallah Corps in Kerman on 20 August 2014. Agents are wearing green camouflage uniforms, protective vests featuring black stripes and black helmets with face shields. © Tasnim News Agency[1857]

1856. Basij News Agency, خودنمایی گردان ضداغتشاش امام علی(ع) در رزمایش راهیان بیت المقدس ["Imam Ali Anti-Riot Battalion showcases strength in the Pathfinders to Jerusalem exercise"], 16 April 2016, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8661027/خودنمایی-گردان-ضداغتشاش-امام-علیع-در-رزمایش-راهیان-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).

1857. Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش تاکتیکی گردان امام علی (ع) سپاه ثارالله کرمان ["Tactical exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion of Sarallah Corps in Kerman"], 20 August 2014, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/05/29/466963/رزمایش-تاکتیکی-گردان-امام-علی-ع-سپاه-ثارالله-کرمان-تصاویر (in Persian).



A tactical security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions on 17 August 2019. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns and helmets with face shields. Some are seen carrying round-shaped black shields, with the word "police" written on some in English. © Daqianus[1858]



A tactical training exercises of the Imam Ali Battalions of Bonab county on 21 October 2021. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms with matching camouflage protective vests and black helmets with face shields and carrying round-shaped black shields, with the word "police" written on some in English. © Sedaye Bonab[1859]

1858. Daqianus, رزمایش تمرین تاکتیکی امنیتی گردان امام علی (ع) جیرفت برگزارشد+ تصاویر ["Tactical security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Jiroft held + images"], 17 August 2019, http://daqianus.ir/?p=1520 (in Persian).
1859. Sedaye Bonab, رزمایش تمرینات تاکتیکی گردان امام علی (ع) بسیج در بناب برگزار شد+ تصاویر ["Tactical exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion held in Bonab + images"], 21 October 2021, https://www.sedayebonab.ir/رزمایش-تمرینات-تاکتیکی-گردان-امام-علی/?print=1 (in Persian).



A “security” exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion on 20 February 2021. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns and black helmets with face shields, with some carrying batons and round-shaped black shields. © Basij News Agency[1860]



A “security” exercise held by the Imam Ali Battalions on 20 September 2021. Agents are seen wearing all-black or green camouflage uniforms and black helmets with face shields. Agents in the front row carry transparent rectangular shields with a yellow strip in the middle, while agents at the back carry round-shaped black shields. © Basij News Agency[1861]

1860. Basij News Agency, رزمایش امنیتی گردان امام علی درکهنوج [“Security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalion in Kahnuj”], 20 February 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9322677/رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-امام-علی-درکهنوج (in Persian).
1861. Basij News Agency, برگزاری رزمایش دفاعی امنیتی گردان های امام علی (ع) در چابهار [“Security and defensive exercise of Imam Ali Battalions in Chabahar”], 20 September 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9374386/بر-گزاری-رزمایش-دفاعی-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-در-چابهار (in Persian).



A "security" exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions on 27 January 2021. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns and black helmets with face shields. Agents in the front row carry transparent rectangular shields with a yellow strip in the middle, while agents at the back carry round-shaped black shields. © Basij News Agency[1862]

In images reviewed by Amnesty International, agents of the Imam Ali Battalions are mostly seen carrying batons while some are seen carrying or practising the use of firearms including shotguns, 37/38mm launchers,[1863] assault rifles, designated marksman rifles or handguns. In some of the images, agents in plain clothes are also seen.

1862. Basij News Agency, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی (ع) و کوثر در شهرستان مرزی خواف ["Exercise of the Imam Ali and Kosar Security Battalion in Khaf county"], 27 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9315246/رزمایش-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علیع-و-کوثر-در-شهرستان-مرزی-خواف (in Persian).

1863. These launchers can be used to fire various types of kinetic impact projectiles ("rubber bullets") or tear gas canisters.



A training session of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Khoshab county in Khorasan Razavi province on 24 September 2023. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms and black helmets with face shields. Agents are seen practising the use of 12-gauge shotguns. © Basij News Agency[1864]



A training session of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Bushehr county in Bushehr province on 2 September 2020. The trainee is holding an AK-pattern rifle. © Basij News Agency[1865]

1864. Basij News Agency, اجرای رزمایش اقتدار و صلابت گردان امام علی علیه السلام در خوشاب ["Power and stability exercise of Imam Ali Battalion in Khoshab"], 24 September 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9541586/اجرای-رزمایش-اقتدار-و-صلابت-گردان-امام-علیعلیه-السلام-در-خوشاب-عکس (in Persian).

1865. Basij News Agency, فراخوان آموزشی گردان امام علی (ع) برگزار شد ["Educational call for the Imam Ali Battalion training programme held"], 2 September 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9271583/فراخوان-آموزشی-گردان-امام-علیعیرگزار-شد (in Persian).



A training session of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kuhdasht county in Lorestan province on 9 December 2020. Agents are practising shooting using various AK-pattern rifles. © Kanoon Sobhan[1866]



A training exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kuhdasht county in Lorestan province on 8 September 2021. One of the agents is practising shooting using a handgun. © Kanoon Sobhan[1867]

1866. Kanoon Sobhan, آموزشی گردان امام علی (ع) برگزار شد ["Training of the Imam Ali Battalion held"], 9 December 2020, https://www.kanoonsobhan.ir/2203-2 (in Persian).
1867. Kanoon Sobhan, بازدید فرمانده سپاه کوهدشت از تمرینات تاکتیکی گردان های امام علی و بیت المقدس ["Visit of the commander of the IRGC in Kuhdasht to the tactical training exercises of the Imam Ali and Beit Al-Moghaddas battalions"], 8 September 2021, https://www.kanoonsobhan.ir/بازدید-فرمانده-سپاه-کوهدشت-از-تمرینات (in Persian).



A tactical training exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kuhdasht county in Lorestan province on 8 September 2021. One of the agents is holding a 37/38mm launcher and an SVD-pattern designated marksman rifle. The 37/38mm launcher can be used to fire various types of kinetic impact projectiles ("rubber bullets") or tear gas canisters. © Kanoon Sobhan[1868]



A tactical training exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kohgiluyeh county in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province on 4 October 2020. The agents are practising shooting using variants of the Type 56 AK-pattern rifle. © IRIB News[1869]

1868. Kanoon Sobhan, بازدید فرمانده سپاه کوهدشت از تمرینات تاکتیکی گردان های امام علی و بیت المقدس ["Visit of the commander of the IRGC in Kuhdasht to the tactical training exercises of the Imam Ali and Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 8 September 2021, https://www.kanoonsobhan.ir/بازدید-فرمانده-سپاه-کوهدشت-از-تمرینات (in Persian).

1869. IRIB News, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی(ع) در دیشموک ["Exercise of the Imam Ali Security Battalion in Dishmook"], 4 October 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2845978/رزمایش-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علیع-در-دیشموک



A training session of the Imam Ali Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mahvelat county in Khorasan Razavi province on 2 February 2024. Agents gathered in the premises of a high school are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns and black helmets with face shields, with some carrying round-shaped black shields and transparent rectangular shields with a camouflage strip in the middle. Some of the agents are carrying shotguns. © Basij News Agency[1870]

In many of the images published by state media, Imam Ali Battalions are also pictured on motorcycles, in line with their strategy of approaching protesters in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and disperse them.

1870. Basij News Agency, برگزاری تمرین تاکتیکی گردان امنیتی امام علی (ع) در شهرستان مه ولات ["Holding of a tactical drill by the Imam Ali Security Battalion in Mahvelat county"], 2 February 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9575243/برگزاری-تمرین-تاکتیکی-گردان-امنیتی-امام-علی-ع-در-شهرستان-مه-ولات-عکس (in Persian).



A "security" exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions on 26 July 2012. Agents wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns are pictured on motorcycles in a circle, in line with their strategy of approaching protesters in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and disperse them, while others stand carrying batons and shields. © Ali Golchin / Kazeroon Nema[1871]



An exercise held by the Imam Ali Battalions of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan in Sanandaj on 18 September 2018. An agent holds up a green placard indicating that they are part of the "1 Imam Ali Security Battalion". Agents are seen standing in a row behind a row of motorcycles wearing green camouflage uniforms with protective camouflage vests featuring black stripes and black helmets with face shields. Some agents are seen wearing balaclavas. © Khabar Online[1872]

1871. Kazeroon Nema, رزمایش گردان امنیتی امام علی ["Security exercise of the Imam Ali Security Battalion"], 26 July 2012, http://www.kazeroonnema.ir/fa/print/9054 (in Persian).
1872. Khabar Online, تصاویر: رزمایش اقتدار عاشورایی در سنندج ["Images: Ashoura power exercise in Sanandaj"], 18 September 2018, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/805493/تصاویر-رزمایش-اقتدار-عاشورایی-در-سنندج (in Persian).



Agents of Imam Ali Battalions pictured on motorcycles, in line with their strategy of approaching protesters in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and disperse them. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms with protective camouflage vests featuring black stripes and black helmets with face shields. © Nody[1873]



A motorcade parade of the Imam Ali Security Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Delfan county on 31 January 2021. Agents are pictured on motorcycles, in line with their strategy of approaching protesters in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and disperse them. Agents are seen wearing all-black or green camouflage uniforms. © Basij News Agency[1874]

1873. See Nody, عکس گردان امام علی ["Photographs of Imam Ali Battalion"], 22 September 2021, https://fa.nody.ir/عکس-گردان-امام-علی (in Persian).
1874. Basij News Agency, برگزاری رژه موتوری به مناسبت دهه فجر در دلفان ["Motorcade parade held in Delfan in celebration of the 10-Day Dawn"], 31 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9316334/برگزاری-رژه-موتوری-به-مناسبت-دهه-فجر-در-دلفان (in Persian).



A motorcade parade during the security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions in Mazandaran province on 25 October 2022. Agents are pictured on motorcycles, in line with their strategy of approaching protesters in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and disperse them. Agents are seen wearing all-black uniforms and black helmets with face shields. © Basij News Agency[1875]



A "security" exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions of Chabahar county on 20 September 2021. Agents are pictured on motorcycles, in line with their strategy of approaching protesters in large numbers on motorcycles to overwhelm and disperse them. Agents are seen wearing all-black or green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns. © Basij News Agency[1876]

1875. Basij News Agency, مرحله دوم رزمایش امنیتی گردان های امام علی (ع) برگزار شد ["Second stage security exercise of the Imam Ali Battalions held"], 25 October 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9463791/مرحله-دوم-رزمایش-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-برگزار-شد (in Persian).
1876. Basij News Agency, برگزاری رزمایش دفاعی امنیتی گردان های امام علی (ع) در چابهار ["Security and defensive exercise of Imam Ali Battalions in Chabahar"], 20 September 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9374386/پر-گزاری-رزمایش-دفاعی-امنیتی-گردان-های-امام-علیع-در-چابهار (in Persian).



A still from a video of a motorcycle parade of the Imam Ali Battalion of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Delfan county, Lorestan province, on January 2021. Agents are seen wearing all-black uniforms, with protective camouflage vests, black helmets with face shields and balaclavas. The agents sitting on the back of the motorcycles carry 12-gauge shotguns. © Imam Ali Battalion of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Delfan county[1877]

While the overwhelming majority of images published by state media outlets show the Imam Ali Battalions in the green camouflage or all-black uniforms described above, Amnesty International reviewed several images and a video which reflect some anomalies in uniform patterns. The organization reviewed a video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran in October 2022, which says that it features its Imam Ali Battalions.[1878] However, the video shows agents in green camouflage and all-black uniforms, as well as some agents wearing the brown camouflage uniforms typically used by IRGC official guards and the Fateheen Battalions.

1877. Still from video produced by the Imam Ali Battalion of Delfan county, available at: u_10124741, رژه متوری گردان امام علی (ع) شهرستان دلفان استان لرستان ["Motorcycle parade of the Imam Ali Battalion of Delfan county, Lorestan province"], 8 February 2021, https://www.aparat.com/v/Q1D28 (in Persian), minute 1:54.

1878. Video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran, available at: taheronline, فیلم: رژه اقتدار و امنیت گردان‌های امنیتی امام علی (ع) ["Video: Parade of power and security of the Imam Ali Security Battalions"], 16 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/bRPB5 (in Persian), minute 0:06-0:11.



A still from a video of a military parade of the Imam Ali Battalions of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran in October 2022. Agents can be seen wearing brown camouflage uniforms typically used by IRGC official guards and the Fateheen Battalions. This reflects some anomalies in the uniform patterns of the Imam Ali Battalions, whose agents are typically seen in images published by state media outlets wearing green camouflage or all-black uniforms. © IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran[1879]



A still from a video of a military parade of the Imam Ali Battalions of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran in October 2022. Agents can be seen wearing brown camouflage uniforms typically used by IRGC official guards and the Fateheen Battalions. This reflects some anomalies in the uniform patterns of the Imam Ali Battalions, whose agents are typically seen in images published by state media outlets wearing green camouflage or all-black uniforms. © IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran[1880]

1879. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran, available at: taheronline, فیلم: رژه اقتدار و امنیت گردان‌های امنیتی امام علی (ع) ["Video: Parade of power and security of the Imam Ali Security Battalions"], 16 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/bRPB5, minute 0:07.
1880. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran, available at: taheronline, فیلم: رژه اقتدار و امنیت گردان‌های امنیتی امام علی (ع) ["Video: Parade of power and security of the Imam Ali Security Battalions"], 16 October 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/bRPB5, minute 2:35.

Amnesty International also reviewed several images from a parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran in November 2019, which show agents of the Imam Ali Battalions in green camouflage and all-black uniforms, as well as some agents wearing solid green uniforms and caps.[1881] A photograph available online from another occasion indicates that agents wearing such solid green uniforms and caps with red headbands also belong to the Imam Ali Battalions, though these uniforms are not generally seen in street operations; it is possible they are used in ceremonial and other specific contexts.



A parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran in November 2019. Agents of the Imam Ali Battalions are seen in solid green uniforms and caps. © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1882]

1881. See Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).
1882. See Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).



A parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran in November 2019. Agents are seen in solid green uniforms and caps. The patch on the uniform of the agent in the foreground reads "Imam Ali Battalion". © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1883]

10.3.3(I)(ii) Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions

Amnesty International reviewed scores of photographs and videos published by state media outlets from the military exercises of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions between 2015 and 2024.[1884] In these images, the uniforms of the agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions resemble those of the Imam Ali

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1883. See Jahan News, يگان امنيتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/يگان-امنيتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).

1884. Ghatreh, رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در زنجان ["Towards Jerusalem exercise in Zanjan"], 20 September 2024, https://www.ghatreh.com/news/nn14030624959707326464/رزمايش-الی-بيت-المقدس-زنجان (in Persian); Moj News Agency, برگزاری رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در اصفهان ["Holding the Towards Jerusalem exercise in Esfahan"], 15 September 2024, https://www.mojnews.com/-/بخش-اصفهان (in Persian); shahrdaadtv, نماهنگ رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در سپاه ناحیه حضرت مهدی موعود (عج) شهرستان قدس ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in the Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian); shahrdaadtv, نماهنگ رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در سپاه ناحیه حضرت مهدی موعود (عج) شهرستان قدس ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in the Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian), minute 1:22; Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش گردان بیت المقدس در ساری ["Photographs of the exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion in Sari"], 21 May 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1377735/عکس-رزمايش-گردان-بيت-المقدس-در-ساری (in Persian); Basij News Agency, مقابله با اغتشاشات در رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس دلوار ["Confronting riots in the exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar"], 15 February 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9219379/مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-در-رزمايش-گردان-های-بيت-المقدس-دلوار (in Persian); Kharg Online, برگزاری رزمایش گردان بیت المقدس در جزیره خارگ ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion held on Kharg Island"], 6 February 2020, https://www.kharg-online.ir/photo/809 (in Persian); ISNA, رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس در صومعه‌سرا برگزار شد ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in Someh Sara"], 20 December 2019, https://www.isna.ir/news/98092921984/رزمايش-گردان-های-بيت-المقدس-در-صومعه-سرا-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Najafabad City Council News, رزمایش بزرگ بسیجیان نجف آباد با ۸ گردان ["Large-scale exercise of Najafabad Basij with eight battalions"], 16 November 2019, https://shora.najafabad.ir/fa/news/5231/رزمايش-بزرگ-بسيجيان-نجف-آباد-با-8-گردان (in Persian); ISNA, گردان‌های بیت المقدس سلماس آمادگی خود را در رزمایش به نمایش گذاشتند ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of Salmas demonstrated their readiness in exercise"] 14 July 2017, https://www.isna.ir/news/orumiyeh-33767/گردانهای-بيت-المقدس-سلماس-آمادگی-خود-را-در-رزمايش-به-نمايش-گذاشتند (in Persian); ISNA, رزمایش گردان‌های بیت المقدس سپاه ناحیه اهر ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ahar"], 7 October 2016, https://www.isna.ir/photo/95071610008/رزمايش-گردان-های-الی-بيت-المقدس-سپاه-ناحيه-اهر (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت‌المقدس در آذربایجان شرقی برگزار شد (فیلم) ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in East Azerbaijan (video)"], 30 September 2016, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/07/09/1200561/رزمايش-گردان-های-واکنش-سريع-بيت-المقدس-در-آذربايجان-شرقی-برگزار-شد-فيلم (in Persian); IRNA, رزمایش مبارزه با اغتشاش گردان‌های بیت المقدس بسیج ناحیه مقداد ["Anti-riot exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Maghdad"], 15 July 2016, https://www.irna.ir/news/3158196/رزمايش-مبارزه-با-اغتشاش-گردان-های-بيت-المقدس-بسيج-ناحيه-مقداد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمايش-گردان-های-واکنش-سريع-بيت-المقدس (in Persian).

Battalions, featuring green camouflage patterns and black helmets with face shields. Once again, the patterns of their camouflage uniforms vary, but the green colour dominates in all of them.

Like the Imam Ali Battalions, many images show agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions carrying batons and round-shaped black shields on which the word "police" is written in English. Other pictures show agents carrying rectangular transparent anti-ballistic shields with a stripe in the middle, which in some cases have a camouflage pattern and in other cases are white with "police" or other words written in English.

In many of the images published by state media from the military exercises of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions, agents appear without protective vests while in some others, they wear camouflage vests that blend into their uniforms.

In images showing mock "anti-riot" confrontations, agents wear black helmets.

In one of the videos reviewed by Amnesty International, several plain-clothes agents are seen among a group of Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion agents, practising arrests and pushing individuals into cars that bear no official insignia or logo.[1885]



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in February 2020. Agents are seen wearing uniforms in varying green camouflage patterns and black helmets with face shields and carrying round-shaped black shields on which the word "police" is written in English. © Kharg Online[1886]

1885. shahrdaadtv, نماهنگ رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در سپاه ناحیه حضرت مهدی موعود (عج) شهرستان قدس ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in the Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian), minute 1:21.

1886. Kharg Online, برگزاری رزمایش گردان بیت المقدس در جزیره خارگ ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalion held on Kharg Island"], 6 February 2020, https://www.kharg-online.ir/photo/809 (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Mianeh county, East Azerbaijan province, in September 2015. Agents are seen wearing uniforms in varying green camouflage patterns and black helmets with face shields. Agents in the front row are carrying transparent rectangular anti-ballistic shields with a white or camouflage strip in the middle. © Mehr News Agency[1887]

1887. Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar county, Bushehr province, on 15 February 2020 to prepare them for confronting "riots and unrest", the terms used by the authorities for protests. Agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are seen engaging in a training exercise involving mock physical confrontations with "rioters". Agents are seen wearing uniforms in green camouflage patterns and black helmets with face shields and carrying round-shaped black shields on which the word "police" is written in English. © Basij News Agency[1888]

1888. Basij News Agency, مقابله با اغتشاشات در رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس دلوار ["Confronting riots in exercises of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar"], 15 February 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9219379/مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-در-رزمایش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-دلوار (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salmas county, West Azerbaijan province, in July 2017. Agents are seen wearing uniforms in varying green camouflage patterns and black helmets with face shields. They carry transparent rectangular anti-ballistic shields with a white strip in the middle. On some of these shields, the phrase "I sacrifice my life for the Supreme Leader" is written in Persian. © Sajjad Saghafi / ISNA[1889]

1889. ISNA, گردان‌های بیت المقدس سلماس آمادگی خود را در رزمایش به نمایش گذاشتند ["Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of Salmas demonstrated their readiness in exercise"] 14 July 2017, https://www.isna.ir/news/orumiyeh-33767/گردانهای-بیت-المقدس-سلماس-آمادگی-خود-را-در-رزمایش-به-نمایش-گذاشتند (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Mianeh county, East Azerbaijan province, in September 2015. Agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are seen engaging in a training exercise involving mock confrontations with "rioters". The agent on the right is seen wearing a green camouflage uniform, a camouflage vest that matches the uniform and a black helmet with a face shield and carrying a transparent rectangular anti-ballistic shield with a camouflage strip in the middle.
© Mehr News Agency[1890]

1890. Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Someh Sara county, Gilan province, in December 2019. Agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are seen engaging in a training exercise involving mock confrontations with "rioters". Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of various patterns, black helmets with face shields, and are carrying transparent rectangular anti-ballistic shields with a white strip in the middle, on which the word "police" is written in English. © ISNA[1891]

1891. ISNA, رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس در صومعه‌سرا برگزار شد ["Exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in Someh Sara"], 20 December 2019, https://www.isna.ir/news/98092921984/رزمایش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-در-صومعه-سرا-برگزار-شد (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in July 2016. Agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are seen engaging in a training exercise involving mock confrontations with "rioters". Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of various patterns, carrying batons and transparent rectangular anti-ballistic shields with a camouflage strip in the middle. © IRNA[1892]



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county, Tehran province, in May 2022. Agents are seen on motorcycles, wearing green camouflage uniform of various patterns. Some are also wearing protective vests and black helmets with face shields. © Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county[1893]

1892. IRNA, رزمایش مبارزه با اغتشاش گردان‌های بیت المقدس بسیج ناحیه مقداد ["Anti-riot exercise of Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Maghdad"], 15 July 2016, https://www.irna.ir/news/3158196/رزمایش-مبارزه-با-اغتشاش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-بسیج-ناحیه-مقداد (in Persian).

1893. Still from video produced by the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county, available at: shahrdaadtv, نماهنگ رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در سپاه ناحیه حضرت مهدی موعود (عج) شهرستان قدس ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in the Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian), minute 2:00.

The firearms depicted in the images from the exercises of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions include ZPU-23-2 anti-aircraft guns,[1894] AK-pattern rifles,[1895] Chinese Type 56-1 assault rifles,[1896] and what look like Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns and East German Mpi-KM 72 assault rifles.[1897] Additionally, some images from the exercises depict the use of water cannons, inert tear gas grenades and smoke grenades.[1898]



An exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Mianeh county, East Azerbaijan province, on 12 September 2015. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniform in various patterns, without protective vests, practising mock arrests. The firearm held by the agent is an AK-pattern rifle. © Mehr News Agency[1899]

1894. Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).
1895. Tasnim News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت‌المقدس در آذربایجان شرقی برگزار شد (فیلم) ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions held in East Azerbaijan (video)"], 30 September 2016, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/07/09/1200561/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس-در-آذربایجان-شرقی-برگزار-شد-فیلم (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).
1896. Mehr News Agency, رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در زنجان ["The Towards Jerusalem exercise in Zanjan"], 20 September 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/6230931/رزمایش-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-زنجان (in Persian).
1897. Jam-e Jam, رزمایش بزرگ گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس برگزار شد ["Large-scale exercise of the Beit al-Al-Moghaddas Battalions drill held"], 20 October 2012, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/2605745 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).
1898. shahrdaadtv, نماهنگ رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در سپاه ناحیه حضرت مهدی موعود (عج) شهرستان قدس ["Video clip of the Towards Jerusalem exercise in the Hazrat-e Mahdi Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Qods county"], 7 June 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/u73b124 (in Persian), minute 2:00.
1899. Mehr News Agency, رزمایش گردان‌های واکنش سریع بیت المقدس ["Exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions"], 12 September 2015, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/2913138/رزمایش-گردان-های-واکنش-سریع-بیت-المقدس (in Persian).



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Zanjan province in September 2024. Agents of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms. Some are seen holding up Chinese Type 56-1 assault rifles. © Mehdi Almasi / Mehr News Agency[1900]



An exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Esfahan in September 2024. Agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms of varying patterns. One agent is seen holding an AK-pattern rifle. © Moj News Agency[1901]

1900. Mehr News Agency, رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در زنجان ["The Towards Jerusalem exercise in Zanjan"], 20 September 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/6230931/رزمایش-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-زنجان (in Persian).
1901. Moj News Agency, برگزاری رزمایش الی بیت المقدس در اصفهان ["Towards Jerusalem exercise held in Esfahan"], 15 September 2024, https://www.mojnews.com/بخش-اصفهان-67/577193-برگزاری-رزمایش-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-اصفهان (in Persian).



An exercise of the rapid response Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar, Bushehr province, in February 2020. Agents are seen engaging in a training exercise involving the use of coloured tear gas and mock physical confrontations with "rioters". © Basij News Agency[1902]

10.3.3(II) OPERATIONAL DIVISIONS AND BRIGADES

The uniforms of the military personnel of the operational divisions and brigades of the Ground Resistance Forces of the IRGC are not described in publicly available regulations. An analysis of pictures and videos published by state media, which show military exercises and ceremonial marches, provide an indication of their uniforms.[1903] Typically, these IRGC agents can be recognized by their khaki-coloured camouflage uniforms. A patch bearing the IRGC insignia is often sewn to caps and uniform sleeves and/or chests.

The protective gear of the IRGC's military personnel typically includes green or khaki helmets and protective vests, which match their camouflage uniforms. However, when deployed for "security" missions involving protest repression, they may also wear black helmets and black or khaki balaclavas.[1904]

1902. Basij News Agency, مقابله با اغتشاشات در رزمایش گردان‌های بیت‌المقدس دلوار ["Confronting riots in exercise of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions in Delvar"], 15 February 2020, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9219379/مقابله-با-اغتشاشات-در-رزمایش-گردان-های-بیت-المقدس-دلوار (in Persian).

1903. See, for example, Tabnak, رزمایش اقتدار نیروی زمینی سپاه در منطقه ارس ["Power exercise of Ground Resistance Forces of the IRGC in the Aras region"], 18 October 2022, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1145767/رزمایش-اقتدار-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-در-منطقه-ارس (in Persian).

1904. See, for example, AL Mahdi, سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian).



The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the time of the 2022 protests, Ali Khamenei, walking alongside high-level IRGC commanders, recognizable by their solid dark green uniforms. The IRGC insignia of the stylized fist holding a rifle is visible on their uniforms and caps. IRGC military personnel can also be seen, recognizable by their khaki camouflage uniforms. © Aftab News[1905]

1905. Aftab News, رهبرانقلاب: ابزار نظامی سپاه باید پیشرفته باشد؛ ابزار به‌روز تولید کنید! در مقابل آمریکا کوتاه نمی‌آییم ["Supreme Leader: The IRGC's military equipment must be advanced; produce up-to-date equipment: We will not back down in confronting the United States"], 13 October 2019, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/616036/رهبرانقلاب-ابزار-نظامی-سپاه-باید-پیشرفته-باشد-ابزار-به‌روز-تولید-کنید-در-مقابل-آمریکا-کوتاه-نمی‌آییم (in Persian).



Military activities of the operational division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Gilan during a visit by its commander in October 2021. The commander is seen wearing a green camouflage uniform with an IRGC insignia patch visible on his cap. Personnel of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Gilan are seen in khaki-coloured camouflage uniforms and green helmets, typical of the protective gear of the IRGC's military personnel. © Gilkhabar[1906]



A military exercise of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force in Sistan and Baluchistan province in November 2024. The individual on the left is wearing a khaki-coloured camouflage uniform with a chest patch displaying the IRGC insignia. The individual on the right is equipped with protective gear, typical of the IRGC's military personnel, including a khaki-coloured uniform, protective vest, helmet and balaclava. © IRNA[1907]

1906. Gilkhabar, لشکر عملیاتی ۱۶ قدس گیلان یکی از افتخارات کشور بوده است ["16 Qods Operational Division of Gilan: One of the country's sources of pride"], 17 October 2021, https://gilkhabar.ir/news/i/473872 (in Persian).
1907. See Hamshahri Online, فرمانده نیروی زمینی سپاه در رزمایش عملیاتی شهدای امنیت: تصاویر ["Commander of the IRGC's Ground Force at the Martyrs for Security operational exercise: Images"], 4 November 2024, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/photo/897221/-فرمانده-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-در-رزمایش-عملیاتی-شهدای-امنیت-تصاویر (in Persian).

Amnesty International reviewed a video from a joint manoeuvre by the Special Forces of FARAJA and the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in September 2023.[1908] The video shows a long line of beige or white pickup trucks as well as red motorcycles transporting IRGC agents in khaki camouflage uniforms, with many wearing helmets or balaclavas and carrying batons, shields and firearms, including assault rifles.



A still from a video of a joint manoeuvre by the Special Forces of FARAJA and the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in September 2023. Three beige pickup trucks are seen carrying IRGC agents dressed in khaki camouflage uniforms, with some wearing balaclavas.
© Unknown[1909]

1908. Video posted by AL Mahdi on Aparat, available at: AL Mahdi سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian).
1909. Still from video posted by AL Mahdi on Aparat, available at: AL Mahdi, سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian), minute 1.08.



A still from a video of a joint manoeuvre by the Special Forces of FARAJA and the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in September 2023. Two beige pickup trucks are seen carrying IRGC agents dressed in khaki camouflage uniforms and wearing black balaclavas. Some are wearing helmets. © Unknown[1910]



A still from a video of a joint manoeuvre by the Special Forces of FARAJA and the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan province, held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in September 2023. Several beige pickup trucks are seen carrying IRGC agents dressed in brown camouflage uniforms wearing balaclavas and black helmets and carrying firearms, including assault rifles. © Unknown[1911]

1910. Still from video posted by AL Mahdi on Aparat, available at: AL Mahdi, سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian), minute 1.19.

1911. Still from video posted by AL Mahdi on Aparat, available at: AL Mahdi, سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian), minute 1.26.



A still from a video of a joint manoeuvre by the Special Forces of FARAJA and the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in September 2023. IRGC agents in brown camouflage uniforms are seen riding red motorcycles, with many wearing balaclavas. © Unknown[1912]

Additionally, the footage captures several vehicles carrying agents dressed in traditional Kurdish clothes[1913] in black, beige or grey tones, with some of them carrying assault rifles.

1912. Still from video posted by AL Mahdi on Aparat, available at: AL Mahdi, سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian), minute 3.47.

1913. In some military marches, agents appear in traditional clothing associated with Iran's Kurdish, Arab, Baluchi and Turkmen ethnic minorities, in an apparent effort by the authorities to project support for the armed forces among diverse ethnic communities. See, for example, ISNA, رژه نظامی با لباس محلی ["Military parade in traditional dress"], 23 September 2018, https://www.isna.ir/news/97063115450/رژه-نظامی-با-لباس-محلی (in Persian).



A still from a video of a joint manoeuvre by the Special Forces of FARAJA and the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, in September 2023. Several beige pickup trucks can be seen carrying agents dressed in traditional Kurdish clothes in black, beige and grey tones, with some of them carrying firearms. © Unknown[1914]

10.3.3(II)(i) Imam Hossein Battalions

Amnesty International reviewed scores of images published by state media outlets from the military exercises of the Imam Hossein Battalions between 2016 and 2024.[1915] In these images, the agents are seen wearing green camouflage uniforms featuring varying patterns. In some images, a few individuals are seen wearing khaki camouflage uniforms used by the IRGC's military personnel and are often leading the training sessions. This aligns with information obtained by Amnesty International which indicates that Imam Hossein Battalions are trained by the military personnel of the IRGC's operational divisions and brigades.

The images reviewed by Amnesty International of the military exercises of the Imam Hossein Battalions generally show them in remote areas away from urban centres, including deserts, mountainous regions and dirt roads.

1914. Still from video posted by AL Mahdi on Aparat, available at: AL Mahdi, سنندج کردستان / مانور مشترک یگان ویژه انتظامی و لشکر۲۲ بیت المقدس سپاه ["Sanandaj Kurdistan: Joint manoeuvre of the Special Cohort of the police and 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Division of the IRGC"], 20 September 2023, https://www.aparat.com/v/q774xp2 (in Persian), minute 1.05.

1915. See, for example, IRIB News, پایان رزمایش تاکتیکی گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) تیپ ۴۸ فتح ["End of the tactical exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalions of the 48 Fath Brigade"], 5 January 2024, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4112560/پایان-رزمایش-تاکتیکی-گردان‌های-امام (in Persian); Basij News Agency, برگزاری تمرینات تاکتیکی گردان نهم امام حسین (ع) در قوچان ["Tactical training of 9 Imam Hossein Battalion held in Ghouchan"], 12 December 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9562866/برگزاری-تمرینات-تاکتیکی-گردان-نهم-امام-حسین-ع-در-قوچان-عکس (in Persian); IRIB News, رزمایش گردان امام حسین (ع) تیپ ۴۸ فتح در پاتاوه ["Exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalion of the 48 Fath Brigade in Pataveh"], 30 January 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3735002/رزمایش-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-تیپ-۴۸-فتح-در-پاتاوه (in Persian); Nakhl Photo Agency, تصاویر رزمایش بزرگ تاکتیکی عملیاتی گردان ۴۰۳ امام حسین علیه السلام ["Images of the large tactical operational exercise of the 403 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 17 November 2022, https://nakhllarestan.ir/?p=19184 (in Persian); Aftab News, آموزش گردان امام حسین(ع) سپاه ["Training of the Imam Hossein Battalion of the IRGC"], 19 September 2021, available at https://www.aparat.com/v/p20kvc0 (in Persian); IRIB News, رزمایش گردان امام حسین (ع) درمیناب ["Imam Hossein Battalion exercise in Minab"], 5 December 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3039617/رزمایش-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-درمیناب (in Persian); IRIB News, رزمایش گردان‌های امام حسین (ع) در داود آباد ["Imam Hossein Battalions exercise in Davoodabad"], 21 October 2018, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2258093/رزمایش-گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-در-داود-آباد (in Persian); ISNA, رزمایش بزرگ تاکتیکی بسیجیان گردان امام حسین (ع) هشترود ["Large tactical exercise of Basijis of the Imam Hossein Battalion in Hashtroud"], 30 October 2017, https://www.isna.ir/photo/tabriz-94043/رزمایش-بزرگ-تاکتیکی-بسیجیان-گردان-امام-حسین-ع- هشترود (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, رزمایش تاکتیکی گردان تکاوری امام حسین (ع) در بیرجند ["Tactical exercise of the commando Imam Hossein Battalion in Birjand"], 4 March 2016, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/3572365/رزمایش-تاکتیکی-گردان-تکاوری-امام-حسین-ع-در-بیرجند (in Persian).

Agents of the Imam Hossein Battalions are typically pictured with military-style backpacks commonly used by soldiers. Some wear camouflage helmets while others wear beige helmets similar to those worn by the IRGC's military personnel. The agents are seen carrying various firearms including AK-pattern assault rifles, PKM-pattern general-purpose machine guns and SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles.



A military exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalions in Roudbar, Gilan province, on 28 January 2017. The agents are recognizable by their camouflage uniforms and beige helmets. The agents are seen carrying SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and AK-pattern assault rifles. © Dana News[1916]

1916. Dana News, تصاویر رزمایش بزرگ تاکتیکی عملیاتی گردان ۴۰۳ امام حسین علیه السلام ["Images of the large tactical operational exercise of the 403 Imam Hossein Battalion"], 28 January 2017, https://dana.ir/1019726/رزمایش-اقتدار-پسیجیان-گردان-۲-امام-حسینع-رودبار#gsc.tab=0 (in Persian).



A military exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalions in Hasht Bandi, Hormozgan province, on 24 February 2024, held in a remote mountainous region. The agents are recognizable by their green camouflage uniforms with some wearing camouflage helmets and most wearing beige helmets similar to those worn by the IRGC's military personnel. The agent standing on the left and leading the session is seen wearing a khaki camouflage uniform typically used by the IRGC's military personnel. The agents are seen carrying AK-pattern assault rifles and PKM-pattern general-purpose machine guns. © IRIB News[1917]

1917. IRIB News, برگزاری رزمایش گردان امام حسین (ع) در هشتبندی ["Exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalion held in Hasht Bandi"], 24 February 2024, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4163202/برگزاری-رزمایش-گردان-امام-حسین-ع-در-هشتبندی (in Persian).



A military exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalions in Arak province on 25 October 2018. The agents are recognizable by their green camouflage uniform featuring "digital" patterns and are pictured with military-style backpacks commonly used by soldiers and beige helmets, similar to those worn by the IRGC's military personnel. The agents are seen holding various AK-pattern rifle variants. © Young Journalists Club[1918]

Amnesty International also reviewed several images from a parade of Basij agents in Amol, Mazandaran province, on 26 November 2019, including agents of the Imam Hossein Battalions. In these images, agents of the Imam Hossein Battalions are shown in green camouflage uniforms of various patterns. Several agents are seen with black balaclavas under their camouflage protective helmets, while others wear green military caps typically used during official events. The agents hold a placard indicating that they are part of an Imam Hossein Battalion.

1918. Young Journalists Club, رزمایش عملیاتی گردان های امام حسین (ع) اراک ["Operational exercise of the Imam Hossein Battalions in Arak"], 25 October 2018, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/6710147/رزمایش-عملیاتی-گردان-های-امام-حسین-ع-اراک (in Persian).



A parade of Basij agents in Amol, Mazandaran province, on 26 November 2019. Agents of the Imam Ali Battalions are seen standing in the back of the beige pickup truck holding a placard indicating that they are part of the 415 Imam Hossein Battalion in Amol, Mazandaran province. They are recognizable by their green camouflage uniforms and are wearing black balaclavas under their camouflage protective helmets. The agents are seen carrying SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles and PKM-pattern general-purpose machine guns. © Seyyede Amol[1919]

1919. Seyyede Amol, همایش بزرگ اقتدار بسیجیان ولایتمدار آمل درصبحگاه مشترک ["Grand power assembly of Basijis loyal to the Guardianship of the Jurist in Amol during joint morning assembly"], 26 November 2019, https://seyyedeamol.ir/25963-2 (in Persian).



A parade of Basij agents in Amol, Mazandaran province, on 26 November 2019. The agents in green camouflage uniforms and black balaclavas hold placards identifying them as agents of the 415 Imam Hossein Basij Battalion in Amol, Mazandaran province. Standing next to them, agents wearing a different style of green camouflage uniforms hold a placard indicating their affiliation with the 410 Imam Hossein Battalion in Amol, Mazandaran province. On the right, agents dressed in black uniforms hold a placard and a flag identifying them as agents of the Fateheen Battalions. © Seyyede Amol[1920]

10.3.3(II)(ii) Fateheen Battalions

Amnesty International reviewed scores of images published by state media outlets from military exercises or official events featuring the Fateheen Battalions between 2016 and 2024.[1921] Unlike most Basij battalions, whose agents wear green camouflage uniforms, the uniforms of the Fateheen Battalions are either camouflage khaki, like those of the IRGC's military personnel, or entirely black. The insignia of the Fateheen Battalions is visible on some of the uniforms.

1920. Seyyede Amol, همایش بزرگ اقتدار بسیجیان ولایتمدار آمل درصبحگاه مشترک ["Grand power assembly of Basijis loyal to the Guardianship of the Jurist in Amol during the joint morning assembly"], 26 November 2019, https://seyyedeamol.ir/25963-2 (in Persian).
1921. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Nezami_kadeh, تمرینات ضد تروریسم یگان فاتحین سپاه حمزه سیدالشهداء ["Anti-terrorism training by the specialized Fateheen Cohort, Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Corps"], 23 March 2024, https://www.aparat.com/v/p481am1 (in Persian); IRNA, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps of the specialized Fateheen Cohorts"], 9 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85252680/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Photographs from the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1534329/عکس-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, تصاویر رزمایش امنیتی یگان ویژه فاتحین با حضور سردار حسین نجات ["Images of the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort in the presence of General Hossein Nejat"], 27 September 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/photo/884433/تصاویر-رزمایش-امنیتی-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-با-حضور-سردار-حسین-نجات (in Persian); daddario, تمرینات تیم یگان ویژه فاتحین سپاه محمد رسول الله ["Training exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohort, Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps"], 20 September 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/w78vv2n (in Persian); tasnim.video, تمرینات تیم عملیات ویژه یگان ویژه فاتحین سپاه محمد رسول الله ["Special operations team training of the specialized Fateheen Special Cohorts, Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps"], 30 November 2021, https://www.aparat.com/v/0gHhz (in Persian); 13810313, یگان ویژه بسیج فاتحین ["Basij's specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 6 September 2021, https://www.aparat.com/v/b13dkpi (in Persian); Basij News Agency, اولین رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین سپاه محمد رسول الله (ص) ["First exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort, Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps"], 3 November 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9387130/اولین-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-سپاه-محمد-رسول-اللهص (in Persian); Jahan News, اولین رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین سپاه ["First exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort of the IRGC"], 2 November 2021, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/780703/2 (in Persian); dsof, فیلمی از آموزشهای یگان فاتحین بسیج ["Training session video of the Fateheen Cohorts of the Basij"], 7 December 2019, https://www.aparat.com/v/i11ijv1 (in Persian); Mojtaba.7327, نمایش قدرت یگان فاتحین غرب مازندران ["Power demonstration by the Fateheen Cohort in Western Mazandaran"], 10 April 2019, https://www.aparat.com/v/6UF5t (in Persian); dsof, فاتحین, یگان ویژه ی بسیج ایران ["Fateheen, the specialized cohort of Iran's Basij"], 27 October 2016, https://www.aparat.com/v/q05sm65 (in Persian).

Additionally, in several images from the military exercises covered by state media, agents are seen in plain clothes.[1922]



Insignia of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC. The main element of the insignia is the word "Fateheen" written in Persian, with the fist and rifle image from the main IRGC insignia incorporated into the Persian script. Sometimes, above the main logo, various phrases such as "Labbayk ya Hossein" in Persian (on the left) and "Fateheen Basij Ranger Battalion" in Persian (in the centre) and "Special ops" in English (on the right) are displayed, in recognition of the Fateheen Battalions' role as the special operations unit of the Basij.

Several images published by state media depict the military exercises of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran held on 24 September 2024 and 9 October 2023, where some of the agents are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises.[1923] These agents are seen wearing khaki camouflage uniforms, sometimes under green camouflage vests, and black protective helmets with face shields.

Most of the agents carry round-shaped black shields while some carry transparent rectangular shields with a camouflage strip in the middle. The word "police" is written in English on many of the round-shaped black shields. The agents are equipped with batons and, in one image, an agent is seen with a shotgun. Some of the images also depict the use of coloured tear gas.

1922. See, for example, IRNA, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85252680/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Photographs from the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1534329/عکس-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Hamshahri Online, تصاویر رزمایش امنیتی یگان ویژه فاتحین با حضور سردار حسین نجات ["Images of the security exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort in the presence of General Hossein Nejat"], 27 September 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/photo/884433/تصاویر-رزمایش-امنیتی-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-با-حضور-سردار-حسین-نجات (in Persian).
1923. Tasnim News Agency, "IRGC special unit holds security exercise", 25 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/media/2024/09/25/3165124/irgc-special-unit-holds-security-exercise; Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); IRNA, Учения специального подразделения Фатехин ["Exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohorts"], 9 October 2023, https://ru.irna.ir/photo/85253049/Учения-специального-подразделения-Фатехин (in Russian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions on 24 September 2024. The agents wear camouflage khaki uniforms, like those of the IRGC's military personnel, and black protective helmets with face shields. They are carrying batons and round-shaped black shields. The word "police" is written in English on many of the shields. © Tasnim News Agency[1924]



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents wear brown camouflage uniforms under green camouflage vests and black protective helmets with face shields and are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises. They are equipped with batons and round-shaped black or transparent shields. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1925]

1924. Tasnim News Agency, "IRGC special unit holds security exercise", 25 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/media/2024/09/25/3165124/irgc-special-unit-holds-security-exercise (in Persian).
1925. Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents wear brown camouflage uniforms under green camouflage vests and black protective helmets with face shields. They are equipped with batons and round-shaped black shields and are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1926]

1926. Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents wear brown camouflage uniforms under green camouflage vests and black protective helmets with face shields. They are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises and are carrying batons. They carry round-shaped black shields or transparent rectangular shields with a camouflage strip in the middle. The agent standing on the far right can be seen holding a shotgun. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1927]

1927. IRNA, Учения специального подразделения Фатехин ["Exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohorts"], 9 October 2023, https://ru.irna.ir/photo/85253049/Учения-специального-подразделения-Фатехин (in Russian). See also Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents wear brown camouflage uniforms under green camouflage vests and black protective helmets with face shields. They are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises and are equipped with batons and round-shaped black shields. Yellow-coloured tear gas is being used. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1928]

1928. Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian). See also Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); IRNA, Учения специального подразделения Фатехин ["Exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohorts"], 9 October 2023, https://ru.irna.ir/photo/85253049/Учения-специального-подразделения-Фатехин (in Russian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents wear brown camouflage uniforms under green camouflage vests and black protective helmets with face shields. They are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises and are equipped with batons and round-shaped black shields. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1929]

1929. See Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Photographs from the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1534329/عکس-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian). See also Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); IRNA, Учения специального подразделения Фатехин ["Exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://ru.irna.ir/photo/85253049/Учения-специального-подразделения-Фатехин (in Russian); Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Photographs from the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1534329/عکس-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Basij News Agency, افتتاح ساختمان یگان فاتحین شاهرود به روایت تصویر و فیلم ["Inauguration of the Fateheen Cohort building in Shahroud, with images and video"], 11 March 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9420541/افتتاح-ساختمان-یگان-فاتحین-شاهرود-به-روایت-تصویر-و-فیلم (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024. Agents are dressed in brown camouflage uniforms under green camouflage vests, riding motorcycles. They are shown engaging in "anti-riot" exercises. Some can be seen carrying batons and round-shaped black shields with the word "police" written in English on them. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1930]

Many other images published by state media from the exercises of Fateheen Battalions show them engaging in shooting exercises that resemble armed confrontations in urban settings or executing precision shots while blending with surroundings for stealth operations. In some other images, the agents are posing with their firearms, next to their armoured vehicles as high-level commanders pass by in a parade.

1930. See Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian). See also IRNA, Учения специального подразделения Фатехин ["Exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohorts"], 9 October 2023, https://ru.irna.ir/photo/85253049/Учения-специального-подразделения-Фатехин (in Russian); Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Photographs from the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1534329/عکس-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian); Basij News Agency, افتتاح ساختمان یگان فاتحین شاهرود به روایت تصویر و فیلم ["Inauguration of the Fateheen Cohort's building in Shahroud, with images and video"], 11 March 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9420541/افتتاح-ساختمان-یگان-فاتحین-شاهرود-به-روایت-تصویر-و-فیلم (in Persian).



An event inaugurating a building of the Fateheen Battalion in March 2022. The flag of the Fateheen Battalions, consisting of the Fateheen logo written in green on a yellow background is displayed as a banner attached to the podium. © Basij News Agency[1931]

The attire of the agents in these images matches the most recognizable gear of the Fateheen Battalions: brown camouflage uniforms worn with matching or plain green vests, along with facial masks and helmets in the same camouflage pattern or plain beige colour, and goggles. The general insignia of the IRGC and one of the several distinct insignia of the Fateheen Battalions are sometimes visible on the uniforms.

The flag of the Fateheen Battalions is also visible in some images. The flag consists of the Fateheen logo written in green on a yellow background.



A military exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024. The agents are recognizable by their brown camouflage uniform, along with facial masks and helmets in the same camouflage pattern or beige colour, and goggles. The insignia of the Fateheen Battalions is visible on their uniform, with the word "Fateheen" written in Persian, and the fist and rifle image from the main IRGC insignia incorporated into the Persian script. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1932]

1931. Basij News Agency, افتتاح ساختمان یگان فاتحین شاهرود به روایت تصویر و فیلم ["Inauguration of the Fateheen Cohort's building in Shahroud, with images and video"], 11 March 2022, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9420541/افتتاح-ساختمان-یگان-فاتحین-شاهرود-به-روایت-تصویر-و-فیلم (in Persian).

1932. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents are recognizable by their brown camouflage uniform, along with facial masks in the same camouflage pattern, beige-coloured helmets and goggles. The general insignia of the IRGC is visible on the uniform of the agent in front. Agents are seen posing with their firearms in front of a row of armoured vehicles. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1933]

1933. IRNA, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85252680/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024. The agents are recognizable by their brown camouflage uniform or black military uniform (on the left), along with facial masks and helmets in the same camouflage pattern or beige colour, and goggles. Agents are seen posing with their firearms. The flag of the Fateheen Battalions, consisting of the Fateheen logo written in green on a yellow background, is visible. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1934]

1934. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024. The agents are recognizable by their brown camouflage uniforms and beige-coloured helmets. Agents are seen taking position in their armoured vehicles. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1935]

1935. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024. The agents, recognizable by their brown camouflage uniforms, along with facial masks and helmets in the same camouflage pattern, are seen posing with their firearms as high-level commanders pass by in a parade. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1936]



A military exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The two agents are seen engaging in shooting exercises. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1937]

1936. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).
1937. Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024. The agent is seen engaging in a shooting exercise, executing precision shots while blending in with surroundings for stealth operations. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1938]



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agent is seen engaging in a shooting exercise, executing precision shots while blending in with surroundings for stealth operations. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1939]

1938. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

1939. Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents are seen engaging in a shooting exercise, executing precision shots while blending in with surroundings for stealth operations. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1940]



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 2 November 2021. The agents are seen engaging in shooting exercises that resemble armed confrontations. The insignia of the Fateheen Battalions is visible on the uniform of one of the agents. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1941]

1940. Tasnim News Agency, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1402/07/17/2968524/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

1941. Tasnim News Agency, اولین رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین سپاه محمد رسول الله(ص) ["First exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort of the Mohammad Rasoul Allah Corps"], 2 November 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1400/08/11/2600306/-اولین-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین-سپاه-محمد-رسول-الله-ص (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents, recognizable by their brown camouflage uniforms worn with plain green vests, along with helmets in the same camouflage pattern, are seen engaging in shooting exercises that resemble armed confrontations in urban settings. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1942]



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 9 October 2023. The agents, recognizable by their brown camouflage uniforms worn with plain green vests, along with helmets in the same camouflage pattern, are seen engaging in mock arrests. Coloured tear gas is visible. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1943]

1942. IRNA, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85252680/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).
1943. IRNA, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85252680/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).

While agents of the Fateheen Battalions are frequently seen in the brown camouflage uniforms described above, in some images published from their exercises and parades between 2019 and 2024, some groups of the Fateheen Battalions are seen wearing all-black uniforms. Some of these agents are seen covering their faces with black masks or balaclavas when posing next to their cars or riding motorcycles.



A parade of Basij agents in Amol, Mazandaran province, on 26 November 2019. Agents in black uniforms and black balaclavas stand next to a placard and a flag identifying them as agents of the Fateheen Battalions. The patch on their uniform sleeves also indicates their affiliation. © Seyyede Amol[1944]

1944. Seyyede Amol, همایش بزرگ اقتدار بسیجیان ولایتمدار آمل درصبحگاه مشترک ["Grand power assembly of Basijis loyal to the Guardianship of the Jurist in Amol during the joint morning assembly"], 26 November 2019, https://seyyedeamol.ir/25963-2 (in Persian).



A manoeuvre of Basij agents in Amol, Mazandaran province, on 26 November 2019. Agents of the Fatteheen Batallions are seen wearing all-black uniforms, covering their faces with black balaclavas. The yellow flag of the Fateheen Battalions is visible. © Seyyede Amol[1945]



An exercise organized by the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran on 9 October 2023. Agents of the Fateheen Battalions pose next to their vehicles as IRGC commanders pass by. Some agents are seen wearing all-black uniforms, covering their faces with black masks. © Mashregh News[1946]

1945. Seyyede Amol, همایش بزرگ اقتدار بسیجیان ولایتمدار آمل درصبحگاه مشترک ["Grand power assembly of Basijis loyal to the Guardianship of the Jurist in Amol during the joint morning assembly"], 26 November 2019, https://seyyedeamol.ir/25963-2 (in Persian).
1946. Mashregh News, عکس رزمایش یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Photographs from the exercise of the specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1534329/عکس-رزمایش-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran on 9 October 2023. Some agents are seen wearing all-black uniforms, covering their faces with black masks. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1947]

In several images published from the exercises of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, held on 24 September 2024 and 9 October 2023, some groups of armed agents are also seen in plain clothes, posing next to white vehicles or simulating shooting through car windows with sub-machine guns. On the cars, the yellow flag of the Fateheen Battalions is visible, and the licence plates also identify the white vehicles and agents as belonging to the Fateheen Cohort.

1947. IRNA, دومین رزمایش نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Second exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 9 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85252680/دومین-رزمایش-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran on 24 September 2024. Agents are seen in plain clothes, posing next to white vehicles. On the cars, the yellow flag of the Fateheen Battalions is visible and the licence plates also identify the white vehicles and agents as belonging to the Fateheen Cohort. © Hossein Zohrevand / Tasnim News Agency[1948]



An exercise of the Fateheen Battalions of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran on 9 October 2023. Agents are seen in plain clothes, simulating shooting from a car with sub-machine guns. © Akbar Tavakkoli / IRNA[1949]

1948. Tasnim News Agency, سومین رزمایش امنیتی نبی اکرم یگان ویژه فاتحین ["Third security exercise of the Nabi Akram Corps' specialized Fateheen Cohort"], 24 September 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/media/1403/07/03/3164898/سومین-رزمایش-امنیتی-نبی-اکرم-یگان-ویژه-فاتحین (in Persian).
1949. IRNA, Учения специального подразделения Фатехин ["Exercises of the specialized Fateheen Cohorts"], 9 October 2023, https://ru.irna.ir/photo/85253049/Учения-специального-подразделения-Фатехин (in Russian).

10.3.3(III) SECURITY COHORTS

As mentioned in previous sections, the Iranian authorities have not published information on either the types of battalions and companies making up the Security Cohorts of the various provinces or their formation and recruitment processes. These Security Cohorts have their own Imam Ali Battalions and may also possess some additional battalions. In some cases, such as in Greater Tehran, they also have one or several security ranger companies and/or special operations teams.

Given these complexities, the uniforms of the Security Cohorts can greatly vary, as illustrated by the examples cited below. As a result, the affiliation of agents can only be ascertained through the placards they hold, the banners displayed during the marches, the badges on their uniforms, and/or accompanying official statements or state media reports.

Amnesty International reviewed 20 photographs published by state media from a parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran in November 2019.[1950] In these images, agents mostly wear green camouflage or all-black uniforms identical to those used by the Imam Ali Battalions. Additionally, some agents are seen in khaki camouflage uniform, like those used by the IRGC's military personnel.

The agents are seen carrying 37/38mm launchers, rifles and shotguns. The images also feature reinforced black pickup trucks, with an agent standing on top of one of them while holding a 12-gauge shotgun.



A military parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort on 22 November 2019. Agents are seen riding motorcycles, wearing green camouflage uniforms identical to those used by the Imam Ali Battalions. The agents on the back of some motorcycles are seen carrying 37/38mm launchers. © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1951]

1950. See Jahan News, (عج) یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/2/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).
1951. Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).



A military parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort on 22 November 2019. Agents are seen riding motorcycles, wearing khaki camouflage uniforms identical to those used by the IRGC's military personnel. The agents on the back of some motorcycles are seen carrying 37/38mm launchers. © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1952]



A military parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort on 22 November 2019. Agents stand behind a placard indicating their affiliation. They are seen wearing all-black uniforms identical to those used by the Imam Ali Battalions. © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1953]

1952. Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).
1953. Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).



A military parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort on 22 November 2019. A line of reinforced black pickup trucks are seen, with an agent standing on top of one of them in an all-black uniform and holding a 12-gauge shotgun. © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1954]



A military parade of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort on 22 November 2019. Agents are seen on motorcycles in all-black uniforms identical to those used by the Imam Ali Battalion. © Mohsen Ataei / Fars News Agency[1955]

1954. Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).
1955. Jahan News, یگان امنیتی حضرت صاحب الزمان ["Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort"], 22 November 2019, https://www.jahannews.com/gallery/708290/1/یگان-امنیتی-حضرت-صاحب-الزمان-عج (in Persian).

Amnesty International also reviewed over 40 photographs from a parade of "security battalions" in Gachsaran county, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, in May 2021.[1956] In these images, agents in green camouflage and all-black uniforms on red motorcycles, similar to those seen in images of the Imam Ali Battalions, are present. The arm badge on some uniforms appears to bear the phrase "Security Cohort" in Persian.



A manoeuvre of "security battalions" in Gachsaran county, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, in May 2021. Agents are seen on red motorcycles wearing green camouflage and all-black uniforms, similar to those seen in images of the Imam Ali Battalions. The arm badge on some uniforms appears to bear the phrase "Security Cohort" in Persian. © Sobhe Zagros[1957]

1956. Aftabe Jonoub, رزمایش اقتدار گردان‌های امنیتی در گچساران ["Power exercise of the security battalions in Gachsaran"], 26 May 2021, https://www.aftabejonoob.ir/tasviri/77176/رزمایش-اقتدار-گردان-های-امنیتی-در-گچسارانتصاویر (in Persian).
1957. See Aftabe Jonoub, رزمایش اقتدار گردان‌های امنیتی در گچساران ["Power exercise of the security battalions in Gachsaran"], 26 May 2021, https://www.aftabejonoob.ir/tasviri/77176/رزمایش-اقتدار-گردان-های-امنیتی-در-گچسارانتصاویر (in Persian).



Agents of "security battalions" in Gachsaran county, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, in May 2021. They are seen wearing green camouflage or all-black uniforms identical to those used by the Imam Ali Battalions. © Sobhe Zagros[1958]

Amnesty International also reviewed an official video, produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran and posted online in January 2024, which first features the military exercises of the 141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Battalion of its Security Cohort.[1959] The video then proceeds to show a group of agents preparing for deployment, putting on their all-black uniforms and helmets and heading into the streets to repress the 2022 protests in Sari, Mazandaran province. These agents are depicted wearing black balaclavas underneath black helmets with face shields. The agents are seen in full protective gear, loading shotguns with what looks like kinetic impact projectiles and pepper balls. Their motorcycles and black armoured vehicles are also visible.

1958. See Aftabe Jonoub, رزمایش اقتدار گردان‌های امنیتی در گچساران ["Power exercise of the security battalions in Gachsaran"], 26 May 2021, https://www.aftabejonoob.ir/tasviri/77176/رزمایش-اقتدار-گردان-های-امنیتی-در-گچسارانتصاویر (in Persian).
1959. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran and posted online in January 2024, available at: Alitby, گردان امنیتی عملیات ویژه ۱۴۱ مالک اشتر ["141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Security Battalion"], 3 January 2024, https://www.aparat.com/v/g57io75 (in Persian).



An exercise of the 141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Battalion of the Security Cohort of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran. Agents are seen preparing for deployment, wearing full protective gear and black balaclavas underneath black helmets with face shields. A black armoured vehicle is visible behind them. © IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran[1960]



An exercise of the 141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Battalion of the Security Cohort of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran. Agents are seen in their all-black uniforms and black balaclavas preparing for deployment. © IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran[1961]

1960. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran and posted online in January 2024, available at: Alitby, گردان امنیتی عملیات ویژه ۱۴۱ مالک اشتر ["141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Security Battalion"], 3 January 2024, https://www.aparat.com/v/g57io75 (in Persian), minute 0.40-0.43.

1961. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran and posted online in January 2024, Alitby, گردان امنیتی عملیات ویژه ۱۴۱ مالک اشتر ["141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Security Battalion"], 3 January 2024, https://www.aparat.com/v/g57io75 (in Persian), minute 0.03-0.22.



An exercise of the 141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Battalion of the Security Cohort of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran. Agents are seen on motorcycles in their all-black uniforms, full protective gear and black balaclavas underneath black helmets with face shields. © IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran[1962]



An exercise of the 141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Battalion of the Security Cohort of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran. Agents are seen riding motorcycles in their all-black uniforms and full protective gear, accompanied by a black armoured vehicle. © IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran[1963]

1962. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran and posted online in January 2024, Alitby, گردان امنیتی عملیات ویژه ۱۴۱ مالک اشتر ["141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Security Battalion"], 3 January 2024, https://www.aparat.com/v/g57io75 (in Persian), minute 0.22-0.33.

1963. Still from video produced by the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Mazandaran and posted online in January 2024, Alitby, گردان امنیتی عملیات ویژه ۱۴۱ مالک اشتر ["141 Malek Ashtar Special Operations Security Battalion"], 3 January 2024, https://www.aparat.com/v/g57io75 (in Persian), minute 1.40-1.43.

With respect to the commando units of the Security Cohorts, Amnesty International reviewed several photographs posted in 2023 and 2024 on an Instagram account affiliated with the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company, which is part of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran.[1964] In these photographs, agents are mostly seen wearing khaki camouflage uniforms while some wear black uniforms. They are seen carrying Type 56-1 pattern rifles, shotguns and Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns.

The agents are equipped with protective khaki vests, helmets (sometimes with helmet cameras), arm and knee pads, masks covering their faces, black goggles and two-way radios. As such, their attire and gear make them resemble the ranger brigades of the IRGC's Special Forces.



Badge on the uniform sleeves of the commando units of the Security Cohorts. The badge bears the phrase "security ranger" in English along with its equivalent in Persian.

The distinguishing feature is the badge on their uniform sleeves, which bears the phrase "security ranger" in English along with its equivalent in Persian.

A second badge is often placed below the first, bearing a logo that resembles the Special Forces' insignia but has some distinct elements. The logo of the Special Forces typically features the main symbol of the IRGC insignia, which includes a fist holding a rifle, along with a parachute and wings. In the case of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company, the lower part of the image differs, showing the anchor associated with the logo of the IRGC's Navy Special Forces. At the top, the phrase "S.R.C" appears, which likely stands for Security Ranger Company.

1964. See navab_725, Instagram account, https://www.instagram.com/navab_725



Badges of the IRGC's Special Forces. The badge on the left bears the phrase "Special Forces" in Persian. The badge on the right is of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company. At the top, the initials "S.R.C" appear, which likely stand for Security Ranger Company. The lower part of the insignia contains the anchor associated with the logo of the IRGC's Navy Special Forces. Both badges contain the logo of the Special Forces, featuring the main symbol of the IRGC's insignia, which includes a fist holding a rifle, along with a parachute and wings.



An agent of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company wearing a khaki camouflage uniform and helmet, arm pads, a mask covering his face and black goggles. The badge on the agent's uniform sleeve bears the phrase "security ranger" in English along with its equivalent in Persian. The second badge below it bears the logo of the Special Forces, featuring the main symbol of the IRGC insignia, which includes a fist holding a rifle, along with a parachute and wings. The lower part of the badge shows the anchor associated with the logo of the IRGC's Navy Special Forces. At the top of the badge, the initials "S.R.C" appear, which likely stands for Security Ranger Company. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1965]

1965. See Farzad Seifikaran, X post: ۱- #رشته_توییت: کماندوهای ۷۲۵ نواب و سرکوب اعتراضات - ["#Thread: The 725 Navvab commandos and the suppression of protests"], 16 January 2023, https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1615087033206145058https://x.com/FSeifikaran/status/1615087033206145058 (in Persian). See also Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).



Agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort. Agents are seen wearing khaki camouflage uniforms with protective khaki vests and are seen carrying Type 56-1 pattern rifles. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1966]



Agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company of the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort. Agents wearing khaki camouflage uniforms and scarves covering their faces and are seen carrying Tondar MP5-pattern sub-machine guns. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1967]

1966. See Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).
1967. navab_725, Instagram post: ایران به دنبال دفاع از قرآن ["Iran seeks to defend the Quran"], 17 February 2023, https://www.instagram.com/p/Cow-pJ3sF91/?igsh=b2FwbHZwdDY5a2Fs (in Persian).



An agent of the Navvab Security Ranger Company wearing a khaki camouflage uniform, carrying a Type 56-1 pattern rifle. The agent is seen equipped with a protective khaki vest, helmet, helmet camera, knee pads, a mask covering his face and black goggles. His attire and gear make him resemble an agent of the ranger brigades of the IRGC's Special Forces. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1968]

1968. See Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).



Agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company wearing khaki camouflage uniforms and masks covering their faces. The agent on the right is equipped with a protective khaki vest, helmet, helmet camera, knee pads, black goggles, a two-way radio and a Type 56-1 pattern rifle. The agent on the left is equipped with a khaki camouflage-patterned helmet, and arm and knee pads. Their attire and gear make them resemble agents of the ranger brigades of the IRGC's Special Forces. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1969]

1969. See Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).



Agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company wearing khaki camouflage uniforms, masks covering their faces, protective khaki vests, helmets, knee pads and black goggles. The agent in the front is seen carrying a Type 56-1 pattern rifle and is equipped with a two-way radio. Their attire and gear make them resemble agents of the ranger brigades of the IRGC's Special Forces. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1970]

1970. navab_725, Instagram post: شمشیر هایمان آخته و سیقل خورده است ["Our swords are drawn and sharpened"], 3 June 2024, https://www.instagram.com/p/C7wqEGCo7a8/?igsh=MTR5YzIxN2RndW8x (in Persian).



Agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company. Agents stand alongside motorcycles dressed in camouflage uniforms, masks covering their faces, protective khaki vests, helmets and knee pads, with some wearing black goggles. Their attire and gear make them resemble agents of the ranger brigades of the IRGC's Special Forces. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1971]



Agents of the 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company dressed in khaki camouflage uniforms, protective khaki vests, helmets, knee pads and masks and black goggles covering their faces. The agent on the left holds a Type 56-1 pattern rifle. The agent on the right holds a shotgun. Their attire and gear make them resemble agents of the ranger brigades of the IRGC's Special Forces. © 725 Navvab Security Ranger Company[1972]

1971. navab_725, Instagram post: شیر همیشه، شیر خواهد ماند ["A lion will always remain a lion"], 3 June 2024, https://www.instagram.com/p/C7wmZK2o1tu/?igsh=ZjBxYWxiZDI3amdl (in Persian).
1972. See Radio Zamaneh, گروهان تکاور امنیتی نواب؛ فاتحان قدس یا سرکوبگران مردم؟ ["Navvab Security Ranger Company: Conquerors of Jerusalem or suppressors of the people?"], 16 January 2023, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/748036 (in Persian).

With respect to the commando units of the Security Cohorts, Amnesty International also reviewed an image showing a young armed agent during a parade of Basij agents in Tehran in November 2023. He is wearing a khaki camouflage uniform and a green cap similar to those worn by the IRGC's Special Forces, but there is a badge on his sleeve identifying him as a "security ranger". He is shown carrying a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. The title of the commando unit to which he belongs is not clear from the image.



A member of the commando unit of the Security Cohorts at a military parade in Tehran on 24 November 2023. The agent wears a khaki camouflage uniform and a green cap similar to those worn by the IRGC's Special Forces. The badge on his sleeve identifies him as a "security ranger". He is seen carrying a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. The name of the commando unit to which he belongs is not clear from the image. © Mashregh News[1973]

10.3.4 OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

Amnesty International collated and analysed statements made by 11 IRGC commanders in connection with the repression of the Woman Life Freedom uprising between September and December 2022.

The 11 IRGC commanders include the general commander of the IRGC, the commanders and deputy commanders of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, which oversees the provincial corps of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, and the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, which oversees the provincial corps of Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan, and the commanders and deputy commanders of the provincial corps of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. Their names and titles at the time of the 2022 protests are:

1. Hossein Salami, general commander of the IRGC
2. Mohammad Taghi Osanlou, commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters

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1973. Mashregh News, عکس/ رزمایش ۵۰ هزار نفری «الی بیت المقدس» در تهران ["Photographs: The 50,000-person Towards Jerusalem military exercise in Tehran"], 24 November 2023, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/photo/1549580/عکس-رزمایش-۵۰-هزار-نفری-الی-بیت-المقدس-در-تهران (in Persian).

3. Majid Arjmandfar, deputy commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters
4. Mohammad Nazar Azimi, commander of the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters
5. Kourosh Asiabani, deputy commander of the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters
6. Sadegh Hosseini, commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
7. Alireza Madanifar (Madani), deputy commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
8. Bahman Reyhani, commander of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
9. Masoud Ghanbari, deputy commander of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
10. Habib Shahsavari, commander of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
11. Taleb Rahimi, deputy commander of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan

10.3.4(I) NATIONAL LEVEL

10.3.4(I)(i) General commander of the IRGC

Throughout the September-December 2022 protests and in their aftermath, the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, repeatedly warned the protesters against becoming the "foot soldiers" of the USA,[1974] or "pawns" in the "enemy's political chess game",[1975] and described them as "villains",[1976] as well as "hired terrorists of the enemy".[1977] In other instances, he described some of the protesters as "deceived youths",[1978] duped by anti-revolutionary, enemy forces into opposing the Islamic Republic.

1974. Tasnim News Agency, سردار سلامی: جوانان مهره شطرنج سیاسی دشمنان نشوند ["General Salami: Young people should not become pawns in the enemies' political chess game"], 10 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/18/2786020/سردار-سلامی-جوانان-مهره-شطرنج-سیاسی-دشمنان-نشوند (in Persian).

1975. Tasnim News Agency, سردار سلامی: جوانان مهره شطرنج سیاسی دشمنان نشوند ["General Salami: Young people should not become pawns in the enemies' political chess game"], 10 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/18/2786020/سردار-سلامی-جوانان-مهره-شطرنج-سیاسی-دشمنان-نشوند (in Persian).

1976. Hamshahri Online, ما برای دشمنان خطرناکیم؛ مراقب باشید | پر کاه را از پشه نمی‌توانید پس بگیرید ؛ می‌خواهید ایران را پس بگیرید؟ ["We are dangerous to our enemies; be careful: You cannot take a straw away from a fly; you want to take Iran back?"], 25 November 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/722893/ما-برای-دشمنان-خطرناکیم-مراقب-باشید-پر-کاه-را-از-پشه-نمی-توانید (in Persian).

1977. See Khabar Online, فرمانده کل سپاه: امروز فصل انتخاب است؛ یا جبهه اسلام یا جبهه دشمن ["General commander of the IRGC: Today is a time of choice: Either the front of Islam, or the enemy's front"], 27 November 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1700281/فرمانده-کل-سپاه-امروز-فصل-انتخاب-است-یا-جبهه-اسلام-یا-جبهه (in Persian).

1978. See Hamshahri Online, هشدار فرمانده کل سپاه: امروز روز پایان اغتشاشات است؛ دیگر به خیابان نیایید ["Warning from the general commander of the IRGC: Today is the day the riots end; do not come to the streets anymore"], 29 October 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/715849/هشدار-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-امروز-روز-پایان-اغتشاشات-است-دیگر-به (in Persian); Didban Iran, سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"], 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

He praised the commitment and loyalty of the IRGC, including its Basij forces, to the Supreme Leader and their readiness to defeat the protesters,[1979] celebrating the lethal crackdown as "a clear victory and a pronounced triumph for the beloved Iranian nation".[1980]

On 10 October 2022, amid lethal protest dispersals which had by then resulted in the death of at least 186 protesters and bystanders during protest dispersals and in militarized areas across the country,[1981] Hossein Salami, praised the Army, IRGC and Basij forces for ensuring the country's "security, greatness and glory" through "a defensive formation against the enemy". He acknowledged that "youth" had been killed but deflected blame for the violence and deaths onto external enemies and warned "youth" to "be careful".



The general commander of the IRGC at the time of the 2022 protests, Hossein Salami © Mahdi Afrakhteh / Student News Network

"The Basij, the Army and the IRGC stood in a defensive formation against the enemy and secured the country's independence, security, greatness, and glory… A small number of the country's youth have been influenced by enemy propaganda, and I tell these few young people to recognize the enemy and not become pawns in the enemy's political chess game against the country; you should not become the foot soldiers of our enemies' political generals… The enemies who command you today to pour into the streets… take pleasure in the killing of young people and do not wish you well."[1982]

On 20 October 2022, Hossein Salami attended an official event in Qom called the Great Assembly of Allegiance to the Supreme Leader to express "gratitude" for "the performance of the IRGC and military, police and security forces" in "completely defeating" the protests, which he described as "a war"

1979. See Mehr News Agency, قدردانی فرمانده معظم کل قوا از بسیجیان مدافع امنیت تهران ["General commander of the IRGC's appreciation for Basijis defending security in Tehran"], 25 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5616522/قدردانی-فرمانده-معظم-کل-قوا-از-بسیجیان-مدافع-امنیت-تهران (in Persian); Khabar Online, پیام تشکر رهبر انقلاب از بسیجیان و پاسداران سپاه تهران ["Message of gratitude from the Leader of the Revolution to Basijs and the IRGC Guards of the Tehran Corps"], 25 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1687513/پیام-تشکر-رهبر-انقلاب-از-بسیجیان-و-پاسداران-سپاه-تهران (in Persian); Didban Iran, سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"], 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

1980. Didban Iran, سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"], 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

1981. See section 5.3.

1982. Tasnim News Agency, سردار سلامی: جوانان مهره شطرنج سیاسی دشمنان نشوند ["General Salami: Young people should not become pawns in the enemies' political chess game"], 10 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/18/2786020/سردار-سلامی-جوانان-مهره-شطرنج-سیاسی-دشمنان-نشوند (in Persian).

against the Islamic Republic system.[1983] He stated:

> **"Today, in this sensitive juncture, we witness a war by global parties against Iran, the [Islamic Republic] system, the people and the Revolution. All contemporary political and media empires have united... against the Iranian nation... This time, imperialism, with the same miscalculations it made previously, and with the assumption that it could bring about the collapse of the Islamic [Republic] system, deployed all its field might, political power and psychological operational talents… In this grand global sedition, efforts were made from New York, London and Riyadh to our cities to remove Islam from governing the management of regional and global transformations."[1984]**

Hossein Salami claimed to have asserted command and control over the situation, through the monitoring of the Islamic Republic's enemies, and boasted about defeating them. He stated:

> **"We monitor the horizon of the enemy's perspective every moment... Our enemies had come to separate the Iranian nation from its history and beliefs, placing it against the [Islamic Republic] system, but they were completely defeated... Americans, French, British and Saudis intervened to provide artificial respiration for the riots, and this also ended in a clear victory and a pronounced triumph for the beloved Iranian nation."[1985]**

In his speech, Hossein Salami again undermined the agency of young protesters, referring to them as "deceived youths" and urging them to recognize the "devilish objectives of the enemy", including encouraging unveiling.[1986] He stated:

1983. Didban Iran, ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"] سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند, 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/-بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

1984. Didban Iran, ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"] سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند, 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/-بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

1985. Didban Iran, ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"] سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند, 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/-بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

1986. Didban Iran, ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"] سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند, 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/-بخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-داد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).



The general commander of the IRGC at the time of the 2022 protests, Hossein Salami © IRNA

"To the youth who remain deceived... Observe who has decided to distance the women of our land from their perpetual chastity and modesty; our youth shall reflect that the same enemy that targeted Hiroshima with an atomic bomb, has mobilized their media to take away the identity of our youth. The women of our society are chaste and, in these past few days when the atmosphere of unveiling was created, they preserved their veiling."[1987]

Several days later, on 25 October 2022, Hossein Salami reiterated his narrative of command and accomplishment at an event which the state media reported as a "gathering of [IRGC] guards and Basijis participating in the confrontation against rioters".[1988] Hossein Salami proudly stated: "In every incident that we encountered with all the devils of the world over the 43 years following the Sacred Defence,[1989] we managed to triumph and defeat them all."[1990]

According to state media reports, following this event, Hossein Salami visited the Supreme Leader, updating him on the efforts made to protect the Islamic Republic and emphasizing commitment, loyalty and continued readiness within the IRGC ranks to defend the Islamic Republic system in service to the Supreme Leader. The Supreme Leader is quoted in state media as blessing and praising their efforts. State media reported:

1987. Didban Iran, سردار سلامی: امپراتوری‌ها از لانه بیرون آمده‌اند، دشمنان می‌خواهند به اغتشاشات تنفس مصنوعی بدهند ["General Salami: Empires have emerged from their dens, enemies seek to breathe artificial life into the riots"], 20 October 2022, https://www.didbaniran.ir/-پخش-سیاسی-3/141689-سردار-سلامی-امپراتوری-ها-از-لانه-بیرون-آمده-اند-دشمنان-می-خواهند-به-اغتشاشات-تنفس-مصنوعی-بدهند-رئیس-جمهور-سابق-آمریکا-اجازه-نمی-دهد-دارو-به-ملت-ایران-برسد (in Persian).

1988. Khabar Online, پیام تشکر رهبر انقلاب از بسیجیان و پاسداران سپاه تهران ["Message of gratitude from the Leader of the Revolution to Basijs and the IRGC Guards of the Tehran Corps"], 25 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1687513/-پیام-تشکر-رهبر-انقلاب-از-بسیجیان-و-پاسداران-سپاه-تهران (in Persian).

1989. The term Sacred Defence is used by the authorities to refer to the Iran-Iraq war between 1980 and 1988.

1990. Khabar Online, پیام تشکر رهبر انقلاب از بسیجیان و پاسداران سپاه تهران ["Message of gratitude from the Leader of the Revolution to Basijis and the IRGC Guards of the Tehran Corps"], 25 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1687513/-پیام-تشکر-رهبر-انقلاب-از-بسیجیان-و-پاسداران-سپاه-تهران (in Persian).



The general commander of the IRGC at the time of the 2022 protests, Hossein Salami (left), and the then Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei (right) © Mizan

"The general commander of the IRGC went to visit the Supreme Leader and addressed him as follows: 'Dear Sir, as I mentioned before, rest assured, your supporters are standing steadfast and firm. Today, I saw that the Basijis and guards of the [IRGC] corps of Tehran are standing up, proudly defending the Revolution, conveying their regard to you and praying for you.' In response to these sentences, the commander-in-chief stated: 'Peace be upon you and upon them. Convey my regard to all of them, thank them and, God willing, may God grant them success. I have prayed for their success.'"[1991]

On 29 October 2022, Hossein Salami once again addressed young protesters as "deceived youths". He stated:

> **"To the few deceived youth of my homeland, I say: You should not be deceived by the enemy's psychological operations… Do not sell your homeland and honour to America. Do not slap the face of warriors who have stood tall to protect your security. Take off the clothes of American soldiers and do not become their pawns."[1992]**

Hossein Salami then escalated his threatening language, warning of "no good end" for those persisting in what he labelled as "sedition". Despite overwhelming evidence that security forces were engaging in a lethal crackdown, killing at least 225 protesters and bystanders by 29 October 2022, he claimed that the security forces were exercising "restraint" and warned that this could change. He stated:

> **"America's dream and desired image for our youth is solely that they be killed… In this land, no one allows you to riot and start fires. Do not exploit the restraint of the people [referring to the security forces]… This poisoned river will drown you… Today is the end day of the riots, so do not take to the streets any more. Know that this sedition will lead to no good end."[1993]**

On 27 November 2022, following a renewed peak of nationwide protests, which were met with intensified repression leading to the killing of at least 70 further protesters and bystanders between 15 and 23 November 2022,[1994] Hossein Salami used highly threatening and dehumanizing language against the protesters, describing them as "internal mercenaries" linked to "the forces of blasphemy

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1991. Mehr News Agency, قدردانی فرمانده معظم کل قوا از بسیجیان مدافع امنیت تهران ["General commander of the IRGC's appreciation for Basijis defending security in Tehran"], 25 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5616522/قدردانی-فرمانده-معظم-کل-قوا-از-بسیجیان-مدافع-امنیت-تهران (in Persian).

1992. See Hamshahri Online, هشدار فرمانده کل سپاه: امروز روز پایان اغتشاشات است؛ دیگر به خیابان نیایید ["Warning from the general commander of the IRGC: Today is the day the riots end; do not come to the streets anymore"], 29 October 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/715849/هشدار-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-امروز-روز-پایان-اغتشاشات-است-دیگر-به (in Persian).

1993. See Hamshahri Online, هشدار فرمانده کل سپاه: امروز روز پایان اغتشاشات است؛ دیگر به خیابان نیایید ["Warning from the general commander of the IRGC: Today is the day the riots end; do not come to the streets anymore"], 29 October 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/715849/هشدار-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-امروز-روز-پایان-اغتشاشات-است-دیگر-به (in Persian).

1994. See section 5.3.

and polytheism from around the world" and accusing them of participating in a "filthy scene" orchestrated by the USA and Israel and waging "warfare" against the Islamic Republic.[1995] He stated:



The general commander of the IRGC at the time of the 2022 protests, Hossein Salami © IRNA

"We will definitely turn this scene of grand sedition and this global war into a graveyard for the Americans, Israelis and their allies. The country is today exposed to a grand global war… The forces of blasphemy and polytheism from around the world, along with their internal mercenaries and leaders, have waged a war against the Revolution, security and national unity. Today is the season of choice; one cannot stand in the middle. One must either be on the side of Islam or on the side of blasphemy. The scene that America and Israel are administrating is a filthy scene."[1996]

In the months following the end of the protests, Hossein Salami repeatedly expressed pride in the complete suppression of the protests by the IRGC forces, boasting that "the Islamic Republic is shining in stability".[1997]

On 1 August 2023, in advance of the first anniversary of the protests, he stated:

"Last year's riots were the strongest and most dangerous, serious, unequal and extensive global campaign against the Islamic [Republic] system of Iran. However, the enemy was defeated in this heavy campaign. In the grand sedition of last year, the Basij and the IRGC,[1998] with foresight, steadfastness, high self-confidence and great hope, took to the field and, alongside the people, thwarted the enemy's plans. We are now at a new juncture, and the enemy intends to incite sedition again on the anniversary of the events of the autumn of 2022. With our readiness and vigilance, the enemy cannot succeed, and the solution to counter it is prevention."[1999]

1995. Khabar Online, فرمانده کل سپاه: امروز فصل انتخاب است؛ یا جبهه اسلام یا جبهه دشمن ["General commander of the IRGC: Today is a time of choice: Either the front of Islam, or the enemy's front"], 27 November 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1700281/فرمانده-کل-سپاه-امروز-فصل-انتخاب-است-یا-جبهه-اسلام-یا-جبهه (in Persian).

1996. Khabar Online, فرمانده کل سپاه: امروز فصل انتخاب است؛ یا جبهه اسلام یا جبهه دشمن ["General commander of the IRGC: Today is a time of choice: Either the front of Islam, or the enemy's front"], 27 November 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1700281/فرمانده-کل-سپاه-امروز-فصل-انتخاب-است-یا-جبهه-اسلام-یا-جبهه (in Persian).

1997. See, for example, ISNA, سردار سلامی: مراقب کید دشمنان باشیم؛ در یکی از فرازهای جدی تاریخ ["General Salami: We must be careful of the enemy's deception in one of the serious phases of history"], 15 July 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402042414972/سردار-سلامی-مراقب-کید-دشمنان-باشیم-در-یکی-از-فرازهای-جدی-تاریخ (in Persian); Farda News, سردار سلامی: بزرگترین شکست تاریخی دشمن در اغتشاشات اخیر بود ["General Salami: The greatest historical defeat of the enemy was in the recent riots"], 18 May 2023, https://www.fardanews.com/بخش-سیاست-73/1221823-سردار-سلامی-بزرگترین-شکست-تاریخی-دشمن-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-بود (in Persian); IRNA, سردار سلامی: حامیان اغتشاشات اکنون خود بی‌ثبات شده‌اند ["General Salami: Supporters of the riots have now become unstable"], 9 May 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85106457/سردار-سلامی-حامیان-اغتشاشات-اکنون-خود-بی-ثبات-شده-اند (in Persian); ISNA, فرمانده کل سپاه: دشمن در اغتشاشات اخیر همه گسل‌ها را فعال کرد ["Commander of the IRGC: The enemy activated all fault lines in the recent riots"], 28 December 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401100704163/فرمانده-کل-سپاه-دشمن-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-همه-گسل-ها-را-فعال-کرد (in Persian).

1998. As noted previously, while the Basij forces are formally part of the IRGC, Iranian authorities sometimes refer to the "Basij and the IRGC" instead of the more precise "Basij of the IRGC". This phrasing appears to be an effort to present the Basij as a separate, voluntary popular force. In such contexts, the term "IRGC" typically refers to its operational divisions or brigades.

1999. Tasnim News Agency, سرلشکر سلامی: دشمن به‌دنبال فتنه‌انگیزی در سالگرد حوادث پاییز ۱۴۰۱ است ["Major General Salami: The enemy is seeking to incite sedition on the anniversary of events of autumn 2022"], 1 August 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/05/10/2934614/سرلشکر-سلامی-دشمن-به-دنبال-فتنه-انگیزی-در-سالگرد-حوادث-پاییز-1401-است (in Persian).

10.3.4(II) REGIONAL LEVEL

10.3.4(II)(i) Commander and deputy commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters

On 22 October 2022, **Mohammad Taghi Osanlou**, the then commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, which oversees the IRGC's provincial corps of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan province, stated that the IRGC forces were "determining and taking countermeasures… against *monafegh* [hypocritical] and anti-revolutionary grouplets", in reference to protesters.[2000]

By 22 October 2022, the security forces, including the IRGC, had already unlawfully killed at least 23 protesters and bystanders during protest dispersals and in militarized areas in the provinces of Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan and injured many more.[2001] Mohammad Taghi Osanlou's statement came just days before another surge in unlawful killings in response to protests marking the 40th day since the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini on 26 October 2022.

In his 22 October 2022 statement, Mohammad Taghi Osanlou further indicated that the armed attacks waged by the IRGC against the bases of Iranian Kurdish opposition groups in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in late September 2022 were among the measures taken to quell the protests.[2002] As such, he insinuated that armed Kurdish opposition groups outside Iran were fuelling the protests. This claim is consistent with the official rhetoric seeking to discredit and smear the protesters and justify their deadly repression.

On 13 November 2022, in the lead-up to calls for further mass protests marking the anniversary of the 2019 nationwide protests, Mohammad Taghi Osanlou stated that Kurdish opposition groups outside Iran were responsible for "stirring sedition". He said:

2000. Mehr News Agency, تلاش همه‌جانبه گروهک‌های منافق برای بحرانی جلوه دادن کشور ["Comprehensive efforts by hypocritical groups to portray the country as in crisis"], 22 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5614620/-تلاش-همه-جانبه-گروهک-های-منافق-برای-بحرانی-جلوه-دادن-کشور (in Persian).
2001. See Chapters 6 and 8.
2002. Mehr News Agency, تلاش همه‌جانبه گروهک‌های منافق برای بحرانی جلوه دادن کشور ["Comprehensive efforts by hypocritical groups to portray the country as in crisis"], 22 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5614620/-تلاش-همه-جانبه-گروهک-های-منافق-برای-بحرانی-جلوه-دادن-کشور (in Persian).



The commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Taghi Osanlou © ISNA

"The enemy has been able to smuggle weapons into the country for inciting sedition and this has been met with the forceful actions of the security forces… In the recent riots, we have arrested over 100 members of anti-revolutionary groups, the [Kurdish] Democratic [Party of Iran] and the Komala [Party of Kurdistan]… Over the past month, we have seized a significant number of weapons and ammunition from groups attempting to smuggle arms into the country, and we have confiscated the equipment they intended to send to the cities of the interior."[2003]

Mohammad Taghi Osanlou proceeded to boast about the "capabilities" of the IRGC forces and their control and dominance in defeating the protesters whom he described as the "enemy". He stated:

> **"The enemy is making every effort to achieve its goals, but the important thing is that it cannot and has not succeeded. The capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran's forces in the northwest frontiers are very strong, indicating that our intelligence oversight is exceptionally high."[2004]**

In a media interview the next day, Mohammad Taghi Osanlou attributed the death of protesters and bystanders killed by the security forces, including the IRGC, in Sanandaj and Baneh in Kurdistan province,[2005] and Mahabad and Boukan in West Azerbaijan province,[2006] to "separatist terrorist grouplets". He cited as "evidence" the "confessions" of "individuals from these grouplets" arrested

2003. Asr-e Iran, ["Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters: 100 members of armed Democrat and Komala parties arrested in recent riots"], 13 November 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/866117/فرمانده-قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-بازداشت-۱۰۰-نفر-از-اعضای-احزاب-مسلح-دموکرات-و-کومله-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر (in Persian).

2004. Asr-e Iran, ["Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters: 100 members of armed Democrat and Komala parties arrested in recent riots"], 13 November 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/866117/فرمانده-قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-بازداشت-۱۰۰-نفر-از-اعضای-احزاب-مسلح-دموکرات-و-کومله-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر (in Persian).

2005. See Chapter 6.

2006. See Chapter 8.

"during the riots".[2007] The Iranian authorities have a long-standing, well-documented record of extracting "confessions" under torture and other ill-treatment to deny and distort the truth about their human rights violations.[2008] Mohammad Taghi Osanlou stated:



The commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Taghi Osanlou © Tasnim News Agency

"Separatist terrorist grouplets… conducted significant actions during the recent riots. Their forces were fully present in activities such as arson against banks… These terrorists also engaged in staging killings in Kurdish cities like Sanandaj, Mahabad, Baneh and Boukan… In the past two months, they brought into the country military weapons such as Kalashnikovs, pistols, Winchesters and even grenades, and a considerable number of the importers were arrested… We arrested some individuals from these grouplets within the country and during the riots. These individuals are now in our custody and have confessed to entering Iran to create riots and engage in staging killings."[2009]

On 18 November 2022, during the height of the lethal repression by the IRGC forces in West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, the deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, **Majid Arjmandfar**, similarly labelled the protesters as "internal rioters" and claimed, without providing evidence, that they had been "armed" by external "enemies" seeking to "disintegrate the Islamic [Republic of] Iran and create insecurity in the county".[2010] Through this framing, he sought to justify the actions of the IRGC forces as a necessary response to armed threats, while simultaneously invoking the official narrative that attributed lethal shootings to armed non-state actors.[2011]

Additionally, Majid Arjmandfar warned young people against participating in the protests, which he described as "becoming part of the enemy's army". His warning combined denial of responsibility for the use of lethal force with threats. On the one hand, despite overwhelming evidence that the IRGC forces were committing unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations, he claimed that "we do not wish to harm our own youth" and that the IRGC is showing "tolerance". Simultaneously, he used

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2007. Tasnim News Agency, سردار اصانلو: حملات سپاه تا خلع سلاح گروه‌های تروریستی ادامه می‌یابد ["General Osanlou: IRGC attacks will continue until the disarmament of terrorist groups"], 14 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/23/2804066/سردار-اصانلو-حملات-سپاه-تا-خلع-سلاح-گروه-های-تروریستی-ادامه-می-یابد (in Persian).

2008. Amnesty International, "Iran: Macabre propaganda videos feature forced 'confessions' of executed Sunni men", 17 November 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2016/11/iran-macabre-propaganda-videos-feature-forced-confessions-of-executed-sunni-men/; Amnesty International, *Trampling Humanity* (previously cited), pp. 43 and 53-56.

2009. Tasnim News Agency, سردار اصانلو: حملات سپاه تا خلع سلاح گروه‌های تروریستی ادامه می‌یابد ["General Osanlou: IRGC attacks will continue until the disarmament of terrorist groups"], 14 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/23/2804066/سردار-اصانلو-حملات-سپاه-تا-خلع-سلاح-گروه-های-تروریستی-ادامه-می-یابد (in Persian).

2010. ISNA, کشور به پشتوانه نیروی انسانی آزاداندیش رشد می‌کند ["Country develops thanks to free-thinking human resources"], 24 May 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402030301709/کشور-به-پشتوانه-نیروی-انسانی-آزاداندیش-رشد-می-کند (in Persian).

2011. Hamshahri Online, علت مدارا کردن سپاه در اغتشاشات؛ جنگ مسلح در تهران را سال‌ها دیده‌ایم ["Reason for the IRGC's tolerance during the riots: We have witnessed armed conflict in Tehran for years"], 18 November 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/720997/علت-مدارا-کردن-سپاه-در-اغتشاشات-جنگ-مسلح-در-تهران-را-سال-ها (in Persian).

violent language, noting that the IRGC's "intention is to cut off the head of the sedition".[2012] He stated:



The deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Majid Arjmandfar © IRNA

"The enemy has admitted to arming internal rioters… Young people must… not become part of the enemy's army… The reason for the IRGC's tolerance is that a significant number of young people are unaware of the situation… We do not wish to harm our own youth… Our intention now is to cut off the head of the sedition."[2013]

10.3.4(II)(ii) Commander and deputy commander of Najaf Ashraf Headquarters

During a gathering of Basij agents on 25 September 2022, **Kourosh Asiabani**, the then deputy commander of IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, the IRGC regional headquarters overseeing the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, reiterated the official narrative, smearing the protesters as "rioters" and "foot soldiers of the enemies of Islam and the Revolution". By this time, the security forces, including the IRGC, had already killed at least six protesters and bystanders and injured others during protest dispersals and in militarized areas in Kermanshah province. Kourosh Asiabani stated:

> **"Undoubtedly, the incidents occurring in the country today are accompanied by the planning of Zionists and Americans, and those who take to the streets are in a way the foot soldiers of the enemies of Islam and the Revolution."[2014]**

Consistent with the rhetoric of the IRGC and FARAJA officials in Kurdish areas, he further attributed protests by members of the oppressed Kurdish minority in Iran to armed Iranian Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, in an apparent effort to justify their repression. He stated:

> **"Behind the recent riots in the country, Zionists, *monafeghin* [hypocrites] and [members of] the Komala [Party of Kurdistan] and the [Kurdish] Democratic [Party of Iran] have been present… Recent riots are the conspiracy of the enemies of this [Islamic Republic] system against the nation and the Islamic Revolution of Iran."[2015]**

Kourosh Asiabani also questioned the adherence of women and girls who were removing and burning their headscarves to Islam and the Quran. This framing exposed women and girls defying compulsory

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2012. Hamshahri Online, علت مدارا کردن سپاه در اغتشاشات؛ جنگ مسلح در تهران را سال‌ها دیده‌ایم ["Reason for the IRGC's tolerance during the riots: We have witnessed armed conflict in Tehran for years"], 18 November 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/720997/علت-مدارا-کردن-سپاه-در-اغتشاشات-جنگ-مسلح-در-تهران-را-سال-ها (in Persian).

2013. Hamshahri Online, علت مدارا کردن سپاه در اغتشاشات؛ جنگ مسلح در تهران را سال‌ها دیده‌ایم ["Reason for the IRGC's tolerance during the riots: We have witnessed armed conflict in Tehran for years"], 18 November 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/720997/علت-مدارا-کردن-سپاه-در-اغتشاشات-جنگ-مسلح-در-تهران-را-سال-ها (in Persian).

2014. Rasa News, حزب کومله در طول جنگ تحمیلی علیه ملت ایران جنایت‌های فراوانی مرتکب شد ["Komala Party committed numerous atrocities against the Iranian nation during the imposed war"], 25 September 2022, https://rasanews.ir/fa/news/720103/حزب-کومله-در-طول-جنگ-تحمیلی-علیه-ملت-ایران-جنایت-های-فراوانی-مرتکب-شد (in Persian).

2015. Rasa News, حزب کومله در طول جنگ تحمیلی علیه ملت ایران جنایت‌های فراوانی مرتکب شد ["Komala Party committed numerous atrocities against the Iranian nation during the imposed war"], 25 September 2022, https://rasanews.ir/fa/news/720103/حزب-کومله-در-طول-جنگ-تحمیلی-علیه-ملت-ایران-جنایت-های-فراوانی،-مرتکب-شد (in Persian).

veiling to further threats of harassment and violence from state actors and non-state vigilantes who perceive themselves as guardians of Islamic norms. He stated: "In Islam, veiling is a mandatory command, and can someone who burns her own headscarf and cuts her hair in the midst of rioters be considered a Muslim and a follower of the Quran?"[2016]

On 10 October 2022, the then commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, **Mohammad Nazar Azimi**, attended a seminar called the Flag Bearers of Unity and Insight, held in the prayer and assembly hall of the Ansar Al-Rasoul Brigade in Javanroud. The event coincided with growing calls for coordinated protests across the country on 12 October 2022.

During this event, Mohammad Nazar Azimi celebrated the victory of the Islamic Republic over its "enemies": "Despite all complex conspiracies by enemies, Iran and its Islamic nation successfully progresses and thrives on its path."[2017]

The Iranian authorities including IRGC officials use the terms "people" or "Islamic nation" to refer to the security forces, including the IRGC. With this framing, they seek to mispresent the crimes under international law and other human rights violations committed by the security forces as serving the collective good or national interest.

While Mohammad Nazar Azimi's statement on 10 October 2022 did not explicitly mention the role of the IRGC forces in Kermanshah province to suppress the protests, given that the event was taking place against the backdrop of ongoing lethal protest crackdowns, his statement can be perceived as expressing satisfaction at the conduct of the IRGC forces in protecting the Islamic Republic system from "complex conspiracies" plotted by its "enemies" and his encouragement to continue in the same way.

Over a week later, on 19 October 2022, Kourosh Asiabani expressed his "gratitude and appreciation" for the "vital role that commanders and guardians of security had performed" in the context of "recent incidents and events". His statement came after another wave of violent crackdowns on protests, particularly in Kermanshah and Salas-e Babajani,[2018] and in advance of calls for mass protests on 26 October 2022, marking the 40th day since the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. Consistent with the official rhetoric of senior IRGC officials, he framed the security forces repressing the protests as the "people" stating:

2016. Rasa News, حزب کومله در طول جنگ تحمیلی علیه ملت ایران جنایت‌های فراوانی مرتکب شد ["Komala Party committed numerous atrocities against the Iranian nation during the imposed war"], 25 September 2022, https://rasanews.ir/fa/news/720103/حزب-کومله-در-طول-جنگ-تحمیلی-علیه-ملت-ایران-جنایت-های-فراوانی-مرتکب-شد (in Persian).

2017. IRNA, امام جمعه جوانرود: باید از تفرقه دوری کرد ["Friday Imam of Javanroud: We must avoid division"], 10 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84908629/امام-جمعه-جوانرود-باید-از-تفرقه-دوری-کرد (in Persian).

2018. See sections 7.2 and 7.5.



The deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Kourosh Asiabani © ISNA

"During recent events, we witnessed that the people [security forces] in Paveh, Javanroud, Salas-e Babajani and Ravansar once again demonstrated their loyalty to the principles of Islam and the Islamic Republic system… The devout, enlightened and insightful people… with their wise stance in support of the leadership and the Islamic system, again thwarted the efforts and conspiracies of the enemies and their mercenaries with full vigilance. They rejected all the sworn enemies of this system and reaffirmed their commitment to… protecting and preserving the system and complying with the Supreme Leader."[2019]

In the aftermath of the mass unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations during November 2022, when security forces in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, killed at least seven protesters and bystanders and injured others during protest dispersals and in militarized areas on 20 and 21 November 2022, Mohammad Nazar Azimi expressed praise for the IRGC forces.

On 22 December 2022, he appreciated all the "armed forces and military personnel for their steadfastness against the enemies' conspiracies". Like other officials, he portrayed the protests as a "war" on the Islamic Republic that was successfully quelled by the security forces, and he noted that the security forces deserved rewards for their "service".[2020] He stated:



The commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Nazar Azimi © IRNA

"In these riots, the enemies designed and implemented a war, but, due to the presence of people [security forces] on the scene, they could not achieve their goals… [I] appreciate all armed forces and military personnel for their steadfastness against the enemies' conspiracies.[2021]

2019. Taghrib News Agency, امنیت پایدار در اورامانات مرهون اعتماد مردم اهل سنت این منطقه به نظام است ["Sustainable security in Uramanat is rooted in the trust of Sunni population in this region"], 19 October 2022, https://www.taghribnews.com/fa/news/569994/امنیت-پایدار-اورامانات-مرهون-اعتماد-مردم-اهل-سنت-این-منطقه-نظام (in Persian).

2020. Khabarban, استان کرمانشاه نیازمند کارهای زیربنایی و خدمت‌گذاری دلسوزانه است ["Kermanshah province needs infrastructure development and compassionate service"], 22 December 2022, https://36677180.khabarban.com (in Persian).

2021. Khabarban, استان کرمانشاه نیازمند کارهای زیربنایی و خدمت‌گذاری دلسوزانه است ["Kermanshah province needs infrastructure development and compassionate service"], 22 December 2022, https://36677180.khabarban.com (in Persian).

A year later, on 19 December 2023, in an event held at the Logistics and Support Centre of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, Mohammad Nazar Azimi again asserted his narrative of control, approval and accomplishment and praised the suppression of the protests as an act of defending "the Revolution based on God's religion". He stated:

> **"During the riots, some individuals were influenced by the enemy and took to the streets after psychological warfare was launched. However, there were those who felt a sense of duty and came to the scene to defend the Revolution based on God's religion… We are the flag-bearers of defending God's religion under the eminent leadership of the Supreme Leader, and we will continue despite the enemies' wishes."[2022]**

10.3.4(III) KURDISTAN PROVINCE

On 20 September 2022, a day after the first four victims of the lethal crackdown were shot and unlawfully killed by the security forces in three cities – Dehgolan, Divandareh and Saqqez – in Kurdistan province, the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, **Sadegh Hosseini**, made inflammatory statements. He issued warnings against joining the protests, describing them as part of the "enemies' conspiracy", and emphasized his expectation for the security forces, whom he referred to as the "people", to "neutralize" the protests with "patience and perseverance".[2023] He stated:



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Sadegh Hosseini © Ramvar Ghaffari / Tasnim News Agency

> **"The enemies of the system exploited this accident [the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini] to attack the religious beliefs of the people and attempted to create chaos in our country by capitalizing on this event, but fortunately, they were unsuccessful… We witnessed a series of illegal gatherings in several cities in the province… We are hopeful that with the patience and perseverance of the people, this conspiracy by the enemies will also be neutralized."[2024]**

Several days later, on 24 September 2022, Sadegh Hosseini claimed that the protesters possessed firearms, despite all evidence to the contrary, in an apparent attempt to justify the deadly repression. He stated:

> **"In the context of recent gatherings, many firearms have been discovered among the rioters and one person was arrested who was armed at the scene and had at their home a Winchester [rifle] and five**

2022. Mersad News, همه توطئه‌های دشمنان در منطقه شکست خورده است ["All the enemies' conspiracies in the region have been defeated"], 19 December 2023, https://mersadnews.ir/public/story/همه-توطئه‌های-دشمنان-در-منطقه-شکست-خورده-است (in Persian).
2023. Mehr News Agency, حوادث اخیر زیبنده مردم انقلابی کردستان نیست ["Recent incidents are not reflective of the revolutionary people of Kurdistan"], 20 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5593780/حوادث-اخیر-زیبنده-مردم-انقلابی-کردستان-نیست (in Persian).
2024. Mehr News Agency, حوادث اخیر زیبنده مردم انقلابی کردستان نیست ["Recent incidents are not reflective of the revolutionary people of Kurdistan"], 20 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5593780/حوادث-اخیر-زیبنده-مردم-انقلابی-کردستان-نیست (in Persian).

different models of mobile phones with which they sent news to hostile media outlets online."[2025]

The juxtaposition of firearms and mobile phones highlights the commander's repressive stance on peaceful acts such as filming and sharing videos with the outside world.[2026] While portraying the protesters as dangerous, in the same statement, Sadegh Hosseini attempted to discredit the protesters by downplaying the scale of the protests, stating that, "contrary to the exaggeration by hostile media, the number of people present at recent gatherings in the centre of Kurdistan province did not even reach 200 individuals."[2027]

Two days later, in a state-orchestrated rally held in Sanandaj to "appreciate the efforts of police and military forces in confronting rioters",[2028] Sadegh Hosseini praised the crackdown, without any mention of the serious human rights violations committed by his forces, stating, "The people in Kurdistan neutralized the sedition of recent days with vigilance and insight."[2029] He added: "Enemies brought some individuals into the field through round-the-clock propaganda to impose difficulties on the system and the Revolution, but you, the informed people, defeated them."[2030]

2025. Tasnim News Agency, روایت فرمانده سپاه کردستان از تجمعات اخیر ["Account of the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan of recent gatherings"], 24 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/02/2778513/روایت-فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-از-تجمعات-اخیر-دستگیری-یک-آشوبگر-مسلح-به-وینچستر (in Persian).

2026. Videos sent from Iran during the protest period captured the human rights violations committed by the security forces against protesters.

2027. Tasnim News Agency, روایت فرمانده سپاه کردستان از تجمعات اخیر ["Account of the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan of recent gatherings"], 24 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/02/2778513/روایت-فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-از-تجمعات-اخیر-دستگیری-یک-آشوبگر-مسلح-به-وینچستر (in Persian).

2028. Mehr News Agency, نه بلند کردستانی‌ها به تجزیه‌طلبان و اغتشاش‌گران ["People of Kurdistan say a resounding 'no' to separatists and rioters"], 26 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5597635/نه-بلند-کردستانی-ها-به-تجزیه-طلبان-و-اغتشاش-گران (in Persian).

2029. Mehr News Agency, نه بلند کردستانی‌ها به تجزیه‌طلبان و اغتشاش‌گران ["People of Kurdistan say a resounding 'no' to separatists and rioters"], 26 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5597635/نه-بلند-کردستانی-ها-به-تجزیه-طلبان-و-اغتشاش-گران (in Persian).

2030. IRNA, فرمانده سپاه بیت‌المقدس کردستان: جوانان از توطئه دشمنان آگاه کنند ["Commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Corps of Kurdistan: Young people must be aware of the enemies' conspiracies"], 26 September 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84898013/فرمانده-سپاه-بیت-المقدس-کردستان-جوانان-از-توطئه-دشمنان-آگاه (in Persian).



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Sadegh Hosseini, delivering a speech on 26 September 2022, in which he praised the crackdown on the protests, despite mounting evidence of serious human rights violations by his forces. © Mehr News Agency[2031]

Shortly afterwards, on 2 October 2022, in advance of calls for coordinated nationwide protests on 8 October 2022, Sadegh Hosseini stated: "We must not succumb to the blackmail and psychological warfare of the enemies, because in sensitive scenes, taking a position is crucial."[2032]

He also reiterated the official narrative of accusing armed Kurdish opposition as fuelling the protests and described the protesters as "a few deceived individuals who have damaged public property and shown disrespect towards Islamic sanctities and values."[2033]

On 12 October 2022, in the aftermath of another wave of unlawful killings by the security forces, particularly on 8 October in Sanandaj, where four protesters were unlawfully killed,[2034] Sadegh Hosseini flatly "denied the killing of young people", describing such reports as "rumours by hostile media".

2031. Mehr News Agency, نه بلند کردستانی‌ها به تجزیه‌طلبان و اغتشاش‌گران ["People of Kurdistan say a resounding 'no' to separatists and rioters"], 26 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5597635/نه-بلند-کردستانی-ها-به-تجزیه-طلبان-و-اغتشاش-گران (in Persian).
2032. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده سپاه استان کردستان: تسلیم جنگ روانی دشمنان نمی‌شویم ["Commander of Provincial Corps of Kurdistan: We will not surrender to the enemies' psychological warfare"], 2 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/10/2782757/فرمانده-سپاه-استان-کردستان-تسلیم-جنگ-روانی-دشمنان-نمی-شویم (in Persian).
2033. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده سپاه استان کردستان: تسلیم جنگ روانی دشمنان نمی‌شویم ["Commander of Provincial Corps of Kurdistan: We will not surrender to the enemies' psychological warfare"], 2 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/10/2782757/فرمانده-سپاه-استان-کردستان-تسلیم-جنگ-روانی-دشمنان-نمی-شویم (in Persian).
2034. See section 6.2.1.

Instead, he solely focused on the death of a Basij agent working in the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division, Gholamreza Bamadi, whom he said was killed by eight "anti-revolutionary agents during riots".[2035]

In an apparent effort to portray the protests as dangerous developments meriting a forceful response, Sadegh Hosseini also again claimed that the protests were orchestrated by armed Kurdish opposition groups based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and involved armed activities. He stated:

> **"Twenty days before this accident [the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini], a meeting was held in the [Kurdistan] Region of Iraq, about the creation of insecurity in Iran. The [Kurdish] Democratic [Party of Iran], the Komala [Party of Kurdistan] and other parties each declared their readiness in one way, saying, 'we will go armed to Iran and Kurdistan', and the death of [Zhina] Mahsa Amini was just an excuse."[2036]**

On 30 October 2022, Sadegh Hosseini renewed his warnings against joining the protesters, specifically addressing this time school students, who had a noticeable presence in the Woman Life Freedom uprising. His speech, given at a school in Sanandaj, came shortly after another wave of unlawful killings by security forces during protests marking the 40th day since the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini.

Across the country, the security forces, including the IRGC, had by this time unlawfully killed at least 39 children during protest dispersals and in militarized areas. Without any mention of these unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations committed by the security forces, he proudly stated that despite "the agenda of Westerners… security is established in [Kurdistan] province and the whole country."

2035. See section 5.3.1. See also Tasnim News Agency, فیلم روایتی از شهید مدافع امنیت غلامرضا بامدی ["A film depicting the story of martyr Gholamreza Bamadi, defender of security"], 1 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/10/2793898/-فیلم-روایتی-از-شهید-مدافع-امنیت-غلامرضا-بامدی-پاسداری-که-همیشه-آرزوی-شهادت-داشت (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ناگفته‌هایی از پشت پرده اغتشاشات کومله و دموکرات ["Untold stories behind the scenes of Komala and Democratic party riots"], 12 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/20/2787170/-ناگفته-هایی-از-پشت-پرده-اغتشاشات-کومله-و-دموکرات-شهریور-گفته-بودند-مسلحانه-به-ایران-می-آییم (in Persian).

2036. Tasnim News Agency, ناگفته‌هایی از پشت پرده اغتشاشات کومله و دموکرات ["Untold stories behind the scenes of Komala and Democrat party riots"], 12 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/20/2787170/-ناگفته-هایی-از-پشت-پرده-اغتشاشات-کومله-و-دموکرات-شهریور-گفته-بودند-مسلحانه-به-ایران-می-آییم (in Persian).



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Sadegh Hosseini, delivering a speech at the Imam Shafei high school in Sanandaj on 30 October 2022. In his speech, Sadegh Hosseini renewed his warnings against joining the protesters, specifically addressing school students. © IRNA

"Social media is full of false news. In these circumstances, be wary of enemy plots and do not be deceived by them. Strive to emerge victorious in this war… Although a few individuals acted out of ignorance and some carried out the agenda of Westerners in recent events, the 80-million-strong population of the country supports the system and the Revolution and, today, security is established in the province and the country."[2037]

A couple of days later, on 2 November 2022, the then deputy commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, **Alireza Madanifar (Madani)**, dehumanized protesters as "impurities" and "seditionists" and invoked themes of sacrifice and strength to rally the IRGC forces to continue the repression resolutely. He stated:

2037. IRNA, فرمانده سپاه کردستان: دانش‌آموزان مراقب توطئه‌های دشمنان باشند ["Commander of the Provincial Corps of Kurdistan: Students should be aware of enemy plots"], 30 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84927543/فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-دانش-آموزان-مراقب-توطئه-های-دشمنان-باشند (in Persian).



The deputy commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Alireza Madanifar (Madani) © International Quran News Agency

"In the sedition of the end times, impurities will surface, but we stand against the seditionists with all our strength… In these times, the pure will be distinguished from the impure, and the true men from the false. The seditionists cannot weaken the Islamic Revolution, and those who get involved in sedition should know that they are destroying themselves for something fruitless. This Revolution has a guardian and is invulnerable."[2038]

On 19 November 2022, as unlawful killings reached their peak during protests marking the anniversary of the 2019 protests, Sadegh Hosseini gave a speech in which he adopted phrases that were laden with violent connotations. His speech marked the Basij week, extending "congratulations to all Basijis".

Sadegh Hosseini dehumanized the protesters and their supporters as "devils" and "mercenaries" who are "taking up arms… attacking innocent people… and harming lives", despite mounting evidence that those using firearms and carrying out killings belonged to the security forces.[2039] He stated:

> **"All the devils have formed a front against the Islamic system of Iran to create disruptions within this system and prevent the progress and development of the country and along this line, they support anti-revolutionary groups. We have witnessed their mercenaries taking up arms in some parts of the country and attacking innocent individuals… The enemies support rioters and harm the lives, property and businesses of the people."[2040]**

Sadegh Hosseini also accused protesters of desecrating mosques and the Quran, without providing any evidence. He stated: "The enemies have put desecrating mosques and the Quran and insults to the holy Islamic religion on their agenda. However, they should know that the religion of Islam is victorious."[2041]

Throughout his speech, Sadegh Hosseini labelled the protesters as "enemies" while characterizing the security forces and their supporters as the "Iranian nation". Standing on a stage in front of a banner reading "we stand till the end", he declared that "the enemies will take their dreams [of overthrowing the Islamic Republic] to their graves".

2038. Tasnim News Agency, جانشین سپاه کردستان: حادثه تروریستی شاهچراغ حاصل فتنه‌های عوامل خارجی و داخلی است ["Deputy commander of the IRGC in Kurdistan province: The terrorist attack at Shah Cheragh is the result of internal and external conspiracies"], 2 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/11/2797645/جانشین-سپاه-کردستان-حادثه-تروریستی-شاهچراغ-ع-حاصل-فتنه-های-عوامل-خارجی-و-داخلی-است (in Persian).

2039. Mehr News Agency, ملت ایران با وحدت و همدلی از امنیت خود دفاع می‌کند ["People of Iran defend their security with unity and solidarity"], 19 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5635287/ملت-ایران-با-وحدت-و-همدلی-از-امنیت-خودش-دفاع-می-کند (in Persian).

2040. Mehr News Agency, ملت ایران با وحدت و همدلی از امنیت خود دفاع می‌کند ["People of Iran defend their security with unity and solidarity"], 19 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5635287/ملت-ایران-با-وحدت-و-همدلی-از-امنیت-خودش-دفاع-می-کند (in Persian).

2041. Mehr News Agency, ملت ایران با وحدت و همدلی از امنیت خود دفاع می‌کند ["People of Iran defend their security with unity and solidarity"], 19 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5635287/ملت-ایران-با-وحدت-و-همدلی-از-امنیت-خودش-دفاع-می-کند (in Persian).



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Sadegh Hosseini, delivering a speech in Sanandaj on 19 November 2022 © Mehr News Agency

"What our enemies have dreamt will never come true, and they will take their dreams [of overthrowing the Islamic Republic] to their graves and the Iranian nation will defend its security with unity… The enemies… must know that in battlefield, the noble Iranian nation has been and will continue to be victorious."[2042]

In the following weeks, as protests continued, Sadegh Hosseini kept mobilizing and encouraging his subordinates to persist in their repression.

In a speech on 29 November 2022, he once again demonized the protesters as "devils" and instructed his subordinates to "remain in the field" to "neutralize the enemy's plots". He stated:

> **"Over the past two months… all the devils gathered and waged a cognitive and hybrid war against the country and the [Islamic Republic] system… Today, it is our duty to remain in the field. Vandalizing public property harms society and benefits and pleases the enemy… Remain as Basijis, recognize your value and, with understanding the enemy and timing, neutralize the enemy's plots."[2043]**

He also reiterated the official narrative of denial, attributing killings to "anti-revolutionary elements". He stated: "Anti-revolutionary elements aimed to create and spread fear and terror in society through a project of staging killings."[2044]

From December 2022 onwards, as protests subsided after months of lethal repression, Sadegh Hosseini and Alireza Madanifar (Madani) continued to use dehumanizing rhetoric to endorse and praise the lethal crackdown and celebrate the system's strategy of self-preservation.

On 18 December 2022, Alireza Madanifar (Madani) described the crackdown as the "neutralization of sedition", praising the Basij for their role. He stated:

2042. Mehr News Agency, ملت ایران با وحدت و همدلی از امنیت خود دفاع می‌کند ["People of Iran defend their security with unity and solidarity"], 19 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5635287/ملت-ایران-با-وحدت-و-همدلی-از-امنیت-خودش-دفاع-می-کند (in Persian).
2043. Defa Press, بصیرت و آگاهی مردم دشمن را ناامید کرد ["Insight and awareness of the people made the enemy hopeless"], 29 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/558711/بصیرت-و-آگاهی-مردم-دشمن-را-ناامید-کرد (in Persian).
2044. Defa Press, بصیرت و آگاهی مردم دشمن را ناامید کرد ["Insight and awareness of the people made the enemy hopeless"], 29 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/558711/بصیرت-و-آگاهی-مردم-دشمن-را-ناامید-کرد (in Persian).



The deputy commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests, Alireza Madanifar (Madani), delivering a speech in Sanandaj on 18 December 2022 © Mehr News Agency

"The Kurdistani Basijis have always been and continue to be steadfast... During times of sedition, we shall witness the separation of the good from the bad and the pure from the impure... In the recent riots, we witnessed the system's kindness... The disturbance and sedition that erupted in recent months would have led to the collapse of any other country, but due to the righteousness of the sacred Islamic system, we have witnessed the neutralization of these seditions... The Basijis have proven that they are always ready to make significant contributions to the country's advancement and dignity at any given time."[2045]

On 3 January 2023, as months of lethal repression brought the protests to an end, Sadegh Hosseini once again described the security forces as "the people" and victoriously evoked violent imagery in describing the crushing of the protests. He was reported saying:

> **"Timely engagement of various segments of the people in recent events and condemning the conspiracies delivered a steel fist to the mouth of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution… The people defeated the counter-revolutionaries and the United States in the recent sedition."[2046]**

In another statement on 25 February 2023, Sadegh Hosseini persisted with the narrative of praise and accomplishment, without any mention of the serious human rights violations committed by his subordinates. He stated:

> **"By God's grace, these days, stable security is established in the [Kurdistan] province… Recent seditions have been overcome… thanks to God's will, the wisdom of the Supreme Leader, the efforts of all security and military agencies, and the vigilance of the people. The IRGC is proud to have fulfilled its duty in this regard."[2047]**

In a similar vein, on 26 May 2023, he proudly stated:

> **"Fortunately, despite the enemy's conspiracy to create chaos and disorder in the country, the Iranian people were able to neutralize this plot just as they have with other conspiracies. This has led to another victory for the Iranian nation."[2048]**

2045. Mehr News Agency, ["Truth of Iran's Islamic system was proven to the world in the recent sedition"], 18 December 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5658393/حقانیت-نظام-اسلامی-ایران-در-فتنه-اخیر-برای-جهانیان-ثابت-شد (in Persian).

2046. Tasnim News Agency, ["Commander of the Kurdistan IRGC: Martyr Soleimani was a driving force behind pure Islam and opposition to global arrogance"], 3 January 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/10/13/2830816/فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-شهید-سلیمانی-جریان-ساز-اسلام-ناب-و-ضداستکبار-بود (in Persian).

2047. Mehr News Agency, ["The IRGC is a symbol of Iran's honour and a pioneer in defending revolutionary values"], 25 February 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5718504/سپاه-نماد-افتخار-ایران-و-پیشگام-در-دفاع-از-ارزش-های-انقلابی-است (in Persian).

2048. Hawzah News Agency, ["Enemy sought to transform the ideology of the youth during last year's riots"], 26 May 2023, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1088778/دشمن-در-اغتشاشات-سال-گذشته-به-دنبال-استحاله-فکری-جوانان-بود (in Persian).

10.3.4(IV) KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

On 20 October 2022, despite overwhelming evidence regarding the commission of unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations by his subordinates, the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, Bahman Reyhani, attributed the responsibility for the deaths of protesters to "enemies".[2049] Additionally, he continued to invoke religious and nationalist sentiments to rally and characterized the protests as both an attack on religion and a scheme by "enemies" to "turn Iran into the next Syria", evoking the risk of the outbreak of armed conflict. He also demonized the protesters as "rioters" listening to "the words of the devils". He stated:



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah at the time of the 2022 protests, Bahman Reyhani © IRNA

"Certainly, the enemies were not upset by the death of Ms [Zhina] Mahsa Amini; rather, they were pleased and resorted to staging killings to keep the atmosphere heated and turn Iran into the next Syria…

"We must stay alert because, unlike previous times, they have targeted religion from day one. In this environment, we have a great responsibility, the first of which is not to listen to the words of the devils."[2050]

Several days later, on 25 October 2022, Bahman Reyhani once again characterized the protesters as enemies of "God's religion" and the forces under his command as "the Army of God's religion" in an apparent effort to frame the repression as a religious duty for his subordinates. He also triumphantly declared that "this sedition has ended with the guidance of the Supreme Leader". He stated:

> **"We must view these days like Ashoura[2051] with the same confrontations occurring now as those against the army of God's religion back then. In the recent incidents, the enemy aimed to extinguish the light of God's religion. While in previous events they created riots under various pretexts, in the recent riots, they targeted the nation's religion and beliefs… Enemies are always trying to weaken God's religion and harm the sacred Islamic Republic system through this. However, this sedition also ended with the guidance of the Supreme Leader and the religious commitment and insight of the people."[2052]**

On 6 November 2022, Bahman Reyhani once again framed the repression as a divine battle on behalf of "God" and "Islam" against "evil" forces that he said were using "deceptive lies to target people's

2049. See Tasnim News Agency, عملکرد بازاریان کرمانشاه در اغتشاشات اخیر قابل تقدیر است ["Performance of Kermanshah merchants in the recent riots is commendable"], 20 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/28/2790974/عملکرد-بازاریان-کرمانشاه-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-قابل-تقدیر-است (in Persian).
2050. Tasnim News Agency, عملکرد بازاریان کرمانشاه در اغتشاشات اخیر قابل تقدیر است ["Performance of Kermanshah merchants in the recent riots is commendable"], 20 October 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/28/2790974/عملکرد-بازاریان-کرمانشاه-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-قابل-تقدیر-است (in Persian).
2051. Ashoura refers to the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE between Imam Hossein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Umayyad caliph Yazid. The authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran believe in a school of Shia Islam which views the battle by Imam Hossein as a struggle against oppression and tyranny and mark the day with various rituals.
2052. Mehr News Agency, دشمنان به دنبال از بین بردن باورهای دینی مردم هستند ["Enemies seek to destroy the religious beliefs of the people"], 25 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5616970/دشمنان-به-دنبال-از-بین-بردن-باورهای-دینی-مردم-هستند (in Persian).

emotions and draw young people into the streets".[2053] Additionally, he sanctified the security forces carrying out the lethal repression as embodiments of "Islam", stating, "Islam will continue its combat against the enemy".[2054]

In the following days, Bahman Reyhani repeatedly emphasized the inevitability of the "enemy's defeat" due to "the strength of the armed forces and the wise leadership of the Supreme Leader".[2055] He also proudly declared that "for 43 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has thwarted and neutralized all the strategies of enemies".[2056]

On 16 November 2022, as mass unlawful killings by security forces, including the IRGC, surged in response to protests marking the anniversary of November 2019 protests, the deputy commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, **Masoud Ghanbari**, characterized the protests as a "hybrid warfare" involving riots which were instigated by "enemies" through social media.[2057] Like his immediate superior, Bahman Reyhani, Masoud Ghanbari equated the protests to "a conspiracy… to harm Islam and the Revolution",[2058] and praised the security forces for "standing firm, with God's help, against the conspiracies of enemies."[2059]

Additionally, he expressed appreciation for the "prominent role" of the Basij on various fronts and their "hard efforts", as a result of which, he said, "the enemies have reached the conclusion that the Basij and the Iranian people are not, and will not be, separate from each other."[2060]



The deputy commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah at the time of the 2022 protests, Masoud Ghanbari © IRNA

"Regarding the recent riots… today the enemies tried to harm Islam and the Revolution through a hybrid war designed against us on social media. However, the insightful people of Islamic Iran stood firm, with God's help, against their conspiracies. Through the hard efforts of the Basijis, the enemies have reached the conclusion that the Basij and the Iranian people are not, and will not be, separate from each other."[2061]

2053. Mehr News Agency, دشمنان از وجود ایرانی قوی و مقتدر هراس دارند ["Enemies fear a strong and powerful Iran"], 6 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5625875/دشمنان-از-وجود-ایرانی-قوی-و-مقتدر-هراس-دارند (in Persian).
2054. Mehr News Agency, دشمنان از وجود ایرانی قوی و مقتدر هراس دارند ["Enemies fear a strong and powerful Iran"], 6 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5625875/دشمنان-از-وجود-ایرانی-قوی-و-مقتدر-هراس-دارند (in Persian).
2055. Mehr News Agency, لزوم ساماندهی فضای مجازی ["Necessity of regulating cyberspace"], 7 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5626622/لزوم-ساماندهی-فضای-مجازی (in Persian).
2056. Mehr News Agency, بصیرت مردم نقشه دشمنان برای ایجاد ناامنی در کشور را ناکام گذاشت ["People's insight thwarted the enemies' plot to create insecurity in the country"], 13 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5631394/بصیرت-مردم-نقشه-دشمنان-برای-ایجاد-ناامنی-در-کشور-را-ناکام-گذاشت (in Persian).
2057. Defa Press, بسیج و ملت ایران جدا از هم نبوده و نخواهند بود ["Basij and the Iranian nation have never been separate and never will be"], 16 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/556388/بسیج-و-ملت-ایران-جدا-از-هم-نبوده-و-نخواهند-بود (in Persian).
2058. Defa Press, بسیج و ملت ایران جدا از هم نبوده و نخواهند بود ["Basij and the Iranian nation have never been separate and never will be"], 16 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/556388/بسیج-و-ملت-ایران-جدا-از-هم-نبوده-و-نخواهند-بود (in Persian).
2059. Defa Press, بسیج و ملت ایران جدا از هم نبوده و نخواهند بود ["Basij and the Iranian nation have never been separate and never will be"], 16 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/556388/بسیج-و-ملت-ایران-جدا-از-هم-نبوده-و-نخواهند-بود (in Persian).
2060. Defa Press, بسیج و ملت ایران جدا از هم نبوده و نخواهند بود ["Basij and the Iranian nation have never been separate and never will be"], 16 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/556388/بسیج-و-ملت-ایران-جدا-از-هم-نبوده-و-نخواهند-بود (in Persian).
2061. Defa Press, بسیج و ملت ایران جدا از هم نبوده و نخواهند بود ["Basij and the Iranian nation have never been separate and never will be"], 16 November 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/556388/بسیج-و-ملت-ایران-جدا-از-هم-نبوده-و-نخواهند-بود (in Persian).

On 19 November 2022, Bahman Reyhani similarly praised the Basij forces for "confronting the seditionists" and "protecting the county against threats".[2062]

On 26 November 2022, following the unlawful killing of at least 82 protesters and bystanders in November 2022 across the country including seven in Javanroud, Kermanshah province, and despite overwhelming evidence of crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed by the Basij forces, Bahman Reyhani stated: "In the recent events in the country, despite all the malicious actions of the enemies, Basijis remained within the bounds of ethics."[2063]

Meanwhile, he demonized the protesters as "internal enemies", stating:



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah at the time of the 2022 protests, Bahman Reyhani, delivering a speech at a gathering of Basij members in Kermanshah on 26 November 2022 © Yahya Biabadi / Mehr News Agency

"Today, internal enemies, who have handed their faith over to the enemy, become puppets of the Saudis, and have martyrized people and military forces in a manner similar to ISIS [Islamic State armed group]… Both internal and foreign enemies have exerted every effort in recent days to disintegrate and subdue the Islamic [Republic] system and to separate the people from the Supreme Leader. However, the Iranian people stood firm, demonstrating knowledge and insight."[2064]

On 5 March 2023, several months after the crushing of the protests, Bahman Reyhani reiterated the official narrative of victory, misrepresenting the lethal repression as a successful effort to defeat

2062. Mehr News Agency, تفکر و فرهنگ بسیجی راهگشای مشکلات کشور است ["Basiji mindset and culture are key to solving the country's problems"], 19 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5635419/تفکر-و-فرهنگ-بسیجی-راهگشای-مشکلات-کشور-است (in Persian).
2063. ISNA, بسیجیان به روشنگری پرداخته و توطئه‌های دشمنان را بیان کنند ["Basij members should engage in awareness-raising and expose the enemies' conspiracies"], 26 November 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401090502788/بسیجیان-به-روشنگری-پرداخته-و-توطئه-های-دشمنان-را-بیان-کنند (in Persian).
2064. Mehr News Agency, حضور بسیجیان همواره خنثی کننده نقشه‌های دشمنان بوده است ["Presence of Basij members has always neutralised the enemies' plans"], 26 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5639989/حضور-بسیجیان-همواره-خنثی-کننده-نقشه-های-دشمنان-بوده-است (in Persian).

enemies who sought to destroy "Islam and the Revolution" and "harm the [Islamic Republic] system". He portrayed the security forces as performing legitimate duties, stating:

> **"The enemies exploited the death of [Zhina] Mahsa Amini to advance their goals of destroying Islam and the Revolution. They attempted to create conflicts between the police and families to not only distract the police from their primary responsibilities but also to turn families against the police."[2065]**

10.3.4(V) WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

Official statements by the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan at the time of the 2022 protests, **Habib Shahsavari**, calling for and justifying the repression of protesters by his subordinates increasingly appeared on state media from late October 2022 onwards when the use of lethal force by the security forces, including the IRGC, escalated in West Azerbaijan province, resulting in the unlawful killing of at least nine protesters and bystanders in October 2022 and at least 22 in November 2022.[2066]

On 31 October 2022, Habib Shahsavari labelled the protests as a "religious war", which he claimed the "enemy" ignited, using "Mahsa/Zhina Amini as a riot code… due to her possessing five characteristics: being a woman, a Kurd, a student, a youth, and a Sunni Muslim." Habib Shahsavari then proceeded to state that "all efforts of the IRGC are aimed at ensuring the complete security of the country's borders and the [security] of the province."[2067]

In his statement, Habib Shahsavari also asserted that Iran International, a Persian-language media outlet based outside Iran, was "fuelling the fire of riots" and dismissed their reports as "falsehoods". The outlet had been widely covering the protests, as well as the crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed by the security forces.[2068]

On 16 November 2022, amid a wave of unlawful killings during coordinated protests commemorating the November 2019 demonstrations, Habib Shahsavari escalated his rhetoric, warning protesters, whom he referred to as "separatists and terrorists", that the "Shohada [Provincial] Corps [of West Azerbaijan] will confront those who disrupt security in the province with absolute decisiveness" and without "engaging in any niceties". Consistent with the official strategy of denial, he also demonized protesters as "rioters who… murder people" despite overwhelming evidence that the security forces were responsible for the death of protesters and bystanders. He stated:

2065. Mehr News Agency, بصیرت مردم همواره نقشه‌های دشمنان را خنثی کرده است ["People's insight has always thwarted the enemies' schemes"], 5 March 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5725896/بصیرت-مردم-همواره-نقشه-های-دشمنان-را-خنثی-کرده-است (in Persian).
2066. See Chapter 8.
2067. Hawzah News Agency, انتخاب مهسا امینی برای رمز آشوب به دلیل داشتن پنج شاخصه بود ["Mahsa Amini was chosen as the symbol of unrest due to five specific characteristics"], 31 October 2022, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1051170/انتخاب-مهسا-امینی-برای-رمز-آشوب-به-دلیل-داشتن-پنج-شاخصه-بود (in Persian).
2068. Hawzah News Agency, انتخاب مهسا امینی برای رمز آشوب به دلیل داشتن پنج شاخصه بود ["Mahsa Amini was chosen as the symbol of unrest due to five specific characteristics"], 31 October 2022, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1051170/انتخاب-مهسا-امینی-برای-رمز-آشوب-به-دلیل-داشتن-پنج-شاخصه-بود (in Persian).



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan at the time of the 2022 protests, Habib Shahsavari © IRNA

"The IRGC and the Basij authoritatively defend the security of the Iranian nation against separatists and terrorists, and they are the guardians of the Islamic Iran. Protesting has rules, and the rioters who cause damage to public property and murder people should not be considered as protesters… The Shohada [Provincial] Corps [of West Azerbaijan] will confront those who disrupt security in the province with absolute decisiveness; we do not engage in any niceties in maintaining the security of the people."[2069]

In the next four days and until 20 November 2022, the security forces, including the IRGC, unlawfully killed at least 22 further protesters and bystanders during protest dispersals and in militarized areas in West Azerbaijan province alone.

On 21 November 2022, the Tasnim News Agency, affiliated with the IRGC, issued an article stating:

> **"The operations of the IRGC combatants and security forces in the southern cities of West Azerbaijan have been carried out pursuant to a statement issued by the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters of the IRGC's Ground Forces and [the operations] are set to continue until all anti-revolutionary elements are fully cleansed from the cities."[2070]**

The referenced statement, dated 24 September 2022, had announced that the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters' military "operational units had begun destroying the bases and headquarters of hostile terrorist and anti-revolutionary groups involved in planning and conspiracies, across the country's borders in the northern Iraqi Kurdistan region through artillery strikes and fire operations."[2071]

The next day, the Tasnim News Agency and other state media outlets further reported that the "cleansing operations" of the "operational units" of the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters and their "combatants", initially conducted across the Iran-Iraq border, had been extended into the cities of Mahabad, Piranshahr and Boukan. The reports claimed that this escalation was due to "the entry of agents from anti-revolutionary groups into these cities to create insecurity"[2072] and:

> **"The serious role that terrorists belonging to the PKK [Kurdistan Workers' Party], the Komala [Party of Kurdistan] and the [Kurdish] Democratic [Party of Iran] had in directing wicked acts in the cities of**

2069. Mehr News Agency, ["91 programmes held during Basij Week / Perpetrators of the Basiji martyrdom in Urumieh arrested"], 16 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5633854/برگزاری۹۱-برنامه-هفته-بسیج-دستگیری-عاملان-شهادت-بسیجی-در-ارومیه (in Persian).

2070. Tasnim News Agency, ["Tasnim's account of Piranshahr: Sabotage activities of rioters and the decisive response of security forces"], 21 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/30/2807929/روایت-تسنیم-از-پیرانشهر-اقدامات-خرابکارانه-اغتشاشگران-و-برخورد-قاطعانه-نیروهای-امنیتی (in Persian).

2071. Mashregh News, ["Details of the operation to destroy terrorist group positions"], 24 September 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1420754/جزئیات-عملیات-انهدام-مواضع-گروهک-های-تروریستی (in Persian).

2072. Asr-e Iran, ["Tasnim's account of Mahabad, Boukan, and Piranshahr: 'Widespread arrest of rioter leaders' in Mahabad"], 21 November 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/amp/news/867047 (in Persian).

Boukan, Mahabad, Sanandaj, Javanroud and Piranshahr."[2073]

The separate mention of "security forces" and "combatants" in these reports indicate that the operational division of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan was involved despite the division's exact name not being specified.

On 22 November 2022, Habib Shahsavari reiterated a dual narrative of threat and denial. On the one hand, he warned that "none of the hostilities from enemies will go unanswered". On the other hand, he falsely attributed unlawful killings to non-state actors, asserting that the "enemy… pursued its objectives through a project of staging killings." He also continued to blame the protests on "global imperialism, Zionism and satellite channels" seeking Iran's territorial "disintegration".[2074]



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan at the time of the 2022 protests, Habib Shahsavari © IRNA

"The enemy sought the disintegration of Iran and pursued its objectives through a project of staging killings during these events. In the recent developments, global imperialism, Zionism and satellite channels acted as instigators.

None of the hostilities from enemies, even those beyond our borders, will go unanswered… The people are the primary asset of the Islamic system, and we must serve them tirelessly day and night."[2075]

Less than a week later, on 27 November 2022, Habib Shahsavari once again invoked "war" themes and equated the street protests to the battle of Shalamcheh during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, stating that "in both [situations], the ideals and security of the people had to be defended."[2076] He also praised the Basijis under his command, describing them as people whose "hearts beat for Iran, the Revolution and Islam".[2077] He mentioned the death of four Basij agents during the protests,[2078] describing them as "martyrs forming the pieces of the puzzle of the Iranian nation's honour" but made no mention of the protesters and bystanders who had been unlawfully killed by the security forces including IRGC and Basij agents.

On 29 December 2022, after months of lethal repression that brought the protests to an end, Habib Shahsavari celebrated the crushing of the protests, lauded the "defeat of the enemies" and "the

2073. Iran Online, استقبال مردم شمالغرب کشور از حضور نیروهای مدافع امنیت ["Warm reception of the people of north-western Iran for the presence of security forces"], 22 November 2022, https://ion.ir/news/7879/استقبال-مردم-شمالغرب-کشور-از-حضور-نیروهای-مدافع-امنیت (in Persian).
2074. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده سپاه آذربایجان غربی: پاسخ قاطع به شرارت‌های دشمن می‌دهیم ["Commander of the IRGC in West Azerbaijan: We will give a decisive response to the enemy's acts of aggression"], 22 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/01/2808146/فرمانده-سپاه-آذربایجان-غربی-پاسخ-قاطع-به-شرارت-های-دشمن-می-دهیم (in Persian).
2075. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده سپاه آذربایجان غربی: پاسخ قاطع به شرارت‌های دشمن می‌دهیم ["Commander of the IRGC in West Azerbaijan: We will give a decisive response to the enemy's acts of aggression"], 22 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/01/2808146/فرمانده-سپاه-آذربایجان-غربی-پاسخ-قاطع-به-شرارت-های-دشمن-می-دهیم (in Persian).
2076. Borna News, شلمچه یا کف خیابان در هر دو باید از مردم دفاع کرد ["Whether in Shalamcheh or the streets, we must defend the people"], 27 November 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1404238/شلمچه-یا-کف-خیابان-در-هر-دو-باید-از-مردم-دفاع-کرد (in Persian).
2077. Borna News, شلمچه یا کف خیابان در هر دو باید از مردم دفاع کرد ["Whether in Shalamcheh or the streets, we must defend the people"], 27 November 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1404238/شلمچه-یا-کف-خیابان-در-هر-دو-باید-از-مردم-دفاع-کرد (in Persian).
2078. See section 5.3.1.

neutralization of the sedition", thanks to the "intervention of the people", in line with the official rhetoric of IRGC officials referring to the security forces conducting the repression as "the people":



The commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan at the time of the 2022 protests, Habib Shahsavari, delivering a speech in the city of Urumieh, West Azerbaijan province, on 29 December 2022 © IRNA

"A complex and cognitive war has been orchestrated by enemies against the Islamic Republic of Iran for the purpose of creating a rift between the people and the Supreme Leader… The great nation of Iran has always supported the leadership of the Supreme Leader… The enemies have become practically hopeless about inciting the people against the Islamic Republic… The presence of the people in various scenes is the fundamental and main factor in the defeat of the enemies… Wherever the people have intervened, the sedition against the country has also been neutralized."[2079]

On 10 April 2023, in a statement reflecting the triumphant rhetoric of other high-ranking commanders regarding the suppression of protests and disregarding substantial evidence of the atrocities committed by the authorities of the Islamic Republic to retain their grip on power and eradicate dissent, the then deputy commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, **Taleb Rahimi**, declared: "Despite facing numerous hostilities against the Islamic Revolution, the dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran grows daily, and it continues to achieve new heights of honour one after another."[2080]

2079. IRNA, فرمانده سپاه آذربایجان‌غربی: خواص در رابطه با حوادث اخیر سکوت نکنند ["Commander of the IRGC in West Azerbaijan: Elites should not remain silent regarding the recent events"], 29 December 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84983349/فرمانده-سپاه-آذربایجان-غربی-خواص-در-رابطه-با-حوادث-اخیر-سکوت (in Persian).

2080. International Quran News Agency, فرمانده سپاه میاندوآب تودیع و معارفه شد ["Commander of the IRGC in Miandoab was bid farewell and introduced"], 10 April 2023, https://orumiyeh.iqna.ir/fa/news/4132824/فرمانده-سپاه-میاندوآب-تودیع-و-معارفه-شد (in Persian).

10.3.5 LEAKED OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

10.3.5(I) ORDERS BY COMMANDER OF IRGC'S CORPS OF GREATER TEHRAN ON 9 AND 12 OCTOBER 2022

Amnesty International obtained copies of two leaked official orders that were issued by the commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran at the time of 2022 protests, **Hassan Hassanzadeh**, and are dated 9 and 12 October 2022. The orders outline a series of instructions to various entities under his command, including the operational headquarters of Greater Tehran, the Basij Resistance Sector Corps, the Imam Hossein Battalions, the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions, the Imam Ali Battalions, the Fateheen Battalions, the operational division of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, and the Security Cohorts and Brigades of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran.

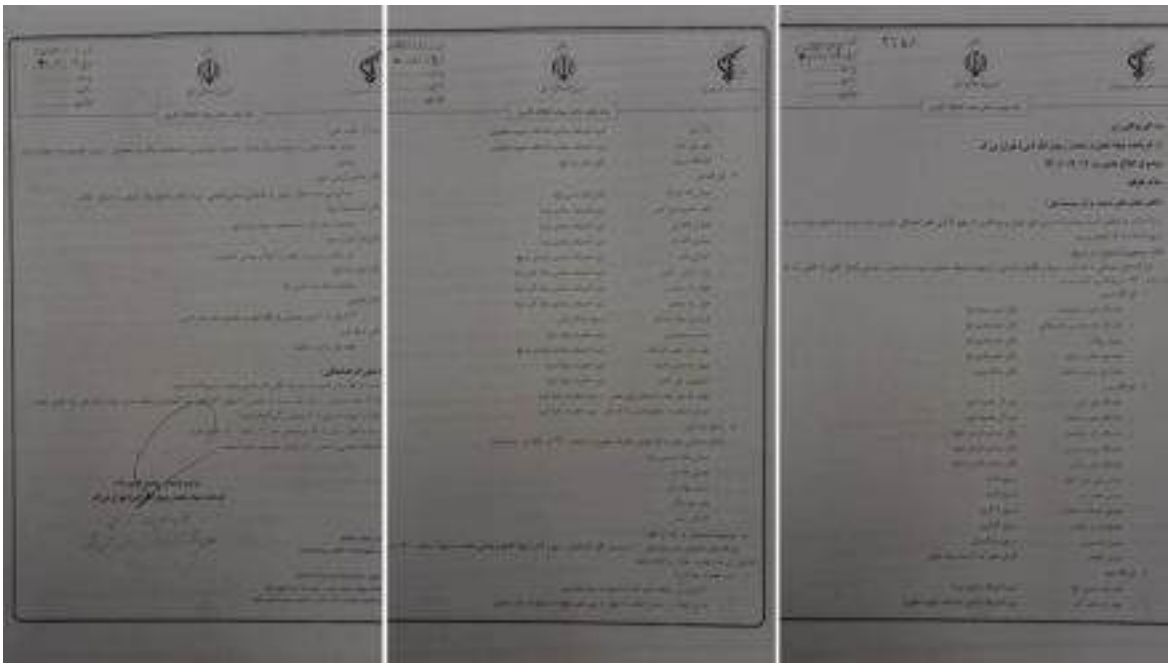
While Amnesty International does not have access to similar leaked official documents from other provinces or time periods, these leaked documents offer insight into how IRGC provincial corps commanders elsewhere may have exercised their authority through the chain of command, including the wide range of entities addressed in their orders and the level of operational detail involved, such as deployment and positioning instructions regarding locating and timing and operations targeting those writing slogans.

The 9 October 2022 order issues instructions to the four IRGC operational headquarters across Greater Tehran – Qods, Nasr, Fath and Ghadr – concerning the deployment of various forces and their positioning.[2081] The order states:

> **"Operational headquarters [must] deploy at 100% capacity all the Basij Battalions, as well as the personnel of [Security] Brigades, Cohorts and Basij Resistance Sector Corps, at 9.30am, and proceed with the positioning of the units, prioritizing the following locations."**

The order then lists various locations across Tehran, including central squares, streets, intersections, markets and university campuses, and assigned each area to a specific IRGC entity. The entities addressed include the operational division of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, five Security Cohorts – the Imam Hadi Security Cohort, the Imam Sajad Security Cohort, the Imam Reza Security Cohort, the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Security Cohort and the Saheb Al-Zaman Security Cohort – as well as two Security Brigades, the Al Mohammad Security Brigade and the Hazrat-e Zahra Security Brigade.

2081. The document is on file with Amnesty International.



Leaked document, dated 9 October 2022, containing an order from the then commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, instructing the operational headquarters to pursue maximum mobilization of all battalions of Security Cohorts, brigades and Basij Resistance Sector Corps © IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran

The 12 October 2022 order from Hassan Hassanzadeh issues several instructions to various IRGC entities for the following day, which he says are necessary to "stabilize the security situation of Tehran and prevent the occurrence of potential unrest".[2082]

With respect to the Imam Hossein Battalions, paragraph 2 of the order gives the following instruction: "All Imam Hossein Battalions must be placed under the operational control of [Basij Resistance] Sector [Corps] and be ready for mobilization."



Leaked official document, dated 12 October 2022, containing an order from the commander of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh © IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran

2082. The document is on file with Amnesty International.

Paragraph 3 addresses the Security Cohorts, the Security Brigades and the operational division of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, stating:

> **"Each of the Security Cohorts must deploy two battalions, each consisting of 30 motorcycles, and each of the Security Brigades and the Operational Division must deploy five battalions, each consisting of 30 motorcycles, starting at 9am [on 13 October 2022], based on the [same] plan issued for 12 October 2022. You must be prepared to divide these battalions into smaller units and position them in active spots."**

Paragraph 5 addresses two sectoral Basij organizations, stating: "The Offices [and Employees] and the Workers [and Factories] Basij organizations must each deploy one battalion from 9am, in coordination with the Nasr and Qods headquarters."

Paragraphs 6 and 9 issue instructions related to the deployment of the Imam Ali Battalions maintained by the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Greater Tehran. Paragraph 6 states: "Basij Resistance Sector [Corps] must mobilize their Imam Ali Battalions from 16:00 onwards and position them within their territorial zones [of responsibility] based on the strategies of the operational headquarters."

Paragraph 9 adds: "The Imam Ali Battalions of the [Basij Resistance] Districts [Corps] must be mobilized, with a capacity of at least 40 motorcycles, and be prepared to carry out missions."

Paragraph 8 addresses the Imam Ali Battalions of the Security Cohorts and Brigades stating, "The Imam Ali Battalions of Security Cohorts and Brigade[s] must be deployed at 50% capacity with the remaining 50% kept on standby for deployment."

With respect to the Beit Al-Moghaddas Battalions, paragraph 7 orders that they should be kept on standby for deployment.

With respect to the Fateheen Battalions, paragraph 11 instructs that "the Fateheen Cohort should be prepared to mobilize all its battalions".

Paragraph 13 addresses the operational division of the IRGC's Corps of Greater Tehran, stating:

> **"The operational division must deploy… patrol teams, each consisting of two motorcycles and one car, starting at 3am, along the Imam Ali Highway, covering the stretch from Azadegan to Damavand, with the aim of arresting individuals engaged in writing slogans."**

Paragraph 14 similarly instructs the Al Mohammad Security Brigade, stating:

> **"The Al Mohammad Security Brigade must deploy… patrol teams, each consisting of two motorcycles and a car, starting at 12.30am, along the Imam Ali Highway, covering the stretch between Damavand and Artesh with the aim of arresting those writing slogans."**

Paragraph 16 also issues instructions for the arrest of those engaged in writing slogans, this time addressed to the Basij Resistance Sector Corps. It states: "Each [Basij] Resistance Sector [Corps] must ensure patrols along a main street within the area under their responsibility, starting at 12.30am, with the aim of arresting those writing slogans.

10.3.5(II) LETTER FROM DEPUTY PROSECUTOR OF TEHRAN ON 13 OCTOBER 2022

Amnesty International reviewed a leaked eight-page letter from the deputy prosecutor of Tehran dated 13 October 2022, which was published by Iran International, a Persian-language media outlet based

outside Iran, on 8 February 2023.[2083] The letter refers to the involvement of the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Security Cohort in repressing the protests in Tehran. In it, the deputy prosecutor of Tehran, Mohammad Shahriari, addresses the public and revolutionary prosecutor general of Tehran, Ali Salehi, informing him that two young women, aged 18 and 23, had reported to a police station in Tehran that two IRGC agents raped them inside a van after arbitrarily arresting them in the context of the protests at 8pm on 3 October 2022.

The document names the two agents as Alireza Hosseini Hagh, a captain and intelligence official at the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Security Cohort. The agents are recorded stating that they were part of the teams positioned around Sattar Khan Street and Shahr-e Ara area to carry out their "mission of pacifying the riots". The document shows that the agents admitted on record to engaging in sexual acts with the women, but claimed that the sexual acts were consensual and initiated by the two women in their custody. Despite this, the authorities deliberately decided not to register the women's complaints and engaged in cover-up. In the document, the deputy prosecutor of Tehran gave advice to classify the case as "completely secret" and suggested that it be gradually "closed over time by removing the suspects [from their positions] without mentioning the names of security bodies involved".[2084]

10.4 SECURITY COUNCILS

A set of security councils operating at national, provincial and county levels are responsible for formulating and coordinating defence and security strategies, including responses to protests. At the apex is the Supreme National Security Council, which sets overall defence and security policies. Below it, the State Security Council and its subordinate provincial and county security councils monitor and assess security, political and social developments within their areas of responsibility; report to and coordinate with higher and lower-level councils; and adopt resolutions that direct and coordinate the actions of state bodies, including FARAJA and the IRGC.

10.4.1 COMMAND AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

10.4.1(I) SUPREME NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

According to Article 176 of the constitution, the Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council) consists of the heads of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the state; the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces; the official in charge of national planning and budgeting;[2085] two representatives appointed by the Supreme Leader; and the ministers of foreign affairs, interior and intelligence, as well as, "depending on the circumstances, relevant ministers and general commanders of the Army and the IRGC." According to experts in the Iranian security apparatus, while the phrase "depending on the circumstances" appears to apply to both relevant ministers and general

2083. See Iran International, روایت تجاوز دو مامور سپاه پاسداران به دو زن معترض بازداشتی ["Account of the rape of two detained female protesters by two IRGC officers"], 8 February 2023, available at https://issuu.com/iranintl/docs/805010496979 (in Persian). The letter is also on file with Amnesty International.
2084. For detailed information on the content of the leaked letter, see Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 85-87.
2085. Under Iran's current structure, this would be the head of the country's Planning and Budgeting Organization, a state institution that is responsible for strategic development planning and oversight of Iran's economic system.

commanders of the Army and the IRGC, in practice the general commanders of the Army and the IRGC have consistently sat on the Supreme Council.[2086]

Article 176 of the constitution allows the Supreme Council to establish subsidiary councils, such as the State Security Council, and specifies that their powers and responsibilities are to be defined by law and approved by the Supreme Council.

The head of the Supreme Council is the president of the Islamic Republic. The long-standing practice in Iran has been for the president, in coordination with the Supreme Leader, to appoint one of the representatives of the Supreme Leader as the secretary general of the Supreme Council.[2087]

10.4.1(II) STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

The State Security Council was established in accordance with Article 176 of the constitution, which states:

> **"The Supreme National Security Council, in accordance with its responsibilities, establishes subsidiary councils such as… the State Security Council. Each subsidiary council is headed by either the president or a member of the Supreme National Security Council appointed by the president. The scope of the authority and duties of subsidiary councils is determined by law, and their structure is decided by the Supreme National Security Council."**

According to Article 1 of the State Security Council Law, "the State Security Council is under the responsibility of the minister of interior." The minister of interior is appointed as the head of the State Security Council by the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.[2088]

Note 7 to Article 3 of the State Security Council Law states:

> **"The secretariat of the State Security Council is established within the Ministry of Interior, under the supervision of the minister of interior… Members and staff of the secretariat must be approved by the State Security Council and appointed by the order of the minister of interior."**

The minister of interior typically appoints their deputy for police and security as the secretary of the State Security Council.[2089]

2086. Pishkhan, شورایی برای تصمیم‌سازی ["A council for policy-making"], 1 August 2023, https://www.pishkhan.com/news/301735 (in Persian). Amnesty International reviewed pictures published on the websites of the president and the Supreme Leader from two meetings of the Supreme Council on 13 June 2020 and 25 September 2001, and in both cases, the commanders-in-chief of the Army and the IRGC are present. In both meetings, the minister of defence is also seen in attendance. Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, جلسه شورای عالی امنیت ملی به ریاست رییس جمهور ["Meeting of the Supreme National Security Council chaired by the president"], 13 June 2020, https://president.ir/fa/115860; Khamenei.ir, عکس دیدار فرماندهان نیروهای مسلح با مقام معظم رهبری ["Photographs from the meeting between the commanders of the armed forces and the Supreme Leader"], 15 August 2005, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/photo-print?id=1774; Khamenei.ir, تشکیل جلسه شورای عالی امنیت ملی در حضور رهبر انقلاب ["Meeting of the Supreme National Security Council held in the presence of the Leader of the Revolution"], 25 September 2001, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/photo-album?id=23915 (in Persian).

2087. Fars News Agency, شمخانی رفت؛ احمدیان آمد؛ دبیر شورای عالی امنیت ملی چه جایگاهی دارد ["Shamkhani departs, Ahmadian is appointed: What is the role of the secretary general of the Supreme National Security Council?"], 22 May 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Wire_Plus/1684765329000585463/شمخانی-رفت،-احمدیان-آمد؛-دبیر-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی-چه-جایگاهی-دارد؟ (in Persian).

2088. Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, احمد وحیدی به عنوان "رئیس شورای امنیت کشور" منصوب شد ["Ahmad Vahidi was appointed as head of the State Security Council"], 11 September 2021, https://president.ir/fa/131124 (in Persian).

2089. See IRNA, پورجمشیدیان دبیر شورای امنیت کشور شد ["Pourjamshidian was appointed as Secretary of the State Security Council"], 30 September 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403070907371/پورجمشیدیان-دبیر-شورای-امنیت-کشور-شد (in Persian).

Article 3 of the State Security Council Law provides that, in addition to the minister of interior, members of the State Security Council include an adviser to the Supreme Leader in the Supreme Council,[2090] a high-ranking Army official,[2091] the general commander of the IRGC and the general commander of FARAJA.[2092] Further clarifications are provided on other potential attendees of council meetings.[2093]

Article 3(5) of the State Security Council Law refers to the membership of another official, referred to as "the official in charge of intelligence [affairs] for the country". State media reports indicate that this position refers to the minister of intelligence.[2094] Since the establishment of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC in 2009 and the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA in 2021, it is possible that the representatives of these other intelligence organizations also participate in the sessions of the State Security Council.[2095] This is supported by a leaked official document, dated 18 September 2022, indicating that the then deputy head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, Mehdi Sayaree, took part in a session of the State Security Council on this date.[2096]

Note 1 to Article 3 provides that the minister of interior can invite the country's prosecutor general[2097] to attend State Security Council meetings.

Note 3 to Article 3 states that it is mandatory for members of the State Security Council to convene at the invitation of the minister of interior every two weeks, and "extraordinary" sessions may convene at the suggestion of the minister or one-third of the council members.

Note 2 to Article 3 of the State Security Council Law designates the State Security Council as an advisory body, with decision-making authority on domestic security matters assigned to the minister of

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2090. The phrase used in Article 3(2) of the State Security Council Law is the "Supreme Council of Defence", which is predecessor of the Supreme National Security Council in the 1980s. See Mizan News Agency, وظایف شورای امنیت کشور شاک ["Responsibilities of the State Security Council"], 29 July 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4782582/وظایف-شورای-امنیت-کشور-شاک (in Persian); Khabar Online, چگونه از دل شورای عالی دفاع، شورای عالی امنیت ملی متولد شد ["How the Supreme Council of Defence gave way to the Supreme National Security Council"], 15 October 2021, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1563978/چگونه-از-دل-شورای-عالی-دفاع-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی-متولد-شد (in Persian).

2091. Article 3(3) of the State Security Council Law, adopted in August 1983, refers to the position of the chief of the Joint Staff of the Army, which was at the time the highest Army official. Currently, the highest-ranking official in the Army is the general commander of the Army. The second in command is the deputy general commander, followed by the coordination deputy of the Army, who oversees coordination between the Ground, Air, Naval and Air Defence forces, tasks that were previously carried out by the former role of the chief of the Joint Staff. An expert in Iran's security apparatus told Amnesty International that while there is no official documentation on whether the general commander of the Army personally attends meetings of the State Security Council or sends a subordinate, it is unlikely that they would attend themselves because their military rank is higher than those of both the current minister of interior and the secretary of the State Security Council and, according to military protocol, it is uncommon for a higher-ranking commander to attend a meeting chaired by, or with a secretary of, a lower rank.

2092. The State Security Council Law, adopted in August 1983, predates the establishment of the police organization known today as FARAJA, which was created by merging three security bodies: the Shahrbani and Gendarmerie, which existed prior to the 1979 Revolution, and the Revolutionary Committees, which were formed in its aftermath. As a result, Article 3 of the State Security Council Law does not list the general commander of FARAJA. Instead, paragraphs 6-8 of Article 3 refer to the national head of the Shahrbani, the national head of the Gendarmerie, and the official in charge of the Revolutionary Committees. Although the State Security Council Law has not been amended, in practice, the general commander of FARAJA now serves as the functional equivalent of these three positions.

2093. Note 4 to Article 3 provides that "each member of the State Security Council may, in the event they are unable to attend, appoint a fully authorized representative to participate in council meetings on their behalf." Note 5 to Article 3 provides that, "if the subject under review in the council meeting is related to a specific executive body, it is mandatory to invite the highest-ranking executive official of the relevant body."

2094. Mizan News Agency, وظایف شورای امنیت کشور شاک ["Responsibilities of the State Security Council"], 29 July 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4782582/وظایف-شورای-امنیت-کشور-شاک (in Persian)

2095. See BBC Persian, تغییرات ساختاری سپاه پاسداران ["Structural changes in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 8 October 2009, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2009/10/091008_op_sepah_restructuring (in Persian); Iran Emrooz, گزارش ایرنا از تغییرات سپاه پاسداران ["IRNA report on changes in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 9 October 2009, https://www.iran-emrooz.net/index.php/news1/19567 (in Persian); Entekhab, عنوان نیروی انتظامی به فرماندهی کل انتظامی جمهوری اسلامی ایران تغییر کرد ["Title of Police Force changed to the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran"], 8 December 2021, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/651395/عنوان-نیروی-انتظامی-به-فرماندهی-کل-انتظامی-جمهوری-اسلامی-ایران-تغییر-کرد (in Persian).

2096. See section 10.4.4(III) for details about this leaked official document.

2097. The Note refers to two prosecution officials: the national prosecutor general and the revolutionary prosecutor general. These positions have since been combined into a single role.

interior. This means that the State Security Council's resolutions become binding only when the minister of interior communicates them for implementation.

This interpretation is supported by a verdict from the Court of Administrative Justice, which confirms that the resolutions of the State Security Council and its subsidiary councils at the provincial and county levels become binding once communicated for implementation by the respective head of the council, namely the minister of interior at the national level, the provincial governor at the provincial level and the county governor at the county level.[2098] This legal structure further enables the minister of interior – and their representatives at the provincial and county levels – to wield significant influence over security operations, including the ability to cause disruption by failing to communicate council resolutions.

The *County Governor's Handbook* provides further confirmation of this structure. The book refers to a State Security Council resolution, dated 10 May 2015, which confirms that the Ministry of Interior is empowered to "issue orders aimed at establishing order and security" and "communicate the resolutions of the State Security Council and follow up on and evaluate their implementation" by FARAJA.

Article 39 of the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces states that: "any military or police commander or official who fails to implement the resolutions of the State Security Council and provincial or county provision councils in cases where they are obligated by law to do so shall be sentenced to imprisonment for six months to two years", provided that their actions do not amount to *moharebeh* (waging war against God) or merit harsher penalties under other laws. While the provision does not specify the exact circumstances that trigger the obligation for compliance, the context suggests it includes cases where resolutions have been formally communicated by the minister of interior for implementation.

Leaked official documents reviewed by Amnesty International reveal that, following the adoption of State Security Council resolutions, the deputy minister of interior for police and security communicates the resolutions to relevant authorities, including top FARAJA and IRGC commanders, with instructions to issue orders for their implementation.[2099] The documents also reveal that these authorities are requested to report back to the secretariat on the actions taken and the outcomes of implementation.

10.4.1(III) PROVINCIAL AND COUNTY PROVISION COUNCILS

The State Security Council Law provides for the establishment of subsidiary councils known as provision councils at provincial and county levels. According to Articles 6(1) and 7(1) of the State Security Council Law, the head of the provincial provision council is the provincial governor while the head of the county provision council is the county governor.

Mirroring the structure of the State Security Council, provincial and county governors typically appoint their respective deputy governors for political, security and social affairs as the secretaries of the provincial and county provision councils.[2100]

Based on Articles 6(2)-6(6) of the State Security Council Law, in addition to the provincial governor, members of the provincial provision council include the commander of the respective IRGC provincial

2098. See National Judicial Rulings System, عنوان: لزوم اجرای مصوبات شورای تأمین استان ها ["The Necessity of Implementing the Resolutions of Provincial Provision Councils"], 15 April 2015, https://ara.jri.ac.ir/Judge/Text/27199 (in Persian).
2099. See section 10.4.4(III).
2100. See, for example, IRNA, شورای تامین خراسان رضوی با حضور بانوان در دیدار تیم ملی با کره شمالی موافقت کرد ["Provision Council of Khorasan Razavi approved presence of women at national team's match against North Korea"], 29 April 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/85818616/شورای-تأمین-خراسان-رضوی-با-حضور-بانوان-در-دیدار-تیم-ملی-با-کره (in Persian).

corps, the commander of the IRGC Basij Resistance Sector Corps covering the provincial capital,[2101] and the provincial commander of FARAJA.[2102] Article 6(5) also mentions the membership of the "military commander of the province (if existing)". Experts in Iran's security apparatus interpret this as referring to the Army. The Note to this article adds that "if there are several military forces in the province, the commanders of all of them must participate."

Article 6(7) of the State Security Council Law refers to the membership of a further official identified as the "official in charge of intelligence affairs in the province". Like the composition of the State Security Council, this position was understood to refer to the head of the Ministry of Intelligence office in the province. This understanding is supported by a leaked document, dated 22 July 2017, which indicates the presence of the head of the Ministry of Intelligence office in Mazandaran province at a meeting of the Mazandaran Provision Council.[2103]

The Note to Article 6 adds that provincial governors can invite the public and revolutionary prosecutor general of the respective province to attend the meetings of the provincial provision council.[2104]

Regarding the membership of county provision councils, Articles 7(2)-7(6) of the State Security Council Law provides that, in addition to the county governor, other members are the commander of the IRGC Basij Resistance Sector Corps in the respective county,[2105] and the county commander of FARAJA.[2106] Additionally, Article 7(7) of the State Security Council Law refers to the membership of an official identified as the "official in charge of intelligence affairs in the county". Like the composition of the State Security Council and the provincial provision council, this position likely refers to the head of the Ministry of Intelligence office in the county.

Article 9 of the State Security Council Law provides that provincial and county provision councils are advisory bodies, with decision-making authority vested in their respective heads, namely the provincial governor and the county governor. Like the role of the minister of interior in the State Security Council, the governors' position as final decision-makers effectively transforms the provision councils into instruments of executive authority, making their resolutions enforceable commands once communicated by the governors for implementation. As noted previously, Article 39 of the Law on

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2101. The State Security Council Law, adopted in August 1983, predates the establishment of the IRGC's provincial corps and changes to the organizational structure of the IRGC, including its Basij entities. Accordingly, the phrase used in Article 6(2) for this position is the "IRGC commander of the district based in the capital of the province." The term "district" refers to Basij Resistance Sector Corps, which covers a county.
2102. The State Security Council Law, adopted in August 1983, predates the establishment of the police organization known today as FARAJA, which was created by merging three security bodies: the Shahrbani and Gendarmerie, which existed prior to the 1979 Revolution, and the Revolutionary Committees, which were formed in its aftermath. Accordingly, Article 6 of the State Security Council Law does not list the provincial commander of FARAJA. Articles 6(3), 6(4) and 6(6) instead refer to the provincial head of the Shahrbani, the provincial commander of the Gendarmerie, and the official in charge of the Revolutionary Committee in the respective province. Although the State Security Council Law has not been amended, in practice, the provincial commander of FARAJA now serves as the functional equivalent of these three positions.
2103. Ministry of Interior, Mazandaran province, leaked letter, List of those present at the Provincial Security Council, 22 July 2017, available at https://iranbahaipersecution.bic.org/fa/archive/mswbh-jlsh-shwray-tamyn-astan-mazndran-bray-brkhwrd-ba-bhayyany-kh-mghazhhayshan-ra-dr-ayam
2104. The Note refers to two prosecution officials: the provincial prosecutor general and the revolutionary prosecutor general. Since 2002, these positions have been combined into a single role: the public and revolutionary prosecutor general.
2105. The State Security Council Law, adopted in August 1983, predates the establishment of the IRGC's provincial corps and changes to the organizational structure of the IRGC. Accordingly, the phrase used in Article 7(2) for this position is the "IRGC commander based in the county."
2106. The State Security Council Law, adopted in August 1983, predates the establishment of the police organization known today as FARAJA, which was created by merging three security bodies: the Shahrbani and Gendarmerie, which existed prior to the 1979 Revolution, and the Revolutionary Committees, which were formed in its aftermath. Accordingly, Article 7 of the State Security Council Law does not list the provincial commander of FARAJA. Articles 7(3), 7(4) and 7(6) instead refer to the local head of the Shahrbani, the local commander of the Gendarmerie, and the official in charge of the local Revolutionary Committee, if applicable. Although the State Security Council Law has not been amended, in practice, the county commander of FARAJA now serves as the functional equivalent of these three positions.

Crimes by Armed Forces introduces criminal liability for commanders who fail to implement provision council resolutions.

According to information cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*,[2107] the minutes of county provision council sessions and the resolutions adopted at their conclusion must be promptly prepared, signed by the deputy county governor for political, security and social affairs, and distributed to council members and the secretariat for implementation.[2108] Given that the same structure is mirrored at the provincial level, a similar process is likely in place for provincial provision councils, with minutes and resolutions signed and circulated for implementation under the authority of the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs.

10.4.2 MANDATE

10.4.2(I) SUPREME NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

The Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council) is a pivotal institution in Iran's security apparatus, formulating the overall defence and security strategies of the Islamic Republic system, including in the context of responding to nationwide protests.[2109]

According to Article 176 of the constitution, the Supreme Council is tasked with "safeguarding national interests, the Islamic Revolution, territorial integrity, and sovereignty". This provision outlines the responsibilities of the Supreme Council as follows:

> **"Determining the country's defence and security policies within the framework of general policies set by the Supreme Leader; coordinating political, intelligence, social, cultural and economic activities related to overall defence and security measures; and utilizing the country's material and spiritual resources to counter internal and external threats."**

Official statements by the Supreme Leader indicate that the secretary general of the Supreme Council is responsible for "preparing all the groundwork for decision-making: gathering information, conducting activities, consulting experts, and thoroughly analysing and examining issues in depth."[2110]

The decisions of the Supreme Council, upon approval by the Supreme Leader, are binding, including upon the commanders of the Army, the IRGC and FARAJA.[2111]

As explained previously, official statements indicate that the Supreme Council plays a key role in determining whether the IRGC should take the lead on protest repression operations if the protests concerned reach a certain scale.[2112]

2107. As mentioned previously, this is a publication produced in consultation with state officials and published on government websites.
2108. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش%20کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, p. 250.
2109. Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Article 176. See also Abdolreza Bagheri, نقش شورای عالی امنیت ملی در حکمرانی امنیت ملی جمهوری اسلامی ایران ["The role of the Supreme National Security Council in the governance of national security of the Islamic Republic of Iran"], January 2023, Quarterly Journal of Strategic Studies, Volume 24, Issue 4, https://quarterly.risstudies.org/article_166560_3f9c84d86bfb90faa93693063b7b8c61.pdf (in Persian).
2110. See Mohammad Mohsen Roozitalab and Kheyrollah Parvin, تأملی حقوقی در ساختار و صالحیت مصوبه‌گذاری دبیرخانه شورای عالی امنیت ملی ["A legal reflection on the structure and legislative authority of the secretariat of the Supreme National Security Council"], Summer 2021, Quarterly Journal of Public Law Knowledge, Issue 32, https://mag.shora-rc.ir/article_226_b4b034411c14e565ce9532b3c0049f49.pdf, p. 111.
2111. Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Article 176.
2112. See section 10.3.2 which explains four levels of alert for internal security operations – "white", "grey", "yellow" and "red" – with the degree of IRGC involvement escalating at each successive level or phase.

10.4.2(II) STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

Article 1 of the State Security Council Law outlines the responsibilities of the State Security Council, led by the minister of interior, as follows:

> **"In order to review major developments and critical events related to internal security, and to make coordinated decisions and measures for the prevention and management of related issues, the Security Council, under the responsibility of the minister of interior, shall be tasked with the following duties: Summarizing and reviewing news, reports, and analyses related to sensitive security, political, and social events in the country for the purpose of swift utilization to depict the current situation and predict future developments… determining the general policies of domestic security within the framework of enacted laws; clarifying the duties and authorities of each organization and institution regarding domestic security within the framework of their legal responsibilities; and monitoring and evaluating the consequences of implementing the [State Security] Council's decisions".[2113]**

Article 1 of the State Security Council Law adds that the State Security Council must communicate with its subsidiary bodies at provincial and county levels, called the provision councils, and "receive regular reports on the security, political and social conditions of each province".

The Note to Article 4(2) of the Police Force Law tasks the State Security Council with "determining the quality and method of cooperation" between FARAJA and the Ministry of Intelligence in their "firm and ongoing confrontation and combat against any form of sabotage, terrorism, rebellion and actions or movements that disrupt national security."

According to Note 3 to Article 4(4) of the Police Force Law, the State Security Council is also responsible for determining the specifics of cooperation between FARAJA and the Ministry of Intelligence in circumstances when FARAJA is requested to "place its personnel under the operational control of the Ministry of Intelligence to support its intelligence gathering objectives."

Article 4(7) of the Police Force Law indicates that the responsibilities of the State Security Council also include "establishing the framework for the issuance of permits for the carrying and storage of authorized weapons, ammunition and explosive materials (non-military explosives), as well as the collection of unauthorized weapons, ammunition and equipment".[2114]

Article 10 of the State Security Council Law provides that "the protection of [public] figures, places and facilities shall be reviewed and discussed within the State Security Council… and responsibility for these duties shall be assigned to the relevant agencies and organizations as appropriate."[2115]

10.4.2(III) PROVINCIAL AND COUNTY PROVISION COUNCILS

Provincial and county provision councils adopt domestic security strategies and plans at the provincial and county level, respectively, within the parameters set out by the State Security Council. The *County Governor's Handbook* states:

2113. Islamic Republic of Iran, Law Regarding the Determination of Duties and the Organization of the State Security Council, 1983, available at https://www.ostan-ar.ir/uploads/vazayefshuraamniat.pdf, Article 1.
2114. Mizan News Agency, وظایف شورای امنیت کشور شاک ["Responsibilities of the State Security Council"], 29 July 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4782582/وظایف-شورای-امنیت-کشور-شاک (in Persian); Defa Press, نحوه همکاری نیروی انتظامی با نیروهای مسلح در تأمین امنیت کشور ["How police force cooperates with armed forces in securing the country"], 10 October 2021, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/482792/نحوه-همکاری-نیروی-انتظامی-با-نیروهای-مسلح-در-تأمین-امنیت-کشور (in Persian).
2115. Islamic Republic of Iran, Law Regarding the Determination of Duties and the Organization of the State Security Council, 1983, https://www.ostan-ar.ir/uploads/vazayefshuraamniat.pdf

"Matters of a non-security nature, such as social, economic, and cultural issues, may only be raised in Council meetings if the relevant institutions have already attempted to address them but, for various reasons, have been unable to resolve them, and the continued persistence of such issues may lead to unrest or anti-security activities."[2116]

Articles 5 of the State Security Council Law outlines the responsibilities of the provincial provision councils as follows:

"Summarizing and reviewing news, reports and analyses related to sensitive security, political and social matters of the province; reporting the security, political, and social situation of the province to the State Security Council; coordinating with the State Security Council; defining the duties and powers of each organization and institution in relation to the province's security [including FARAJA and the IRGC] within the framework of their legal responsibilities; and establishing direct communication with the provision councils of counties and their subordinate districts."

Article 7 of the State Security Council Law states that county provision councils have analogous responsibilities to the provincial provision councils at the county level. This means that they must monitor and report on the security, political and social situation of the county to the respective provincial provision council, coordinate with the provincial provision council and define the duties and powers of each organization and institution in relation to the county's security within the framework of their legal responsibilities.

Article 1(b) of the State Security Council Law provides that the State Security Council must "establish communication with the provincial provision councils and receive periodic reports on the security, political and social conditions of each province".

According to the *County Governor's Handbook*,[2117] an executive directive of the State Security Council dated 5 February 1985 has outlined four levels of alert for internal security operations – white, grey, yellow and red – and defined the roles of the State Security Council, as well as county and provincial provision councils, in officially declaring these levels, which in turn affect the decision for the deployment of IRGC to join FARAJA in suppressing protests. The levels may be applied to a specific area within a county or province, to an entire county or province, or on a nationwide scale.

The "white" level refers to "normal" circumstances where, according to the authorities, there are no signs of "disruption to public order or security".

The "grey" level refers to "abnormal" circumstances where, according to the authorities, "there is a possibility that anti-system forces may engage in hostile acts, or they have already initiated uncoordinated anti-security operations." In this context, according to the executive directive, FARAJA is responsible for restoring order and security, but the IRGC may be assigned certain responsibilities by the county provision council in the area concerned. According to the handbook, the grey level must be proposed by the district provision council to the county provision council, which then submits it for approval to the provincial provision council. Once approved, it is officially declared and reported to the State Security Council. During this stage, all activities related to internal security operations across a county must be coordinated through the county provision council.

The "yellow" level refers to "extraordinary" circumstances where, according to the authorities, "large-scale, coordinated anti-security operations, whether armed or unarmed, have advanced." The county

2116. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش%20کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, pp. 249-250.
2117. As mentioned previously, this is a publication produced in consultation with state officials and published on government websites.

provision council must propose the declaration of this status to the provincial provision council for approval and, once approved, the status is officially declared by the State Security Council. At this level, FARAJA remains responsible for restoring order, while the IRGC carries out specific tasks assigned by the provision council.

The "red" level denotes "a progression from the yellow (extraordinary) level where the scope of activities by forces opposing the system has expanded, leading to organized anti-security operations." Relevant provincial and county provision councils must approve the declaration of this status. Once approved, the State Security Council must confirm the declaration of this status and propose to the commander-in-chief of all armed forces for final approval and declaration.

Once a red level is declared, the State Security Council shall adopt the necessary general policies and strategies and communicate them to the relevant provincial provision councils for implementation. According to the information cited in the *County Governor's Handbook*, in this situation, FARAJA forces shall come under the operational control of a military force appointed by the Supreme Defence Council.[2118] While both the Army and the IRGC are military forces, the designated force in the context of protest-suppression operations would be generally the IRGC. In such circumstances, security operations would be conducted under unified command based on policies set by the State Security Council and the provincial provision council, and reports on the operations would be prepared by the operational military commanders and submitted periodically to the aforementioned councils.

Official statements confirm that provision councils play a key role in authorizing the involvement of IRGC provincial corps in protest-repression operations. For example, on 18 November 2019, Gholamreza Soleimani, the then head of the Basij-e Mostaz'afin Organization, confirmed that IRGC provincial corps assist FARAJA in suppressing protests pursuant to resolutions adopted by the relevant provision council.[2119]

State media reports indicate that members of provincial and county provision councils frequently attend the training exercises of Basij battalions.[2120]

10.4.3 OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

10.4.3(I) SUPREME NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

For years, the meetings and decisions of the Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council) have been shrouded in secrecy, with its resolutions and other communications classified as highly

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2118. Asghar Saremi Shahab, *County Governor's Handbook*, 2018, https://tahavol.ostan-chb.ir/afiles/up/tahavol/36/other/آموزش%20کتاب%20فرماندار.pdf, pp. 251-253.

2119. Defa Press, "Main instigators of unrest arrested / Basij spares no effort in assisting the country's institutions"] عوامل اصلی اغتشاشات دستگیر شدند/ بسیج در کمک به دستگاه‌های کشور از هیچ تلاشی دریغ نمی‌کند], 18 November 2019, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/370479/عوامل-اصلی-اغتشاشات-دستگیر-شدند-بسیج-در-کمک-به-دستگاه‌های-کشور-از-هیچ-تلاشی-دریغ-نمی‌کند (in Persian).

2120. IRIB News, "Successful implementation of the Towards Jerusalem and Kowsar military exercises in Torbat-e Jam"] اجرای موفق رزمایش الی بیت‌المقدس و کوثر در تربت‌جام], 22 November 2024, https://www.irib-news.ir/fa/news/4387902/اجرای-موفق-رزمایش-الی-بیت‌المقدس-و-کوثر-در-تربت‌جام (in Persian); Basij News Agency, "Power and stability exercise of Imam Ali Battalion in Khoshab"] اجرای رزمایش اقتدار و صلابت گردان امام علی علیه السلام در خوشاب], 24 September 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9541586/اجرای-رزمایش-اقتدار-و-صلابت-گردان-امام-علیعلیه-السلام-در-خوشاب-عکس (in Persian); Defa Press, "Display of Basij forces' strength in the 'Towards Jerusalem' military exercise in Bardaskan + photos"] نمایش اقتدار بسیجیان در رزمایش «الی بیت‌المقدس» در بردسکن+ تصاویر], 20 May 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/523671/نمایش-اقتدار-بسیجیان-در-رزمایش-الی-بیت‌المقدس-در-بردسکن-تصاویر (in Persian); Tabnak, "Operational phase of Arbaeen military exercise began with display of combat capabilities of Basij battalions"] مرحله اجرایی رزمایش اربعین با نمایش توان رزمی گردان های بسیج آغاز شد], 4 February 2016, https://ostanha.tabnak.ir/fa/news/175428/مرحله-اجرایی-رزمایش-اربعین-با-نمایش-توان-رزمی-گردان-های-بسیج-آغاز-شد (in Persian); IQNA, گزارش ایکنا از "IQNA report on the 30,000-person Khatam Al-Anbiya military exercise in Fars"] برگزاری رزمایش ۳۰ هزار نفری خاتم‌الانبیا(ص) در فارس], 5 December 2014, https://iqna.ir/fa/news/2615246/گزارش-ایکنا-از-برگزاری-رزمایش-۳۰-هزار-نفری-خاتم‌الانبیاص-در-فارس (in Persian).

confidential documents.[2121] This secrecy persisted during and in the aftermath of the 2022 protests. As a result, no information is publicly available about the details of the directives issued by the Supreme Council in connection with the 2022 uprising.

However, on 27 October 2022, state media outlets reported that the then secretary general of the Supreme Council, Ali Shamkhani, and the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, convened a meeting with members of the Assembly of Experts[2122] during which "they presented a report about the riots over the last month and the performance of security institutions in controlling and thwarting the enemies' exploitation of societal tensions".[2123]

Although no further details were disclosed, state media reports about the occurrence of this joint presentation from the top leadership of FARAJA and the Supreme Council, at the very least, indicates the involvement of the Supreme Council in evaluating the deployment and conduct of security forces in response to the protests.

Indicative of its vast constitutional power for strategic decision-making and composition, throughout the period of the protests, the Supreme Council was addressed as the top decision-making body by both political actors who criticized the severity of the repression as well as those who advocated for even a harsher response.

For example, on 20 November 2022, following an intensified wave of unlawful killings,[2124] the then member of parliament for Mahabad, West Azerbaijan province, Jalal Mahmoudzadeh, wrote an urgent letter to the then secretary general of the Supreme Council, Ali Shamkhani. According to excerpts quoted by state media, the letter denounced "the killing of hundreds of young people… leaving many children orphaned, hundreds of women widowed and families grieving." The letter also noted that "in the past three days, several innocent young people from Mahabad were killed or injured." Jalal Mahmoudzadeh called on the Supreme Council to order "military and security forces to treat the people of Mahabad with more respect… and restraint".[2125] According to state media reports, Jalal Mahmoudzadeh also sent the letter to the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the minister of interior and urged them to "order prompt action" to address the concerns raised.[2126]

In another development, on 24 November 2022, a group of former politicians met with Ali Shamkhani and the head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i. They raised concerns about the treatment

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2121. See Pishkhan, شورایی برای تصمیم‌سازی ["A council for policy-making"], 1 August 2023, https://www.pishkhan.com/news/301735 (in Persian).

2122. Articles 107 and 111 of Iran's current constitution define the Assembly of Experts as a state body responsible for appointing, supervising and, in theory, dismissing the Supreme Leader. In practice, however, it has never removed a Supreme Leader from office. The Assembly is composed of clerics elected by popular vote, but all candidates must first be approved by the Guardian Council. Given that the Supreme Leader directly and indirectly controls the composition of the Guardian Council, this arrangement creates a circular system in which the body responsible for appointing and removing the Supreme Leader is itself shaped by institutions under his control.

2123. ISNA, گزارش شمخانی و اشتری به مجمع تشخیص مصلحت درباره حوادث ماه اخیر ["Shamkhani and Ashtari's report to the Expediency Discernment Council on incidents of the past month"], 27 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080503028/گزارش-شمخانی-و-اشتری-به-مجمع-تشخیص-مصلحت-درباره-حوادث-ماه-اخیر (in Persian).

2124. See Chapter 5.

2125. See Donya-e-Eqtesad, جزئیات حوادث مهاباد از زبان نماینده مجلس/ چند نفر کشته شدند؟ ["Details of the incidents in Mahabad from the Mahabad MP's perspective / How many were killed?"], 21 November 2022, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/-62/3918933-بخش-سایت-خوان-جزئیات-حوادث-مهاباد-از-زبان-نماینده-مجلس-چند-نفر-کشته-شدند (in Persian); KurdPress, نامه نماینده مهاباد در مجلس به دبیر شورای عالی امنیت ملی در خصوص اتفاقات مهاباد ["MP of Mahabad's letter to the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council regarding events in Mahabad"], 20 November 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/39611/نامه-نماینده-مهاباد-در-مجلس-به-دبیر-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی-در-خصوص (in Persian).

2126. KurdPress, نامه نماینده مهاباد در مجلس به دبیر شورای عالی امنیت ملی در خصوص اتفاقات مهاباد ["MP of Mahabad's letter to the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council regarding events in Mahabad"], 20 November 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/39611/نامه-نماینده-مهاباد-در-مجلس-به-دبیر-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی-در-خصوص (in Persian).

of protesters and detainees by the security apparatus and judiciary, and urged them to ensure, using their powerful positions, that protesters were not subjected to further "harsh, violent behaviour".[2127]

At the other end of the spectrum, on 4 November 2022, a member of parliament for Karaj, Fardis and Eshtehard in Alborz province, Mehdi Asgari, described the ongoing protests as a "war against people's security" and called on the Supreme Council to "severely confront" protesters whom he accused of "spreading violence and terror and assaulting the country's security perimeter."[2128]

Additionally, although none of the resolutions of the Supreme Council have been made public to date, several statements by Iranian state officials reveal that the Supreme Council had adopted resolutions during the protests to advance repression. For example, on 13 November 2022, the then head of Alameh Tabatabyee University in Tehran, Abdollah Mo'tamedi, stated that "a new order from the Supreme Council" permits disciplinary committees of universities to expel students who have been warned for their prominent involvement in protests.[2129]

On 14 March 2023, a member of the Parliamentary Cultural Commission, Bijan Nobaveh, stated, in the context of defending a repressive bill that further erodes the human rights of women and girls who defy compulsory veiling laws,[2130] that the bill had been developed to counter the "the problem of unveiling and public exposure of the body in public places and in the public eye" in accordance with Article 1(d) of Resolution No. 330618 adopted by the Supreme Council on 11 December 2022.[2131] Amnesty International was unable to find further details about this resolution. It is notable that, at the time of its adoption in December 2022, women and girls standing up for their human rights and those supporting them were facing widespread and systematic patterns of arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence.[2132]

10.4.3(II) STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

On 3 December 2022, the State Security Council issued an extensive statement that emphasized its resolve to "more firmly carry out its responsibility to create security" amid protests that it described as a "hybrid war", instigated by "a network of professional, organized troublemakers under the leadership of the British-Saudi media" and involving "riots and terrorist activities".[2133]

2127. Aftab News, در نشست اصلاح‌طلبان با شمخانی و اژه‌ای چه گذشت ["What transpired during the Reformist faction's meeting with Shamkhani and Ejei"], 24 November 2022, https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/810023/در-نشست-اصلاح‌طلبان-با-شمخانی-و-اژه‌ای-چه-گذشت (in Persian).
2128. Khabarban, درخواست مهم از شورای عالی امنیت ملی ["An important request to the Supreme National Security Council"], 4 November 2022, https://36336623.khabarban.com (in Persian)
2129. Shargh Daily, دستور جدید شورای عالی امنیت ملی درباره ممنوع الورودی دانشجویان ["New order from the Supreme National Security Council regarding the ban on student entry"], 13 November 2022, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-بخش-جامعه-220/861265-دستور-جدید-شورای-عالی-امنیت-ملی-درباره-ممنوع-الورودی-دانشجویان (in Persian).
2130. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Women and girls facing violent crackdown" (Index: MDE 13/8029/2024), 7 May 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8029/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Draconian campaign to enforce compulsory veiling laws through surveillance and mass car confiscations", 6 March 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/03/iran-draconian-campaign-to-enforce-compulsory-veiling-laws-through-surveillance-and-mass-car-confiscations; Amnesty International, "Iran: Testimonies provide a frightening glimpse into the daily reality of women and girls" (Index: MDE 13/7770/2024), 6 March 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7770/2024/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities doubling down on punishments against women and girls defying discriminatory veiling laws" (Index: MDE 13/7041/2023), 26 July 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7041/2023/en
2131. Tabnak, ۳۲ دستگاه در زمینه حجاب و وظایف ایجابی و فرهنگی دارند/ قوه قضائیه برای حجاب لایحه دو فوریتی بدهد ["32 organizations have responsibilities in the field of veiling and cultural duties / Judiciary should propose an urgent bill on veiling"], 14 March 2023, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1167808/دستگاه-در-زمینه-حجاب-وظایف-ایجابی-و-فرهنگی-دارند-قوه-قضاییه-برای-حجاب-لایحه-دو-فوریتی-بدهد-باید-به-گونه-ای-عمل--۳۲-شود-که-جامعه-دو-قطبی-نشود (in Persian).
2132. UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras 714-726, 739-749 and 756-770; Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).
2133. Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, بیانیه شورای امنیت کشور درباره رخدادهای اخیر ["Statement of the National Security Council regarding recent events"], 3 December 2022, https://dolat.ir/detail/400920

The statement stressed that "security and police forces, with all their strength and resolve, would not allow a group of troublemakers, supported by foreign intelligence, to threaten public safety any further." It declared that "any disruption of public order or unauthorized gatherings at any level or location will be met with strict and decisive action".

The statement added: "Judicial investigations into the rioters and those causing insecurity in social environments and the psychological atmosphere of society will be conducted in as short a period of time as possible."

These prescriptive warnings suggest that the State Security Council may have issued resolutions to a similar effect.

In its statement, the State Security Council also contributed to state cover-ups shielding the security forces from accountability. The statement acknowledged that over 200 people had been killed during the protests. However, without providing a detailed breakdown, it suggested that most were killed by non-state actors. It further indicated various categories of victims, including "innocent individuals" caught up in the "security chaos", as well as "armed rioters", implying that the security forces' use of lethal force against them was justified.

The statement read:

> **"More than 200 individuals have lost their lives and they can be divided as follows: security martyrs [a term used by the authorities to refer to state agents killed during protests]; public martyrs [killed] during terrorist activities; innocent individuals who fell victim to the grouplets' project of staging killings; innocent people who lost their lives amid the security chaos; and armed rioters as well as anti-revolutionary agents belonging to separatist grouplets."[2134]**

In an apparent response to the disproportionate number of victims belonging to Iran's Kurdish and Baluchi minorities and the greater use of military-grade weapons against them, the statement further framed the repression of the protests as a response to "separatist groups" in border areas. The statement declared:

> **"Iranian ethnic groups in the country's border provinces have been targeted by enemy plots aimed at extending the protests into ethnic and religious conflicts. The riots were orchestrated with the involvement of separatist groups in the provinces of Sistan and Baluchistan, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, with the goal of creating a cycle of violence and division among the nation."[2135]**

10.4.3(III) PROVINCIAL AND COUNTY PROVISION COUNCILS

Amnesty International is not aware of any formal statements issued by the provision councils of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces. Nevertheless, state media reports and public statements by the provision councils' heads and secretaries – namely the provincial governors and their deputies for political, security and social affairs – point to the active involvement of these councils in coordinating and directing protest-repression operations, consistent with their statutory mandate.

For example, on 21 September 2022, Esmail Zarei Kousha, the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, confirmed that the Provision Council of Kurdistan province was issuing instructions to the security forces in relation to the protests and claimed that these instructions were being followed. He portrayed

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2134. Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, بیانیه شورای امنیت کشور درباره رخدادهای اخیر ["Statement of the National Security Council regarding recent events"], 3 December 2022, https://dolat.ir/detail/400920 (in Persian).
2135. Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, بیانیه شورای امنیت کشور درباره رخدادهای اخیر ["Statement of the National Security Council regarding recent events"], 3 December 2022, https://dolat.ir/detail/400920 (in Persian).

the security forces' response as restrained and insinuated that protesters were engaged in armed activities, even though the protesters were unarmed and security forces had unlawfully killed at least four protesters during violent protest dispersals over the preceding two days. He stated:

> **"Regarding the gatherings, we have emphasized in the Provision Council that they should be handled with the utmost restraint and that military or police action should not be taken unless there is a serious necessity... The military forces acted in accordance with our instructions issued through the Provision Council. At the same time, however, we will deal firmly and decisively with individuals who seek to disrupt public security through armed action."[2136]**

On 11 October 2022, amid ongoing repression in Kermanshah province, the then head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah, Mohammad Pourhashemi, acknowledged that the Provision Council of Kermanshah province was actively "managing" the protest response through the adoption of resolutions. He stated:

> **"In Kermanshah province, we were never caught off guard. We monitored the movements with full preparedness and, in the Provision Council meetings, we had a council resolution in place before any event occurred. This played a crucial role in managing the recent events [protests] in the province."[2137]**

On 20 November 2022, state media reported that the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, along with several other members of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province, travelled to Mahabad to assess the situation in the county and issued "the necessary orders for ensuring security and tranquillity". State media added:

> **"The Provision Council of Mahabad county convened last night in the presence of the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan to prove that the city has enough security for the highest-ranking officials of the province to go there for their meeting… In this meeting, emphasis was placed on ensuring maximum security by using the capabilities of the police force, and it was decided that this would be a serious priority for the police."[2138]**

On 21 November 2022, the head of the Office of the Ministry of Intelligence in West Azerbaijan province revealed that the resolutions of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan addressed the use of lethal force by the security forces during the protests.[2139]

2136. Hamshahri Online, ["Important order from the Kurdistan Provision Council: New details on deaths of three people in protests in Kurdistan; protester's liver was ruptured"], 21 September 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/707450/دستور-مهم-شورای-تامین-کردستان-جزئیات-جدید-مرگ-۳-نفر-در-تجمعات (in Persian).
2137. ISNA, ["Media should convey the realities of the Islamic Republic"], 11 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071909711/رسانه-ها-واقعیات-جمهوری-اسلامی-را-بیان-کنند (in Persian).
2138. IRNA, ["Mahabad residents welcome police officers + video / Provincial governor of West Azerbaijan among citizens"], 20 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84948425/استقبال-مردم-مهاباد-از-ماموران-انتظامی-فیلم-استاندار-آذربایجان (in Persian).
2139. See section 10.2.4(IV)(ii) above for the details of his statement.

10.4.4 LEAKED OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

10.4.4(I) LETTER FROM SECRETARY GENERAL OF SUPREME NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL ON 8 NOVEMBER 2022

On 25 June 2023, an opposition group outside Iran released a classified document,[2140] which it claimed was obtained by hacking into the president's website,[2141] and which reveals the efforts of the then secretary general of the Supreme National Security Council, **Ali Shamkhani**, to mitigate the international fallout from the authorities' crackdown, suppress evidence, and avoid accountability on the global stage. In the letter, marked as "very confidential" and dated 8 November 2022, Ali Shamkhani wrote to the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, **Ebrahim Raisi**, regarding the upcoming special session of the UN Human Rights Council on 24 November 2022, which was set to vote on the creation of an independent international fact-finding mission on Iran.[2142]

In his letter, Ali Shamkhani recommended urgent steps to prevent the establishment of such a mechanism, which he warned could create a basis for further international action, including sanctions against Iranian officials and the potential referral of the situation in Iran by the Security Council to the International Criminal Court.

To prevent the establishment of the fact-finding mission, Ali Shamkhani proposed a coordinated strategy combining diplomatic engagement and public relations measures. His key recommendations included inviting the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association to visit Iran as an alternative to an international investigation, while seeking to "manage his travel schedule, delay dates, manage visit plans, and even accept some final recommendations from the Special Rapporteur (such as reforming some minor laws)".

The letter also proposed establishing a domestic investigative mechanism to create the appearance of accountability[2143] and holding court hearings into complaints against security officials in parallel with the prosecution of "rioters", "regardless of whether the officials are convicted or imprisoned", in order to undermine calls for an international investigation.[2144]

The letter further called for intensive diplomatic lobbying of UN Human Rights Council member states, particularly "aligned countries such as China, Brazil, Venezuela, Asian countries such as Qatar, the UAE, Malaysia, as well as some African and Latin American countries", with the aim of securing enough votes against the resolution proposing the establishment of the fact-finding mission.

Finally, it recommended challenging the credibility of human rights reports by "presenting scandalous reports about false information provided by human rights organizations" in order to weaken support for an international investigation mechanism.

2140. See a copy of the document available at Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights Iran, نامه خیلی محرمانه شمخانی به خامنه‌ای و رئیسی، اقدامات پیشنهادی جهت جلوگیری از تشکیل کمیته حقیقت‌یاب ["Confidential Letter of Ali Shamkhani to Khamenei and Raisi Suggesting Measures to Prevent the UN Fact-Finding Mission"], 8 November 2022, https://www.iranrights.org/library/document/4061 (accessed on 6 August 2026).

2141. Radio Farda, نامهٔ «خیلی محرمانه» شمخانی به خامنه‌ای برای جلوگیری از تشکیل کمیته حقیقت‌یاب شورای حقوق بشر ["Shamkhani's 'top secret' letter to Khamenei to prevent the formation of a Human Rights Council fact-finding mission"], 25 June 2023, https://www.radiofarda.com/a/ali-shamkhani-warned-khamenei-amid-iran-s-protests/32475059.html (in Persian). The document is also on file with Amnesty International.

2142. Amnesty International, "Iran: Landmark UN fact-finding mission marks long-awaited turning point in tackling systematic impunity", 24 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-landmark-un-fact-finding-mission-marks-long-awaited-turning-point-in-tackling-systematic-impunity/

2143. For more information on this, see section 11.4.

2144. For more information on the flawed nature of these proceedings and how they ultimately failed to ensure accountability, see section 11.3.

The Iranian authorities did not succeed in shielding themselves from international scrutiny, and member states of the UN Human Rights Council overwhelmingly voted during the Special Session on 24 November 2022 to establish the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran).[2145]

10.4.4(II) LETTER FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR ON 8 JANUARY 2023

Amnesty International reviewed a leaked letter written by the then minister of interior, **Ahmad Vahidi**, to the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, **Ebrahim Raisi** on 8 January 2023.[2146] This document was published by an opposition group called Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni (Uprising till Overthrow) on its Telegram channel.[2147] The document is marked as "very confidential".

The letter reveals that, on 13 October 2022, the State Security Council passed a resolution instructing the Budget and Planning Organization to allocate 9 trillion rials (22 million US dollars)[2148] to the Ministry of Interior "given the heavy security costs across all provinces, the prolonged and expanding nature of recent riots in various sectors, and the provinces' need for financial resources to manage different aspects of the event [referring to protests]."[2149]

10.4.4(III) ORDER FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

Amnesty International reviewed two leaked official documents, namely copies of resolutions adopted by the State Security Council on 18 September 2022 and 26 September 2022, each accompanied by a cover letter signed by the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, **Majid Mir Ahmadi**, communicating the resolutions to various authorities for implementation.[2150] Consistent with the previously described structure, in which the minister of interior and his deputy minister of interior for police and security transform the State Security Council's advisory resolutions into binding orders, the leaked cover letters illustrate this process with respect to the two resolutions.

These documents were published by an opposition group called Edalat-e Ali, which has been able to obtain internal official documents related to over 3 million cases archived in the online system of Iran's judiciary and made them publicly available through an online database.[2151]

2145. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Landmark UN fact-finding mission marks long-awaited turning point in tackling systematic impunity", 24 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-landmark-un-fact-finding-mission-marks-long-awaited-turning-point-in-tackling-systematic-impunity

2146. See Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni, Telegram post: نامه خیلی محرمانه احمد وحیدی وزیر کشور به رئیسی ["Very confidential letter from Ahmad Vahidi, minister of the interior, to Raisi"], 26 June 2023, https://t.me/ghyamsarnegouni/1508 (accessed on 11 August 2026).

2147. Ghyam Ta Sarnegouni, Telegram channel, https://t.me/ghyamsarnegouni (accessed on 11 August 2026).

2148. At the time, 22 million US dollars was the approximate equivalent of 9 trillion rials at the market exchange rate, while the approximate equivalent at the central bank exchange rate was 215 million US dollars. This is a reflection of Iran's dual exchange rate system.

2149. See section 10.4.4(II) for details about the content of this letter.

2150. Justice of Iran, مهسا امینی (بررسی ابعاد امنیتی) ["Mahsa Amini (security dimensions analysis)"], https://www.edaalat.org/posts/11 (accessed on 11 August 2026); and Justice of Iran, اعتراضات ۹۸ و ۱۴۰۱ - قسمت دوم ["Protests of 2019 and 2022 – part two"], https://www.edaalat.org/posts/31 (accessed on 11 August 2026).

2151. Justice of Iran, https://www.edaalat.org/home (accessed on 11 August 2026).

The leaked document dated 18 September 2022 records the decisions adopted by the Intelligence Committee of the State Security Council during a session held on this same date, after it summarizes the statements by several officials present in the meeting.[2152] This seven-page document is accompanied by a one-page cover letter signed by **Majid Mir Ahmadi**. The title beneath his name and signature identifies him as the deputy minister of interior for police and security and secretary general of the State Security Council.

In his cover letter, Majid Mir Ahmadi addresses nine officials and communicates to them the decisions adopted by the State Security Council in its 18 September 2022 session. He instructs the nine officials to issue the necessary orders to their subordinates for the implementation of the State Security Council's decisions and to subsequently report the outcomes to the council's secretariat.



Leaked document, dated 18 September 2022, containing a one-page cover letter signed by the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, communicating to various officials the decisions adopted by the State Security Council in its 18 September 2022 session © State Security Council

The nine officials addressed are referenced only by their positions. Based on state media reports and other leaked official documents reviewed by Amnesty International, the organization was able to identify the full names of five of them, and the first name of the sixth. The nine officials are the deputy prosecutor general for political and security affairs, **Mehdi Amiri Esfahani**;[2153] the deputy minister of intelligence in soft security;[2154] the deputy minister of intelligence in counter-espionage, **Hamidi**;[2155] the head of the Intelligence Organization of the Ministry of Intelligence in Tehran province;[2156] and the then deputy minister of interior for political affairs, **Mohammad Reza Gholamreza**;[2157] the then deputy head of the Intelligence Organization of the

2152. Note 6 to Article 3 of the State Security Council Law provides that "the State Security Council may establish committees to conduct preliminary reviews of specialized security issues." The document is on file with Amnesty International.

2153. See Mizan News Agency, ["Deputy prosecutor general for political and security affairs: High participation in elections is achieved by following the law"], 17 February 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4760234/معاون-سیاسی-امنیتی-دادستان-کل-کشور-مشارکت-بالا-در-انتخابات-با-رعایت-قانون-شکل-می‌گیرد (in Persian).

2154. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain the name of this official.

2155. Amnesty International identified the last name through another leaked official document also discussed in this section. The organization was unable to ascertain the first name of the official.

2156. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain the name of this official.

2157. See Iran Student Correspondents Association, ["What was the story behind the dismissal of the deputy minister of interior for political affairs?"], 15 August 2023, https://www.iscanews.ir/news/1194035/ماجرای-برکناری-معاون-سیاسی-وزارت-کشور-چه-بود (in Persian).

IRGC, **Mehdi Sayaree**;[2158] the intelligence deputy of the Sarallah Headquarters in Tehran;[2159] the then head of the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA, **Mohammad Babayee**,[2160] and the then head of FARAJA in Greater Tehran, **Hossein Rahimi.**[2161]

Four additional officials are listed in copy including the then head of the Military Office of the Supreme Leader, **Mohammad Shirazi**;[2162] the then head of the Office of the President, **Gholamhossein Esmaili**;[2163] the then Secretary General of the Supreme Council, **Ali Shamkhani**; and the then minister of interior and head of the State Security Council, **Ahmad Vahidi**.

The segments summarizing the discussions during the 18 September 2022 session reveal that, from the outset, the authorities adopted a narrative framing peaceful protests and defiance against compulsory veiling as the work of "counter-revolutionaries", "hostile" agents, and armed Kurdish opposition groups, setting the tone for the state's messaging in the months that followed. For example:

- The then deputy minister of interior for political affairs, **Mohammad Reza Gholamreza**,[2164] is recorded as stating that the "anti-revolutionary movement is pursuing, from a long-term perspective, the creation of rifts within the establishment."
- The then deputy head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, **Mehdi Sayaree**,[2165] raises concerns about various issues, including the active teachers' union movement in Kurdistan province, and that the "women's movement is one of the key issues on which the Anti-Revolution has focused."
- An official identified as **Mr Bajestani** is recorded as expressing concerns about various issues, including "problematic… and anti-revolutionary movements" and "hostile groups" seizing on the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini as an "opportunity" to mobilize street protests and increase pressure on the Islamic Republic to "retreat from the issue of veiling". He adds that Kurdish opposition groups, specifically the Komala Party of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, "have not yet intervened in a hard manner… but are pursuing soft action."
- An official identified as **Mr Mahdavi** expresses concern about "the emergence of all-out warfare" and "the formation of a war involving [Kurdish opposition] parties." He adds that "hostile currents [involving] celebrities are active."

2158. See Entekhab, جانشین سازمان اطلاعات سپاه: دشمنان می‌خواستند حجاب را مرکز ثقل همه اعتراضات قرار دهند تا به عنوان موتور محرک براندازی نظام از آن استفاده کنند ["Deputy head of Intelligence Organization of the IRGC: Enemies wanted to make veiling the focal point of protests to use it as a driving force for overthrowing the system"], 24 November 2023, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/745993/جانشین-سازمان-اطلاعات-سپاه-دشمنان-می‌خواستند-حجاب-را-مرکز-ثقل-همه-اعتراضات-قرار-دهند-تا-به-عنوان-موتور-محرک-براندازی-نظام-از-آن-استفاده-کنند-دشمن-معتقد-بود-۲-ساحت-مردم-سالاری-و-کارآمدی-نظام-در-سال‌های-قبل-آسیب-جدی-دیده (in Persian).

2159. Amnesty International was unable to ascertain the name of this official.

2160. See Iranian Worker News Agency, اسلام، مردم و رهبری دست استکبار را از کشور کوتاه کرده است ["Islam, the people and leadership have cut off the hands of arrogance from the country"], 9 February 2023, https://iwna.ir/news/اسلام-مردم-و-رهبری-دست-استکبار-را-از-کش (in Persian).

2161. See ISNA, خداحافظی سردار رحیمی از پلیس پایتخت؛ انتصاب به عنوان رئیس پلیس ["General Rahimi's farewell from Tehran Police: Appointment as head of the police"], 29 January 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401110906541/خداحافظی-سردار-رحیمی-از-پلیس-پایتخت-انتصاب-به-عنوان-رئیس-پلیس (in Persian).

2162. See Khabar Online, رییس دفتر نظامی رهبر انقلاب: همین امروز برخی به ظاهر ابرقدرت ["Head of the Military Office of the Supreme Leader: Even today, some appear as superpowers"], 8 October 2022, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1681418/رییس-دفتر-نظامی-رهبر-انقلاب-همین-امروز-برخی-به-ظاهر-ابرقدرت (in Persian).

2163. See Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, غلامحسین اسماعیلی به سمت رئیس دفتر رئیس جمهور منصوب شد ["Gholamhossein Esmaili appointed as head of the Office of the President"], 8 August 2021, https://president.ir/fa/130485 (in Persian).

2164. In the document, the official is identified as Mr Ghomreza. Amnesty International identified his name and position based on the accompanying cover letter, which referred to his role, and state media reports that identified the full name of the official holding this position.

2165. In the document, the official is identified as Mr Sayaree. Amnesty International identified his name and position based on the accompanying cover letter, which referred to his role, and state media reports that identified the full name of the official holding this position.

While the discussions recorded do not explicitly address the use of force or firearms, they reveal that, from the outset, authorities defined the prevention and repression of protests as a top priority. The discussions also allude to a strategy of presenting subsequent protester killings as "staged killings" by Kurdish opposition groups, a narrative later echoed consistently by FARAJA and IRGC commanders, as well as by the minister of interior and provincial governors. For example,

- An official identified as **Mr Rastegar** expresses concern about various issues, including the potential spread of protests, particularly to Tehran, in response to "events in Kurdistan or possible staged killings".
- The then minister of interior, **Ahmad Vahidi**, is recorded as stating that the session on 18 September 2022 had been convened to review "the intelligence-operational scene" and ensure that further "street protests do not take place".
- The then national head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA, **Mehdi Masoum Beigi**, is recorded as referring to the protests that took place in front of Kasra Hospital in Tehran on the evening of 16 September 2022, following Zhina Mahsa Amini's death, noting, "Thank God, the aforementioned protests were managed." He warns that "our assessment is that the situation will be ongoing" and that, "in the coming days, there is a possibility of confrontation with the police forces."
- The official recorded as **Mr Bajestani** is recorded as warning that "if we allow protests to form, the security system will become entangled for weeks" and emphasizes that the "our top strategy is to prevent protests from forming."

In addition to repressing street protests, the discussions focus on silencing other forms of dissent and expressions of solidarity, both online and offline, within Iran and internationally. As part of this strategy, the discussions, as recorded in the document, also reveal that extensive surveillance and close monitoring, as well as harassment, intimidation and persecution of public figures and others expressing solidarity were already underway. For example:

- The then national head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA, **Mehdi Masoum Beigi**, is recorded as expressing concern that "civil and political associations, athletes, artists [including] actors, singers and bloggers, political figures… along with enemies, families of those killed and foreign media… have expressed positions." He adds that: "during the first 24 hours [after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini], 360,000 tweets… were posted and tweet likes surpassed 11 million" and that "56,000 posts were also published on Telegram."
- The official recorded as **Mr Bajestani** is recorded as announcing that "we have contacted most social media activists" and "given a warning to some elements of political currents", referring to patterns of security and intelligence agents harassing activists and dissidents who criticize the authorities online and pressuring them to delete their posts and cease their activism. He adds that "in the Clubhouse, a voice-based social network, strongly worded statements were made against the system".
- The official identified as **Mr Mahdavi** adds that "the issue of embassies and NGOs must be taken seriously" and emphasizes that "strikes must be managed by the Security Committee [of] the State Security Council." He is also recording as stating that "fruit and vegetable markets are under the control of Kurds", apparently implying concerns about potential protests or strikes in those areas.
- The official identified as **Mr Rastegar** stresses that "universities must be managed".

The discussions also reveal extensive deliberations on gathering information and internally documenting the causes and circumstances of Zhina Mahsa Amini's death, while simultaneously

suppressing this information from public view. They also refer to repressive efforts aimed at silencing her family or coercing them and doctors into publicly endorsing the state's narrative. For example:

- The official identified as **Mr Bajestani** is recorded as noting that Zhina Mahsa Amini's family "remained steadfast and not retreating", stating that the family must be "managed". He further suggests that older medical records indicating she had undergone surgery years ago had been obtained and should be published if doctors decline to give media interviews. Based on the context of the statement and the authorities' long-standing practices, Amnesty International understands that this refers to interviews that would support the state narrative attributing her death to a stroke.[2166]
- The then deputy head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, **Mehdi Sayaree**,[2167] is recorded as similarly stating that, "if the father [of Zhina Mahsa Amini] gives a brief interview acknowledging her illness, this would be very effective."[2168]
- An official identified as the **FARAJA representative** is also recorded as stating that if Zhina Mahsa Amini's father "gives a brief interview, all matters will be resolved". Additionally, the FARAJA representative mentioned that a doctor had documented Zhina Mahsa's condition before her death, that FARAJA covered her hospital expenses, and that footage from before she entered the building where she collapsed exists and was shown upon request, though it is unclear to whom the footage was shown.
- The deputy prosecutor general for political and security affairs, **Mehdi Amiri Esfahani**,[2169] is recorded as advising that "we must not focus all our attention on the history of illness, and in the field of media, we should consider an alternative approach." He adds that "an image of the system being biased should not be created and that, while displaying authority is necessary, making it believable for the people that a fair examination is taking place is also important."
- The then minister of interior, **Ahmad Vahidi**, is recorded as stating that FARAJA must submit a written report on the incident leading to the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini and provide all related evidence. He adds that "an information headquarters, consisting of the Ministry of Intelligence, the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, the Police for the Sphere of the

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2166. The proposed interviews with doctors referring to Zhina Mahsaj's past medical records and surgery materialized. See Nabze Bazaar, صحبت‌های دکتر مهسا امینی در مورد سابقه بیماری قبلی او ["Statements by Mahsa Amini's doctor regarding her previous medical history"], 21 December 2022, https://nabzebaazaar.com/fa/news/139747/صحبت‌های-دکتر-مهسا-امینی-در-مورد-سابقه-بیماری-قبلی-او (in Persian). See also UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, Report of the independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2 February 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/67, paras 16-20; Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent international action needed to ensure accountability for Mahsa Amini's death in custody" (Index: MDE 13/6060/2022), 27 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6060/2022/en

2167. In the document, the official is identified as Mr Sayaree. Amnesty International identified his name and position based on the accompanying cover letter, which referred to his role, and state media reports that identified the full name of the official holding this position.

2168. State media outlets subsequently aired fragmented interview clips with Zhina Mahsa Amini's father to promote the state narrative. However, he later denied this narrative in other interviews and resisted the pressure to distort the truth about the causes and circumstances surrounding her daughter's death. See reza9194, پدر مهسا امینی در پزشکی قانونی مجبور شد اعتراف به مریضی دخترش کند ["Mahsa Amini's father was forced at the Legal Medicine Organization to confess that his daughter had an illness"], 28 December 2022, https://www.aparat.com/v/gH97M (in Persian); Mardom Salari, پدر مهسا امینی: پزشکی قانونی گفت در گزارشم هرچه بخواهم می‌نویسم ["Mahsa Amini's father: Legal Medicine Organization said, 'I will write whatever I want in my report'"], 20 October 2022, https://www.mardomsalari.ir/news/177843/پدر-مهسا-امینی-پزشکی-قانونی-گفت-گزارشم-هرچه-بخواهم-می-نویسم (in Persian); BBC Persian, اختصاصی بی‌بی‌سی فارسی؛ پدر مهسا امینی گزارش پزشک قانونی و سابقه بیماری را «دروغ» خواند ["BBC Persian exclusive: Mahsa Amini's father called the forensic report and the alleged medical history a 'lie'"], 21 September 2022, https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-62989457 (in Persian).

2169. In the document, the official is identified as Mr Amiri Esfahani. Amnesty International identified his name and position based on the accompanying cover letter, which referred to his role, and state media reports that identified the full name of the official holding this position.

Production and Exchange of Information,[2170] and the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Corporation, had been established… to manage the issue of information dissemination."

- An official identified as the **"representative for counterterrorism"** is recorded as expressing concern about potential challenges the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran may face during his upcoming trip to New York, given the "recent incident", in reference to the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. He stresses that the "president's narrative regarding the recent incident must be precise". He further notes that "the biggest issue is the lack of competing content in the social media space".

After this summary of the discussion, the document outlines the assessments and adopted decisions of the Intelligence Committee of the State Security Council in 22 paragraphs.



Leaked document, dated 18 September 2022, recording the decisions adopted by the Intelligence Committee of the State Security Council during a session held on the same date © State Security Council

The first three paragraphs summarize assessments of the security situation and the evolution of protests. Paragraph 1 notes:

> **"Assessment of intelligence bodies indicating that the death of Ms [Zhina Mahsa] Amini has garnered extensive attention on social media... with content production and sharing on Twitter and Telegram surpassing the levels seen during the 2019 riots [the nationwide protests in November 2019]."**

Paragraph 2 adds that intelligence bodies assess that, in this case, "widespread social media protests could evolve into a security challenge for the system in the physical space." Paragraph 3 warns that the protests could extend beyond Kurdistan and become nationwide.

Paragraphs 4, 5, 11 and 17 emphasize the role of FARAJA, among other bodies, in repressing the protests.

Paragraph 4 states:

> **"Current conditions and upcoming possibilities necessitate complete vigilance and preparedness from intelligence and security bodies. To this end, necessary precautions and measures must be taken by**

2170. In the original document in Persian, this entity, known otherwise in English as Iran's cyber police, is referred to by its Persian acronym FATA.

FARAJA, the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC."

Paragraph 5 states:

> **"The Security Council's resolution to prevent the formation of initial protest cells must remain the top priority for intelligence, security and police bodies, particularly FARAJA, as the primary strategy for managing and controlling the situation on the ground."**

Paragraph 11 notes that "FARAJA's actions in various fields related to serving the people [such as] ensuring order and public security… should be appropriately publicized."[2171]

Paragraph 17 says that "FARAJA must take action to strengthen the police forces in Kurdistan."

Paragraph 22 of the resolution instructs the provincial governors and the provision councils of all provinces to act as follows:

> **"The esteemed provincial governors and the provision councils of provinces should continuously monitor the situation in their provinces, prevent assemblies from occurring, identify all individuals and elements involved in issuing calls for protests, and take the necessary actions against them."**

Paragraph 21 of the resolution issues the following instruction to the Provision Council of Kurdistan province: "The Provision Council of Kurdistan province should take measures to prevent the bazaar merchants' strike from taking place on Monday 19 September 2022 or any other day."

The rest of the paragraphs call for rigorous surveillance and intelligence gathering and the suppression of dissident voices by various authorities.

Paragraph 9 states that "the Security Committee of the State Security Council must monitor possible issues and events such as calls, strikes and illegal gatherings and adopt the decisions necessary."

Paragraph 6 says:

> **"The intelligence community must focus on the control and management of crisis hotspots, particularly problematic agents, and, to this end, use appropriate methods [including] admonition, persuasion, warnings, referral to the judiciary and others."**

Paragraph 7 instructs "bodies responsible in the cyber domain [to] increase their level of vigilance while blocking websites, channels and other [platforms] that publish illegal calls."

Paragraph 8 says:

> **"The Intelligence Coordination Council[2172] and its subsidiary committees must convene regular sessions and undertake the necessary measures and coordination for the division of tasks within the intelligence community, particularly concerning the persuasion of those who post untruthful comments in the online space [such as] as artists, athletes and political agents."**

Paragraph 12 states:

> **"Given the significance of countering the narratives concocted by hostile and anti-revolutionary outlets and the remarks of malicious individuals, the Psychological Operations Committee within the Ministry of**

2171. Official statements that praise FARAJA and describe them as servants of the people are consistent with this directive.
2172. The Intelligence Coordination Council is a body whose members include the heads of various intelligence organizations of the Islamic Republic of Iran including the Ministry of Intelligence and the Intelligence Organizations and the Intelligence Protection Organizations of the IRGC and FARAJA. The council facilitates the necessary consultations to coordinate the country's numerous intelligence organizations with one another. The head of the Intelligence Coordination Council is the minister of intelligence.

Intelligence must convene regular sessions, with the entities responsible present, and adopt the necessary measures."

Paragraph 15 calls for extensive surveillance of international responses, including NGO efforts, stating: "Intelligence surveillance of embassies [in Iran], related agents, international offices and associations, NGOs, and others must be in the working agenda of the intelligence community."

Paragraph 16 orders the IRGC's Sarallah Headquarters and the Intelligence Organization of the Ministry of Intelligence in Tehran to "separately prepare comprehensive reports about the incident of the death of Ms [Zhina] Mahsa Amini and submit them to the secretariat of the State Security Council within 24 hours."

Paragraph 18 gives the following instruction: "The judiciary must publicly remind prominent individuals (considering the untruthful statements of celebrities and others) of the necessity of upholding and respecting the psychological security of the society."

Paragraphs 19 and 20 state that, based on previous divisions of tasks, the responsibility for surveillance, control and necessary measures regarding athletes and politicians falls under the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC while the Ministry of Intelligence is responsible for actors, artists and "anti-revolutionary movements" and that both must pursue these responsibilities "seriously, urgently and consistently".

Amnesty International's analysis of the leaked resolution from 18 September 2022 reveals how from the very outset of the protests following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, officials participating in State Security Council sessions engaged in extensive surveillance, information gathering and joint oversight across multiple domains, including developments on the ground, social media discourse and international reactions. This level of close monitoring is critical in establishing that top officials, including FARAJA and IRGC commanders, the minister of interior and the deputy minister of interior for police and security, had detailed and timely knowledge of the unfolding situation, and challenges any claims that these officials were unaware of the conduct of their subordinates.

Furthermore, the document reveals coordinated and systematic response planning through directives issued to key state institutions, including FARAJA, the IRGC, provincial and county provision councils, the Ministry of Intelligence and the judiciary. Critically, the document also illustrates how the council's decisions were operationalized and made binding through formal communications issued by the deputy minister of interior for police and security, confirming a centralized structure with clearly documented chains of authority.

10.4.4(IV) ORDER FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2022

The second leaked official document, dated 26 September 2022, outlines the decisions adopted by the State Security Council during its "extraordinary" 730th session, held on this date.[2173] The document detailing the adopted decisions consists of three pages and is again accompanied by a one-page cover letter from the then secretary of the State Security Council and deputy minister of interior for police and security, **Majid Mir Ahmadi**.

In his cover letter, Majid Mir Ahmadi communicates the adopted decisions to eight officials and instructs them to issue the necessary orders for implementation of the decisions. The eight officials are referred to by their last names and positions. However, for six of them, Amnesty International was able to obtain their first names through the analysis of state media reports. The eight officials are the deputy

2173. The document is on file with Amnesty International.

prosecutor general for political and security affairs, **Mehdi Amiri Esfahani**;[2174] the public and revolutionary prosecutor general of Tehran, **Ali Salehi**;[2175] the deputy minister of intelligence for political, cultural and social affairs, **Salimi**;[2176] the deputy minister of intelligence in counterterrorism, **Hamidi**;[2177] the then operations deputy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, **Mehdi Rabani**;[2178] the deputy commander of the Sarallah Headquarters, **Hossein Nejat**;[2179] the then head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization, **Gholamreza Soleimani**;[2180] and the then head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, **Mohammad Kazemi**.[2181]

The document begins by noting that the session on 26 September 2022 was convened under the leadership of the minister of interior and included "key members of the State Security Council", as well as the minister of culture and Islamic guidance and the minister of sports and youth present as "guests". The document then proceeds to record the decisions of the State Security Council under a heading "working agenda: review of the latest situation of recent riots".



Leaked document, dated 26 September 2022, containing a one-page cover letter signed by the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, communicating to various officials the decisions adopted by the State Security Council in its 26 September 2022 session © State Security Council

Several paragraphs focus on directives to FARAJA, the IRGC and the Ministry of Intelligence, emphasizing the need to bring the protests to an end. Paragraph 2 states:

> **"Given the negative consequences of the protracted presence of rioters in the streets… including the reflection of the issue at the international level… it was decided that FARAJA, the IRGC and the Ministry of Intelligence[2182] would seriously place on their working agenda the deployment of various intelligence and operational methods, including infiltration into the key cells of rioters, to end riots and unauthorized gatherings in all parts of the country."**

Paragraph 3 orders "intelligence bodies to pursue as a matter of priority the identification and targeting of the leaders and key elements of the riots."

2174. Mizan News Agency, معاون سیاسی امنیتی دادستان کل کشور: مشارکت بالا در انتخابات با رعایت قانون شکل می‌گیرد ["Deputy prosecutor general for political and security affairs: High participation in elections is achieved by following the law"], 17 February 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4760234/معاون-سیاسی-امنیتی-دادستان-کل-کشور-مشارکت-بالا-در-انتخابات-با-رعایت-قانون-شکل-می‌گیرد (in Persian).

2175. Mehr News Agency, القاضی‌مهر و صالحی رئیس‌کل دادگستری و دادستان جدید تهران شدند ["Alghasi Mehr and Salehi appointed as head of the justice department of Tehran province and prosecutor of Tehran"], 29 November 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5363809/القاضی-مهر-و-صالحی-رئیس-کل-دادگستری-و-دادستان-جدید-تهران-شدند (in Persian).

2176. In the document, he is referred to by the honorific title of Hijjat ol-Islam, which is used for mid-ranking clerics in Iran. Amnesty International was unable to verify his first name.

2177. Amnesty International was unable to verify his first name.

2178. Tabnak, ایران نقش مهمی در بومی‌سازی امنیتی دارد ["Iran plays an important role in localizing security"], 26 June 2021, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1060143/ایران-نقش-مهمی-در-بومی‌سازی-امنیتی-دارد (in Persian).

2179. Fars News Agency, سردار نجات جانشین فرمانده قرارگاه ثارالله تهران شد ["General Nejat appointed as deputy commander of the Sarallah Headquarters in Tehran"], 21 June 2020, https://farsnews.ir/politics/15927183610009475 66/سردار-نجات-جانشین-فرمانده-قرارگاه-ثارالله-تهران-شد (in Persian).

2180. IRIB News, انتصاب سردار غلامرضا سلیمانی به ریاست سازمان بسیج مستضعفین سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Appointment of General Gholamreza Soleimani as head of the Basij-e Mostaza'fin Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps"], 2 July 2019, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2465284/انتصاب-سردار-غلامرضا-سلیمانی-به-ریاست-سازمان-بسیج-مستضعفین-سپاه-پاسداران-انقلاب-اسلامی (in Persian).

2181. Tasnim News Agency, سردار محمد کاظمی رئیس سازمان اطلاعات سپاه شد ["General Mohammad Kazemi appointed as head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC"], 23 June 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/04/02/2733202/سردار-محمد-کاظمی-رئیس-سازمان-اطلاعات-سپاه-شد (in Persian).

2182. The term used in the document is VAJA, which is the Persian acronym of the Ministry of Intelligence of the Islamic Republic.

The resolution reinforces the state narrative portraying protesters as those responsible for carrying out killings, despite substantial evidence indicating that security forces were responsible for the mass killing of protesters and bystanders. By 26 September 2022, when this resolution was forced, FARAJA and IRGC forces had killed at least 87 protesters and bystanders nationwide during protest dispersals and in militarized areas.[2183] Rather than addressing these state-perpetrated killings, paragraph 4 of the resolution instructs FARAJA, the IRGC and the Ministry of Intelligence agents, acting as "judicial officers",[2184] to "expedite the preparation of case files and the judicial processing of… those groups of rioters and grouplet agents who have committed murder." The resolution does not clarify whether this refers to the deaths of protesters, security agents or others.

Crucially, the resolution also highlights the Ministry of Interior's role in facilitating coordination between FARAJA and the IRGC. Paragraph 4 gives the following instruction: "Mr Taheri,[2185] the assistant to the minister of interior, will carry out the necessary follow-up and coordination, including among judicial officers of FARAJA, the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC".



Leaked document, dated 26 September 2022, recording the decisions adopted by the State Security Council in its session on the same date © State Security Council

To further reinforce the portrayal of protesters as violent, and justify the ongoing repression, paragraph 5 directs the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Corporation (IRIB) to extensively broadcast coverage of the "violent activities of those seeking chaos" including showing their faces.

Several paragraphs also stress the importance of continued surveillance and repression of dissenting voices, specifically targeting media workers, university students, artists, athletes, who are accused of "triggering and aggravating the riots". For example:

- Paragraph 1(1) instructs the Ministries of Culture and Islamic Guidance, along with Sports and Youth, to "use all their resources… to persuade artistic and athletic figures… to distance

2183. See section 5.3.
2184. Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure designates agents from the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC, including its Basij forces, as "special judicial officers" and authorizes them to conduct arrests, detentions and investigations under the supervision of the prosecutor. See Amnesty International, *Flawed Reforms* (previously cited), pp. 27-29.
2185. The document does not identify the official's first name and Amnesty International was unable to find it through state media reports.

themselves from… the anti-revolutionary and chaos-seeking movement."

- Paragraph 1(3) emphasizes the need for state entities to "focus on key elements [people] among artistic and athletic figures displaying anti-security rhetoric or conduct."
- Paragraph 1(7) calls for the "serious intervention of the bodies responsible for and active in the areas of advertisement and media, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Corporation, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the Ministry of Sports and Youth, the Basij, the Islamic Advertisement Organization and others, to use all their resources to neutralize the narrative-building [efforts] of hostile media outlets and shift the atmosphere in favour of narratives supporting the Islamic Revolution."
- Paragraph 6 orders that "the country's Herasat Organization[2186] carry out the necessary coordination and actions to complete and enhance the visual surveillance system at universities." The note to paragraph 6 instructs the Ministry of Intelligence to provide the country's Herasat Organization with financial support and the required equipment."

The leaked resolution from 26 September 2022 provides further evidence of a highly coordinated and centrally directed state response to the 2022 protests through the State Security Council. The resolution highlights the role of the minister of interior as the head of the Security Council in facilitating operational alignment between FARAJA, the IRGC and other key security and intelligence agencies, to crush street protests. It also reveals a systematic strategy of extensive surveillance and intelligence gathering to suppress broader expressions of dissent. This level of centralized oversight and planning further confirms that the chain of command was functioning effectively and undermines any claim that those in positions of command were unaware of the actions carried out by security forces on the ground.

2186. The Herasat Organization is a critical part of Iran's security and intelligence apparatus, operating within all government institutions, universities, banks, municipalities and other public sector organizations to monitor, control and ensure compliance with state policies and ideology. It works under the supervision of the minister of intelligence. The Herasat Organization conducts background checks and can restrict or deny employment in government roles or access to educational institutions for those who do not align with the state ideology. It focuses on preventing actions and expressions within public institutions that are deemed "anti-revolutionary" or "un-Islamic" or politically subversive.

11. IMPUNITY BY DESIGN

> **"I extend my appreciation to my colleagues… in the security and intelligence agencies, police force, the IRGC and the Basij, who, with patience, effort, and through the sacrifice of martyrs and the wounded, thwarted the enemy's plans [2022 protests]… We will continue our efforts until the enemy [protesters] is completely defeated and driven to despair."**
>
> Head of the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i[2187]

> **"The justice system will firmly remain on the scene in support of security and intelligence bodies."**
>
> National prosecutor general at the time of 2022 protests, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri[2188]

Four years after the Woman Life Freedom uprising, those responsible for recurrent cycles of mass unlawful killings, torture, enforced disappearances and other serious human rights violations and crimes under international law continue to evade justice. Amnesty International's research shows that impunity in Iran is deliberate and built into its legal system, legitimizing the use of firearms to suppress protests and making justice unattainable within the country. This systemic impunity is reflected in official statements that deny unlawful killings while praising the security forces. It is further reinforced through sham inquiries as well as by prosecutors and judges who routinely closed criminal investigations or limited redress to the payment of *diyeh* (blood money) by the state. Together, these practices underscore the urgent need for fundamental reform of the legal framework that enables such injustice and entrenches impunity.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides an overview of state narratives of denial and glorification, reflecting the authorities' determination to sustain impunity for unlawful killings and other human rights violations, while preserving the morale of perpetrators through public praise. The second section analyses the harmful legislative framework that enables lethal repression of protests with impunity. The third section illustrates the practical impact of this harmful framework through 10

2187. Hamshahri Online, ببینید: هشدار به اغتشاشگران ؛ صبر زمان مشخص دارد و نقطه پایانی برای این صبر داریم ["Watch: A warning to rioters: Patience has a defined limit, and we have an endpoint for this patience"], 5 December 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/725815/ببینید-هشدار-به-اغتشاشگران-صبر-زمان-مشخص-دارد-و-نقطه-پایانی (in Persian).
2188. Mehr News Agency, معترضان، اعتراضات خود را مسالمت آمیز بیان کنند ["Protesters should express their demands peacefully"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603512/معترضان-اعتراضات-خود-را-مسالمت-آمیز-بیان-کنند (in Persian).

cases from eight provinces across the country where judicial proceedings took place in relation to the killing of protesters and bystanders during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The fourth section addresses the work of the sham "fact-finding committees" the authorities have established to create a façade of accountability for the international community while recycling state narratives of denial and reinforcing impunity.

11.1 STATE DENIAL AND GLORIFICATION

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, impunity for gross human rights violations and crimes under international law is intentional. The absence of justice serves to preserve the morale of perpetrators.

During and in the aftermath of the Woman Life Freedom uprising, Iranian authorities systematically promoted fabricated and distorted narratives to deny the facts about the causes and circumstances surrounding the unlawful killing of protesters and bystanders by security forces. These propaganda efforts were sustained by a range of state actors, including the minister of interior and his deputy for police and security, provincial governors and their deputies for political, security and social affairs, the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commanders, prosecution and judicial authorities,[2189] and state-affiliated media.

Amnesty International's review of official statements and state media coverage found that patterns of denial included:

- attributing the killings of protesters and bystanders to unidentified non-state actors described as "rioters",[2190] "anti-revolutionary agents",[2191] "enemies",[2192] "terrorists",[2193] "hostile

2189. As explained in Chapter 3, in Iran, contrary to international law and standards, the principle of separation between the prosecution service and the judiciary has been undermined, with the head of the judiciary exercising authority over both the courts and prosecution services. As a result, prosecution officials are often referred to as judicial officials in domestic discourse, reflecting the lack of institutional distinction between these functions. For the purposes of clarity and precision, however, Amnesty International distinguishes between the two. It uses "prosecution officials" to refer to those responsible for conducting and overseeing criminal investigations and prosecutions, and "judicial officials" to refer to judges and other authorities responsible for adjudication and the administration of the court system.

2190. See, for example, the case of Yahya Rahimi in section 6.2.1.

2191. See, for example, the cases of Fereydoon Mahmoudi (section 6.3.1), Reza Lotfi (section 6.6.1) and Esmail (Simko) Moloudi (section 8.3.2).

2192. For example, on 20 September 2022, the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, Esmail Zareie Kousha, confirmed in a media interview the death of three people during "unlawful protests" in Kurdistan province. He claimed that "anti-revolutionary" agents and "hostile grouplets" had carried out the killings and were seeking to falsely attribute them to security forces who he said had shown "tolerance towards protesters". Esmail Zareie Kousha did not mention the names of the victims. However, based on the locations of the incidents noted in his statement and the reports published by human rights groups at the time regarding the killings that were known to have taken place in Kurdistan province on 19 September 2022, it is clear that the victims concerned were Fereydoon Mahmoudi and two other men, Reza Lotfi killed in Dehgolan (see section 6.6.1) and Mohsen Mohammadi killed in Divandareh (see section 6.4.1). With respect to Fereydoon Mahmoudi, Esmail Zareie Kousha claimed that unidentified "enemies" had shot him and then left him in a car near the main hospital in Saqqez.

2193. For example, see the case of Motaleb Saeed Peiro in section 6.5.2. See also Khabarban, اغتشاشات شب گذشته در بانه ۲ کشته و ۲ مصدوم داشت ["Last night's riots in Baneh left 2 dead and 2 injured"], 28 October 2022, https://36280549.khabarban.com (in Persian). In a media interview on 28 October 2022, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Mehdi Ramezani, publicly acknowledged that two individuals had been killed during the protests that took place in Baneh on 27 October 2022. He did not name the victims and referred to them as "rioters", claiming that "initial investigations point to the suspicious nature of these murders". Mehdi Ramezani further claimed that the killings occurred in the context of a "terrorist attack", which involved "several armed individuals" firing at security forces, resulting in a FARAJA official and an IRGC agent sustaining injuries. These claims contradict audiovisual evidence and eyewitness accounts from Baneh which indicate that individuals using firearms belonged to the security forces.

individuals", and "hostile groups",[2194] members of Kurdish opposition groups,[2195] and "*monafeghin*" (hypocrites);

- framing the killings of protesters and bystanders as a deliberate "project" for "staging killings", which is a phrase used by the authorities to either deny that any killings occurred or to claim that protesters themselves, whom they refer to as "rioters" or unidentified "enemies", carried out the killings but attributed them to the security forces to influence public opinion and instigate further protests;[2196]
- describing deaths as "suspicious" or the result of "private disputes" unrelated to the protests;[2197]
- blaming deaths on illnesses, drug use, suicides, road traffic accidents or other incidents such as falls from heights or dog bites;
- claiming that individuals were killed during clashes between security forces and armed opposition groups or "armed elements"[2198] without providing any details or evidence on where or how the alleged clashes took place, how the victims were allegedly caught in them or which actor carried out the fatal act; and
- asserting that individuals were killed because they were engaged in armed confrontation with security forces without providing any evidence for this claim.

As detailed in Chapter 9, Amnesty International found that authorities reiterated these same narratives in their interactions with bereaved families and routinely pressured and coerced them to publicly endorse them.

The organization found that, compared to men and boys, authorities responded to reported killings of women and girls during protests with a more rapid and consistent campaign of denial. State media quickly swiftly flooded the public space with videos and articles attributing these deaths to accidental falls, suicide, car accidents, illness or ordinary crimes. In other cases, reports were simply dismissed as "fake news".

In its March 2024 report, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) similarly stated that "while the overall response by the State to the killings of protesters has been general denial, the authorities went to even greater lengths to deny any role in the killings of women and girls." The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran found:

> **"In comparison [to the killings of men and boys], the deaths of women and girl protesters were… commonly attributed to alcohol consumption, suicide, ordinary crimes, illness (seizure, influenza,**

2194. See, for example, the cases of Reza Lotfi (section 6.6.1), Foad Ghadimi and Mohsen Mohammadi (section 6.4.1).

2195. See, for example, the cases of Koumar Daroftadeh (section 8.4.2), Zakaria Khial (section 8.4.1), Mohsen Niazi (section 6.6.2) and Peyman Manbari (section 6.2.1).

2196. See, for example, Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA), ["Over 200 people lost their lives in recent unrest" بالغ بر ۲۰۰ نفر در اغتشاشات اخیر جان خود را از دست دادند], 3 December 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401091207586/بالغ-بر-۲۰۰-نفر-در-اغتشاشات-اخیر-جان-خود-را-از-دست-دادند (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, ["The truth behind staged killings by anti-Iranian Persian-language media during riots" واقعیت ماجرای کشته سازی رسانه‌های معاند فارسی زبان در اغتشاشات], 6 November 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5626141/واقعیت-ماجرای-کشته-سازی-رسانه-های-معاند-فارسی-زبان-در-اغتشاشات (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ["Vahidi: Organized groups and cells engaged in sabotage and staged killings during riots" وحیدی: گروه‌ها و هسته‌های سازمان‌یافته در اغتشاشات دست به خرابکاری و کشته‌سازی زدند], 23 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/07/01/2778195/وحیدی-گروه-ها-و-هسته-های-سازمان-یافته-در-اغتشاشات-دست-به-خرابکاری-و-کشته-سازی-زدند (in Persian).

2197. In cases where authorities described the deaths as "suspicious" while denying any role by security forces, they frequently announced the initiation of investigations, but no information was subsequently provided on steps taken or outcomes.

2198. Fars News Agency, ["What happened in Javanroud today?" امروز در جوانرود چه گذشت؟], 21 November 2022, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1669052720000128342/امروز-در-جوانرود-چه-گذشت؟ (in Persian).

cardiac arrest), traffic accidents, fake news, family dispute, and falls from a window or a building. The authorities put families under pressure to deny that the death of their female relative was linked to the protests. Such narratives attempted to erase the overall role of women and girls in the protests, and to stifle their demands for equality and non-discrimination, which were at the core of the September 2022 protests… Indeed, authorities minimized their deaths and injuries in an attempt to avoid at any cost that women killed gain a symbolic status".[2199]

In the months and years following the lethal crackdown, prosecution and judicial authorities took concerted action to conceal evidence of criminal conduct, pressured torture survivors and families of those killed to withdraw their complaints and formally terminated criminal investigations. Amnesty International's research shows that, even in exceptional cases where a prosecution official acted on complaints and trials were eventually held, fundamentally flawed legal frameworks worked to block accountability.

Systemic impunity in Iran is also manifested through statements by senior judicial and prosecution authorities, who consistently express unwavering support and praise for security forces involved in protest repression, including during the 2022 protests, often glorifying their actions.

For example, on 19 October 2022, in a ceremony to appoint the prosecutor of Kerman province, the then national prosecutor general, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri, praised the security force's lethal response to the Woman Life Freedom uprising, stating:



The then national prosecutor general at the time of the 2022 protests, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri © Mehr News Agency

"In recent incidents, where we were fully present in the situation, our dear ones in FARAJA, the IRGC and the Ministry of Intelligence delivered a stellar performance and, despite all conspiracies plotted by the enemy, were able to bring the situation under control."[2200]

On 6 October 2022, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri said that the recent protests had been on the agenda of the 22nd conference of provincial prosecution offices. He also conveyed a collective message from prosecutors to the public, stating, "the justice system will firmly remain on the scene in support of security and intelligence bodies."[2201]

Such statements followed public statements from the head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, who systematically instructed provincial prosecutors and judicial officials to take robust action against "rioters", expedite their cases and issue harsh, deterrent punishments. He praised the security

2199. UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras 513-514.

2200. Etemad Online, فراجا، سپاه، وزارت اطلاعات توانستند خوب اوضاع را جمع کنند ["FARAJA, the IRGC and Ministry of Intelligence successfully brought situation under control"], 19 October 2022, https://www.etemadonline.com/اعتراضات-9/578618-پخش-سیاسی (in Persian).

2201. Mehr News Agency, معترضان، اعتراضات خود را مسالمت آمیز بیان کنند ["Protesters should express their demands peacefully"], 6 October 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5603512/معترضان-اعتراضات-خود-را-مسالمت-آمیز-بیان-کنند (in Persian).

forces for their handling of the protests while warning protesters that their acts of defiance would be met with severe consequences.[2202]

On 5 December 2022, amid mounting evidence of mass unlawful killings and other crimes committed by security forces, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i praised the security forces stating:



The head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i © IRNA

"I extend my appreciation to my colleagues… in the security and intelligence agencies, police force, the IRGC and the Basij, who, with patience, effort, and through the sacrifice of martyrs and the wounded, thwarted the enemy's plans… We will continue our efforts until the enemy is completely defeated and driven to despair."[2203]

The national head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan, has similarly praised the security forces involved in the 2022 lethal protest crackdowns and denied any wrongdoing.

For example, on 24 November 2022, at the height of the lethal repression, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan referred to the security forces as the "people", echoing the rhetoric of IRGC and FARAJA commanders, and reaffirmed the state's intent to quash the protests. He stated:

> **"The people [security forces], with vigilance, have stood firm against the recent riots of the enemy against the country and have not allowed the enemy to exploit the situation… The riots will be brought to an end… Since the people are devoted to the Revolution, they will continue to strive for its preservation and continuation… Society will always need the Basiji spirit, as this safeguards the [Islamic Republic] system against the enemies' conspiracies and ensures its continued vitality."[2204]**

Three months later, on 27 February 2023, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan made the following remarks defending the conduct of security forces during the Woman Life Freedom uprising, which he described as "riots":

2202. See section 5.4.4.

2203. Hamshahri Online, ببینید: هشدار به اغتشاشگران ؛ صبر زمان مشخص دارد و نقطه پایانی برای این صبر داریم ["Watch: A warning to rioters: Patience has a defined limit, and we have an endpoint for this patience"], 5 December 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/725815/ببینید-هشدار-به-اغتشاشگران-صبر-زمان-مشخص-دارد-و-نقطه-پایانی (in Persian).

2204. Tasnim News Agency, رئیس سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح: مردم ایران به اغتشاشگران پاسخ مثبت ندادند ["Head of Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces: People of Iran did not respond positively to rioters"], 24 November 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811454/رئیس-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-مردم-ایران-به-اغتشاشگران-پاسخ-مثبت-ندادند (in Persian).



The national head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan © Mehr News Agency

"The lowest rate of crimes and offences committed by the armed forces in the world belongs to Iran's armed forces… During the riots in recent months, the armed forces displayed significant restraint… These forces, despite carrying weapons, were beaten and slapped but did not take action although they confronted vandalism, arson and staged killings."[2205]

Similarly, in November 2024, in a meeting with the representative of the Supreme Leader in Kurdistan province, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan stated that the crime rate among the security forces in Kurdistan province was very low. He further thanked the security forces in the province stating, "Kurdistan province witnessed significant unrest in 2022/23 which was managed as a result of the bravery and efforts of the security forces."[2206]

Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan has repeatedly made similar statements, praising security forces for their purported "low crime rates" while disregarding an overwhelming body of evidence documenting long-standing patterns of crimes under international law and serious human rights violations by security forces in Iran, including torture, enforced disappearance and unlawful killings.[2207]

For instance, on 29 July 2022, he claimed that "the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran have the lowest crime rates in the world."[2208] Similarly, on 26 December 2023, he stated that "we have witnessed the lowest crime rate among the armed forces over the past 25 years", describing this as noteworthy at a global level.[2209]

11.2 LEGISLATIVE ROOTS OF IMPUNITY FOR LETHAL PROTEST CRACKDOWNS

The architecture of impunity in Iran is founded on a set of laws that criminalize the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly; authorize the use of firearms to disperse protesters, including peaceful protesters; exempt security forces from criminal liability for unlawful killings resulting from

2205. Mehr News Agency, کمترین جرم بین نیروهای مسلح دنیا متعلق به ایران است ["Iran has lowest crime rate among armed forces worldwide"], 27 February 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5720816/کمترین-جرم-بین-نیروهای-مسلح-دنیا-متعلق-به-ایران-است (in Persian).
2206. Mizan News Agency, رئیس سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح:میزان جرم در نیروهای مسلح استان کردستان بسیار پایین است ["Head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces says crime rate in Kurdistan province armed forces is very low"], 6 November 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4802722/رئیس-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلحمیزان-جرم-در-نیروهای-مسلح-استان-کردستان-بسیار-پایین-است (in Persian).
2207. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, جرایم در نیروهای مسلح در کشور بسیار پایین است ["Crimes in country's armed forces are very minimal"], 28 September 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6239606/جرایم-در-نیروهای-مسلح-در-کشور-بسیار-پایین-است (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, پرونده‌های سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح بسیار کم است ["Number of cases in Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces is very low"], 11 September 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6222416/پرونده-های-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-بسیار-کم-است (in Persian).
2208. Mizan News Agency, رئیس سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح: ایران دارای کمترین جرایم نیروهای مسلح در دنیا است ["Head of Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces said Iran has lowest armed forces crime rate in the world"], 29 July 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4377425/رئیس-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-ایران-دارای-کمترین-جرایم-نیروهای-مسلح-در-دنیا-است (in Persian).
2209. Defa Press, کمترین وقوع جرم در بین نیروهای مسلح است ["Crime occurrence is lowest among armed forces"], 26 December 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/640573/کمترین-وقوع-جرم-در-بین-نیروهای-مسلح-است (in Persian).

such use of force; entrench the entwinement of the judiciary and security forces; and grant jurisdiction over serious human rights violations by security forces to military prosecutors and courts.

11.2.1 CRIMINALIZATION OF ASSEMBLIES

Iran's legislative framework imposes severe arbitrary restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, effectively branding any form of public gathering that challenges the authorities as "illegal".

Iranian law requires prior authorization for assemblies. However, the domestic legal framework fails to provide any avenues for individuals or groups, other than registered political parties, to apply for such permits. At the same time, Iran's legislative framework systematically excludes individuals and groups who criticize the theocratic principles of the Islamic Republic system or challenge the authority of the Supreme Leader from forming or joining political parties. This exclusion, in turn, denies them access to the legal mechanisms for organizing assemblies, rendering any such gatherings unlawful and subject to forceful dispersal by security forces. As detailed in Chapter 3, this is enabled by the country's constitution, which impermissibly restricts the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly under the pretext of protecting "Islamic principles".[2210]

Article 13 of the Law on the Activities of Political Parties and Groups (Law on Parties) lists "organizing demonstrations and holding assemblies" as among the "rights and privileges" of licensed political parties provided that the Ministry of Interior and the Office of the Provincial Governor have given permission. Article 11 of the law entrusts a committee referred to as the Committee of Parties with reviewing and deciding on requests for permission.[2211]

According to Article 6 of the By-Law on Article 13 of the Law on Parties, secretaries general of licensed political parties must submit their requests to the Office of the Provincial Governor or County Governor, three working days prior to planned assemblies, along with information on the subject of the assembly, its time and location and the names of any speakers.[2212] Requests are then sent to the Committee of Parties. Note 1 to Article 6 of the By-Law states that requests for nationwide assemblies must be submitted to the Ministry of Interior.[2213]

The domestic framework that restricts the ability to organize assemblies to registered political parties becomes even more alarming when considered alongside the highly restrictive and discriminatory eligibility criteria for registering a political party.

Under Article 2 of the Law on Parties, the statute of parties must ensure, among other conditions, that their "worldview, ideologies and beliefs" align with "Islamic principles". Moreover, under Article 4 the Law on Parties, individuals forming or seeking membership in parties must meet certain criteria including "belief in and practical commitment to guardianship of the Islamic jurist", thus excluding individuals on the ground of their political opinion or religious beliefs.

Article 5 introduces further discriminatory exclusions:

> **"The following individuals are deprived of the right to form or join a political party: all members of the intelligence and security apparatus of the former tyrannical regime… influential members of the former regime… members of unlawful *mohareb* [an individual waging war against God] and anti-**

2210. See section 3.3.

2211. The composition of this committee, as outlined in Article 10, includes, among others, a representative of the prosecutor general, a representative of the head of the judiciary and the deputy minister of interior for political affairs.

2212. Islamic Republic of Iran, آیین نامه اجرایی ماده ۱۳ قانون نحوه فعالیت احزاب و گروههای سیاسی [By-law on Article 13 of the Law on the Activities of Political Parties and Groups (Law on Parties)], 2018, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/1059507 (in Persian), Article 6.

2213. Islamic Republic of Iran, آیین نامه اجرایی ماده ۱۳ قانون نحوه فعالیت احزاب و گروههای سیاسی [By-law on Article 13 of the Law on Parties], 2018, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/1059507 (in Persian), Article 6(1).

revolutionary groups, as determined by the competent authorities; individuals convicted of crimes against the internal or external security of the country; individuals suspected of espionage, as determined by the Ministry of Intelligence or the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, until a final acquittal is issued by a competent court; individuals who visibly commit vice, those known for corruption and drug traffickers…; and individuals who have been deprived of social rights by final court rulings."

These criteria deny anyone charged with or convicted of national security-related offences the right to form or join political parties, even when the charges arise from the peaceful exercise of their human rights. People in Iran who have been impacted in this way have commonly included political dissidents, protesters, human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists, lawyers, women's rights activists and members of oppressed ethnic and religious minorities.

11.2.2 BROAD LICENCE TO FIRE

The extensive use of firearms during protests in Iran is enabled by the Law on the Use of Firearms by Armed Forces in Necessary Incidents (Law on Firearms), which is Iran's only legislation governing the use of firearms.[2214] This law authorizes the use of firearms to suppress "illegal demonstrations" within a broader legal framework where the designation "illegal" effectively applies to any assembly not aligned with the ideology of the Islamic Republic system.

The Law on Firearms disregards the high threshold set by international law, which permits the use of firearms only as a last resort to protect against an imminent threat of death or serious injury. It also fails to incorporate or even reference key principles under international law that must govern the use of force, including legality, precaution, necessity, proportionality, non-discrimination and accountability.[2215]

Article 4 of the Law on Firearms allows security forces to resort to firearms for "controlling illegal demonstrations" and "quashing rebellions, riots or unrest". As detailed in Chapter 4, these are not legitimate objectives under international law and standards, which prohibit the use of firearms for the dispersal of assemblies and limit their use to targeted individuals in exceptional circumstances where it is strictly necessary to confront an imminent threat of death or serious injury.[2216]

The Law on Firearms distinguishes between unarmed and armed assemblies.

Regarding unarmed assemblies, Article 4 of the law states:

"Police agents have a right to use firearms upon the order of the operations commander to restore order and control illegal demonstrations, [and] quash rebellion, riots or unrest, where dispersing them would be impossible without the use of firearms."

Article 4 adds that, prior to the use of firearms, other lawful measures aimed at dispersing demonstrations must have been used to no avail and an ultimatum given to "agitators" and "rioters".

Note 1 to Article 4 stipulates that the responsibility for determining whether the use of firearms is necessary for suppressing an assembly rests with the head of the respective provincial or county provision council, namely the provincial governor or county governor. The Note adds that, in the absence of the governor, "the responsibility falls to their deputy and, if the governor does not have a

2214. See Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون بکارگیری سلاح توسط مأمورین نیروهای مسلح در موارد ضروری [Law on the Use of Firearms by Armed Forces in Necessary Incidents], 1995, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92500 (in Persian).
2215. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 459.
2216. See section 4.2.1.

political deputy, they may assign the responsibility to another member of the council."[2217]

Note 2 to Article 4 states that military forces are also bound by this provision when deployed to suppress assemblies.

Regarding armed assemblies, Article 5 states:

> **"Miliary and police agents are authorized to use firearms to restore order and security during armed illegal demonstrations and armed unrest and rebellions. Agents are required to act on the order of the operations commander without hesitation, in order to restore order and security, disarm, collect munitions, arrest individuals and refer them to judicial authorities."**

Article 5 does not require any conditions to be met prior to the use of firearms in the case of armed assemblies, unlike Article 4 in the case of unarmed assemblies. The article provides neither any definition of what constitutes being "armed", nor any criteria for determining what qualifies as an "armed assembly". It also fails to specify who is responsible for determining if an assembly is "armed" and what processes and procedures must be followed. Moreover, the article does not make any distinction between the treatment of "armed" and "unarmed" individuals in the context of "armed illegal assemblies".

In addition to authorizing the use of firearms for suppressing assemblies, Article 3 enumerates 10 other circumstances in which security forces are permitted to use firearms. They include situations where they need to stop and arrest escaped detainees or prisoners when other measures are not sufficient;[2218] to protect military, police and security buildings, training grounds and armouries, as well as their equipment and weapons carried for the performance of their missions; or to stop individuals from entering or leaving the country illegally.[2219] All these situations do not correspond to the high threshold required for the use of firearms, meaning an imminent threat of death or serious injury.

Note 1 to Article 3 requires that, whenever armed forces are authorized to use firearms, they must first issue a warning "if the situation permits". Note 3 to Article 3 adds that resorting to firearms must be their only option and, "if possible", they must fire in the following sequence: first into the air, then at the lower body (from the waist down) and finally at the upper body (from the waist up).

Here it must be noted that firing weapons as a means of warning is a highly risky undertaking, exposing not only those being warned but also other people, who may be far away, to the danger of being fatally hit by a bullet. Establishing such an obligation without requiring any precautions for people in the area is therefore highly problematic.

2217. At the provincial level, a "political deputy" would mean the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs.
2218. As detailed in Chapter 4, under international law and standards, the use of firearms cannot be justified to prevent the perpetration of crime, even serious crime, or to enable the arrest, or prevent the escape, of a perpetrator, even if they are resisting law enforcement officials, unless the crime to be prevented, or the circumstances necessitating arrest or prevention of escape, involve a grave threat to life.
2219. The 10 circumstances in which armed forces are permitted to use firearms under the law are the following: 1. to defend themselves against an individual who attacks them with combustive or non-combustive weapons; 2. to defend themselves against one or more persons who launch an attack without resorting to weapons but do so in circumstances that render self-defence impossible without the use of a firearm; 3. to protect one or more persons who they see have been attacked and whose lives are at risk; 4. to arrest a thief, a bandit or a person who has committed an assassination or destruction or has used explosives and is fleeing; 5. to stop and arrest a detainee or prisoner who has escaped a detention facility or prison or has fled while being transferred when other measures have been used to no avail; 6. to protect buildings belonging to the police forces, such as headquarters, police stations, armouries and training grounds; 7. to protect the weapons they carry for the performance of their missions; 8. to protect high-security locations, referred to as "classified locations", in particular those prone to being invaded and attacked with the aim of committing assassinations, destruction, arson, theft of documents and valuables, hostage-taking or occupation; 9. to prevent and stop people who intend to enter or leave the country illegally and do not pay attention to the warnings of border guards; 10. to protect police, military and security facilities, buildings and equipment.

Article 1 of the Law on Firearms states that its provisions are binding upon all state agents who are permitted to carry and use firearms for fulfilling duties related to "securing order and security, preventing the flight of those accused or convicted of crimes… investigating and uncovering crimes, and enforcing judicial orders".

The Note to Article 1 states that the provisions of the law apply to armed agents of the Ministry of Intelligence while Article 11 extends the applicability of the law to "military and security forces collaborating with the police in assigned operations". The law does not provide further details regarding these military and security forces. As outlined previously in Chapter 10, the authorities typically use the term "military" for the operational divisions and brigades of the IRGC and the term "security" for its Basij battalions.

11.2.3 LEGALIZED IMPUNITY FOR KILLINGS

As a result of the deeply flawed framework of Iran's Law on Firearms, domestic accountability for deaths resulting from the use of firearms by security forces has been consistently unattainable. These killings are not treated as unlawful or as violations of the right to life, and the actions of the state agents responsible are not criminalized under national law.

Article 12 of the Law on Firearms exempts state agents from civil or criminal liability when they use firearms in accordance with the provisions of this law.

The responsibility for assessing whether such use complies with the Law on Firearms lies with military prosecutor's offices and military courts.

Article 5 of the Executive By-Laws on the Note to Article 3(5) of the Law on Firearms provides that, for the purpose of conducting such assessments, the relevant security force must submit to judicial authorities a "comprehensive report regarding the actions of its agent or agents" and include therein an opinion from an "expert committee" formed within the security force which evaluates the consistency of the use of firearms with the provisions of the Law on Firearms. The article specifies that this committee shall be composed of representatives from the security force's intelligence, security, legal and oversight units.

The Law on Firearms and its Executive By-Laws do not specify the evidentiary weight of such reports. However, according to information and evidence gathered by Amnesty International, in judicial practice, prosecution and judicial authorities often accord these reports significant weight even though they are prepared by security forces that are implicated in alleged violations. Nonetheless, courts retain discretion to disregard them.

According to Article 13 of the Law on Firearms, if it is deemed that agents used firearms in accordance with the provisions of this law, and a competent tribunal later determines that one or more "innocent" individuals were killed or injured as a result, the responsibility for paying *diyeh* (blood money) and financial compensation lies with the security force to which the agent belonged. The article further mandates that the government must allocate a dedicated budget each year for this purpose and disburse funds to the relevant security forces as needed.

In a similar vein, Notes 1 and 2 to Article 41 of the Law on the Punishment of Crimes by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Law on Crimes by Armed Forces) provide that state agents who use firearms in compliance with the Law on Firearms are exempt from criminal liability even when their actions result in injury or death. If the victims are later found to be "not guilty" and "innocent", the victims or their families are only entitled to financial compensation from the state, with no criminal accountability imposed on the perpetrators.

The Law on Firearms and the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces do not define what constitutes being "not guilty" or "innocent", nor do they explain the circumstances or authority responsible for determining an individual's "guilt". In practice, military prosecutors and courts typically make this determination based on information received from security forces.[2220]

As noted above, the Law on Firearms and the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces do not make any mention of international standards requiring an imminent threat of death or serious injury to justify the use of firearms. As a result, a protester's refusal to disperse upon orders from the security forces, even if they are peacefully protesting without engaging in any acts of violence, may be interpreted as "guilt". Actions such as throwing stones or vandalism could also render one "guilty" and justify the use of lethal force against them.

Under Article 41 of the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces, a member of the security forces is subject to imprisonment for three months to a year and required to provide compensation for damages only if they are found to have intentionally discharged a firearm in breach of laws and regulations, including the Law on Firearms.[2221] If the shooting results in death or injury, in addition to a prison term, the perpetrator may also face either *qesas* (retribution in kind) or the requirement to pay *diyeh* (blood money).

The Law on Crimes by Armed Forces not only entrenches impunity for the use of lethal force, but also penalizes hesitation and refusal to shoot, therefore further incentivising the use of firearms.

Article 30 of the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces states that any commander or military official who fails to use all means in their possession to fulfil their military duty and consequently surrenders facilities or equipment to the "enemy, shall be prosecuted and punished for *moharebeh* [waging war against God]".[2222]

Article 32 states that any member of the armed forces who refrains from using their weapons, ammunition or other military means of combat, or who flagrantly commit acts that weaken the morale of the forces, or who intentionally refuses to engage, fight, capture or destroy "enemy" forces and equipment, as delegated to them or required by their military responsibilities, shall be sentenced to death if their actions result in the defeat of the "front of Islam". Otherwise, they shall be sentenced to a prison term of between three and 15 years.

Article 37 states that any member of the armed forces who disobeys orders from commanders or superiors by refusing to engage in attacks against "the enemy, *mohareban* [those waging war against God] or *mofsedan* [the corrupt]" shall be punished for *moharebeh* (waging war against God) if their action "indicates collaboration with the enemy, causes disruption to the country's security or results in the defeat of the front of Islam."

Article 42 states that any member of the armed forces who, either individually or along with other forces, is deployed for a mission and intentionally fails to report for duty without a valid reason may be punished for *moharebeh* (waging war against God) if the mission involved confronting *ashrar* (evil-doers) or *mofsedan* (the corrupt) and if their absence "caused disruption to the country's security or resulted in the defeat of the front of Islam."

2220. See section 11.3 for several illustrative cases.

2221. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون مجازات جرائم نیروهای مسلح [Law on the Punishment of Crimes by the Armed Forces (Law on Crimes by Armed Forces)], 2003, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/94088 (in Persian), Article 41.

2222. Under the 2013 Islamic Penal Code, the judge is given the discretion to choose between the death penalty, crucifixion, amputation of the right arm and the left leg, or banishment as punishment for those found guilty of *moharebeh* (waging war against God). In practice, the punishment for *moharebeh* is the death penalty, implemented by hanging. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون مجازات جرائم نیروهای مسلح [Law on Crimes by Armed Forces], 2003, https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/94088 (in Persian), Article 30.

Article 43 states that any guard who leaves their post without authorization shall be similarly sentenced for *moharebeh* (waging war against God) if their action involves "collaboration or collusion with the enemy, causes disruption to public order and the country's security, or results in the defeat of the front of Islam."

Article 39 states that any commander "who fails to implement… the resolutions of the Supreme National Security Council, the State Security Council or the provision councils of provinces or counties… shall be subject to imprisonment from six months to two years" unless they are subject to heavier punishments under other laws or are considered as "*mohareban*" (those waging war against God), in which case they will be sentenced to death.

Amnesty International recalls that superior orders, duress and necessity cannot be invoked as valid defence for crimes under international law. This principle is firmly established in international jurisprudence, including the Nuremberg and Tokyo charters, as well as the statutes of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, all of which exclude superior orders as a defence.[2223] Article 33(2) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court affirms that "orders to commit genocide or crimes against humanity are manifestly unlawful", thereby prohibiting the use of superior orders as a defence in such cases.

The Law on Crimes by Armed Forces, like many other laws in Iran, repeatedly uses vague terminology such as "the enemy", "*mohareban*" (those waging war against God) and "*mofsedan*" (the corrupt) to mandate state violence against individuals. Article 25 of the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces defines "the enemy" as "*ashrar* [evil-doers], groups and governments who are at war with the Islamic Republic of Iran or intend to overthrow it or whose actions are against [the Islamic Republic of Iran's] national security."

The broad definition and ambiguous definition of "the enemy", extending beyond the context of armed conflict, effectively encompasses individuals who take to the streets to peacefully protest, challenge the authorities or call for fundamental political change, such as transition to a new system of governance.

The terms used in the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces to define "the enemy", such as "*ashrar*" (evil-doers) and "*mohareban*" (those waging war against God), are echoed in official statements that vilified protesters during the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising. This alignment between the legislative framework and state rhetoric illustrates how legislation reflects and informs the state's repressive response to dissent.

11.2.4 JURISDICTION OF MILITARY COURTS AND PROSECUTORS

MILITARY COURTS AND PROSECUTORS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW AND STANDARDS

Under international law and standards, military courts should not have jurisdiction on cases of human rights violations or crimes under international law committed by military and security

2223. Charter of the International Military Tribunal – Annex to the Agreement for the prosecution and punishment of the major war criminals of the European Axis ("London Agreement"), 8 August 1945, Article 8; Charter of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Article 6; Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Article 7(4); Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Article 6(4).

forces.[2224] The UN Human Rights Committee, in its observations on Colombia, asserted the following:

> **"Transfer from civilian to military jurisdiction of cases involving human rights violations by military and security forces… reinforces the institutionalization of impunity… since the independence and impartiality of these tribunals is open to serious doubt."[2225]**

Requirements for the independence and impartiality of judicial bodies and tribunals lie at the heart of restrictions imposed on jurisdictions by military courts over violations of human rights and crimes under international law. The Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions has expressed concerns about the "trial of members of the security forces before military courts, where it is alleged, they evade punishment because of an ill-conceived esprit de corps, which generally results in impunity."[2226]

In the Inter-American human rights system, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has asserted that human rights violations do not constitute military or police offences, and as such, should fall outside the jurisdiction of military courts. The Commission recommended to states the adoption of necessary measures "to ensure that all cases of human rights violations are submitted to the ordinary courts".[2227]

The composition of military tribunals, which means that they primarily or solely consist of members of the military, seriously jeopardizes the right to a fair trial before independent and impartial tribunals.

Concerns about the lack of independent and impartial mechanisms and adequate legislative frameworks to investigate and prosecute unlawful killings and other crimes by security forces are compounded by the fact that such crimes fall under the jurisdiction of military prosecution offices and courts in Iran.

2224. See, for example, UN Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, *Issue of the Administration of Justice Through Military Tribunals*, 13 January 2006, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2006/58, Principle 9; UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, *Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Through Action to Combat Impunity*, 8 February 2005, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1, Principle 29; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Principles and guidelines on the right to a fair trial and legal assistance in Africa, 29 May 2003, Principle L(a) ("The only purpose of Military Courts shall be to determine offences of a purely military nature committed by military personnel."; UN Special Rapporteur on the Question of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, *Question of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*, 3 July 2001, UN Doc. A/56/156, para. 39(j); UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 7 October 1996, UN Doc. A/51/457, para. 125; Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons, 9 June 1994, Article IX ("The acts constituting forced disappearance shall not be deemed to have been committed in the course of military duties."); Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, 18 December 1992, Article 16(2) (alleged authors of a crime of enforced disappearance "shall be tried only by the competent ordinary courts in each State, and not by any other special tribunal, in particular military courts".) See also the "Yale Draft" revision of the 2006 Draft UN Principles Governing the Administration of Justice Through Military Tribunals (also known as the Decaux Principles, after Emmanuel Decaux), UN Doc. E/CN.4/2006/58, Principle 9, Trial of persons accused of serious human rights violations ("With the exception of circumstances permitted by international humanitarian law, the jurisdiction of military courts should be set aside in favour of the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts to conduct inquiries into serious human rights violations such as extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances and torture, and to prosecute and try persons accused of such crimes."); Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Radilla-Pacheco v. Mexico*, Judgment of 23 November 2009, https://corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_209_ing.pdf, paras 277 and 290-314; Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Concluding Observations, 25 July 2006, UN Doc. CAT/C/PER/CO/4, para. 16(a).
2225. UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations: Colombia, 5 May 1997, UN. Doc. CCPR/C/79/Add.75, para. 18.
2226. UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Report, 7 October 1996, UN Doc. A/51/457, para. 125.
2227. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Ecuador, 24 April 1997, UN Doc: EA/Ser.L/V/II.96, chapter 3 (fourth recommendation), doc. 10, rev. 1.

Article 172 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran provides for the establishment of military prosecution offices and courts to investigate and prosecute members of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army), the IRGC and FARAJA for "crimes related to specific military or police duties". The article states that military prosecution offices and courts are part of the judiciary.

Article 1 of the Law on Crimes by Armed Forces reiterates that military prosecution offices and courts have jurisdiction over crimes committed by personnel of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, FARAJA, the IRGC and its affiliated bodies, including its Basij battalions, and the Army.

Note 2 to Article 597 of the Code of Criminal Procedure states that the phrase "crimes related to specific military or police duties" means "crimes committed by members of the armed forces in connection with the military and police duties and responsibilities assigned to them by laws and regulations."[2228]

According to a decree issued by the Supreme Leader in August 2020, the jurisdiction of military prosecution offices and courts includes "all crimes related to weapons and munitions".[2229] This reinforces their jurisdiction over crimes committed in the context of protest dispersals.

According to Articles 571-574 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, military prosecution offices and courts are organized under an entity called the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces. This body consists of a national entity and provincial branches. The national and provincial heads of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces are all appointed by the head of the judiciary. On 26 June 2024, in a meeting with the commander of the Army's Ground Forces, the national head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan, stated that "the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces did not perceive itself detached from the armed forces".[2230]

According to Article 289 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Note 2 of the same article, the head of the judiciary also holds the authority to appoint, transfer or dismiss military prosecutors. The national prosecutor general may make recommendations in this regard, subject to approval by the national head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces.

According to official statements and state media reports, the recruitment of military personnel into judicial roles was prioritized pursuant to a decree issued by the Supreme Leader mandating that at least 50% of judges, prosecutors and administrative staff within the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces must be members of the armed forces, including the IRGC, FARAJA and the Army.[2231]

Trials by military courts in Iran are inherently unfair and lack due process guarantees. They fail to meet the principles of independence and impartiality and are generally shrouded in secrecy, falling far short of the requirement for transparency. This secrecy is guaranteed under the Code of Criminal Procedure for Armed Forces, Article 633 of which states that "publication of information about the judgments by military courts is prohibited." Under this provision, however, the head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces can in "necessary cases and where appropriate" allow for the publication of such

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2228. Islamic Republic of Iran, قانون آیین دادرسی کیفری [Code of Criminal Procedure], 2014, https://davoudabadi.ir/page/1625903/ماهه-597-قانون-آیین-دادرسی-کیفری (in Persian), Article 597(2).

2229. Mehr News Agency, صلاحیت‌های رسیدگی سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح افزایش یافت ["Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces' authority to handle cases expanded"], 19 October 2020, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5051252/صلاحیت-های-رسیدگی-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-افزایش-یافت (in Persian).

2230. Mizan News Agency, رئیس سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح: سازمان خود را جدا از نیروهای مسلح کشور نمی‌داند ["Head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces said organization does not see itself as separate from country's armed forces"], 26 June 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4780318/رئیس-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-سازمان-خود-را-جدا-از-نیروهای-مسلح-کشور-نمی‌داند (in Persian).

2231. Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), یکصد قاضی نظامی جذب سازمان قضایی نیروهای مسلح شدند ["One hundred military judges recruited into Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces"], 21 September 2014, https://www.irna.ir/news/81320127/یکصد-قاضی-نظامی-جذب-سازمان-قضایی-نیروهای-مسلح-شدند (in Persian). Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports indicating the date the decree was issued.

information. Accordingly, judgments by military courts are considered confidential and shielded from public scrutiny.

11.3 FLAWED JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS FOR 2022 KILLINGS

Amnesty International's research reveals a pattern of impunity sustained by prosecution and judicial authorities through the implementation of the harmful legal framework outlined above, in particular in relation to the criminalization of assemblies, the broad licence to use firearms, the jurisdiction of biased military prosecution offices and courts over unlawful killings and other crimes by security forces, and the entrenched entwinement between security forces[2232] and the judiciary.

As documented in Chapter 9, during and in the aftermath of the Woman Life Freedom uprising, prosecution and judicial authorities consistently took concerted action to conceal evidence of criminal conduct and shield state officials from accountability for unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations and crimes under international law. They pressured torture survivors and families of those killed to withdraw their complaints and formally terminated investigations or ignored criminal complaints.

Amnesty International was able to gather and review legal documents, official statements and domestic media reports in relation to 10 cases from eight provinces across the country where judicial proceedings took place in relation to the killing of protesters and bystanders during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The organization does not know the total number of cases of unlawful killings that have been the subject of judicial proceedings since 2022, due to the judiciary's lack of transparency and the climate of terror and repression, which deters many victims' families and lawyers from openly sharing information.

The 10 cases, which concern the killings of one or more individuals in separate incidents between 19 September and 29 November 2022, are listed below in the order in which they are presented in the following subsections:

- the killings of Mohammadreza Sarvari, a 14-year-old boy of Afghan origin, and Mohammad Javad Farmani, in Shahr-e Rey, Tehran province, on 21 September 2022, addressed jointly in a single case;
- the killings of Abdollah Mahmoudpour, a 16-year-old boy, and Danesh Rahnama in the village of Balou, West Azerbaijan province, on 21 September 2022, addressed jointly in a single case;
- the killing of Pedram Azarnoush in Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, on 22 September 2022;
- the killing of Abolfazl Adinezadeh, a 17-year-old boy, in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province, on 8 October 2022;
- the killing of Mehdi Babrnejad, in Ghouchan, Khorasan Razavi province, on 21 September 2022;
- the killing of Fereydoon Mahmoudi in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 19 September 2022;
- the killing of Mohammad Jameh Bozorg, in Malard, Tehran province, on 24 September 2022;
- the killing of Sepehr Biranvand in Khorramabad, Lorestan province, on 9 November 2022;

2232. See section 3.3.1(III).

- the killing of Mehran Samak in Bandar Anzali, Gilan province, on 29 November 2022; and
- the killings of scores of protesters and bystanders[2233] in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, on 30 September 2022 (known as "Bloody Friday").

In six of the 10 cases – the killings of Abdollah Mahmoudpour and Danesh Rahnama (addressed jointly); Mohammadreza Sarvari and Mohammad Javad Farmani (addressed jointly); Pedram Azarnoush; Abolfazl Adinezadeh; Mehdi Babrnejad; and Fereydoon Mahmoudi – prosecution authorities issued written orders formally terminating criminal investigations aimed at identifying and prosecuting alleged perpetrators. Amnesty International reviewed these written orders.[2234]

In the first four cases, prosecution authorities claimed there was "insufficient evidence" to establish that security forces were responsible for the shootings, despite overwhelming evidence indicating that protesters were unarmed and that the fatal shootings originated from security forces.

In the latter two cases, prosecution and judicial authorities acknowledged that the deaths were caused by IRGC or FARAJA agents. Nevertheless, they still terminated the criminal proceedings either because they claimed it was not possible to identify the agent who had fired the fatal shot or because they held that the use of force was lawful under the Law on Firearms. These two cases were subsequently referred to a military court to assess whether the victims' families qualified for payment of *diyeh* (blood money) by the security force to which the agents shooting belonged, with eligibility determined based on the perceived "guilt" or "innocence" of the deceased victim. This referral took place based on the Law on Firearms.

In the remaining four of the 10 cases – the killing of Mohammad Jameh Bozorg; the killing of Sepehr Biranvand; the killing of Mehran Samak; and the killings on "Bloody Friday" – judicial proceedings led to convictions and sentences against members of the security forces. However, they were swiftly undermined by interventions from senior judicial and security officials, which resulted in overturned convictions, reduced charges or the substitution of proportionate sentences with the institutional payment of *diyeh* (blood money).

The cases reviewed by Amnesty International consistently underscore the harmful impact of the flawed legal framework that authorizes the use of lethal force to disperse protests and institutionalizes heavy reliance on security forces' accounts in court proceedings. They also reveal the absence of adequate laws and mechanisms to investigate and prosecute crimes under international law in an independent, impartial, transparent and comprehensive manner, consistent with international law and standards; address modes of liability relevant to the responsibility of commanders and agents beyond the principal shooter; and secure convictions and sentences matching the gravity of the crimes concerned.

11.3.1 EXONERATION OF MEMBERS OF SECURITY FORCES

As mentioned above, in four of the 10 cases reviewed by Amnesty International, prosecution authorities formally terminated criminal investigations aimed at identifying and prosecuting alleged perpetrators on the grounds that there was "insufficient evidence" to establish that members of security forces were responsible for the shootings.

2233. See section 5.3.2(II). For the list of names, see Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en

2234. IRN0468, IRN0469, IRN0470, IRN0471, IRN0472, IRN0473, IRN0474, IRN0475, IRN0476, IRN0477, IRN0478, IRN0479, IRN0480, IRN0481, IRN0482, IRN0483, IRN0484, IRN0485, IRN0486, IRN0487, IRN0488, IRN0489, legal documents on file with Amnesty International.

These decisions were communicated through written orders, which were often limited to just a few lines and failed to explain the scope of investigative efforts undertaken to gather evidence. The written decisions also illustrate a pattern of prosecution authorities deferring to security forces, accepting their blanket denials of responsibility without scrutiny or allowing them to obstruct investigations through non-cooperation.



Mohammadreza Sarvari (left) and Mohammad Javad Farmani (right)
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In the case of the killings of 14-year-old Mohammadreza Sarvari and Mohammad Javad Farmani in Shahr-e Rey, Tehran province, on 21 September 2022,[2235] an investigator from Branch 4 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Shahr-e Rey county in Tehran province terminated investigations citing a lack of CCTV footage and the inability of complainants to present any eyewitnesses.[2236] This decision, issued on 7 November 2023, was made even though it is the duty of prosecution authorities to actively pursue and gather such evidence.

In the other three cases – the killings of 16-year-old Abdollah Mahmoudpour and Danesh Rahnama, in Balou, West Azerbaijan province, on 21 September 2022 (addressed jointly); Pedram Azarnoush in Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, on 22 September 2022; and 17-year-old Abolfazl Adinezadeh in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province, on 8 October 2022 – prosecution authorities closed the cases either on the basis of the IRGC's and FARAJA's refusal to respond to inquiries or by uncritically accepting their denials that their members had used firearms and caused the deaths.



Abdollah Mahmoudpour (left) and Danesh Rahnama (right)
© Private

In the case of the killings of Abdollah Mahmoudpour and Danesh Rahnama, an investigator from Branch 7 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Urumieh county,[2237] terminated the investigation in a written order issued on 19 December 2022.[2238] The order relied on the opinion of a biased body composed of FARAJA and IRGC representatives to conclude that identifying the perpetrator was not possible and accordingly close the case. The investigator described this opinion as a "judicial order issued by a fact-finding committee" and went on to state:

> **"A judicial order was issued by a fact-finding committee composed of the Investigation Police, the Intelligence and Security Police, and the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC Corps of [West Azerbaijan] province. Ultimately, the opinion of the committee was that the deceased individuals were**

2235. The unlawful killing of both victims was addressed in one decision. It is unclear to Amnesty International why the cases were joint.
2236. IRN0482, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2237. The investigator's name is on file with Amnesty International.
2238. IRN0470, legal document on file with Amnesty International.

among the rioters and they had been present near the site of the riots, where rioters intended to attack a Basij base, when they were shot. However, it was unclear from which direction the shots were fired and by whom… Given that an accused has not been identified… an order to terminate the investigations is issued."



Pedram Azarnoush (left) and Abolfazl Adinezadeh (right) © Private

In the case of Pedram Azarnoush, according to a legal document reviewed by Amnesty International, an investigator from Branch 1 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Dehdasht county, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, dismissed the complaint after inquiries addressed to the Intelligence Protection Organization of FARAJA and the IRGC went unanswered and no response was received regarding the identity of the agent involved in the shooting.[2239] According to two other legal documents reviewed by Amnesty International, both the investigator from Branch 1 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecution Office of Dehdasht county, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province,[2240] and the head of Police Station No. 11 in the Hosseinabad area of Dehdasht county[2241] referred to the perpetrator who killed Pedram Azarnoush with an AK-47 pattern rifles as "unknown", despite video evidence indicating that protesters were unarmed and that security forces used firearms to disperse protesters.

In the case of Abolfazl Adinezadeh, an investigator from Branch 1 of the Military Prosecution Office of Khorasan Razavi province, Gholamhasan Alvandi, cited "absence of sufficient evidence pointing to the use of shotguns by military or police forces" in an order issued on 4 November 2023 as grounds for closing the case.[2242] In this regard, the investigator relied on information received from the FARAJA commander of Khorasan Razavi province, who claimed that "some of the personnel of this force were equipped with shotguns on the day of the incident but never used them." The investigator also relied on information received from the IRGC which claimed that "none of the IRGC personnel present at the scene were armed with shotguns."

11.3.2 'BLOOD MONEY' AS SUBSTITUTE FOR CRIMINAL PROSECUTION

As mentioned above, in two of the 10 cases reviewed by Amnesty International, prosecution authorities acknowledged that the deaths were caused by IRGC or FARAJA agents, but terminated the criminal investigations aimed at identifying and prosecuting individual perpetrators and referred the cases to a military court solely to assess the payment of *diyeh* (blood money) by the security force concerned. They did so based on Article 13 of the Law on Firearms.

2239. IRN0483, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2240. IRN0485, legal document on file with Amnesty International. The investigator's name is on file with Amnesty International.
2241. IRN0484, legal document on file with Amnesty International. The name of the police station head is on file with Amnesty International.
2242. IRN0472, legal document on file with Amnesty International.



Mehdi Babrnejad © Private

In the case of Mehdi Babrnejad, who was killed during protests in Ghouchan, Khorasan Razavi province, on 21 September 2022, an investigator from Branch 1 of the Military Prosecutor's Office of Khorasan Razavi province terminated the criminal investigation because he concluded that the use of firearms was in accordance with the Law on Firearms.[2243] To reach this conclusion, the investigator relied on reports from FARAJA and the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Khorasan Razavi, including the assessments by the "expert committees" established within these security forces, which evaluated the consistency of firearm use with the provisions of the Law on Firearms. On this basis, the investigator stated:

> **"Many rioters were throwing stones and other objects towards military and police forces, causing damage to public property. It appears that there was no alternative but to use firearms to disperse the rioters. The deceased, Mehdi Babrnejad, was participating in the unrest and was observed causing damage and confronting military and police personnel through throwing stones… The shootings carried out by police, Basij and IRGC agents were therefore consistent with Articles 2, 4, 7 and 8 of the Law on Firearms and no criminal offence has been established."**

Branch 1 of Military Court 1 of Khorasan Razavi province subsequently upheld this decision and registered the case solely to examine the eligibility of the victim's family for *diyeh* (blood money) based on the "guilt" or "innocence" of the deceased. In a ruling issued on 18 September 2023, the court held that the victim's family was not eligible to receive *diyeh* (blood money) because "the deceased, Mehdi Babrnejad, was not innocent and bore fault."[2244] To support this conclusion, the court repeated the investigator's reasoning verbatim, citing the purported lawfulness of the use of force to disperse protests and Mehdi Babrnejad's alleged involvement in stone throwing.

Mehdi Babrnejad's family subsequently appealed the verdict to Branch 1 of the Military Appeal Court of Khorasan Razavi Province. In a ruling issued on 29 April 2024, the appeal court amended the original decision, awarding the victim's family 30% of the full *diyeh* (blood money) amount designated for a Muslim man.[2245] This partial award was based on "the manner of shooting, the [bodily] part of the victim struck by the bullet, and the fact that the shooting was carried out by an agent of FARAJA or the IRGC." The court did not provide further details. It justified the denial of the remaining 70% on the grounds that Mehdi Babrnejad had "participated in the riots, filmed the rioters, and supported and instigated them."

2243. IRN0476, legal document on file with Amnesty International. The investigator's name is on file with Amnesty International.
2244. IRN0476, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2245. IRN0476, legal document on file with Amnesty International.



Fereydoon Mahmoudi © Private

In the case of Fereydoon Mahmoudi, who was killed during protests in Saqqez, Kurdistan province, on 19 September 2022, the head of the Office of the Military Prosecutor in Saqqez and Baneh in Saqqez and Baneh and deputy military prosecutor of Kurdistan province, Sohrab Shafayee, concluded in a written order, dated 11 April 2023, that, "although shootings by agents of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA were confirmed, it was not possible to identify the individual perpetrator."[2246] As a result, he terminated criminal investigations and ordered the case to be referred to a military court solely to determine whether the Special Cohorts of FARAJA were obligated to pay *diyeh* (blood money), with eligibility contingent on their findings about the "guilt" or "innocence" of Fereydoon Mahmoudi. Amnesty International was unable to find updated information on how the case progressed subsequently.

11.3.3 OVERTURNED CONVICTIONS AND UNJUSTIFIED REDUCTIONS OF CRIMINAL CHARGES

As noted above, in four of the 10 cases reviewed by Amnesty International, judicial proceedings in relation to the unlawful killings of protesters and bystanders during the Woman Life Freedom uprising led to convictions and sentences against members of the security forces. These include the three individual cases of Mohammad Jameh Bozorg, killed in Malard, Tehran province, on 24 September 2022; Sepehr Biranvand, killed in Khorramabad, Lorestan province, on 9 November 2022; and Mehran Samak, killed in Bandar Anzali, Gilan province, on 29 November 2022. The fourth case relates to the unlawful killing of scores of protesters and bystanders in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, on 30 September 2022 (known as "Bloody Friday").

At first glance, these cases may suggest a rare break from the entrenched pattern of blanket impunity for security forces, with at least military prosecutors pursuing investigations and lower courts issuing convictions and sentences. However, each case ultimately saw convictions overturned or charges reduced, despite overwhelming evidence, resulting in punishments that were disproportionate to the gravity of the crimes committed.

Based on its review of publicly available information related to all these cases, Amnesty International concluded that the authorities did not make public any details regarding the identities of the accused and convicted individuals, their organizational affiliations and ranks; the exact charges brought against them; or the evidence reviewed and relied upon. Court hearings were held behind closed doors.

However, in the cases of Mohammad Jameh Bozorg and Sepehr Biranvand, Amnesty International was able to access such information by obtaining the relevant court documents and interviewing three informed sources. For the case of Mehran Samak, the organization relied on media interviews with the lawyer of Mehran Samak's family. For the group case in Sistan and Baluchistan, Amnesty International reviewed publicly available information, including official statements and reports by independent media and human rights organizations, and interviewed two informed sources.

The court documents reviewed by Amnesty International along with other information gathered by the organization underscore that, even in exceptional cases where complaints reach criminal trials, proceedings fall far short of meeting international standards regarding justice for crimes under international law. The cases illustrate the harmful impact of a flawed legal framework that authorizes

2246. IRN0473, legal document on file with Amnesty International.

the use of lethal force to disperse protests and institutionalizes the heavy reliance on security forces' accounts in court proceedings to block accountability for killings.

They also highlight the use of charges that fail to reflect the gravity of the crimes committed, the absence of modes of liability relevant to the responsibility of commanders and agents other than the principal shooter, and a flawed sentencing regime where the principal shooter faces either the death penalty or disproportionately light prison sentences.

The cases also reveal a persistent pattern of substituting proportionate punishment with institutional payments of *diyeh* (blood money), effectively shielding perpetrators from accountability.

MOHAMMAD JAMEH BOZORG



Mohammad Jameh Bozorg
© Private

Mohammad Jameh Bozorg was unlawfully killed in the early hours of 24 September 2022 at his home in Malard, Tehran province, after several agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions violently raided his home to arrest him. According to court verdicts reviewed by Amnesty International, an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions, Shahram Bazrbouy, fired a shotgun loaded with metal pellets at Mohammad Jameh Bozorg's face from less than 1m when Mohammad Jameh Bozorg demanded that the agents show him an arrest warrant and objected to the illegality of the raid.

Court documents reveal that the IRGC agents conducted the raid after Jalal Mirzanejad, the head of the office of the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Malard county, Aliakbar Jahaninejad, sent an identical text message to several senior IRGC officials within the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Malard county, including its deputy commander, Hadi Ramezani; the head of its Intelligence Protection Unit, Meysam Kamari; the head of its Intelligence Unit,[2247] Alikhani; and the deputy head of its Intelligence Unit, Mohammad Hassanpour. The message identified Mohammad Jameh Bozorg as someone who had allegedly opened his home to protesters fleeing security forces and called for his arrest to ensure "rioters would no longer have a shelter on that street."

According to court documents, the head of the Intelligence Protection unit of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Malard county, Meysam Kamari, assigned an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions, Ahmadreza Tachehband, and the deputy head of the Intelligence Unit of the same corps, Mohammad Hassanpour, to follow up on the matter. Subsequently, a raid was carried out by a group of agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions under the command of Mohammad Hassanpour. The court documents confirm that the agents were armed with AK-pattern rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets.

Following a legal complaint filed by Mohammad Jameh Bozorg's family, the Military Prosecutor's Office of Tehran province charged an agent from the IRGC's Basij battalions, Shahram Bazrbouy, with murder. Seven other agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions – Ahmadreza Tachehband, Fakhroddin Chalelou, Amir Bakhtiari, Davoud Khazaee, Amin Khazaee, Hossein Tazrbouyee and Abbas Tazrbouyee – were charged with carrying out an unlawful armed raid. Mohammad Hassanpour was charged with leading an unlawful armed raid. Jalal Mirzanejad, who had sent the initial text message, was charged with "defamation" and "publishing false content in cyberspace via text messaging".

2247. This unit is also sometimes referred to as the Office of the Intelligence Deputy of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps.

In a verdict issued on 6 January 2024, Branch 5 of Military Court 1 of Tehran province convicted Shahram Bazrbouy of murder and sentenced him to death under the Islamic principle of *qesas* (retribution in kind).[2248] The court stated that, even if Mohammad Jameh Bozorg had previously sheltered protesters, this would not have justified killing him. It further rejected the defendant's claim that he had fired into the air because of stone throwing. The court found that he had deliberately shot the victim at close range and there was no evidence of stone throwing that could justify the use of lethal force.

In the same verdict, Branch 5 of Military Court 1 of Tehran province sentenced Mohammad Hassanpour to six months' imprisonment for leading an unlawful armed raid and Jalal Mirzanejad to 91 days' imprisonment for publishing false content. To support this verdict, the court noted that the prosecution authorities had not issued a warrant to authorize the raid and no report had been filed with them regarding Mohammad Jameh Bozorg prior to the fatal incident. However, the court acquitted the other seven agents from the IRGC's Basij battalions on the grounds that they "had been present at the scene as Basij forces under orders and were unaware of whether legal authorization had been issued to enter the complainants' residence".

Branch 29 of the Supreme Court upheld the convictions and sentences on 26 August 2024. This outcome triggered swift action by senior IRGC and judiciary officials to overturn the verdict.[2249]

An informed source in Iran, Teymour, told Amnesty International that, initially, a wide range of officials, including judicial and prosecution authorities and IRGC commanders, as well as the Friday Prayer Leader of Malard, put pressure on Mohammad Jameh Bozorg's family to grant pardon to those convicted, partly by offering them large sums of money.

After the family refused to cooperate, the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, submitted a request to the head of the judiciary to order a judicial review of the case of Shahram Bazrbouy.[2250] The request was made under Article 477 of Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure, which empowers the head of the judiciary to order the annulment of a verdict if he determines it to be "in blatant contravention of Islamic law." In such cases, the head of the judiciary refers the matter to specific branches of the Supreme Court, handpicked by him for these circumstances. According to Article 477, these branches are then obliged to annul the conviction and sentence, based solely on the head of the judiciary's opinion regarding the violation of Islamic law, and to issue a new final verdict not subject to appeal.

The head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, subsequently granted the IRGC general commander's request for retrial. Ignoring the evidence presented and analysed across multiple court proceedings, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i declared that the criteria for murder was not met, and reclassified the killing as unintentional, simply based on Shahram Bazrbouy's own statement that he had intended to fire into the air but lost balance after being struck by a stone thrown by the deceased, causing the weapon to misfire. Furthermore, the head of the judiciary stated that, as Shahram Bazrbouy had not received proper training in the use of shotguns and their ammunition, the fault lay with the IRGC as an institution rather than with the defendant individually; therefore, *diyeh* (blood money) had to be paid by the IRGC.[2251]

The head of the judiciary then referred the case to Branch 1 of the Supreme Court for retrial. In a verdict issued on 11 October 2025, this branch quashed Shahram Bazrbouy's conviction without

2248. IRN0481, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2249. IRN0477, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2250. IRN0477, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2251. IRN0477, legal document on file with Amnesty International.

providing detailed reasoning.[2252] The court then merely reiterated the statements of the head of the judiciary to conclude that Shahram Bazrbouy did not have an intent to kill and sentenced him to three years' imprisonment, along with the payment, by the IRGC, of *diyeh* (blood money) to the victim's family.

In relation to the use of Article 477 to overturn convictions, a lawyer in Iran told Amnesty International:

"Article 477 has consistently given rise to various forms of corruption under successive judicial leaderships. It enables interference in legal cases after final verdicts are secured with much hardship. A few select branches [within the Supreme Court] are granted special powers [at the discretion of the head of the judiciary]. The article creates a pathway for undue privilege, allowing any ruling to be overturned and sent back for re-examination. Its very foundation is deeply flawed."

SEPEHR BIRANVAND



Sepehr Biranvand © Private

Sepehr (also known as Sam) Biranvand was unlawfully killed in Khorramabad, Lorestan province, on 9 November 2022, while fleeing from security forces. According to court verdicts reviewed by Amnesty International, a FARAJA agent, Jahanbakhsh Daniary, fired an AK-pattern assault rifle at Sepehr Biranvand from a distance of around 5m as he was climbing a wall to enter a residential courtyard in an attempt to escape security forces.

On 18 June 2023, Branch 1 of Military Court 1 of Lorestan province sentenced Jahanbakhsh Daniary to death under the Islamic principle of *qesas* (retribution in kind) for murder and to 10 months' imprisonment for unlawful shooting. In the verdict, which was reviewed by Amnesty International, the court referred to CCTV footage which it said confirmed that Jahanbakhsh Daniary deliberately aimed his firearm at Sepehr Biranvand and shot him as he was running away. According to the verdict, the footage also showed that Sepehr Biranvand was not holding any threatening objects at the time he came under fire.[2253] As such, the court dismissed the defendant's claim that Sepehr Biranvand was in possession of a Molotov cocktail and that the defendant was acting in self-defence.

The court also stated that legal provisions authorizing the use of firearms to disperse "illegal" protests were not applicable, as Sepehr Biranvand and others had already dispersed and were fleeing when the defendant opened fire.

On 3 February 2024, Branch 51 of the Supreme Court quashed the conviction and returned the case for retrial.[2254] The court made this decision on the basis that Branch 1 of Military Court 1 of Lorestan province had not sought the opinion of FARAJA's "expert committee" concerning the consistency of the firearm use with the Law on Firearms.

The case was then returned to Branch 1 of Military Court 1 of Lorestan province, which sought the opinion of FARAJA's "expert committee". The committee subsequently claimed that the use of firearms was lawful under the Law on Firearms, which permits their use in defence against an

2252. IRN0477, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2253. IRN0487, legal document on file with Amnesty International.
2254. IRN0468, legal document on file with Amnesty International.

armed individual attacking members of the security forces or to arrest a person involved in acts of "assassination, damage or explosion" who is fleeing.[2255]

However, Branch 1 of Military Court 1 of Lorestan province rejected the opinion of the FARAJA committee about the lawfulness of the fatal shooting under the Law on Firearms, holding that it "was not consistent with the facts of the case and displayed bias". The court, therefore, reinstated the original conviction and sentence.[2256]

On appeal, Branch 51 of the Supreme Court once again quashed the conviction and death sentence, reasoning that Branch 1 of Military Court 1 of Lorestan province should have accepted the opinion of the FARAJA committee over its own independent analysis. This time, Branch 51 of the Supreme Court ordered the case to be referred to a different military court of first instance.[2257]

The case was subsequently registered with Military Court 1 of Markazi province. In a verdict issued on 13 May 2024, Military Court 1 of Markazi province acquitted Jahanbakhsh Daniary of murder, reasoning that he did not fire with the intent to kill Sepehr Biranvand, but rather to stop him.[2258] Despite the CCTV footage cited in earlier verdicts, the court uncritically accepted the defendant's claim that the bullet struck Sepehr Biranvand accidentally as he moved into the path of the shot. The court then went on to conclude that Jahanbakhsh Daniary had carried out an unlawful shooting without intent to kill and that the previously imposed sentence of 10 month's imprisonment for unlawful shooting remained appropriate. Branch 51 of the Supreme Court upheld this verdict on 23 September 2024.[2259]

MEHRAN SAMAK



Mehran Samak © Private

Mehran Samak was unlawfully killed on 29 November 2022, in Bandar Anzali, Gilan province. He was fatally shot with metal pellets after he sounded the horn of his car during the protests celebrating the defeat of Iran's football team during the World Cup on 29 November 2022.

In an interview with Shargh newspaper on 15 February 2023, the lawyer representing Mehran Samak's family, Majid Ahmadi, reported that, two days after the fatal incident, the family filed a criminal complaint. According to the lawyer, following prosecutorial efforts, the FARAJA commander of Anzali county at the time of the 2022 protests, Jafar Javanmardi, was identified as the alleged perpetrator who had shot Mehran Samak and arrested. The case was then referred to the military prosecutor of Gilan province, who continued the investigations. The lawyer stated that, by mid-February 2023, a formal indictment was issued charging the accused with "failure to adhere to the Law on Firearms resulting in murder".[2260]

2255. IRN0468, legal document on file with Amnesty international.
2256. IRN0468, legal document on file with Amnesty international.
2257. IRN0468, legal document on file with Amnesty international.
2258. IRN0468, legal document on file with Amnesty international.
2259. IRN0468, legal document on file with Amnesty international.
2260. Shargh Daily, کیفرخواست متهم پرونده مهران سماک صادر شد ["Indictment issued for defendant in Mehran Samak case"], 15 February 2023, https://www.sharghdaily.com/بخش-روزنامه-100/870345-کیفرخواست-متهم-پرونده-مهران-سماک-صادر-شد (in Persian); Vokala Press, وکیل اولیای دم مهدی سماک : فرمانده نیروی انتظامی بندر انزلی در زندان مرکزی رشت بازداشت است ["Lawyer of Mehdi Samak's family: Bandar Anzali police commander is detained in Rasht Central Prison"], 8 December 2022, https://vokalapress.ir/وکیل-اولیای-دم-مهدی-سماک-فرمانده-نیروی (in Persian).

Several months later, on 6 June 2023, in another interview with Shargh Newspaper, the lawyer of Mehran Samak's family, Majid Ahmadi, reported that, around late March or early April 2023, Military Court 1 of Gilan province had convicted Jafar Javanmardi of murder and sentenced him to death under *qesas* (retribution in kind). He further reported that the case had been referred to the Supreme Court following an appeal by the former commander's lawyer.[2261] In January 2024, Mizan Online, the judiciary's news agency, reported that the Supreme Court had overturned the sentence against Jafar Javanmardi and referred the case to a new court of first instance for retrial.[2262]

In March 2024, the lawyer of Mehran Samak's family told Shargh Newspaper that Jafar Javanmardi had been convicted on the same charge and sentenced to death a second time by Military Court 1 of Ghazvin province.[2263] On 9 April 2024, Masoud Setayeshi, the judiciary's spokesperson, stated that the verdict issued by Military Court 1 of Ghazvin province was not final and could be appealed before the Supreme Court. He added that, in all cases involving private complaints, the judiciary's efforts were aimed at achieving reconciliation between the parties, which typically means the family of the murder victim granting pardon to the individual convicted in exchange for *diyeh* (blood money).[2264]

The judiciary spokesperson's statement followed an article published on the Fars News Agency, a media outlet affiliated with the IRGC, which described the sentence issued against Jafar Javanmardi as a "harsh sentence" that "will weaken the police." According to the Fars News Agency, unnamed "judicial officials" told the news agency that "the ruling is not final and will be re-examined due to multiple deficiencies in the case."[2265] This suggested that security forces were exerting pressure on the judiciary to overturn the sentence. Amnesty International has not been able to obtain any further information on this case.

ZAHEDAN "BLOODY FRIDAY" CASE

"Bloody Friday" is a term widely used by victims' communities and human rights defenders to describe the events of 30 September 2022 in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, where security forces unlawfully killed scores of protesters, worshippers and bystanders, including children, from Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority.[2266]

The Iranian authorities refer to the "Bloody Friday" incident as the "8 Mehr" (30 September) case or as the "incident of Police Station No. 16", in reference to the police station located across from

2261. Shargh Daily, صدور حکم بدوی علیه فرمانده سابق نیروی انتظامی بندرانزلی در دادگاه نظامی/ با اعتراض وکلای متهم، پرونده به دیوان عالی کشور رفته است ["Preliminary verdict issued against former Bandar Anzali police commander in military court: Case referred to Supreme Court following defendant's lawyers' appeal"], 6 June 2023, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-بخش-سیاست-6/882671-صدور-حکم-بدوی-علیه-فرمانده-سابق-نیروی-انتظامی-بندرانزلی-در-دادگاه-نظامی-با-اعتراض-وکلای-متهم-پرونده-به-دیوان-عالی-کشور-رفته-است (in Persian).

2262. Mizan News Agency, نقض حکم پرونده قتل مهران سماک در دیوان عالی کشور/ پرونده به شعبه هم عرض رفت ["Supreme Court overturns verdict in Mehran Samak murder case: Case sent to a parallel court branch"], 15 January 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4754778/نقض-حکم-پرونده-قتل-مهران-سماک-در-دیوان-عالی-کشور-پرونده-به-شعبه-هم-عرض-رفت (in Persian).

2263. Shargh Daily, اصرار بر مفاد حکم دادگاه نظامی یک گیلان در دادگاه نظامی یک قزوین/ حکم قتل عمد و مجازات قصاص برای متهم پرونده «قتل عمد مهران سماک» صادر شد ["Insistence on provisions of military court ruling in Gilan at Military Court 1 in Ghazvin: Premeditated murder verdict and *qesas* punishment issued for the defendant in the 'Mehran Samak premeditated murder' case"], 27 March 2024, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-بخش-جامعه-220/924416-اصرار-بر-مفاد-حکم-دادگاه-نظامی-یک-گیلان-در-دادگاه-نظامی-یک-قزوین-حکم-قتل-عمد-مجازات-قصاص-برای-متهم-پرونده-قتل-عمد-مهران-سماک-صادر-شد (in Persian).

2264. Shargh Daily, آخرین وضعیت پرونده متهم قتل مهران سماک از زبان سخنگوی قوه قضاییه ["Latest status of Mehran Samak murder case, according to judiciary spokesperson"], 9 April 2024, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-بخش-سیاست-6/925798-آخرین-وضعیت-پرونده-متهم-قتل-مهران-سماک-از-زبان-سخنگوی-قوه-قضاییه (in Persian).

2265. Eghtesaad24.ir, فارس: پروندۀ محکومیت متهم پرونده مهران سماک، دوباره بررسی می‌شود ["Fars: Conviction of accused in Mehran Samak case set to be re-examined"], 1 April 2024, https://eghtesaad24.ir/fa/news/234033/فارس-پروندۀ-محکومیت-متهم-پرونده-مهران-سماک-دوباره-بررسی-می‌شود (in Persian).

2266. See section 5.3.2(II).

the Great Mosalla prayer area where fatal shootings took place.[2267]

On 26 April 2023, the judiciary spokesperson announced at a press conference that the events of 30 September 2022 in Zahedan were being investigated by the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces of Sistan and Baluchistan province. He stated that an indictment had been issued and that the case was being heard before Military Court 1 of Sistan and Baluchistan province.[2268]

On 11 May 2023, the national head of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces, Ahmadreza Pourkhaghan, announced that 26 individuals had been criminally charged in connection with the events of 30 September 2022 in Zahedan. He stated that 11 of the 26 had been charged with shootings resulting in bodily injuries and death while the remaining 15 faced charges such as "abuse of power", "unlawful shooting", "annulment of orders" and "acts of omission".[2269]

Several weeks later, at a press conference on 21 June 2023, the military prosecutor of Sistan and Baluchistan province, Hosseinali Mir, stated that three separate cases had been initiated in connection with the events of 30 September 2022. He indicated that one of the cases involved 15 defendants, another 11 defendants and the third an unspecified number of defendants who were commanders.[2270]

Regarding the case involving 15 defendants, he indicated that verdicts had been issued towards the end of the Iranian calendar year 1401, which finished on 20 March 2023. However, he said no further information could be disclosed as the rulings were still under appeal and were therefore not considered final.

Regarding the second case involving 11 individuals, he stated that indictments had been issued in connection with fatal shootings that resulted in deaths and that the cases were referred to trial towards the end of the Iranian calendar year 1401. However, he noted that the trial court found the cases incomplete and returned them to the office of the prosecutor for further investigation. He indicated that the incompleteness stemmed from the purported lack of identity documents from some victims' families, as well as delays in the issuance of expert opinions by the Legal Medicine Organization in the cases of injured protesters who were undergoing prolonged treatment.

Regarding the third case, Hosseinali Mir did not specify the number of defendants but noted that they were commanders facing charges related to "omissions, disregarding regulations and false reporting".[2271] He reported that indictments had been issued, several sessions had taken place and a judgment would be delivered once the court received the outcomes of certain pending inquires.[2272]

Haalvsh, a Baluchi human rights organization based outside Iran, reported that the first hearing of these trials took place behind closed doors on 7 February 2024 before a military court, presided by judge Mohammad Marzieh. Haalvsh reported that, during this session, injured victims and families

2267. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News), تشکیل سه پرونده برای حادثه کلانتری ۱۶ زاهدان ["Three cases filed regarding the incident at Zahedan Police Station No. 16"], 21 June 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3890003/تشکیل-سه-پرونده-برای-حادثه-کلانتری-۱۶-زاهدان (in Persian).
2268. Mizan News Agency, پرونده متهمان حوادث روز جمعه ۸ مهر در زاهدان در چه مرحله‌ای است؟ ["At what stage are proceedings against the defendants in the 30 September incidents in Zahedan?"], 26 April 2023, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4709386 (in Persian).
2269. IRNA, کیفرخواست برای ۲۶ نفر در پرونده هشتم مهر زاهدان صادر شد ["Indictments issued for 26 individuals in the 30 September Zahedan case"], 11 May 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85108306/کیفرخواست-برای-۲۶-نفر-در-پرونده-هشتم-مهر-زاهدان-صادر-شد (in Persian).
2270. Etemad Online, جزئیاتی از آخرین وضعیت پرونده جمعه سیاه زاهدان ["Details on latest status of Zahedan Black Friday case"], 21 June 2023, https://www.etemadonline.com/بخش-سیاسی-9/618796-پرونده-جمعه-سیاه-زاهدان-سیستان-بلوچستان (in Persian).
2271. IRIB News, تشکیل سه پرونده برای حادثه کلانتری ۱۶ زاهدان ["Three cases filed regarding incident at Zahedan Police Station No. 16"], 21 June 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3890003/تشکیل-سه-پرونده-برای-حادثه-کلانتری-۱۶-زاهدان (in Persian).
2272. IRIB News, تشکیل سه پرونده برای حادثه کلانتری ۱۶ زاهدان ["Three cases filed regarding incident at Zahedan Police Station No. 16"], 21 June 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3890003/تشکیل-سه-پرونده-برای-حادثه-کلانتری-۱۶-زاهدان (in Persian).

of those unlawfully killed were told by the court to accept *diyeh* (blood money).[2273] According to Haalvsh, witnesses and lawyers of victims and their families were barred from attending the second hearing, which was held on 12 February 2024. The court was reported to have refused to hear the statements of 11 eyewitnesses on the basis that it had reviewed relevant CCTV footage.[2274] According to Haalvsh, throughout the process, prosecution authorities pressured the victims' families to accept *diyeh* (blood money) and stop pursuing their complaints.

On 12 January 2025, the head of the Justice Department of Sistan and Baluchistan province, Ali Movahedirad, announced that the state agents on trial had been charged with murder. However, he said that, since the authorities had "not established who exactly shot these people and with what weapons", *qesas* (retribution in kind) was not pursued. Instead, the maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment and the payment of *diyeh* (blood money) was sought.[2275] Around nine months later, on 21 September 2025, Ali Movahedirad announced that several agents had been convicted of murder and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.[2276]

In his January and September 2025 announcements, Ali Movahedirad did not clarify the number of state agents who were tried for murder and later convicted and sentenced. However, based on the content of his announcements and earlier official statements, it appears that his remarks related only to the case of 11 agents whom the authorities had previously said were accused of fatal shootings resulting in death.

Amnesty International was unable to obtain any information or updates in relation to the other two cases which the authorities claimed to have initiated against 15 defendants in one case and an unidentified number of commanders in another.

Apart from the abovementioned vague statements, the authorities have not made public any official information regarding the investigations and prosecutions they claim have taken place in relation to the "Bloody Friday" incident, such as the exact number of those prosecuted and convicted; their identities, organizational affiliations and ranks; the evidence reviewed and relied upon; the bodies and officials in charge of the investigations and prosecutions; and the final verdicts with the details of convictions and/or acquittals. No documents, such as indictments or judgments, have been made public.

According to Haalvsh, victims' families believe that the proceedings were merely show trials and have not seen evidence that any officials are currently serving prison terms following the court verdict.

On 16 January 2025, several victims of the "Bloody Friday" incident published an open letter in protest at what they described as "sham trials" against low-ranking officials. The letter highlighted that responsible high-ranking officials had not been prosecuted and urged the international community to take action to hold the Iranian authorities accountable. The letter said:

2273. Haalvsh, ["First court session held for complaints of families of victims and injured in Zahedan's 'Bloody Friday': Court: Settle with blood money"], 7 February 2024, https://haalvsh.org/2024/02/07/برگزاری-اولین-جلسه-دادگاه-رسیدگی-به-پر (in Persian).

2274. Haalvsh, ["Second court session held for the complaints of families of the victims and injured in Zahedan's 'Bloody Friday' / Court: No need for eyewitnesses, CCTV footage has been reviewed"], 12 February 2024, https://haalvsh.org/2024/02/12/برگزاری-دومین-جلسه-دادگاه-رسیدگی-به-پر (in Persian).

2275. ISNA, ["Explanation of the latest details of the 30 September Zahedan incident case by the head of the Justice Department of Sistan and Baluchistan"], 12 January 2025, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403102316679/تشریح-آخرین-جزئیات-پرونده-حادثه-۸-مهر-زاهدان-از-سوی-رییس-کل-دادگستری (in Persian).

2276. ISNA, ["Zahedan incident of 30 September was pursued seriously and in accordance with Leader's measures"], 21 September 2025, https://www.isna.ir/news/1404063018449/حادثه-هشتم-مهر-زاهدان-با-جدیت-و-بر-اساس-تدابیر-رهبری-پیگیری-شد-صدور (in Persian).

"Bloody Friday marks an atrocity in the history of Baluchistan and Iran and an example of documented violent repression and widespread human rights violations… In response to public protests and international pressure, sham trials were held to address this atrocity. However, the rulings issued, which have sentenced only several low-ranking individuals to insignificant punishments (10 years in prison), illustrate the lack of will to prosecute those who ordered this atrocity."[2277]

11.4 SHAM INQUIRIES

The authorities' strategy of denial has also involved the creation of sham "fact-finding committees". Amnesty International has concluded that these bodies have been manifestly biased and failed to meet even the most basic standards of impartiality, independence, transparency, consultation with victims and other stakeholders, and effectiveness.

Based on its detailed monitoring and analysis, Amnesty International considers that their sole purpose has been to create a façade of accountability for the international community, divert attention from the ongoing crisis of systemic impunity prevailing in the country and discourage member states of the UN Human Rights Council from establishing a UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and renewing its mandate.

On 22 November 2022, only two days before a resolution to establish a UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran was being put to a vote in a special session of the UN Human Rights Council, the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, announced the formation of an investigative committee by his ministry to "seriously pursue the rights of victims of recent incidents and disturbances".[2278] As previously highlighted by Amnesty International, this investigative committee failed to adhere to principles of independence, impartiality, thoroughness and transparency, considering particularly the direct involvement of the Ministry of Interior in the lethal crackdown.[2279] According to the authorities, the Ministry of Interior's committee was formed on 31 October 2022 and it "presented the results of its investigation in detail".[2280] However, there exists no publicly available report on its work or findings.

Separately, on 23 November 2022, a member of the Parliamentary Commission on National Security and Foreign Policy and chair of its Human Rights Committee, Zohreh Elahian, announced efforts aimed at the creation of a "fact-finding committee" composed of representatives from various government branches.[2281] At the time, no further information was made public about its composition or mandate. This body appears to be the same as the four-member Special Committee to Investigate the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), which was subsequently established pursuant to an order by the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, on 7 May 2023, though this cannot be confirmed due to the lack of transparency. The mandate of the Special Committee was renewed by the current president, Masoud Pezeshkian, pursuant to a directive issued by him in October 2024.

2277. Radio Zamaneh, «جمعه خونین زاهدان، مصداق بارز جنایت علیه بشریت است» ["Zahedan's Bloody Friday is a clear example of a crime against humanity"], 16 January 2025, https://www.radiozamaneh.com/846470/ (in Persian).
2278. IRNA, وزیر کشور از تشکیل کمیته تحقیق درباره ناآرامی های اخیر خبر داد ["Minister of interior announces formation of investigation committee into recent unrest"], 22 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84950764/وزیر-کشور-از-تشکیل-کمیته-تحقیق-درباره-ناآرامی-های-اخیر-خبر-داد (in Persian).
2279. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7480/2023), 6 December 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7480/2023/en, pp. 92-97. See sections 10.2.5(III) and 10.4.4(III).
2280. Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, https://geneva.mfa.ir/files/mfageneva/geneva/Summary%20-%20EN.pdf, para. 3.
2281. Fars News, الهیان: کمیته حقیقت‌یاب برای بررسی اتفاقات اخیر کشور تشکیل می‌شود ["Elahian: A fact-finding committee will be established to investigate the country's recent incidents"], 23 November 2022, https://www.farsnews.ir/news/14010902000362 (in Persian).

Since the establishment of the Special Committee, Iranian authorities have repeatedly cited it as evidence of their commitment to accountability and as justification for their refusal to cooperate with the UN Fact Finding Mission,[2282] which they have characterized as a "politically motivated move" and "a serious war" waged by the "enemies" of the Islamic Republic of Iran.[2283]

For example, on 5 July 2023, when the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran delivered its oral update to the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council, Kazem Gharibabadi, the then deputy head of the judiciary for international affairs, secretary general of the High Council for Human Rights of Iran and a member of the Special Committee, equated the Special Committee's creation by Ebrahim Raisi with ensuring accountability. In his statement, Kazem Gharibabadi repeatedly referred to the protests as "riots" and described the establishment of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran despite domestic investigations as a "politically motivated move".[2284]

In his 18 March 2024 statement before the UN Human Rights Council, Kazem Gharibabadi once again dismissed the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran as a "politically charged mechanism" formed and supported by "select Western countries". He rejected the Mission's findings, asserting that they were issued just days after the Special Committee submitted its report to the president. Kazem Gharibabadi claimed that the Special Committee had been established to "meticulously and impartially examine, clarify and redress any infringements upon citizens' rights during the riots", and that its report affirmed the accountability of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the unrest.[2285]

On 3 April 2024, during the 55th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Ali Bahreini, the permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN in Geneva, called on member states to vote against the resolution renewing the mandate of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, referring to the establishment of the Special Committee as "a clear manifestation [of] Iran's strong willingness to protect and promote human [rights]".[2286]

As detailed below, Amnesty International's thorough review of the Special Committee's composition, activities and the affiliations of its members, who are linked to state bodies involved in human rights violations, reveals that the Special Committee has done much more than merely failing to conduct investigations or ensure accountability. Rather, it has played a pivotal role in the authorities' deliberate plans to deny and conceal gross human rights violations committed by the security forces during protests. In the face of mounting evidence, the Special Committee, alongside the High Council for Human Rights in Iran and their officials, has consistently sought to weaken international responses and shield those responsible for crimes under international law. They have systematically disseminated

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2282. In March 2024, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran reported that all 21 letters it had sent to the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva, including correspondence requesting information and access to the country, had remained unanswered. Similarly, the authorities provided no response to the repeated requests by the Mission seeking meetings with the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva. See UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 24. See also IRNA, ایران با کمیته حقیقتیاب همکاری نخواهد کرد ["Iran will not cooperate with the fact-finding mission"], 28 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84955465 (in Persian).

2283. Shargh Daily, وزیر کشور: ایجاد کمیته حقیقت‌یاب توسط دشمن یک جنگ جدی علیه ایران است ["Minister of interior: Creation of fact-finding committee by enemy is a serious act of warfare against Iran"], 30 May 2023, https://www.sharghdaily.com/-وزیر-6/882002-بخش-سیاست (in Persian); IRNA, ایران با کمیته حقیقتیاب همکاری نخواهد کرد ["Iran will not cooperate with the fact-finding mission"], 28 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84955465 (in Persian).

2284. UN Web TV, "ID: Fact-finding mission on Iran – 23rd Meeting, 53rd Regular Session of Human Rights Council", 5 July 2023, https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1a/k1a7z87nqd, minute 11:41-16:55.

2285. Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva, "The Statement by H.E. Dr. Kazem Gharibabadi, the Vice-President of the Judiciary for International Affairs and the Secretary-General of the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran before the United Nations Human Rights Council", 18 March 2024, https://geneva.mfa.gov.ir/portal/newsview/741677/The-Statement-by-HE-Dr-Kazem-Gharibabadi-Before-the-United-Nations-Human-Rights-Council

2286. Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva, "Statement by Ambassador Ali Bahreini Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva Before the Human Rights Council, 55th Session, Item 4:Draft resolution A/HRC/55/I.6", 3 April 2024, https://geneva.mfa.gov.ir/portal/newsview/746727/Item4-55th-Session-Of-The-Human-Rights-Council

misinformation to undermine robust findings by UN bodies and experts, including by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as reports by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, thus advancing the Islamic Republic's strategy of denial and distortion.

11.4.1 LACK OF STRUCTURAL INDEPENDENCE AND BIASED MEMBERS

Amnesty International has previously detailed how the Special Committee fails to meet even the most basic requirements of impartiality, independence, transparency, consultation with victims and other stakeholders, and effectiveness, concluding that the Special Committee's formation was simply another tactic by the Iranian authorities to deflect criticism by the international community and evade accountability.[2287]

It has highlighted how all four members of the Special Committee – Hossein Mozaffar, Zohreh Elahian, Kazem Gharibabadi and Sakineh Sadat Pad – presided over or worked with state bodies that are complicit in condoning and perpetuating impunity for crimes under international law and serious human rights violations committed by the authorities in Iran. All members have denied or justified Iran's appalling human rights record and disseminated misinformation about the human rights violations committed by the authorities in the context of the Woman Life Freedom uprising and beyond.[2288]

For example, the most prominent member of the Special Committee, Kazem Gharibabadi, was appointed while simultaneously retaining his roles as the secretary general of Iran's High Council for Human Rights and deputy head of the judiciary for international affairs. In these roles, Kazem Gharibabadi has played a leading role in denying and misrepresenting human rights violations in Iran before international bodies.

The bodies he led issued a joint report in 2024 that listed among their "achievements" the release of two former Iranian officials, Asadollah Asadi and Hamid Nouri, who had been convicted of serious crimes in Belgium and Sweden, respectively. Asadollah Asadi had been sentenced in February 2021 by a criminal court in Belgium to 20 years' imprisonment for his role in a thwarted bomb attack at a 2018 rally of Iranian dissidents in France.[2289] Hamid Nouri had been prosecuted in Sweden under the principle of universal jurisdiction and sentenced to life in prison for crimes related to Iran's 1988 prison massacres.[2290]

In staggering blows to justice, Belgian and Swedish authorities prematurely released and transferred Asadollah Asadi and Hamid Nouri to Iran in May 2023 and June 2024, respectively, in exchange for nationals of Belgium and Sweden who had been arbitrarily detained by the Iranian authorities. The circumstances of the swaps in both cases confirmed Amnesty International's concerns that the Iranian authorities were holding dual and foreign nationals as hostages.[2291] Both convicted former officials

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2287. See Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 92-97.
2288. See Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 92-97.
2289. ISNA, ۱۴۰۲ اقدامات معاونت امور بین‌الملل قوه قضائیه و دبیرخانه ستاد حقوق بشر در سال ["Actions of the Office of the Deputy Head of the Judiciary for International Affairs and the headquarters of the Secretariat of the High Council for Human Rights in 2023"], 28 April 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403020906860/اقدامات-معاونت-امور-بین-الملل-قوه-قضائیه-و-دبیرخانه-ستاد-حقوق (in Persian).
2290. Amnesty International, "Iran: Conviction of former Iranian official over involvement in 1988 prison massacres landmark step towards justice", 14 July 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/07/iran-conviction-of-former-iranian-official-over-involvement-in-1988-prison-massacres-landmark-step-towards-justice
2291. Amnesty International, *Iran/Belgium: Iran Must Be Held Accountable for Hostage-Taking After Overdue Release of Olivier Vandecasteele in Prisoner Swap* (Index: MDE 13/6835/2023), 26 May 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6835/2023/en; Amnesty International, *Belgium Must Ensure New Treaty with Iran Does Not Entrench Impunity* (Index: MDE 13/5813/2022), 5 July 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5813/2022/en

were welcomed by Kazem Gharibabadi and other authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran upon their return and were praised for their "resistance".[2292]

The releases of Asadollah Asadi and Hamid Nouri stand out as glaring examples of the role played by the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its High Council for Human Rights to cement impunity for crimes under international law committed in Iran. In their April 2024 report, the High Council for Human Rights and the Office of the Deputy Head of the Judiciary for International Affairs stated that they "played a critical role within the judiciary in the release of Iranian diplomat Asadollah Asadi".[2293] They also took pride in "coordination" and "special measures" in relation to the case of Hamid Nouri. Additionally, in a meeting with Hamid Nouri's son on 10 July 2022, Kazem Gharibabadi highlighted efforts taken by the High Council for Human Rights and other state institutions to secure Hamid Nouri's release.[2294]

In March 2024, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran raised concerns about "the lack of institutional independence of the Special Committee and its members, as well as about prejudicial public statements about those involved in the protests that began on 16 September 2022 made by some of its members."[2295] The Mission stated that the Special Committee had left unanswered the Mission's queries on concrete steps taken to ensure its institutional and substantive independence and its ability to work independently and impartially.[2296]

11.4.2 RECYCLING OF STATE NARRATIVES

To date, the Special Committee has published two reports: a main 110-page report released in March 2024 and a supplementary 36-page published in March 2025. In the main report, the Special Committee noted that it had submitted a larger report, comprising 279 pages and 17 attachments, to Iran's president on 6 March 2024, but this had not been made public.[2297]

Amnesty International's review of the two publicly available reports reaffirms its assessment that the Iranian authorities established the Special Committee in a bid to mislead the international community about their response to Iran's human rights crisis and to advance the Islamic Republic's campaign of denial and distortion.

Consistent with the official state narrative, the Special Committee's reports characterize the protests as "riots" orchestrated by "foreign enemies", "terrorists" and "separatist groups". They reiterate baseless claims by Iranian authorities that the protests were part of "a pre-planned security scenario against Iran",[2298] as well as "a project designed by certain foreign countries".[2299] The reports deny the authorities' responsibility for the unlawful killing of hundreds of protesters and bystanders as well as for widespread torture and other ill-treatment against men, women and children, including rape and other

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2292. Mizan News Agency, استقبال از حمید نوری در فرودگاه مهرآباد ["Welcome for Hamid Nouri at Mehrabad Airport"], 15 July 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4778182/استقبال-از-حمید-نوری-در-فرودگاه-مهرآباد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, حمید نوری وارد تهران شد ["Hamid Nouri arrives in Tehran"], 15 July 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6137357/حمید-نوری-وارد-تهران-شد (in Persian).

2293. Mizan News Agency, اهم اقدام‌های معاونت امور بین‌الملل قوه قضاییه و دبیرخانه ستاد حقوق بشر در سال ۱۴۰۲ ["Key actions of the High Council for Human Rights and the Office of the Deputy Head of the Judiciary for International Affairs in 1402"], 28 April 2024, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4770475 (in Persian).

2294. ISNA, غریب آبادی:ایران نهایت تلاش خود را برای آزادی حمید نوری به کار خواهد بست ["Gharibabadi: Iran will make every effort to secure Hamid Nouri's release"], 10 July 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401041912775/غریب-آبادی-ایران-نهایت-تلاش-خود-را-برای-آزادی-حمید-نوری-به-کار (in Persian).

2295. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1839.

2296. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1839.

2297. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), para. 4.

2298. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 20.

2299. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 34.

sexual violence. In their conclusions, the Special Committee defends the conduct of security forces, claiming they refrained from using violence or firearms, despite extensive evidence to the contrary.[2300]

The Special Committee's main 110-page report comprises seven chapters and one annex, published in both Persian and English. Over two-thirds of the report is devoted to describing the role of "foreign states and officials" and "the foreign media and platforms" in the violence allegedly committed by the protesters and portraying security forces as "acting responsibly". By comparison, only a 15-page chapter focuses on allegations of human rights violations, with merely half a page devoted to "examining the status of the deceased". The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran reported that, during a call with the Special Committee in January 2024, the latter claimed that "the protests took a violent turn because of the involvement of foreign actors" while also blaming social media.[2301]

Amnesty International compared the report's content with other materials issued by the Iranian authorities and intelligence bodies. Its analysis reveals not only substantial overlap but also verbatim repetition of previously published materials. By recycling the content of reports published by other state institutions, the Special Committee has demonstrated both a failure to conduct any meaningful investigations and a lack of independence.

For instance, the report includes several paragraphs that repeat word for word the allegations made by the Ministry of Intelligence and the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC in a joint statement issued on 28 October 2022, entitled "Enlightening joint statement by the Ministry of Intelligence and the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC surrounding the interventions of the US regime in the recent riots in the country".[2302] Echoing the language of the joint statement, the Special Committee's report names several well-known human rights NGOs focusing on Iran and accuses them of acting as "intelligence, military and political elements" of the US government and instigating unrest by providing human rights-related training.[2303]

Furthermore, the report recycles content from 10 other reports previously prepared by Iran's High Council for Human Rights between November 2022 and January 2024, which were disseminated by the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva to various states and to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Only three of the 10 reports prepared by the High Council for Human Rights focus on Iran. The remaining seven reports focus solely on "discrimination, inequality and violence against women in the USA, Germany, France, Sweden, Canada, Australia and the UK", with one report for each of these countries. Of the three reports that focus on Iran, the first presents the Islamic Republic's supposed achievements on women's rights. The second details a proposal by the head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, to the Supreme Leader to issue pardons and commutations to some of the individuals arbitrarily arrested and detained in relation to the uprising. The third, entitled "Examining the inauthentic, non-legal and political report of the so-called Fact-finding Mission", rejects the findings of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, without presenting any evidence of meaningful investigations conducted in line with international standards.

Amnesty International found that the Special Committee's report closely mirrored the language used in these earlier reports with minimal to no rephrasing. As such, the Special Committee reiterated content that accused foreign states, the media and social media platforms of instigating unrest; alleged the

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2300. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), pp. 75-77 and 94-95.
2301. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1838.
2302. ISNA, بیانیه مشترک وزارت اطلاعات و سازمان اطلاعات سپاه ["Joint statement by Ministry of Intelligence and the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC"], 28 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401080603949/بیانیه-مشترک-وزارت-اطلاعات-و-سازمان-اطلاعات-سپاه (in Persian).
2303. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 35.

discovery and seizure of large quantities of weapons; claimed widespread violence by protesters; justified the arbitrary execution of nine young men in connection with the protests; and framed the "Bloody Friday" protests of 30 September 2022 in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, during which security forces unlawfully killed scores of worshippers, protesters and bystanders, as a "terrorist" attack.

The Special Committee's second report, a 36-page document presenting its final and supplementary findings, mirrors the defensive tone of its predecessor. Like the initial report, it frames the Iranian authorities not as accountable actors under international law, but as victims of a foreign plot orchestrated by states such as France, Germany, Israel, the UK and the USA, as well as Persian-language media based outside Iran. The Special Committee once again describes the protests as "riots" instigated by "foreign enemies", "terrorists" and "separatist groups" while rejecting allegations of human rights violations and crimes under international law.

In its conclusions, the Special Committee defends the conduct of the security forces, claiming that they strictly followed "explicit and unequivocal directives issued by military, law enforcement and security commanders instructing law enforcement personnel not to use firearms or violence against protesters" and that they "exercised considerable restraint and caution in dealing with rioters".

11.4.3 FLAWED METHODOLOGY

The Special Committee's methodology, as outlined in its first report, further demonstrates how the body's work is flawed, lacks clarity and consistency, and bears no resemblance to impartial, independent, comprehensive and effective investigations.

The report lists several methods purportedly used to fulfil the Special Committee's mandate, namely: creating a dedicated website; receiving reports or complaints; corresponding with relevant agencies to request information or review issues; conducting interviews and field visits; carrying out research; organizing hearing sessions; and analysing and evaluating information. It further adds that:

> **"Victims and alleged violators were identified by receiving reports (through the website, dedicated mailbox, fax, email, in-person visits, visiting prisons and making provincial trips and meeting with some victims) and investigations by the Committee's secretariat."[2304]**

However, neither of the Special Committee's two reports provides any details regarding the number of interviews conducted, field visits undertaken, hearing sessions held or complaints received. Nor do they provide any information on the profiles of those interviewed, such as whether they were women, children, members of ethnic minorities, victims, witnesses or other informed sources. The reports also fail to offer any information regarding the date, location, duration or research focus of the field visits purportedly undertaken; the timing and location of the hearing sessions purportedly held; whether victims, witnesses and their lawyers were present during these sessions; or whether the sessions were open to the public.

The Special Committee also fails to specify the methods it used to corroborate the information it received from official and other sources. It provides no indication either of whether it collected and reviewed any documentary evidence such as autopsy reports or audiovisual evidence, such as footage of protest dispersals.

The Special Committee's report further reveals that it imposed vaguely worded and broad restrictions on the type of information and allegations it deemed "admissible". For instance, in the first report, the

2304. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 29.

Special Committee states that it would consider allegations that were "not written with political motivations".[2305] It further notes that the Special Committee required allegations to have been a "description of the legal facts that have been violated", further limiting the chances of victims and witnesses, in particular from marginalized communities, to submit complaints.[2306]

The report also mentions another vaguely defined condition, stating that allegations are deemed admissible if "ways of compensating the violation or damage have been explored inside the country, unless it is established that such ways are ineffective or have [been] hit with unreasonable delays".[2307] This condition, which unnecessarily mirrors the admissibility requirements of international mechanisms that are subsidiary to national systems, such as regional human rights courts, restricts cases to those where formal complaints were lodged with police or judicial bodies. At best, this reduces the Special Committee to an auditing body rather than an investigative one. Limiting the scope of investigations to cases where victims exhausted remedies presents a major obstacle, particularly given that the majority of victims interviewed by Amnesty International refrained from lodging complaints due to fears of reprisals or a firm belief in the futility of such efforts.[2308]

The report does not include any information indicating that the Special Committee had the power to summon individuals from state agencies implicated in the violations and crimes under international law committed during the protest crackdown and compel them to cooperate with their investigations, or to seize evidence from those agencies.

The report merely mentions that it:

> **"Used the explanations and reports of relevant internal institutions such as the Medical Examination Organization [Legal Medicine Organization], the Prisons Organization, the Judiciary [Judicial] Organization of Armed Forces, the Judiciary, the military, law enforcement and security agencies, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, governorates, lawyers and jurists, some non-governmental organizations, scientific and research associations, experts, etc."[2309]**

The standard of proof adopted by the Special Committee similarly lacks cohesion and consistency. The report names various standards of proof used for different categories of violations. In relation to "allegations of death of people... and the issuing of death sentences" in connection with the protests, the Special Committee states that it "examined the evidence that substantiates the relevant claim 'beyond any reasonable doubt'". By comparison, the terms "proof in a convincing manner" and "fully conclusive evidence" are cited as the standards applied to allegations concerning "the use of force" and judicial proceedings in connection with the protests, while the more ambiguous standard "sufficiency" is cited as being used in relation to allegations of arrests, detentions and injuries.[2310] The report is silent on how these varied standards were applied, given the interwoven nature of the violations mentioned.

Furthermore, the standard of "beyond reasonable doubt", which is the highest standard of proof used in criminal proceedings to establish a defendant's guilt, was adopted by the Special Committee despite

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2305. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 30.
2306. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 30.
2307. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 30.
2308. See sections 9.4.1 and 9.4.2.
2309. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 33.
2310. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), pp. 30-33.

the fact that Iranian law contains no clear provisions defining standards of proof in criminal cases or specifying who bears the burden of proof.[2311]

Most unlawful deaths, excluding cases of arbitrary executions and deaths in custody, resulted from the unlawful use of force and firearms by state security forces against protesters and bystanders. However, the vague language used in the Special Committee's report referring to "allegations of death of people", along with the absence of any information or evidence regarding the causes and circumstances of these deaths, suggests that its investigations focused merely on determining whether a death had occurred rather than establishing how it was caused.

These methodological flaws are further compounded by the absence of any mention of the applicable legal frameworks used to assess the facts. The Special Committee's reports do not include any references to key international legal standards applicable to domestic investigations, in particular the UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions and the supplementary Manual on the Effective Prevention of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, known as the Minnesota Protocol, as well as the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, known as the Istanbul Protocol.

In its March 2024 report, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran stated that it had not been "able to establish whether the Special Committee applied the norms and standards contained in the international human rights treaties to which Iran is a party and reflected in international customary law."[2312] As previously highlighted by Amnesty International, Iran has refused to incorporate key human rights guarantees into its domestic laws, making them largely inconsistent with international human rights law and standards and thus unfit to be used as a framework for investigations of human rights violations and crimes under international law.[2313]

In its report, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran found that while the Iranian authorities have announced investigations, these have not met the international human rights standards applicable to domestic investigations.[2314] The UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran concluded that Iran's "domestic law in and of itself falls short of international human rights standards, thereby failing to fully protect fundamental human rights as part of Iran's commitments as State party to the various human rights treaties."[2315] It further established that:

> **"Mechanisms and procedures for investigating potentially unlawful deaths and torture, rape and ill-treatment are either lacking or are not consistent with international human rights law and standards. The Mission found no evidence of formal administrative or legal accountability mechanisms within security or intelligence forces, including the IRGC, Basij and FARAJA."[2316]**

2311. See Amnesty International, *Flawed Reforms: Iran's New Code of Criminal Procedure* (Index: MDE 13/2708/2016), 11 February 2016, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2708/2016/en, p. 70.
2312. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1842.
2313. See Amnesty International, *All-Out Attack on Human Rights: Submission to the 48th Session of the UPR Working Group, January – February 2025* (Index: MDE 13/8032/2024), 17 October 2024, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/8032/2024/en; Amnesty International, *Failing on All Fronts: Amnesty International Submission for the UN Universal Periodic Review, 34th Session of the UPR Working Group, November 2019* (Index: MDE 13/0573/2019), 19 June 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0573/2019/en, Amnesty International, *Iran: No Progress on Human Rights: Amnesty International Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review, October – November 2014* (Index: MDE 13/034/2014), 1 July 2014, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/034/2014/en
2314. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1836.
2315. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1832.
2316. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1835.

11.4.4 DEFICIENT FINDINGS

The Special Committee's findings underscore the fundamentally flawed nature of its work. The findings are presented in an extremely summary, vague and generalized manner, consistent with the authorities' previous formulaic and superficial responses to reports of human rights violations. The Special Committee's reports fail to provide any underlying evidence to support their claims. They also omit critical details regarding the cause, manner, location and dates of the human rights violations the Special Committee claims to have investigated. Moreover, the reports do not identify the various state entities involved in the crackdown, nor do they name alleged perpetrators or specify the state institutions to which they were affiliated.

11.4.4(I) KILLINGS

In relation to the killings of protesters and bystanders, the Special Committee's first report states that it examined the "situation of the deceased and martyrs of the 2022 unrest", assessing available documents, including reports by various state bodies such as ministries, the police and other security forces. On this basis, the report concludes that 202 people "lost their lives" during the protests.[2317]

The report does not name the victims or provide disaggregated data such as gender, age or ethnicity. It also fails to present any information on the precise causes and circumstance of deaths, their locations or the dates on which they occurred. Instead, in keeping with state narratives of denial and distortion, the report smears the protesters as "rioters" and "armed thugs" and claims they carried out most of the killings.

The report divides the 202 individuals it claims were killed into two categories. The first category encompasses 90 people allegedly "killed while carrying and using weapons … in clashes and attacks on military and law enforcement headquarters, critical infrastructure or law enforcement personnel".[2318] The second category encompasses 112 people described as:

> **"Passers-by who lost their lives during the riots by rioters and those armed with unlicensed weapons that were not standard issue of the law enforcement forces; or by armed terrorists with the aim of killing and creating an atmosphere against the system."[2319]**

The report states that 25 additional people lost their lives in various "terrorist attacks" while 54 law enforcement personnel were "martyred as a result of widespread violence by rioters and terrorists."[2320] No further details on the alleged incidents are provided.

The Special Committee's categorization reflects those presented in statements by the authorities, in particular one by the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, on 23 September 2022, and another by the State Security Council on 3 December 2022. Ahmad Vahidi stated that "fatalities fall into several groups" including "ordinary citizens, either killed by rioters or murdered for personal vendettas"; "police and security officers"; and "individuals who intended to enter sensitive headquarters and were

2317. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 53.
2318. Special Committees, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 53.
2319. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 53.
2320. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 54.

killed by security forces defending those sites."[2321] The State Security Council stated that over 200 people had been killed during the protests and divided them into several categories including:

> **"Security martyrs [a term used by the authorities to refer to state agents killed during protests]; public martyrs [killed] during terrorist activities; innocent individuals who fell victim to the grouplets' project of staging killings; innocent people who lost their lives amid the security chaos; and armed rioters as well as anti-revolutionary agents belonging to separatist grouplets."[2322]**

With respect to the category of those who "lost their lives during the riots by rioters and… armed terrorists", the Special Committee's account is identical to the official narrative that attributes the killings to "rioters", "unknown elements" and "terrorists", thus absolving security forces of responsibility.

With respect to the category of "those killed while carrying and using weapons", the Special Committee notably referred to the killings in the passive voice, avoiding any attribution of responsibility to security forces. It provided no information on the identity, affiliation or composition of the security forces involved, nor on the types of weapons and ammunition used.

The report provides no evidence to substantiate the claim that 90 of those killed were armed. Furthermore, by centring its narrative on allegations of weapon possession and use, without claiming that those killed posed an imminent threat of death or serious injury justifying the use of lethal force, it implicitly confirms that the legal threshold for the use of lethal force was not met. This omission underscores a broader failure to investigate potentially unlawful killings within the framework of international human rights law and standards.

Furthermore, the report's own narrative undermines its claims about the circumstances surrounding the deaths of 90 individuals. In its earlier sections, the report asserts that 90 individuals were killed in the context of responding to attacks on sensitive state facilities. However, later sections contradict this by claiming that authorities took measures to avoid the use of firearms and lethal force even in cases of "attacks on military and sensitive places and headquarters during the unrest of 2022." The report makes this claim in a congratulatory tone, stating that "all emphasis was on avoiding using combat weapons" even though Iranian law "makes it possible to use weapons and lethal force" in cases of attacks on state facilities.[2323]

To support its claim that security forces refrained from using firearms, the report refers to three unpublished directives allegedly issued by the FARAJA Command, the IRGC Command and the General Staff of the Armed Forces, and on 20, 21 and 22 September 2022, respectively. According to the report, these directives prohibited the use of "combat firearms" and instructed security forces to rely on "anti-riot equipment and tools" and "non-lethal weapons".[2324] However, the report does not include copies of these orders, nor does it provide any information on their implementation or the impact of any subsequent directives issued throughout the remainder of the protest period, which lasted until the end of the year.

The Special Committee's reference to these unpublished directives followed an earlier mention of the same directives in a report submitted by Iran's High Council for Human Rights to the Office of the UN

2321. Nour News, اولین واکنش رسمی وزیر کشور به تحولات اخیر ["Minister of interior's first official response to recent developments"], 23 September 2022, https://nournews.ir/fa/news/109200/اولین-واکنش-رسمی-وزیر-کشور-به-تحولات-اخیر (in Persian).
2322. Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, یانیه شورای امنیت کشور درباره رخدادهای اخیر ["Statement of the State Security Council regarding recent events"], 3 December 2022, https://dolat.ir/detail/400920 (in Persian).
2323. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 76.
2324. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 76.

High Commissioner for Human Rights and the member states of the UN Human Rights Council on 22 November 2022. Like the Special Committee, the High Council for Human Rights failed to provide copies of the directives, leaving their content and implementation unverified.[2325]

In a letter dated 27 June 2023, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran formally requested copies of these referenced directives as well as detailed information on all forces deployed during the protests, their organigrams, uniforms and the weapons used.[2326] The Mission also requested information on specific protests that the authorities alleged were characterized by widespread violence and on reports of casualties among security forces, as well as instances in which law enforcement officers used force in self-defence or the defence of others to save lives.[2327] No response was received by the Mission from the Iranian authorities.[2328]

11.4.4(II) INJURIES

In relation to those injured by security forces in the context of protests, the Special Committee's report simply makes some vague and general remarks and fails to engage with the scale and severity of harm inflicted by security forces on protesters and bystanders across the country.

The report acknowledges that "some people were injured" but claims that the total number could not be ascertained due to a "lack of referral to medical centres, [and] judicial authorities."[2329] It thus disregards extensive and incontrovertible evidence of mass injuries sustained across the country as a result of the unlawful use of force and firearms, particularly the widespread use of shotguns loaded with metal pellets and assault rifles. This evidence includes video footage, photographic documentation, medical records such as CT scans and X-ray images, and even official forensic reports, many of which are publicly accessible through open sources.[2330]

In addressing reports of injuries, the report refers to individuals who reported their injuries to "foreign authorities" and those who submitted complaints to "competent authorities" within the country, including the Special Committee and law enforcement and judicial officials. Regarding the former group, the report downplays the scale and adopts a dismissive tone, stating that it was not possible for the Special Committee to verify claims made by "so-called human rights non-governmental organizations" regarding "a very small" number of individuals who had reported "their injuries to foreign authorities".[2331]

Regarding the latter group, the report claims that "necessary investigations have been carried out in order to compensate the damage and the cost of treatment of the injured."[2332] However, it provides no details on the number and profile of those injured, such as their gender, age and ethnicity. Nor does it present any information about the nature or findings of the investigations it references, such as the circumstances in which the injuries occurred, their location and timing, the security forces involved, the weapons and ammunition used, or the physical and psychological impact of the injuries on victims. The report merely mentions financial compensation as a remedy, with no indication that any criminal investigations or prosecutions were initiated based on these findings.

2325. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 461.
2326. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), Annex I, 4, 5, 6.
2327. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 474.
2328. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 476.
2329. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 57.
2330. See section 5.3.2(III).
2331. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 57.
2332. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 57.

The report further claims that a significant number of law enforcement agents were injured, including 5,200 agents affiliated with FARAJA and a "significant" number of IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions, 1,540 of whom it says suffered severe, irreparable Injuries.[2333] No additional details are provided regarding the causes and circumstances of these alleged incidents or their dates and locations.

11.4.4(III) RAPE AND OTHER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In both of its reports, the Special Committee also fully reiterated the official narrative completely denying the commission of rape and other forms of sexual violence against women, men and children. The reports reiterate the content of a March 2024 letter sent to Amnesty International by Kazem Gharibabadi, in his capacity as the secretary general of the High Council for Human Rights, regarding Amnesty International's report titled '*They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising*, published on 6 December 2023.[2334]

The letter and the Special Committee's reports question Amnesty International's methodology and the credibility of its findings on the use of rape and sexual violence against protesters. The Special Committee stated that Amnesty International had levelled "illusory accusations and allegations against some law enforcement officers during last year's riots" and that the organization had relied on "fake information".[2335] It questioned the credibility and reliability of Amnesty International's report simply on the basis that all identifying information, including victim's real names, ages, ethnicity and the geographic locations of their detention, had been omitted.

In its response to the letter, dated 11 June 2024, Amnesty International highlighted its well-established methodology, which includes interviewing survivors, witnesses and other informed sources and corroborating the obtained information with other types of available evidence, including photographs of injuries and other audiovisual evidence, as well as official documents such as legal complaints, medical records and court documents. The organization emphasized that the omission of real names and other identifying markers in public documents is a standard practice in human rights documentation and reporting to protect victims and witnesses from reprisals by state authorities, noting that, in the case of Iran, such fears of reprisals were well founded and well documented. Amnesty International further emphasized that, under its organizational methodology and policies, it would never share details about the identities of individuals interviewed without their explicit consent.

The Special Committee's first report states that domestic investigations were carried out by judicial and other officials and that there were no complaints of rape or sexual assault by law enforcement officials bar one incident of rape by two individuals "who introduced themselves as law enforcement" but had "in fact no connection with law enforcement forces."

In his letter to Amnesty International, Kazem Gharibabadi similarly asserted that, following a review of all complaints submitted to the authorities in connection with the protests, Iran's judiciary "found that in 28 out of 31 provinces, no complaints were filed under the headings of rape, assault and sexual harassment". The letter notes only three complaints of sexual violence in three unnamed provinces. Reiterating the claims made by the Special Committee, the letter states that, according to investigations, the perpetrators in these provinces had "no connection with law enforcement forces".

2333. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 58.
2334. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).
2335. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), pp. 62 and 63.

Amnesty International requested further clarifying information regarding the three incidents mentioned but did not receive any response prior to the publication of this report.

The claim denying the involvement of any state agent in sexual violence directly contradicts an earlier admission by the authorities contained in a leaked official letter. This letter, dated 13 October 2022, was written by the deputy prosecutor of Tehran province, Mohammad Shahriari, and addresses complaints of rape filed by two women protesters in Tehran against two state agents. The letter explicitly identifies the two suspected perpetrators as IRGC agents and noted their names and official titles.[2336]

Both the letter and the Special Committee's reports also specifically deny the commission of rape and sexual violence against several young men sentenced to death in connection with the protests, including Javad Rouhi,[2337] Mehdi Mohammadifard,[2338] and Majid Kazemi.[2339] Javad Rouhi died in state custody under suspicious circumstances on 31 August 2023.[2340] Mehdi Mohammadifard's conviction and death sentences were overturned by the Supreme Court in May 2023 and he was subsequently sentenced to six years' imprisonment in October 2023 on national security-related charges. Majid Kazemi was arbitrary executed in May 2023. The reports and the letter ignore a note written by Javad Rouhi from prison and an audio message by Majid Kazemi in which he gave his account of torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence. Instead of conducting or referencing credible investigations, the reports and the letter simply cite statements by provincial justice departments and the judiciary claiming the absence of any formal complaints of rape and sexual violence, using this as supposed proof of the "falsehood" of such allegations. They fail to provide any underlying evidence or documentation of investigations to substantiate these denials.

Amnesty International recalls, as documented in its December 2023 report, that prosecutorial officials systematically turned a blind eye to visible marks of torture, ignored detainees' complaints of torture and refused to order investigations. Prosecutors and judicial officials became further complicit in repression as they relied on "confessions" which survivors said were extracted through torture and other ill-treatment to impose spurious charges and secure unjust convictions and sentences.

This complicity and the failure of prosecutorial officials to protect victims from reprisals meant that, out of the 45 survivors of sexual violence whose cases were documented by Amnesty International, only three survivors raised formal complaints after release. One survivor was forced to withdraw his complaint after members of the security forces threatened to kidnap and/or kill him and his family members, while the other two, both children, stopped pursuing their complaints after months of inaction by the prosecution. According to international human rights law and standards, prosecution authorities are required to initiate, direct and supervise police investigations into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment when information about such alleged crimes is available, even in the absence of formal complaints.[2341]

In the context of widespread prosecutorial failure to pursue justice and protect victims from reprisals, the Special Committee ultimately relied on the absence of processed complaints to conclude that not a

2336. For more details, see Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 85-87.
2337. Amnesty International, "Iran: Tortured protesters sentenced to death: Javad Rouhi, Mehdi Mohammadifard and Arshia Takdastan", (MDE 13/6390/2023), 27 January 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6390/2023/en
2338. Amnesty International,"Iran: Tortured protesters sentenced to death: Javad Rouhi, Mehdi Mohammadifard and Arshia Takdastan", (MDE 13/6390/2023), 27 January 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6390/2023/en
2339. Amnesty International,"Iran: Executions of tortured protesters must trigger a robust reaction from the international community", 19 May 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/05/iran-executions-of-tortured-protesters-must-trigger-a-robust-reaction-from-the-international-community; Amnesty International, '*They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited).
2340. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 74-75.
2341. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 8; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 2 and 7; UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Article 1214.

single case of rape and sexual violence against protesters was committed by security forces during the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

According to the March 2024 report of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, during a call with the Special Committee in January 2024, the latter fully denied allegations of rape and sexual violence and stated "that any allegations of rape and sexual violence were cowardly allegations intended to pervert the public". It warned the Mission "not to fall into this trap."[2342]

Amnesty International highlights that, over three years since the 2022 uprising, not a single official has been criminally investigated, let alone tried and convicted, for committing rape and other forms of sexual violence in detention, even when complaints were made by survivors.

11.4.4(IV) MASS ARBITRARY ARRESTS, TORTURE AND UNFAIR TRIALS

In relation to large-scale arbitrary arrests and unfair trials, the main report of the Special Committee fails to provide any evidence of investigations and simply repeats the official narrative justifying the crackdown. The report confirms the large-scale arrests of protesters by stating that "during the unrest of 1401, cases were filed for about 34 thousand people."[2343] The Special Committee, however, argued that not a single one of the thousands of arrests and detentions made during the uprising were arbitrary because they were carried out "on the basis of judicial orders and hence cannot be characterized as arbitrary."[2344] It also went on to dismiss any complaints of due process breaches. It stated:

> **"Cases of complaints and objections regarding the lack of explanation of charges or access to a lawyer were also reported, which were sent to the relevant judicial and oversight authorities for investigation. However, due to the lack of proofs and documents, their authenticity was not verified."[2345]**

While denying the arbitrary nature of arrests, the report cites official statements that in fact acknowledge the detention of individuals for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. It also justifies abusive measures that the authorities adopted to authorize arbitrary detentions and expedited prosecutions.

For example, the report recalls a statement issued by the then national prosecutor general, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri in which he "underscored that individuals… and cyber activists who played a significant role in inciting, promoting and organizing rioters, should be detained until court proceedings are convened and a final verdict is rendered".[2346] It also notes that, just days into the uprising, on 28 September 2022, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri issued a directive stressing that criminal cases related to the uprising should be expedited.[2347] The Special Committee defended the expedition of criminal cases by the judiciary and cited this, along with other measures taken by the authorities to quash the uprising, as "collectively exemplify[ing] the Islamic Republic of Iran's demonstration of a responsible approach" to the protests.[2348]

2342. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings*, 19 March 2024 (previously cited), para. 1838.
2343. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p 61.
2344. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 62.
2345. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 62.
2346. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 11.
2347. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 11.
2348. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 18.

The Special Committee's first report fails to include any details regarding well-documented cases of enforced disappearances or the widespread torture and ill-treatment of detainees, including children, in the context of the 2022 uprising. Instead, it simply claims the following:

> **"Detainees enjoyed the rights specified in the Code of Criminal Procedure as well as the regulations of the Prisons Organization and all the guarantees of a fair trial, including the principle of presumption of innocence, access to counsel and access to available facilities such as phone calls, meeting with family and receiving medical services in custody."**[2349]

This blanket assertion, made without reference to any credible evidence, underscores yet again the authorities' long-standing refusal to conduct thorough, transparent, independent and impartial investigations into credible evidence of widespread arbitrary arrests and detentions, enforced disappearance of detainees, unfair trials and torture and other ill-treatment, or to take meaningful steps to hold perpetrators accountable.

11.4.4(V) LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY

In relation to criminal justice and accountability, the Special Committee stated that its investigation showed that the justice system had addressed over 244 cases of complaints filed against security forces in relation to the 2022 protests. According to the breakdown provided, prosecutions were terminated in 80 cases; 64 cases had been referred to another judicial body due to lack of jurisdiction; 13 cases were pending adjudication by the Supreme Court over jurisdictional disputes; 61 cases remained undecided; and one case had resulted in an acquittal. The report states that the remaining 25 cases led to convictions, 19 resulting in monetary fines, four in prison terms and two in *qesas* (retribution in kind). The *qesas* sentences were before the Supreme Court at the time of the report's publication. Additionally, the report states that 21 security personnel were subjected to disciplinary measures following public complaints made to FARAJA.

The Special Committee provided no further details about these cases. It merely mentioned that the cases before judicial authorities involved "accusations such as assault and battery, insult, destruction, arrest, murder, etc." However, it failed to disclose critical information, such as the nature of the 244 case and the violations they addressed; the underlying incidents; their dates and locations; the profiles of the victims; the institutional affiliation of those accused; and which prosecutorial and judicial bodies handled the cases, or even whether they were military or civilian in nature. Similarly, no information was provided regarding the 21 disciplinary cases against FARAJA officials.

In the absence of these details, Amnesty International cannot ascertain the validity of the Special Committee's claims in relation to cases of criminal accountability. The organization, however, highlights the low number of cited prosecutions, convictions and disciplinary measures in a context where hundreds of women, children and men were unlawfully killed, thousands were injured, tens of thousands were arbitrarily deprived of their right to liberty and large-scale torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and sexual and gender-based violence, was committed against those detained.

Information provided regarding cases of financial compensation is similarly scant and lacks supporting details. The Special Committee's second report lists the payment of *diyeh* (blood money) and other forms of financial compensation for physical and financial damages to individuals who were injured, to family members of those killed and to businesses damaged during the protests. However, the report fails to explain the amount of compensation paid to each recipient, the breakdown of recipients, the

2349. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 62.

process used to determine eligibility and compensation amounts, or the legal and procedural basis for assigning the responsibility of payments to various institutions.

In one section, the report refers to a 19 October 2022 directive issued by the State Security Council, which determined that, at a first stage, 122 individuals would receive financial compensation – 99 receiving 5 billion rials (30,630 US dollars) and 23 receiving 1 billion rials (6,126 US dollars). Elsewhere, the report states that financial compensation totalling 7,397,473,197,000 rials (9,064,420 US dollars) was paid to 2,345 recipients, including businesses and families of deceased individuals. It notes that this compensation was paid by the Ministry of Justice, the IRGC, FARAJA, the Ministry of Interior (through offices of provincial governors) and the Special Committee.

Regarding families of deceased individuals, the report cites multiple figures for the number of families who received compensation from different institutions, but fails to specify how many were relatives of protesters and bystanders unlawfully killed, and how many were relatives of security personnel. It also does not clarify whether the figures cited collectively account for the total number of families who received compensation.

Separately, the report notes that FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior, through the Office of the County Governor of Zahedan in Sistan and Baluchistan province, paid a total of 92 billion rials (112,745 US dollars) to the families of 27 deceased victims. This figure contrasts with the report's statement that "cases were opened for 52 deceased individuals whose families approached the Office of the Provincial Governor of Sistan and Baluchistan". The report does not explain why only 27 of the 52 families received compensation. This figure also represents a very small number in light of Amnesty International's findings that at least 87 protesters, bystanders and worshippers were unlawfully killed in Zahedan during the protests on "Bloody Friday".[2350] Furthermore, while the payment of financial compensation by FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior constitutes a partial acknowledgement of the responsibility of security forces, the Special Committee's report nonetheless attributes responsibility to "terrorists" and "armed extremists," stating: "These armed assailants, who had premeditated the attack, incited riots throughout the city… opened fire on… the police station."

Regarding compensation for injuries, the report states that 334 people who sustained injuries during the protests received financial compensation. The report is vague as to whether the figures provided include cases of protesters and bystanders, as well as members of the security forces.

Concerns regarding the payment of financial compensation in the absence of any proof of investigations or criminal accountability are heightened given the track record of Iranian authorities pressuring families who have sought criminal investigations into the unlawful killing of their loved ones to accept *diyeh* (blood money) from government funds pursuant to laws which provide for state-funded financial compensation in cases where the perpetrator cannot be identified and apprehended. As documented by Amnesty International, the authorities have threatened family members with reprisals if they refuse *diyeh* (blood money) and instead continue to seek justice and accountability; family members have indicated the futility of their efforts in achieving anything other than *diyeh* (blood money).[2351]

Ultimately, instead of making conclusions on allegations of human rights violations, the findings of the Special Committee focused almost entirely on blaming "external causes" such as "hostile governments" for their role in the 2022 "riots". The Special Committee stated:

> **"Based on the investigations, the Special Committee concludes that while the protest gatherings initially began peacefully, the swift intervention of external agents, foreign intelligence services and**

2350. See section 5.3.2(II).
2351. See section 9.4.2.

terrorist groups precipitated chaos and destruction. Consequently, the events witnessed in the Islamic Republic of Iran last year did not constitute peaceful gatherings…"[2352]

The Special Committee echoed the false official narrative of tolerance towards protesters, simply "confirming" that "the relevant government institutions, including the law enforcement and security agencies and the judicial system of the Islamic Republic, acted responsibly in the face of the unrest of 2022."[2353] Widespread and systematic gross human rights violations were trivialized as "some few violations committed by some law enforcement forces", which, according to the Special Committee, did not "reflect in any way or manner the principled behaviour of the government and were caused by the behaviour of an individual."[2354]

11.4.4(VI) HARMFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on its deficient findings, the Special Committee made seven generic and flawed recommendations, without directing them to any specific state institution. The recommendations fail to call on state entities involved in gross human rights violations to cease unlawful conduct, such as the unlawful use of lethal force during protests. There are no recommendations addressing the need for criminal accountability, such as calls to initiate criminal investigations and prosecutions of individuals against whom sufficient admissible evidence exists.

Instead, the first recommendation conflates damage to public and private property and physical injuries sustained by both law enforcement officials and "some people", and merely calls for the establishment of a mechanism to provide credit for financial compensation in cases where a claim has been approved.

Consistent with the overall tone of the reports, the recommendations trivialize the killing of hundreds of women, men and children, as well as the injuring of thousands, by stating that "a significant number of law enforcement forces and *some* people were martyred or injured during the riots."[2355] One of the recommendations suggests accelerating "the process of verifying… martyrdom or disability cases" through the Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans' Affairs.[2356] This recommendation is particularly alarming given the well-documented practice by the Iranian authorities of pressuring victims' families to abandon their pursuit of truth and justice and instead accept and repeat the official narrative that portrays their loved ones as "martyrs" killed by "rioters" or "unknown elements".[2357]

Moreover, the Special Committee's recommendations make no reference to Iran's international human rights obligations, such as the need to reform the domestic legal framework, which sanctions human rights violations and ensures impunity. The sole recommendation pertaining to law enforcement and security forces calls for "strengthening" their training and equipping them with tools such as body cameras.[2358]

2352. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 16.
2353. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 95.
2354. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 95.
2355. Emphasis added.
2356. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 96.
2357. Justice for Iran, "Mockery of justice: State's policies and laws regarding the victims of Iran's 2019 November protests", 16 May 2020, https://justice4iran.org/15076
2358. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 96.

Pervasive discrimination and violence against women and girls, a key trigger of the Woman Life Freedom uprising, remains completely unaddressed as the Special Committee merely recommended that the "approach of supporting women in the process of making laws and regulations should be strengthened and developed."[2359]

Alarmingly, the Special Committee also made recommendations that would lead to further violations of human rights. In a call addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Special Committee deemed it necessary that "an active programme" is developed for addressing what it refers to as "the destructive role of anti-Iranian satellite networks and social networks, and directing sabotage and terrorist operations by people living abroad", politically, legally and judicially.[2360]

The call came amid escalating levels of transnational repression by the Iranian authorities aimed at silencing journalists, media workers, human rights defenders and others voicing dissent outside Iran's borders.[2361] In recent years, Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have documented a growing number of cases in which Iranian dissidents based abroad have been abducted, forcibly returned to Iran and then subjected to a litany of human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, unfair trials and, in the cases of three men – Rouhollah Zam,[2362] Habib Chaab[2363] and Jamshid Sharmahd[2364] – arbitrary and unlawful deprivation of the right to life through executions carried out following grossly unfair trials.[2365]

According to state media, on 6 October 2024, members of the Special Committee met with the president, Masoud Pezeshkian, to report on their work and findings. During this meeting, Masoud Pezeshkian trivialized the gross violations of human rights and crimes under international law committed in the context of the protests by stating that the country had faced accusations "due to some mistakes in relation to the unrests of 2022". He asked members of the Special Committee to make use of media experts to publicize the "positive measures taken by the Committee". Members of the Special Committee also requested an extension to its mandate, which, according to brief media coverage of the meeting, was granted by the president. However, neither the website of the Special Committee nor domestic media reporting on the meeting provided any details on the new length of the mandate and the tasks that had to be delivered during it.[2366]

As of August 2026, the original website of the Special Committee was no longer functional and its new website was inaccessible from outside Iran.

2359. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 96.
2360. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 96.
2361. Amnesty International, "Iran: Rights Groups: Iranian dissidents remain at risk worldwide without international action" (Index: MDE 13/4480/2021), 19 July 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/4480/2021/en
2362. Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "Iran: UN experts condemn execution of Ruhollah Zam", 14 December 2020, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2020/12/iran-un-experts-condemn-execution-ruhollah-zam; Amnesty International, "Iran: Execution of journalist Rouhollah Zam a 'deadly blow' to freedom of expression", 12 December 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/12/iran-execution-of-journalist-rouhollah-zam-a-deadly-blow-to-freedom-of-expression
2363. Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "Iran: UN experts condemn recent executions, urge moratorium on death penalty", 9 May 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/05/iran-un-experts-condemn-recent-executions-urge-moratorium-death-penalty.
2364. OHCHR, "Iran: UN experts alarmed by surge in executions, demand moratorium on death penalty", 2 September 2024, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/iran-un-experts-alarmed-surge-executions-demand-moratorium-death-penalty; Amnesty International, "Iran: Further information: Tortured German-Iranian sentenced to death: Jamshid Sharmahd" (Index: MDE 13/6642/2023), 3 April 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6642/2023/en
2365. Amnesty International, "Iran: Rights Groups: Iranian dissidents remain at risk worldwide without international action" (Index: MDE 13/4480/2021), 19 July 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/4480/2021/en
2366. Javan Online, رئیس جمهور در دیدار اعضای کمیته ویژه ناآرامی‌های سال ۱۴۰۱, ["President meets with members of the Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests"], 6 October 2024, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1255748/رئیس-جمهور-در-دیدار-اعضای-کمیته-ویژه-ناآرامی‌های-سال-۱۴۰۱ (in Persian).

12. CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING THE REPRESSION OF 2022 PROTESTS

This chapter analyses the crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations documented in the report using the framework of crimes against humanity. While Iran is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and, therefore, the ICC has no jurisdiction over crimes committed in the country, at present the Rome Statute constitutes the most detailed codification concerning crimes against humanity.[2367] For this reason, while also referring to the statutes and jurisprudence of other international tribunals, the chapter will mainly rely on the provisions of the Rome Statute, the ICC Elements of Crimes,[2368] and the ICC jurisprudence to analyse both the contextual elements of crimes against humanity and the constitutive elements of each crime considered.

Under Article 7(1) the Rome Statute, certain prohibited acts, such as murder, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture and rape or any other form of sexual violence,[2369] qualify as crimes against humanity when they are "committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population".[2370] According to Article 7(2)(a) of the Rome Statute, an "attack directed against any civilian population" means a "course of conduct involving the multiple commission of acts referred to in [Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute] against any civilian population, pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy to commit such attack."

Amnesty International's research has concluded that, in the course of repressing the Woman Life Freedom uprising, the Iranian authorities committed the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, rape, sexual violence, enforced disappearance, imprisonment and persecution as part of a widespread and systematic attack against Iran's civilian population. This attack was carried out pursuant to and

2367. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Rome Statute), adopted on 18 July 1998, entered into force on 1 July 2002, Article 7.
2368. International Criminal Court (ICC), Elements of Crimes, 2011.
2369. While rape may qualify as a separate crime against humanity, international jurisprudence has recognized that rape can constitute torture. See International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others,* Case IT-96-21-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 16 November 1998, paras 495-496; International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Case ICTR-96-4-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 597.
2370. Rome Statute, Article 7; ICTY Statute, Article 5; ICTR Statute, Article 3.

in furtherance of a state policy to crush the protests, punish those who called for a different system of governance based on respect for human rights and create a climate of terror and fear to deter future protests.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section sets out the contextual elements required for prohibited acts like murder or torture to qualify as crimes against humanity, namely, a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population carried out pursuant to state policy,[2371] and concludes that these elements were present in the authorities' crackdown on the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The second section refers to the evidence presented in this report regarding the Iranian authorities' nationwide commission of multiple prohibited acts, including murder, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, imprisonment, enforced disappearance and persecution. The third section concludes that these acts amount to crimes against humanity as they were all committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack by the authorities against Iran's civilian population.

12.1 CONTEXTUAL ELEMENTS

12.1.1 ATTACK DIRECTED AGAINST IRAN'S CIVILIAN POPULATION

ELEMENTS

An "attack" must be comprised of acts prohibited under international law, which are typically listed in the statutes of international criminal tribunals.[2372] In turn, the multiple commission of prohibited acts must be part of a "course of conduct", that is "a series or overall flow of events, as opposed to a mere aggregate of random or isolated acts. As such, the 'multiple commission of acts' sets a quantitative threshold involving a certain number of acts falling within the course of conduct."[2373] An attack may arise as a result of the multiple commission of either the same prohibited act, such as murder, or a combination of different prohibited acts, such as murder, torture and enforced disappearance.

An attack is considered to be "directed" against a civilian population when this is "the primary target and not the incidental victim of the attack."[2374] In turn, "civilian population" refers to "a collective, as opposed to individual civilians". The term "any" civilian population means that this is "not limited to populations defined by a common nationality, ethnicity, or other similar distinguishing features."[2375]

2371. This element of the definition of crimes against humanity is included in the Rome Statute but not in the statute of other international criminal tribunals, such as the ICTY and ICTR.
2372. Rome Statute, Article 7(a-k); ICTY Statute, Article 5(a-i); ICTR Statute, Article 3(a-i); International Criminal Court (ICC), *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Case ICC-01/05-01/08, Trial Chamber III judgment, 21 March 2016, para. 151. The ICC held that acts not listed in Article 7(1) may assist in determining "whether the attack was directed against a civilian population, or whether it was pursuant to, or in furtherance of, a State or organizational policy"; see ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ntanganda*, Case ICC-01/04-02/06, Trial Chamber VI judgment, 8 July 2019, para. 663.
2373. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Case ICC-01/12-01/18, Trial Chamber X judgment, 26 June 2024, para. 1105.
2374. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Case ICC-01/04-01/07, Trial Chamber II judgment, 7 March 2014, para. 1104.
2375. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1106. See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Gotovina and others*, Case IT-06-90-T, Volume II, Trial Chamber I judgment, 15 April 2011, para. 1704. Trial Chamber I held that "population" means that "enough individuals were targeted in the course of the attack, or that they were targeted in such a way" as to make it clear that the victims were more than just "a limited and randomly selected number of individuals".

In determining that an attack was directed against a civilian population, consideration will be given to "the means and method used in the course of the attack, the status of the victims, their number, the discriminatory nature of the attack, the nature of the crimes committed in its course", among other factors.[2376] Importantly, what needs to be ascertained is that "the civilians were targeted during the attack in sufficient number or in such a manner that the attack was effectively directed against the civilian population." It is not necessary "to prove that the entire population of a geographic area was targeted at the time of the attack."[2377]

Amnesty International has found that, in the context of repressing the Woman Life Freedom protests, which erupted following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini on 16 September 2022, the Iranian authorities unlawfully killed hundreds of civilians, injured thousands, arbitrarily arrested tens of thousands, and perpetrated widespread enforced disappearances, torture, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, and other ill-treatment against detainees. They also severely deprived the relatives of those killed of their fundamental human rights on intersecting political, cultural, ethnic, religious, gender and other grounds related to the relatives' familial association with the victims of protest-related killings. This constitutes a "course of conduct" involving the multiple commission of prohibited acts referred to in Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute, directed against a civilian population. This gives rise to an "attack" for purposes of the definition of crimes against humanity.

The attack by Iranian authorities was directed against a civilian population within the meaning of Article 7(2)(a) of the Rome Statute. This civilian population included protesters and other individuals across Iran who showed support for the Woman Life Freedom protests or advocated a different system of governance grounded in respect for human rights, dignity and democracy. Among them were university students, schoolchildren, millions of women and girls who removed their headscarves in public, journalists and other media workers, political dissidents, athletes, artists, writers, social media users and human rights defenders, including lawyers, women's rights activists, labour rights activists, minority rights activists from Iran's oppressed minorities, and civil society activists.

The authorities arrested people from the streets during protests or in their immediate aftermath, during raids targeting the homes or workplaces of individuals identified through images taken by security and intelligence agents during protests or from surveillance cameras. Security forces also maintained a significant presence in and around hospitals and medical clinics, arresting injured protesters from hospitals and interrupting their treatment against medical advice. University students and schoolchildren were arrested while attending protests in their campuses or schools, while on their way to and from school or university, and/or from their homes. Human rights defenders, political dissidents and others with similar profiles were often arrested in their homes or neighbourhoods.

Entire communities residing in or near areas where protests took place were also targeted, including for their perceived support of protesters, such as by sheltering individuals fleeing security forces. The authorities' extensive use of both lethal and less lethal ammunition widely affected not only protesters but also bystanders, passersby and residents inside their homes, exposing entire neighbourhoods to harm.

2376. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Milošević,* Case IT-98-29/1-T, Trial Chamber III judgment, 12 December 2007, para. 921; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac and others*, Case IT-96-23 & IT-96-23/1-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 12 June 2002, para. 91.
2377. See ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 1104; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Krajišnik*, Case IT-00-39-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 27 September 2006, para. 706; ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Semanza*, Case ICTR-97-20-T, Trial Chamber III judgment and sentence, 15 May 2003, para. 330.

The primary object of the authorities' attack was not random individuals, but a collective: individuals and communities who stood up for their human rights, challenging decades of discrimination, repression and impunity. With hundreds of protesters and bystanders killed across the country and thousands subjected to imprisonment, torture and other ill-treatment, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and enforced disappearance, civilians were targeted in such significant numbers and through such a manner that the attack qualifies as being directed against the "civilian population".[2378]

Considering the above, it is Amnesty International's view that, for the purposes of the definition of crimes against humanity, the prohibited acts committed by the Iranian authorities amount to an attack directed against a civilian population.

12.1.2 WIDESPREAD OR SYSTEMATIC ATTACK

ELEMENTS

An attack needs to be either "widespread or systematic". These requirements are alternative, not cumulative; they apply to the attack against the civilian population, not the prohibited act(s) committed by an individual perpetrator.[2379]

"Widespread" refers to "the large-scale nature of the attack and the number of targeted persons. The assessment of whether the attack is widespread is neither exclusively quantitative nor geographical, but must be carried out based on all the relevant facts and circumstances of the case.[2380]

"Systematic", in turn, "reflects the organised nature of the violent acts, referring often to the existence of 'patterns of crimes' and the improbability of their random or accidental occurrence."[2381] Examining this requirement means to:

> **"assess if a series of repeated actions seeking to always produce the same effects on a civilian population were undertaken, and consequently, it may consider whether: (i) identical or similar criminal practices can be identified; (ii) the same *modus operandi* was used; or (iii) victims were treated in a similar manner across a wide geographic area."[2382]**

Factors relevant to determining whether an attack qualifies as "widespread" or "systematic" include "the impact on the targeted population, the number of victims, the nature of the acts, the possible participation of officials or authorities or any identifiable patterns of crimes".[2383]

The Iranian authorities' attack against the civilian population, carried out with a view to crushing the Woman Life Freedom protests, was both widespread and systematic.

The widespread nature of the attack is demonstrated by its geographical spread, the period of time over which the prohibited acts were committed and the number of victims involved.

2378. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 1104.
2379. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kordić and Čerkez*, Case IT-95-14/2-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 17 December 2004, para. 94.
2380. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1113.
2381. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), 26 June 2024, para. 1114. See also ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Ndindiliyimana and others*, Case ICTR-00-56-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 11 February 2014, para. 260.
2382. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1114.
2383. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blagojević and Jokić*, Case IT-02-60-T, Trial Chamber I, Section A judgment, 17 January 2005, para. 546.

Amnesty International has gathered a voluminous body of information and evidence about the deaths of 377 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. They include 326 individuals killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, 18 individuals who died in state custody, 10 individuals who died after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related, and 23 individuals who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them.[2384]

The Iranian authorities also embarked on a campaign of mass arbitrary arrests between September and December 2022 that spanned the country, targeting tens of thousands of men, women and children as young as 10 years old.[2385] Leaked audio recordings of official meetings and public statements by officials at the national and provincial levels indicate that tens of thousands of people were swept up in the wave of arbitrary arrests.[2386] Amnesty International documented arrests and detentions in 18 out of Iran's 31 provinces.[2387] The organization is also aware of arrests and detentions having been reported in the remaining 14 provinces by the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) and independent human rights organizations.[2388] The main report of the Special Committee to Investigate the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), which was established pursuant to an order by the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, also confirms the large-scale arrests of protesters by stating that "during the unrest of 1401, cases were filed for about 34 thousand people."[2389]

Iran's security forces also waged a campaign of torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, against thousands of women, men and children in the streets during the protests, at the time of their arrest, and later in detention centres and prisons across the country.

The widespread nature of the attack is further demonstrated by its large-scale nature, with the Iranian authorities mobilizing multiple branches of Iran's security forces nationwide immediately after protests erupted following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini. For months, they carried out repressive operations across the country, deploying thousands of members of the security forces under centralized command structures.

2384. See section 5.3.
2385. The Iranian authorities continued to arrest and detain individuals in relation to the uprising well after the uprising had ended.
2386. See section 5.4.1.
2387. They include Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Gilan, Golestan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Tehran, Sistan and Baluchistan, West Azerbaijan, and Zanjan. See also Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me': Sexual Violence Weaponized to Crush Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/7480/2023), 6 December 2023, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/7480/2023/en
2388. Amnesty International documented the arrest and detention of individuals in 18 provinces, namely: Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Gilan, Golestan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, Tehran, Sistan and Baluchistan, West Azerbaijan, and Zanjan. The organization's research into sexual violence perpetrated against detainees arrested in 17 of these provinces is documented in a report. See Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited). In addition to these 18 provinces, the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) documented arrests in one additional province: Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad. See: HRANA, *Woman, Life, Freedom: Comprehensive Report of 20 Days of Protest Across Iran*, 12 October 2022, https://www.en-hrana.org/woman-life-freedom-comprehensive-report-of-20-days-of-protest-across-iran The UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) documented arrests in a further two provinces: Kerman and Qom. See Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "Iran: Institutional discrimination against women and girls enabled human rights violations and crimes against humanity in the context of recent protests, UN Fact-Finding Mission says", 8 March 2024, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/iran-institutional-discrimination-against-women-and-girls-enabled-human Arrests from a further 10 provinces were compiled by Enqelab Info, which used statistical data from the Committee for the Follow-up on the Status of Detainees to create lists and visual data sets of arrests across Iran. The 10 additional provinces are: Ardabil, Bushehr, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Fars, Hamedan, North Khorasan, Ghazvin, Semnan, South Khorasan and Yazd. See Enqelab Info, برای من و تو که برخیزیم ["For you and me to rise up"], https://enqelab.info/ (accessed on 20 August 2026). For the Committee for the Follow-up on the Status of Detainees, see کمیته پیگیری وضعیت بازداشت‌شدگان, https://x.com/followupiran?lang=en (accessed on 20 August 2026).
2389. Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests (Special Committee), Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests, March 2024, https://geneva.mfa.ir/files/mfageneva/geneva/Summary%20-%20EN.pdf, p. 61. For more information about the Special Committee, see section 11.4.

The systematic nature of the attack is demonstrated by the consistent and coordinated pattern of repression implemented across the country. For months, security forces replicated the same tools and methods of repression nationwide. In the context of violent protest dispersals, these included the repeated use of lethal force and firearms, including assault rifles and shotguns loaded with metal pellets, to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters. In detention centres and prisons, those arrested in connection with the protests were consistently subjected to enforced disappearance for days or weeks, with authorities refusing to provide any information to their families about their fate or whereabouts.[2390] From the moment of arrest, they were systematically subjected to torture and other ill-treatment for the purposes of punishment, intimidation, humiliation, discrimination and/or coercion to extract "confessions".

The coordinated and predictable patterns of repression indicate systematic planning and direction aimed at crushing protests and inflicting pain, injury, terror and fear on protesters and the broader population.

Numerous statements by various state officials, broadcast across state-controlled media, along with leaked official documents reviewed by Amnesty International, reveal that senior political and security authorities were directly involved in planning, orchestrating and subsequently celebrating the lethal repression, while demonizing the protesters and issuing threats. This further confirms that the prohibited acts committed by the security forces were not spontaneous, accidental or isolated incidents but rather part of a systematic attack.

In light of the above, Amnesty International has found that, for the purposes of the definition of crimes against humanity, the Iranian authorities' attack against the civilian population was widespread because of its "large-scale nature" and "the number of targeted persons".[2391] The organization found that the attack was also systematic because of "the organised nature of the violent acts", revealed by a "series of repeated actions seeking to always produce the same effects on a civilian population", including the "identical or similar criminal practices… identified", the "same *modus operandi*… used", and the fact that victims were treated "in a similar manner across a wide geographic area."[2392]

12.1.3 STATE POLICY

ELEMENTS

According to Article 7(2)(a) of the Rome Statute, an attack needs to be committed "pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organisational policy".[2393] The purpose of such a "policy" requirement is to ensure that "the multiple acts forming the course of conduct are linked. It ensures that acts which are unrelated or perpetrated by individuals acting randomly on their own are excluded."[2394]

While the policy may be implemented according to "a design adopted by a State… with regard to a certain population in a given geopolitical situation", it is not required that "a formal design exist, since explicitly advanced motivations are ultimately of little importance. In any event, the policy must always target a particular civilian population or a part thereof".[2395]

2390. Amnesty International, *'They Violently Raped Me'* (previously cited), pp. 29-34.
2391. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X, Judgment (previously cited), para. 1113.
2392. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X, Judgment (previously cited), para. 1114.
2393. Given the element of "organizational policy" refers to the actions of non-state actors, the remainder of the analysis will consider only the element of "State policy".
2394. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Case ICC-02/04-01/15, Trial Chamber IX judgment, 4 February 2021, para. 2678.
2395. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 1108.

A policy may be formalized by the perpetrators. In most cases, however, an attack will be committed "pursuant to or in furtherance of" an informal policy. In recognition of this, the ICC has established that a state policy may be "inferred by discernment of, *inter alia*, repeated actions occurring according to a same sequence, or the existence of preparations or collective mobilization orchestrated and coordinated by that State".[2396]

Moreover, the ICC has clarified that it is not required that a policy be formed before an attack against a civilian population begins:

> **"Some aspects of the policy pursued against a civilian population will only crystallise and develop as actions are set in train and undertaken by the perpetrators. The State… policy may therefore become clear to the perpetrators, as regards its modalities, only in the course of its implementation, such that definition of the overall policy is possible only in retrospect, once the acts have been committed and in the light of the overall operation or course of conduct pursued. Otherwise stated, the State… policy may be part of an ongoing process whose every aspect is not always predetermined before the operation or course of conduct pursued against the targeted civilian population has commenced or even once it has started".[2397]**

The existence of the state policy is evidenced by the sustained involvement of a vast and coordinated security apparatus – encompassing officials, institutions and multiple branches of security forces – that operated at national, provincial, county and neighbourhood levels and took part in the planning, direction, organization and execution of the attack. This extensive network mobilized to carry out a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population, targeting tens of thousands of protesters across the country through recurrent patterns of various prohibited acts, all committed in a climate of total impunity.

The prohibited acts shared common features in their characteristics, locations, targets and apparent aims, and were consistently carried out during protest repression operations or while victims were in state custody. Security forces consistently and repeatedly fired assault rifles, machine guns, handguns and shotguns loaded with metal pellets into crowds to disperse, punish and terrorize unarmed protesters. In addition, security forces engaged in targeted pursuits, closing in on unarmed victims who posed no threat to the security forces or others and unlawfully shooting them at close range with lethal ammunition and prohibited ammunition such as metal pellets. Security forces also carried out mass arbitrary arrests targeting protesters and others who expressed real or perceived support for the Woman Life Freedom uprising or advocated equality and other human rights. People were arrested from the streets during protests or in their immediate aftermath, as well as during raids on the homes or workplaces of individuals identified through images captured by members of the security forces at protests. Security forces also maintained a heavy presence in and around hospitals and medical clinics, arresting injured protesters and interrupting their treatment against medical advice. Torture and other ill-treatment were perpetrated in a widespread manner, with various physical and psychological methods consistently reported during the dispersal of protests, at the time of arrest and throughout detention.

2396. ICC, Prosecutor v. Katanga, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 1109. See also ICC, *Prosecutor v. Laurent Gbagbo*, Case ICC-02/11-01/11, Pre-Trial Chamber I, Decision on the Confirmation of Charges against Laurent Gbagbo, 12 June 2014, paras 215-216: "… an attack which is planned, directed or organised – as opposed to spontaneous or isolated acts of violence – will satisfy the policy criterion, and there is no requirement that the policy be formally adopted"; "evidence of planning, organisation or direction by a State or organisation may be relevant to prove both the policy and the systematic nature of the attack, although the two concepts should not be conflated".
2397. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 1110.

The recurrent patterns of violence demonstrate that the attack – that is, the course of conduct involving the commission of multiple prohibited acts – was carried out pursuant to a policy developed by the authorities.

Leaked official documents analysed by Amnesty International further reveal that the attack was carried out pursuant to a state policy developed and implemented under the close control of senior officials and institutions, including ones at the highest levels of the state, and with their full authorization and financial support. This includes the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, and senior commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA), the minister of interior, provincial and county governors, as well as national, provincial and county security councils.

Further evidence of the state policy includes:

- preparatory and planning meetings involving numerous senior political, security and judicial officials across the security apparatus, during which the state policy regarding the protests was formulated and strategic instructions were issued, as indicated by leaked official documents related to the State Security Council and the Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council);[2398]
- leaked written orders from senior IRGC and FARAJA commanders reflecting the implementation of the state policy under the authority and effective control of those at the highest levels of the chain of command;[2399]
- public statements by numerous political, security and judicial officials, amplified by state-controlled media, that promoted and encouraged the attack, serving as motivational speeches for members of the security forces in furtherance of the state policy (these included statements containing directions to the security forces to "crush", "sweep" or "mop up" the protesters who were consistently demonized through various derogatory labels);[2400]
- the use of public resources to recruit, train, arm and fund the thousands of members of the security forces carrying out the attack, as evidenced by leaked official documents, state media reports and official statements;[2401] and
- continued efforts by the authorities to shield known perpetrators of crimes from accountability, destroy or conceal evidence, and silence victims' relatives and others seeking truth and justice.[2402]

That the authorities waged their attack pursuant to a state policy is further evidenced by the crucial role that the judiciary played to criminalize dissent, persecute protesters and relatives of those killed, authorize or otherwise facilitate the routine use of enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment by intelligence and security agents acting as "judicial officers", and shield perpetrators of crimes under international law from criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Early on during the Woman Life Freedom uprising, the head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, made multiple public announcements and issued several orders to prosecutorial and judicial officials to take "deterrent" actions against "rioters", including by charging protesters with offences carrying the death penalty and expediting their prosecution and sentencing.

2398. See section 10.4.4.
2399. See sections 10.2.5(I), 10.3.5(I) and 10.3.5(II).
2400. See sections 10.1.3, 10.2.4, 10.3.4, and 10.4.3.
2401. See section 10.2.5(II) and 10.4.4.(II).
2402. See Chapters 9 and 11 and section 10.3.5(II).

Abusive judicial proceedings against protesters unfolded against the backdrop of the judicial authorities' persistent characterization of the protests as "riots" and their demonization of protesters by labelling them as "rioters" and other derogatory terms. This narrative deliberately conflated violent acts, such as destruction of public property or assaults against security forces, with peaceful acts, including organizing assemblies, chanting and sharing information on social media, thereby laying the ideological groundwork for mass arbitrary arrests and unjust criminal investigations and prosecutions that criminalized the exercise of human rights and dissent.

State-enforced impunity for the crimes under international law committed during and after the 2022 protests further demonstrates the existence of a state policy. The Iranian authorities have persistently refused to conduct thorough, transparent, independent and impartial investigations into credible evidence of these crimes and to take any steps to hold those suspected of criminal responsibility to account. On the contrary, prosecution authorities and judges have actively sustained the machinery of torture by relying on torture-tainted "confessions" as primary evidence in criminal proceedings and by fostering an environment in which the practice of torture and other ill-treatment is facilitated, and effectively incentivized, thereby further entrenching the system of impunity.

The immediate purpose of the state policy, as indicated by official statements and leaked documents, was to crush the protests and reassert control over areas where people had taken to the streets. Furthermore, as evidenced by both the modalities and the effects of the attack on Iran's civilian population, the authorities sought to inflict harm and set a precedent intended to deter those who might challenge the political and religious ideology of the Islamic Republic system, including the discriminatory and degrading practice of compulsory veiling, which serves as a cornerstone of the system's ideology and a means of controlling women and ensuring their subservience.

Accordingly, the intended outcome of carrying out a multitude of prohibited acts, which gave rise to a widespread and systematic attack, was not only to stop people from protesting but also to traumatize the population more generally, with a view to creating a pervasive climate of fear as a deterrent to possible future protests.

Based on all of the above, it is Amnesty International's view that, for the purposes of the definition of crimes against humanity, the Iranian authorities' attack on the civilian population was carried out "pursuant to or in furtherance of a state policy", particularly through the occurrence of "repeated actions occurring according to a same sequence" and in light of "the existence of preparations or collective mobilization orchestrated and coordinated by that State".[2403]

12.2 PROHIBITED ACTS

Prohibited acts are listed in Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute. In order to constitute crimes against humanity, they must be committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population and with knowledge of the attack. These contextual elements apply to all the prohibited acts analysed below, which characterize the Iranian authorities' crackdown on the Woman Life Freedom protests. These acts include murder, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, persecution and other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.[2404]

2403. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 1109.
2404. Rome Statute, Article 7(a), (e-i) and (k).

12.2.1 MURDER

ELEMENTS

The crime against humanity of murder is listed under Article 7(1)(a) of the Rome Statute.

The ICC Elements of Crimes outline the following requirements to establish the material element[2405] of the crime against humanity of murder: "The perpetrator killed one or more persons. The term 'killed' is interchangeable with the term 'caused death'".[2406]

As the ICC clarified, "[t]he victim's death must be the result of the conduct of the accused in such a way that a causal link is established between the conduct and the result".[2407]

In line with Article 30 of the Rome Statute, the mental element of the crime against humanity of murder requires proof that the perpetrator engaged in the prohibited conduct "with intent and knowledge":[2408]

> **"The perpetrator must have intentionally killed one or more persons. Such intent will be proven where the perpetrator acted deliberately or failed to act (1) in order to cause the death of one or more persons or (2) when they were aware that death would occur in the ordinary course of events."[2409]**

Amnesty International recalls that, with respect to 233 of the 326 victims recorded as having been killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, it was able to conduct investigations and gather sufficient evidence to support the legal conclusion that the killings were unlawful. This means that the security forces used firearms or other means of lethal force against the victims not to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury, but to disperse, intimidate or punish them and create a climate of terror and fear through a militarized presence.

Given the well-documented patterns of unlawful use of firearms against protesters across the country and credible reports published by other human rights organizations and media outlets on many of the remaining killings, Amnesty International considers it highly likely that further investigation and access to evidence would confirm these killings were also unlawful.

With respect to the cases of unlawful killings documented by Amnesty International, the organization has reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold of intent required to satisfy the mental element of the crime against humanity of murder is met. In all these cases, one or several members of the Iranian security forces either intentionally targeted a specific person with lethal force, thereby establishing direct intent to kill, or deliberately and unlawfully discharged lethal ammunition into crowds in proximity to the victim(s), which evidences a mental state in which the security forces were, at the very least,

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2405. Each crime is composed of two essential elements: the material element, referring to the prohibited conduct and its consequences, and the mental element, referring to the perpetrator's state of mind at the time of the prohibited act.
2406. Elements of Crimes, Official Records of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, First session, New York, 3-10 September 2002 (ICC Elements of Crimes), Article 7(1)(a), p. 5.
2407. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 767.
2408. Rome Statute, Article 30(1). Article 30(2-3) further specifies: "2. For the purposes of this article, a person has intent where: (a) In relation to conduct, that person means to engage in the conduct; (b) In relation to a consequence, that person means to cause that consequence or is aware that it will occur in the ordinary course of events. 3. For the purposes of this article, 'knowledge' means awareness that a circumstance exists or a consequence will occur in the ordinary course of events. 'Know' and 'knowingly' shall be construed accordingly."
2409. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 781.

"aware that death would occur in the ordinary course of events."[2410]

Amnesty International is therefore of the view that the unlawful killings documented in this report amount to the crime against humanity of murder.

Acts of murder committed against protesters were perpetrated by agents belonging to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA and the IRGC.

12.2.2 TORTURE

ELEMENTS

Torture is defined in Article 7(2)(e) of the Rome Statute as:

> **"the intentional infliction of severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, upon a person in the custody or under the control of the accused; except that torture shall not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions".**

The ICC Elements of Crimes outline the following requirements to establish the material element of the crime against humanity of torture:

> **"1. The perpetrator inflicted severe physical or mental pain or suffering upon one or more persons.**
>
> **"2. Such person or persons were in the custody or under the control of the perpetrator.**
>
> **"3. Such pain or suffering did not arise only from, and was not inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions."**

The requirement related to "severity" implies "an important degree of pain and suffering. It may be met by a single act or by a combination of acts viewed as a whole. It must therefore be assessed on a case-by-case basis in the light of all the circumstances of the case. The pain and suffering may be either physical or mental. It is not necessary to prove that the pain or suffering involved specific physical injury, impairment of a bodily function or death. The consequences of torture do not have to be visible, nor must the injury be permanent. Likewise, it is not necessary to prove that the perpetrator completed a value judgment as to the severity of the pain inflicted."[2411]

The requirement related to the victim being "in the custody" or "under control of the perpetrator" should "not be equated with 'imprisonment or other severe deprivation of liberty'; rather it should be interpreted broadly in the sense that a person need not be in actual custody and some form of control is sufficient to establish this element."[2412] With regard to the mental element, "[n]o specific purpose need be proven for torture as a crime against humanity."[2413] In line with Article 30 of the Rome Statute, it must be proved that the perpetrator acted "with intent and knowledge", that is, they intended to cause "severe physical or mental pain or suffering upon one or more persons" or was "aware that it will occur in the ordinary course of events".

2410. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Katanga*, Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 781.
2411. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1128.
2412. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1129.
2413. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Trial Chamber IX judgment (previously cited), para. 2706. This is in contrast with torture as a war crime. See ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Trial Chamber IX judgment (previously cited), para. 2705.

Amnesty International recalls its findings that members of the security forces intentionally inflicted painful injuries on unarmed protesters and bystanders through unlawful use of both lethal and less lethal force. This included the unlawful use of firearms, including rifles, machine guns and sub-machine guns and handguns, as well as less lethal weapons such as batons, electric shock devices, kinetic impact projectiles and tear gas canisters, including in confined spaces. The security forces also extensively used shotguns loaded with metal pellets, which should never be used for the policing of protests. In addition, members of the security forces unlawfully used physical violence, including punching, kicking, dragging and throwing individuals to the ground, stomping and hair pulling.[2414]

Given the nationwide scale of the crackdown, its duration of over three months, the participation of tens of thousands of protesters and the widespread use of physical violence, lethal and prohibited weapons and ammunition in densely populated protest environments, where bystanders and passers-by were also present, Amnesty International believes that the number of injured victims reaches into the thousands.

Amnesty International recalls its findings that, as a result of the unlawful use of firearms, shotguns loaded with metal pellets and other means of force, victims sustained a wide range of serious injuries, including permanent loss of vision and other ocular trauma; wounds to the head, face, neck and torso; fractures or breaks involving their ribs, skull, facial bones, teeth or limbs; traumatic brain injuries; spinal cord injuries; failure, loss, rupture or damage affecting solid internal organs such as the kidneys, diaphragm and intestines; nerve injuries; vascular injuries; and internal or external bleeding.[2415]

Many of these injuries resulted in disfigurement, long-term health complications or permanent disabilities that profoundly impacted victims' daily lives, including chronic pain, mobility or speech impairments, recurring infections, debilitating headaches and the need for ongoing specialist medical care, multiple surgical interventions and prolonged rehabilitative treatment. In numerous cases involving injuries caused by metal pellets, medical procedures failed to extract embedded pellets, resulting in continued pain, elevated risk of infection and, in some cases, damage to the brain or other internal organs.

The infliction of such injuries has caused victims severe pain and suffering, both physical and mental. Amnesty International is of the view that the threshold of severity required for establishing torture is clearly met in these cases, taking into account the extreme nature of the injuries, the invasive and repeated nature of medical interventions required and the long-term health consequences.

The second requirement that victims be under the control of the perpetrators is also satisfied. Although there is no jurisprudence where the ICC connects the requirement of control with the use of lethal and less lethal use of force during the policing of protests, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UN Special Rapporteur on torture) has stated that the "prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is not confined to acts carried out against persons deprived of their liberty, but also covers excessive police violence, such as during arrest and the policing of assemblies":

> **"The deliberate instrumentalization of pain or suffering, in conjunction with the powerlessness of the victim, are the very essence of torture and of the fundamental attack on human dignity it represents…**

2414. See Chapter 5.
2415. See Chapters 5-8.

Powerlessness means that the victim is under the direct physical or equivalent control of the perpetrator and has lost the capacity to resist or escape the infliction of pain or suffering."[2416]

The *Resource Book on the Use of Force and Firearms in Law Enforcement*, published jointly by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), similarly recognizes that "control" encompasses not only "direct control", but also "incident control" during crowd policing situations:

"[T]he use of force by law enforcement officers, both when the subject is under their direct control (arrest, detention) and in cases of incident control (during riot control) may amount to torture (if the use of force is unlawful, and falls under the definition of torture) or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment (if the lawful use of force is excessive, disproportionate and unjustifiable)."[2417]

Commentators agree that the phrase "under the control of the accused" in Article 7(2)(e) is to be given a broad meaning.[2418]

It is Amnesty International's view that the above could apply to the notion of "control" under Article 7(2)(e) of the Rome Statute.

The organization's research found a pattern of Iranian security forces using both lethal and less lethal force to inflict severe and pain on protesters and bystanders who were unable to escape or resist.[2419] In instances involving the injurious use of firearms loaded with metal pellets or high-calibre and high energy expanding bullets, the reach of the metal pellets or bullets was such that escape was often not an option; many victims were struck with pellets or bullets while running away, while others came under sudden fire, leaving them overpowered with no chance to flee or protect themselves. Still others were fired at from close range after having fallen to the ground, or while cornered in alleyways, making escape impossible. Instances involving the unlawful use of physical violence involved situations where victims were already restrained, with agents surrounding a protester or bystander lying on the ground or dragging them and deliberately using force to inflict severe pain or suffering.

Based on the above, Amnesty International is of the view that, for the purposes of this report, victims were in a situation that the UN Special Rapporteur on torture has defined as one of "powerlessness [which] means that someone is overpowered, in other words, has come under the direct physical or equivalent control of the perpetrator and has lost the capacity to resist or escape the infliction of pain or suffering."[2420]

Based on the types of weapons repeatedly used and the manner in which they were employed, Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that members of the security forces either intended to inflict severe pain and suffering on individuals or acted with awareness that such pain and suffering would be a virtually certain consequence of their conduct in the ordinary course of events. This conclusion is supported by the following weapon-specific patterns of harm:

- **Assault rifles, machine guns and handguns:** Firearms such as handguns, rifles and machine guns are designed to fire lethal ammunition that can cause fatal or life-threatening injuries upon

2416. UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UN Special Rapporteur on torture), *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and The Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 20 July 2017, UN Doc. A/72/178, para. 47.
2417. OHCHR and UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Resource Book on the Use of Force and Firearms in Law Enforcement,* 2017, UN Doc. HR/PUB/17/6, p. 12.
2418. Otto Triffterer and Kai Ambos (editors), *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. A Commentary*, 2016, p. 271.
2419. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and The Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 36.
2420. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and The Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), para. 31.

impact.[2421] As a result, in line with the principle of proportionality and Principle 9 of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (which is recognized to reflect binding international law), their use must be limited to situations involving a threat of a similar gravity, meaning an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and only where no lesser means of response is available to save a life. They are never a "tool" to handle or disperse assemblies. High-powered rifles and weapons with automatic firing systems such as machine guns have no place at all in the context of protests given the high risk they present for large numbers of people. Amnesty International is of the view that the repeated and systematic use of rifles, machine guns and handguns during the Woman Life Freedom uprising, where no imminent threat of death or serious injury existed, indicates that members of the Iranian security forces acted with the intention to kill or at least they accepted that loss of life was a virtually certain consequence of the generalized strategy of using rifles, machine guns and handguns to disperse protests

- **Shotguns loaded with metal pellets:** Metal pellets are designed to spread widely upon discharge, rendering their effects inherently indiscriminate when fired into crowds. Amnesty International considers that shotguns loaded with metal pellets fall into the category of weapons whose effects are inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading by design and nature, and whose use in policing is always incompatible with the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.[2422] The Iranian security forces' use of these weapons and ammunition in densely populated protest environments predictably resulted in widespread, multiple injuries across different parts of the victims' bodies, causing severe pain and suffering and long-term physical impairments, including permanent vision loss. Given the known effects of metal pellet dispersal and the manner of employment, Amnesty International is of the view that members of the security forces either intended to inflict pain and suffering upon the victims or accepted that this harm was a virtually certain consequence of the strategy of using metal pellets to disperse protests.
- **Physical violence:** Acts of physical violence, including beatings with batons, punching, kicking, dragging and throwing individuals to the ground, stomping and hair pulling, were repeatedly used by members of the security forces outside any permissible law enforcement framework, against protesters and bystanders who posed no imminent threat of injury to security forces or others. They were deployed to disperse, intimidate and punish protesters and deter participation in demonstrations. Security forces routinely targeted highly vulnerable areas of the body, including the head, neck, spine, abdominal area and genital region. Strikes to these anatomically sensitive body areas are known to cause extreme physical pain, fractures, internal injuries, bleeding, brain trauma and permanent disability. Amnesty International is of the view that the deliberate targeting of individuals with such physical violence reflects intent to inflict severe pain and suffering.
- **Tear gas:** In at least five documented cases, security forces discharged tear gas canisters at close range and on direct trajectories, converting them into fatal projectiles. This misuse of tear gas resulted in blunt force trauma, fractures, lacerations and penetrating injuries, causing severe pain and suffering and eventually causing the victims' deaths. Amnesty International also documented a pattern of security forces firing tear gas into confined spaces or densely populated protest environments where people were unable to escape, resulting in severe

2421. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and The Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), paras 52-53, 62(f).
2422. UN Special Rapporteur on torture, *Extra-Custodial Use of Force and The Prohibition of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (previously cited), paras 48-51.

respiratory symptoms. Given the firing distance, method of employment and foreseeable risk of harm, Amnesty International is of the view that members of the security forces either intended to inflict pain and suffering upon the victims or accepted that this harm was a virtually certain consequence of the strategy of misusing tear gas to disperse protests.

Taken together, these patterns demonstrate that security forces used unlawful force and firearms with the intention to inflict severe pain and suffering on the victims, or in full awareness this would be the direct consequence of such use of force, on persons that at the moment of being targeted were under their control. Accordingly, both the material and mental elements of torture as a crime against humanity under Article 7(2)(e) of the Rome Statute can be considered to have been met.

Acts of torture committed through the unlawful use of force and firearms during protests were perpetrated by FARAJA forces, including the Prevention Police, the Assistance Cohorts of the Prevention Police and the Special Cohorts, as well as by IRGC forces, including its operational military divisions, Security Cohorts and Basij battalions.

In addition to acts of torture committed during protest dispersals, the Iranian authorities also perpetrated torture against individuals held in state custody for the purposes of intimidation, punishment and humiliation, for reasons based on discrimination, and to obtain forced "confessions" that formed the basis of indictments and convictions in cases where protesters were subsequently put on trial.

Common methods of physical torture included beatings with batons and chains; slapping, kicking and punching; flogging; prolonged solitary confinement; the application of electric shocks to different body parts; the exposing of victims to extreme temperatures; hair pulling; the forced administration of chemical substances, including pills and injections; the imposition of painful stress positions on detainees for prolonged periods, frequently accompanied by blindfolding or the covering of the head with a bag or sack; the denial of medical care, including painkillers, for physical injuries resulting from torture and other medical problems; and the prolonged denial of sufficient food and potable water. Other reported torture methods included the submersion of victims under water; the insertion of needles into sensitive body parts; the forcible extraction of fingernails and toenails; the use of pepper spray, including on the eyes; mock executions; and the suspension of victims from the neck and wrists.

Common forms of psychological torture included threats to further physically torture survivors, kill them or imprison them for life; threats to arrest, kill, rape or otherwise torture, physically harm and/or forcibly disappear their family members; the subjection of victims to light or sound over a sustained period, including at night; the compulsion of detainees to perform humiliating acts; the persistent use of degrading verbal insults and profanities directed against them and members of their families; and the exposure of victims to screams of other detainees being tortured.

Given the extreme physical and mental harm caused by these methods of torture, and their deliberate use by members of the security forces to intimidate and punish protesters and/or extract forced "confessions", Amnesty International is of the view that the infliction of severe pain and suffering by members of the security forces was intentional, thereby satisfying the mental element required to establish the crime against humanity of torture.

Acts of torture against those held in state custody were perpetrated by agents belonging to: FARAJA forces, including the Special Cohorts, the Public Security Police and the Investigation Police; IRGC forces, including the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, the operational military divisions of IRGC provincial corps, IRGC Security Cohorts and IRGC Basij battalions; and the Ministry of Intelligence.

12.2.3 IMPRISONMENT

ELEMENTS

The crime against humanity of imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty is listed under Article 7(1)(e) of the Rome Statute.

The ICC Elements of Crimes outline the following requirements to establish the material element of the crime against humanity of imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty:

> **"1. The perpetrator imprisoned one or more persons or otherwise severely deprived one or more persons of their physical liberty.**
>
> **"2. The gravity of the conduct was such that it was in violation of fundamental rules of international law."**

The ICC "considers this provision to proscribe arbitrary imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty, taking place without due process of law."[2423] The term "imprisonment" encompasses "unlawful captivity of a person in an enclosed environment, such as a prison or psychiatric institution", while the expression "other severe deprivation of physical liberty" concerns "the unlawful restriction of the person's movements to a specific area, such as a ghetto, camp or a house."[2424] Examples of conduct of the required "gravity", namely which constitutes a "violation of fundamental rules of international law", include cases where "there is no legal basis to detain a person or the person is denied any procedural rights."[2425]

Importantly, "it is sufficient for purposes of the provision that one person be detained. The duration or brevity of detention does not, as such, determine whether a deprivation of physical liberty is severe. Rather, whether a deprivation of physical liberty is severe will have to be determined on a case-by-case basis".[2426]

In line with Article 30 of the Rome Statute, the conduct must be committed "with intent and knowledge". The ICC Elements of Crimes further require proof that "the perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the gravity of the conduct."[2427]

Amnesty International recalls that the Iranian authorities arbitrarily arrested and detained tens of thousands of men, women and children, including children as young as 10 years old, as part of their violent crackdown on the Woman Life Freedom uprising.

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International establishes the arbitrary nature of these arrests and detentions. The overwhelming majority of those arrested and detained were deprived of their liberty for acts that are protected under international human rights law, such as participating in peaceful protests, chanting, dancing, removing headscarves (in the case of some of the women arrested), writing slogans on walls, sounding car horns, supporting or showing solidarity with protesters through social media and, in the cases of families whose loved ones were killed by security forces, seeking truth and justice.

2423. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Yekatom and Ngaïssona*, Case ICC-01/14-01/18, Trial Chamber V judgment, 24 July 2025, para. 3833.
2424. ICC, *Situation in the Republic of Burundi*, Case ICC-01/17-X, Pre-Trial Chamber III, Public Redacted Version of "Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorization of an Investigation into the Situation in the Republic of Burundi", 9 November 2017, para. 68.
2425. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Yekatom and Ngaïssona*, Trial Chamber V judgment (previously cited), para. 3834.
2426. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Yekatom and Ngaïssona*, Trial Chamber V judgment (previously cited), para. 3835.
2427. ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 7, paragraph 1 (e), para. 3.

Journalists were arbitrarily detained for investigating protest-related human rights violations, and lawyers for representing detained protesters or the families of those unlawfully killed.

In all cases documented by Amnesty International, the arrests and detentions took place without any regard for due process guarantees and fair trial rights. Former detainees told the organization that security and intelligence agents blindfolded them or put hoods over their heads immediately upon arrest, so they could not see where they were being transferred, and kept them blindfolded throughout their interrogations.

Amnesty International's research found that the circumstances of the arbitrary deprivation of liberty of those who were arrested in the context of the protests followed various patterns. In some cases, the deprivation of liberty resembled abductions rather than formal arrests, with no formal record of the individual having been arrested. In such cases, security forces arrested individuals without any warrant, forced them into unmarked vehicles for transfer to formal or informal places of detention, and subjected them to torture and other ill-treatment, including through rape and other forms of sexual violence, for hours or days. Survivors were then often abandoned in remote areas or near the scene of their abduction. Survivors detained under these circumstances told the organization that, following their release, they were left shocked and bewildered about what had happened to them. Even months afterwards, they remained in a state of fear and confusion about whether they had been charged and would face criminal prosecution.

In other cases, the deprivation of liberty began with similar due process violations that made the arrest akin to an abduction, such as forceful placement into a vehicle, blindfolding and transfer to undisclosed places where they were subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. Detainees were sometimes held in undisclosed places for days or weeks without their detention being formally registered, before being transferred to a prison or other detention facility. In these cases, Amnesty International found that, upon arrival at detention facilities, security agents routinely subjected detainees to further torture and other ill-treatment.

Detainees were often placed in solitary confinement for days or weeks after their arrests and subjected to incommunicado detention, deprived of access to their families and lawyers.

Subsequently, traumatized and disoriented detainees were typically subjected to questioning and forced to write false, self-incriminating "confessions". Security and intelligence agents questioned detainees individually in interrogation rooms or collectively in halls or courtyards. In both cases, the interrogations frequently involved further torture and other ill-treatment or threats thereof, which itself can amount to torture or other ill-treatment. After interrogations, detainees were usually transferred to the main prison in their city or to the central prison in the provincial capital or another nearby larger city, where they were generally held for varying periods ranging between days and several months. Occasionally, detainees were released directly from the detention centre without being transferred to a prison; this often involved being placed in a vehicle while blindfolded and then abandoned on a street.

Although the Iranian authorities have never been transparent about the exact number of individuals arrested and detained in relation to the protests or the number of those prosecuted, they have acknowledged that tens of thousands were subjected to criminal proceedings. The main report of the Special Committee stated that, "during the unrest of 1401, cases were filed for about 34 thousand people."[2428] Some victims were forced by prosecution authorities to sign undertakings not to participate in future protests in exchange for their eventual release and the suspension or closure of

2428. Special Committee, *Summary of the Report of the President-Elected Special Committee Investigating the 2022 Unrests*, March 2024, (previously cited), p. 61. For more information about the Special Committee, see section 11.4.

their criminal cases. Others were referred to trials held before Revolutionary Courts or criminal courts, which convicted and sentenced them to prison terms and/or the death penalty in grossly unfair trials.

Amnesty International documented repeated violations of the right to a fair trial, including violations of detainees' rights: to access a lawyer of their choosing from the time of arrest and throughout investigation, trial and appeal proceedings; to protection from torture and other ill-treatment; to be promptly informed of charges against them; to remain silent and not to be compelled to incriminate themselves or confess guilt; to the presumption of innocence; to meaningfully challenge the legality of their detention before an independent, impartial tribunal; to have adequate time and facilities to prepare a defence; to obtain full access to relevant evidence; to call, examine and cross-examine witnesses; to challenge the authenticity of evidence; to receive a fair, public hearing before an independent, competent and impartial tribunal; and to have a meaningful review of their convictions and sentences by a higher independent, competent and impartial court.

Based on the above, Amnesty International is of the view that the first requirement of imprisonment as a crime against humanity, pursuant to Article 7(1)(e) of the Rome Statute, namely that the perpetrator imprisoned one or more persons, is met. With respect to the second requirement, namely that the gravity of the conduct was such that it violated "fundamental rules of international law", the abusive and violent circumstances of arrests and detentions, the lack of legal basis for the vast majority of the arrests and detentions, and the denial of due process and the right to a fair trial all support the conclusion that this element of the crime against humanity of imprisonment, as defined under Article 7(1)(e) of the Rome Statute, is also satisfied.

Acts of imprisonment were perpetrated by agents belonging to: FARAJA forces, including the Special Cohorts, the Public Security Police and the Investigation Police; IRGC forces, including the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, the operational military divisions of IRGC provincial corps, IRGC Security Cohorts and IRGC Basij battalions; and the Ministry of Intelligence.

12.2.4 RAPE AND OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

ELEMENTS

The crimes against humanity of rape and sexual violence are listed under Article 7(1)(g) of the Rome Statute.

The ICC Elements of Crimes outline the following requirements to establish the material element of the crime against humanity of rape:

> **"1. The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.**
>
> **"2. The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent."**

With regard to the existence of "coercive circumstances", the ICC clarified these "need not be evidenced by a show of physical force – threats, intimidation, extortion, and other forms of duress which prey on fear or desperation may constitute coercion… Several factors may contribute to creating a coercive environment, such as the number of people involved in the commission of the

crime, or whether the rape is committed… together with other crimes."[2429] Furthermore, "[i]t is not necessary to prove the victim's lack of consent and there is no requirement of resistance on the part of the victim."[2430]

The ICC Elements of Crimes outline the following requirements to establish the material element of the crime against humanity of sexual violence:

> **"1. The perpetrator committed an act of a sexual nature against one or more persons or caused such person or persons to engage in an act of a sexual nature by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or persons or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment or such person's or persons' incapacity to give genuine consent.**
>
> **"2. Such conduct was of a gravity comparable to the other offences in article 7, paragraph 1 (g), of the Statute."**

The mental element of the crime against humanity of rape requires proof of "intent and knowledge" in line with Article 30 of the Rome Statute. Accordingly:

> **"it must be proven that the perpetrator intentionally committed the act of rape. Intent will be established where it is proven that the perpetrator meant to engage in the conduct in order for the penetration to take place.**
>
> **"As to the requirement of 'knowledge', it must be proven that the perpetrator was aware that the act was committed by force, by the threat of force or coercion, by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or against a person incapable of giving genuine consent."[2431]**

The same applies with regard to the mental element of the crime against humanity of sexual violence. Additionally, there must be proof that the "perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the gravity of the conduct".[2432]

Amnesty International recalls that it has documented in detail the cases of 16 individuals who were subjected to rape while arbitrarily under arrest in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising. They comprised six women, seven men, a 14-year-old girl and two boys aged 16 and 17. Six of the 16 survivors – four women and two men – were subjected to forced sexual penetration by multiple male state agents. State agents penetrated women and girls vaginally, anally and orally, while men and boys were penetrated anally. Survivors were penetrated with wooden and metal batons, glass bottles, hosepipes and/or the sexual organs and fingers of agents.

Eight survivors were subjected to forced sexual penetration while held in detention facilities belonging to the IRGC; four in vans belonging to the security forces, three of which were identified as belonging specifically to the Special Cohorts of FARAJA; one in what appeared to the survivor to be a school or preschool, unofficially and unlawfully repurposed as a makeshift detention place; one in a residential building near a Basij facility; and two in unidentified buildings.

2429. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Trial Chamber IX judgment (previously cited), para. 2710.
2430. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ongwen*, Trial Chamber IX judgment (previously cited), para. 2709.
2431. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), paras 111-112.
2432. ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 7, paragraph 1 (g)-6, para. 3.

Amnesty International documented the cases of 29 other individuals who were subjected to forms of sexual violence other than rape while arbitrarily arrested in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising. In the cases of women and girls, acts of sexual violence included male security and intelligence agents putting their hands under the victims' clothing and into their underwear; grabbing, groping, beating, punching or kicking their breasts, genitals or buttocks; stripping them of their clothes, including in front of male detainees; conducting intrusive body searches; holding them naked for hours or days in detention, including in front of video cameras and in freezing conditions; and threatening to rape them or their female relatives.

In the cases of men and boys, documented forms of sexual violence included agents threatening to rape them or their relatives; forcing them to undress; subjecting them to cold temperatures while naked; administering electric shocks to their genitals; inserting needles into their genitals; touching, pressing, kicking or beating their testicles or buttocks; and putting ice on their testicles for prolonged periods.

Based on the above, Amnesty International finds that the material elements of the crimes against humanity of rape and sexual violence under Article 7(1)(g) of the Rome Statute are met. The organization further considers that the modalities and circumstances in which the prohibited acts were committed show that the perpetrators acted with the required mental element of intent and knowledge.

Acts of rape or sexual violence were perpetrated by agents belonging to the IRGC, including its Basij forces, the Ministry of Intelligence and FARAJA forces, including the Public Security Police, the Investigation Police and the Special Cohorts.

12.2.5 ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

ELEMENTS

The crime against humanity of enforced disappearance is defined in Article 7(2)(i) of the Rome Statute as follows:

"'Enforced disappearance of persons' means the arrest, detention or abduction of persons by, or with the authorization, support or acquiescence of, a State or a political organization, followed by a refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of those persons, with the intention of removing them from the protection of the law for a prolonged period of time."

The ICC Elements of Crimes outlines the following requirements to establish the material element of the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance:

"1. The perpetrator:

(a) Arrested, detained or abducted one or more persons; or

(b) Refused to acknowledge the arrest, detention or abduction, or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of such person or persons.

"2.

(a) Such an arrest, detention or abduction was followed or accompanied by a refusal from the perpetrator to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of the detained person(s); or

(b) Such refusal was preceded or accompanied by that deprivation of freedom.

"3. The perpetrator was aware that:

(a) Such arrest, detention or abduction would be followed in the ordinary course of events by a refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of such person or persons; or

(b) Such refusal was preceded or accompanied by that deprivation of freedom.

"4. Such arrest, detention or abduction was carried out by, or with the authorization, support or acquiescence of, a State or a political organization.

"5. Such refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of such person or persons was carried out by, or with the authorization or support of, such State or political organization."

The terms "arrest, detention or abduction" are considered "to cover comprehensively any form of deprivation of liberty of a person against his or her will. The crime also includes the scenario in which a victim, initially arrested and detained lawfully, may be 'disappeared' in custody."[2433] As to the element of refusal to acknowledge or give information about the detention, this "encompasses outright denial or the giving of false information about the fate or whereabouts of the victim."[2434]

In line with Article 30 of the Rome Statute, the conduct must be committed "with intent and knowledge". Additionally, it must be proved that "the perpetrator intended to remove such detained person(s) from the protection of the law for a prolonged period of time".[2435] In this respect, the ICC noted:

"Oftentimes the manner in which the person is deprived of his or her liberty allows the Chamber to infer the intention to remove the victim from the protection of the law, such as the lack of a court order for the detention; abduction in cars without licence plates and with tinted windows; detention in secret, unofficial prisons; non-registration of names of the detainees in official records; or capture in desolate areas."[2436]

Amnesty International recalls its findings that security forces, along with prosecution authorities, deliberately subjected detainees held in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising to enforced disappearance for days or weeks by refusing to provide any information to their families about their fate

2433. ICC, *Situation in the Republic of Burundi*, Pre-Trial Chamber III, Public Redacted Version of "Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorization of an Investigation into the Situation in the Republic of Burundi" (previously cited), para. 118.
2434. ICC, *Situation in the Republic of Burundi*, Pre-Trial Chamber III, Public Redacted Version of "Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorization of an Investigation into the Situation in the Republic of Burundi" (previously cited), para. 118.
2435. ICC Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(i), para. 6. Under international human rights law, including the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the UN Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the removal of a person from the protection of the law is a consequence of enforced disappearance, not a specific intent requirement as envisaged under the Rome Statute. In Amnesty International's view, the more restrictive definition envisaged by the latter, applicable to the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance, is relevant only for purposes of prosecution before the ICC and does not limit or modify the definition of enforced disappearance set out in other international treaties or customary international law.
2436. ICC, *Situation in the Republic of Burundi*, Pre-Trial Chamber III, Public Redacted Version of "Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorization of an Investigation into the Situation in the Republic of Burundi" (previously cited), para. 120.

or whereabouts. Some detainees were held in official places of detention or security compounds belonging to security forces, while others were taken to unofficial detention places, including warehouses and schools, as well as residential buildings colloquially referred to as "safe houses" in Iran.

Distressed relatives told Amnesty International how they visited police stations, prosecution offices, Revolutionary Courts, prisons and other known detention centres to enquire about their loved ones. In many cases, officials deliberately concealed information they had about the fate and/or whereabouts of forcibly disappeared individuals from their relatives, even though they were in their custody. In other cases, officials admitted to relatives that their loved ones were in custody but refused to disclose their place of detention or any charges they faced. When officials acknowledged the detention of individuals to their relatives, the whereabouts of the detainees were not disclosed and they were denied visits and other contact with their families and lawyers for periods ranging from days to several weeks.

Through the deliberate use of enforced disappearance, security forces, together with prosecution authorities, removed detained persons from the protection of the law, creating an environment conducive to torture and other ill-treatment and the extraction of forced "confessions", which were then relied upon in grossly unfair proceedings to issue indictments and convictions.

The uncertainly and fear surrounding the enforced disappearances had devastating psychological consequences for the disappeared persons' relatives. They were left in a state of deep anguish and uncertainty about whether their loved ones were dead or alive, especially amid mounting reports of deaths resulting from the unlawful use of lethal force by the security forces during the protests, as well as reports of deaths in custody due to torture and other ill-treatment.

Based on the above, Amnesty International is of the view that the elements of the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance are satisfied.

Acts of enforced disappearance were perpetrated by agents belonging to: FARAJA forces, including the Special Cohorts, the Public Security Police and the Investigation Police; IRGC forces, including the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, the operational military divisions of IRGC provincial corps, IRGC Security Cohorts and IRGC Basij battalions; and the Ministry of Intelligence.

12.2.6 PERSECUTION

ELEMENTS

Article 7(1)(h) envisages as a crime against humanity the:

> **"Persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3,[2437] or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court".**

Article 7(2)(g) further specifies that persecution means "the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity".

2437. Article 7(3) of the Rome Statute states that "for the purpose of this Statute, it is understood that the term 'gender' refers to the two sexes, male and female, within the context of society."

The ICC Elements of Crimes outline the following requirements to establish the material element of the crime against humanity of persecution:

> **"1. The perpetrator severely deprived, contrary to international law, one or more persons of fundamental rights.**
>
> **"2. The perpetrator targeted such person or persons by reason of the identity of a group or collectivity or targeted the group or collectivity as such.**
>
> **"3. Such targeting was based on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in article 7, paragraph 3, of the Statute, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law.**
>
> **"4. The conduct was committed in connection with any act referred to in article 7, paragraph 1, of the Statute or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court."**

As regards the first element related to the severe deprivation of fundamental rights, this can be established through various forms of conduct:

> **"Persecution can be committed either in one act or in a series of acts. If the conduct is, in and of itself, one of the other acts listed in Article 7 of the Statute which can constitute a crime against humanity, it will in principle result in a deprivation of fundamental rights of one or more individuals and the deprivation will meet the minimum level of severity required. For instance, acts of murder, torture, rape or sexual slavery will satisfy the first element of the crime of persecution."[2438]**

The second element related to targeting by reason of the identity of a group or collectivity has been clarified as follows:

> **"The group need only be identifiable and this can be on the basis of neutral criteria such as geography or residence and need not be premised on a discriminatory ground such as racial or ethnic composition. Specifically, it is not necessary for the identifiable targeted group to be defined by the discriminatory grounds listed in Article 7(1)(h) of the Statute, but rather these grounds enumerate the prohibited reasons for targeting the group."[2439]**

The third element related to the grounds of targeting requires the following:

> **"The person or persons within the group or collectivity are targeted on specified discriminatory grounds as listed or any other ground universally recognised as impermissible under international law. One such ground will suffice, although a combination of more than one may equally form the basis for the discrimination."[2440]**

The fourth element concerns the conduct amounting to persecution having a "connection" with any act in Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute or any crime within the ICC's jurisdiction. The ICC clarified that "it is not necessary to demonstrate that the Article 7(1) acts meet the contextual elements for crime against humanity; it is sufficient that there is a connection between the persecution and any instance of murder, torture, rape or other inhumane act."[2441] It further noted:

2438. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1204.
2439. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1206.
2440. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1207.
2441. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1208.

"There is no requirement that the act of persecution equates to an act under Article 7(1) of the Statute or any other crime under the jurisdiction of the Court. By the plain language of the Statute, there need only be a 'connection' in the sense of link to, or interrelated with. Further, it is the persecution which must be connected with a crime – not the individual acts underlying the same."[2442]

With regard to the mental element of persecution, beside the need to prove that the perpetrator acted with "intent and knowledge",[2443] it must be proven that they acted with the specific discriminatory intent, that is to discriminate against the targeted persons on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other grounds impermissible under international law. The ICC noted: "This specific intent may be inferred from the general behaviour of the perpetrator as well as the circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime."[2444] Perpetrators may commit a persecutory act based on multiple or intersecting grounds of persecution.

The ICC Office of the Prosecutor has stated:

"Types of evidence of discriminatory intent can include the acts or statements of the direct perpetrators, legislation, policies or regulations promulgated by the perpetrator group or other authorities, the use of hate speech, slurs or discriminatory language against members of the target group, or public statements relating to the underlying crimes or persecutory acts. It can also be inferred from the pattern of targeting, such as crimes which are committed exclusively or predominantly against certain individuals or groups and/or not against others".[2445]

With regard to the first element of the crime, Amnesty International recalls its findings that Iranian security forces subjected protesters and those supporting them to murder, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence. The commission of these prohibited acts satisfy the first element of the crime as they inherently amount to severe deprivations of fundamental rights.

Furthermore, the organization recalls its findings that Iranian security forces subjected families of those killed to a catalogue of human rights violations, including concealing information about the whereabouts of victims' bodies; conditioning the return of victims' bodies on families accepting false state narratives about the circumstances of the deaths of their loved ones or agreeing to arbitrary restrictions on burial, funeral and memorial ceremonies; denying families the right to fully examine the bodies of their loved ones before burial; forcing families to bury loved ones quickly, at night, in a militarized climate and/or in remote locations and far from their home towns; firing shotguns loaded with metal pellets at families, including during funeral processions or memorial ceremonies; subjecting families to beatings, surveillance, threats, coercive interrogations, arbitrary detention and unfair criminal proceedings leading to unjust prison sentences; coercing families to sign false statements and appear in state propaganda videos; blocking access to the pension funds and other economic assets of victims; subjecting victims' graves to destruction or desecration; and threatening to destroy victims' grave and/or exhume victims' bodies and re-bury them in unidentified locations. Amnesty International considers that the violations against families of those killed constitute a severe deprivation of

2442. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1209.
2443. Rome Statute, Article 30.
2444. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1212.
2445. ICC Office of the Prosecutor, *Policy on the Crime of Gender Persecution*, 7 December 2022, para. 95.

fundamental rights on their own or when considered cumulatively and thus satisfy the first element of the crime of persecution.

Regarding the second element of the crime of against humanity of persecution, which concerns targeting based on the identity of a group or collectivity, Amnesty International considers that numerous targeted groups or collectivities are identifiable.

Protesters constitute a nationwide collectivity targeted for their collective opposition to compulsory veiling and/or their demands for political change and transition from the Islamic Republic system to a new political system that respects fundamental freedoms and human rights.

Additionally, distinct targeted collectivities marked by their ethnic and religious composition and geographic location can be observed in the case of Kurdish protesters in the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, as well as Baluchi protesters in Sistan and Baluchistan province. Kurdish protesters initiated the protest movement following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, herself a Kurdish woman, before it spread across the country. Kurdish and Baluchi protesters subsequently sustained the protests for a longer period within their respective geographic regions by repeatedly taking to the streets despite facing lethal crackdowns and, as detailed below, were subjected to distinct patterns of repression, particularly involving the repeated use of certain firearms, which resulted in a disproportionately high number of deaths within these communities.

Women and girls who participated in the protests, defied discriminatory compulsory veiling laws by removing their mandatory headscarves in public, and/or shared images of themselves without headscarves on social media, which in the case of women actors and other public figures received a lot of attention, constitute another identifiable collectivity targeted nationwide. Men and boys who expressed support for the human rights of women and girls, including the right to choose whether to wear a headscarf, can also be considered part of this collectivity, or constitute another identifiable group targeted for opposing gender inequality and the discriminatory gendered norms and criteria enforced by the Iranian authorities.

Relatives of those killed by security forces constitute another identifiable collectivity targeted by reason of their familial association with the deceased victims and their real or perceived efforts to speak out against the authorities' lethal crackdown, expose the circumstances surrounding the killing of their loved one by security forces and seek truth, justice and accountability.

Regarding the third element of the crime against humanity of persecution, which requires that the targeting be based on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other universally recognized impermissible grounds under international law, Amnesty International's research found that the groups or collectivities identified above were deprived of their fundamental human rights based on multiple and intersecting grounds.

At a nationwide, cross-cutting level, acts of murder, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, rape and other forms of sexual violence were committed against protesters on discriminatory political grounds due to their real or perceived opposition to the Islamic Republic's theocratic system. Amnesty International recalls that such violent acts against protesters did not occur in isolation: they were an integral part of broader patterns of widespread and systematic human rights violations against those who reject the political and religious ideology of the Islamic Republic's theocratic system and demand political change.

The organization recalls its findings that Iranian laws and policies mandate Iranian security forces to unlawfully use force and firearms and commit other serious human rights violations to preserve the Islamic Republic system and its foundational principles, which include absolute allegiance to the Supreme Leader, violent enforcement of compulsory veiling and other Islamic norms, as interpreted by the authorities, and systematic suppression of secular, pluralist and rights-respecting political visions

and voices. Acts of suppression include violent dispersal of peaceful assemblies and the banning of civil society groups and political parties not aligned with the ideology of the Islamic Republic system.

In the cases of Kurdish and Baluchi protesters, the totality of evidence gathered by Amnesty International provides a reasonable basis to believe that they were targeted on not only political grounds but also intersecting ethnic grounds. The disproportionate number of Kurdish and Baluchi victims among those killed cannot be attributed solely to a higher volume of protests in provinces where these ethnic minorities live. Rather, the organization found that the patterns related to the use of intentional lethal force against Kurdish and Baluchi protesters were distinct and markedly more severe.

In Sistan and Baluchistan province, security forces carried out the deadliest crackdown of the entire protest period, killing 87 protesters and bystanders in Zahedan in a single day on 30 September 2022 through mass shootings.

In the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan, home to Kurdish communities in Iran, security forces frequently deployed an array of weaponry against protesters immediately after protests began, including not only shotguns loaded with metal pellets but also military-grade firearms. These included assault rifles such as AK-pattern models, SVD-pattern designated marksman rifles, and G3 rifles; sub-machine guns such as Uzi-pattern and MP5-pattern guns models; and pickup trucks mounted with DShK heavy machine guns, which were not seen elsewhere in the country. The use of such military-grade weaponry shows that security forces adopted a far more militarized response in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan compared to other parts of Iran. Elsewhere they generally escalated more slowly, starting with shotguns loaded with metal pellets and then moving to other firearms. These weapons still had lethal consequences but were used less frequently.

The distinct patterns of lethal repression against Kurdish and Baluchi protesters did not occur in isolation; it was an extreme manifestation of the systemic discrimination that members of these minorities have suffered for decades, and part of a broader historic context consistently marked by the disproportionate impact of unlawful intentional lethal force and arbitrary executions on minority populations in Iran.[2446]

In the case of women and girls targeted in connection with the protests, Amnesty International found that prohibited acts, including murder, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, rape and other forms of sexual violence, were carried out as a means to not only suppress political opposition but also enforce gender discrimination and punish transgression of state-enforced gender roles and behaviours, rooted in a strict interpretation of Islamic law. In other words, the targeting of women and girls was based on gender grounds intersecting with political and religious grounds and, in the case of Kurdish and Baluchi women and girls, ethnic grounds as well.

Women and girls participating in the Woman Life Freedom uprising were seen as challenging the institutionalized system of oppression and domination over women and girls in Iran, a system the Iranian authorities justify in the name of enforcing Islamic law. While this system of gender-based oppression and domination turns women and girls into second-class citizens in nearly every aspect of their public and private lives in Iran – from marriage, divorce and inheritance to access to work, housing, political office and treatment in the criminal justice system – many Iranian women and girls view the degrading practice of compulsory veiling as its key tenet and as a constant reminder of their subjugation and lack of autonomy over their own bodies.

Amnesty International recalls its findings that state agents who perpetrated sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls frequently used insults that equated not wearing a headscarf with nudity or a desire for “prostitution”. Some perpetrators told women and girls that the victims were

2446. See section 3.5.

deserving of such violence because they defended their right to appear in public without wearing a headscarf. For example, Maryam, who was gang-raped by several agents vaginally and anally with their sexual organs and a glass bottle in an IRGC detention facility recalled the perpetrators telling her: "You are all addicted to penis, so we showed you a good time. Isn't this what you seek from liberation?"

Amnesty International considers that men and boys who were killed, imprisoned, forcibly disappeared, tortured, raped and sexually violated were also targeted for supporting gender equality during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. As such, the prohibited acts committed against them also served as a means of crushing real or perceived challenge to the institutionalized system of gender-based oppression and domination in Iran. This reflects targeting on political grounds.

In the cases of families of those killed, they were subjected to a severe deprivation of fundamental human rights on political grounds. Families were targeted as a means to suppress demands for truth, justice and reparation and to enforce a political system steeped in repression and impunity for serious human rights violations. Families were also targeted simply for their association with protesters who were killed, based on the perception that they might share or support the political beliefs and activism of their deceased relatives and must therefore be suppressed and coerced into submission and silence.

As for the mental element of persecution, there are reasonable grounds to draw the inference from the totality of the evidence that Iranian security forces killed, tortured, imprisoned, forcibly disappeared, raped and sexually violated protesters with intent to discriminate on political and gender grounds, as well as intersecting ethnic grounds in the case of Kurdish and Baluchi protesters. In so finding, Amnesty International notes the context in which prohibited acts and crimes occurred where gender-based discrimination against women and girls, as well as politically based discrimination against those expressing real or perceived political dissent, is pervasive and enforced through systemic violence and criminalization.

Evidence of discriminatory intent on political grounds is found in official statements as well as laws and policies adopted by the authorities. Amnesty International recalls that, during and in the aftermath of the lethal protest crackdown, Iranian officials at all levels repeatedly portrayed protesters as "enemies of the state" to be eliminated, used discriminatory language steeped in hate, dehumanization and threats of violence against protesters, misrepresented protests as "hybrid warfare" against the Islamic Republic system and celebrated the lethal crackdown carried out to keep an iron grip on power. They also repeatedly presented the Islamic Republic system as the embodiment of "divine ideals" and "God's law" and instructed security forces to suppress anyone "attempting actions against the Islamic Revolution".[2447]

Amnesty International recalls its findings that these official declarations and the prohibited acts and crimes committed pursuant to state policy did not occur in isolation. Rather, they emerged within the context of an omnipresent security apparatus shaped by laws, policies and programmes that mandate, organize, train and mobilize security forces to commit human rights violations against individuals who challenge or are perceived as challenging the Islamic Republic system and advocate alternative political ideas or visions, including through street protests.[2448]

Since the 2022 lethal protest crackdown, instead of conducting investigations into the crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed by security forces, and delivering truth, justice and reparations to victims, the Iranian authorities have continued to subject protesters, dissidents and families of those killed to arbitrary detentions, threats, harassment, surveillance, torture

2447. See section 10.3.2.
2448. See Chapter 10.

and other ill-treatment, arbitrary executions and death sentences issued following grossly unfair and torture-tainted trials. This patten further indicates the persecutory intent of the authorities to harm those who express real or perceived political dissent.

Evidence of discriminatory intent on gender grounds can be inferred from the discriminatory circumstances surrounding the commission of prohibited acts against women and girls. These circumstances involved the operation of a system of "institutionalized and structural discrimination" against women and girls, which, as the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran has stated, was "both the trigger of the protests and the Woman Life Freedom movement and enabler of the serious human rights violations committed in their repression."[2449] Amnesty International recalls that this system is enforced through an intricate framework of laws, regulations and policies, implemented through a broad, interlinked network of state institutions, including the executive, legislative and judicial branches, as well as security forces, and sustained through substantial resourcing and continuous monitoring.

Evidence of discriminatory intent on gender grounds is also reflected in repeated official statements by Iranian authorities, which portrayed the Woman Life Freedom uprising and their core demands for gender equality as a "conspiracy" aimed at "distancing the women of our land from their perpetual chastity and modesty". In their statements, authorities repeatedly instigated violence against women and girl protesters who defied compulsory veiling laws by removing their headscarves, cutting their hair and throwing headscarves into bonfires, accusing them of violating Islam and the Quran or referring to them and the men who supported gender equality as "foot soldiers of the enemies of Islam".

In parallel, the authorities praised security forces as "heroes" who defended "Islamic sanctities and values", claiming they acted "with religious, national, and moral zeal to protect their honour", with "honour" referring to women and girls whose so-called "chastity" is treated as a marker of their families' reputation and a symbol of "national unity" and Islamic identity. In leaked official documents, Iranian authorities are also recorded describing the enforcement of compulsory veiling as a matter of national security, directly tied to the fate of the Islamic Republic system, stating that "the women's movement is one of the key issues on which the anti-revolution has focused".[2450]

Since 2022, the Iranian authorities have adopted a wide array of new laws, policies and practices to further erode the human rights of women and girls who defy compulsory veiling laws and crush their struggle for gender equality. This ongoing attack on women and girls further reflects the authorities' persecutory intent based on gender grounds.[2451]

With respect to the treatment of Kurdish and Baluchi protesters, the intent to discriminate on ethnic grounds can be inferred from the totality of evidence, including the authorities' discriminatory and dehumanizing statements relating to the underlying prohibited acts committed against Baluchi and Kurdish protesters and the pattern of targeting, which involved certain persecutory acts being exclusively or predominantly committed against the protesters belonging to these oppressed ethnic groups.

Amnesty International recalls its documentation of the Iranian authorities' official discourse, which persistently used dehumanizing language to portray Kurdish and Baluchi protesters as "hostile, terrorist and separatist". The Iranian authorities distinctly presented the peaceful assemblies of Kurdish protesters as a threat to Iran's territorial integrity and as "enemy plots" pursuing "ethnic and religious conflicts". They also repeatedly made baseless claims that "hostile, terrorist and separatist currents" in Kurdish and Baluchi regions, and armed Kurdish opposition groups, including the Kurdistan Workers'

2449. UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1, para. 1670.
2450. See sections 10.3.2(IV)(i), 10.3.4(III) and 10.4.4(III).
2451. See section 3.4.

Party, the Komala Party of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, had orchestrated the protests "with the goal of creating a cycle of violence and division among the nation".[2452] These assertions were solely based on the fact that the Woman Life Freedom uprising began in Kurdistan province after the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, who was a young Kurdish woman, and Kurdish and Baluchi protesters sustained the overwhelmingly peaceful protests for months despite a lethal crackdown.

Amnesty International further recalls its documentation of the Iranian authorities' denial and distortion of facts surrounding the mass unlawful killings of Kurdish and Baluchi victims. The authorities either misrepresented the identities of Kurdish protesters, falsely portraying them as members of "separatist currents" and "grouplets" killed during armed confrontations, or falsely claimed that such grouplets were responsible for carrying out the killings. Simultaneously, the authorities praised the security forces for "preventing sabotage by separatists and… Iran's disintegration", in a narrative that effectively framed the protests as existential threats orchestrated by ethnic minorities. This rhetoric not only criminalized dissent but also reinforced discriminatory stereotypes against Kurdish and Baluchi communities by conflating their demands for human rights with armed activity and linking their ethnic identity to "separatist" unrest. This official discourse fostered a discriminatory climate that enabled disproportionate lethal force against Kurdish and Baluchi minorities and was later used to justify and enforce impunity for the crimes committed against these marginalized communities.[2453]

Amnesty International recalls its findings that certain military-grade firearms, designed for armed conflict, were used exclusively or predominantly against protesters in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan. It also documented that the manner in which mass shootings were carried out during the 30 September 2022 "Bloody Friday" massacre in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan province, was unparalleled and not seen elsewhere in the country.

The distinct pattern of targeting Kurdish and Baluchi protesters cannot reasonably be attributed to random decisions by agents on the ground. Rather, the available evidence provides reasonable grounds to conclude that the disproportionate use of intentional lethal force against Kurdish and Baluchi protesters was driven by intersecting ethnic and political factors, and that prohibited acts were committed with the requisite discriminatory intent.

Based on all the above, Amnesty International finds that the elements of the crime against humanity of persecution, particularly on intersecting political, gender and ethnic grounds are met.

2452. See sections 10.2.4(I)(ii) and 10.4.3(II).
2453. See sections 10.2.4(I)(ii), 10.2.4(IV)(i), 10.3.4(II)(i), 10.3.4(II)(ii), 10.3.4(III) and 10.3.4(V).

12.3 NEXUS BETWEEN A PROHIBITED ACT AND THE ATTACK

ELEMENTS

To amount to a crime against humanity, a prohibited act must be committed "as part of" a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population. The fact that a prohibited act must be committed "as part of" a widespread or systematic attack means that its perpetration must occur within the context of the attack and be sufficiently connected to it.

For this purpose, due regard is to be given to "the nature of the act at issue, the aims it pursues and the consequences it occasions", in order to examine "whether this act is part of the widespread or systematic attack, considered as a whole, and in respect of the various components of the attack (including the policy, the patterns of crimes, or the type of victims)."[2454] In this respect, the temporal and geographical proximity of the acts are relevant, but acts that are "committed before or after" the core of the attack against the civilian population may also, "if sufficiently connected", be considered as part of that attack.[2455]

The prohibited acts of murder, imprisonment, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, enforced disappearance, persecution and other inhumane acts documented in this report were all committed during the core phase of the attack against Iran's civilian population, between September and December 2022, when street protests were ongoing.

Based on evidence presented by Amnesty International regarding the nature, manner, timing and location of the prohibited acts documented in this report, as well as the institutional affiliations of the perpetrators, it is Amnesty International's view that, for the purposes of the definition of crimes against humanity, all the prohibited acts documented in this report were committed "as part of" the widespread and systematic attack against Iran's civilian population. The organization, therefore, concludes that, in repressing the Woman Life Freedom uprising, the authorities committed the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, imprisonment, rape, sexual violence, enforced disappearance and persecution on intersecting political, gender and ethnic grounds.

It bears recalling that, while street protests related to the Woman Life Freedom uprising had largely ended by late December 2022, the Iranian authorities have continued to repeatedly commit a range of prohibited acts, including imprisonment, torture, persecution and other inhumane acts, in connection with the Woman Life Freedom uprising of 2022. Those targeted have included protesters on death row, protesters serving unjust prison sentences or risking arbitrary detention, individuals seeking truth and justice for killed relatives, and women and girls defying discriminatory compulsory veiling laws.

In January 2026, Iranian authorities once again waged lethal protest repression operations to crush a new round of mass anti-establishment protests that erupted across the country in late December 2025.

2454. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan*, Trial Chamber X judgment (previously cited), para. 1116.
2455. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac and others*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 100.

On the evenings of 8 and 9 January 2026, the authorities carried out protest massacres on an unprecedented scale, unlawfully killing thousands of protesters and bystanders and injuring tens of thousands.[2456] By the authorities' own admission, over 3,000 people were killed.[2457]

During and in the aftermath of the protest massacres of 8-9 January 2026, security forces arrested thousands of protesters and other dissidents, and subjected detainees to enforced disappearance and torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual violence. Authorities relentlessly and cruelly harassed and intimidated bereaved families of killed protesters. In addition to protesters, those arrested included university students and schoolchildren, human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists and members of ethnic and religious minorities.[2458]

Since 2022, the authorities have also increased the use of the death penalty as a weapon of political repression. By 25 August 2026, they had arbitrarily executed at least 14 individuals in connection with alleged offences committed during the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising. The authorities further escalated politically motivated executions after the January 2026 massacres and following the unlawful military attack launched by the USA and Israel against Iran on 28 February 2026. At least 59 individuals were executed on politically motivated charges between 18 March 2026 and 25 August 2026 following grossly unfair trials that bore no resemblance to meaningful judicial proceedings. They comprised 31 protesters, nine other dissidents and 19 other individuals convicted of the broad and vaguely worded charges of *moharebeh* (waging war against God), *baghi* (armed rebellion against the state) or espionage for the USA and/or Israel.

The protest massacres of January 2026 bear the same hallmarks as the crimes against humanity documented throughout this report, yet at an even deadlier and more staggering scale. These include the systematic and widespread unlawful use of firearms and other means of lethal force against protesters; the coordinated deployment of security forces under a unified chain of command; and the deliberate resort to mass unlawful killings, torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and enforced disappearances to eradicate popular demands for the downfall of the Islamic Republic system and transition to a new system of governance grounded in dignity, democracy and human rights.

2456. Amnesty International, "Iran: Massacre of protesters demands global diplomatic action to signal an end to impunity", 14 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-massacre-of-protesters-demands-global-diplomatic-action-to-signal-an-end-to-impunity

2457. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities unleash heavily militarized clampdown to hide protest massacres", 23 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-authorities-unleash-heavily-militarized-clampdown-to-hide-protest-massacres; Khabar Online, "Analytical statement by National Security Council regarding recent terrorist actions / 3,117 people lost their lives, of whom 2,427 were innocent victims"], 21 January 2026, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/2171790/بیانیه-تحلیلی-شورای-امنیت-کشور-درباره-اقدامات-تروریستی-دی-ماه (in Persian).

2458. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities unleash heavily militarized clampdown to hide protest massacres", 23 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-authorities-unleash-heavily-militarized-clampdown-to-hide-protest-massacres

13. OFFICIALS WARRANTING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

The main security forces involved in the lethal dispersal of protests during the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising were the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Operating under the General Staff of the Armed Forces, these security forces implemented strategies which were formulated by security councils at national, provincial and county levels and enforced by the minister of interior and their representatives at sub-national levels, namely provincial and county governors.

Amnesty International has identified the names and details of 87 officials who held top command and leadership positions at national, regional, provincial and county levels at the time the crimes against humanity documented in this report were committed. Of these 87 officials, at least six have since died.[2459] Based on the large body of evidence presented throughout this report, Amnesty International calls for criminal investigations to be initiated against those who are alive, including under universal or other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction where appropriate. Deceased individuals cannot be subjected to criminal investigation or prosecution. Nevertheless, investigation of their alleged conduct remains important for truth-seeking, establishing historical records, and understanding chains of command and the possible responsibility of other individuals.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section describes Amnesty International's approach to identifying the officials who should be the subject of criminal investigations, explains the standard of proof applied – reasonable grounds to believe – and outlines the scope and limitations of the list of officials identified. The second and third sections set out the organization's findings that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the elements required to establish the modes of liability of superior responsibility or aiding and abetting under international criminal law are met for the 87 individuals identified. The second section analyses the conduct of 62 commanders of security forces under superior responsibility. The third section analyses the conduct of 25 Ministry of Interior officials, including the minister of interior and his deputy for police and security, provincial governors, deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs and county governors, under aiding and abetting. The fourth section provides further information on the 87 officials, including their date of

2459. The deceased officials are Ali Khamenei, Hossein Salami, Mohammad Bagheri, Mohammad Pakpour, Mojtaba Karami and Yousef Darvishi. All but Yousef Darvishi were killed by air strikes carried out during US-Israeli military attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran in June 2025 and February 2026.

appointment and subsequent positions they held. The fifth section features three organigrams for the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, presenting the names, titles and photographs of the 87 officials and mapping the hierarchical relationships among them.

Amnesty International emphasizes that individual criminal responsibility can only be established through fair, independent and impartial criminal investigations and, where sufficient evidence exists, prosecutions conducted in accordance with the right to a fair trial, including the principle of the presumption of innocence, and without recourse to the death penalty. Individual criminal responsibility must be proven beyond reasonable doubt, based on evidence specific to each individual and in relation to the incidents underlying the charges.

13.1 APPROACH

Crimes against humanity do not occur in isolation. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence (UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth) clarified this in his 2014 report to the UN Human Rights Council:

> **"Mass violations require not just complex organization of the 'armed' operations that immediately cause the violations, but the coordination of those operations with supportive political and economic actors… capable of mobilizing large groups and resources."[2460]**

In the same report, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth explained how crimes against humanity should be investigated and prosecuted:

> **"A sustainable prioritization strategy requires a prosecutorial focus on patterns of violations, helping to discover chains of command, links between armed actors and other groups, as well as financial and other support [with the] objective to undo the structures or networks that enabled the various actors jointly to make horrific violations happen."[2461]**

This approach aligns with the methodology of "structural investigations",[2462] which are employed in some national jurisdictions such as Germany and Sweden and focus on analysing the "structures of power… [that] have played a significant role in the commission of crimes".[2463] Structural investigations aim to establish command and decision-making structures; provide a broad contextual understanding of how crimes were committed by actors within complex government and/or military systems; and seek to identify and group potential perpetrators, with a view to pursuing criminal accountability, including through the exercise of universal jurisdiction or other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction as appropriate.

Amnesty International was guided by this structural investigations approach in compiling a list of officials warranting criminal investigations in connection with the crimes against humanity documented

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2460. UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence (UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth), Report, 27 August 2014, UN Doc. A/HRC/27/56, para. 72.
2461. UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, Report, 27 August 2014 (previously cited), para. 109.
2462. The UN International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria (IIIM) describes structural investigations as follows: "the mapping of overarching crimes patterns, the structures of power wielded by the parties to the conflict, relevant actors (particularly those within the structures of power but also other actors, including civilians, who may be operating outside of these structures but nevertheless have played a significant role in the commission of crimes) and the broader context within which all of the relevant events took place (the constitutional and legislative frameworks, the geopolitical landscape and the political, economic, social, cultural and religious context)". See IIIM, Glossary, https://iiim.un.org/resources/glossary (6 August 2026), "Structural investigation". This method of investigation has been employed by a number of national jurisdictions, including Germany, France and Sweden. See Miriam Ingeson, "Structural investigations in Sweden: Reinventing investigations of international crimes", September 2020, Scandinavian Studies in Law, Volume 66, https://scandinavianlaw.se/pdf/66-16.pdf, p. 361.
2463. European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, Glossary, https://www.ecchr.eu/en/glossary/structural-investigation (accessed on 6 August 2026), "Structural investigation".

in this report. In previous chapters, the organization provided documentation of the security bodies involved in the crimes against humanity committed in the context of lethal crackdowns on the Woman Life Freedom uprising and undertook an in-depth analysis of their mandate, command structure and organizational arrangements. Based on this detailed documentation, Amnesty International has identified 87 individuals who held senior positions within these security bodies at the national, regional, provincial or county level during the September-December 2022 protests.

Amnesty International applied a "reasonable grounds to believe" standard of proof to identify relevant individuals.[2464] This means that the organization decided to call for an individual to be criminally investigated only when, based on the available evidence, it was reasonable to believe that the person was allegedly responsible for the crimes against humanity documented in this report under one or more recognized modes of liability.

When identifying individuals to name, Amnesty International considered the following elements, which are relevant to the modes of liability of superior responsibility and/or aiding and abetting:

- the position held by the individual within the hierarchy of Iran's security apparatus and the specific role they played in the lethal repression of the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, based on their position;
- the authority and control exercised by the individual as a superior over subordinates responsible for the crimes against humanity documented in this report;
- the acts carried out by the individual to assist, encourage or lend moral support to the perpetration of the crimes against humanity documented by Amnesty International, and the substantial effect that this assistance had on the commission of the crimes;
- public statements made by commanders and superiors that praised, encouraged or demonstrated support for agents who perpetrated crimes against humanity on the ground;
- leaked official orders that authorized or facilitated crimes against humanity; and/or
- the individual's link to the crimes against humanity documented in this report.

The 87 officials listed include 10 national officials and 77 other officials at regional (four), provincial (21) and county (52) levels covering the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan and 17 counties within them. The latter were selected based on Amnesty International's in-depth documentation of lethal protest dispersals in seven counties in Kurdistan province, five counties in Kermanshah province and five counties in West Azerbaijan province. This documentation included a detailed account of the timeline of events, evidence of the unlawful killing of 95 protesters and bystanders and the injuring of many more, as well as a thorough review of official statements made by senior FARAJA and IRGC commanders and Ministry of Interior officials in these areas.[2465]

The 87 officials occupied a range of senior positions at the time of the September-December 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, including the commander-in-chief of all armed forces (the Supreme Leader); the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces; 27 FARAJA commanders, 33 IRGC

2464. Reasonable grounds to believe is a legal standard requiring sufficient, credible and objective evidence that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that an alleged fact is likely true. It is commonly applied in human rights investigations to assess state responsibility for violations. As a standard of proof, reasonable grounds to believe is lower than the criminal threshold of "beyond reasonable doubt". This standard still requires going beyond mere suspicion and necessitates having a solid evidentiary foundation that supports the likelihood of the alleged facts. See UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan, Report, 5 September 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/57/23, para. 13; Max Planck Encyclopedias of International Law, Reasonable Grounds to Believe, https://opil.ouplaw.com/display/10.1093/law-mpeipro/e2792.013.2792/law-mpeipro-e2792 (accessed on 6 August 2026), para. 1.
2465. See Chapters 6-10.

commanders; and 25 Ministry of Interior officials comprising the minister of interior and deputy commander-in-chief for police; the deputy minister of interior for police and security; three provincial governors; three deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs; and 17 county governors. Amnesty International has not included in its list alleged perpetrators who directly carried out the crimes on the ground, although the organization holds the names of several such individuals on file.

The 27 FARAJA commanders were:

- the general commander
- the national commander of the Special Cohorts
- the national head of the Prevention Police
- the provincial commanders of Kurdistan, Kermanshah, West Azerbaijan
- the provincial commanders of the Special Cohorts of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan
- the county commanders of Baneh, Dehgolan, Divandareh, Kamyaran, Mariwan, Sanandaj and Saqqez counties in Kurdistan province; Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Ghasr-e Shirin, Javanroud, Kermanshah and Salas-e Babajani counties in Kermanshah province; and Boukan, Mahabad, Piranshahr, Oshnavieh and Urumieh counties in West Azerbaijan province

The 33 IRGC commanders were:

- the general commander
- the commander of the Ground Resistance Force
- the commanders and deputy commanders of two of the regional headquarters of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force, namely the Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces, and the Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces
- the commanders and deputy commanders of three of the IRGC's provincial corps, namely the Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, the Provincial Corps of Kermanshah and the Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
- the commanders of the operational divisions of three of the IRGC's provincial corps, namely the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Provincial Corps of Kermanshah and the 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of the Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
- the commanders of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh, Dehgolan, Divandareh, Kamyaran, Mariwan, Sanandaj and Saqqez counties in Kurdistan province; Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Ghasr-e Shirin, Javanroud, Kermanshah and Salas-e Babajani counties in Kermanshah province; and Boukan, Mahabad, Piranshahr, Oshnavieh and Urumieh counties in West Azerbaijan province

The 25 Ministry of Interior officials were:

- the minister of interior (also the deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs and head of the State Security Council)
- the deputy minister of interior for police and security (also the secretary of the State Security Council)

- the provincial governors and deputy provincial governors of political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan
- the county governors of Baneh, Dehgolan, Divandareh, Kamyaran, Mariwan, Sanandaj and Saqqez counties in Kurdistan province; Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Ghasr-e Shirin, Javanroud, Kermanshah and Salas-e Babajani counties in Kermanshah province; and Boukan, Mahabad, Piranshahr, Oshnavieh and Urumieh counties in West Azerbaijan province

Amnesty International's work is in no way exhaustive and should not affect any future consideration of the role of other officials or perpetrators (either direct or indirect) not mentioned in this report. The list included in this chapter was compiled based on the following key research constraints and limitations.

First, due to the focus of this report on in-depth documentation of lethal protest dispersals in Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan provinces, the list of officials does not name officials from other provinces. Nevertheless, the evidence presented regarding the nationwide commission of crimes against humanity, including hundreds of unlawful killings in other provinces, alongside detailed information on chains of command consistently structured at national, regional, provincial and county levels across the whole country, should serve as a guide for future investigations by other actors seeking to identify additional officials for criminal investigations.

Second, due to the focus of this report on in-depth documentation of incidents of lethal protest dispersals, it does not name officials allegedly responsible for crimes committed in state custody under the control of entities such as the Ministry of Intelligence, the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, the Public Security Police, the Investigation Police, prosecution offices and the Prison Organization. While Amnesty International has documented patterns of crimes against humanity in state custody – including the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, enforced disappearance, imprisonment, rape and other sexual violence, and persecution – identifying individuals in positions of command in these settings and analysing their potential modes of liability requires separate investigative efforts.

Third, Amnesty International has named officials who held the highest positions at national, regional, provincial and county levels during the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, based on available evidence concerning the chain of command and other materials supporting the application of potential modes of liability. However, the organization emphasizes that intermediate and lower-level commanders as well as other individuals, who led or otherwise participated in entities tasked with repressing protests, as mapped in Chapter 10, should be regarded as persons of interest and, where evidence is available, should be subjected to criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Finally, with regard to members of the Supreme National Security Council (Supreme Council), the State Security Council and provincial and county provision councils who are not already listed as warranting criminal investigations based on their other roles, Amnesty International notes that they should also be considered persons of interest for those investigating the crimes documented in this report. The mandates of these councils, along with the body of evidence analysed in Chapter 10, indicate the essential contribution of these entities to the orchestration of the attack waged against the civilian population during the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising. This is supported by two leaked resolutions of the State Security Council instructing, among other things, provision councils to prevent assemblies;[2466] separate leaked letters from the then secretary general of the Supreme Council and the then minister of interior to the then president;[2467] state media reports on meetings held by the secretary concerning security force operations;[2468] appeals made by various political actors to the

2466. See sections 10.4.4(III) and 10.4.4(IV).
2467. See sections 10.4.4(I) and 10.4.4(II).
2468. See section 10.4.4(III).

Supreme Council;[2469] and official statements issued by the State Security Council during the protest period.[2470]

Access to further evidence, including additional resolutions issued by these councils during the protest period, as well as records of discussions and voting, is essential to assess each member's level of involvement and potential responsibility, and their possible links to the crimes against humanity committed in the context of the crackdown. Members of councils may also be involved in other entities beyond councils, which may also give rise to responsibility for actions or omissions in those capacities.

Similarly, individuals named in leaked official documents of the State Security Council as having either participated in its meetings or been addressed as recipients of its resolutions, with instructions to issue the necessary orders to their subordinates for implementation, should be considered persons of interest.[2471] Again, access to further evidence, including the orders they issued and other measures they undertook, is essential to assess their level of involvement and potential links to the crimes against humanity committed in the context of the crackdown.

13.2 SUPERIOR RESPONSIBILITY

Under customary international law, to hold an individual criminally liable under the mode of liability of superior responsibility, that is as a superior for crimes under international law committed by their subordinates, it must be proved that: (1) a superior-subordinate relationship existed; (2) the superior knew or had reason to know that the criminal act was about to be or had been committed; and (3) the superior failed to take the necessary and reasonable measures to prevent the criminal act or punish the perpetrator thereof, or to submit the matter the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.[2472] These requirements apply to both military and civilian superiors.[2473] The mode of liability of superior responsibility is also codified in Article 28 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.[2474]

Based on the evidence presented in this report and the reasons outlined below, Amnesty International has found reasonable grounds to believe that these elements are met with respect to the following 62 individuals, who held positions of command at national, provincial or county levels during the period in which the crimes against humanity documented in this report were committed. The officials are listed by their geographic zones of responsibility, beginning with those operating at the national level, followed by those operating at provincial and county levels, corresponding to the provinces and counties addressed in Chapters 6 to 8.

2469. See section 10.4.3(I).
2470. See section 10.4.3.
2471. See sections 10.4.4(III) and 10.4.4(IV).
2472. International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others,* Case IT-96-21-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 16 November 1998, para. 346.
2473. International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), *Prosecutor v. Bagilishema*, Case ICTR-95-1A-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 3 July 2002, para. 50.
2474. It should be noted that a difference exists between the standard of constructive knowledge in Article 28 of the Rome Statute and customary international law. The Rome Statute sets a lower standard with respect to the mental element required of military commanders ("should have known" instead of "had reason to know") and a slightly higher standard with regard to civilian superiors ("consciously disregarded information which clearly indicated"). One commentator explained the difference this way: "For non-military superiors, that divergence is slight, and requires awareness of greater certainty on the part of the superior than the customary standard. For military superiors, the divergence runs in the other direction and embraces negligent failures." See Miles Jackson, "Command responsibility", in Jérôme de Hemptinne and others (editors), *Modes of Liability in International Criminal Law*, 2019, p. 425.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

1.	Ali Khamenei, commander-in-chief of all armed forces (Supreme Leader)

GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES

2.	Mohammad Bagheri, head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces

IRGC COMMANDERS

NATIONAL LEVEL

3.	Hossein Salami, general commander
4.	Mohammad Pakpour, commander of the Ground Resistance Force

REGIONAL LEVEL

5.	Mohammad Taghi Osanlou, commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces
6.	Majid Arjmandfar, deputy commander of the regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces
7.	Mohammad Nazar Azimi, commander of the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces
8.	Kourosh Asiabani, deputy commander of the regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces

KURDISTAN PROVINCE

9.	Sadegh Hosseini, commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
10.	Alireza Madanifar (Madani), deputy commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
11.	Jamshid Rezayee, commander of the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan
12.	Morteza Miraghayee, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj county
13.	Yousef Maroufi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez county
14.	Ali Ahmad Safizadeh, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh county
15.	Abbas Amri, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county
16.	Sadegh Jamali, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan county
17.	Hossein Maleki, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kamyaran county
18.	Mansour Valy Yee, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county (until 29 October 2022)
19.	Gheisar Omidi, Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county (after 29 October 2022)

WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

20.	Habib Shahsavari, commander of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
21.	Taleb Rahimi, deputy commander of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
22.	Yadollah Abroushan, commander of the 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan
23.	Samad Mohammad Alizadeh, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Boukan county
24.	Akbar Norouzi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mahabad county
25.	Jalil Naghshi Ghareghbagh, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Piranshahr county
26.	Yaghoub Rashidi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Oshnavieh county
27.	Ghahreman Eyvazlou, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh county
KERMANSHAH PROVINCE	
28.	Bahman Reyhani, commander of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
29.	Masoud Ghanbari, deputy commander of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
30.	Mojtaba Karami, commander of the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah
31.	Abouzar Anvari, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah county
32.	Bahram Mirzaee, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Javanroud county
33.	Arsalan Soltangholi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county[2475]
34.	Ma'ref Olfati, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salas-e Babajani county
35.	Mohsen Darabi, commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county

FARAJA COMMANDERS

NATIONAL LEVEL	
36.	Hossein Ashtari, general commander
37.	Hassan Karami, national commander of the Special Cohorts
38.	Mehdi Masoum Beigi, head of the Prevention Police (until 14 November 2022)
39.	Reza Baniasadifar, head of the Prevention Police (after 14 November 2022)
KURDISTAN PROVINCE	
40.	Ali Azadi, commander of Kurdistan province

2475. Arsalan Soltangholi was the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county between February 2021 and 18 October 2022 when he was succeeded by Behzad Yousefvand. Amnesty International has focused on Arsalan Soltangholi in its list as the unlawful killings documented by the organization took place in Eslam Abad-e Gharb on 21 September 2022. See section 7.4.

41.	Mohammad Alizamani, commander of the Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province
42.	Alireza Moradi, commander of Sanandaj county
43.	Ali Safari, commander of Saqqez county
44.	Alireza Karaji, commander of Divandareh county
45.	Rasoul Karami Chegini, commander of Baneh county
46.	Yousef Darvishi, commander of Dehgolan county
47.	Behrouz Jalilian, commander of Kamyaran county
48.	Kambiz Rostamnia, commander of Mariwan county
WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE	
49.	Rahim Jahanbakhsh, commander of West Azerbaijan province
50.	Reza Faraji, commander of the Special Cohorts of West Azerbaijan province
51.	Salman Heidary, commander of Boukan county
52.	Mohammad Tohidi, commander of Mahabad county
53.	Hessam Salahi, commander of Piranshahr county
54.	Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh, commander of Oshnavieh county
55.	Hassan Sheikhnejad, commander of Urumieh county
KERMANSHAH PROVINCE	
56.	Ali Akbar Javidan, commander of Kermanshah province
57.	Mohsen Panahi, commander of the Special Cohorts of Kermanshah province
58.	Alireza Daliri, commander of Kermanshah county
59.	Behrouz Fakhri, commander of Javanroud county
60.	Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour), commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county
61.	Shahram Kasani, commander of Salas-e Babajani county
62.	Mohammad Mohammadi, commander of Ghasr-e Shirin county

13.2.1 SUPERIOR-SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIP

INTERNATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

International law requires proof of effective control by a superior over a subordinate in cases involving either a formal (de jure) or informal (de facto) hierarchical relationship between them.

When a superior is found to have formal authority over their subordinates, a court may presume, at least prima facie, the exercise of effective control over their subordinates, unless proof to the contrary is produced. However, formal authority is not synonymous with effective control. The prosecution must still prove beyond reasonable doubt that a superior exercised effective control over their subordinates, unless an accused does not challenge the exercise of such a level of control.[2476]

Assessing whether a superior exercised effective control over a subordinate is more a question of fact and evidence than of law,[2477] and it requires consideration of factors showing that "the accused had the power to prevent, punish, or initiate measures leading to proceedings against the alleged perpetrators where appropriate."[2478] Relevant factors include, but are not limited to, the superior's ability to issue orders and ensure compliance with orders, including consideration of whether the orders were actually followed; their power over subordinates, including promotions, removals and terminations; their control over finances; and their access to and control over means such as communication equipment and weapons. Additionally, a superior's role in representing the ideology to which their forces adhere, and in maintaining influence through public appearances and statements, can further indicate the exercise of effective control.[2479]

In Chapter 10, Amnesty International analysed in detail the strictly hierarchical nature of the FARAJA and IRGC forces, which are characterized by a formal command and control structure in place for their units at all levels. Based on this context, the organization has found that holding an official position of command at any level within these forces (1) signifies that a commander has formal authority over their subordinates, as well as being themselves formally subordinated to higher-ranking commanders, and (2) is prima facie evidence of exercise of effective control by a commander over their subordinates, meaning they have "the material ability to prevent or repress the commission of the crimes or to submit the matter to the competent authorities".[2480]

The 62 commanders listed above held formal authority, within their respective national, provincial or county areas of responsibility, over the FARAJA and/or IRGC forces that perpetrated the crimes against humanity documented in this report. Based on the information and evidence presented in Chapter 10 and throughout this report, Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that these commanders' formal authority entailed effective control over the subordinate forces which perpetrated crimes against humanity on the ground, giving them the material ability to prevent or repress the commission of such crimes or to submit the matter to the competent judicial or other authorities.[2481]

The information and evidence presented in Chapter 10 demonstrates a range of powers collectively indicative of the effective control exercised by these commanders:

2476. See ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Orić,* Case IT-03-68-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 3 July 2008, para. 91; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Hadžihasanović and Kubura,* Case IT-01-47-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 22 April 2008, paras 20-21.
2477. See ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blaškić*, Case IT-95-14-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 29 July 2004, para. 69; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Strugar*, Case IT-01-42-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 17 July 2008, para. 254.
2478. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Karadžić*, Case IT-95-5/18-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 24 March 2016, para. 580; International Criminal Court (ICC), *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Case ICC-01/05-01/08, Trial Chamber III judgment, 21 March 2016, para. 188.
2479. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 188.
2480. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 183.
2481. International criminal jurisprudence does not require that a commander have sole or exclusive authority and control over the subordinate forces who committed a crime. Further, the effective control of one commander does not necessarily exclude the exercise of effective control by another commander, and multiple superiors can be held concurrently responsible for actions of their subordinates. See ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 185.

- They have the power to issue orders, as set out in the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces.[2482] These orders can include directing forces under their command to carry out operations to supress protests, based on their repressive mandates[2483] and in accordance with directives from the commander-in-chief of all the armed forces[2484] and the General Staff of the Armed Forces,[2485] as well as the resolutions of the Supreme Council, the State Security Council and provision councils.[2486]
- They have the power to ensure compliance with orders, as set out in the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces.[2487] They can do this through numerous channels at national and sub-national levels that transmit orders and require consistent surveillance, reporting, coordination, assessment of implementation and suppression of deviations. These channels include the communication, coordination and enforcement infrastructures organized through command staffs,[2488] strategic, operational and training headquarters,[2489] command and control centres (known by its Persian acronym, MARFOUKs),[2490] the State Security Council and its subsidiary provision councils;[2491] the Intelligence Protection Organizations of FARAJA and the IRGC;[2492] and various coordination and operations deputies, offices and other entities within the Ministry of Interior,[2493] FARAJA[2494] and the IRGC.[2495]
- They exercise control over the logistical resources necessary to implement orders, as set out in the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces.[2496] This control covers the allocation and use of equipment, weapons or ammunition,[2497] and the standardization of forces through consistent

2482. See section 10.2.2(I), which outlines the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces.
2483. See sections 10.2.2 and 10.3.2.
2484. See section 10.1.1 and 10.2.2(I).
2485. See section 10.1.1.
2486. See section 10.2.2(I), which outlines the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, as well as section 10.4.
2487. See section 10.2.2(I), which outlines the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces.
2488. See section 10.2.1(I), which cites the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces regarding command staffs and outlines the command staffs of FARAJA. See also section 10.3.1 which outlines the command structures of the IRGC.
2489. See the references to the headquarters of provincial corps and regional headquarters of the IRGC Ground Resistance Force in section 10.3.1, the Central Imam Ali Headquarters in section 10.3.1(I)(ii), the Operational Headquarters related to operational divisions and brigades, Security Cohorts and the IRGC's Basij battalions in sections 10.3.1(III) and 10.3.1(IV), and the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters in section 10.3.1(III)(i).
2490. See the references to MARFOUK in sections 10.1.4, 10.2.1(I), 10.2.2 and 10.2.5(I).
2491. See section 10.2.2(I), which outlines the relevant provisions of the Law on the Punishment of Crimes by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Law on Crimes by Armed Forces), as well as section 10.4.
2492. See the references to the Intelligence Protection Organizations of FARAJA and the IRGC and their responsibilities, including with respect to the execution of orders, in sections 10.2.1(I), 10.2.2 and 10.3.1.
2493. See the references to the deputy minister of interior for police and security and the subsidiary Office for Security Affairs and the Office for Police Affairs in sections 10.2.1(II)(i) and 10.2.2(II))(i).
2494. See the references to the operations deputy and coordination deputy in sections 10.2.1(I) and 10.2.2(I).
2495. See the references to the Basij Resistance Sector Corps and the Basij Resistance Domains and Bases in sections 10.3.1(I), 10.3.2(I) and 10.3.1(III) and 10.3.2(III).
2496. See section 10.2.1(I), which cites the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, including Article 64 which states that commanders "must constantly be aware of the current status of their unit, organization or relevant section, and have knowledge of the personnel count, weapons, ammunition, transportation equipment and other government property under their responsibility."
2497. See sections 10.2.1(II), 10.2.1(II)(i) for relevant information related to FARAJA commanders and Ministry of Interior officials, including those working at the Office for Police Affairs which handles logistical and operational support. See also sections 10.2.1(I)(ii) and 10.2.2(I)(ii) for relevant comments from the national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA on the allocation and use of equipment and weapons; section 10.2.5(I) for a relevant leaked order from a provincial FARAJA commander illustrating control over the use of weapons and ammunition; and section 10.3.1(III) on authorizations for the commanders of Basij Resistance Bases and Domains to carry weapons. See also sections 10.2.2 and 10.4.2(II), which cites the relevant provisions of the Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Law).Article 4(7) of the Police Force Law states that the responsibilities of the State Security Council include "establishing the framework for the issuance of permits for the carrying and storage of authorized weapons, ammunition and explosive materials".

mobilization and development structures and tactical and ideological training programmes.[2498]

- They exercise control over financial resources,[2499] including through their membership of decision-making bodies such as the State Security Council,[2500] which allocate the budget required for the expenses of deployed forces.[2501]
- They have the power to deploy forces to locations where operations to repress protests are planned,[2502] and to be involved in strategic decision-making regarding the focus of the operations and the scope of deployment of forces.[2503]
- They hold high public profiles, manifested through public appearances and statements that concern the operations aimed to repress protests.[2504]
- They exercise control over recruitment, evaluation and disciplinary policies and/or practices including the capacity to formulate these policies or apply them through appointments, performance evaluations, promotions, assignments, reassignments or removals of subordinate FARAJA and IRGC agents and commanders, as well as the authority to initiate investigations and disciplinary proceedings.[2505]
- While these factors are indicative only, and a contextual assessment of effective control must be conducted for each commander through fair, independent and impartial criminal investigations, case law establishes that such powers "constitutes *prima facie* a reasonable basis" to assume the existence of effective control.[2506]

Further indicators of effective control can be found in official statements, the content of which followed consistent patterns. In Chapter 10, Amnesty International documented the statements made by the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri; and 24 other senior officials, including five FARAJA commanders, 11 IRGC commanders and eight Ministry of Interior officials.[2507]

These statements consistently emphasized that operations were being orchestrated and carried out in strict compliance with the commands of the Supreme Leader and under his "absolute" and "wise

2498. See section 10.2.2(I), which cites the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces including Article 52 which tasks commanders with "ensuring the training and development of qualified and capable person". See sections 10.3.1(I), 10.3.1(IV), 10.3.2 and 10.3.3, including their subsections, for relevant provisions of the IRGC Recruitment Regulations Law and additional information related to the organization and training of IRGC agents, including members of the IRGC's Basij battalions.
2499. See section 10.1.2 for relevant references related to the General Staff of Armed Forces; sections 10.2.1(II)(i) and 10.2.2(II)(i) for FARAJA commanders and Ministry of Interior officials; and section 10.4.4(I) for the State Security Council.
2500. See section 10.4.1(II).
2501. See section 10.4.4(II) which cites a leaked letter revealing that, on 13 October 2022, the State Security Council passed a resolution instructing the Budget and Planning Organization to allocate 9 trillion rials (22 million US dollars) to the Ministry of Interior to cover "the heavy security costs" of the prolonged nationwide protest repression operations.
2502. See, for example, sections 10.2.5(I) and 10.3.5(I) for three illustrative leaked orders from two FARAJA and IRGC commanders.
2503. See, for example, sections 10.4.4(III) and 10.4.4(IV) for two illustrative resolutions of the State Security Council, which were converted into binding orders by the minister of interior and transmitted through the chain of command for implementation by the deputy minister of interior for police and security.
2504. See sections 10.1.3, 10.2.4, 10.3.4 and 10.4.3.
2505. See section 10.2.2(I), which outlines the relevant provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, including Articles 24 and 55 concerning the duties of commanders in relation to supervision and disciplinary measures. See also section 10.1.1 with respect to the General Staff of the Armed Forces; sections 10.2.1(I) and 10.2.2(I), including their subsections, with respect to FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior; and section 10.3.1, including its (sub)subsections, with respect to the IRGC.
2506. Miles Jackson, "Command responsibility", in Jérôme de Hemptinne and others (editors), *Modes of Liability in International Criminal Law*, 2019. See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Karadžić*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 581; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Case IT-96-21-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 20 February 2001, para. 197; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Orić,* Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), paras 20-21.
2507. See sections 10.1.3, 10.2.4, 10.3.4 and 10.4.3.

leadership".[2508] The commanders made no mention of lower-level operational commanders or agents deviating from orders or instructions. Instead, they depicted a cohesive and well-functioning chain of command, with commanders fully aware of the situation and demonstrating "prudent and decisive management".[2509] Subordinate agents were consistently described as the "soldiers of the Supreme Leader"[2510] and "warriors"[2511] who carried out the crackdown in a disciplined manner lauded as "commendable", "praiseworthy", "vigilant", "selfless", "intelligent" and "honourable".[2512]

This portrayal is significant in light of the international jurisprudence on superior responsibility, which indicates that disregard for or non-compliance with the orders of commanders or a weak or malfunctioning chain of command indicates a lack of effective control, whereas giving an impression in interactions with external bodies or public statements that commanders are "well conversant with the situation" and subordinates are obedient and disciplined is indicative of the exercise of effective control.[2513]

The consistent emphasis by commanders regarding their own compliance with orders and that of their subordinate forces with the Supreme Leader is in line with the provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces. Article 27 of these regulations requires commanders to issue orders that are "clear, explicit, executable and in full compliance with Islamic law and the commands of the commander-in-chief." Article 6 defines "discipline within the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran" as "practical allegiance with the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist… and adherence to the commands of the commander-in-chief of all forces, as well as the laws, regulations and orders issued by commanders, heads and managers throughout the chain of command."

Indicators of effective control are further reinforced by the fact that, in September 2022, many of the commanders listed in this section attended military marches held across the country, where large numbers of members of FARAJA, the IRGC and the Islamic Republic of Iran Army (Army) paraded before them. Such marches are typically held in Iran every year between 22 and 28 September 2022

2508. See, for example, the October 2022 open letter from the head of the General Staff of Armed Forces and the commanders of the IRGC, FARAJA and the Army in section 10.1.3; the October 2022 statements by the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, in section 10.3.4(I)(i); the October 2022 statements by the deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Kourosh Asiabani, in section 10.3.4(II)(ii); the February 2023 statements by the then commander of the Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, Sadegh Hosseini, in section 10.3.4(III); the October and November 2022 statements by the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, Bahman Reyhani, in section 10.3.4(IV); the October 2022 statements by the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, in section 10.2.4(I)(i).
2509. See section 10.2.4(I)(iii), which cites the October 2022 statement by the deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi.
2510. See, for example, the 20 December 2022 statement by the then FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province, Ali Akbar Javidan, in section 10.2.4(III)(i); and the October 2022 statement by the FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province, Rahim Jahanbakhsh, in section 10.2.4(IV)(i).
2511. See, for example, the March 2023 statement by the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, in section 10.2.4(I)(ii); the December 2022 statement by the then FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province, Ali Akbar Javidan in section 10.2.4(III)(i); the October 2022 statement by the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami in section 10.3.4(I)(i).
2512. See, for example, the December 2022, January 2023 and May 2023 statements by the then national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA, Hassan Karami, in section 10.2.4(I)(ii); the October 2022 statement by the FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province, Rahim Jahanbakhsh, in section 10.2.4(IV)(i); the October 2022 statement by the deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests, Kourosh Asiabani, in section 10.3.4(II)(ii); the September 2022 and February 2023 statements by the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, Sadegh Hosseini, in section 10.3.4(III); the September, October and December 2022 statements by the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, in section 10.1.3; the September 2022 and January 2023 statements by the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, in section 10.2.4(I)(i); the October 2022 statement by the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, in section 10.2.4(I)(iii).
2513. See ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 190; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Galić*, Case IT-98-29-T, Trial Chamber I judgment and opinion, 5 December 2003, para. 622.

to mark the Sacred Defence Week, commemorating the Iran-Iraq War.[2514] However, in 2022, their overlap with the eruption of the Woman Life Freedom uprising and the escalation of killings on 21 September 2022[2515] transformed the military marches into a display of power. Authorities and state media used the occasion to project control, express absolute allegiance to the Supreme Leader, intimidate the public, and remind them of the strength of the security forces, united in their commitment to defend the Islamic Republic system.[2516]

In the national march held in the capital Tehran on 22 September 2022, security forces paraded before the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, and his immediate subordinates in the chain of command: the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari; the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami; and the then general commander of the Army, Abdolrahim Mousavi.[2517]



Senior commanders of FARAJA, the IRGC and the Army observing the national march held in Tehran on 22 September 2022. The then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, is seen standing in front of a microphone (centre) with his immediate subordinates in the chain of command: the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari (far left); the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami (third from the left); and the then general commander of the Army, Abdolrahim Mousavi (fourth from the right). © Mohammadreza Alimadadi / Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)[2518]

2514. Borna News, ["Armed forces parade ceremony will be held in Tehran and other provincial capitals on 22 September"], 21 September 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1380036/آیین-رژه-۳۱شهریور-نیروهای-مسلح-در-تهران-و-سایر-مراکز-استان‌ها-برگزار-می‌شود (in Persian).

2515. See section 5.3.

2516. See, for example, Mizan News Agency, ["Armed forces parade ceremony: Major General Bagheri: Enemies' miscalculation will be met with a decisive and devastating response"], 22 September 2022, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4452780/مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-سرلشکر-باقری-خطای-محاسباتی-دشمنان-با-پاسخی-قاطع-و-ویرانگر-مواجه-می‌شود (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ["Armed forces parade ceremony held in Mashhad"], 22 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/06/31/2777680/مراسم-رژه-نیرو-های-مسلح-در-مشهد-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

2517. Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), ["Armed forces parade ceremony started in Tehran"], 22 September 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84895219/مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-تهران-آغاز-شد (in Persian).

2518. IRNA, ["Armed forces parade ceremony started in Tehran"], 22 September 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84895219/مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-تهران-آغاز-شد (in Persian).

On the same day, the provincial equivalents of these marches took place in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province; Kermanshah, Kermanshah province; and Urumieh, West Azerbaijan province.

In Kurdistan province, members of FARAJA, the IRGC and the Army paraded before senior provincial officials including the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi; the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, Sadegh Hosseini; and the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, Esmail Zareie Kousha.[2519]



Senior provincial officials observing the march held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 22 September 2022. The second and third officials from the right are, respectively, the then FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, Ali Azadi and the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, Sadegh Hosseini. © Naser Abasalinia / Mehr News Agency[2520]

2519. Tasnim News Agency, رژه نیروهای مسلح استان کردستان برگزار شد+ تصاویر ["Kurdistan province armed forces parade held + photos"], 22 September 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/06/31/2777673/رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-استان-کردستان-برگزار-شد-تصاویر (in Persian).
2520. Mehr News Agency, مراسم رژه نیروهای مسلح - سنندج ["Armed forces parade ceremony - Sanandaj"], 22 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/5595415/مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-سنندج (in Persian).



Members of the IRGC parading during the march held in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province, on 22 September 2022. Behind them, senior officials stand on the stage observing. The second official from the left is the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, Esmail Zareie Kousha. © Naser Abasalinia / Mehr News Agency[2521]

In Kermanshah province, members of FARAJA, the IRGC and the Army similarly paraded before senior provincial officials, including the then FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province, Ali Akbar Javidan; the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, Bahman Reyhani; and the then provincial governor of Kermanshah, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam.[2522]

2521. Mehr News Agency, مراسم رژه نیروهای مسلح - سنندج ["Armed forces parade ceremony - Sanandaj"], 22 September 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/photo/5595415/مراسم-رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-سنندج (in Persian).
2522. Defa Press, مراسم رژه یگان‌های نمونه نیروهای مسلح در کرمانشاه ["Parade ceremony of exemplary armed forces cohorts in Kermanshah"], 22 September 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/546771/مراسم-رژه-یگان‌های-نمونه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-کرمانشاه (in Persian).



Senior provincial officials observing the march held in Kermanshah, 22 September 2022. The officials include the then FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province, Ali Akbar Javidan; the commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of Kermanshah, Bahman Reyhani; and the then provincial governor of Kermanshah, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam. © Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA)[2523]

In West Azerbaijan province, members of FARAJA, the IRGC and the Army similarly paraded before senior provincial officials, including the FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province, Rahim Jahanbakhsh; the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, Habib Shahsavari; and the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian.[2524]

2523. Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA), رژه نیروهای مسلح در کرمانشاه برگزار شد ["Armed forces parade held in Kermanshah"], 22 September 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401063122597/رژه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-کرمانشاه-برگزار-شد (in Persian).
2524. Defa Press, مراسم رژه یگان‌های نمونه نیروهای مسلح در کرمانشاه ["Parade ceremony of exemplary armed forces cohorts in Kermanshah"], 22 September 2022, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/546771/مراسم-رژه-یگان‌های-نمونه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-کرمانشاه (in Persian).



Senior provincial officials observing the march held in West Azerbaijan province, on 22 September 2022. The officials include the FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province, Rahim Jahanbakhsh; the then commander of the IRGC's Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan, Habib Shahsavari; and the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian. © Defa Press

Further evidence that commanders exercised effective control over their subordinates and were able to issue orders is provided by leaked official documents containing or referring to six orders issued by the following authorities:

- the General Staff of the Armed Forces, which issued an order on 21 September 2022;[2525]
- the then FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province, Morteza Mirzaee, who issued an order on 23 September 2022;[2526]
- the then commander of the IRGC Corps of Greater Tehran, Hassan Hassanzadeh, who issued an order on 9 October 2022 and another on 12 October 2022;[2527]
- the then deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs and then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, who issued, in his capacity as the then head of the State Security Council, an order on 18 September 2022,[2528] and another on 26 September 2022.[2529]

The content of these orders, as documented in Chapter 10, demonstrates the exercise of effective control over a wide range of issues by these commanders. At the highest level, the General Staff of the Armed Forces set the overall tone and strategic direction, calling for a "firm and severe" response to gatherings, dispersal of protesters, arrests and the extraction of forced statements. Similarly, the minister of interior set the strategic direction for security forces including FARAJA and the IRGC,

2525. See section 10.1.4.
2526. See section 10.2.5(I).
2527. See sections 10.3.2(II) and 10.3.5(I).
2528. See section 10.4.4(III).
2529. See section 10.4.4(IV).

designating the prevention of assemblies as their top priority. His order also directed subordinates nationwide to engage in extensive surveillance and specifically identified Kurdistan as a region for intensified action by FARAJA. The orders of the two FARAJA and IRGC commanders extended to operational details, including specifying the number and types of forces to be deployed, identifying precise locations for their positioning, and determining the types of weapons and ammunition to be used.

The level of details in these orders aligns with Article 28 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces, which stipulates that "orders directed to higher ranks should be general in nature, whereas for lower ranks, they must be detailed in proportion to the recipient's position in the hierarchy."[2530] Amnesty International considers that, given the totality of the evidence, these orders provide proof of a functioning chain of command where effective control is exercised throughout.[2531]

The information presented in Chapter 10 concerning the transmission of the 21 September 2022 order from the General Staff of the Armed Forces through the command and control centres of FARAJA down to the county level, where it was logged in local police records and enforced by county FARAJA forces, indicates that orders were implemented across the chain of command, from national to provincial to county levels. The nationwide escalation in the use of lethal force and unlawful killings on the evening of 21 September 2022 further indicates that orders were implemented.[2532]

The information presented in Chapter 10 concerning the process by which State Security Council resolutions were converted into binding orders by the minister of interior and transmitted via cover letters from the deputy minister of interior for police and security to multiple security forces, requesting implementation and reporting, also demonstrates a well-functioning chain of command through which commanders were able to execute orders across institutions.

Amnesty International reviewed a court verdict concerning the unlawful killing of a protester by security forces, which cites reports submitted to the court by the command staff of FARAJA in the county where the protester was fatally shot, as well as by the commander of the IRGC provincial corps for the relevant province.[2533] The court verdict indicates that, according to these reports, the deployment of FARAJA agents from a specific police station to a specific location, both of which are named in the verdict, was pursuant to a written order. The order's number is indicated in the report, but its content and issuing authority are not. This further indicates that operations to repress protests were carried out pursuant to orders.

The verdict adds that the command staff of FARAJA in the county concerned deployed a group of "crowd control" FARAJA agents "equipped with organizational equipment to control rioters." The verdict also specifies that IRGC forces, including its Basij forces, were positioned in the area "with prior

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2530. See section 10.2.2(I).

2531. While Amnesty International has focused on the mode of liability of superior responsibility in this report, these leaked orders may also be relevant to other modes of liability such as ordering or aiding and abetting. For example, it may be argued that, by issuing orders for the prevention or dispersal of protests or for a "firm and severe response" to protesters, commanders either intended for the crimes of murder and torture resulting from unlawful use of force to be carried out pursuant to their orders or were aware of the substantial likelihood that such crimes would be committed in the execution of their orders in the ordinary course of events. International jurisprudence recognizes that when a commander in a position of authority orders an act or omission with the awareness of the substantial likelihood that a crime will be committed in the execution of the order, then they are regarded as having accepted the crime. See International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), *Prosecutor v. Nyiramasuhuko and others*, Case ICTR-98-42-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 14 December 2015, para. 976, fn. 4448; Special Court for Sierra Leone, *Prosecutor v. Ghankay Taylor,* Case SCSL-03-010A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 26 September 2013, fn. 1365*;* ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Martić,* Case IT-95-11-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 8 October 2008, paras 221 and 223; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Milošević,* Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 958; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kordić and Čerkez,* Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 30; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blaškić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), paras 42, 345, 428, 468, 481, 517, 543, 600, 645 and fn. 974.

2532. See section 5.3.

2533. IRN0172, verdict on file with Amnesty International (verdict withheld for security and privacy reasons).

coordination" to assist FARAJA forces. These details further support the assessment that operations to repress protests were orchestrated under centralized control by higher levels of authority.

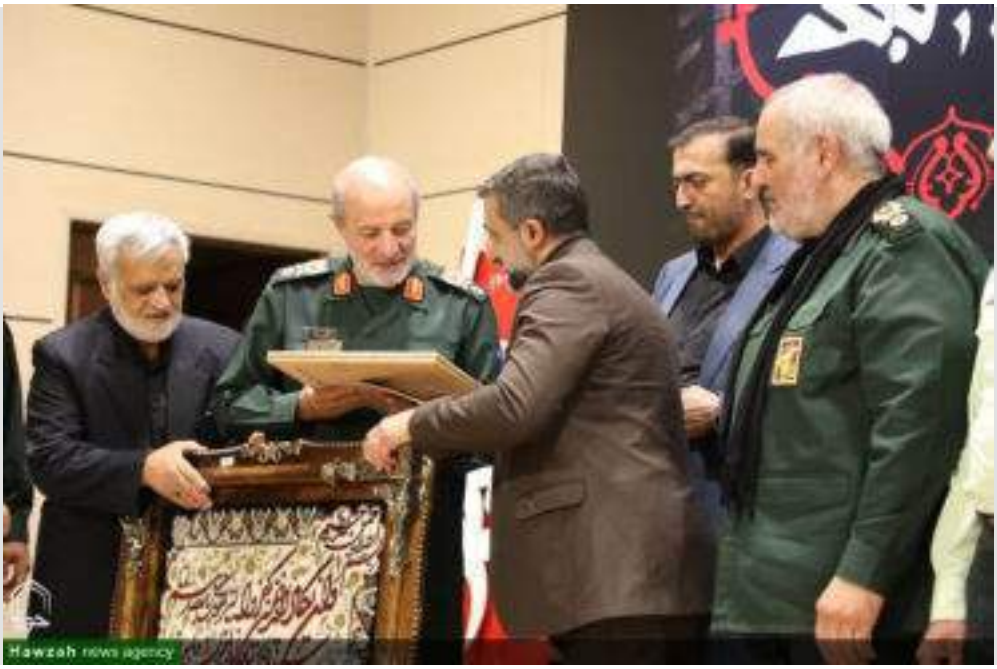
Furthermore, official statements and state media reports reviewed by Amnesty International confirm that, during and in the aftermath of the protest period, commanders exercised effective control over their subordinates through personnel decisions, such as promoting intermediate commanders and making new appointments.

According to information gathered from state media by Amnesty International, none of the 62 commanders named in this section were removed from their positions, indicating that their superiors approved of their conduct during the protest period. Instead, they either continue to hold their posts or remained in them for months or years before being appointed to other positions of power.[2534] The organization found that, upon moving to new positions or, in the case of five officials, retirement, these individuals were routinely "appreciated" in ceremonies held to "honour their efforts".[2535] In some cases, retirement was followed by appointment to advisory roles.[2536]



Ali Azadi, the former FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province, at a ceremony in August 2025 where he was honoured for his conduct upon retirement and a new commander was appointed to succeed him © IRNA[2537]

2534. See section 13.4.
2535. IRNA, تودیع و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی کردستان ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for Kurdistan police commander"], 25 August 2025, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85922050/تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان (in Persian); Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News), انتصاب فرمانده پلیس راهور استان وفرمانده انتظامی شهرستان سنندج ["Appointment of provincial traffic police commander and the police commander of Sanandaj county"], 23 November 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4065785/انتصاب-فرمانده-پلیس-راهور-استان-وفرمانده-انتظامی-شهرستان-سنندج (in Persian).
2536. Hawzah News, سردار شهسواری مشاور فرمانده کل سپاه شد ["General Shahsavari become advisor to general commander of the IRGC"], 26 June 2023, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1094354/سردار-شهسواری-مشاور-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-شد (in Persian).
2537. IRNA, تودیع و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی کردستان ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for Kurdistan police commander"], 25 August 2025, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85922050/تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان (in Persian).



Mohammad Taghi Osanlou, former commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, at a ceremony in July 2023 where he was honoured for his conduct upon retirement © Hawzah News[2538]

Some of the striking examples of IRGC and FARAJA commanders who advanced up the chain of command in the aftermath of the crimes against humanity committed in 2022 include the following:[2539]

IRGC	
Mohammad Pakpour	He was the commander of the Ground Resistance Force at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the general commander of the IRGC, a position he held until 28 February 2026 when he was killed by the US-Israeli strikes.
Mohammad Taghi Osanlou	He was the commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the coordination deputy of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters and then coordination deputy of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force.
Mohammad Nazar Azimi	He was the commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the coordination deputy of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters.
Jamshid Rezayee	He was the commander of the 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan in October 2023.
Mansour Valy Yee	He was the commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the commander of the IRGC's 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.

2538. Hawzah News, تجلیل از مجاهدت‌های خاموش سردار اوصانلو ["Honouring the unsung struggles of General Osanlou"], 20 July 2023, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1099183/تجلیل-از-مجاهدت-های-خاموش-سردار-اوصانلو (in Persian).
2539. For state media reports on the appointments noted in the table, refer to the case boxes of the relevant officials in section 13.4.

Mojtaba Karami	He was the commander of the 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the deputy commander of the IRGC's Imam Hassan Mojtaba Provincial Corps of Alborz.
FARAJA	
Hassan Karami	He was the national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the operations deputy of FARAJA.
Mohammad Alizamani	He was the commander of the Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the commander of the FARAJA Special Cohorts of Greater Tehran, a more strategically significant position given its responsibility for the capital.
Kambiz Rostamnia	He was the commander of Mariwan county, Kurdistan province, at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county, Kurdistan province, a more strategically significant position given its responsibility for the provincial capital.
Mohammad Tohidi	He was the commander of Mahabad county, West Azerbaijan province, at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the FARAJA commander of Urumieh county, West Azerbaijan province, a more strategically significant position given its responsibility for the provincial capital.
Ali Akbar Javidan	He was the commander of Kermanshah province at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the commander of FARAJA's Border Guard.
Alireza Daliri	He was the commander of Kermanshah county at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the FARAJA deputy commander of Sistan and Baluchistan province.
Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour)	He was the commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county at the time of the 2022 protests. He subsequently became the head of the Anti-Narcotics Police of Kermanshah province.

13.2.2 KNOWLEDGE

INTERNATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

For purposes of superior responsibility, knowledge can be actual ("knew") or constructive ("had reason to know").[2540] International jurisprudence has indicated several non-exhaustive factors relevant to determining whether a superior had actual knowledge ("knew") that their subordinates had committed or were about to commit a crime under international law:

2540. As mentioned above, a difference exists between customary international law and the Rome Statute with regard to the standard required to prove an individual's constructive knowledge under the mode of liability of superior responsibility. The Rome Statute sets a lower standard with respect to the mental element required of military commanders ("should have known" instead of "had reason to know") and a slightly higher standard with regard to civilian superiors ("consciously disregarded information which clearly indicated"). One commentator explained the difference this way: "For non-military superiors, that divergence is slight, and requires awareness of greater certainty on the part of the superior than the customary standard. For military superiors, the divergence runs in the other direction and embraces negligent failures." See Miles Jackson, "Command responsibility", in Jérôme de Hemptinne and others (editors), *Modes of Liability in International Criminal Law*, 2019, p. 425.

- the scope and nature of the commander's position and responsibility in the hierarchical structure,[2541] noting that, according to the case law, "an individual's command position per se is at least an important indicium that he knew about the crimes committed by his subordinates";[2542]
- the fact that the commander, a priori, was part of an organized structure with established reporting and monitoring systems;[2543]
- any orders to commit crimes;[2544]
- the fact that the accused was informed personally that his forces were involved in criminal activity;[2545]
- the number, type, scope, location and timing of illegal acts, their widespread occurrence, the speed of operations, and the modus operandi of similar illegal acts;[2546]
- the number and type of forces, the officers and staff involved and the location of the commander at the time;[2547]
- the means of available communication and logistics involved;[2548] and
- the notoriety of illegal acts, such as whether they were reported in media coverage of which the accused was aware.[2549]

With reference to constructive knowledge ("had reason to know"), international jurisprudence has held that what is required to be proved is that the superior had "some general information in his possession, which would put him on notice of possible unlawful acts by his subordinates".[2550] In this respect, "the relevant information only needs to have been provided or available to the superior, or in the Trial Chamber's words, 'in the possession of'. It is not required that he actually acquainted himself with the information."[2551] The information does not need to provide specific details about unlawful acts committed or about to be committed. Nor is it necessary to show a commander had specific details of the subordinate's crimes or mastered every aspect of each crime committed by the subordinate forces.

However, mere knowledge of the overall situation in a certain country/context is not sufficient to prove that an individual had constructive knowledge for purposes of superior responsibility.[2552] The superior must be in possession of "sufficiently alarming information putting [him] on notice of the risk that crimes might subsequently be carried out by his subordinates and justifying further inquiry".[2553] As to the form of the information available to them, it may be written or oral, and does not need to have the form of specific reports submitted pursuant to an established monitoring

2541. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 193.
2542. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Naletilić and Martinović*, Case T-98-34-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 31 March 2003, para. 71.
2543. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Hadžihasanović and Kubara*, Case IT-01-47-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 15 March 2006, para. 94; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Naletilić and Martinović*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 73.
2544. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 193.
2545. ICTY *Prosecutor v. Galić*, Trial Chamber I judgment and opinion (previously cited), paras 700-705; ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment, 21 March 2016, para. 193.
2546. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 193; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Naletilić and Martinović*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 71.
2547. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 193.
2548. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 193.
2549. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 193.
2550. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 238.
2551. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 239.
2552. ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Bagilishema*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 42.
2553. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Strugar*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 304.

system.[2554]

Actual or constructive knowledge can be proved through direct or circumstantial evidence.[2555]

As described previously, the 62 commanders listed in this session all exercised effective control, in their respective national or sub-national zones of responsibility, over security strategies and operations, trainings, logistics, promotions and discipline.[2556] These powers stemmed from their dual roles as commanders of FARAJA and/or IRGC forces and as members of relevant security strategy-making councils at national, provincial or county levels.[2557] Amnesty International considers that the commanders' roles and responsibilities within the hierarchical structure of Iran's security apparatus imply that they were at all times informed of what was happening on the ground and the actions undertaken by their subordinates.

Numerous other interrelated factors further provide reasonable grounds to believe that commanders knew, or had reason to know, that their subordinates had committed or were about to commit crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity. These factors include:

- the existence of well-functioning internal reporting and monitoring systems, as evidenced by leaked official documents, official statements and court documents;
- the widespread public and global exposure of the commission of crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations by Iranian security forces through extensive media coverage, human rights reporting, statements by UN bodies, and domestic and international protests; and
- systematic efforts by the Iranian authorities to deny and distort the facts including extent and circumstances of the killings, suppress reporting, conceal evidence, and avoid international scrutiny and accountability, all of which demonstrate not only knowledge at the highest levels but also an orchestrated effort to conceal these crimes rather than prevent or punish them.

13.2.2(I) INTERNAL REPORTING AND MONITORING SYSTEMS

The structures to which the commanders listed in this chapter belonged had established reporting and monitoring systems, which ensured that information gathered from the ground by intelligence and security officials moved through the chain of command and that orders were transmitted from higher to lower levels.[2558] The 10 leaked official documents analysed in Chapter 10 provide evidence that the reporting and monitoring systems were properly functioning throughout the protest period, informing response planning, the issuance of orders and coordination among various security forces involved in the commission of crimes against humanity.

The leaked documents contain orders or recommendations from various officials, including the General Staff of the Armed Forces,[2559] the secretary general of the Supreme Council, the minister of interior,[2560] the deputy minister of interior for police and security,[2561] the commander of the IRGC

2554. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 238,
2555. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 191.
2556. See Chapter 9.
2557. See sections 10.2.1(II), 10.2.1(II)(ii) and 10.2.1(II)(iii).
2558. See sections 10.1.1, 10.2.1, 10.3.1 and 10.4.1.
2559. See section 10.1.4.
2560. See sections 10.2.5(II) and 10.4.4(I).
2561. See sections 10.4.4(III) and 10.4.4(IV).

Corps of Greater Tehran[2562] and the FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province.[2563] Two of the leaked documents also record detailed observations and reports from other senior security officials taking part in the meetings of the State Security Council and its subcommittee.[2564] When analysed as a whole, these leaked documents show that officials across the security apparatus, spanning various entities and levels, were closely monitoring and communicating the situation on the ground and the status of operations, demonstrating a high level of awareness, oversight and control over the events as they unfolded.

Official statements from the national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at the time of the 2022 protests, Hassan Karami, also reveal a systematic approach to monitoring, with audio devices and cameras attached to agents' motorcycles, helmets or uniforms used to document operations.[2565] Similarly, announcements from the general commander of FARAJA regarding the use of an advanced video surveillance system to "monitor all missions involving the specialized police forces… across the country" demonstrate the high level of oversight and control exerted by commanders.[2566]

Court verdicts and prosecution orders reviewed by Amnesty International also indicate that the IRGC and FARAJA commanders were aware of the types of weapons used and the quantities of bullets and other ammunition discharged during protest repression operations.[2567]

One court verdict references the reports submitted to the court by the Assistance Cohort of the county where the protester was fatally shot, as well as by the commander of the IRGC provincial corps of the corresponding province.[2568] The verdict outlines the detailed information provided in these reports about the exact timing of operations, the positioning and types of deployed security forces, and CCTV footage capturing the incident. The verdict also lists, as per the information submitted in the reports, the types and quantities of ammunition used by FARAJA and the IRGC, including its Basij battalions, during the operations. In the case of FARAJA, the verdict refers to the use of: "100 Kalashnikov cartridges and six blank Kalashnikov cartridges, 200 MP5 or handgun cartridges and eight blank MP5 or handgun cartridges, six tear gas canisters, 24 smoke grenades, three blank rounds, and 40 plastic pellets." In the case of the IRGC, including its Basij forces, the verdict refers to the use of "280 cartridges loaded with 12mm plastic pellets, 81 38mm tear gas grenades, 14 38mm sound grenades, 3 38mm cartridges for launchers and Winchester rifles, and eight 9mm cartridges."

Another verdict cites a report from the Intelligence Protection Organization of the FARAJA, which in turn notes information received from the Special Cohorts of the province where the victim concerned was unlawfully killed.[2569] According to this information, "the Special Cohorts used 41 cartridges loaded with lead pellets of shot size numbers 9-12."[2570]

The level of detail recorded in these official reports and cited in the verdicts provides further evidence of the awareness and oversight exercised by IRGC and FARAJA commanders during the crackdown.

2562. See sections 10.3.5(I).
2563. See section 10.2.5(I).
2564. See sections 10.4.4(III) and 10.4.4(IV).
2565. See section 10.2.3(II).
2566. See section 10.2.2.
2567. See, for example, section 11.3.3.
2568. IRN0172, verdict on file with Amnesty International (verdict withheld for security and privacy reasons). For security reasons, Amnesty International has withheld the name of the county and other identifying details.
2569. IRN0173, verdict on file with Amnesty International. The verdict does not name the authority who provided the information.
2570. Shot sizes differ in the diameter of the individual pellets. As the shot number increases, the pellet diameter decreases. Because smaller pellets take up less space, a shotgun round of a smaller size will contain a greater number of small pellets. UK standard shot sizes 9 and 12 contain pellets with diameters of about 2mm and 1.6 mm, respectively.

13.2.2(II) HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING AND MEDIA COVERAGE

Amnesty International considers that the commanders listed in this section were aware or had information in their possession putting them on notice that crimes against humanity were being committed by their subordinate forces through media coverage, human rights reporting and public protests by victims' families, protesters, activists, public figures and others in Iran and abroad.

Between September and December 2022, a considerable number of statements were issued by UN officials and bodies, including the Secretary-General, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and other special procedures, raising grave concerns about the lethal repression of the protests and urging the authorities to cease the use of unnecessary or disproportionate force against protesters.[2571]

2571. See, for example, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "Iran: UN experts denounce crackdown on public commemoration of Jina Mahsa Amini's death", 19 September 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/iran-un-experts-denounce-crackdown-public-commemoration-jina-mahsa-aminis; UN News, "Iran: 40 people killed in protests over past week – OHCHR", 22 November 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130927; UN News, "News in Brief 22 November 2022", 22 November 2022, https://news.un.org/en/audio/2022/11/1130922; UN News, "Iran: Thousands held for peacefully protesting must be released", 15 November 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130627; UN News, "Time for 'concrete action' by international community to hold Iran's security forces to account", 27 October 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/10/1129937; UN News, "Killings and detentions of children in Iran must end, UN child rights committee urges", 17 October 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/10/1129612; France 24, "UN chief calls on Iran to refrain from using 'disproportionate force' against protesters", 28 September 2022, https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20220928-un-calls-on-iran-to-halt-disproportionate-force-as-protests-continue; UN News, "Iran: UN condemns violent crackdown against hijab protests", 27 September 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1128111; UN Secretary-General, "Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on protests in Iran", 27 September 2022, https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2022-09-27/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-protests-iran; UN News "UN experts strongly condemn death of Mahsa Amini, 'victim of Iran's sustained repression'", 22 September 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127471; UN News, "Alarm over Iranian woman's death after 'improper' hijab arrest", 20 September 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127131; UN News, "Alarm over Iranian woman's death after 'improper' hijab arrest", 20 September 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127131

Amnesty International issued numerous reports documenting and denouncing the crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed by the Iranian security forces,[2572] as did other NGOs.[2573] Persian-language and global media outlets also published a large number of reports about the unlawful killings and other serious human rights violations committed by the Iranian security forces in the context of their crackdown on the protests.

The security forces' consistent use of lethal force, as reported by human rights groups and media outlets and evident in videos emerging from the country, triggered widespread public outrage both within Iran and around the world.

2572. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities covering up their crimes of child killings by coercing families into silence", 9 December 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/iran-authorities-covering-up-their-crimes-of-child-killings-by-coercing-families-into-silence; Amnesty International, "Iran: Swift action by UN Human Rights Council essential after latest horrifying protester killings", 22 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-swift-action-by-un-human-rights-council-essential-after-latest-horrifying-protester-killings; Amnesty International, "Iran: Urgent international action needed to stop mass killings of Baluchi protesters" (Index: MDE 13/6193/2022), 10 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6193/2022/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: More than 760,000 people around the world calling for UN investigative mechanism on Iran", 3 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-more-than-760000-people-around-the-world-calling-for-un-investigative-mechanism-on-iran; Amnesty International, "Iran: UN must act urgently after authorities unlawfully kill eight protesters in less than 24 hours", 27 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-un-must-act-urgently-after-authorities-unlawfully-kill-eight-protesters-in-less-than-24-hours; Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 23 children killed with impunity during brutal crackdown on youthful protests", 13 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-23-children-killed-with-impunity-during-brutal-crackdown-on-youthful-protests; Amnesty International, "Iran: At least 82 Baluchi protesters and bystanders killed in bloody crackdown", 6 October 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/iran-at-least-82-baluchi-protesters-and-bystanders-killed-in-bloody-crackdown; Amnesty International, "Iran: Leaked documents reveal top-level orders to armed forces to 'mercilessly confront' protesters", 30 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/iran-leaked-documents-reveal-top-level-orders-to-armed-forces-to-mercilessly-confront-protesters; Amnesty International, "Iran: "Protester killings must be urgently investigated by international accountability mechanism" says Amnesty chief", 28 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/iran-protester-killings-must-be-urgently-investigated-by-international-accountability-mechanism-says-amnesty-chief; Amnesty International, "Iran: World must take meaningful action against bloody crackdown as death toll rises", 23 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/iran-world-must-take-meaningful-action-against-bloody-crackdown-as-death-toll-rises; Amnesty International, "Iran: Deadly crackdown on protests against Mahsa Amini's death in custody needs urgent global action", 21 September 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/iran-deadly-crackdown-on-protests-against-mahsa-aminis-death-in-custody-needs-urgent-global-action

2573. See, for example, Human Rights Watch "Iran: 'Bloody Friday' crackdown this year's deadliest", 22 December 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/12/22/iran-bloody-friday-crackdown-years-deadliest; Human Rights Watch, "Iran: Brutal repression in Kurdistan capital", 21 December 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/12/21/iran-brutal-repression-kurdistan-capital; Iran Human Rights, "Iran protests: At least 458 people killed/11 officially sentenced to death", 7 December 2022, https://iranhr.net/en/articles/5623; Human Rights Watch, "Iran: UN rights council should create fact-finding mission", 23 November 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/11/23/iran-un-rights-council-should-create-fact-finding-mission; Center for Human Rights in Iran, "Iran protests: Massacre in Kurdish areas feared as security forces launch lethal crackdown", 21 November 2022, https://iranhumanrights.org/2022/11/iran-protests-massacre-in-kurdish-areas-feared-as-security-forces-launch-lethal-crackdown; Center for Human Rights in Iran, "Briefing: Addressing state atrocities against protesters in Iran", 21 October 2022, https://iranhumanrights.org/2022/10/briefing-addressing-state-atrocities-against-protesters-in-iran; Iran Human Rights, "UN Human Rights Council must hold a special session on Iran", 17 October 2017, https://www.iranhr.net/en/statement/59; Iran Human Rights, "Iran protests: Death toll rises to at least 201/Children victims of the crackdown", 12 October 2022, https://iranhr.net/en/articles/5517; International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), "Iran: International investigation urged as protest death toll nears 200", 8 October 2022, https://www.fidh.org/en/region/asia/iran/iran-international-investigation-urged-as-protest-death-toll-nears; Human Rights Watch, "Iran: Security forces fire on, kill protesters", 5 October 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/10/05/iran-security-forces-fire-kill-protesters; Iran Human Rights, "Iran protests: Death toll rises to 133 / 40+ killed in Zahedan's 'Bloody Friday'", 2 October 2022, https://iranhr.net/en/articles/5506; Article 19, "Iran: Justice for Mahsa Jhina Amini", 20 September 2022, https://www.article19.org/resources/iran-justice-for-mahsa-jhina-amini

Inside Iran, shopkeepers, merchants and factory workers across the country waged hundreds of strikes in protest at the lethal crackdown,[2574] while many celebrities, including artists and athletes, expressed outrage and solidarity.[2575] Around the world, large rallies took place, attracting extensive media attention.[2576] Additionally, hundreds of thousands of people across 193 added their voices to Amnesty International's petitions, calling for the establishment of a UN independent mechanism to investigate the crimes under international law committed by the Iranian authorities during the protest crackdown.[2577]

Governments around the world also reacted to the violent protest crackdown, issuing statements and imposing sanctions.[2578] Furthermore, on 24 November 2022, member states of the UN Human Rights Council convened a special session and passed a resolution to establish the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran) to investigate serious human rights violations related to the Woman Life Freedom uprising.[2579]

Official statements, including those highlighted and analysed in this report, provide evidence that media coverage, human rights reports and global pressure about the unlawful conduct of the security forces were registering with the Iranian authorities, compelling them to respond. In their statements, officials, including many of those featured in Chapter 10, repeatedly rejected reports of unlawful killings carried out by their forces, attributing them to "non-state actors" without any evidence.[2580] Simultaneously, they continued to warn of a harsh response, promising ultimate victory over the protests, which they described as "hybrid warfare", and offering moral support to their forces to continue their actions.[2581] As documented throughout this report, official responses to reports of unlawful killings by the Iranian security forces came not only at the national level but also from provincial and county authorities responding to specific notorious incidents.[2582]

2574. Media articles reporting on such strikes have been compiled and made accessible through the following database: https://enqelab.info

2575. See, for example, Artistic Freedom Initiative & Voices Unbound, *I Create; I Resist: Iranian Artists on the Frontline of Social Change,* September 2024, https://artisticfreedominitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/I-Create-I-Resist-Artistic-Freedom-Initiative-Report.pdf; BBC, "Iran protests: Secret committee 'punished celebrities over dissent'", 25 April 2023, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-65373847; CNN, "Iranian football federation says players who protested during international tournament will be 'dealt with'", 7 November 2022, https://edition.cnn.com/2022/11/07/football/iran-football-federation-protests-spt-intl/index.html; France 24, "Call to protect Iran climber after reported house arrest", 24 October 2022, https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20221021-call-to-protect-iran-climber-after-reported-house-arrest

2576. See, for example, NPR, "Iran protests spark solidarity rallies in the U.S. and Europe", 23 October 2022, https://www.npr.org/2022/10/23/1130775833/iran-protests-rallies-us-europe; ABC News, "Tens of thousands march in Berlin in solidarity with Iran protests", 23 October 2022, https://abcnews.go.com/International/tens-thousands-march-berlin-solidarity-iran-protests/story?id=91926288; Guardian, "Protest strikes in Iran reported as solidarity rallies held around world", 22 October 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/22/protest-strikes-in-iran-reported-as-solidarity-rallies-held-around-world

2577. See Amnesty International, "Iran: More than 760,000 people around the world calling for UN investigative mechanism on Iran", 3 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-more-than-760000-people-around-the-world-calling-for-un-investigative-mechanism-on-iran

2578. See, for example, UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, "UK and international partners announce further sanctions against Iranian officials", 14 November 2022, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-international-partners-announce-further-sanctions-against-iranian-officials; France 24, "EU sanctions Iranian security forces over Mahsa Amini death, protest crackdown", 17 October 2022, https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20221017-iran-prison-fire-death-toll-rises-as-protests-over-death-of-mahsa-amini-continue; Reuters, "Canada imposes new Iran sanctions over human rights", 13 October 2022, https://www.reuters.com/world/canada-imposes-new-iran-sanctions-over-human-rights-2022-10-13; DW, "Iran on 'wrong side of history,' Baerbock says", 10 October 2022, https://www.dw.com/en/iran-protests-germanys-top-diplomat-says-regime-on-wrong-side-of-history/a-63384041; Global News, "Canada bans more than 10K Iran Revolutionary Guard members from entering country", 7 October 2022, https://globalnews.ca/news/9184757/iran-islamic-revolutionary-guard-corps-terrorism-list-mahsa-amini-protests; US News, "How countries are responding to Iran's crackdown on dissent", 7 October 2022, https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2022-10-07/how-countries-are-responding-to-irans-repression

2579. See Amnesty International, "Iran: Landmark UN fact-finding mission marks long-awaited turning point in tackling systematic impunity", 24 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/11/iran-landmark-un-fact-finding-mission-marks-long-awaited-turning-point-in-tackling-systematic-impunity

2580. See sections 10.2.4(I)(i), 10.2.4(IV)(iii), 10.3.4(II)(i), 10.3.4(V) and 10.4.3(II).

2581. See, for example, sections 10.1.3, 10.2.4(IV)(i), 10.2.4(IV)(ii), 10.3.4(III), 10.3.4(IV) and 10.4.3(II).

2582. See, for example, sections 10.2.4(II), 10.2.4(III), 10.2.4(IV), 10.3.4(II), 10.3.4(III), 10.3.4(IV) and 10.3.4(V).

13.2.2(III) SYSTEMATIC SUPPRESSION OF INFORMATION AND CONCEALMENT OF EVIDENCE

In addition to dismissing and denying reports of crimes committed by the security forces, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the Iranian authorities mobilized their security forces, as well as diplomatic channels, to suppress reporting, obstruct truth-seeking, silence expressions of solidarity and outrage, conceal evidence, evade international scrutiny and block the establishment of a UN fact-finding mission. This further demonstrates that Iranian officials, including those at the highest levels of the chain of command, were aware of the crimes occurring on the ground but actively worked to prevent and suppress public knowledge and recognition of them.

As documented throughout this report, the suppression of information and concealment of evidence involved a range of tactics, including silencing victims' families and survivors, coercing them into reiterating the state's narrative,[2583] denying or restricting access to information,[2584] seizing CCTV footage from scenes where protesters were killed by security forces,[2585] and arresting journalists and activists.[2586]

It also involved restrictions on funerals and memorial ceremonies,[2587] along with the further use of lethal force against protesters who took to the streets to mourn the deaths of protesters and bystanders and denounce the crimes committed by the security forces.[2588] As documented in this report, FARAJA and the IRGC consistently engaged in these practices throughout the country during and after the protest period, which indicates the systematic nature of the repression and the coordinated implementation of unlawful tactics across various regions under a centralized command authority.[2589]

The authorities' efforts to suppress reporting extended beyond Iran's borders. On 25 September 2022, state media announced that Iran's foreign ministry had summoned the UK ambassador in Iran the previous day to protest against what it described as "a hostile atmosphere created by London-based Persian-language media outlets".[2590] This was in reference to Iran International and the Persian service of the BBC (BBC Persian), whose satellite broadcasts exposing serious human rights violations by security forces during the protests were being watched by millions inside Iran.

On 8 November 2022, Iran's then minister of intelligence, Esmail Khatib, described Iran International as a "terrorist organization" and threatened that its staff in the UK would be pursued by Iranian intelligence bodies.[2591] In November 2022, UK police warned two journalists from Iran International of potential threats to their lives.[2592] In response to growing threats against the media outlet, the police also deployed armed officers near the channel's studios in Chiswick, west London, and installed concrete barriers outside the building for added security.[2593]

2583. See section 9.1.
2584. See, for example, sections 9.3.2, 9.3.5 and 9.4.2.
2585. See section 9.3.5.
2586. See section 5.4.
2587. See section 9.2.2.
2588. See section 9.2.4.
2589. See Chapter 10.
2590. Mashregh News, احضار سفیر انگلیس در تهران به وزارت خارجه ["Summoning the British ambassador in Tehran to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs"], 25 September 2022, https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1420884/احضار-سفیر-انگلیس-در-تهران-به-وزارت-خارجه (in Persian).
2591. Fars News Agency, انگلیس هزینه اقداماتش برای ناامنسازی ایران را خواهد داد/ شبکه اینترنشنال به عنوان سازمان تروریستی شناخته شده است ["UK will pay the price for its actions to destabilize Iran: International network recognized as a terrorist organization"], 8 November 2022, https://farsnews.ir/politics/1667935335000985349/انگلیس-هزینه-اقداماتش-برای-ناامنسازی-ایران-را-خواهد-داد-شبکه-اینترنشنال-به-عنوان-سازمان-تروریستی-شناخته-شده (in Persian).
2592. BBC, "Iran International: Channel leaves UK after regime threats", 18 February 2023, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-64690387; BBC "Iran International: TV channel says Iran threatened UK-based journalists", 8 November 2022, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-63554305
2593. BBC, "Iran International: Channel leaves UK after regime threats", 18 February 2023, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-64690387

Leaked documents from 18 and 26 September 2022, analysed in Chapter 10, further reveal that, from the early days of the protests, high-ranking officials within Iran's security apparatus were systematically monitoring and planning repressive responses to individuals and groups attempting to raise awareness about the crimes perpetrated by the security forces. In official discussions recorded in the leaked documents, such individuals and groups are described as "hostile celebrities", "embassies", "international offices and associations" and "NGOs", as well as "athletes, artists, actors, singers, bloggers, political figures, families of the deceased, and foreign media."[2594]

A leaked official letter from the secretary general of Iran's Supreme Council to the Iranian president, dated 8 November 2022, further highlights that awareness of international concerns regarding the crimes committed by the security forces extended to the highest levels of the chain of command.[2595] The letter outlines strategies to control the narrative about the violations committed by the security forces, evade external scrutiny, and block the formation of a UN fact-finding mission. The strategies outlined in the letter included selectively inviting certain specific special rapporteurs while controlling the itinerary of their visits, leveraging diplomatic influence with aligned countries to reduce support for the establishment of a fact-finding mission, and establishing a domestic investigation committee to create a facade of accountability for the international community while minimizing public attention to the committee.[2596]

13.2.3 FAILURE TO PREVENT OR PUNISH

INTERNATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

Establishing superior responsibility requires showing that a superior failed in their duty to take all necessary and reasonable measures to prevent the commission of crimes by their subordinates or, if such crimes have been committed, to punish the perpetrators thereof, including by submitting the matter to competent authorities.[2597]

According to international jurisprudence, "'necessary' measures are those appropriate for the commander to discharge his obligation, and 'reasonable' measures are those reasonably falling within the commander's material power".[2598]

Establishing what constitutes "necessary and reasonable measures" is not a matter of law but of evidence.[2599] Accordingly, a "superior may be held liable for failing to take measures, even in the absence of explicit legal capacity to do so, if it is proven that it was within his material ability to take such measures."[2600] This assessment is context-specific and can only be made based on the concrete circumstances.[2601]

2594. See section 10.4.4(III).
2595. See section 10.4.4(I).
2596. See section 11.4.
2597. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 394. See also ICTY *Prosecutor v. Galić*, Trial Chamber I judgment and opinion (previously cited), para. 176
2598. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 198.
2599. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Bo škoski and Tarčulovski,* Case IT-04-82-T, Trial Chamber II judgment, 10 July 2008, para. 415.
2600. See, for example, ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Mrkšić and others*, Case IT-95-13/1-T, Trial Chamber II judgment, 27 September 2007, para. 565; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kordić and Čerkez,* Case IT-95-14/2-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 26 February 2001, para. 443; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 395. See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blagojević and Jokić,* Case IT-02-60-T, Trial Chamber I, Section A judgment, 17 January 2005, para. 793; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Brđanin*, Case IT-99-36-T, 1 September 2004, Trial Chamber II judgment, para. 279; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Stakić*, Case IT-97-24-T, Trial Chamber II judgment, 31 July 2003, para. 461; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Bo škoski and Tarčulovski,* Trial Chamber II judgment (previously cited), para. 415; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delalić and others*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 394.
2601. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 198.

According to the case law, the duty to prevent arises "before the commission of the crimes, and it includes crimes in progress and crimes which involve on-going elements".[2602] Non-exhaustive factors related to establishing the failure to prevent include the following:

- ensuring that the forces are adequately trained in international law;
- securing reports that actions by their subordinates were carried out in accordance with international law;
- issuing orders aimed at bringing the relevant practices into accord with international law;
- issuing disciplinary measures to prevent the commission of atrocities by the forces under the commander's command;
- issuing orders specifically meant to prevent the crimes, as opposed to merely issuing routine orders;
- protesting or criticizing criminal conduct;
- postponing operations;
- suspending, excluding or redeploying violent subordinates; and
- conducting operations in such a way as to lower the risk of specific crimes or to remove opportunities for their commission.[2603]

The duty to punish or to submit the matter to competent authorities requires commanders to ensure that offenders are brought to justice to avoid impunity and to prevent future crimes. These duties arise after the commission of the crimes.

A commander's lack of formal authority to take certain actions does not exempt them from the obligation to take all necessary and reasonable steps within their power to repress or punish crimes. If the commander has disciplinary authority, they are expected to use it within the scope of their powers. If they do not, they must still fulfil their duty by, for example, recommending disciplinary measures to a superior who does have such authority or referring the matter to authorities competent to investigate and prosecute, along with any available evidence.[2604] Referral to a non-functioning authority or an authority likely to conduct an inadequate investigation or prosecution may not be sufficient to fulfil a commander's obligations.[2605]

As discussed above, the commanders listed in this chapter, holding the highest positions within the chain of command at national, provincial and county levels, had a duty to prevent and punish the criminal conduct of their subordinates, as well as the material ability to fulfil this obligation.

Amnesty International considers that the duty of these officials to prevent the commission of murder and other crimes against humanity by FARAJA and IRGC forces falling under their command arose even before the first incidents of unlawful shootings took place on 19 September 2022. Given the notorious and well-documented patterns of unlawful use of force resulting in deaths and injuries during

2602. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 202
2603. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), paras 203-204.
2604. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 207.
2605. See ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Trial Chamber III judgment (previously cited), para. 208. See also ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Boškoski and Tarčulovski*, Case IT-04-82-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 19 May 2010, para. 234.

nationwide and localized protests in past years,[2606] Iranian officials had a clear obligation to prevent a repeat of such serious human rights violations in their response to the 2022 protests. The duty to prevent such crimes continued throughout the entire protest period.[2607]

The officials have a duty to ensure that their forces are adequately trained in international law. However, information from official statements and state media reports, as presented in Chapter 10, reveals that the training of IRGC forces, including their Basij battalions, demonstrates a complete disregard for international law and standards governing the use of force and firearms in protest situations. The training includes shooting drills, mock physical confrontations with unarmed protesters labelled as "rioters" and the use of intimidation and violent repression to forcibly disperse crowds.[2608]

Official statements made by the national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA at the time of the 2022 protests, Hassan Karami, also confirm this approach. He openly said that the training of Special Cohorts in repressive tactics is aimed at enabling them to swiftly disperse and "mop up protesters" through what he described as "lightning-speed operations", which he admitted may physically harm anyone present in the protest area including bystanders.[2609]

The protest-related orders issued by superior officials, including those named in this chapter, remain unavailable to the public. However, two leaked official orders from the early days of the protests – one issued by the General Staff of the Armed Forces to FARAJA forces nationwide on 21 September 2022, and another issued by the FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province to the forces under his command on 23 September 2022 – reflect a stark breach of the duty to issue orders aimed at ensuring security forces act in accordance with international law. Instead of instructing lawful conduct, the order from the FARAJA commander of Mazandaran province instructed security forces to "respond mercilessly and go as far as causing death",[2610] while the one from the General Staff of the Armed Forces mandated a "firm and severe response to any gathering, the dispersal of rioters, and their arrest

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2606. See, for example, Amnesty International, "Iran: More than 100 protesters believed to be killed as top officials give green light to crush protests", 19 November 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/11/iran-more-than-100-protesters-believed-to-be-killed-as-top-officials-give-green-light-to-crush-protests; Amnesty International, *They are Shooting Brazenly: Iran's Militarized Response to May 2022 Protests* (Index: MDE 13/5789/2022), 3 August 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5789/2022/en; Amnesty International, *Iran: Details of 321 Deaths in Crackdown on November 2019 Protests [July 2022 Update]* (Index: MDE 13/2308/2020), 29 July 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2308/2020/en; Amnesty International, "Iran: International action needed to break authorities' cycle of protest bloodshed" (Index: MDE 13/3546/2021), 20 January 2021, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/3546/2021/en; Impact Iran, "HRC 45: Joint call for states to mandate a UN-led inquiry into the November 2019 protests", 18 September 2020, https://impactiran.org/2020/09/18/hrc-45-joint-call-for-states-to-mandate-a-un-led-inquiry-into-the-november-2019-protests; Amnesty International, *'They Shot our Children': Killings of Minors in Iran's November 2019 Protests* (Index: 13/1894/2020), 4 March 2020, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1894/2020/en; European Parliament, Motion for a resolution - B9-0275/2019, European Parliament resolution on the violent crackdown on the recent protests in Iran (2019/2993(RSP)), 17 December 2019, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2019-0275_EN.html; https://docs.un.org/en/A/75/213; Amnesty International, "Iran: Thousands arbitrarily detained and at risk of torture in chilling post-protest crackdown", 16 December 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/12/iran-thousands-arbitrarily-detained-and-at-risk-of-torture-in-chilling-post-protest-crackdown; OHCHR, "Bachelet calls on Iran to address multiple human rights violations in context of recent protests", 6 December 2019, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2019/12/bachelet-calls-iran-address-multiple-human-rights-violations-context-recent; Amnesty International, "Iran: Death toll from bloody crackdown on protests rises to 208", 2 December 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/12/iran-death-toll-from-bloody-crackdown-on-protests-rises-to-208; Amnesty International, "Iran: World must strongly condemn use of lethal force against protesters as death toll rises to 143", 29 November 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/11/iran-world-must-strongly-condemn-use-of-lethal-force-against-protesters-as-death-toll-rises-to-143; UN News, "Independent rights experts sound alarm at Iran protest crackdown, internet blackout", 22 November 2019, https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/11/1051981; UN News, "Iran protests: Live ammunition reportedly used, says UN human rights office", 19 November 2019, https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/11/1051661; Amnesty International, "Iran: Stop increasingly ruthless crackdown and investigate deaths of protesters", 4 January 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/iran-stop-increasingly-ruthless-crackdown-and-investigate-deaths-of-protesters

2607. See sections 5.1 and 5.3.1 for the timelines of protests and violent dispersals.

2608. See sections 10.2.2, 10.2.3, 10.3.2 and 10.3.3.

2609. See section 10.2.4(I)(ii).

2610. See section 10.2.5(I).

and transfer to bases for obtaining undertakings."[2611]

Leaked documents detailing discussions and directives of the State Security Council, of which the general commanders of FARAJA and the IRGC were members, further reveal that the highest levels of the chain of command were focused on ordering measures designed to crush the protests, rather than initiating investigations or issuing orders to prevent further crimes against humanity by forces under their control.

Hundreds of official statements, including those featured in Chapter 10,[2612] further demonstrate that, in the face of mounting evidence of crimes committed by their subordinate forces, commanders consistently did the exact opposite of what international law required of them. Rather than criticizing and condemning criminal conduct, halting operations, adopting disciplinary measures to prevent further crimes or referring the matter to competent judicial authorities, they praised the FARAJA and IRGC forces for their "bravery", "vital role", "steadfastness" "commitment", "intelligence" and "effective performance" in "countering enemy seditions" and "combating hybrid warfare", phrases routinely used to delegitimize the protests.[2613]

Moreover, commanders actively instructed the continuation of the crackdown, framing it as a mission to protect "the country's security, greatness and glory", "the Islamic Revolution", "Islam" and "the Supreme Leader". Instead of taking measures to lower the risk of the commission of crimes, they even escalated such a risk by consistently employing violent and dehumanizing rhetoric against protesters, demonizing them as "enemies of God's religion," "infidels", "seditionists," "conspirators", "chaos makers", "hired terrorists", "mercenaries", "anti-revolutionary elements", and even "mosquitoes", language that emboldened violent subordinates and contributed to an environment of brutality and impunity.

In light of the above considerations and the evidence of crimes against humanity presented earlier, and considering that the criminal conduct of FARAJA and IRGC forces persisted over a period of three months with widespread notoriety, Amnesty International has found reasonable grounds to believe that the 62 commanders named in this chapter failed to take any necessary and reasonable measures to prevent the commission of crimes against humanity by their subordinates within their respective zones of responsibility.

Likewise, there is no evidence indicating that these commanders took any necessary and reasonable measures to punish perpetrators, despite a steady stream of alarming reports about the widespread crimes committed by their subordinates against protesters and bystanders.

As shown in Chapter 11, the Iranian authorities at all levels completely failed to secure any form of accountability for the crimes against humanity committed during the repression of the uprising. In fact, various state entities, including those under the command of the FARAJA and IRGC commanders named here, actively worked to conceal evidence, obstruct investigations, shield those suspected of criminal responsibility from investigation and prosecution, and prevent justice from being served. These actions included, but were not limited to, refusing independent autopsies, hastily burying victims without proper autopsies, issuing incorrect or incomplete death certificates, seizing or destroying evidence like CCTV footage, and threatening victims' families to drop their complaints to the judicial authorities.[2614]

2611. See section 10.1.4.
2612. See sections 10.1.3, 10.2.4, 10.3.4 and 10.4.3.
2613. See, for example, sections 10.2.4(I)(i), 10.2.4(I)(ii), 10.2.4(IV)(i), 10.2.4(IV)(iii), 10.3.4(I)(i), 10.3.4(II)(ii), 10.3.4(III) and 10.3.4(IV).
2614. See sections 9.3.2, 9.3.3, 9.3.5, 9.4.2 and 11.3.

The few complaints regarding murder that underwent criminal investigations or trial, as discussed in Chapter 11, did not arise from any commanders referring the matter to the competent authorities. Instead, these cases proceeded despite a lack of cooperation from FARAJA and the IRGC, and due to the bravery of the victims' families and lawyers, who persisted despite the threats received. Court verdicts reviewed by Amnesty International show that FARAJA and the IRGC commanders either defended the unlawful use of lethal force by their agents, resulting in killings and injuries,[2615] or refused to cooperate with prosecution authorities to identify the direct perpetrators, which led to the closure of cases.[2616]

In a similar vein, as explained in Chapter 11, the Special Committee to Investigate the 2022 Unrests, established by the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, in the lead-up to the UN Human Rights Council's establishment of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran in November 2022, did not result from any commanders taking action to punish perpetrators.[2617]

Furthermore, the creation of this domestic committee did not fulfil, by any means, the duty to take all necessary and reasonable measures to punish crimes. In fact, as detailed in Chapter 11, the committee was part of the authorities' campaign of distortion and cover-up, aimed at diverting international attention from the ongoing impunity crisis in the country.[2618] A leaked letter from the head of the secretary general of the Supreme Council corroborates that the creation of this domestic committee was motivated by the authorities' desire to evade international scrutiny, block the formation of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and rehabilitate their public image.[2619]

To date, none of the individuals named in this chapter or any other authorities have made any effort to cooperate meaningfully with the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran.[2620] This ongoing refusal to engage highlights the authorities' commitment to maintaining impunity for the crimes against humanity committed during the repression of the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising.

In light of the above considerations and the evidence as a whole, Amnesty International has found reasonable grounds to believe that the 62 commanders named in this section failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within their power to punish the crimes against humanity committed by their subordinates, or to submit the matter to the competent authorities.

13.3 AIDING AND ABETTING

Under customary international law, as reflected in the jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), to hold an individual criminally liable for crimes under international law under the mode of liability of aiding and abetting it must be proved that: (1) the accused carried out acts specifically directed to assist, encourage or lend moral support to the perpetration of a crime, and this assistance had a substantial effect on the commission of the crime; (2) the accused knew that their acts assisted the commission of the crime by the principal perpetrator, or was aware of the substantial likelihood that their acts would assist the commission of such crimes; and (3) the assistance was specifically directed

2615. See section 9.4.3.
2616. See section 9.4.3.
2617. See section 11.4.
2618. See sections 11.1 and 11.4.2.
2619. See section 10.4.4(I).
2620. See UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1, paras 21-23.

towards criminal conduct.[2621] The mode of liability of aiding and abetting is also codified in Article 25(3)(c) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Based on the evidence presented in this report and the reasons outlined below, Amnesty International has found reasonable grounds to believe that the material and mental elements of aiding and abetting are met with respect to the following 25 Ministry of Interior officials. They include the minister of interior, the deputy minister of interior for police and security, three provincial governors, three deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs, and 17 county governors. The officials are listed below by their geographic zones of responsibility, beginning with those at the national level, followed by those at provincial and county levels, corresponding to the provinces and counties addressed sequentially in Chapters 6 to 8.

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIALS

NATIONAL LEVEL	
1.	Ahmad Vahidi, minister of interior, deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs and head of the State Security Council
2.	Majid Mir Ahmadi, deputy minister of interior for police and security and secretary of the State Security Council
KURDISTAN PROVINCE	
3.	Esmail Zareie Kousha, provincial governor of Kurdistan
4.	Mehdi Ramezani, deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan
5.	Hassan Askari, county governor of Sanandaj[2622]
6.	Jafar Tavan, county governor of Saqqez
7.	Taher Hosseini, county governor of Divandareh
8.	Kamal Khedry, county governor of Baneh
9.	Hamid Motasami, county governor of Dehgolan
10.	Keyvan Shafeyee, county governor of Kamyaran
11.	Esmail Ahmadi, county governor of Mariwan
WEST AZERBAIJAN	
12.	Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, provincial governor of West Azerbaijan
13.	Reza Ebrahimi, head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan
14.	Babakhan Eskandari, county governor of Boukan

2621. See ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Case IT-94-1-A, Appeal Chamber judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 229; ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Case ICTR-96-4-T, Trial Chamber I judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 484.
2622. Also known as Asgari.

15.	Amir Ghaderi, county governor of Mahabad
16.	Khezr Kak Darvishi, county governor of Piranshahr
17.	Ali Torabi, county governor of Oshnavieh
18.	Gholam Hossein Ammari, county governor of Urumieh
KERMANSHAH PROVINCE	
19.	Bahman Amiri Moghaddam, provincial governor of Kermanshah
20.	Mohammad Pourhashemi, head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah
21.	Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh, county governor of Kermanshah
22.	Sa'di Naghshbandi, county governor of Javanroud
23.	Hamidreza Karami, county governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb
24.	Faramarz Bavandpouri Gilan,[2623] county governor of Salas-e Babajani
25.	Mohammad Heidary, county governor of Ghasr-e Shirin

13.3.1 ASSISTANCE

INTERNATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

The material element of aiding and abetting consists of acts that specifically assist, encourage or lend moral support to the perpetration of a crime, where such assistance has a substantial effect on the commission of the crime.[2624] International jurisprudence has clarified several aspects of this requirement.

First, the form of assistance can vary widely. Aiding and abetting encompasses acts of assistance by words or acts, including planning, preparation or execution of the crime, provided they substantially contribute to the crime's commission.[2625] Assistance may be practical, such as providing weapons, financial resources or logistical support, or it may consist of moral support and encouragement through public statements, endorsements or other expressions that legitimize or promote criminal conduct.[2626]

2623. Also known as Bavandpour or Bavandpouri without the word "Gilan" included in his last name.
2624. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 229; ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda*, Case ICC-01/04-02/06, Trial Chamber VI judgment, 8 July 2019, paras 1145-1152.
2625. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 229.
2626. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Furundžija*, Case IT-95-17/1-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 10 December 1998, para. 249; ICTY *Prosecutor v. Krstić*, Case IT-98-33-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 19 April 2004, para. 140.

Second, the assistance must have a substantial effect on the commission of the crime. This requires proof that the acts of the accused significantly facilitated the commission of the crime, but the assistance need not be indispensable to the crime's commission.[2627] It is sufficient that the assistance facilitated the commission of the crime in a substantial way, even if the crime could have been committed without such assistance.[2628] The substantial effect requirement does not demand that the assistance be either necessary or essential to the crime's perpetration.[2629]

Third, the temporal relationship between assistance and the crime is flexible. The mode of liability of aiding and abetting applies to assistance provided before, during or after the commission of the principal crime, provided that the assistance substantially facilitates the crime's commission or continuation.[2630] This recognizes that systematic criminality often requires ongoing coordination and support structures that extend beyond the immediate moments of physical perpetration.

In Chapter 10, Amnesty International analysed in detail the roles and responsibilities of Ministry of Interior officials, their integration into the FARAJA command structure and their extensive involvement in coordinating, facilitating and supporting FARAJA operations, thereby ensuring their effectiveness and compliance with orders. The chapter further examined their authority over both FARAJA and IRGC forces through their leadership positions within security councils, including their role in authorizing the intervention of the IRGC to support of FARAJA in the repression of protests and determining when the use of firearms is permitted to disperse protests.

Based on the information and evidence presented in Chapter 10 and throughout this report, Amnesty International has found reasonable grounds to believe that the 25 Ministry of Interior officials named in this chapter substantially assisted the perpetration of the crimes against humanity documented in this report.

Their acts of assistance included the coordination and facilitation of violent operations through the State Security Council and its subsidiary provision councils, which ensured that operations by various security forces proceeded in a coordinated and systematic manner across the country and in relevant provinces for months. Their assistance also involved the provision of administrative and logistical infrastructure through the Ministry of Interior and its subsidiary provincial and county governance structures, the communication of directives, the transmission of orders, the allocation of resources and public expressions of moral support to the security forces carrying out crimes against humanity on the ground. The systematic nature of lethal operations, sustained for over three months, demonstrates that their actions had a substantial effect on the commission of such crimes, aligning security forces under a unified repressive purpose.

Based on the patterns of serious human rights violations documented in Chapter 9, Amnesty International considers that provincial and county governors should also be investigated for providing assistance that extended beyond the crimes against humanity of murder and torture during protest dispersals[2631] and included involvement in the crime against humanity of persecution against the families of those killed.[2632] As detailed in Chapter 9, these officials were frequently involved in withholding bodies, imposing restrictions on burials and silencing families, thereby helping to conceal the crimes committed, suppress evidence and obstruct public exposure of unlawful killings. Amnesty

2627. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blaškić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 48.
2628. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 229.
2629. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda*, Trial Chamber VI judgment (previously cited), para. 1150.
2630. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Vasiljević*, Case IT-98-32-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 25 February 2004, para. 102.
2631. See sections 12.2.1 and 12.2.2.
2632. See section 12.2.6.

International considers that such conduct substantially assisted the crime against humanity of persecution against the families of those killed[2633] and also contributed to the cover-up of the unlawful killings committed and the climate of impunity that fuelled their continuation.

13.3.1(I) MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND DEPUTY FOR POLICE AND SECURITY

Ahmad Vahidi was the minister of interior during the September-December 2022 period. As detailed in Chapter 10, his position encompassed authority over security operations through three mechanisms of control.[2634]

First, Ahmad Vahidi had been appointed by the Supreme Leader as deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs, granting him superior authority over the general commander of FARAJA within the command structure.

Second, he was the head of the State Security Council, which is the key body tasked with formulating national security policies and strategies. Under Iranian law, the State Security Council's resolutions are advisory by nature and become binding orders only when communicated for implementation by the minister of interior.

Third, Ahmad Vahidi held administrative oversight over FARAJA. Article 2 of the Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Law) states that FARAJA is "an armed organization under the authority of the commander-in-chief and affiliated with the Ministry of Interior." This institutional affiliation mandates joint oversight of FARAJA affairs by both the FARAJA command and the Ministry of Interior across domains including organizational structure, recruitment, training, budgeting, weapons and equipment, performance evaluation, promotion, disciplinary procedures, and reporting of field situations and intelligence.

Majid Mir Ahmadi was the deputy minister of interior for police and security and secretary of the State Security Council during the September-December 2022 period. In this capacity, he served as the operational link between the State Security Council's resolutions and their implementation by security forces.

Leaked official documents reviewed by Amnesty International reveal that, following the adoption of State Security Council resolutions, the deputy minister of interior for police and security communicated the resolutions to relevant authorities, including FARAJA and IRGC commanders, with instructions to issue orders for their implementation. The documents also reveal that these authorities were requested to report back to the secretariat on the actions taken and the outcomes of implementation.

As documented in Chapter 10, a leaked official document dated 18 September 2022 records that, as early as 18 September 2022, the Intelligence Committee of the State Security Council convened a session. This occurred one day after protests erupted in Saqqez and Sanandaj following the death in custody of Zhina Mahsa Amini, and two days before the first recorded unlawful killings on 19 September 2022. The leaked document records the decisions adopted by the Intelligence Committee of the State Security Council during this session. The document is accompanied by a one-page cover letter signed by Majid Mir Ahmadi, which addresses nine officials and communicates to them the decisions adopted by the State Security Council in its 18 September 2022 session. In his cover letter, Majid Mir Ahmadi instructed the nine officials to issue the necessary orders to their subordinates for implementation of the State Security Council's decisions and to subsequently report the outcomes to the Council's secretariat.

2633. See section 12.2.6.
2634. The information in this section is based on the detailed analysis provided in Chapter 10. For full details and citations, please refer to that chapter, as Amnesty International has not repeated the references here.

The nine officials addressed were: the deputy prosecutor general for political and security affairs, Mehdi Amiri Esfahani; the deputy minister of intelligence for soft security; the deputy minister of intelligence for counterterrorism, Hamidi; the head of the Intelligence Organization of the Ministry of Intelligence in Tehran province; the then deputy minister of interior for political affairs, Mohammad Reza Gholamreza; the deputy head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, Mehdi Sayaree; the intelligence deputy of the Sarollah Headquarters in Tehran; the then head of the Intelligence Organization of FARAJA, Mohammad Babayee; and the then head of FARAJA in Greater Tehran, Hossein Rahimi.

The segments summarizing discussions during the 18 September 2022 session reveal that, from the outset, the minister of interior and other authorities present prioritized crushing the protests, which they portrayed as orchestrated by "anti-revolutionaries", "hostile agents" and armed Kurdish opposition groups. The document reveals coordinated and systematic response planning through directives issued under the leadership of the minister of interior to key state institutions, including FARAJA, the IRGC, provincial and county provision councils, the Ministry of Intelligence and the judiciary.

Paragraph 4 calls for "complete vigilance and preparedness from intelligence and security bodies" with "necessary precautions and measures… taken by FARAJA, the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC." Paragraph 5 states that "the Security Council's resolution to prevent the formation of initial protest cells must remain the top priority for intelligence, security and police bodies". Paragraph 17 says that "FARAJA must take action to strengthen the police forces in Kurdistan."

A second leaked official document dated 26 September 2022 reveals that, on this date, the State Security Council held its "extraordinary" 730th session under the leadership of the minister of interior. The document consists of three pages, which outline the decisions adopted during this session, and is accompanied by a one-page cover letter from Majid Mir Ahmadi.

In his cover letter, Majid Mir Ahmadi communicated the adopted decisions to eight officials and instructed them to issue the necessary orders for implementation of the decisions. The eight officials were: the deputy prosecutor general for political and security affairs, Mehdi Amiri Esfahani; the public and revolutionary prosecutor general of Tehran, Ali Salehi; the deputy minister of intelligence for political, cultural and social affairs, Salimi; the deputy minister of intelligence for counterterrorism, Hamidi; the then operations deputy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mehdi Rabani; the deputy commander of the Sarollah Headquarters, Hossein Nejat; the head of the Basij Organization, Gholamreza Soleimani; and the then head of the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC, Mohammad Kazemi.

The 26 September 2022 resolution emphasizes the need to bring protests to an end. Paragraph 2 states:

> **"Given the negative consequences of the protracted presence of rioters in the streets… including the reflection of the issue at the international level… it was decided that FARAJA, the IRGC and the Ministry of Intelligence would seriously place on their working agenda the deployment of various intelligence and operational methods, including infiltration into the key cells of rioters, to end riots and unauthorized gatherings in all parts of the country."**

Paragraph 3 orders "intelligence bodies to pursue as a matter of priority the identification and targeting of the leaders and key elements of the riots."

By 26 September 2022, when this resolution was adopted, FARAJA and IRGC forces had already killed at least 87 protesters and bystanders during protest dispersals and in areas where there was a

militarized presence of security forces.[2635]

As head of FARAJA from an administrative perspective, the minister of interior also exercised authority over resource allocation, policy approval and performance evaluation. The minister's provision of administrative infrastructure, resources and coordination mechanisms was the means through which FARAJA forces sustained operations that resulted in the crimes against humanity documented in this report, including mass murder and torture.

As documented in Chapter 10, a leaked letter written by Ahmad Vahidi to the then president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, on 8 January 2023 reveals that, on 13 October 2022, the State Security Council passed a resolution instructing the Budget and Planning Organization to allocate 9 trillion rials (22 million US dollars) to the Ministry of Interior "given the heavy security costs across all provinces, the prolonged and expanding nature of recent riots in various sectors, and the provinces' need for financial resources to manage different aspects of the event [referring to protests]." In this letter, Ahmad Vahidi noted that the Ministry of Interior was actively managing the significant financial costs arising from the prolonged deployment of thousands of security forces across the country throughout the protest period.

Throughout and after the 2022 protest periods, Ahmad Vahidi and the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, also provided public encouragement and moral support to the criminal conduct of the security forces. As documented in Chapter 10, they demonized the protesters as "rioters", "terrorists" and even "mosquitoes" while signalling instructions to security forces to maintain repression and praising them. These statements were particularly issued during, or in the immediate aftermath of, waves of unlawful killings.

The concentration of killings during specific periods points to coordinated direction rather than isolated local actions. This demonstrates the substantial effect of the minister of interior's coordination. Without the policies and strategies set by State Security Council under the minister's leadership, security forces would have lacked the unified direction needed to carry out systematic repression across the country. The transmission of binding directives from the minister as the head of the State Security Council to various authorities, including FARAJA and IRGC commanders, enabled coordinated lethal operations to unfold across the country simultaneously.

13.3.1(II) PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS AND DEPUTY FOR POLITICAL, SECURITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Esmail Zareie Kousha, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam and Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian were the provincial governors of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan, respectively, during the September-December 2022 period. Their deputies for political, security and social affairs were, respectively, Mehdi Ramezani in Kurdistan province, Mohammad Pourhashemi in Kermanshah province and Reza Ebrahimi in West Azerbaijan province.

As documented in Chapter 10, provincial governors are the highest-ranking representatives of the government at the provincial level, responsible for maintaining order and security with the assistance of their deputies for political, security and social affairs.[2636]

Provincial governors and deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs hold dual roles that grant them authority over security operations. First, as local representatives of the Ministry of Interior, they have institutional oversight over FARAJA. Second, as heads (in the case of governors) and

2635. See section 5.3.2.

2636. The information in this section is based on the detailed analysis provided in Chapter 9. For full details and citations, please refer to that chapter, as Amnesty International has not repeated the references here.

secretaries (in the case of deputies for political, security and social affairs) of provincial provision councils, their authority extends to the IRGC and other entities. Through council resolutions, they authorize the intervention of the IRGC to support FARAJA in the repression of protests.

Provincial provision councils adopt domestic security strategies and plans at the provincial level within the parameters set out by the State Security Council. As at the national level, where the minister of interior serves as the final decision-maker, the provincial governor's authority transforms the provision council into an instrument of executive power, making its resolutions enforceable commands once they are communicated for implementation by the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs. Article 2(1) of the Regulations on Duties and Responsibilities of Provincial Governors and County Governors and the Manner of their Appointment and Dismissal (Regulations on Governors) stipulates that "all member organizations of the provision council and other executive bodies in the province are obligated to implement… the security orders of provincial governors."

Deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs, acting in their capacities as secretaries of the respective provincial provision councils, are responsible for communicating the resolutions of provision councils for implementation and overseeing their implementation. Like the deputy minister of interior for police and security at the national level, therefore, they serve as the operational link between the resolutions of the provincial provision councils and their implementation by security forces.

Additionally, provincial governors wield significant power to authorize the use of lethal force under the Law on the Use of Firearms by Armed Forces in Necessary Incidents (Law on Firearms). Note 1 to Article 4 of this law stipulates that the head of the respective provincial or county provision council, namely the provincial governor or county governor, is responsible for determining which assemblies warrant the use of firearms under Article 4, which permits the use of firearms when dispersal of an assembly cannot be achieved by other means.

A leaked resolution of the Intelligence Committee of the State Security Council, dated 18 September 2022, reveals that provincial governors and provincial provision councils were specifically instructed from early on to "continuously monitor the situation in their provinces, prevent assemblies from occurring, identify all individuals and elements involved in issuing calls for protests, and take the necessary actions against them." These activities constitute substantial contribution to the crimes against humanity committed by security forces while preventing and dispersing assemblies and targeting those involved in the protests.

The rapid deployment of security forces across multiple cities, combined with sustained repression, concentrated killings during specific periods, mass arbitrary arrests and official statements projecting control and "victory" through a disciplined chain of command, indicate that provincial governors and deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs acted as instructed by the State Security Council.

This is supported by a leaked letter from the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, to the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, on 8 January 2023. The letter notes that offices of provincial governors consistently provided financial resources and logistical support to the security forces deployed to repress the protests. The letter states that, throughout the three-month protest period, offices of provincial governors covered significant transportation, food and accommodation costs for security forces, along with other expenses incurred by forces working beyond contractual hours to sustain the crackdown on mass protests.

While no minutes of provincial provision council sessions related to the 2022 crackdown have been leaked, official statements, taken together with the councils' established structures and mandates,

make it evident that they issued resolutions enabling the crimes against humanity documented in this report.

For example, on 21 September 2022, the then provincial governor of Kurdistan, Esmail Zarei Kousha, confirmed that the Provision Council of Kurdistan province was issuing instructions to the security forces in relation to the protests and claimed that these instructions were being followed.[2637]

On 11 October 2022, amid ongoing repression in Kermanshah province, the then head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah, Mohammad Pourhashemi, acknowledged that the Provision Council of Kermanshah province was actively "managing" the protest response through the adoption of resolutions. He stated:

> **"In Kermanshah province, we were never caught off guard. We monitored the movements with full preparedness and, in the Provision Council meetings, we had a council resolution in place before any event occurred. This played a crucial role in managing the recent events [protests] in the province."[2638]**

On 21 November 2022, the then head of the Office of the Ministry of Intelligence in West Azerbaijan province revealed that the resolutions of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province addressed the use of firearms by the security forces during the protests. He claimed the resolutions did not authorize shootings by agents. However, he specified that "shootings and violent response" were not authorized when "security sites" were not under attack, implying that such responses might be permitted or justified when such sites were "under attack".

Throughout the September-December protest period, the provincial governors of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan – Esmail Zareie Kousha, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam and Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, respectively – and their deputies for political, security and social affairs – Mehdi Ramezani, Mohammad Pourhashemi and Reza Ebrahimi, respectively – repeatedly provided public encouragement and moral support to the security forces. As documented in Chapter 10, they demonized protesters, labelling them as "enemies", "heartless terrorists" and "rioters" pursuing "evil schemes", "ideological and cultural sedition" and "a widespread conspiracy against the people". In parallel, they legitimized the criminal conduct of security forces by praising them for their "coordination, synergy, and unwavering determination" and dismissing concerns about violations as "rumours spread by anti-revolutionary media outlets." They also encouraged the continuation of the crackdown by warning of "firm" action against "enemies" or declaring that they "will deepen their surveillance of… rioters, and with intelligence and forcefulness, they will neutralize their conspiracies".

A leaked official document recording the action points adopted by a provincial committee operating under the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan further illustrates the extensive role of provincial governance structures in implementing a broad campaign of repression. In this case, the measures targeted teachers arrested for their involvement in the protests and sought to extend repression to protest activity in school settings. The document quotes Mehdi Ramezani, the then deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan, calling for further planning to "confront the enemies' plots" while appreciating the efforts undertaken up to then.[2639]

2637. Hamshahri Online, ["Important order by Provision Council of Kurdistan: New details on deaths of three people during Kurdistan protests; one protester's liver was shattered"], 21 September 2022, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/707450/دستور-مهم-شورای-تامین-کردستان-جزئیات-جدید-مرگ-۳-نفر-در-تجمعات (in Persian). For further details, see sections 10.2.4(II)(ii) and 10.4.3(III).

2638. ISNA, ["Media should convey the realities of the Islamic Republic"], 11 October 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401071909711/رسانه-ها-واقعیات-جمهوری-اسلامی-را-بیان-کنند (in Persian).

2639. See section 10.2.5(III).

13.3.1(III) COUNTY GOVERNORS

County governors bear duties and responsibilities analogous to provincial governors but at the county level. Article 24 of the Regulations on Governors states that "all duties and authorities assigned to provincial governors are likewise granted to county governors within their respective county of responsibility."

Like provincial governors, county governors hold dual roles that grant them authority over security operations. First, as local representatives of the Ministry of Interior, they have institutional oversight over FARAJA forces in their respective county. Second, as heads of county provision councils, their authority extends to the IRGC and other entities because resolutions of county provision councils only become binding once communicated by the county governor, who is responsible for overseeing their implementation.

County provision councils adopt security strategies and plans at the county level within the parameters set out by the relevant provincial provision council and more broadly the State Security Council. Like the minister of interior and provincial governor at higher levels, the county governor's position as final decision-maker transforms the county council into an instrument of executive authority, making its resolutions enforceable commands once communicated by the county governor for implementation.

Additionally, like provincial governors, county governors wield significant power to authorize the use of lethal force under the Law on Firearms. Note 1 to Article 4 of this law stipulates that the head of the respective provincial or county provision council, namely the provincial governor or county governor, is responsible for determining which assemblies warrant the use of firearms under Article 4, which in turn permits the use of firearms when dispersal of an assembly cannot be achieved by other means.

County governors are accountable to and carry out their security-related actions under the supervision of provincial governors. Article 14 of the Regulations on Governors states that county governors are required to go through provincial governors to raise their concerns with high-ranking state officials.

The rapid deployment of security forces across multiple cities, combined with sustained repression, concentrated killings during specific periods and mass arbitrary arrests, indicate that county governors facilitated crimes through the coordination of security forces via county provision councils. They implemented provincial directives at the county level and coordinated FARAJA and IRGC forces operating within their counties.

An official statement from 7 December 2022, made by the then head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan, Reza Ebrahimi, confirms that the coordination function performed by county governors was essential to systematic operations. He stated:

> **"The measures taken at the provincial level and the efforts of the county governors… have played a crucial role in neutralizing the enemies' conspiracies to cause insecurity in the province and the country… The enemies' conspiracies to destabilize Islamic Iran continue, and county governors, in coordination with provincial authorities, must be prepared to defeat the enemy."**

State media reports also highlight that sustained operations required coordination between provincial and county levels and that such coordination efforts intensified during periods where killings increased. For example, on 20 November 2022, as Mahabad was gripped by mass protests met with unlawful shootings and killings, state media reported that the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, and several other members of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province travelled to Mahabad to assess the situation in the county and issued "the necessary orders for ensuring security and tranquillity". State media added:

"The Provision Council of Mahabad county convened last night in the presence of the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan to prove that the city has enough security for the highest-ranking officials of the province to go there for their meeting… In this meeting, emphasis was placed on ensuring maximum security by using the capabilities of the police force, and it was decided that this would be a serious priority for the police."

The leaked letter from the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, to the then president, Ebrahim Raisi, on 8 January 2023 reveals that county governors also contributed financial resources and logistical support to the security forces committing crimes on the ground. The letter states that, throughout the three-month protest period, offices of county governors, together with offices of provincial governors, covered significant transportation, food and accommodation costs for security forces, along with other expenses incurred by forces working beyond contractual hours to sustain the crackdown on mass protests.

Moreover, according to testimonies gathered by Amnesty International, county governors were frequently involved in persecuting families of those killed, including through withholding bodies, imposing restrictions on burial and memorial ceremonies as a condition for returning victims' bodies to their families, and coercing families to accept false narratives about their loved ones' deaths. Families were frequently summoned to the offices of county governors where they were threatened and pressured to accept these restrictions. They were also subjected to intimidating phone calls and home visits from officials, including county governors themselves.[2640]

13.3.2 KNOWLEDGE

INTERNATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

The mental element of aiding and abetting requires that the accused knew that their acts assisted the commission of the crime by the principal perpetrator or was aware of the substantial likelihood that their acts would assist the commission of such crimes. This knowledge standard reflects customary international law as established by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.[2641]

Under customary international law, the knowledge requirement does not demand that the accused shared the principal perpetrator's specific intent to commit the crime. Aiding and abetting is established where the accused knew that their actions would assist the perpetrator in the commission of the crime even if the accused did not share the perpetrator's criminal purpose.[2642] The knowledge requirement for aiding and abetting is less demanding than the intent requirement for principal liability because aiders and abettors need only be aware that their acts assist the commission of the crime, or aware of the substantial likelihood that their acts would provide such assistance, rather than intending to bring about the specific criminal result.[2643]

2640. See Chapter 9.

2641. See, for example, ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previous cited), para. 229 ("The requisite mental element is knowledge that the acts performed by the aider and abettor assist the commission of the specific crime of the principal"); ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Furundžija*, Trial Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 246 ("the requisite mental element... is knowledge that the assistance aids the commission of [the] criminal acts"); ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Trial Chamber I judgment (previously cited), para. 484.

2642. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Furundžija*, Case IT-95-17/1-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 21 July 2000, para. 117.

2643. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo and others*, Case ICC-01/05-01/13, Pre-Trial Chamber II decision on confirmation of charges, 11 November 2014, paras 347-350.

Article 25(3)(c) of the Rome Statute introduces the textual requirement that assistance be provided "for the purpose of facilitating the commission of such a crime." The interpretation of this "purpose" requirement remains unsettled in International Criminal Court jurisprudence. The International Criminal Court has not yet authoritatively resolved whether Article 25(3)(c) requires a higher standard than customary international law's knowledge requirement.

Knowledge may be established through direct or circumstantial evidence. An accused's state of mind can be inferred from circumstantial evidence, including the accused's conduct and the context in which the accused acted.[2644] Relevant circumstantial evidence includes the accused's position and responsibilities, the systematic nature of crimes, the accused's continued provision of assistance despite awareness of ongoing criminality, and public statements indicating awareness of criminal conduct.[2645]

The knowledge requirement encompasses awareness of the essential elements of the principal crime, meaning the accused must be aware of the factual circumstances that make the assisted conduct criminal. For crimes against humanity, the accused must be aware that the assisted crimes were committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, which constitutes the contextual element of crimes against humanity under Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute.[2646] However, the accused need not possess detailed knowledge of specific crimes that were intended or eventually perpetrated; it suffices that they were aware of the type of crimes that were likely to be committed.[2647]

Wilful blindness may satisfy the knowledge requirement. An accused who deliberately avoids acquiring knowledge of the crimes being committed, or who consciously disregards information clearly indicating that crimes are being committed, may be found to possess the requisite *mens rea* for aiding and abetting.[2648] This principle prevents individuals from escaping liability by deliberately avoiding knowledge of the criminal nature of activities they are facilitating.

Drawing on the same evidence presented in the previous section on superior responsibility regarding knowledge, including extensive monitoring and reporting mechanisms, widespread media and human rights reporting, and systematic responses through denial and distortion, Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that the continued facilitation of security operations by the 25 Ministry of Interior officials named above demonstrates that they knew their acts assisted the commission of the crime against humanity committed by security forces on the ground, or were aware of the substantial likelihood that their acts would assist the commission of such crimes.

The leaked resolution from 18 September 2022 reveals how, from the very outset of the protests, officials participating in State Security Council sessions, including the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi, and the then deputy minister of interior for police and security, Majid Mir Ahmadi, engaged in extensive surveillance of developments on the ground, social media discourse and international

2644. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Krstić,* Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 140; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delić*, Case IT-04-83-T, Trial Chamber judgment, 15 September 2008, para. 53.
2645. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Delić*, Trial Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 53.
2646. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Samoei Ruto and others*, Case ICC-01/09-01/11, Pre-Trial Chamber II decision on confirmation of charges, 23 January 2012, paras 354-356; ICC *Prosecutor v. Kirimi Muthaura and others*, Case ICC-01/09-02/11, Pre-Trial Chamber II decision on confirmation of charges, 23 January 2012, para. 421; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7(1); ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Kunarac and others*, Case IT-96-23-A and IT-96-23/1-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 12 June 2002, para. 102.
2647. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 229.
2648. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Tadić*, Appeals Chamber judgment (previously cited), para. 220; ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Blagojević and Jokić*, Case IT-02-60-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 9 May 2007, para. 127.

reactions. This level of close monitoring establishes that Ahmad Vahidi and Majid Mir Ahmadi had detailed and timely knowledge of the unfolding situation.

By 18 September 2022, the State Security Council was already meeting to formulate response strategies, one day before the first recorded killings on 19 September 2022. Leaked official documents show that Ahmad Vahidi presided over subsequent State Security Council sessions and was involved in decisions related to resource allocation, after security forces had already carried out killings and inflicted injuries. Meanwhile, as secretary of the State Security Council, Majid Mir Ahmadi transmitted the resolutions of the State Security Council for implementation.[2649]

In their capacities as the head and secretary of the State Security Council, Ahmad Vahidi and Majid Mir Ahmadi, respectively, received regular reports on security operations and their outcomes, as evidenced by the reporting mechanisms detailed in leaked official documents. Their positions required receipt of reports on security developments from various authorities across the vast security apparatus, including provincial governors, FARAJA commanders and IRGC commanders. By issuing directives and requesting reports from implementing bodies, Ahmad Vahidi and Majid Mir Ahmadi demonstrated awareness that their communications and coordination were facilitating ongoing security operations.

The public statements of Ahmad Vahidi and Majid Mir Ahmadi throughout the three-month protest period further demonstrate knowledge of the lethal nature of security operations. As early as 23 September 2022, Ahmad Vahidi showed that he was aware of the killings of protesters and bystanders, but attributed many deaths to "rioters" or "personal vendettas". He admitted that some killings were carried out by security forces, though he framed these as occurring in the context of security forces preventing individuals from entering "sensitive headquarters" or targeting members of outlawed Kurdish opposition groups. In the same interview, he expressed confidence in the ability of the police to crush the protests and warned that those involved in the "riots" would be identified and prosecuted by the judiciary.

In a 24 September 2022 statement, the Ministry of Interior emphasized its mandate to confront "unauthorized" gatherings. On 26 September 2022, following a wave of killings, Ahmad Vahidi expressed appreciation for the "timely", "effective" and "appropriate" response of the FARAJA command to the protests, stating:

> **"The totality of the police command has performed very very well and appropriately during the recent riots… FARAJA agents were present at the scene of the riots in a very good, extensive and timely manner and they were able to thwart the enemies' conspiracies and sedition."[2650]**

On 11 October 2022, amid another wave of killings, Majid Mir Ahmadi expressed outrage towards Persian-language media outlets based outside Iran that were reporting the lethal repression of the protests by the security forces. He described these outlets as a "war operation room" and called on the governments of the countries where they are located to shut them down.

The continued facilitation of operations by Ahmad Vahidi and Majid Mir Ahmadi, through both the State Security Council and the Ministry of Interior, despite clear awareness of ongoing criminality, demonstrates their knowledge that their coordination and communication activities were assisting ongoing violent operations.

2649. See sections 10.4.4(III) and 10.4.4(IV).

2650. Entekhab, وزیر کشور: نیروی انتظامی در اتفاقات اخیر بسیار بسیار خوب و مناسب عمل کرد؛ توانست توطئه‌ها را نقش بر آب کند ["Minister of interior: Police forces performed very well in recent events: they were able to thwart conspiracies"], 26 September 2022, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/696446/وزیر-کشور-نیروی-انتظامی-در-اتفاقات-اخیر-بسیار-بسیار-خوب-و-مناسب-عمل-کرد-توانست-توطئه‌ها-را-نقش-بر-آب-کند (in Persian).

This is reinforced by public statements throughout October, November and December 2022 in which they expressed satisfaction with "FARAJA's intelligent, prudent and decisive management of the situation" and warned of continued repression. As documented in Chapter 10, Ahmad Vahidi took pride in the "constant monitoring" and "effective control" of "subversive activities", claiming these measures brought the "defeat of protests". He further vowed that "security officials will stand guard with intensity and vigilance". Majid Mir Ahmadi described the protests as a threat to national security that "must be dealt with firmly".

Provincial governors, deputy governors for political, security and social affairs and county governors similarly possessed knowledge of the lethal crackdown through multiple reporting and enforcement channels. By law, member organizations of provincial and county provision councils are required to report security developments to provincial and county governors and their deputies for political, security and social affairs. This mandatory reporting mechanism ensured that these officials received regular reports on security operations and outcomes from various authorities, including FARAJA and IRGC commanders. The repeated episodes of killings between September and December 2022 across multiple counties within each province and across different areas within individual counties reflect a sustained pattern of repression that could not have occurred without continued facilitation by provincial and county governors.

Given the concentration of killings and injuries during specific periods, the notoriety that these events received in the media and human rights reports, and the responsibility of provincial governors, deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs and county governors for maintaining security and order, Amnesty International has reasonable grounds to believe that they were aware of the patterns of killings and injuries resulting from the lethal repression.

Public statements by provincial governors and deputy provincial governors for political, security and social affairs, reacting to reports of killings while attributing them to "counter-revolutionaries" and "hostile grouplets", further confirm their awareness of the crimes against humanity being committed. For county governors, evidence gathered by Amnesty International showing their direct involvement in persecution of the families of those killed offers further proof that they were also aware of the crimes against humanity being committed.

13.3.3 NEXUS

INTERNATIONAL JURISPRUDENCE

Beyond the requirements of assistance and knowledge, international jurisprudence has addressed an additional element concerning the nexus between assistance and criminal conduct. Courts have articulated varying standards regarding whether assistance must be specifically directed towards criminal activities.

Some jurisprudence has introduced a "specific direction" requirement, holding that aiding and abetting requires proof that the contribution of the accused was specifically directed to the crimes of principal perpetrators rather than to lawful activities.[2651] This approach emphasizes that, where assistance is provided in a context where both lawful and unlawful activities occur, liability requires showing the assistance was directed towards the unlawful activities specifically.

2651. ICTY, *Prosecutor v. Perišić*, Case IT-04-81-A, Appeals Chamber judgment, 28 February 2013, paras 37-44.

However, subsequent jurisprudence has clarified that "specific direction", while relevant, is not a separate legal element but rather an evidentiary factor to be considered when proving the substantial effect and knowledge elements of aiding and abetting in cases where assistance is provided in contexts involving both lawful and unlawful activities.[2652] The more remote the accused's acts are from the actual commission of the crime, the more significant it becomes to demonstrate that their contribution was specifically directed towards criminal activities, but this consideration forms part of the analysis of substantial effect rather than constituting an independent legal requirement.

Where assistance is provided directly to forces engaged exclusively in criminal conduct, or where the context demonstrates that the assistance relates specifically to criminal activities rather than legitimate operations, the nexus requirement is readily satisfied. International jurisprudence recognizes that, in cases involving systematic criminality implemented through state structures, the provision of coordination, resources and directives to forces engaged in criminal operations establishes the necessary nexus.[2653]

The 25 Ministry of Interior officials named in this chapter coordinated and facilitated protest suppression through the security councils and the Ministry of Interior, providing material, administrative and moral support to security forces. Their actions were explicitly directed towards crushing protests by deploying security forces, with a clear link to the resulting killings and injuries during violent dispersals. Leaked State Security Council resolutions dated 18 and 26 September 2022 specifically address operations to repress protests, instructing FARAJA and the IRGC to "end riots and unauthorized gatherings". The administrative and financial support of the Ministry of Interior was explicitly directed towards these operations, as evidenced by the 13 October 2022 resolution allocating 9 trillion rials for "security costs" related to managing "riots", as well as the 8 January 2023 letter from the minister of interior referring to the offices of provincial and county governors covering the substantial costs of the security operations.

The nexus between the minister of interior's coordination and criminal conduct is evident in the direct causal chain from State Security Council directives to operational implementation by security forces, leading to systematic killings and torture during protest dispersals. Communications from the deputy minister of interior for police and security were likewise focused on executing operations to repress protests, consistent with his role as the secretary of the State Security Council tasked with operationalizing State Security Council decisions on security matters.

Provincial governors, deputy governors for political, security and social affairs and county governors also coordinated through provincial and county provision councils to implement State Security Council directives. The Regulations on Governors mandate these officials to "provide the necessary conditions for the implementation of general security and police plans and policies, resolutions of legal authorities, and security directives and notifications."

Based on all the above, Amnesty International has concluded that the nexus between assistance and criminal conduct is established through the direct connection between the coordination and facilitation of violent operations to repress protests and the killings and injuries resulting from them.

While Ministry of Interior officials did not necessarily exercise operational command over the state

2652. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda*, Trial Chamber VI judgment (previously cited), para. 1150.
2653. ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda*, Trial Chamber VI judgment (previously cited), paras 1145-1152.

agents who directly perpetrated crimes against humanity, they substantially facilitated the commission of crimes during operations to repress protests through the provision of resources, the coordination of operations and the transmission of security council decisions.[2654]

13.4 LIST OF OFFICIALS

This section provides information on the 87 officials named by Amnesty International as individuals meriting criminal investigations in connection with the crimes against humanity documented in this report. For each individual, the date of appointment and any subsequent positions held are noted. The individual who immediately succeeded them in the role they held in 2022 is also mentioned. However, the names of later successors to that position are not provided.

13.4.1 COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND SUPREME LEADER

ALI KHAMENEI



Ali Khamenei © Khamenei.ir

Position: Commander-in-chief and Supreme Leader

Appointment and tenure: Ali Khamenei was appointed as the Supreme Leader by the Assembly of Experts in June 1989.

He remained in this position until 28 February 2026, when he was killed in Tehran by an air strike carried out during the US-Israeli military attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran.
His son, Mojtaba Khamenei, was subsequently appointed as the new commander-in-chief and Supreme Leader.

2654. This analysis is supported by international jurisprudence. See, for example, ICC *Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda*, Trial Chamber VI judgment (previously cited), paras 1145-1152; ICC, *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo and others*, Pre-Trial Chamber II decision on confirmation of charges (previously cited), paras 347-350.

13.4.2 GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES

MOHAMMAD BAGHERI



Mohammad Bagheri © IRNA

Position: Head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and member of the Supreme National Security Council

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Bagheri was appointed as the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces by the Supreme Leader in June 2016.[2655]

He remained in this position until 13 June 2025, when he was killed in Tehran by an air strike carried out during the Israeli military attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Abdolrahim Mousavi was subsequently appointed by the Supreme Leader as the new head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.[2656] Abdolrahim Mousavi was killed on 28 February 2026 by an air strike carried out during the US-Israeli military attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ali Abdollahi succeeded him.[2657]

2655. The Office of the Supreme Leader, انتصاب سردار سرلشکر باقری به ریاست ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح ["Appointment of Major General Bagheri as head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces"], 28 June 2016, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/15902/انتصاب-سردار-سرلشکر-باقری-به-ریاست-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian).
2656. IRNA, سرلشکر موسوی رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح شد ["Major General Mousavi becomes head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces"], 13 June 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/85861382/سرلشکر-موسوی-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-شد (in Persian).
2657. Mehr News Agency, انتصاب سرلشکر علی عبداللهی به سمت رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح ["Appointment of Major General Ali Abdollahi as head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces"], 10 August 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6913441/انتصاب-سرلشکر-علی-عبداللهی-به-سمت-رئیس-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح (in Persian).

13.4.3 IRGC

13.4.3(I) NATIONAL LEVEL

HOSSEIN SALAMI



Hossein Salami © Tasnim News Agency

Position: General commander of the IRGC and member of the State Security Council

Appointment and tenure: Hossein Salami was appointed as the general commander of the IRGC by the Supreme Leader in April 2019.[2658]

He remained in this position until 13 June 2025, when he was killed in Tehran by an Israeli air strike.

Mohammad Pakpour was subsequently appointed as the new general commander of the IRGC.[2659] After Mohammad Pakpour was killed on 28 February 2026 by an air strike carried out during the US-Israeli military attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran,[2660] Ahmad Vahidi succeeded him as the general commander of the IRGC.[2661]

2658. Khamenei.ir, انتصاب سردار سرتیپ حسین سلامی به فرماندهی کل سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Appointment of Brigadier General Hossein Salami as general commander of the IRGC"], 21 April 2019, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=42301 (in Persian).

2659. Asr Iran, فرمانده جدید کل سپاه منصوب شد ["New general commander of the IRGC appointed"], 13 June 2025, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/1068346/فرمانده-جدید-کل-سپاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2660. Mehr News Agency, سردار پاکپور در حمله آمریکا و رژیم صهیونیستی به شهادت نائل آمد ["General Pakpour martyred in attack by United States and the Zionist regime"], 1 March 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6762581 (in Persian); IRIB News, انتصاب سردار کهگیلویه و بویراحمدی به فرماندهی دانشگاه امیرالمؤمنین (ع) ["Appointment of a Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad commander as head of Imam Ali University"], 14 February 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5715443 (in Persian).

2661. IRNA, انتصاب سردار احمد وحیدی به سمت فرمانده کل سپاه پاسداران ["Appointment of General Ahmad Vahidi as general commander of the IRGC"], 10 August 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86232713/انتصاب-سردارسرلتیپ-احمد-وحیدی-به-سمت-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-پاسداران (in Persian).

MOHAMMAD PAKPOUR



Mohammad Pakpour © Defa Press

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force

Appointment and tenure: Mohmmad Pakpour was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force by the Supreme Leader in March 2010.[2662]

He remained in this position until 13 June 2025, when he was appointed by the Supreme Leader as the general commander of the IRGC.[2663] Mohammad Karami was subsequently appointed by the Supreme Leader as the commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force.[2664]

Mohammad Pakpour remained in his position as the general commander of the IRGC until 28 February 2026, when he was killed in an air strike carried out during the US-Israeli military attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran.[2665]

2662. Khamenei.ir, انتصاب فرماندهی نیروی زمینی سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Appointment of commander of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC"], 13 March 2010, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=9004 (in Persian).

2663. Asr Iran, فرمانده جدید کل سپاه منصوب شد ["New general commander of the IRGC appointed"], 13 June 2025, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/1068346/فرمانده-جدید-کل-سپاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2664. Khamenei.ir, انتصاب سردار سرتیپ محمد کرمی به فرماندهی نیروی زمینی سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی ["Appointment of Brigadier General Mohammad Karami as commander of Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC"], 18 June 2025, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=60466 (in Persian).

2665. Mehr News Agency, سردار پاکپور در حمله آمریکا و رژیم صهیونیستی به شهادت نائل آمد ["General Pakpour martyred in attack by United States and the Zionist regime"], 1 March 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6762581 (in Persian); IRIB News, انتصاب سردار کهگیلویه و بویراحمدی به فرماندهی دانشگاه امیرالمؤمنین (ع) ["Appointment of a Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad commander as head of Imam Ali University"], 14 February 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5715443 (in Persian).

13.4.3(II) REGIONAL LEVEL

MOHAMMAD TAGHI OSANLOU



Mohammad Taghi Osanlou © Hamshahri Online

Position: Commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Taghi Osanlou was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters sometime between March 2011 and March 2012, which corresponds to the Persian calendar year 1390.[2666]

He remained in this position until June 2023,[2667] when he was replaced by Ali Akbar Pourjamshidian.[2668]

Mohammad Taghi Osanlou was subsequently appointed as the coordination deputy of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters.[2669] He remained in this position until October 2024, when he was appointed as the coordination deputy of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force.[2670] He remained in this position until August 2025, when he was replaced by Ahmad Akhavan.[2671] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Mohammad Taghi Osanlou.

2666. See Fars News Agency, یار همیشگی حاج قاسم تجلیل شد + عکس ["Tribute to General Soleimani's lifelong companion + photographs"], 14 July 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1689326740000997746/یار-همیشگی-حاج-قاسم-تجلیل-شد+عکس (in Persian).
2667. Hamshahri Online, انتصاب تازه در سپاه پاسداران: فرمانده جدید قرارگاه حمزه سیدالشهدا (ع) ["New appointment in the IRGC: Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters"], 26 June 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/769737/-انتصاب-تازه-در-سپاه-پاسداران-فرمانده-جدید-قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-ع (in Persian).
2668. Hamshahri Online, انتصاب تازه در سپاه پاسداران: فرمانده جدید قرارگاه حمزه سیدالشهدا (ع) ["New appointment in the IRGC: Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters"], 26 June 2023, https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/769737/-انتصاب-تازه-در-سپاه-پاسداران-فرمانده-جدید-قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-ع (in Persian).
2669. Defa Press, سردار «اوصانلو» به قرارگاه امام حسن (ع) رفت ["General Osanlou moved to the Imam Hassan Headquarters"], 27 June 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/599506/سردار-اوصانلو-به-قرارگاه-امام-حسن-ع-رفت (in Persian).
2670. IRNA, سردار محمد تقی اوصانلو معاون هماهنگ‌کننده نیروی زمینی سپاه شد ["General Mohammad Taghi Osanlou becomes coordination deputy of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC"], 5 October 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85618452/-سردار-محمد-تقی-اوصانلو-معاون-هماهنگ-کننده-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه (in Persian).
2671. Tasnim News Agency, سردار اخوان معاون هماهنگ کننده نیروی زمینی سپاه شد ["General Akhavan becomes coordination deputy of the Ground Resistance Force of the IRGC"], 2 August 2025, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1404/05/11/3367410 (in Persian).

MAJID ARJMANDFAR



Majid Arjmandfar © IRNA

Position: Deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, covering Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles indicating when Majid Arjmandfar was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters. However, the organization found several state media articles published between May 2011 and November 2016 which referred to him as having this position.[2672]

According to state media reports, in November 2016, he was then appointed as the operations deputy commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force for several years.[2673] State media reports indicate that, by September 2019 at the latest, he had resumed the role of deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters.[2674]

State media reports indicate that Majid Arjmandfar was still serving as deputy commander of the Hamzeh Seyyed Al-Shohada Headquarters as of January 2025.[2675] Amnesty International was unable to identify state media reports documenting his departure from the position. However, state media later reported the appointment of Esmaeil Khalilzadeh as deputy commander of the Hamzeh Seyyed Al-Shohada Headquarters in December 2025.[2676] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Majid Arjmandfar.

2672. See, for example, ISNA, معاون عملیات نیروی زمینی سپاه منصوب شد ["Operations deputy of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force appointed"], 2 November 2016, https://www.isna.ir/news/95081208900/معاون-عملیات-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Kayhan, جانشین فرمانده کل سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی:تکرار انقلاب اسلامی منافع دشمنان را به خطر خواهد انداخت ["Deputy commander of the IRGC: Reviving Islamic Revolution will endanger enemies' interests"], 25 May 2011, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/2290436 (in Persian).

2673. See ISNA, معاون عملیات نیروی زمینی سپاه منصوب شد ["Operations deputy of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force appointed"], 2 November 2016, https://www.isna.ir/news/95081208900/معاون-عملیات-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian); Kayhan, جانشین فرمانده کل سپاه پاسداران انقلاب اسلامی:تکرار انقلاب اسلامی منافع دشمنان را به خطر خواهد انداخت ["Deputy commander of the IRGC: Reviving Islamic Revolution will endanger enemies' interests"], 25 May 2011, available at https://www.magiran.com/article/2290436 (in Persian).

2674. See Basij News Agency, دریافت نشان فتح توسط سردار مجید ارجمندفر ["General Majid Arjmandfar awarded Fath Medal"], 28 September 2019, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/917941 6/دریافت-نشان-فتح-توسط-سردار-مجید-ارجمندفر (in Persian).

2675. Mehr News Agency, قرآن کریم موجبات برقراری امنیت را در کشور فراهم کرده است ["Holy Quran has provided foundations for establishing security in country"], 25 January 2025, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6358330/قرآن-کریم-موجبات-برقراری-امنیت-را-در-کشور-فراهم-کرده-است (in Persian).

2676. IRIB News, حفظ وحدت و آمادگی مقابل دشمن بی وقفه ادامه خواهد داشت ["Maintaining unity and readiness against the enemy will continue without interruption"], 2 December 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5642850/حفظ-وحدت-و-آمادگی-مقابل-دشمن-بی-وقفه-ادامه-خواهد-داشت (in Persian); Defa Press, سردار «خلیل‌زاده» جانشین قرارگاه حمزه سیدالشهداء شد ["General Khalilzadeh appointed deputy commander of Hamzeh Seyyed Al-Shohada Headquarters"], 2 December 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/796991/سردار-خلیل‌زاده-جانشین-قرارگاه-حمزه-سیدالشهدا-شد (in Persian).

MOHAMMAD NAZAR AZIMI



Mohammad Nazar Azimi © Defa Press

Position: Commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Nazar Azimi was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters in November 2013.[2677]

He retained this position until November 2025, when he was replaced by Mohsen Karimi.[2678]

State media reports indicate that Mohammad Nazar Azimi was subsequently appointed as the coordination deputy of the Central Imam Hossein Headquarters. Amnesty International was unable to find a state media report announcing the exact date when he was appointed to this role. However, state media reports indicate that he held this position as of December 2025.[2679] He retained this position as of 2026.[2680]

KOUROSH ASIABANI



Kourosh Asiabani © IRNA

Position: Deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters, covering Kermanshah, Ilam and Hamedan provinces

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International could not find any state media articles specifying when Kourosh Asiabani was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Regional Headquarters.

However, state media articles indicate that he had held this position for over a decade, dating back to at least 2012.[2681]

Amnesty International was unable to find a state media report documenting the date of his departure from the position. However, state media articles indicate that he remained in the position of deputy

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2677. IRNA, سردار محمدنظر عظیمی به عنوان فرمانده قرارگاه منطقه‌ای نجف اشرف معرفی شد ["General Mohammad Nazar Azimi appointed as commander of regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters"], 24 November 2013, https://www.irna.ir/news/80919464/سردار-محمدنظر-عظیمی-به-عنوان-فرمانده-قرارگاه-منطقه-ای-نجف-اشرف (in Persian).

2678. ILNA, معرفی فرمانده جدید قرارگاه نجف اشرف سپاه ["Introduction of new commander of the IRGC's Najaf Ashraf Headquarters"], 2 November 2025, https://www.ilna.ir/پخش-سیاسی-3/1708402-معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-قرارگاه-نجف-اشرف-سپاه (in Persian); IRNA, فرمانده جدید قرارگاه منطقه‌ای نجف اشرف نیروی زمینی سپاه پاسداران معرفی شد ["New commander of the IRGC Ground Force's Najaf Ashraf Regional Headquarters appointed"], 2 November 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/85984782/فرمانده-جدید-قرارگاه-منطقه-ای-نجف-اشرف-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-پاسداران (in Persian).

2679. See, for example, IRNA, معاون سپاه پاسداران: ملت ایران در مقاطع مختلف تاریخی، فداکاری‌های عظیمی انجام دادند ["IRGC deputy: Iranians have made immense sacrifices throughout history"], 1 December 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/86011568/معاون-سپاه-پاسداران-ملت-ایران-در-مقاطع-مختلف-تاریخی-فداکاری-های (in Persian); Defa Press, انتصاب فرمانده جدید در سپاه خراسان جنوبی ["Appointment of new commander of the IRGC in South Khorasan"], 1 December 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/796969/انتصاب-فرمانده-جدید-در-سپاه-خراسان-جنوبی (in Persian).

2680. Defa Press, سردار عظیمی: رزمندگان اسلام پیروزی‌های بزرگی را در جبهه مقاومت رقم زدند ["General Azimi: Muslim fighters achieved major victories in Resistance Front"], 21 June 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/842890/سردار-عظیمی-رزمندگان-اسلام-پیروزی-های-بزرگی-را-در-جبهه-مقاومت-رقم-زدند (in Persian); Fars News Agency, فداکاری و مقاومت مردم در جنگ رمضان، ماندگار خواهد شد ["People's sacrifice and resilience during Ramadan War will endure"], 20 June 2026, https://farsnews.ir/AliLotfi_Ardabil/1781953193475835136/فداکاری-و-مقاومت-مردم-در-جنگ-رمضان-ماندگار-خواهد-شد (in Persian).

2681. See, for example, ISNA, جانشین فرماندهی قرارگاه نجف اشرف: بسیجی هرگز به دنبال دنیا و پست نیست ["Deputy commander of Najaf Ashraf Headquarters: A Basiji never seeks worldly gains or official positions"], 30 September 2012, https://www.isna.ir/news/91070905646/جانشین-فرماندهی-قرارگاه-نجف-اشرف-بسیجی-هرگز-به-دنبال-دنیا-و-پست (in Persian).

commander of the IRGC's regional Najaf Ashraf Headquarters as of June 2024.[2682]

State media reports indicate that, as of December 2024, he was serving as the commander of the Shaheed Kazemi Operational Headquarters.[2683] Amnesty International was unable to identify state media reporting announcing the exact date of his appointment to this role. He remained in this position as of 2025.[2684] Amnesty International was unable to find any updates on any subsequent positions held by Kourosh Asiabani as of 2026.

13.4.3(III) KURDISTAN PROVINCE

SADEGH HOSSEINI



Sadegh Hosseini © Mehr News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan and member of the Provision Council of Kurdistan province

Appointment and tenure: Sadegh Hosseini was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan by the then general commander of the IRGC, Hassan Salami, in November 2019.[2685]

He remained in this position until June 2023, when he was replaced by Amanollah Gashtasebi.[2686]
Sadegh Hossein was subsequently appointed by the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, as the adviser to the general commander of the IRGC.[2687]

He remained this position until June 2024, when he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Amir Al-Momenin Provincial Corps of Ilam.[2688] He retained this position as of 2026.[2689]

2682. Defa Press, ماموستا قادری معنای وحدت بین اهل تشیع و تسنن است ["Mamosta Ghaderi embodies the meaning of unity between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims"], 15 June 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/673121/ماموستا-قادری-معنای-وحدت-بین-اهل-تشیع-و-تسنن-است (in Persian).

2683. IRNA, قوه قضاییه برای پرداخت دیه به کوله‌بران سانحه‌دیده مساعدت خواهد کرد ["Judiciary will assist with payment of blood money to injured border porters"], 11 December 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85687125/قوه-قضاییه-برای-پرداخت-دیه-به-کوله-بران-سانحه-دیده-مساعدت-خواهد (in Persian). See also Fars News Agency, دیدار سردار آسیابانی فرمانده قرارگاه شهید کاظمی با حاج شیخ محمد قادری ["General Asiabani, commander of the Shaheed Kazemi headquarters' meeting with Haj Sheikh Mohammad"], 26 February 2025, https://farsnews.ir/Sarina_kahrizi/1740593602540797565 (in Persian).

2684. Defa Press, سردار آسیابانی: خدمت به محرومان عهد همیشگی انقلاب است ["General Asiabani: Serving the underprivileged is the Revolution's enduring commitment"], 14 November 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/792598/سردار-آسیابانی-خدمت-به-محرومان-عهد-همیشگی-انقلاب-است (in Persian).

2685. Sadegh Hosseini had been in this position since November 2019. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه بیت‌المقدس کردستان منصوب شد / سوابق ["New commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan appointed: Background"], 12 November 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/08/21/2138038/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-بیت-المقدس-کردستان-منصوب-شد-سوابق (in Persian).

2686. Fars News Agency, آئین معارفه و تکریم فرمانده سپاه کردستان ["Ceremony to introduce new commander and honour outgoing commander of IRGC in Kurdistan"], 26 June 2023, https://farsnews.ir/kordestan/1687794011000451313/آیین-معارفه-و-تکریم-فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان? (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه بیت‌المقدس کردستان معرفی شد ["New commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan introduced"], 25 June 2023, https://mehrnews.com/news/5819469/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-بیت-المقدس-کردستان-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2687. Kord Today, سردار سیدصادق حسینی مشاور فرمانده کل سپاه منصوب شد ["General Seyed Sadegh Hosseini appointed as adviser to the IRGC commander"], 26 June 2023, https://kordtoday.com/سردار-سیدصادق-حسینی-مشاور-فرمانده-کل-س/ (in Persian); Fars News Agency, آئین معارفه و تکریم فرمانده سپاه کردستان ["Ceremony to introduce new commander and honour outgoing commander of IRGC in Kurdistan"], 26 June 2023, https://farsnews.ir/kordestan/1687794011000451313/آیین-معارفه-و-تکریم-فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان? (in Persian).

2688. Mehr News Agency, آیین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه امیرالمومنین(ع) ایلام آغاز شد ["Ceremony to bid farewell to outgoing commander and introduce new commander of Amir Al-Momenin Corps of Ilam"], 10 June 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6131854/آیین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-امیرالمومنین-ع-ایلام-آغاز-شد (in Persian).

2689. See Basij News Agency, همهٔ ظرفیت‌ها برای تشییع رهبر شهید بسیج شد ["All capacities have been mobilized for funeral of martyred leader"], 1 July 2026, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9768807 (in Persian).

ALIREZA MADANIFAR (MADANI)



Alireza Madanifar (Madani) © Asr Tabriz

Position: Deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan

Appointment and tenure: Alireza Madanifar (Madani) was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps in November 2020.[2690]

He remained in this position until October 2023, when he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Ashoura 31 Operational Division, the main operational division of the provincial Shoda Corps of East Azerbaijan province.[2691]

Jamshid Rezayee was subsequently appointed as the new deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.[2692]

Alireza Madanifar (Madani) retained his position as commander of the IRGC's Ashoura 31 Operational Division as of 2026.[2693]

JAMSHID REZAYEE



Jamshid Rezayee © Iranian Water News Network

Position: Commander of the IRGC's 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan

Appointment and tenure: Jamshid Rezayee was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan by the then commander of the IRGC's Ground Resistance Force, Mohammad Pakpour, in June 2019.[2694]

He remained in this position until December 2023, when he was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan in December 2023.[2695]

Mansour Valy Yee was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-

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2690. Hawzah News Agency, جانشین فرمانده سپاه بیت‌المقدس کردستان منصوب شد ["Deputy commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan appointed"], 30 November 2020, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/930577 (in Persian).
2691. Defa Press, فرمانده جدید لشکر ۳۱ عاشورا تبریز منصوب شد ["New commander of Ashoura 31 Division in Tabriz appointed"], 10 October 2023, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/622239/فرمانده-جدید-لشکر-۳۱-عاشورا-تبریز-منصوب-شد (in Persian).
2692. Fars News Agency, جانشین سپاه بیت‌المقدس و فرمانده لشکر ۲۲ کردستان معرفی شدند ["Deputy commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps and commander of the 22 Division of Kurdistan introduced"], 12 December 2023, https://farsnews.ir/FarsNews/17023721730000117779/جانشین-سپاه-بیت‌المقدس-و-فرمانده-لشکر-۲۲-کردستان-معرفی-شدند (in Persian).
2693. ISNA, فرمانده لشگر عملیاتی ۳۱ عاشورا: دشمنان جرأت حمله زمینی ندارند ["Commander of Ashoura 31 Operational Division: The enemy does not dare launch a ground attack"], 26 May 2026, https://www.isna.ir/news/1405030503151/فرمانده-لشگر-عملیاتی-۳۱-عاشورا-دشمنان-جرأت-حمله-زمینی-ندارند (in Persian).
2694. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده قرارگاه عملیاتی لشکر ۲۲ سپاه کردستان معرفی شد ["Commander of 22 Operational Division of Provincial Corps of Kurdistan introduced"], 13 June 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/03/23/2031639/فرمانده-قرارگاه-عملیاتی-لشکر-22-سپاه-کردستان-معرفی-شد/amp (in Persian).
2695. Fars News Agency, جانشین سپاه بیت‌المقدس و فرمانده لشکر ۲۲ کردستان معرفی شدند ["Deputy commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps and commander of the 22 Division of Kurdistan introduced"], 12 December 2023, https://farsnews.ir/FarsNews/17023721730000117779 (in Persian).

Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.[2696]
Jamshid Rezayee remained in his position as deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan until April 2025, when he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.[2697] He retained this role as of 2026.[2698]

MORTEZA MIRAGHAYEE



Morteza Miraghayee © Fars News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj county and member of the Provision Council of Sanandaj county

Appointment and tenure: Morteza Miraghayee was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj county in July 2022.[2699]

He retained this position until August 2025, when he was succeeded by Akbar Esmaili.[2700]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Morteza Miraghayee.

2696. Fars News Agency, جانشین سپاه بیت‌المقدس و فرمانده لشکر ۲۲ کردستان معرفی شدند ["Deputy commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps and commander of the 22 Division of Kurdistan introduced"], 12 December 2023, https://farsnews.ir/FarsNews/1702372173000117779 (in Persian).

2697. IMNA, فرمانده جدید سپاه بیت‌المقدس استان کردستان معرفی شد ["New commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan introduced"], 9 April 2025, https://www.imna.ir/news/856177/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-بیت-المقدس-استان-کردستان-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2698. IRNA, فرمانده سپاه کردستان: اجلاسیه‌های شهدا باید جریان‌ساز و فرهنگ‌ساز باشند ["Commander of Kurdistan IRGC: Conferences honouring martyrs should be catalysts for social movements and promotion of culture"], 14 July 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86208920/فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-اجلاسیه-های-شهدا-باید-جریان-ساز-و-فرهنگ-ساز (in Persian).

2699. Mehr News Agency, فرمانده جدید ناحیه مقاومت بسیج سپاه سنندج معرفی شد ["New commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj introduced"], 16 July 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5539332/فرمانده-جدید-ناحیه-مقاومت-بسیج-سپاه-سنندج-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2700. Borna News, فرمانده سپاه سنندج معرفی شد + سوابق ["Commander of Sanandaj Corps introduced + background"], 30 August 2025, https://borna.news/fa/news/2252030/فرمانده-سپاه-سنندج-معرفی-شد-سوابق (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, ۳۰ تشریح برنامه‌های هفته بسیج سنندج؛ میلیارد تسهیلات پرداخت شد ["Explanation of Basij Week programmes in Sanandaj; 30 billion in loans disbursed"], 19 November 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1403/08/29/3203543/تشریح-برنامه-های-هفته-بسیج-سنندج-30میلیارد-تسهیلات-پرداخت-شد (in Persian).

YOUSEF MAROUFI



Yousef Maroufi © Tasnim News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez county and member of the Provision Council of Saqqez county

Appointment and tenure: Yousef Maroufi was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez county in June 2019.[2701]

He remained in this position until August 2024. Mohsen Ivani was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez county.[2702]

State media reports indicate that, as of January 2025, Yousef Maroufi held the position of deputy commander of the Shaheed Boroujerdi Headquarters in West Azerbaijan province.[2703] Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports indicating the exact date of his appointment. He remained in this position as of 2026.[2704]

2701. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه سقز معرفی شد+تصویر ["New commander of Saqqez IRGC introduced + images"], 2 June 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/03/12/2024770/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سقز-معرفی-شد-تصویر (in Persian).

2702. Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه سقز معرفی شد ["New commander of Saqqez IRGC introduced"], 27 August 2024, https://farsnews.ir/ahmadrashidi/1724748649486026785/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سقز-معرفی-شد? (in Persian).

2703. Basij News Agency, مراسم پنجمین سالگرد شهادت سردار حاج قاسم سلیمانی در باروق برگزار شد ["Ceremony marking the fifth anniversary of martyrdom of commander Haj Ghasem Soleimani was held in Barugh"], 2 January 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9657794/مراسم-پنجمین-سالگرد-شهادت-سردار-حاج-قاسم-سلیمانی-در-باروق-برگزار-شد (in Persian). See also IRNA, بسیج به یک تفکر فرامنطقه‌ای تبدیل شده است ["Basij has become a transregional way of thinking"], 29 November 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/86010260/بسیج-به-یک-تفکر-فرامنطقه-ای-تبدیل-شده-است (in Persian).

2704. IRIB News, شهدا درس ایستادگی را از مکتب عاشورا آموخته‌اند ["Martyrs learned the lesson of steadfastness from the school of Ashoura"], 1 January 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5676109/شهدا-درس-ایستادگی-را-از-مکتب-عاشورا-آموخته-اند (in Persian)

ALI AHMAD SAFIZADEH



Ali Ahmad Safizadeh © IRNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh county and member of the Provision Council of Divandareh county

Appointment and tenure: Ali Ahmad Safizadeh was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh county in June 2022.[2705]
He remained in this position until August 2024, when he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county.[2706]

Mehdi Jabari was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh county.[2707]

State media reports indicate that Ali Ahmad Safizadeh remained in his position of commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county as of February 2026, but that, sometime between then and May 2026, he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez county.[2708]

2705. IRNA, فرمانده جدید سپاه شهرستان دیواندره معرفی شد ["New IRGC commander of Divandareh county introduced"], 27 June 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84803380/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-شهرستان-دیواندره-معرفی-شد (in Persian).
2706. Office of the County Governor of Divandareh, سرهنگ پاسدار جباری بعنوان فرمانده جدید سپاه شهرستان دیواندره منصوب گردید ["Colonel Pasdar Jabari appointed as new IRGC commander of Divandareh county"], 28 August 2024, https://divandareh.ostan-kd.ir/1403/06/07/سرهنگ-پاسدار-جباری-بعنوان-فرمانده-ج (in Persian); Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه سقز معرفی شد ["New commander of Saqqez IRGC introduced"], 27 August 2024, https://farsnews.ir/ahmadrashidi/1724748649486026785/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سقز-معرفی-شد? (in Persian).

2707. Office of the County Governor of Divandareh, سرهنگ پاسدار جباری بعنوان فرمانده جدید سپاه شهرستان دیواندره منصوب گردید ["Colonel Pasdar Jabari appointed as new IRGC commander of Divandareh county"], 28 August 2024, https://divandareh.ostan-kd.ir/1403/06/07/سرهنگ-پاسدار-جباری-بعنوان-فرمانده-ج/ (in Persian); Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه سقز معرفی شد ["New commander of Saqqez IRGC introduced"], 27 August 2024, https://farsnews.ir/ahmadrashidi/1724748649486026785/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سقز-معرفی-شد? (in Persian).
2708. Mehr News Agency, سردار صفی‌زاده: آزادی خرمشهر تجلی پیروزی حق بر باطل است ["Brigadier General Safizadeh: The liberation of Khorramshahr embodies the triumph of right over falsehood"], 24 May 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6840005/ (in Persian).

ABBAS AMRI



Abbas Amri © IRNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county and member of the Provision Council of Baneh county

Appointment and tenure: Abbas Amri was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county in January 2021.[2709]

He remained in this position until August 2024.[2710] Ali Ahmad Safizadeh was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh county.[2711]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Abbas Amri.

SADEGH JAMALI



Sadegh Jamali © IRNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan county and member of the Provision Council of Dehgolan county

Appointment and tenure: Sadegh Jamali was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan county in October 2021.[2712]

He remained in this position until July 2023, when he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghorveh county.[2713]

2709. Basij News Agency, آیین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه شهرستان بانه برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the IRGC commander of Baneh county held"], 13 January 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9312318/آیین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-شهرستان-بانه-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

2710. Office of the County Governor of Divandareh, سرهنگ پاسدار جباری بعنوان فرمانده جدید سپاه شهرستان دیواندره منصوب گردید ["Colonel Pasdar Jabari appointed as new IRGC commander of Divandareh county"], 28 August 2024, https://divandareh.ostan-kd.ir/1403/06/07/سرهنگ-پاسدار-جباری-بعنوان-فرمانده-ج/ (in Persian).

2711. Office of the County Governor of Divandareh, سرهنگ پاسدار جباری بعنوان فرمانده جدید سپاه شهرستان دیواندره منصوب گردید ["Colonel Pasdar Jabari appointed as new IRGC commander of Divandareh county"], 28 August 2024, https://divandareh.ostan-kd.ir/1403/06/07/سرهنگ-پاسدار-جباری-بعنوان-فرمانده-ج/ (in Persian).

2712. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده سپاه استان کردستان: سپاه در همه عرصه‌ها در کنار مردم است ["Commander of Province Corps of Kurdistan: The IRGC stands with the people in all areas"], 4 October 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1400/07/12/2584094/فرمانده-سپاه-استان-کردستان-سپاه-در-همه-عرصه-ها-در-کنار-مردم-است (in Persian).

2713. Tasnim News Agency, تمرکز سپاه بر محرومیت‌زدایی در کنار حفظ امنیت پایدار در کردستان ["IRGC focuses on poverty alleviation alongside maintaining sustainable security in Kurdistan"], 31 July 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/05/09/2933870/تمرکز-سپاه-بر-محرومیت-زدایی-در-کنار-حفظ-امنیت-پایدار-در-کردستان (in Persian).

Ali Rezvanian was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan county.[2714]

Sadegh Jamali retained his position as commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghorveh county as of 2026.[2715]

HOSSEIN MALEKI



Hossein Maleki © Pana News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kamyaran county and member of the Provision Council of Kamyaran county

Appointment and tenure: Hossein Maleki was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kamyaran county by the then commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan, Mohammad Hossein Rajabi, in August 2017.[2716]

He retained this position as of 2026.[2717]

2714. Tasnim News Agency, تمرکز سپاه بر محرومیت‌زدایی در کنار حفظ امنیت پایدار در کردستان ["IRGC focuses on poverty alleviation alongside maintaining sustainable security in Kurdistan"], 31 July 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/05/09/2933870/تمرکز-سپاه-بر-محرومیت-زدایی-در-کنار-حفظ-امنیت-پایدار-در-کردستان (in Persian).

2715. Mehr News Agency, سرهنگ جمالی: ۱۵۰ زائر از قروه به مراسم تشییع رهبر شهید اعزام می‌شوند ["Colonel Jamali: 150 pilgrims from Ghorveh will be sent to the funeral ceremony of the martyred leader"], 4 July 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6878608/سرهنگ-جمالی-۱۵۰-زائر-از-قروه-به-مراسم-تشییع-رهبر-شهید-اعزام-می-شوند (in Persian).

2716. Kordira Blog, فرمانده جدید سپاه شهرستان کامیاران منصوب شد ["New IRGC commander of Kamyaran county appointed"], 27 August 2017, https://kordira.blogfa.com/post/27588 (in Persian).

2717. Office of the County Governor of Kamyaran, بدرقه کاروان زائران کامیارانی اعزامی به مراسم تشییع پیکر مطهر رهبر شهید انقلاب در تهران ["Farewell ceremony for Kamyaran pilgrims departing to attend funeral procession of the martyred leader of the Revolution in Tehran"], 5 July 2026, https://kamyaran.ostan-kd.ir/1405/04/14/بدرقه-کاروان-زائران-کامیارانی-اعزام/ (in Persian).

MANSOUR VALY YEE



Mansour Valy Yee © Tasnim News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county until 29 October 2022 and member of the Provision Council of Mariwan county

Appointment and tenure: Mansour Valy Yee was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county in July 2019.[2718]

He remained in this position until 29 October 2022. Gheisar Omidi was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county.[2719]

In December 2023, Mansour Valy Yee was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.[2720] He retained this position as of 2026.[2721]

GHEISAR OMIDI



Gheisar Omidi © shahrdarimarivan

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county after 29 October 2022 and member of the Provision Council of Mariwan county

Appointment and tenure: Gheisar Omidi was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan county on 29 October 2022.[2722]

He retained this position as of 2026.[2723]

2718. Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه مریوان معرفی شد ["New IRGC commander of Mariwan introduced"], 30 July 2019, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1564490108000101453/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-مریوان-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2719. Marivan_online, Telegram post: مراسم تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه مریوان ["Farewell ceremony and introduction of IRGC commander in Mariwan"], 29 October 2022, https://t.me/Marivan_online/10977 (in Persian).

2720. Fars News Agency, جانشین سپاه بیت‌المقدس و فرمانده لشکر ۲۲ کردستان معرفی شدند ["Deputy commander of the Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps and commander of the 22 Division of Kurdistan introduced"], 12 December 2023, https://farsnews.ir/FarsNews/17023721730000117779/جانشین-سپاه-بیت‌المقدس-و-فرمانده-لشکر-۲۲-کردستان-معرفی-شدند (in Persian).

2721. Tasnim News Agency, ببینید | بازدید نماینده ولی فقیه در سپاه از نقطه صفر مرزی ["Watch: Representative of Supreme Leader in IRGC visits zero border point"], 13 May 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1405/02/23/3589983/ببینید-بازدید-نماینده-ولی-فقیه-در-سپاه-از-نقطه-صفر-مرزی (in Persian).

2722. Marivan_online, Telegram post: مراسم تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه مریوان ["Farewell ceremony and introduction of IRGC commander in Mariwan"], 29 October 2022, https://t.me/Marivan_online/10977 (in Persian).

2723. Tasnim News Agency, سردار امیدی: اجلاسیه شهدای مریوان تجلی وحدت و زنده بودن راه ایثار بود ["General Omidi: Mariwan Martyrs Congress was manifestation of unity and keeping path of sacrifice alive"], 15 July 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1405/04/24/3647854/سردار-امیدی-اجلاسیه-شهدای-مریوان-تجلی-وحدت-و-زنده-بودن-راه-ایثار-بود (in Persian).

13.4.3(IV) WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

HABIB SHAHSAVARI



Habib Shahsavari © Basij News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan and member of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province

Appointment and tenure: Habib Shahsavari was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan in February 2018.[2724]
He remained in this position until June 2023, when he retired. Mohammad Hossein Rajabi was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan.[2725]

Following his retirement, in June 2023, Habib Shahsavari was appointed by the then general commander of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, as one of his advisers.[2726] Amnesty International was unable to find any updates on any subsequent positions held by Habib Shahsavari as of 2026.

2724. ISNA, سردار حبیب شهسواری فرمانده سپاه شهداء آذربایجان غربی شد ["General Habib Shahsavari appointed commander of the Shohada Corps of West Azerbaijan"], 3 February 2018, https://www.isna.ir/news/orumiyeh-37394/سردار-حبیب-شهسواری-فرمانده-سپاه-شهداء-آذربایجان-غربی-شد (in Persian).

2725. IRNA, فرمانده جدید سپاه شهدای آذربایجان غربی معرفی شد ["New commander of the Shohada Corps of West Azerbaijan introduced"], 26 June 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85151708/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-شهدای-آذربایجان-غربی-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2726. Hawzah News Agency, سردار شهسواری مشاور فرمانده کل سپاه شد ["General Shahsavari appointed adviser to general commander of the IRGC"], 26 June 2023, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1094354/سردار-شهسواری-مشاور-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-شد (in Persian).

TALEB RAHIMI



Taleb Rahimi © International Quran News Agency (IQNA)

Position: Deputy commander of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan

Appointment and tenure: Taleb Rahimi was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan in March 2021.[2727]

He remained in this position until November 2023.[2728] Taghi Najmi was subsequently appointed as the new deputy commander of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan.[2729]

In January 2024, Taleb Rahimi was appointed by the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan province, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, as the director general of the Bureau for Foreign Nationals and Immigrants of West Azerbaijan province.[2730] He retained this position as of 2025.[2731] Amnesty International was unable to find any updates on any subsequent positions held by Taleb Rahimi as of 2026.

2727. Asemaneshahr, سردار طالب رحیمی به سمت جانشین فرمانده سپاه منصوب شد ["General Taleb Rahimi appointed deputy commander of provincial corps"], 19 March 2021, https://www.asemaneshahr.ir/سردار-طالب-رحیمی-به-سمت-جانشین-فرمانده/ (in Persian).

2728. Basij News Agency, جانشین سپاه شهدای آذربایجان غربی معرفی شد ["Deputy commander of the Shohada Corps of West Azerbaijan introduced"], 2 November 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9550984/جانشین-سپاه-شهدای-آذربایجان-غربی-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2729. Basij News Agency, جانشین سپاه شهدای آذربایجان غربی معرفی شد ["Deputy commander of the Shohada Corps of West Azerbaijan introduced"], 2 November 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9550984/جانشین-سپاه-شهدای-آذربایجان-غربی-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2730. IRIB News, انتصاب مدیرکل دفتر اتباع و مهاجرین خارجی استانداری آذربایجان‌غربی ["Director General of Bureau for Foreign Nationals and Immigrants of Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan province appointed"], 3 January 2024, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4111126/انتصاب-مدیرکل-دفتر-اتباع-و-مهاجرین-خارجی-استانداری-آذربایجان‌غربی (in Persian).

2731. IRIB News, تأکید جوانان و ورزشکاران آذربایجان غربی بر تقویت هویت ملی، دینی و انقلابی ["West Azerbaijan's youth and athletes emphasize strengthening national, religious and revolutionary identity"], 9 July 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5513864/تأکید-جوانان-و-ورزشکاران-آذربایجان-غربی-بر-تقویت-هویت-ملی-دینی-و-انقلابی (in Persian).

YADOLLAH ABROUSHAN



Yadollah Abroushan © Defa Press

Position: Commander of the IRGC's 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan

Appointment and tenure: Yadollah Abroushan was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of the Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan in October 2012.[2732] He remained in this position until September 2025, when he was replaced by Mir Mehdi Ghafouri.[2733]

In December 2025, Yadollah Abroushan was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Shaheed Boroujerdi Operational Headquarters of West Azerbaijan.[2734] He retained this position as of 2026.[2735]

SAMAD MOHAMMAD ALIZADEH



Samad Mohammad Alizadeh © IQNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Boukan county and member of the Provision Council of Boukan county

Appointment and tenure: Samad Mohammad Alizadeh was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Boukan county in June 2022.[2736]

He remained in this position until October 2023, when he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sardasht county, also in West Azerbaijan province.[2737]

Sohrab Saidi was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Boukan county.[2738] Samad Mohammad Alizadeh remained in his position as commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sardasht county until June 2026.[2739] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Samad Mohammad Alizadeh.

2732. IRNA, فرمانده جدید سپاه خوی معرفی شد ["New commander of the IRGC of Khoy introduced"], 24 October 2012, https://www.irna.ir/news/80384959/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-خوی-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2733. Kurd Press, فرمانده لشکر۳ حمزه سیدالشهدا در ارومیه معرفی شد ["Commander of 3 Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada division introduced in Urumieh"], 13 September 2025, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2788624 (in Persian).

2734. Fars News Agency, انتصاب جدید در نیروی زمینی سپاه ۳ ["Three new appointments in the IRGC Ground Forces"], 2 December 2025, https://farsnews.ir/M_r7726/1764656055216798696/انتصاب-جدید-در-نیروی-زمینی-سپاه-۳ (in Persian).

2735. Borna News, بازدید سردار رحیم صفوی از زیرساخت‌های مرزی شهرستان ماکو ["General Rahim Safavi inspects border infrastructure in Maku county"], 2 July 2026, https://borna.news/fa/news/2361184/بازدید-سردار-رحیم-صفوی-از-زیرساخت-های-مرزی-شهرستان-ماکو (in Persian).

2736. Bokan Online, فرمانده سپاه پاسداران بوکان تغییر کرد ["IRGC commander of Boukan replaced"], 29 June 2022, https://bokanonline.ir/فرمانده-سپاه-پاسداران-بوکان/ (in Persian).

2737. International Quran News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه سردشت معرفی شد ["New commander of the IRGC of Sardasht introduced"], 2 October 2023, https://orumiyeh.iqna.ir/fa/news/4172744/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سردشت-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2738. Basij News Agency, آیین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه بوکان برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for IRGC commander of Boukan held"], 9 October 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9545839/آیین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-بوکان-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

2739. IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید سپاه سردشت ["Introduction of new IRGC commander of Sardasht"], 21 June 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5832268/معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-سردشت (in Persian).

AKBAR NOROUZI



Akbar Norouzi © IQNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mahabad county and member of the Provision Council of Mahabad county

Appointment and tenure: Akbar Norouzi was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mahabad county in July 2022.[2740]
He retained this position as of 2026.[2741]

JALIL NAGHSHI GHAREGHBAGH



Jalil Naghshi Ghareghbagh
© IRNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Piranshahr county and member of the Provision Council of Piranshahr county

Appointment and tenure: Jalil Naghshi Ghareghbagh was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Piranshahr county in June 2022.[2742]

He retained this position as of 2025.[2743] Amnesty International was unable to find any updates on any subsequent positions held by Jalil Naghshi Ghareghbagh as of 2026.

2740. Young Journalists Club, فرمانده سپاه پاسداران مهاباد معارفه شد ["IRGC commander of Mahabad introduced"], 5 July 2022, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8178794/فرمانده-سپاه-پاسداران-مهاباد-معارفه-شد (in Persian).
2741. IRIB News, تکریم ایثارگر جنگ تحمیلی سوم در مهاباد ["Honouring a veteran of the third imposed war in Mahabad"], 10 May 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5788975 (in Persian).
2742. PiranshahrRudaw, Telegram post: مراسم تکریم و معارفه فرمانده سپاه پیرانشهر برگزار گردید ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for IRGC commander of Piranshahr held"], 23 June 2022, https://t.me/PiranshahrRudaw/156367 (in Persian).
2743. IRIB News, آغاز ساخت نیروگاه خورشیدی در شهرستان پیرانشهر ["Construction of solar power plant begins in Piranshahr county"], 25 December 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5667603 (in Persian).

YAGHOUB RASHIDI



Yaghoub Rashidi © IMNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Oshnavieh county and member of the Provision Council of Oshnavieh county

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles specifying the date of Yaghoub Rahshidi's appointment as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Oshnavieh county.

According to state media articles, he was the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Oshnavieh county at the time of the 2022 protests.[2744]

He remained in this position until June 2026, when he was replaced by Ghasem Karamzadeh.[2745] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Yaghoub Rashidi.

GHAHREMAN EYVAZLOU



Ghahreman Eyvazlou © IQNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh county and member of the Provision Council of Urumieh county

Appointment and tenure: Ghahreman Eyvazlou was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh county in December 2019.[2746]

He remained in this position until August 2024.[2747] Mehdi Razavi was subsequently appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh county.[2748]

State media reports from January 2025 to January 2026 indicate that he was either the head or deputy head of the Specialized Staff of Sectoral

2744. See, for example, IRNA, فرماندار اشنویه: توسعه فرهنگی بستر ساز ارتقای جامعه است ["County governor of Oshnavieh: Cultural development lays the foundation for societal progress"], 17 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84914298/فرماندار-اشنویه-توسعه-فرهنگی-بستر-ساز-ارتقای-جامعه-است (in Persian); Borna News, برقراری امنیت کامل در اشنویه ["Complete security has been established in Oshnavieh"], 26 September 2022, https://borna.news/fa/news/1381108/برقراری-امنیت-کامل-در-اشنویه (in Persian).

2745. IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید سپاه اشنویه [Introduction of new IRGC commander of Oshnavieh], 21 June 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5832281/معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-اشنویه (in Persian); Basij News Agency, تجلیل فرمانده سپاه اشنویه از خانواده چندفرزندی در شهرستان ["IRGC commander of Oshnavieh IRGC honours a multi-child family in county"], 24 August 2024, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9622841/تجلیل-فرمانده-سپاه-اشنویه-از-خانواده-چندفرزندی-در-شهرستان (in Persian).

2746. Tasnim News Agency, آئین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه ارومیه برگزار شد + تصاویر ["Farewell and introduction ceremony of the IRGC commander of Urumieh held + photos"], 26 December 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/10/05/2168238/آئین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-ارومیه-برگزار-شد-تصاویر (in Persian).

2747. Young Journalists Club, معرفی فرمانده نیروی مقاومت بسیج سپاه ارومیه ["Introduction of new commander of the Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh"], 28 August 2024, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8810042/معرفی-فرمانده-نیروی-مقاومت-بسیج-سپاه-ارومیه (in Persian).

2748. Fars News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه ارومیه معرفی شد ["New IRGC commander of Urumieh introduced"], 28 August 2024, https://farsnews.ir/Fereshteh_farid/1724854335736315704/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-ارومیه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

and Specialists Basij of the IRGC's Shohada Provincial Corps of West Azerbaijan.[2749]

In March 2026, Ghahreman Eyvazlou was appointed by the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Reza Rahmani, as the county governor of Urumieh.[2750] He retained this position as of June 2026.[2751]

13.4.3(V) KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

BAHMAN REYHANI



Bahman Reyhani © Chakavak News

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah and member of the Provision Council of Kermanshah province

Appointment and tenure: Bahman Reyhani was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah in June 2014.[2752]

He retained this position as of 2026.[2753]

2749. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), ظرفیت نخبگانی بسیج شهرستان خوی در خدمت حل مسائل و مشکلات مردم ["The expert capacities of the Basij in Khoy County at the service of solving people's issues and problems"], 6 January 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5682143/ (in Persian); Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), برگزاری مجمع سالانه بسیج سپاه شهرستان خوی ["The annual assembly of the Khoy county IRGC Basij"], 12 January 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4429597/https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4429597/ (in Persian).

2750. IRNA, قهرمان عیوضلو» فرماندار ارومیه شد« ["Ghahreman Eyvalzou becomes county governor of Urumieh"], 6 March 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86093523/قهرمان-عیوضلو-فرماندار-ارومیه-شد (in Persian).

2751. Mehr News Agency, عیوضلو: محرم فرصتی برای تقویت انسجام ملی و ترویج فرهنگ ایثار است ["Eyvazlou: Muharram is an opportunity to strengthen national unity and promote culture of self-sacrifice"], 10 June 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6856676/-عیوضلو-محرم-فرصتی-برای-تقویت-انسجام-ملی-و-ترویج-فرهنگ-ایثار (in Persian).

2752. ISNA, فرمانده جدید سپاه نبی اکرم (ص) کرمانشاه معرفی شد ["New commander of Nabi Akram Corps of Kermanshah introduced"], 10 June 2014, https://www.isna.ir/news/kermanshah-43644/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-نبی-اکرم-ص-کرمانشاه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2753. See Tasnim News Agency, ملت ایران از آرمان‌های رهبر شهید عقب‌نشینی نمی‌کند ["Iranian people will not retreat from ideals of martyred leader"], 1 July 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1405/04/10/3630903/ملت-ایران-از-آرمان-های-رهبر-شهید-عقب-نشینی-نمی-کند (in Persian).

MASOUD GHANBARI



Masoud Ghanbari © IMNA

Position: Deputy commander of the IRGC's Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International could not find any state media articles specifying when Masoud Ghanbari was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah. However, state media articles indicate that he had held this position since at least January 2022.[2754]

He retained this position as of 2026.[2755]

MOJTABA KARAMI



Mojtaba Karami © Basij News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International could not find any state media articles specifying when Mojtaba Karami was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps of Kermanshah. However, state media articles indicate that he had held this position since at least December 2020.[2756]

He remained in this position until August 2023, when he was appointed as deputy commander of the IRGC's Imam Hassan Mojtaba Provincial Corps of Alborz.[2757]

Faramarz Safari was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of the Nabi Akram Provincial Corps

2754. See, for example, IRNA, جانشین فرمانده سپاه کرمانشاه: بسیج کلید حل همه مشکلات است ["Deputy commander of Kermanshah IRGC: The Basij is the key to solving all problems"], 25 November 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85670216/جانشین-فرمانده-سپاه-کرمانشاه-بسیج-کلید-حل-همه-مشکلات-است (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, برگزاری رژه موتوری نیروهای مسلح در کرمانشاه همزمان با شروع دهه فجر ["Motorcade parade of armed forces held in Kermanshah to mark the start of the 10-Day Dawn"], 30 January 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5412421/برگزاری-رژه-موتوری-نیروهای-مسلح-درکرمانشاه-همزمان-با-شروع-دهه (in Persian).

2755. Defa Press, آمادگی تردد ۲ میلیون زائر از مرز خسروی برای اربعین ["Preparation for passage of 2 million pilgrims through the Khosravi border crossing for Arbaeen"], 12 July 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/847493/آمادگی-تردد-۲-میلیون-زائر-از-مرز-خسروی-برای-اربعین (in Persian).

2756. See, for example, IRIB News, گرامی‌داشت سالروز عملیات غرورآفرین والفجر ۸ در لشکر ۲۹ نبی اکرم (ص) کرمانشاه ["Commemoration of the anniversary of the glorious Operation Valfajr 8 in the 29 Nabi Akram Division of Kermanshah"], 6 February 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3743985/گرامی-داشت-سالروز-عملیات-غرور-آفرین-والفجر-۸-در-لشکر-۲۹-نبی-اکرم-ص-کرمانشاه (in Persian); Young Journalists Club, وحدت مهم‌ترین عامل در موفقیت و رمز برتری مسلمانان ["Unity is most important factor for success and key to Muslim superiority"], 16 December 2020, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/7597570/وحدت-مهمترین-عامل-در-موفقیت-و-رمز-برتری-مسلمانان (in Persian).

2757. Basij News Agency, مراسم تکریم و معارفه جانشین فرمانده سپاه امام حسن مجتبی (ع) استان البرز برگزار شد ["Ceremony held to honour and introduce the new deputy commander of Imam Hassan Mojtaba Provincial Corps of Alborz"], 11 August 2023, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9532658/مراسم-تکریم-و-معارفه-جانشین-فرمانده-سپاه-امام-حسن-مجتبی-ع-استان-البرز-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

of Kermanshah.[2758]

Mojtaba Karami remained in his position as deputy commander of the IRGC's Imam Hassan Mojtaba Provincial Corps of Alborz until 23 June 2025, when he was killed in Alborz province by an Israeli air strike.[2759]

ABOUZAR ANVARI



Abouzar Anvari © Basij News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah county and member of the Provision Council of Kermanshah county

Appointment and tenure: Abouzar Anvari was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah county in December 2021.[2760]

He remained in this position until September 2023.[2761] Gholamali Yarbeigi was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah county.[2762]

A state media report indicates that, as of December 2025, Abouzar Anvari held the position of deputy head of Shahid Motahari College.[2763] However, Amnesty International was unable to find any information on the date of his appointment to that position or on any other positions he might have held.

2758. See Kayhan, آمادگی ما برای دفاع از کشور در بالاترین سطح قرار دارد ["Our readiness to defend the country is at the highest level"], 8 January 2025, https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/303520/آمادگی-ما-برای-دفاع-از-کشور-در-بالاترین-سطح-قرار-دارد (in Persian); IRNA, گردهمایی امامان جمعه و جماعات غرب کرمانشاه در سرپل ذهاب برگزار شد ["Gathering of Friday prayer leaders and congregations from western Kermanshah held in Sarpol-e Zahab"], 2 October 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85246138/گردهمایی-امامان-جمعه-و-جماعات-غرب-کرمانشاه-در-سرپل-ذهاب-برگزار (in Persian).

2759. IRNA, اعلام اسامی شهدای حمله هوایی رژیم اسراییل به سپاه البرز ["Announcement of names of martyrs of Israeli airstrike on Alborz IRGC"], 24 June 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/85871959/اعلام-اسامی-شهدای-حمله-هوایی-رژیم-اسراییل-به-سپاه-البرز (in Persian); Fars News Agency, تشییع پیکر شهید سردار مجتبی کرمی در هرسین ["Funeral procession of martyred body of general Mojtaba Karami in Harsin"], 24 June 2025, https://farsnews.ir/Veismoradi/1751057248832507005/تشییع-پیکر-شهید-سردار-مجتبی-کرمی-در-هرسین (in Persian).

2760. Basij News Agency, آئین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده سپاه ناحیه کرمانشاه برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah held"], 27 December 2021, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9402542/آئین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-ناحیه-کرمانشاه-برگزار-شد-عکس (in Persian).

2761. See Mersad News Agency, آئین تکریم و معارفه فرمانده سپاه ناحیه کرمانشاه ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah"], 14 September 2023, https://mersadnews.ir/story/آئین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-ناحیه-کرمانشاه (in Persian); Fars News Agency, معارفه سرهنگ غلامعلی یاربیگی به سمت فرمانده سپاه ناحیه کرمانشاه ["Colonel Gholamali Yarbeigi introduced as commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah"], 13 September 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1694631989000243868/معارفه-سرهنگ-غلامعلی-یاربیگی-به-سمت-فرمانده-سپاه-ناحیه-کرمانشاه؟ (in Persian).

2762. See Mersad News Agency, آئین تکریم و معارفه فرمانده سپاه ناحیه کرمانشاه ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah"], 14 September 2023, https://mersadnews.ir/story/آئین-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-سپاه-ناحیه-کرمانشاه (in Persian); Fars News Agency, معارفه سرهنگ غلامعلی یاربیگی به سمت فرمانده سپاه ناحیه کرمانشاه ["Colonel Gholamali Yarbeigi introduced as commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah"], 13 September 2023, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1694631989000243868/معارفه-سرهنگ-غلامعلی-یاربیگی-به-سمت-فرمانده-سپاه-ناحیه-کرمانشاه؟ (in Persian).

2763. Basij News Agency, برنامه‌های گسترده دانشکده شهید مطهری همزمان با هفته پژوهش/ از اجرای نخستین گردهمایی حکمرانی علمی در بسیج تا برپایی رویداد طرحی نو ["Extensive programmes by Shahid Motahari faculty during Research Week: From holding the first scientific governance conference in the Basij to organizing the New Design event"], 10 December 2025, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9734302/برنامه‌های-گسترده-دانشکده-شهید-مطهری-همزمان-با-هفته-پژوهش-از-اجرای-نخستین-گردهمایی-حکمرانی-علمی-در-بسیج-تا-برپایی-رویداد-طرحی-نو (in Persian).

BAHRAM MIRZAEE



Bahram Mirzaee © Mehr News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Javanroud county and member of the Provision Council of Javanroud county

Appointment and tenure: Bahram Mirzaee was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Javanroud county in December 2020.[2764]

He remained in this position until September 2025, when he was replaced by Hamed Pirou.[2765]

Bahram Mirzaee was subsequently appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Paveh county.[2766] He retained this position as of 2026.[2767]

ARSALAN SOLTANGHOLI



Arsalan Soltangholi © Salam Paveh

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county and member of the Provision Council of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county

Appointment and tenure: Arsalan Soltangholi was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county in February 2021.[2768]

He remained in this position until 18 October 2022, when he was succeeded by Behzad Yousefvand.[2769]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Arsalan Soltangholi.

2764. Dana News, فرمانده جدید سپاه ناحیه جوانرود معرفی شد ["New commander of the Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Javanroud introduced"], 13 December 2020, https://dana.ir/1677071/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-ناحیه-جوانرود-معرفی-شد#gsc.tab=0 (in Persian).

2765. See Fars News Agency, معرفی فرمانده جدید سپاه ناحیه جوانرود ["Introduction of new commander of Javanroud IRGC sector"], 3 September 2025, https://farsnews.ir/Fatemeh_Nikjoo/1756910801203688936?lang=en (in Persian); Pupils Association News Agency, حضور بسیجیان شهرستان جوانرود در رزمایش اقتدار پیامبر اعظم ["Participation of Basijis from Javanroud county in Prophet Mohammad power exercise"], 10 January 2025, https://www.pana.ir/بخش-کرمانشاه-16/1532097-حضور-بسیجیان-شهرستان-جوانرود-در-رزمایش-اقتدار-پیامبر-اعظم (in Persian); See IRNA, فرمانده سپاه جوانرود: بسیج هر جا که نیاز به خدمت بوده وارد میدان شده است ["Commander of Javanroud IRGC: Basij has stepped in wherever service was needed"], 17 November 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84945740/فرمانده-سپاه-جوانرود-بسیج-هر-جا-که-نیاز-به-خدمت-بوده-وارد-میدان (in Persian); IRNA, فرمانده سپاه جوانرود: دشمن با جنگ رسانه‌ای به دنبال انحراف افکار عمومی است ["Commander of Javanroud IRGC: Enemy is seeking to mislead minds through media warfare"], 4 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84904072/فرمانده-سپاه-جوانرود-دشمن-با-جنگ-رسانه-ای-به-دنبال-انحراف-افکار (in Persian).

2766. Basij News Agency, سرهنگ «بهرام میرزایی» سکان‌دار جدید سپاه پاوه شد ["Colonel 'Bahram Mirzaee' becomes new commander of Paveh IRGC"], 3 September 2025, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1404/06/12/3391655 (in Persian).

2767. See Fars News Agency, شهید اهل سنت پاوه پس از ۱۲۰ روز مجاهدت در کما به شهادت رسید ["Sunni martyr from Paveh dies after 120 days in coma"], 24 June 2026, https://farsnews.ir/Aranramazani1/1782299475922954949 (in Persian).

2768. Mehr News Agency, فرمانده جدید سپاه اسلام آباد غرب معرفی شد ["New IRGC commander in Eslam Abad-e Gharb introduced"], 27 February 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5157294/فرمانده-جدید-سپاه-اسلام-آبادغرب-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2769. Eslam Abad Khabar, مراسم تکریم و معارفه فرمانده سپاه اسلام آبادغرب برگزار شد+تصاویر ["Farewell and introduction ceremony of IRGC commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb held + images"], 18 October 2022, https://eslamabadkhabar.ir/print/308892 (in Persian).

MA'REF OLFATI



Ma'ref Olfati © IRNA

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salas-e Babajani county and member of the Provision Council of Eslam Salas-e Babajani county

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles indicating when Ma'ref Olfati was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salas-e Babajani county. However, state media articles indicate that he had held this role since at least September 2021.[2770]

In February 2023, Ma'ref Olfati was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county.[2771] Mohammad Sharifi was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salas-e Babajani county. Ma'ref Olfati retained his position of the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county as of 2026.[2772]

MOHSEN DARABI



Mohsen Darabi © Basij News Agency

Position: Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county and member of the Provision Council of Ghasr-e Shirin county

Appointment and tenure: Mohsen Darabi was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county in August 2021.[2773] He remained in this position until February 2023.[2774] Ma'ref Olfati was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin county.[2775]

2770. Tabnak Kermanshah, بیش از ۱۴ هزار نفر در ثلاث باباجانی واکسن کرونا زدند ["More than 14,000 people in Salas-e Babajani received COVID-19 vaccine"], 2 September 2021, https://www.tabnakkermanshah.ir/fa/news/990626/بیش-از-۱۴-هزار-نفر-در-ثلاث-باباجانی-واکسن-کرونا-زدند (in Persian).

2771. IRNA, مردم با حضور باشکوه در راهپیمایی ۲۲ بهمن بار دیگر دشمنان را ناامید کردند ["With magnificent turnout at 11 February rally, people once again dashed enemies' hope"], 6 February 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85021240/مردم-با-حضور-باشکوه-در-راهپیمایی-۲۲-بهمن-بار-دیگر-دشمنان-را-ناامید (in Persian).

2772. IRNA, ملت ایران با حضور گسترده در آیین تشییع قدردان مجاهدت‌های رهبر شهید خواهند بود ["Iranian people will honour fallen leader's sacrifices through massive participation in funeral ceremony"], 29 June 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86195985 (in Persian).

2773. IRNA, اجرای طرح شهید سلیمانی خدمات خوبی به مردم قصرشیرین ارایه کرد ["Martyr Soleimani Plan delivered valuable services to people of Ghasr-e Shirin"], 1 August 2021, https://www.irna.ir/news/84422647/اجرای-طرح-شهید-سلیمانی-خدمات-خوبی-به-مردم-قصرشیرین-ارایه-کرد (in Persian).

2774. IRNA, مردم با حضور باشکوه در راهپیمایی ۲۲ بهمن بار دیگر دشمنان را ناامید کردند ["With magnificent turnout at 11 February rally, people once again dashed enemies' hope"], 6 February 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85021240/مردم-با-حضور-باشکوه-در-راهپیمایی-۲۲-بهمن-بار-دیگر-دشمنان-را-ناامید (in Persian).

2775. IRNA, مردم با حضور باشکوه در راهپیمایی ۲۲ بهمن بار دیگر دشمنان را ناامید کردند ["With magnificent turnout at 11 February rally, people once again dashed enemies' hope"], 6 February 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85021240/مردم-با-حضور-باشکوه-در-راهپیمایی-۲۲-بهمن-بار-دیگر-دشمنان-را-ناامید، (in Persian).

State media articles from later in 2023 indicate that Mohsen Darabi was subsequently appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sahneh county.[2776] He retained this position as of 2026.[2777]

13.4.4 FARAJA

13.4.4(I) NATIONAL LEVEL

HOSSEIN ASHTARI



Hossein Ashtari © Tasnim News Agency

Position: General commander of FARAJA and member of the State Security Council

Appointment and tenure: Hossein Ashtari was appointed as the general commander of FARAJA by the Supreme Leader in March 2015.[2778]

He remained in this position until January 2023, when he was appointed by the then head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, as his senior adviser for security and police affairs.[2779] He retained this position as of 2026.[2780]

Ahmadreza Radan was subsequently appointed by the Supreme Leader as the new general commander of FARAJA.[2781]

2776. See, for example, Mersad News, اجلاسیه عمومی مجمع بسیجیان صحنه برگزار شد ["General assembly of the Sahneh Basij Association held"], 12 October 2023, https://www.mersadnews.ir/story/اجلاسیه-عمومی-مجمع-بسیجیان-صحنه-برگزار-شد (in Persian); Khabarban, مراسمی برای معرفی و تکریم فرمانده جدید سپاه اسلام‌آباد غرب برگزار شد ["Ceremony held to introduce and honour new IRGC commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb"], 11 September 2023, https://38663268.khabarban.com (in Persian).

2777. See IRNA, فرماندار: شهرستان صحنه برای تشییع باشکوه رهبر شهید آماده می‌شود ["Provincial governor: Sahneh county is preparing for grand funeral procession for fallen leader"], 28 June 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86195111 (in Persian).

2778. The Office of the Supreme Leader, تأکید فرمانده معظم کل قوا بر بهبود خدمات انتظامی و ابتکار عمل در برقراری امنیت و آرامش اخلاقی و اجتماعی ["Supreme Leader's emphasis on improving police services and proactive measures to establish security and moral and social calm"], 9 March 2015, https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/12922/انتصاب-سردار-سرتیپ-اشتری-به-فرماندهی-نیروی-انتظامی (in Persian).

2779. Donya-e-Eqtesad, سردار اشتری سمت جدید گرفت ["General Ashtari appointed to new position"], 11 January 2023, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/سردار-اشتری-سمت-جدید-گرفت-62/3934471-بخش-سایت-خوان (in Persian).

2780. IRIB News, ادامه راه امام شهید، وظیفه همه خدمتگزاران نظام است ["Continuing path of martyred Imam is duty of all servants of the system"], 8 July 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5847952/ادامه-راه-امام-شهید-وظیفه-همه-خدمتگزاران-نظام-است (in Persian).

2781. IRNA, سردار رادان به عنوان فرمانده کل انتظامی کشور منصوب شد ["General Radan appointed general commander of country's police force"], 7 January 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/84991412/سردار-رادان-به-عنوان-فرمانده-کل-انتظامی-کشور-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

HASSAN KARAMI



Hassan Karami © Defa Press

Position: National commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA

Appointment and tenure: Hassan Karami was appointed as the national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA by the then general commander of FARAJA, Esmail Ahmadi Moghaddam, in July 2012.[2782]

He remained in this position until October 2024, when he was appointed by the current general commander of FARAJA, Ahmadreza Radan, as the operations deputy of FARAJA.[2783] He retained this position as of 2026.[2784]

Masoud Mosaddegh was subsequently appointed as the new national commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA.[2785]

MEHDI MASOUM BEIGI



Mehdi Masoum Beigi © Mehr News Agency

Position: Head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA until 14 November 2022

Appointment and tenure: Mehdi Masoum Beigi was appointed as the head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA by the former general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, in May 2020.[2786]
He remained in this position until 14 November 2022, when Reza Baniasadifar was appointed as the new head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA.[2787]

2782. Fars News Agency, سردار حسن کرمی از اصفهان خداحافظی کرد ["General Hassan Karami bids farewell to Esfahan"], 10 July 2012, https://farsnews.ir/Provinces/1341932100000257505/سردار-حسن-کرمی-از-اصفهان-خداحافظی-کرد (in Persian).

2783. ISNA, معاون عملیات فراجا منصوب شد ["Operations deputy of FARAJA appointed"], 24 October 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403080302250/معاون-عملیات-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2784. IRNA, پاسخی به آمریکا می‌دهیم که در تاریخ ثبت شود/آمادگی بالای نیروی‌های مسلح در خارک ["We will deliver a response to the United States that will go down in history / High readiness of the armed forces in Khargh"], 11 June 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86180055/پاسخی-به-آمریکا-می-دهیم-که-در-تاریخ-ثبت-شود-آمادگی-بالای-نیروی-های (in Persian); Fars News Agency, روایت معاون عملیات فراجا از نقش شهید پاکپور در امنیت ایران ["Operations deputy of FARAJA recounts martyr Pakpour's role in Iran's security"], 1 June 2026, https://farsnews.ir/TM_911/1780287856343243461/روایت-معاون-عملیات-فراجا-از-نقش-شهید-پاکپور-در-امنیت-ایران (in Persian).

2785. IRNA, فرمانده جدید یگان‌های ویژه فراجا منصوب شد ["New commander of Special Cohorts of FARAJA appointed"], 7 December 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85682494/فرمانده-جدید-یگان-های-ویژه-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2786. Borna News, سردار مهدی معصوم بیگی رئیس پلیس پیشگیری ناجا شد ["General Mehdi Masoum Beigi appointed head of the Prevention Police of NAJA"], 6 May 2020, https://borna.news/fa/news/998629/سردار-مهدی-معصوم-بیگی-رئیس-پلیس-پیشگیری-ناجا-شد (in Persian).

2787. Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA), رئیس پلیس پیشگیری فراجا منصوب شد ["Head of Prevention Police of FARAJA appointed"], 14 November 2022, https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-اجتماعی-5/1297739-رئیس-پلیس-پیشگیری-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

In February 2022, while he was still the head of the Prevention Police, Mehdi Masoum Beigi was additionally appointed by the then general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, as the head of the General Inspectorate of FARAJA,[2788] a body within FARAJA responsible for overseeing compliance with laws and regulations and addressing complaints. He retained this position as of 2026.[2789]

REZA BANIASADIFAR


Reza Baniasadifar © IRNA

Position: Head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA after 14 November 2022

Appointment and tenure: Reza Baniasadifar was appointed as the head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA by the former general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, on 14 November 2022.[2790]
He remained in this position until January 2024, when he was appointed by the current general commander of FARAJA, Ahmadreza Radan, as the commander of the Police and Protection Cohorts of FARAJA,[2791] a force responsible for safeguarding government buildings, sensitive sites and critical infrastructure, and providing security for political figures and officials. He retained this position as of 2026.[2792]
Ali Moayedi was subsequently appointed as the new head of the Prevention Police of FARAJA.[2793]

2788. ILNA, سه انتصاب جدید در انتظامی کل کشور ["Three new appointments in country's police force"], 26 February 2022, https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-اجتماعی-5/1201459-سه-انتصاب-جدید-در-انتظامی-کل-کشور (in Persian).

2789. Tasnim News Agency, پلیس با امنیت و آرامش را در کشور تأمین کرد ["Police ensured security and public order in country"], 26 February 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1404/12/07/3526721/پلیس-تها-امنیت-و-آرامش-را-در-کشور-تأمین-کرد (in Persian).

2790. ILNA, رئیس پلیس پیشگیری فراجا منصوب شد ["Head of Prevention Police of FARAJA appointed"], 14 November 2022, https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-اجتماعی-5/1297739-رئیس-پلیس-پیشگیری-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2791. Tasnim News Agency, انتصابات جدید در فراجا؛ رئیس جدید پلیس پیشگیری منصوب شد ["New Appointments in FARAJA: New head of Prevention Police appointed"], 10 January 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/10/20/3020750/انتصابات-جدید-در-فراجا-رئیس-جدید-پلیس-پیشگیری-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2792. ILNA, امنیت، زیربنای توسعه و پیشرفت کشور است ["Security is the cornerstone of country's development and advancement"], 4 June 2026, https://www.ilna.ir/بخش-اجتماعی-5/1794246-امنیت-زیربنای-توسعه-پیشرفت-کشور-است (in Persian).

2793. Tasnim News Agency, انتصابات جدید در فراجا؛ رئیس جدید پلیس پیشگیری منصوب شد ["New Appointments in FARAJA: New head of Prevention Police appointed"], 10 January 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/10/20/3020750/انتصابات-جدید-در-فراجا-رئیس-جدید-پلیس-پیشگیری-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

13.4.4(II) KURDISTAN PROVINCE

ALI AZADI



Ali Azadi © Mehr News Agency

Position: FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province and member of the Provision Council of Kurdistan province

Appointment and tenure: Ali Azadi was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province by the former general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, in December 2018.[2794]
He retained this position until August 2025, when he retired.[2795]

Yayha Elahi was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Kurdistan province.[2796]

2794. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده جدید انتظامی استان کردستان معرفی شد: سوابق ["New police commander of Kurdistan province introduced: Background"], 2 December 2018, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1397/09/11/1889304/فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-استان-کردستان-معرفی-شد-سوابق (in Persian).

2795. Tasnim News Agency, خداحافظی و طلب حلالیت سردار آزادی از مردم کردستان ["General Azadi says goodbye to people of Kurdistan"], 24 August 2025, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1404/06/03/3384552/خداحافظی-و-طلب-حلالیت-سردار-آزادی-از-مردم-کردستان (in Persian).

2796. IRNA, تودیع و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی کردستان ["Farewell and introduction of the Kurdistan police commander"], 24 August 2025, https://www.irna.ir/photo/85922050/تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-انتظامی-کردستان (in Persian).

MOHAMMAD ALIZAMANI



Mohammad Alizamani © Young Journalists Club

Position: Commander of the FARAJA Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find a state media report announcing the exact date when Mohammad Alizamani was appointed as the commander of the FARAJA Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province. A human rights group has identified the date as August 2019.[2797] This is consistent with a state media report indicating that Mohammad Ali Zamani was removed from his previous position as the commander of the FARAJA Special Cohorts of Ilam province in August 2019.[2798]

State media reports confirm that he held this position until October 2023.[2799] Akbar Abbasi was subsequently appointed as the new commander of the FARAJA Special Cohorts of Kurdistan province.[2800]

A post published by a state-affiliated Instagram account on 13 November 2024 indicates that Mohammad Alizamani was later appointed as the commander of the FARAJA Special Cohorts of Greater Tehran.[2801] He retained this position as of 2026.[2802]

2797. See Justice for Iran, چهره جنایت ["Faces of Crime"], محمدعلی زمانی ["Mohammad Alizamani"], https://facesofcrime.org/fa/profile/683/mohammad-ali-zamani/ (accessed on 6 August 2026).

2798. Mehr News Agency, استفاده از سیستم های هوشمند در محورهای مواصلاتی مرز مهران ["Use of intelligent systems on the roadways at Mehran border"], 27 August 2019, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/4704153/استفاده-از-سیستم-های-هوشمند-در-محورهای-مواصلاتی-مرز-مهران (in Persian).

2799. See, for example, Mehr News Agency, فرهنگ شهادت پشتوانه محکم کارکنان پلیس است ["Culture of martyrdom is a strong support for police personnel"], 1 October 2023, https://mehrnews.com/news/5900231/فرهنگ-شهادت-پشتوانه-محکم-کارکنان-پلیس-است (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده یگان ویژه فراجا: با برهم‌زنندگان امنیت قاطعانه برخورد می‌کنیم ["Commander of Special Cohort of FARAJA: We will deal firmly with those disrupting security"], 1 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/07/09/2964807/فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فراجا-با-برهم-زنندگان-امنیت-قاطعانه-برخورد-می-کنیم (in Persian); sedaye.asemanabad.official, Instagram post: جناب سرهنگ محمد علیزمانی فرمانده یگان ویژه استان کردستان ["Colonel Mohammad Alizamani, commander of Special Cohort of Kurdistan province"], 17 November 2021, https://www.instagram.com/p/CWYrCsxNYON/?hl=en (in Persian).

2800. See Mehr News Agency, فرهنگ شهادت پشتوانه محکم کارکنان پلیس است ["Culture of martyrdom is a strong support for police personnel"], 1 October 2023, https://mehrnews.com/news/5900231/فرهنگ-شهادت-پشتوانه-محکم-کارکنان-پلیس-است (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, فرمانده یگان ویژه فراجا: با برهم‌زنندگان امنیت قاطعانه برخورد می‌کنیم ["Commander of the Special Cohort of FARAJA: We will deal firmly with those disrupting security"], 1 October 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/07/09/2964807/فرمانده-یگان-ویژه-فراجا-با-برهم-زنندگان-امنیت-قاطعانه-برخورد-می-کنیم (in Persian).

2801. ilam_khezel.ir, Instagram post: افتخاری دیگر برای ایل بزرگ خزل ["Another honor for the great Khezel tribe"], 13 November 2024, https://www.instagram.com/ilam_khezel.ir/p/DCUu3DLOOfw/ (in Persian).

2802. aseman.abad1400, Instagram post: اعطا درجه سرتیپ دومی به سرهنگ محمد علیزمانی ["Promotion of Colonel Mohammad Alizamani to rank of Second Brigadier General"], 14 July 2026, https://www.instagram.com/reel/Dax4smxtJbW/ (in Persian); Perspolis News, مدیرعامل پرسپولیس از فرماندهان یگان ویژه تقدیر کرد ["Persepolis CEO commended commanders of Special Cohorts"], 15 October 2025, https://perspolisnews.com/مدیرعامل-پرسپولیس-از-فرماندهان-یگان-و/ (in Persian).

ALIREZA MORADI



Alireza Moradi © IRNA

Position: FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county and member of the Provision Council of Sanandaj county

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find a state media report announcing the exact date when Alireza Moradi was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county. However, state media reports indicate that by April 2020, he had been appointed to this position.[2803]

He remained in this position until November 2023.[2804] Rasoul Karami Chegini was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county.[2805]

ALI SAFARI



Ali Safari © Mehr News Agency

Position: FARAJA commander of Saqqez county and member of the Provision Council of Saqqez county

Appointment and tenure: Ali Safari was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Saqqez county in April 2021.[2806]

He remained in this position until September 2024,[2807] when he was replaced by Mohammad Sadegh Pirouzi.[2808]
Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports regarding any subsequent positions held by Ali Safari.

2803. Tasnim News Agency, از گوشه و کنار کردستان | جانشین جدید فرمانده انتظامی معرفی شد ["From around Kurdistan / New deputy police commander introduced"], 25 April 2020, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1399/02/06/2251198/از-گوشه-و-کنار-کردستان-جانشین-جدید (in Persian).
2804. See Tasnim News Agency, کشف ۵۸ درصدی سرقت‌ها در استان کردستان ["58% of thefts in Kurdistan province solved"], 24 November 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/09/03/2994553/کشف-58-درصدی-سرقت-ها-در-استان-کردستان (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, دست و پا زدن رسانه‌های ضدانقلاب برای ناامن جلوه دادن کردستان ["Anti-revolutionary media's attempts to portray Kurdistan as insecure"], 30 October 2022, https://mehrnews.com/news/5620001/دست-وپا-زدن-رسانه-های-ضدانقلاب-برای-ناامن-جلوه-دادن-کردستان (in Persian).
2805. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News (IRIB News), انتصاب فرمانده پلیس راهور استان وفرمانده انتظامی شهرستان سنندج ["Appointment of provincial traffic police commander and the police commander of Sanandaj county"], 23 November 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4065785/انتصاب-فرمانده-پلیس-راهور-استان-وفرمانده-انتظامی-شهرستان-سنندج (in Persian). See also Tasnim News Agency, شرور سابقه دار سنندج دستگیر شد؛ کشف سلاح وینچستر از متهم ["Dangerous criminal with a record arrested in Sanandaj; Winchester rifle discovered"], 8 January 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/10/18/3019638/شرور-سابقه-دار-سنندج-دستگیر-شد-کشف-سلاح-وینچستر-از-متهم (in Persian); Tasnim News Agency, کشف ۵۸ درصدی سرقت‌ها در استان کردستان ["58% of thefts in Kurdistan province solved"], 24 November 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/09/03/2994553/کشف-58-درصدی-سرقت-ها-در-استان-کردستان (in Persian).
2806. IRNA, فرماندار پلیس به ارتقای اعتماد عمومی در سقز کمک کرد ["County governor: Police helped boost public trust in Saqqez"], 21 April 2021, https://www.irna.ir/news/84304373/فرماندار-پلیس-به-ارتقای-اعتماد-عمومی-در-سقز-کمک-کرد (in Persian).
2807. Office of the County Governor of Saqqez, فرماندار سقز فراجا، مجری قوانین مجلس ["County governor of Saqqez: FARAJA, implementer of parliamentary laws"], 24 September 2024, https://saghez.ostan-kd.ir/1403/07/03/فرماندار-سقزفراجا-مجری-قوانین-مجلس-و (in Persian).
2808. Office of the County Governor of Saqqez, فرماندار سقز فراجا، مجری قوانین مجلس ["County governor of Saqqez: FARAJA, implementer of parliamentary laws"], 24 September 2024, https://saghez.ostan-kd.ir/1403/07/03/فرماندار-سقزفراجا-مجری-قوانین-مجلس-و (in Persian).

ALIREZA KARAJI


Alireza Karaji © IRNA

Position: FARAJA commander of Divandareh county and member of the Provision Council of Divandareh county

Appointment and tenure: Alireza Karaji was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Divandareh county in June 2022.[2809]
He remained in this position until May 2023.[2810] Mohammad Sadegh Pirouzi was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Divandareh county.[2811]

Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports regarding any subsequent positions held by Alireza Karaji.

2809. Office of the County Governor of Divandareh, دیدار سرپرست فرمانداری، حاج ماموستا عبدالرحمان خالدی و جمعی از معتمدین شهرستان ["Meeting of head of the Office of the County Governor, Haj Mamousta Abdolrahman Khaledi, and trusted county representatives"], 13 June 2022, https://divandareh.ostan-kd.ir/1401/03/24/دیدار-سرپرست-فرمانداری-ت-حاج-ماموست (in Persian).
2810. Edalat Khabar سرهنگ محمد صادق پیروزی فرمانده انتظامی دیواندره شد ["Colonel Mohammad Sadegh Pirouzi appointed as police commander of Divandareh"], 2 May 2023, https://edaalatkhabar.ir/1402/02/سرهنگ-محمد-صادق-پیروزی-فرمانده-انتظام/ (in Persian); Anti-Narcotics Headquarters News, ۵۴ کیلوگرم تریاک در دیواندره کشف شد ["54kg of opium discovered in Divandareh"], 5 November 2022, https://news.dchq.ir/3/?p=82621 (in Persian).
2811. Edalat Khabar, سرهنگ محمد صادق پیروزی فرمانده انتظامی دیواندره شد ["Colonel Mohammad Sadegh Pirouzi appointed as police commander of Divandareh"], 2 May 2023, https://edaalatkhabar.ir/1402/02/سرهنگ-محمد-صادق-پیروزی-فرمانده-انتظام (in Persian).

RASOUL KARAMI CHEGINI



Rasoul Karami Chegini © Dana News

Position: FARAJA commander of Baneh county and member of the Provision Council of Baneh county

Appointment and tenure: Rasoul Karami Chegini was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Baneh county in March 2018.[2812]

He remained in this position until November 2023, when he was appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county.[2813] Jafar Lotfi was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA Commander of Baneh county.[2814]

Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports confirming the exact date on which Rasoul Karami Chegini ceased serving as the FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county. However, state media reports indicate that he remained in the position as of October 2025.[2815] State media reports indicate that, by around February 2026, Kambiz Rostamnia had been appointed as the FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county.[2816]

In May 2026, Rasoul Karami Chegini was appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Poldokhtar county, Lorestan province.[2817] He retained this position as of 2026.[2818]

2812. Basij News Agency, فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان بانه منصوب شد ["New police commander of Baneh county appointed"], 13 March 2018, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/8999508/فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-شهرستان-بانه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2813. IRIB News, انتصاب فرمانده پلیس راهور استان وفرمانده انتظامی شهرستان سنندج ["Appointment of provincial traffic police commander and the police commander of Sanandaj county"], 23 November 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4065785/انتصاب-فرمانده-پلیس-راهور-استان-وفرمانده-انتظامی-شهرستان-سنندج (in Persian).

2814. State media reports indicate that Jafar Lotfi was appointed the FARAJA Commander of Baneh in April 2024. It is not clear to Amnesty International who the FARAJA Commander of Baneh was between November 2023, when Rasoul Karami Chegini was appointed as the FARAJA Commander of Sanandaj, and April 2024. See KurdPress, مردم‌داری و حفظ حقوق شهروندی از وظایف مهم پلیس است ["Serving the people and safeguarding citizens' rights are among the police's important duties"], 21 April 2024, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2769601/مردم-داری-و-حفظ-حقوق-شهروندی-از-وظایف-مهم-پلیس-است (in Persian).

2815. Tasnim News Agency, انهدام باند سارقان حرفه‌ای در سنندج ["Professional theft gang dismantled in Sanandaj"], 27 October 2025, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1404/08/05/3433323 (in Persian); Defa Press, زمین‌گیر شدن عامل حمله به مأموران پلیس در سنندج ["Perpetrator of attack on police officers apprehended"], 27 June 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/758045 (in Persian).

2816. Defa Press, جانشین فراجا کردستان: امنیت امروز حاصل تلاش مجموعه‌های انتظامی و امنیتی است ["Deputy FARAJA commander of Kurdistan: Today's security is the result of the efforts of police and security agencies"], 19 February 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/813645 (in Persian)

2817. IRIB News, معارفه فرمانده جدید انتظامی پلدختر ["Introduction of new police commander of Poldokhtar"], 12 May 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5790240/معارفه-فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-پلدختر (in Persian).

2818. Safir-e Lorestan, دیدار مردمی فرمانده انتظامی لرستان در پلدختر؛ پاسخگویی مستقیم به مطالبات شهروندان ["Public meeting with Lorestan police commander in Pol-e Dokhtar: Direct response to citizens' demands"], 17 August 2026, https://safirelorestan.ir/culture/13449-2026-08-17-07-12-24 (in Persian).

YOUSEF DARVISHI



Yousef Darvishi © shahrvand_kabarnegar

Position: FARAJA commander of Dehgolan county and member of the Provision Council of Dehgolan county

Appointment and tenure: Yousef Darvishi was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Dehgolan county in July 2020.[2819]

He remained in this position until December 2023, when he died.[2820]

Mohammad Ali Gholari was subsequently appointed as the FARAJA commander of Dehgolan county.[2821]

BEHROUZ JALILIAN



Behrouz Jalilian © Eqtesad Ayandeh News

Position: FARAJA commander of Kamyaran county and member of the Provision Council of Kamyaran county

Appointment and tenure: Behrouz Jalilian was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Kamyaran county in April 2021.[2822]

He remained in this position until December 2025, when he retired.[2823]

Shahab Rahmati was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Kamyaran county.[2824]

2819. Dehgolan Sheyda, اعتماد مردم بالاترین سرمایه برای نیروی انتظامی است ["Public trust is the greatest asset for the police force"], 7 July 2020, https://dehgolansheyda.com/news/2977/اعتماد-مردم-بالاترین-سرمایه-برای-نیروی-انتظامی-است.html (in Persian).

2820. Iran's Metropolises News Agency (IMNA), نیروهای فراجا اجازه پایمال شدن خون شهدا را نخواهند داد ["FARAJA forces will not allow the blood of martyrs to be spilt in vain"], 21 December 2023, https://www.imna.ir/news/713751/نیروهای-فراجا-اجازه-پایمال-شدن-خون-شهدا-را-نخواهند-داد (in Persian); qorveh_tarhim, Instagram post: با نهایت تاسف و تاثر درگذشت مرحوم سرهنگ یوسف#درویشی را به خانواده ایشان تسلیت عرض نموده ["With deepest sorrow and regret, we extend our condolences to the family of the late Colonel Yousef Darvishi"], 18 December 2023, https://www.instagram.com/qorveh_tarhim/p/C0_hOxBK8f9/ (in Persian).

2821. Dehgolan Vira, سرهنگ ولی پور فرمانده انتظامی شهرستان دهگلان شد ["Colonel Valipour appointed as police commander of Dehgolan county"], 4 April 2024, https://dehgolanvira.ir/سرهنگ-ولی-پور-فرمانده-انتظامی-شهرستان/ (in Persian).

2822. Tasnim News Agency, امنیت انتخابات در استان کردستان را با تمام توان تأمین می‌کنیم ["We will ensure security of elections in Kurdistan province with full effort"], 28 April 2021, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1400/02/08/2493468/امنیت-انتخابات-در-استان-کردستان-را-با-تمام-توان-تأمین-می-کنیم (in Persian).

2823. Office of the County Governor of Kamyaran, فرماندار شهرستان کامیاران در جلسه شورای اداری و مراسم تکریم و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی؛ همراهی مجموعه انتظامی در تأمین امنیت انتخابات، حفاظت از صندوق‌ها و ایجاد آرامش روانی جامعه تعیین کننده است ["Governor of Kamyaran county at Administrative Council meeting and the farewell and appointment ceremony of police commander, stated: Cooperation of police body is decisive in ensuring election security, protecting ballot boxes, and creating psychological calm in society"], 29 December 2025, https://kamyaran.ostan-kd.ir/1404/10/08/فرماندار-شهرستان-کامیاران-در-جلسه-شور/ (in Persian).

2824. Office of the County Governor of Kamyaran, فرماندار شهرستان کامیاران در جلسه شورای اداری و مراسم تکریم و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی؛ همراهی مجموعه انتظامی در تأمین امنیت انتخابات، حفاظت از صندوق‌ها و ایجاد آرامش روانی جامعه تعیین کننده است ["Governor of Kamyaran county, at Administrative Council meeting and the farewell and appointment ceremony of the police commander, stated: Cooperation of police body is decisive in ensuring election security, protecting ballot boxes, and creating psychological calm in society"], 29 December 2025, https://kamyaran.ostan-kd.ir/1404/10/08/فرماندار-شهرستان-کامیاران-در-جلسه-شور/ (in Persian).

KAMBIZ ROSTAMNIA



Kambiz Rostamnia © Marivan Ava

Position: FARAJA commander of Mariwan county and member of the Provision Council of Mariwan county

Appointment and tenure: Kambiz Rostamnia was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Mariwan county in July 2020.[2825]

He remained in this position until August 2023 when Tayyeb Mohammadi was appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Mariwan county.[2826]

In August 2024, Kambiz Rostamnia was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Ghorveh county.[2827] He retained this position until February 2026, when he was succeeded by Vahed Mozaffari.[2828]

State media reports indicate that Kambiz Rostamnia was subsequently appointed as the FARAJA commander of Sanandaj county.[2829] Amnesty International was unable to find a state media report announcing the exact date when Kambiz Rostamnia was appointed to this role. However, state media reports indicate that he has held this position since at least May 2026.[2830]

2825. Mariwan Khabar, Telegram post: تودیع و معارفه فرمانده نیروی انتظامی شهرستان های مریوان و سروآباد برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the police commanders of Mariwan and Sarvabad counties held"], 26 August 2023, https://t.me/mariwankhabar/66266 (in Persian).

2826. Mariwan Khabar, Telegram post: تودیع و معارفه فرمانده نیروی انتظامی شهرستان های مریوان و سروآباد برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for the police Commanders of Mariwan and Sarvabad counties held"], 26 August 2023, https://t.me/mariwankhabar/66266 (in Persian).

2827. KurdPress, فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان قروه معرفی شد ["New police commander of Ghorveh county introduced"], 3 August 2024, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2773585/فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-شهرستان-قروه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2828. IRIB News, اخبار گوناگون از مناطق مختلف کردستان ["Various news from different areas of Kurdistan"], 17 February 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5720033 (in Persian); Tabnak, تغییر در رأس فرماندهی پلیس قروه/ سرهنگ مظفری سکان امنیت شهرستان را به دست گرفت + فیلم ["Change in the leadership of Ghorveh Police: Colonel Mozaffari takes the helm of the county's security + video"], 17 February 2026, https://ostanha.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1217865 (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, فرماندار قروه: امنیت پایدار حاصل همراهی مردم و نیروهای انتظامی است ["County governor of Ghorveh: Lasting security is result of cooperation between public and police forces"], 17 February 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6752227 (in Persian).

2829. See, for example, Defa Press, جانشین فراجا کردستان: امنیت امروز حاصل تلاش مجموعه‌های انتظامی و امنیتی است ["Deputy FARAJA commander of Kurdistan: Today's security is the result of the efforts of police and security agencies"], 19 February 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/813645 (in Persian)

2830. See, for example, Fars News Agency, رئیس پلیس سنندج: دشمن با حمله به کلانتری‌ها دنبال ایجاد ناامنی اجتماعی بود ["Head of Sanandaj police: Enemy sought to create social unrest by attacking police stations"], 16 May 2026, https://farsnews.ir/As5188/17789155534299177 50/رئیس-پلیس-سنندج-دشمن-با-حمله-به-کلانتری-ها-دنبال-ایجاد-ناامنی-اجتماعی-بود (in Persian); ISNA, فرمانده انتظامی سنندج: اجازه ندادیم دشمن در امنیت اجتماعی خلأ ایجاد کند ["Police commander of Sanandaj: We didn't allow the enemy to create a security vacuum in society"], 16 May 2026, https://www.isna.ir/news/1405022614989 (in Persian).

13.4.4(III) WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

RAHIM JAHANBAKHSH



Rahim Jahanbakhsh © Mehr News Agency

Position: FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province and member of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province

Appointment and tenure: Rahim Jahanbakhsh was appointed as the FARAJA commander of West Azerbaijan province in April 2022.[2831]

He retained this position as of 2026.[2832]

REZA FARAJI

Position: Commander of FARAJA Special Cohorts of West Azerbaijan province

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports specifying the date of Reza Faraji's appointment as the commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in West Azerbaijan province. However, state media reports indicate that he was in this position from before September 2022[2833] and held it until at least May 2024.[2834] State media reports further indicate that, by October 2024, he had been succeeded by Reza Babapour.[2835]

Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports regarding any subsequent positions held by Reza Faraji.

2831. IRNA, فرمانده جدید انتظامی آذربایجان غربی منصوب شد, ["New police commander appointed in West Azerbaijan"], 27 April 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84733690/فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-آذربایجان-غربی-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2832. Borna News, سردار جهانبخش: دشمن در برابر مکتب ولایت و خون شهدا ناکام ماند ["General Jahanbakhsh: The enemy failed in the face of the school of Velayat and the blood of martyrs"], 28 June 2026, https://borna.news/fa/news/2359339/سردار-جهانبخش-دشمن-در-برابر-مکتب-ولایت-و-خون-شهدا-ناکام-ماند (in Persian); Fars News Agency, سردار جهانبخش: پلیس مزاحمت به مردم را برنمی‌تابد ["General Jahanbakhsh: Police will not tolerate actions that disturb or harass public"], 14 June 2026, https://farsnews.ir/press/1781465812604229485/سردار-جهانبخش-پلیس-مزاحمت-به-مردم-را-برنمی-تابد (in Persian).

2833. See, for example, IRNA, حمایت خانواده معظم شهدا موجب دلگرمی یگان ویژه آذربایجان غربی ["Support from families of martyrs brings encouragement to Special Cohort of West Azerbaijan"], 15 March 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84685141/حمایت-خانواده-معظم-شهدا-موجب-دلگرمی-یگان-ویژه-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian).

2834. See, for example, Khabar Farsi, دیدار فرمانده یگان ویژه آذربایجان غربی با مدیرکل فرهنگ و ارشاد اسلامی ["Meeting of commander of Special Cohort of West Azerbaijan and director general of Culture and Islamic Guidance"], 9 May 2024, https://khabarfarsi.com/u/181978380 (in Persian); Khabarban, ماموریت یگان ویژه در «خوی»/ استقرار امنیت در مناطق زلزله زده ["Mission of the Special Cohort in 'Khoy' / Establishing security in earthquake-stricken areas"], 30 January 2023, https://36969472.khabarban.com (in Persian).

2835. Police Vizheh, Eitaa post: دیدار و سرکشی فرمانده یگان ویژه استان آذربایجان غربی ["Visit and inspection by commander of Special Cohort of West Azerbaijan province"], 11 December 2025, https://eitaa.com/s/policevizheh/30197 (in Persian); Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance West Azerbaijan Provincial Office, دیدار فرمانده جدید یگان ویژه آذربایجان غربی با مدیرکل فرهنگ و ارشاد اسلامی استان ["Meeting of new commander of Special Cohort of West Azerbaijan with Director General of Culture and Islamic Guidance of the province"], 3 October 2024, https://azarg.farhang.gov.ir/fa/news/762357/دیدار-فرمانده-جدید-یگان-ویژه-آذربایجان-غربی-با-مدیرکل-فرهنگ-و-ارشاد-اسلامی-استان (in Persian).

SALMAN HEIDARY



Salman Heidary © Bokan Online

Position: FARAJA commander of Boukan county and member of the Provision Council of Boukan county

Appointment and tenure: Salman Heidary was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Boukan county in September 2019.[2836]

He remained in this position until August 2023, when he retired.[2837]

Mousa Bahari was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Boukan county.[2838]

MOHAMMAD TOHIDI



Mohammad Tohidi © Saheb Khabar

Position: FARAJA commander of Mahabad county and member of the Provision Council of Mahabad county

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Tohidi was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Mahabad county in November 2020.[2839]

He remained in this position until October 2023, when he was replaced by Yousef Ashrafi.[2840]

Mohammad Tohidi was subsequently appointed as the FARAJA commander of Urumieh county.[2841] He retained this position as of 2026.[2842]

2836. Ziryan Mukryan, فرمانده نیروی انتظامی بوکان تغییر کرد ["Police commander of Boukan replaced"], 4 September 2019, https://www.ziryanmukryan.ir/news.php?id=150B1445&news=فرمانده نیروی انتظامی بوکان تغییر کرد (in Persian).
2837. Harferok, فرمانده جدید پلیس بوکان معارفه شد ["New police commander of Boukan introduced"], 31 August 2023, https://harferok.ir/فرمانده-جدید-پلیس-بوکان-معارفه-شد/ (in Persian).
2838. Harferok, فرمانده جدید پلیس بوکان معارفه شد ["New police commander of Boukan introduced"], 31 August 2023, https://harferok.ir/فرمانده-جدید-پلیس-بوکان-معارفه-شد/ (in Persian).

2839. IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید انتظامی مهاباد ["Introduction of Mahabad's new police commander"], 7 November 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2900832/معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-مهاباد (in Persian).
2840. IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید انتظامی مهاباد ["Introduction of Mahabad's new police commander"], 2 October 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3999866/معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-مهاباد (in Persian).
2841. Vahid Jalalzadeh, دیدار با فرماندهی جدید نیروی انتظامی ["Meeting with new police force command"], 6 October 2023, https://vahidjalalzade.ir/دیدار-با-فرماندهی-جدید-نیروی-انتظامی-ا/ (in Persian); urmiyeh_sasi, Instagram post: معارفه فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان ارومیه ["Introducing new police commander of Urumieh county"], 27 September 2023, https://www.instagram.com/p/CxsLaUltGVQ/?hl=en (in Persian).
2842. Fars News Agency, قاتل نوجوان ۱۴ ساله در ارومیه در کمترین زمان دستگیر شد ["Killer of 14-year-old teenager in Urumieh arrested in the shortest possible time"], 19 June 2026, https://farsnews.ir/Emad_charbgoo/1781892762712436783 (in Persian); ISNA, فرمانده انتظامی ارومیه: با قانون‌شکنان بدون اغماض برخورد می‌شود ["Urumieh police commander: Violators of law will be dealt with without leniency"], 11 June 2026, https://www.isna.ir/news/1405032112662/فرمانده-انتظامی-ارومیه-با-قانون-شکنان-بدون-اغماض-برخورد-می-شود (in Persian).

HESSAM SALAHI



Hessam Salahi © Iran's Metropolises News Agency (IMNA)

Position: FARAJA commander of Piranshahr county and member of the Provision Council of Piranshahr county

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles specifying the date of Hessam Salahi's appointment as the FARAJA commander of Piranshahr county. However, state media reports indicate that by September 2020, he had been appointed to this position.[2843] In June 2023, he was succeeded by Younes Arjmand.[2844]

Hessam Salahi was subsequently appointed as the FARAJA commander of Naghadeh county. He remained in this position until November 2025, when he retired.[2845]

TALEB MOHAMMAD GHOLIZADEH



Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh © IRIB News

Position: FARAJA commander of Oshnavieh county and member of the Provision Council of Oshnavieh county

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles specifying the date of Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh's appointment as the FARAJA commander of Oshnavieh county. However, state media reports indicate that he already held this position in August 2021.[2846] On or around 17 November 2022, he was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Chaypareh county.[2847] Ali Tavakoli replaced him as the FARAJA commander of Oshnavieh.[2848]

2843. See KurdPress, قاتل زوج سالمند پیرانشهری در کمتر از ۵ ساعت دستگیر شد ["Murderer of elderly couple in Piranshahr arrested in less than 5 hours"], 29 September 2020, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/329801/قاتل-زوج-سالمند-پیرانشهری-در-کمتر-از-5-ساعت-دستگیر-شد (in Persian).

2844. Mehr News Agency, قاتل پیرانشهری در دام پلیس افتاد ["Piranshahr killer caught by police"], 15 October 2023, https://mehrnews.com/news/5912707/قاتل-پیرانشهری-در-دام-پلیس-افتاد (in Persian); Office of the County Governor of Piranshahr, مراسم تکریم و معارفه فرمانده نیروی انتظامی شهرستان پیرانشهر؛ ["Ceremony honoring and introducing new police commander of Piranshahr county"], 28 June 2023, https://piranshahr-ag.ir/fa/news/detail/ee4075dc-8d18-ee11-9c43-000c29ce98b8/مراسم-تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-نیروی-انتظامی-ش (in Persian).

2845. IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان نقده ["Introduction of new police commander of Naghadeh county"], 25 November 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5636623/معرفی-فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-نقده (in Persian).

2846. See, for example, IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی: جان خانواده افغانستانی در شوط نجات یافت ["Police commander: The lives of an Afghan family were saved in Showt"], 18 August 2021, https://www.irna.ir/news/84441495/نجات-خانواده-افغانستانی-در-شوط (in Persian).

2847. IRIB News, انهدام باند سارقان موتورسیکلت شمال استان در چایپاره ["Motorcycle theft ring operating in northern part of province dismantled in Chaypareh"], 16 October 2023, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4018230 (in Persian); ChaypareNews, Telegram post: سرهنگ طالب محمد قلی‌زاده به عنوان فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان چایپاره منصوب شد ["Colonel Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh appointed new police commander of Chaypareh county"], 17 November 2022, https://t.me/ChaypareNews/88152 (in Persian).

2848. See Kebna News, پایان اعتصابات ۸ روزه اشنویه آذربایجان غربی ["End of 8-day strikes in Oshnavieh, West Azerbaijan"], 24 November 2022, https://www.kebnanews.ir/report/454793/پایان-اعتصابات-۸-روزه-اشنویه-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian).

In August 2024, Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Takab county.[2849] He retained this position as of 2026.[2850]

HASSAN SHEIKHNEJAD



Hassan Sheikhnejad © Dana News

Position: FARAJA commander of Urumieh county and member of the Provision Council of Urumieh county

Appointment and tenure: Hassan Sheikhnejad was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Urumieh county in December 2020.[2851]

He remained in this position until September 2023, when he was replaced by Mohammad Tohidi.[2852]

Amnesty International was unable to find information on any subsequent positions held by Hassan Sheikhnejad.

2849. IRIB News, فرمانده انتظامی تکاب معرفی شد ["Police commander of Takab introduced"], 4 August 2024, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4300117/فرمانده-انتظامی-تکاب (in Persian).
2850. Young Journalists Club, دستگیری۷ سارق و ۴ مال خر در تکاب ["Arrest of seven thieves and four stolen-goods buyers in Takab"], 3 June 2026, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/9093610/توقیف-۱۶۹-وسیله-نقلیه-متخلف-در-اجرای-طرح-ارتقاء-امنیت-اجتماعی-در-تکاب (in Persian).
2851. IRNA, فرمانده جدید انتظامی ارومیه معرفی شد ["New police commander of Urumieh appointed"], 15 December 2020, https://www.irna.ir/news/84147750/فرمانده-جدید-انتظامی-ارومیه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).
2852. See Vahid Jalalzadeh, دیدار با فرماندهی جدید نیروی انتظامی ["Meeting with new police force command"], 6 October 2023, https://vahidjalalzade.ir/دیدار-با-فرماندهی-جدید-نیروی-انتظامی/ (in Persian); shahindezh_today, Instagram post: سرهنگ محمد توحیدی از شاهین دژ بعنوان فرمانده انتظامی شهرستان ارومیه ["Colonel Mohammad Tohidi from Shahin Dezh appointed as police commander of Urumieh county"], 28 September 2023, https://www.instagram.com/shahindezh_today/p/CxuhtNDtgdw/ (in Persian); Asr-e Iran, پلیس فوت نیما شفق دوست در تجمعات ارومیه کذب است فوت او به دلیل عفونت ناشی از گاز گرفتگی سگ بود ["Police claims about Nima Shafaghdoost's death in Urumieh protests are false: His death was due to an infection caused by a dog bite"], 16 October 2022, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/862124/پلیس-فوت-نیما-شفق-دوست-در-تجمعات-ارومیه-کذب-است-فوت-او-به-دلیل-عفونت-ناشی-از-گاز-گرفتگی-سگ-بود (in Persian).

13.4.4(IV) KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

ALI AKBAR JAVIDAN



Ali Akbar Javidan © Mashregh News

Position: FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province and member of the Provision Council of Kermanshah province

Appointment and tenure: Ali Akbar Javidan was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Kermanshah province by the former general commander of FARAJA, Hossein Ashtari, in June 2019.[2853]

He remained in this position until May 2023, when he was succeeded by Mehdi Hajian.[2854]

He was subsequently appointed as the FARAJA commander of Hormozgan province.[2855]

He retained this position until February 2026, when he was appointed as the commander of FARAJA's Border Guard.[2856]

MOHSEN PANAHI



Mohsen Panahi © Basij News Agency

Position: Commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Kermanshah province

Appointment and tenure: Mohsen Panahi was appointed as the commander of the Special Cohorts of FARAJA in Kermanshah province in, or shortly after, February 2022.[2857]

State media reports indicate that he retained this position until at least August 2024.[2858]

Amnesty International was unable to find information on any subsequent changes in positions held by Mohsen Panahi.

2853. Basij News Agency, سردار جاویدان فرمانده انتظامی استان کرمانشاه شد, ["General Javidan appointed police commander of Kermanshah province"], 15 June 2019, https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9147974/سردار-جاویدان-فرمانده-انتظامی-استان-کرمانشاه-شی (in Persian).
2854. ISNA, جاویدان رفت؛ حاجیان آمد ["Javidan left; Hajian arrived"], 10 May 2023, https://www.isna.ir/news/1402022013039/جاویدان-رفت-حاجیان-آمد (in Persian).
2855. Tasnim News Agency, سردار جاویدان فرمانده انتظامی هرمزگان شد ["General Javidan appointed police commander of Hormozgan"], 15 May 2023, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/02/25/2895274/سردار-جاویدان-فرمانده-انتظامی-هرمزگان-شد (in Persian).
2856. Mehr News Agency, فرمانده جدید مرزبانی فراجا منصوب شد ["New commander of FARAJA Border Guard appointed"], 3 February 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6738876/فرمانده-جدید-مرزبانی-فراجا-منصوب-شد (in Persian).
2857. Hamedan Online, انتصاب جدید در فرماندهی یگان ویژه همدان ["New appointment in command of Special Cohort in Hamedan"], 9 February 2022, https://hamedanonline.ir/2022/02/09/انتصاب-جدید-در-فرماندهی-یگان-ویژه-همدا/ (in Persian).
2858. See, for example, Defa Press, خدمت شبانه‌روزی یگان ویژه به زوار اربعین حسینی در مرز خسروی ["Round-the-clock service by Special Cohort to Arbaeen pilgrims at the Khosravi border"], 17 August 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/685157/-خدمت-شبانه-روزی-یگان-ویژه-به-زوار-اربعین-حسینی-در-مرز-خسروی (in Persian); ILNA, بازگرداندن کیف حاوی مدارک و وجه نقد توسط نیروی یگان ویژه ["Return of a bag containing documents and cash by the Special Cohort forces"], 11 September 2022, https://www.ilna.ir/1276974/بازگرداندن-کیف-نیروی-ویژه (in Persian).

ALIREZA DALIRI



Alireza Daliri © IRNA

Position: FARAJA commander of Kermanshah county and member of the Provision Council of Kermanshah county

Appointment and tenure: Alireza Daliri was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Kermanshah county in November 2020.[2859]

He remained in this position until March 2024, when he was appointed as the FARAJA deputy commander of Sistan and Baluchistan province.[2860] He retained this position as of 2026.[2861]

Mohammadreza Yary was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Kermanshah county.[2862]

BEHROUZ FAKHRI



Behrouz Fakhri © Fartak News

Position: FARAJA commander of Javanroud county and member of the Provision Council of Javanroud county

Appointment and tenure: Behrouz Fakhri was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Javanroud county in November 2021.[2863]

He retained this position until January 2025, when he was replaced by Fazlollah Pornobeh.[2864]

Amnesty International was unable to find information on any subsequent positions held by Behrouz Fakhri.

2859. IRIB News, معارفه فرمانده انتظامی جدید شهرستان کرمانشاه ["New police commander of Kermanshah county introduced"], 2 November 2020, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2891502/معارفه-فرمانده-انتظامی-جدید-شهرستان-کرمانشاه (in Persian).

2860. See IRNA, فرماندار: احساس امنیت در کرمانشاه ارتقاء یافته است ["County governor: Sense of security in Kermanshah has improved"], 13 March 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85417786/فرماندار-احساس-امنیت-در-کرمانشاه-ارتقاء-یافته-است (in Persian); IRNA, فرماندار کرمانشاه: تلاش مجموعه انتظامی در برقراری امنیت قابل تقدیر است ["County governor of Kermanshah: Efforts of the police in ensuring security are commendable"], 12 October 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84910303/فرماندار-کرمانشاه-تلاش-مجموعه-انتظامی-در-برقراری-امنیت-قابل (in Persian).

2861. ISNA, انسداد ۱۳۰ میلیارد ریال وجوه کلاهبرداری شده در سیستان و بلوچستان ["Fraudulently obtained funds of 130 billion rials frozen in Sistan and Baluchistan"], 11 July 2026, https://www.isna.ir/news/1405042011454 (in Persian).

2862. See IRNA, فرماندار: احساس امنیت در کرمانشاه ارتقاء یافته است ["County governor: Sense of security in Kermanshah has improved"], 13 March 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85417786/فرماندار-احساس-امنیت-در-کرمانشاه-ارتقاء-یافته-است (in Persian); IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی استان: رشد شتابان سرقت در کرمانشاه متوقف شد ["Police commander of province: Rapid increase in theft in Kermanshah has been stopped"], 13 March 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85417349/فرمانده-انتظامی-استان-رشد-شتابان-سرقت-در-کرمانشاه-متوقف-شد (in Persian).

2863. Akharin Khabar, فرمانده انتظامی جدید شهرستان صحنه معرفی شد ["New police commander of Sahneh county introduced"], 25 November 2021, https://akharinkhabar.ir/local/8545256/فرمانده-انتظامی-جدید-شهرستان-صحنه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2864. IRIB News, معرفی فرمانده جدید انتظامی شهرستان جوانرود ["Introduction of new police commander of Javanroud county"], 26 January 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4439941/فرماندهجدید-جوان... (in Persian)

HOUSHANG MOBARAKI (MOBARAKIPOUR)



Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour) © Eslam Abad News

Position: FARAJA commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county and member of the Provision Council of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county

Appointment and tenure: Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour) was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county in December 2021.[2865]

He remained in this position until May 2024, when he was appointed as the head of the Anti-Narcotics Police of Kermanshah province.[2866]

Aria Abdi was subsequently appointed as the new FARAJA commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county.[2867]

State media articles indicate that Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour) retained his position as head of the Anti-Narcotics Police of Kermanshah province as of June 2025.[2868] From around November 2025, however, state media reports identify Eghbal Karami as holding the position.[2869]

Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports indicating the exact date of Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarankipour)'s departure from the position or information regarding any subsequent positions he has held.

2865. Mehr News Agency, آیین تودیع و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی اسلام آباد غرب برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony for police commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb held"], 7 December 2021, https://mehrnews.com/news/5369947/آیین-تودیع-و-معارفه-فرمانده-انتظامی-اسلام-آبادغرب-برگزار شد (in Persian).

2866. Mozhdeh Khabar, تودیع سرهنگ مبارکی و معارفه فرمانده جدید ["Farewell to Colonel Mobaraki and introduction of new commander"], 14 May 2024, https://mozhdekhabar.ir/تودیع-سرهنگ-مبارکی-و-معارفه-فرمانده-جد/ (in Persian).

2867. Mozhdeh Khabar, تودیع سرهنگ مبارکی و معارفه فرمانده جدید ["Farewell to Colonel Mobaraki and introduction of new commander"], 14 May 2024, https://mozhdekhabar.ir/تودیع-سرهنگ-مبارکی-و-معارفه-فرمانده-جد/ (in Persian).

2868. IMNA, امحای بیش از ۶۸۰ کیلوگرم مواد مخدر در کرمانشاه ["More than 680 kilograms of illegal drugs destroyed in Kermanshah"], 11 June 2025, https://www.imna.ir/news/874368/امحای-بیش-از-۶۸۰-کیلوگرم-مواد-مخدر-در-کرمانشاه (in Persian); IRNA, رییس پلیس مبارزه با موادمخدر: کرمانشاه به ۲ کمپ ماده ۱۶ نیاز دارد ["Head of the Anti-Narcotics Police: Kermanshah needs two Article 16 rehabilitation camps"], 2 June 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/85850606 (in Persian).

2869. Mehr News Agency, توزیع کننده مواد مخدر با ۱۰ کیلو تریاک در کرمانشاه دستگیر شد ["Drug distributor arrested with 10 kilograms of opium in Kermanshah"], 10 February 2026, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6744812/توزیع-کننده-مواد-مخدر-با-۱۰-کیلو-تریاک-در-کرمانشاه-دستگیر-شد (in Persian); IRIB News, اجرای طرح ارتقاء امنیت اجتماعی در کرمانشاه ["Implementation of social security enhancement plan in Kermanshah"], 20 November 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5632338/اجرای-طرح-ارتقاء-امنیت-اجتماعی-در-کرمانشاه (in Persian).

SHAHRAM KASANI



Shahram Kasani © Fars News Agency

Position: FARAJA commander of Salas-e Babajani county and member of the Provision Council of Salas-e Babajani county

Appointment and tenure: Amnesty International was unable to find state media reports specifying the date of Shahram Kasani's appointment as the FARAJA commander of Salas-e Babajani county. However, state media reports indicate that he already held this position in October 2022[2870] and retained it until October 2025, when he was replaced by Elahyar Moradian.[2871] Shahram Kasani was subsequently appointed as the FARAJA commander of Ghasr-e Shirin county.[2872] He retained this position as of 2026.[2873]

2870. Shakh-e Shemiran, پیام تبریک فرمانده انتظامی ثلاث باباجانی به مناسبت هفته نیروی انتظامی ["Congratulatory message from the Salas-e Babajani police commander on the occasion of Police Week"], 6 October 2022, available at https://web.archive.org/web/20240503015613/http://www.shakhshemiran.ir/news/296379 (in Persian).

2871. Sardabirpress.ir, Instagram post: مراسم تودیع و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی ثلاث باباجانی برگزار شد ["Farewell and introduction ceremony of police commander of Salas-e Babajani held"], 19 October 2025, https://www.instagram.com/p/DP_R-mNCFAK/ (in Persian).

2872. See Mehr News Agency, سرهنگ شهرام کسانی فرمانده جدید انتظامی قصرشیرین شد ["Colonel Shahram Kasani becomes new police commander of Qasr-e Shirin"], 14 October 2025, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6622065/فرمانده-جدید-قصرشیرین (in Persian); ISNA, کشف ۳ خمپاره جنگی عمل نکرده در ثلاث باباجانی ["Discovery of 3 unexploded mortars in Salas-e Babajani"], 16 November 2024, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403082619028/کشف-۳-خمپاره-جنگی-عمل-نکرده-در-ثلاث-باباجانی (in Persian).

2873. IRNA, انهدام ۳ باند سرقت در قصرشیرین و دستگیری ۷ سارق حرفه‌ای ["Three theft gangs dismantled in Ghasr-e Shirin and seven professional thieves arrested"], 9 April 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86122872/انهدام۳-باند-سرقت-در-قصرشیرین-و-دستگیری-۷-سارق-حرفه-ای (in Persian).

MOHAMMAD MOHAMMADI



Mohammad Mohammadi

© IRNA

Position: FARAJA commander of Ghasr-e Shirin county and member of the Provision Council of Ghasr-e Shirin county

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Mohammadi was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Ghasr-e Shirin in November 2019.[2874]

He remained in this position until February 2023,[2875] when he was replaced by Iman Moradi.[2876]

Amnesty International was unable to confirm information on any subsequent positions held by Mohammad Mohammadi. State media reported that a Mohammad Mohammadi was appointed as the FARAJA commander of Dalahou county in December 2022[2877] and retained this post until October 2025.[2878] However, Amnesty International could not confirm whether this referred to the same individual.

2874. Young Journalists Club, معرفی فرمانده انتظامی جدید قصرشیرین/جایی برای افراد مجرم و خلافکار در کرمانشاه وجود ندارد ["New police commander of Ghasr-e Shirin introduced: There is no place for criminals and lawbreakers in Kermanshah"], 13 November 2019, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/7138101/معرفی-فرمانده-انتظامی-جدید-قصرشیرین-جایی-برای-افراد-مجرم-و-خلافکار-در-کرمانشاه-وجود-ندارد (in Persian).

2875. IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی استان کرمانشاه از استان‌های امن کشور است ["Police commander of Kermanshah province says it is one of the safe provinces in the country"], 7 February 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85022460/فرمانده-انتظامی-استان-کرمانشاه-از-استان-های-امن-کشور-است (in Persian).

2876. See IRNA, فرمانده انتظامی استان کرمانشاه از استان‌های امن کشور است ["Police commander of Kermanshah province says it is one of the safe provinces in the country"], 7 February 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85022460/فرمانده-انتظامی-استان-کرمانشاه-از-استان-های-امن-کشور-است (in Persian).

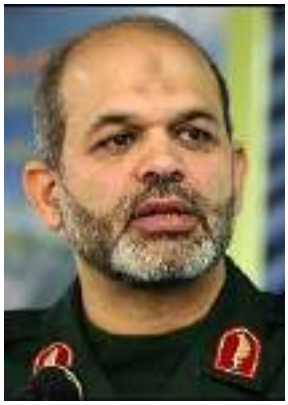
2877. Office of the County Governor of Dalahou, تکریم و معارفه فرمانده انتظامی شهرستان دالاهو ["Farewell and introduction of police commander of Dalahou county"], 3 December 2022, https://ostan-ks.ir/dalaho/اخبار/تکریم-و-معارفه-فرمانده-انتظامی-شهرستان-دالاهو/ (in Persian).

2878. Defa Press, معرفی فرماندهان جدید انتظامی دالاهو و قصرشیرین ["Introduction of new police commanders of Dalahou and Ghasr-e Shirin"], 14 October 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/785133/معرفی-فرماندهان-جدید-انتظامی-دالاهو-و-قصرشیرین (in Persian).

13.4.5 MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

13.4.5(I) NATIONAL LEVEL

AHMAD VAHIDI



Ahmad Vahidi © IRNA

Position: Minister of interior, deputy commander-in-chief for police affairs and head of the State Security Council

Appointment and tenure: Ahmad Vahidi was appointed as the minister of interior in August 2021.[2879]
He remained in this position until August 2024.[2880] Eskandar Momeni was subsequently appointed as the new minister of interior.[2881]

In October 2025, Ahmad Vahidi was appointed by the Supreme Leader as the deputy head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.[2882]

In December 2025, Ahmad Vahidi was appointed by the Supreme Leader as the deputy general commander of the IRGC.[2883]
On 10 August 2026, state media published the decree by which the Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, appointed Ahmad Vahidi as the general commander of the IRGC.[2884]

2879. ISNA, وحیدی وزیر کشور شد ["Vahidi becomes minister of interior"], 25 August 2021, https://www.isna.ir/news/1400060302599/وحیدی-وزیر-کشور-شد (in Persian).
2880. IRNA, مراسم معارفه وزیر کشور با حضور رئیس جمهور برگزار شد ["Ceremony introducing new minister of interior held in presence of President"], 26 August 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85579062/مراسم-معارفه-وزیر-کشور-با-حضور-رئیس-جمهور-برگزار-شد (in Persian).
2881. IRNA, مراسم معارفه وزیر کشور با حضور رئیس جمهور برگزار شد ["Ceremony introducing new minister of interior held in presence of President"], 26 August 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85579062/مراسم-معارفه-وزیر-کشور-با-حضور-رئیس-جمهور-برگزار-شد (in Persian).
2882. Entekhab, سردار وحیدی به عنوان جانشین ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح منصوب شد ["General Vahidi appointed as deputy head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces"], 30 October 2025, https://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/892567/سردار-وحیدی-به-عنوان-جانشین-ستاد-کل-نیروهای-مسلح-منصوب شد (in Persian).
2883. IRNA, سردار وحیدی به جانشینی فرمانده کل سپاه منصوب شد ["General Vahidi appointed as deputy general commander of the IRGC"], 31 December 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/86041271/سردار-وحیدی-به-جانشینی-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).
2884. IRNA, انتصاب سردار احمد وحیدی به سِمت فرمانده کل سپاه پاسداران ["Appointment of General Ahmad Vahidi as commander of the IRGC"], 10 August 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86232713/انتصاب-سردار-سرلشکر-احمد-وحیدی-به-سمت-فرمانده-کل-سپاه-پاسداران (in Persian).

MAJID MIR AHMADI



Majid Mir Ahmadi © Defa Press

Position: Deputy minister of interior for police and security, and secretary of the State Security Council

Appointment and tenure: Majid Mir Ahmadi was appointed as the deputy minister of interior for police and security in December 2021 by the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi.[2885]

He remained in this position until September 2024 when he was appointed as the deputy head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces for intelligence and security.[2886]

State media reports indicate that, as of December 2025, he retained this position,[2887] but he no longer held this role as of April 2026.[2888]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Majid Mir Ahmadi.

2885. Defa Press, معاون جدید امنیتی و انتظامی وزارت کشور منصوب شد ["New deputy minister of interior for police and security appointed"], 27 December 2021, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/496950 (in Persian).

2886. Javan Online, سیدمجید میراحمدی به ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح باز می‌گردد ["Seyed Majid Mir Ahmadi returns to General Staff of the Armed Forces"], 18 September 2024, https://www.javanonline.ir/fa/news/1252100 (in Persian).

2887. Defa Press, دیدار سپهبد «آلتین داغ» با معاون اطلاعات و امنیت ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح ["Lieutenant General Altın Dağ meets with deputy head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces for intelligence and security"], 24 December 2025, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/802052 (in Persian).

2888. Defa Press, سردار میراحمدی: عملکرد معجزه‌گونه نیروهای مسلح در برابر قدرت‌های شیطانی/ دنیا ایران را پیروز میدان می‌داند ["General Mirahmadi: Armed Forces' miraculous performance against evil powers - the world considers Iran the victor"], 30 April 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/830322/سردار-میراحمدی-عملکرد-معجزه‌گونه-نیروهای-مسلح-در-برابر-قدرت‌های-شیطانی-دنیا-ایران-را-پیروز-میدان-می‌داند (in Persian).

13.4.5(II) KURDISTAN PROVINCE

ESMAIL ZAREIE KOUSHA



Esmail Zareie Kousha © President.ir

Position: Provincial governor of Kurdistan and head of the Provision Council of Kurdistan province

Appointment and tenure: Esmail Zareie Kousha was appointed as the provincial governor of Kurdistan in November 2021.[2889]

He remained in this position until September 2024.[2890] Arash Zarehtan Lahouni was subsequently appointed as the provincial governor of Kurdistan.[2891]

He was subsequently appointed as an advisor to the Supreme Audit Court in January 2025.[2892] He retained this position as of 2026.[2893]

MEHDI RAMEZANI



Mehdi Ramezani © Mehr News Agency

Position: Deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan and secretary of the Provision Council of Kurdistan province

Appointment and tenure: Mehdi Ramezani was appointed as the deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan in February 2022 by the then minister of interior, Ahmad Vahidi.[2894]

He remained in this position until December 2024, when he was succeeded by Ali Akbar Varmaghani.[2895]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Mehdi Ramezani.

2889. Mehr News Agency, اسماعیل زارعی کوشا استاندار کردستان شد ["Esmail Zareie Kousha becomes provincial governor of Kurdistan"], 17 November 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5354013/اسماعیل-زارعی-کوشا-استاندار-کردستان-شد (in Persian).
2890. Asr-e Iran, برای اولین بار بعد از 45 سال / شهروند سنی ، استاندار کردستان شد ["For first time in 45 years, a Sunni citizen becomes provincial governor of Kurdistan"], 19 September 2024, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/998793/برای-اولین-بار-بعد-از-45-سال-شهروند-سنی-استاندار-کردستان-شد (in Persian).
2891. Asr-e Iran, برای اولین بار بعد از 45 سال / شهروند سنی ، استاندار کردستان شد ["For first time in 45 years, a Sunni citizen becomes provincial governor of Kurdistan"], 19 September 2024, https://www.asriran.com/fa/news/998793/برای-اولین-بار-بعد-از-45-سال-شهروند-سنی-استاندار-کردستان-شد (in Persian).
2892. Donya-e Eqtesad, مستشار دیوان محاسبات انتخاب شدند ۱۲ ["Twelve advisors to the Audit Court appointed"], 5 January 2025, https://donya-e-eqtesad.com/4141164 (in Persian).
2893. Tasnim News Agency, زارعی‌کوشا: رئیس جمهور شهید بر استقلال سیاسی کشور تأکید داشت ["Zareie Kousha: Martyred president emphasized the country's political independence"], 21 May 2026, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/3596776 (in Persian).
2894. Tasnim News Agency, معاون سیاسی امنیتی استانداری کردستان منصوب شد ["Deputy political and security governor in Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan appointed"], 1 February 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1400/11/12/2655269/معاون-سیاسی-امنیتی-استانداری-کردستان-منصوب-شد (in Persian).
2895. IMNA, معاون سیاسی، امنیتی استانداری کردستان معرفی شد ["Deputy provincial governor for political, security and social affairs of Kurdistan introduced"], 28 December 2024, https://www.imna.ir/news/824037 (in Persian).

HASSAN ASKARI[2896]



Hassan Askari © Defa Press

Position: County governor of Sanandaj and head of the Provision Council of Sanandaj county

Appointment and tenure: Hassan Askari was appointed as the county governor of Sanandaj in April 2022.[2897]

He remained in this position until February 2025, when he was replaced by Gharib Sajadi.[2898]

In May 2025, Hassan Askari was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC's Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps of Kurdistan.[2899] He retained this position as 2026.[2900]

JAFAR TAVAN



Jafar Tavan © IRNA

Position: County governor of Saqqez and head of the Provision Council of Saqqez county

Appointment and tenure: Jafar Tavan was appointed as the county governor of Saqqez in April 2022.[2901]

He remained in this position until February 2025.[2902] Zia Al-Din Nomani was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Saqqez.[2903]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Jafar Tavan.

2896. Also known as Asgari.
2897. Mehr News Agency, فرماندار جدید سنندج منصوب شد ["New county governor of Sanandaj appointed"], 15 April 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5467723/فرماندار-جدید-سنندج-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2898. IMNA, فرماندار جدید سنندج معرفی شد + سوابق ["New county governor of Sanandaj introduced + background"], 23 February 2025, https://www.imna.ir/news/842968 (in Persian).
2899. IMNA, جانشین فرمانده سپاه کردستان معرفی شد + سوابق ["Deputy commander of Kurdistan IRGC introduced + background"], 6 May 2025, https://www.imna.ir/news/863716/جانشین-فرمانده-سپاه-کردستان-معرفی-شد-سوابق (in Persian).
2900. ISNA, راه امام شهید با قدرت بیشتر ادامه خواهد یافت+فیلم ["Path of martyred Imam will continue with greater strength"], 4 July 2026, https://www.isna.ir/news/1405041307486 (in Persian).

2901. IRIB News, فرماندار جدید سقز معرفی شد ["New county governor of Saqqez introduced"], 21 April 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3422091/فرماندار-جدید-سقز-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2902. IRIB News, آیین تکریم و معارفه فرماندار سقز ["Farewell and inauguration ceremony for Governor of Saqqez"], 20 February 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4460937 (in Persian).
2903. IRIB News, آیین تکریم و معارفه فرماندار سقز ["Farewell and inauguration ceremony for Governor of Saqqez"], 20 February 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4460937 (in Persian).

TAHER HOSSEINI



Taher Hosseini © Tasnim News Agency

Position: County governor of Divandareh and head of the Provision Council of Divandareh county

Appointment and tenure: Taher Hosseini was appointed as the county governor of Divandareh in March 2022.[2904]

He remained in this position until August 2023.[2905] Javad Hosseini was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Divandareh.[2906] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Taher Hosseini.

KAMAL KHEDRY



Kamal Khedry © Office of the County Governor of Baneh

Position: County governor of Baneh and head of the Provision Council of Baneh county

Appointment and tenure: Kamal Khedry was appointed as the county governor of Baneh in April 2022.[2907]

He remained in this position until January 2024.[2908] Ehsan Darvishi was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Baneh.[2909]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Kamal Khedry.

2904. Tasnim News Agency, فرماندار جدید دیواندره معرفی شد ["New county governor of Divandareh introduced"], 18 March 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1400/12/27/2684306/فرماندار-جدید-دیواندره-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2905. Tabnak, تغییر در مدیریت عالی شهرستان دیواندره ["Change in senior management of Divandareh county"], 20 August 2023, https://ostanha.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1121409/تغییر-در-مدیریت-عالی-شهرستان-دیواندره (in Persian).

2906. Tabnak, تغییر در مدیریت عالی شهرستان دیواندره ["Change in senior management of Divandareh county"], 20 August 2023, https://ostanha.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1121409/تغییر-در-مدیریت-عالی-شهرستان-دیواندره (in Persian).

2907. Tasnim News Agency, مراسم معارفه فرماندار بانه برگزار شد ["Introduction ceremony of county governor of Baneh held"], 21 April 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/02/01/2699292/مراسم-معارفه-فرماندار-بانه-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

2908. KurdPress, سرپرست فرمانداری شهرستان بانه منصوب شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Baneh appointed"], 11 January 2024, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2765582/سرپرست-فرمانداری-شهرستان-بانه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2909. Mehr News Agency, آیین معارفه سرپرست فرمانداری بانه برگزار شد ["Introduction ceremony for head of the Office of the County Governor of Baneh held"], 11 January 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5991703/آیین-معارفه-سرپرست-فرمانداری-بانه-برگزار-شد (in Persian).

HAMID MOTASAMI



Hamid Motasami © Mehr News Agency

Position: County governor of Dehgolan and head of the Provision Council of Dehgolan county

Appointment and tenure: Hamid Motasami was appointed as the county governor of Dehgolan in March 2022.[2910]

He remained in this position until October 2024.[2911] Soudabeh Zarghamnejad was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Dehgolan.[2912]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Hamid Motasami.

KEYVAN SHAFAYEE



Keyvan Shafayee © Mehr News Agency

Position: County governor of Kamyaran and head of the Provision Council of Kamyaran county

Appointment and tenure: Keyvan Shafayee was appointed as the county governor of Kamyaran in September 2022.[2913]

He remained in this position until July 2023.[2914] Kianoush Saghafinia was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Kamyaran.[2915]

State media articles indicate that, in November 2024, Keyvan Shafayee was appointed as the new head of Islamic Azad University of Kurdistan province.[2916] He retained this position as of 2026.[2917]

2910. Tasnim News Agency, فرمانداران دهگلان و بیجار منصوب شدند ["County governors of Dehgolan and Bijar appointed"], 12 March 2022, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1400/12/21/2680757/فرمانداران-دهگلان-و-بیجار-منصوب-شدند (in Persian).

2911. Defa Press, انتصاب اولین فرماندار دولت چهاردهم در کردستان ["Appointment of first county governor of Kurdistan under 14th government"], 20 October 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/699213/انتصاب-اولین-فرماندار-دولت-چهاردهم-در-کردستان (in Persian).

2912. Defa Press, انتصاب اولین فرماندار دولت چهاردهم در کردستان ["Appointment of first county governor of Kurdistan under 14th government"], 20 October 2024, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/699213/انتصاب-اولین-فرماندار-دولت-چهاردهم-در-کردستان (in Persian).

2913. Office of the County Governor of Kamyaran, حکم فرماندار شهرستان کامیاران به امضای وزیر کشور رسید ["Appointment decree for county governor of Kamyaran signed by minister of interior"], 10 September 2022, https://kamyaran.ostan-kd.ir/1401/06/19/حکم-فرماندار-شهرستان-کامیاران-به-امضا/ (in Persian).

2914. Mehr News Agency, فرماندار جدید کامیاران معرفی شد ["New county governor of Kamyaran introduced"], 4 July 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5826817/فرماندار-جدید-کامیاران-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2915. Mehr News Agency, فرماندار جدید کامیاران معرفی شد ["New county governor of Kamyaran introduced"], 4 July 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5826817/فرماندار-جدید-کامیاران-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2916. See, for example, Tasnim News Agency, سرپرست جدید دانشگاه آزاد کردستان منصوب شد+سوابق ["New head of Azad University of Kurdistan appointed + background"], 22 November 2024, https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1403/09/02/3204964/سرپرست-جدید-دانشگاه-آزاد-کردستان-منصوب-شد-سوابق (in Persian); Islamic Azad University, Kurdistan Branch, "مراسم معارفه رئیس جدید دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی کردستان" ["Inauguration ceremony of the new president of Islamic Azad University of Kurdistan"], 24 September 2023, https://sanandaj.iau.ir/fa/news/1104/مراسم-معارفه-رئیس-جدید-دانشگاه-آزاد-اسلامی-کردستان (in Persian).

2917. Ana News Agency, شهید طهرانچی با نگاهی تمدن‌ساز نقش مؤثری در ارتقای جایگاه علمی و فرهنگی دانشگاه آزاد ایفا کرد ["Martyr Tehranchi, with a civilisation-building vision, played an effective role in enhancing the scientific and cultural standing of Islamic Azad University"], 13 June 2026, https://ana.ir/fa/news/1062575 (in Persian).

ESMAIL AHMADI



Esmail Ahmadi © IRNA

Position: County governor of Mariwan and head of the Provision Council of Mariwan county

Appointment and tenure: Esmail Ahmadi was appointed as the county governor of Mariwan in March 2022.[2918]

He remained in this position until May 2025.[2919] Nejad Jahani was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Mariwan.[2920]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Esmail Ahmadi.

13.4.5(III) WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE

MOHAMMAD SADEGH MOTAMEDIAN



Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian © IMNA

Position: Provincial governor of West Azerbaijan and head of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian was appointed as the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan in October 2021.[2921]

He retained this position until October 2024, when he was appointed as the provincial governor of Tehran.[2922] Reza Rahmani was subsequently appointed as the new provincial governor of West Azerbaijan.[2923]

State media articles indicate that he remained the provincial governor of Tehran as of 2026.[2924]

2918. Mehr News Agency, فرماندار جدید مریوان معرفی شد ["New county governor of Mariwan introduced"], 13 March 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5446367/فرماندار-جدید-مریوان-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2919. Tasnim News Agency, فرماندار مریوان معرفی شد ["County governor of Mariwan introduced"], 3 May 2025, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1404/02/13/3304506 (in Persian).

2920. Tasnim News Agency, فرماندار مریوان معرفی شد ["County governor of Mariwan introduced"], 3 May 2025, https://www.tasnimnews.ir/fa/news/1404/02/13/3304506 (in Persian).

2921. Mehr News Agency, محمدصادق معتمدیان استاندار آذربایجان غربی شد ["Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian becomes provincial governor of West Azerbaijan"], 17 October 2021, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5330033/محمدصادق-معتمدیان-استاندار-آذربایجان-غربی-شد (in Persian).

2922. Mehr News Agency, محمدصادق معتمدیان استاندار جدید تهران کیست؟ ["Who is Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, Tehran's new provincial governor?"], 20 October 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6263172 (in Persian).

2923. IRNA, رضا رحمانی استاندار آذربایجان غربی شد ["Reza Rahmani becomes provincial governor of West Azerbaijan"], 4 December 2024, https://www.irna.ir/news/85679611/رضا-رحمانی-استاندار-آذربایجان-غربی-شد (in Persian).

2924. IRNA, استاندار تهران از مردم خواست از وسایل نقلیه عمومی استفاده کنند ["Provincial governor of Tehran urged public to use public transport"], 4 July 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86200520 (in Persian).

REZA EBRAHIMI[2925]



Reza Ebrahimi © IRNA

Position: Head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan and secretary of the Provision Council of West Azerbaijan province

Appointment and tenure: Reza Ebrahimi was appointed as the head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan in December 2021.[2926]
In October 2024, he was appointed to concurrently act as the head of the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan.[2927]

In January 2025, he was appointed by the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Reza Rahmani, as the adviser of the provincial governor.[2928] Amnesty International was unable to find any information indicating changes to his position since then.

BABAKHAN ESKANDARI



Babakhan Eskandari © Bokan Online

Position: County governor of Boukan and head of the Provision Council of Boukan county

Appointment and tenure: Babakhan Eskandari was appointed as the county governor of Boukan by the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, in December 2021.[2929]

He remained in this position until March 2023, when he was appointed by the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, as the county governor of Sardasht.[2930] Khashayar Sanati was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Boukan.[2931]
Babakhan Eskandari remained in his position as county governor of Sardasht until March 2025.[2932]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Babakhan Eskandari.

2925. His last name is also written as Ebrahimi Aagh Esmaili.
2926. Kurd Press, تغییر معاونت سیاسي، امنیتي و اجتماعی استانداری آذربایجان غربی ["Change in head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of West Azerbaijan"], 25 December 2021, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/24010 (in Persian).
2927. ILNA, سرپرست استانداری آذربایجان غربی منصوب شد ["Acting governor of West Azerbaijan province appointed"], 22 October 2024, https://www.ilna.ir/1546271 (in Persian).
2928. IRIB News, معرفی معاونان جدید استانداري آذربایجانغربی ["Introducing new deputies of the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan"], 30 January 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/444366 (in Persian).
2929. IRNA, معرفی فرماندار جدید بوکان ["Introduction of new county governor of Boukan"], 30 December 2021, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3320323 (in Persian).
2930. Kurd Press, فرماندار سابق بوکان فرماندار جدید سردشت شد ["Former county governor of Boukan becomes new county governor of Sardasht"], 15 March 2023, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/43999 (in Persian).
2931. Kurd Press, فرماندار جدید بوکان معرفی شد ["New county governor of Boukan appointed"], 15 March 2023, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/44009 (in Persian).
2932. IRNA, میرزایی سرپرست فرمانداري شهرستان سردشت شد ["Mirzaei appointed head of the Office of the County Governor of Sardasht"], 1 March 2025, https://www.irna.ir/news/85765776 (in Persian).

AMIR GHADERI



Amir Ghaderi © IRNA

Position: County governor of Mahabad and head of the Provision Council of Mahabad county

Appointment and tenure: Amir Ghaderi was appointed as the county governor of Mahabad by the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, in January 2022.[2933]

He remained in this position until 17 December 2022, when Hassan Abbasi was appointed as the new county governor of Mahabad.[2934] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any positions held by Amir Ghaderi between December 2022 and February 2026.

In February 2026, Amir Ghaderi was appointed as the director general for roads and urban development of Kurdistan Province.[2935]

While retaining this position, he was appointed as the coordination deputy of civil affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan by the provincial governor of Kurdistan in July 2026.[2936]

2933. Kurd Press, سرپرست فرمانداری شهرستان مهاباد منصوب شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Boukan appointed"], 13 January 2022, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/25243 (in Persian).
2934. IRIB News, آیین تکریم و معارفه فرماندار جدید مهاباد ["Ceremony honouring the former and introducing the new county governor of Mahabad"], 17 December 2022, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3676710 (in Persian).
2935. IMNA, مدیرکل جدید راه و شهرسازی کردستان معرفی شد + سوابق ["New Director General of Roads and Urban Development of Kurdistan Province"], 26 February 2026, https://www.imna.ir/news/951682/مدیرکل-جدید-راه-و-شهرسازی-کردستان-معرفی-شد-سوابق (in Persian).
2936. Defa Press, سرپرست جدید معاونت عمرانی استانداری کردستان معرفی شد ["New head introduced as deputy governor for civil affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kurdistan"], 1 July 2026, https://defapress.ir/fa/news/845093 (in Persian).

KHEZR KAK DARVISHI



Khezr Kak Darvishi © Borna News

Position: County governor of Piranshahr and head of the Provision Council of Piranshahr county

Appointment and tenure: Khezr Kak Darvishi was appointed as the county governor of Piranshahr by the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, in December 2021.[2937]

He remained in this position until January 2025, when he was appointed as the deputy for management development and human resources of the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan by the provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Reza Rahmani.[2938]

Loghman Khosrowpour was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Piranshahr.[2939]

Khezr Kak Darvishi retained his position as deputy for management development and human resources of the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan as of 2026.[2940]

2937. Young Journalists Club, سرپرست فرمانداری پیرانشهر منصوب شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Piranshahr appointed"], 6 December 2021, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/7989249 (in Persian).
2938. IRNA, تشریح فعالیت ادارات در ایام تشییع پیکر قائد شهید امت/ آذربایجان غربی دوشنبه تعطیل است ["Explanation of Government office operations during funeral procession for martyred leader of the Ummah: West Azerbaijan is closed on Monday"], 4 July 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86198608/تشریح-فعالیت-ادارات-در-ایام-تشییع-پیکر-قائد-شهید-امت-آذربایجان (in Persian); Fars News Agency, معاونین جدید استانداری آذربایجان‌غربی معرفی شدند ["New deputies of Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan introduced"], 29 January 2025, https://farsnews.ir/Fereshteh_farid/1738174349761319624/ (in Persian); Young Journalists Club, انتصاب دو معاون استاندار آذربایجان غربی ["Appointment of two deputies in the Office of the Provincial Governor of West Azerbaijan"], 29 January 2025, https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8905670/انتصاب-دو-معاون-استاندار-آذربایجان-غربی (in Persian); Hawzah News, رئیس جدید اداره تبلیغات اسلامی شهرستان پیرانشهر معرفی شد ["New head of Islamic Propaganda Organization Office of Piranshahr county introduced"], 14 January 2025, https://www.hawzahnews.com/news/1219191 (in Persian).
2939. IRIB News, معرفی فرماندار جدید پیرانشهر ["Introduction of new county governor of Piranshahr"], 1 February 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4444732/معرفی-فرماندار-جدید-پیرانشهر (in Persian).
2940. Fars News Agency, ادارات آذربایجان‌غربی فردا ساعت ۹ صبح آغاز به کار می‌کنند ["Offices in West Azerbaijan will begin work tomorrow at 9.00am"], 26 June 2026, https://farsnews.ir/Fereshteh_farid/1782493306110882363 (in Persian).

ALI TORABI



Ali Torabi © Ostan Sazan

Position: County governor of Oshnavieh and head of the Provision Council of Oshnavieh county

Appointment and tenure: Ali Torabi was appointed as the county governor of Oshnavieh by the then provincial governor of West Azerbaijan, Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, in December 2021.[2941] He remained in this position until September 2025, when Abdolsalam Mam Aziz was appointed as the new county governor of Oshnavieh.[2942]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Ali Torabi.

GHOLAM HOSSEIN AMMARI



Gholam Hossein Ammari

© IRNA

Position: County governor of Urumieh and head of the Provision Council of Urumieh county

Appointment and tenure: Gholam Hossein Ammari was appointed as the county governor of Urumieh in February 2022.[2943]

He remained in this position until February 2025, when Rasoul Moghabeli was appointed as the new county governor of Urumieh.[2944]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Gholam Hossein Ammari.

2941. IRIB News, معرفی سرپرست فرماندار ی اشنویه ["Introduction of head of the Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh"], 8 December 2021, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/3299997/معرفی-سرپرست-فرمانداری-اشنویه (in Persian); Kurd Press, سرپرست فرمانداری اشنویه منصوب شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Oshnavieh appointed"], 8 December 2021, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/22939/سرپرست-فرمانداری-اشنویه-منصوب-شد (in Persian).

2942. IRIB News, معرفی فرماندار جدید اشنویه ["Introduction of new county governor of Oshnavieh"], 8 September 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5562441/معرفی-فرماندار-جدید-اشنویه (in Persian).

2943. Mehr News Agency, سرپرست فرمانداری ارومیه معرفی شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Urumieh introduced"], 23 February 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5431832/سرپرست-فرمانداری-ارومیه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2944. IRIB News, فرماندار جدید شهرستان ارومیه معرفی شد ["New county governor of Urumieh introduced"], 3 February 2025, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/4446585/فرماندار-جدید-شهرستان-ارومیه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

13.4.5(IV) KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

BAHMAN AMIRI MOGHADDAM



Bahman Amiri Moghaddam
© IRNA

Position: Provincial governor of Kermanshah and head of the Provision Council of Kermanshah province

Appointment and tenure: Bahman Amiri Moghaddam was appointed as the provincial governor of Kermanshah in January 2022.[2945]

He remained in this position until December 2022, when he was succeeded by Mohammad Tayyeb Sahrayee.[2946]

In April 2023, Bahman Amiri Moghaddam was appointed as the director general of the Office for Border Affairs and Border Residents.[2947] He apparently held this position until January 2025.[2948]

State media articles suggest that, later in 2025, he was appointed as the deputy head of Iran's Red Crescent Society.[2949] He retained this position as of 2026.[2950]

2945. Jahan News, بهمن امیری مقدم استاندار کرمانشاه شد ["Bahman Amiri Moghaddam becomes provincial governor of Kermanshah"], 5 January 2022, https://www.jahannews.com/news/787605 (in Persian).
2946. See Mehr News Agency, استاندار جدید کرمانشاه را بیشتر بشناسیم ["Let's get to know the new provincial governor of Kermanshah better"], 27 November 2024, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/6300803/استاندار-جدید-کرمانشاه-را-بیشتر-بشناسیم (in Persian); Tabnak, محمدطیب صحرایی استاندار کرمانشاه شد ["Mohammad Tayyeb Sahrayee becomes provincial governor of Kermanshah"], 21 December 2022, https://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/1155902/محمدطیب-صحرایی-استاندار-کرمانشاه-شد (in Persian).
2947. IRNA, سه مدیر کل جدید در وزارت کشور منصوب شدند ["Three new directors general appointed at the Ministry of Interior"], 19 April 2023, https://www.irna.ir/news/85087507/سه-مدیر-کل-جدید-در-وزارت-کشور-منصوب-شدند (in Persian).
2948. Mizan News Agency, مهدی حسن عباسی مدیرکل دفتر امور مرزی و مرزنشینان وزارت کشور شد ["Mehdi Hassan Abbasi becomes Director General of the Office for Border Affairs and Border Residents of the Ministry of Interior"], 21 January 2025, https://www.mizanonline.ir/fa/news/4816051/مهدی-حسن-عباسی-مدیرکل-دفتر-امور-مرزی-و-مرزنشینان-وزارت-کشور-شد (in Persian).
2949. ISNA, آماده‌باش ۲۲ هزار امدادگر در زمستان ۱۴۰۴ / استفاده از ریزپرنده‌ها ["Rescuers, 22,000 on alert in winter 2025/2026 / Use of Micro-Drones"], November 2025, https://www.isna.ir/news/1404092718374/آماده-باش-۲۲-هزار-امدادگر-در-زمستان-۱۴۰۴-استفاده-از-ریز-پرنده-ها (in Persian).
2950. IRIB News, بیشترین حوادث در کدام استان‌ها رخ داد ["Which provinces had the most accidents?"], 25 February 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5727673/بیشترین-حوادث-در-کدام-استان‌ها-رخ-داد (in Persian).

MOHAMMAD POURHASHEMI



Mohammad Pourhashemi
© IRNA

Position: Head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah and secretary of the Provision Council of Kermanshah province

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Pourhashemi was appointed as the head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah in May 2022.[2951] The same month, he was appointed to concurrently act as the head of the Office for Security and Police Affairs of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah.[2952]

State media articles indicate that, by December 2024, Bahram Soleimani had replaced him as the head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah.[2953] However, state media articles indicate that as of 2026, he retained the position of the head of the Office for Security and Police Affairs in Kermanshah province.[2954]

2951. Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah, سرپرست معاونت سیاسی، امنیتی و اجتماعی استانداری کرمانشاه منصوب شد ["Appointment of new head of the Office of the Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs of Kermanshah"], 19 May 2022, https://www.ostan-ks.ir/84114 (in Persian).

2952. Milkan Online, مدیرکل امنیتی و انتظامی استانداری منصوب شد ["Head of the Office for Security and Police Affairs of the Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah appointed"], 15 May 2022, https://www.milkanonline.ir/25190/مدیرکل-امنیتی-و-انتظامی-استانداری-منصی (in Persian).

2953. Fars News Agency, آغاز تغییرات مدیریتی در استانداری کرمانشاه ["Beginning of management changes in Office of the Provincial Governor of Kermanshah"], 17 December 2024, https://farsnews.ir/Parasto/1734437195996944963/آغاز-تغییرات-مدیریتی-در-استانداری-کرمانشاه (in Persian).

2954. Office of the County Governor of Gilan-e Gharb, مدیرکل امنیتی و انتظامی و دبیر ستاد اربعین استان کرمانشاه: تکمیل زیرساخت‌های مرز سومار با شتاب در حال انجام است ["Head of Security and Police Affairs and secretary of the Kermanshah province Arbaeen Headquarters: Completion of infrastructure at the Soumar border crossing is progressing rapidly"], 27 June 2026, https://www.ostan-ks.ir/gilanegharb/-اخبار/مدیرکل-امنیتی-و-انتظامی-و-دبیر-ستاد-اربعین-استان-کرمانشاه-تکمیل-زیرساخت-های-مرز-سومار-با-شتاب-در-حال-انجام-است (in Persian).

EBRAHIM RAHIMI ZANGANEH



Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh © Ghatreh News

Position: County governor of Kermanshah and head of the Provision Council of Kermanshah county

Appointment and tenure: Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh was appointed as the county governor of Kermanshah in July 2022.[2955] He remained in this position until April 2023.[2956] Mohammadreza Amoui was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Kermanshah.[2957]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh.

SA'DI NAGHSHBANDI



Sa'di Naghshbandi © ISNA

Position: County governor of Javanroud and head of the Provision Council of Javanroud county

Appointment and tenure: Sa'di Naghshbandi was appointed as the county governor of Javanroud in May 2022.[2958] He remained in this position until July 2023, when Namdar Hosseini was appointed as the new county governor of Javanroud.[2959]

Later in December 2024, Sa'di Naghshbandi was appointed as the head of the Agricultural Jihad Organization of Kurdistan province, the regional branch of a national state organization responsible for agriculture and rural development.[2960] He retained this position as of 2026.[2961]

2955. ISNA, ابراهیم رحیمی زنگنه سرپرست فرمانداری کرمانشاه شد ["Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh becomes head of the Office of the County Governor of Kermanshah"], 3 July 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401041208257/ابراهیم-رحیمی-زنگنه-سرپرست-فرمانداری-کرمانشاه-شد (in Persian).

2956. Mehr News Agency, آمویی سرپرست جدید فرمانداری کرمانشاه معرفی شد ["Amoui introduced as new head of the Office of the County Governor of Kermanshah"], 5 April 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5747460/آمویی-سرپرست-جدید-فرمانداری-کرمانشاه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2957. Mehr News Agency, آمویی سرپرست جدید فرمانداری کرمانشاه معرفی شد ["Amoui introduced as new head of the Office of the County Governor of Kermanshah"], 5 April 2023, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5747460/آمویی-سرپرست-جدید-فرمانداری-کرمانشاه-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2958. IRNA, سرپرست فرمانداری جوانرود معرفی شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Javanroud introduced"], 21 May 2022, https://www.irna.ir/news/84762039/سرپرست-فرمانداری-جوانرود-معرفی-شد (in Persian).

2959. KurdPress, نامدار حسینی سرپرست فرمانداری جوانرود شد ["Namdar Hosseini becomes head of the Office of the County Governor of Javanroud"], 4 July 2023, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2757837/نامدار-حسینی-سرپرست-فرمانداری-جوانرود-شد (in Persian).

2960. KurdPress, سعدی نقشبندی رئیس سازمان جهاد کشاورزی کردستان شد ["Sa'di Naqshbandi became head of the Agricultural Jihad Organization of Kurdistan"], 23 December 2024, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2779165/-سعدی-نقشبندی-رئیس-سازمان-جهاد-کشاورزی-کردستان-شد (in Persian).

2961. IRIB News, پیش‌بینی خرید تضمینی تا ۷۸۰ هزار تن گندم در کردستان ["Forecast of guaranteed purchase of up to 780,000 tonnes of wheat in Kurdistan"], 9 July 2026, https://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/5848532 (in Persian).

HAMIDREZA KARAMI



Hamidreza Karami © Mehr News Agency

Position: County governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb and head of the Provision Council of Eslam Abad-e Gharb county

Appointment and tenure: Hamidreza Karami was appointed as the county governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb in May 2022.[2962]

He retained this position until January 2025, when Farhad Shahbazi was appointed as the county governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb.[2963] Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Hamidreza Karami.

FARAMARZ BAVANDPOURI GILAN[2964]



Faramarz Bavandpouri Gilan © IRNA

Position: County governor of Salas-e Babajani and head of the Provision Council of Salas-e Babajani county

Appointment and tenure: Faramarz Bavandpouri Gilan was appointed as the county governor of Salas-e Babajani in April 2022.[2965]

He remained in this position until February 2025, when Alireza Rezaei was subsequently appointed as the new county governor of Salas-e Babajani.[2966]

Amnesty International was unable to find any information on any subsequent positions held by Faramarz Bavandpouri Gilan.

2962. ISNA, فرماندار جدید اسلام‌آبادغرب معرفی شد ["New county governor of Eslam Abad-e-Gharb introduced"], 30 May 2022, https://www.isna.ir/news/1401030906914/فرماندار-جدید-اسلام-آبادغرب-معرفی-شد (in Persian).
2963. ISNA, معارفه سرپرست فرمانداری اسلام‌آبادغرب ["Introducing head of the Office of the County Governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb"], 26 January 2025, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403110704644/معارفه-سرپرست-فرمانداری-اسلام-آبادغرب (in Persian).
2964. Also known as Bavandpour or Bavandpouri without the word "Gilan" included in his last name.
2965. Mehr News Agency, فرماندار جدید ثلاث باباجانی معارفه شد ["New county governor of Salas-e Babajani introduced"], 5 April 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5460203/فرماندار-جدید-ثلاث-باباجانی-معارفه-شد (in Persian); Mehr News Agency, سرپرست فرمانداری ثلاث باباجانی منصوب شد ["Head of the Office of the County Governor of Salas-e Babajani appointed"], 4 April 2022, https://www.mehrnews.com/news/5459318/سرپرست-فرمانداری-ثلاث-باباجانی-منصوب-شد (in Persian).
2966. ISNA, انتصاب سرپرست فرمانداری ۳ شهرستان استان کرمانشاه ["Appointment of heads of three offices of county governors in Kermanshah"], 15 February 2025, https://www.isna.ir/news/1403112720166/انتصاب-سرپرست-فرمانداری-۳-شهرستان-استان-کرمانشاه (in Persian).

MOHAMMAD HEIDARY



Mohammad Heidary © IRNA

Position: County governor of Ghasr-e Shirin and head of the Provision Council of Ghasr-e Shirin county

Appointment and tenure: Mohammad Heidary was appointed as the county governor of Ghasr-e Shirin in July 2022.[2967]

He remained in this position until June 2023, when Mohammad Najafi was appointed as the new county governor of Ghasr-e Shirin.[2968]

In July 2023, Mohammad Heidary was appointed as the county governor of Roudsar in Gilan province.[2969] He remained in this position until October 2024, when he was appointed as the director general of the Office for Cabinet Affairs.[2970]

Amnesty International was unable to find state media articles confirming when Mohammad Heidary left this role or was appointed to subsequent positions. However, state media articles indicate that, as of May 2026, he held the position of director general for special follow-up affairs in the Office of the President.[2971]

13.5 ORGANIGRAMS OF OFFICIALS

This section features three organigrams for the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah and West Azerbaijan. Together, they present the names, titles and photographs of 87 officials identified by Amnesty International as warranting criminal investigations in connection with the crimes against humanity documented in these areas. All three organigrams include the same 10 national officials. Additionally, the organigram for Kurdistan features 31 sub-national officials, the organigram for Kermanshah features 24 sub-national officials and the organigram for West Azerbaijan features 24 sub-national officials. Two sub-national officials appear in the organigrams for both Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan because they are the commander and deputy commander of the IRGC's regional Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters, which covers both provinces.

In each organigram, following the presentation of the Supreme Leader and the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, officials are grouped according to their institutional affiliation within three entities: the IRGC, FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior. The organigrams illustrate the hierarchical structure of these institutions at the national, regional, provincial and county levels and the

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2967. See Borna News, استاندار کرمانشاه سرپرستان فرمانداری‌های کنگاور و قصرشیرین را منصوب کرد ["Provincial governor of Kermanshah appoints heads of the offices of the county governors of Kangavar and Ghasr-e Shirin"], 15 June 2023, https://borna.news/fa/news/1486481/استاندار-کرمانشاه-سرپرستان-فرمانداری‌های-کنگاور-و-قصرشیرین-را-منصوب-کرد (in Persian).

2968. Borna News, استاندار کرمانشاه سرپرستان فرمانداری‌های کنگاور و قصرشیرین را منصوب کرد ["Provincial governor of Kermanshah appoints heads of the offices of the county governors of Kangavar and Ghasr-e Shirin"], 15 June 2023, https://borna.news/fa/news/1486481/استاندار-کرمانشاه-سرپرستان-فرمانداری‌های-کنگاور-و-قصرشیرین-را-منصوب-کرد (in Persian).

2969. Diyar-e Mirza, یک غیر بومی سرپرست فرمانداری شهرستان رودسر شد ["Non-local becomes head of the Office of the County Governor of Roudsar"], 22 July 2023, https://diyarmirza.ir/1402/04/یک-غیر-بومی-سرپرست-فرمانداری-شهرستان-ر/ (in Persian).

2970. Gil Khabar, فرماندار رودسر، مدیرکل دفتر امور هیئت دولت شد ["County governor of Roudsar becomes director general of the Office of the Government's Council Affairs"], 9 October 2024, https://gilkhabar.ir/news/i/500137 (in Persian).

2971. Ministry of Roads and Urban Development News Portal, تأکید نماینده ویژه رئیس‌جمهور بر هم‌افزایی حداکثری برای تسهیل فعالیت‌های بندری ["Special representative of president emphasizes maximum coordination to facilitate port activities"], 21 May 2026, http://news.mrud.ir/news/222470/تأکید-نماینده-ویژه-رئیس-جمهور-بر-هم-افزایی-حداکثری-برای-تسهیل (in Persian); IRNA, مدیرکل پیگیری‌های ویژه ریاست‌جمهوری: دولت به دنبال بی‌اثر کردن تحریم‌هاست ["Director general for special follow-up affairs at the Presidency: Government is working to render sanctions ineffective"], 21 May 2026, https://www.irna.ir/news/86160775/مدیرکل-پیگیری-های-ویژه-ریاست-جمهوری-دولت-به-دنبال-بی-اثر-کردن (in Persian); Kurd Press, انتصاب فرماندار اسبق قصرشیرین به عنوان مدیرکل پیگیری‌های ویژه دفتر رئیس‌جمهور ["Former county governor of Ghasr-e Shirin appointed as Director General for Special Follow-up Affairs in the Office of the President"], 2 May 2026, https://www.kurdpress.com/news/2795179/انتصاب-فرماندار-اسبق-قصرشیرین-به-عنوان-مدیرکل-پیگیری-های-ویژه (in Persian).

relationships of superiority and subordination between the officials within these entities. However, given the opacity surrounding the internal organization of Iran's security apparatus and the lack of detailed publicly available information on reporting relationships, the organigrams do not depict specific reporting lines between individual officials.

Further, the organigrams do not depict the relationships between officials across the three entities through connecting lines. However, Amnesty International recalls that officials from the IRGC, FARAJA and the Ministry of Interior act in close coordination with one another, as detailed in Chapter 10. The organigrams should therefore be understood as broadly illustrating relationships of superiority and subordination within each entity, rather than the inter-institutional coordination and cooperation that characterized the planning and implementation of the protest repression operations.

OFFICIALS WARRANTING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

KURDISTAN PROVINCE



Commander-in-chief of All Armed Forces (Supreme Leader)

Ali Khamenei*



Head of General Staff of the Armed Forces

Mohammad Bagheri*

ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS CORPS (IRGC)

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

POLICE FORCE (FARAJA)

NATIONAL



General Commander

Hossein Salami*



Commander of Ground Resistance Force

Mohammad Pakpour*



Minister of Interior and Deputy Commander-in-chief for Police

Ahmad Vahidi



Deputy Minister of Interior for Police and Security

Majid Mir Ahmadi



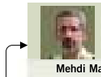
National Commander of Special Cohorts

Hassan Karami



General Commander

Hossein Ashtari



Head of Prevention Police (until 14 November 2022)

Mehdi Masoum Beigi



Head of Prevention Police (after 14 November 2022)

Reza Baniasadifar

REGIONAL



Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters

Mohammad Taghi Osanlou



Deputy Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters

Majid Arjmandfar

PROVINCIAL



Commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps

Sadegh Hosseini



Deputy Commander of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps

Alireza Madanifar (Madani)



Commander of 22 Beit Al-Moghaddas Operational Division of Beit Al-Moghaddas Provincial Corps

Jamshid Rezayee



Provincial Governor

Esmail Zareie Kousha



Deputy Provincial Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs

Mehdi Ramezani



Commander

Ali Azadi



Commander of Special Cohorts

Mohammad Alizamani

COUNTY



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Baneh County

Abbas Amri



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Dehgolan County

Sadegh Jamali



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Divandareh County

Ali Ahmad Safizadeh



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kamyaran County

Hossein Maleki



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan County (until 29 Oct 2022)

Mansour Valy Yee



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mariwan County (after 29 Oct 2022)

Gheisar Omidi



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Sanandaj County

Morteza Miraghayee



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Saqqez County

Yousef Maroufi



County Governor of Baneh

Kamal Khedry



County Governor of Dehgolan

Hamid Motasami



County Governor of Divandareh

Taher Hosseini



County Governor of Mariwan

Esmail Ahmadi



County Governor of Kamyaran

Keyvan Shafeyee



County Governor of Sanandaj

Hassan Askari



County Governor of Saqqez

Jafar Tavan



Commander of Baneh County

Rasoul Karami Chegini



Commander of Dehgolan County

Yousef Darvishi*



Commander of Divandareh County

Alireza Karaji



Commander of Kamyaran County

Behrouz Jalilian



Commander of Mariwan County

Kambiz Rostamnia



Commander of Sanandaj County

Alireza Moradi

Commander of Saqqez County

Ali Safari

*Deceased

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

OFFICIALS WARRANTING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE



Commander-in-chief of All Armed Forces (Supreme Leader)

Ali Khamenei*



Head of General Staff of the Armed Forces

Mohammad Bagheri*

ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS CORPS (IRGC)

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

POLICE FORCE (FARAJA)

NATIONAL



General Commander

Hossein Salami*



Commander of Ground Resistance Force

Mohammad Pakpour*



Minister of Interior and Deputy Commander-in-chief for Police

Ahmad Vahidi



Deputy Minister of Interior for Police and Security

Majid Mir Ahmadi



National Commander of Special Cohorts

Hassan Karami



General Commander

Hossein Ashtari



Head of Prevention Police (until 14 November 2022)

Mehdi Masoum Beigi



Head of Prevention Police (after 14 November 2022)

Reza Baniasadifar

REGIONAL



Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters

Mohammad Taghi Osanlou



Deputy Commander of Hamzeh Seyed Al-Shohada Headquarters

Majid Arjmandfar

PROVINCIAL



Commander of Shohada Provincial Corps

Habib Shahsavari



Deputy Commander of Shohada Provincial Corps

Taleb Rahimi



Commander of 3 Hamzeh Operational Division of Shohada Provincial Corps

Yadollah Abroushan



Provincial Governor

Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian



Provincial Deputy Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs

Reza Ebrahimi



Commander

Rahim Jahanbakhsh



Commander of Special Cohorts

Reza Faraji

COUNTY



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Boukan County

Samad Mohammad Alizadeh



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Mahabad County

Akbar Norouzi



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Piranshahr County

Jalil Naghshi Ghareghbagh



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Oshnavieh County

Yaghoub Rashidi



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Urumieh County

Ghahreman Eyvazlou



County Governor of Boukan

Babakhan Eskandari



County Governor of Mahabad

Amir Ghaderi



County Governor of Piranshahr

Khezr Kak Darvishi



County Governor of Oshnavieh

Ali Torabi



County Governor of Urumieh

Gholam Hossein Ammari



Commander of Boukan County

Salman Heidary



Commander of Mahabad County

Mohammad Tohidi



Commander of Piranshahr County

Hessam Salahi



Commander of Oshnavieh County

Taleb Mohammad Gholizadeh



Commander of Urumieh County

Hassan Sheikhnejad

*Deceased

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

OFFICIALS WARRANTING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

KERMANSHAH PROVINCE



Commander-in-chief of All Armed Forces (Supreme Leader)

Ali Khamenei*



Head of General Staff of the Armed Forces

Mohammad Bagheri*

ISLAMIC REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS CORPS (IRGC)

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

POLICE FORCE (FARAJA)

NATIONAL



General commander

Hossein Salami*



Commander of Ground Resistance Force

Mohammad Pakpour*



Minister of Interior and Deputy Commander-in-chief for Police

Ahmad Vahidi



Deputy Minister of Interior for Police and Security

Majid Mir Ahmadi



National Commander of Special Cohorts

Hassan Karami



General Commander

Hossein Ashtari



Head of Prevention Police (until 14 November 2022)

Mehdi Masoum Beigi



Head of Prevention Police (after 14 November 2022)

Reza Baniasadifar

REGIONAL



Commander of Najaf Ashraf Headquarters

Mohammad Nazar Azimi



Deputy Commander of Najaf Ashraf Headquarters

Kourosh Asiabani

PROVINCIAL



Commander of Nabi Akram Provincial Corps

Bahman Reyhani



Deputy Commander of Nabi Akram Provincial Corps

Masoud Ghanbari



Commander of 29 Nabi Akram Operational Division of Nabi Akram Provincial Corps

Mojtaba Karami*



Provincial Governor

Bahman Amiri Moghaddam



Provincial Deputy Governor for Political, Security and Social Affairs

Mohammad Pourhashemi



Commander

Ali Akbar Javidan



Commander of Special Cohorts

Mohsen Panahi

COUNTY



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Kermanshah County

Abouzar Anvari



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Javanroud County

Bahram Mirzaee



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Eslam Abad-e Gharb County

Arsalan Soltangholi



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Salas-e Babajani County

Ma'ref Olfati



Commander of Basij Resistance Sector Corps of Ghasr-e Shirin County

Mohsen Darabi



County Governor of Kermanshah

Ebrahim Rahimi Zanganeh



County Governor of Javanroud

Sa'di Naghshbandi



County Governor of Eslam Abad-e Gharb

Hamidreza Karami



County Governor of Salas-e Babajani

Faramarz Bavandpouri Gilan



County Governor of Ghasr-e Shirin

Mohammad Heidary



Commander of Kermanshah County

Alireza Daliri



Commander of Javanroud County

Behrouz Fakhri



Commander of Eslam Abad-e Gharb County

Houshang Mobaraki (Mobarakipour)



Commander of Salas-e Babajani County

Shahram Kasani



Commander of Ghasr-e Shirin County

Mohammad Mohammadi

*Deceased

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

14. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Iranian authorities systematically mobilized their state machinery of repression to brutally crush the Woman Life Freedom uprising. This report demonstrates, based on extensive investigations over years, that they unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders, including children. They subjected thousands more to arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearance and torture or other ill-treatment. They raped and committed other sexual violence against some of those arrested in connection with the protests, including children. To hide their crimes and enforce impunity, they persecuted the bereaved families of those killed. These crimes were committed as part of an attack against a civilian population that was both widespread and systematic, pursuant to a state policy. Amnesty International has concluded that they amount to crimes against humanity.

As Amnesty International has long warned, failure to address systemic impunity for crimes under international law fuels further atrocities. These warnings have been tragically borne out. Since the Woman Life Freedom uprising of September-December 2022, the authorities have committed further widespread crimes under international law, culminating in unprecedented massacres of thousands of protesters and bystanders during the January 2026 protests.

In late December 2025, protests once again erupted in Tehran following a sharp currency collapse amid soaring inflation and chronic state mismanagement of essential services. Protests quickly spread nationwide, evolving into large-scale street demonstrations calling for the downfall of the Islamic Republic system. In response, the authorities committed crimes under international law against protesters once again, this time at an even graver level. On the evenings of 8 and 9 January 2026, the authorities carried out protest massacres on an unprecedented scale, unlawfully killing thousands of protesters and bystanders and injuring tens of thousands.[2972] By the authorities' own admission, over 3,000 people were killed.[2973] The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the

2972. Amnesty International, "Iran: Authorities unleash heavily militarized clampdown to hide protest massacres", 23 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-authorities-unleash-heavily-militarized-clampdown-to-hide-protest-massacres; Amnesty International, "Iran: Massacre of protesters demands global diplomatic action to signal an end to impunity", 14 January 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-massacre-of-protesters-demands-global-diplomatic-action-to-signal-an-end-to-impunity

2973. Khabar Online, بیانیه تحلیلی شورای امنیت کشور درباره اقدامات تروریستی اخیر ["Analytical statement by National Security Council regarding recent terrorist acts"], 21 January 2026, https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/2171790/بیانیه-تحلیلی-شورای-امنیت-کشور-درباره-اقدامات-تروریستی-دی-ماه (in Persian).

Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Special Rapporteur on Iran) estimated that at least 5,000 women, men and children were killed.[2974]

The protest massacres of January 2026 bear the same hallmarks as the crimes against humanity documented throughout this report, yet at an even deadlier and more staggering scale. These include the systematic and widespread unlawful use of firearms and other lethal force against protesters; the coordinated deployment of security forces under a unified chain of command; and the deliberate resort to mass unlawful killings, torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual violence, mass arbitrary arrests and detentions, and enforced disappearances to eradicate popular demands for the downfall of the Islamic Republic system and transition to a new system of governance grounded in dignity, democracy and human rights.

For years, Amnesty International has sounded the alarm that, if the Iranian authorities' crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations during successive lethal protest crackdowns in December 2017-January 2018, November 2019 and September-December 2022 continued to be met with systemic impunity, their criminal state policies would inevitably deepen and intensify. As the organization concludes this report, it is evident that the failure to resolutely confront impunity for the crimes against humanity committed in 2022 paved the way for even more devastating atrocities in 2026.

Since the unlawful US-Israeli attacks on Iran began on 28 February 2026, risks of further crimes under international law against people in Iran by the Iranian authorities have deepened and multiplied. Citing "wartime conditions", senior Iranian officials have escalated their repression of dissent and openly boasted about the massacre of thousands of protesters in January 2026. State messaging is awash with threats of further violence against protesters, including warnings that security forces have received "orders to shoot" and remain ready "with their fingers on the trigger".[2975] Authorities have also threatened "a blow more severe than that on 8 January 2026" and branded peaceful protesters and dissidents seeking dignity, democracy and human rights as "enemies" and "traitors".[2976]

As Amnesty International has extensively documented, including in this report, impunity is built into the political and constitutional frameworks of the Islamic Republic system. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (the constitution), reinforced by numerous laws and policies, intertwines the judiciary with the security apparatus, ensuring they operate in unison to wipe out dissent and enforce impunity. Under the constitution, the judiciary falls under the control of the Supreme Leader, who is the commander-in-chief of the security forces which carry out crimes against humanity. The legislative framework not only excludes definitions of crimes under international law but also contains provisions that place a seal of legality on unlawful killings, the use of firearms to disperse protests and the criminalization of peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International's analysis of the systemic and deliberate nature of impunity in Iran mirrors the findings of the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran). In its detailed findings published in March 2024, the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran stated:

2974. ABC News, "VIDEO: The UN special rapporteur discusses allegations of crimes against humanity in Iran", 19 January 2026, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-01-20/un-rapporteur-on-allegations-of-crimes-against-humanity-in-iran-/106247870, minute 1:02-1:41.

2975. Amnesty International, *Trapped Between Unlawful Attacks by the USA/Israel and Internal Deadly Repression: People in Iran Face Dual Atrocity Risks* (Index: MDE 13/0883/2026), 28 April 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0883/2026/en

2976. Amnesty International, *Trapped Between Unlawful Attacks by the USA/Israel and Internal Deadly Repression: People in Iran Face Dual Atrocity Risks* (Index: MDE 13/0883/2026), 28 April 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0883/2026/en

> **"The domestic legal framework is set to prevent and obstruct any efforts of victims and their families to obtain a remedy and reparation. The lack of independence of the judiciary and prosecutors… and the lack of transparency and accountability of the judicial system… create further impediments for victims of human rights violations to access justice."**[2977]

Recognizing that the recurrence of crimes against humanity in Iran with impunity is rooted in its constitutional structure, Amnesty International has called on the international community to support Iranian civil society-led calls for fundamental changes, including to the constitution, to ensure respect for human rights, including the right to non-discrimination and equality, to freedom of belief, religion, expression, association and peaceful assembly, and to participation in public affairs.[2978]

However, victims of crimes against humanity in Iran should not be made to wait for justice until a new, independent justice system is formed through constitution-making and legislative reform, processes that depend on profound change in the country's political system. Nor can they be left exposed to further massacres for exercising their human rights. Iranian officials responsible for crimes against humanity must not remain immune from prosecution and punishment.

Any further delay by the international community in pursuing international criminal justice dangerously contributes to the normalization of mass protest killings and risks emboldening Iranian authorities to carry out further atrocities without fear of consequences.

Amnesty International calls for a meaningful approach to prevent further atrocities in Iran and advance justice for the crimes against humanity committed in the country. This should include the referral of the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court by the UN Security Council, as well as coordinated national-level criminal investigations and prosecutions pursuant to universal or other form of extraterritorial jurisdiction.
In parallel, given the gravity and scale of the crimes committed, the high risks of recurrence, and the political deadlock within the UN Security Council, Amnesty International urges the UN General Assembly to create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran.

14.1 MEANINGFUL PURSUIT OF JUSTICE

Amnesty International considers that any meaningful pursuit of justice and accountability for the crimes against humanity committed in Iran must acknowledge the well-documented reality that the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran forms an integral part of the system responsible for these crimes.

On this basis, the international community's continued practice of directing calls for accountability mainly at prosecution and judicial authorities in Iran, that are themselves complicit in the commission, concealment and facilitation of crimes against humanity, is fundamentally detached from reality. In the context of persistent and institutionalized impunity, the repetition of such calls, absent any meaningful action to advance alternative pathways to criminal justice, is wholly insufficient. For victims who have already been systematically denied their rights to truth, justice and reparations by the judiciary of the

2977. UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran), *Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran*, 19 March 2024, UN Doc. A/HRC/55/CRP.1.

2978. Amnesty International, *Trapped Between Unlawful Attacks by the USA/Israel and Internal Deadly Repression: People in Iran Face Dual Atrocity Risks* (Index: MDE 13/0883/2026), 28 April 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/0883/2026/en

Islamic Republic of Iran, the lack of effective action at the international level also serves to reinforce their sense of abandonment and compounds their suffering.

Given this context, it is essential that, for the time being and pending fundamental changes enabling the establishment of an independent judiciary, justice efforts for Iran become internationalized while ensuring meaningful consultation with and participation of Iranian victims of human rights violations, including those from the most marginalized and oppressed ethnic and religious communities, as well as lawyers, human rights defenders and other key civil society actors.

Amnesty International considers that a comprehensive and meaningful international justice approach towards the crimes against humanity committed in Iran should include the following measures:

Structures and processes to collect, consolidate, preserve and analyse evidence: Amnesty International welcomed the establishment of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran by the UN Human Rights Council in November 2022 and the subsequent renewals and expansions of its mandate in March 2024 and January 2026. The organization continues to urge member of the UN Human Rights Council to support the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran to enable it to continue its crucial work. At the same time, the scope of the task required – large-scale evidence collection, consolidation, preservation and analysis commensurate with the magnitude of the crimes perpetrated in Iran – exceeds the resources and infrastructure provided to the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. Additional structures and processes should be actively explored to ensure more sustainable and systematic evidence collection and case file preparation to criminal law standards and facilitate cooperation with national and international prosecution authorities around the world.

Universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction: Amnesty International renews its calls on prosecution offices in third states to initiate coordinated criminal investigations under universal or other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction, including against the officials named in this report, with a view to issuing arrest warrants and pursuing prosecutions where sufficient evidence exists. Amnesty International further urges states to establish joint investigation teams to streamline and accelerate these efforts.

Referral to the International Criminal Court: Amnesty International renews its calls on states to urge the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. The organization is gravely concerned that no resolution to this effect has yet been tabled in the UN Security Council. This inaction is particularly striking in the context of an escalating pattern of crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations, culminating in the unprecedented protest massacres of January 2026.

International criminal justice mechanism for Iran: Given the gravity and scale of the crimes committed, the high risks of recurrence and the political dynamics within the UN Security Council that have blocked referrals in the past in the case of other situations,[2979] Amnesty International urges the UN General Assembly to create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting

2979. To date, the UN Security Council has referred only two situations to the International Criminal Court: Darfur, Sudan (2005) and Libya (2011). Attempts to refer other situations, including Syria and Myanmar, have been blocked by the use or threat of veto by permanent members.

those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran.[2980] To facilitate this, member states of the UN General Assembly should consider mandating the UN Secretary-General to propose context-specific legal options for an international criminal justice mechanism, and then identify the most suitable option to enable its implementation.

In this regard, Amnesty International welcomes a European Parliament resolution on 21 May 2026, which for the first time highlighted the need for international criminal justice including through the establishment of "a tribunal for Iran to pursue accountability".[2981] While the feasibility and design of an international criminal justice mechanism require careful examination, jurisdictional barriers affecting other international justice pathways, coupled with the gravity of the crimes committed in Iran, mean that context-specific challenges should not deter action, but compel it.

14.2 INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT ON CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND NON-RECURRENCE

Amnesty International has urged the international community to recognize that Iran's constitution entrenches discrimination and impunity, enables grave human rights violations and crimes against humanity, and leaves no avenue for people to peacefully express themselves about the institutions of their own government and to seek representation, participation, dignity and human rights without facing unlawful killing, torture and other violations.

For these reasons, Iranian civil society actors have long called for a new, rights-respecting constitution and for international support to create the enabling conditions for civil society to pursue a transformative constitution-making process grounded in human rights, equality, and democratic participation.[2982]

Iran observers are in broad agreement that demands for a transition from the Islamic Republic system to a new rights-respecting system of governance have been central to nationwide protests since December 2017/January 2018, and have increasingly become a central topic of discussion among protesters, dissidents, civil society actors and other members of the public.

As documented by Amnesty International, such protests have been met with crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, while large segments of the population remain without any

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2980. For analyses of different options in this respect, see Carsten Stahn, "From 'united for peace' to 'united for justice?': Reflections on the power of the United Nations General Assembly to create criminal tribunals or make referrals to the ICC", 2023, Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law, Volume 55, Issue 1, https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/jil/vol55/iss1/11, pp. 270-271; Michael Ramsden, *International Justice in the United Nations General Assembly*, 2021, p. 207; UN Group of Experts for Cambodia, *Report of the Group of Experts for Cambodia Established Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 52/135*, 16 March 1999, UN Doc. A/53/850, para. 146; UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *Report of the Detailed Findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, 7 February 2014, UN Doc. A/HRC/25/CRP.1, para. 1201; Claus Kress, Stephan Hobe and Angelika Nußberger, "The Ukraine war and the crime of aggression: How to fill the gaps in the international legal system", Just Security, 23 January 2023, https://www.justsecurity.org/84783/the-ukraine-war-and-the-crime-of-aggression-how-to-fill-the-gaps-in-the-international-legal-system; Oona Hathaway, Maggie Mills and Heather Zimmerman, "The legal authority to create a special tribunal to try the crime of aggression upon the request of the UN General Assembly", Just Security, 5 May 2023, https://www.justsecurity.org/86450/the-legal-authority-to-create-a-special-tribunal-to-try-the-crime-of-aggression-upon-the-request-of-the-un-general-assembly

2981. European Parliament, Resolution 2026/2733(RSP), adopted on 21 May 2026, Register Reference: P10_TA(2026)0185, para. 10.

2982. See, for example, Narges Mohammadi, X post: مسئول اصلی این روزگار هولناک شخص علی خامنه‌ای و ساختار فاسد نظام حاکم است ["Primary party responsible for these horrific times is Ali Khamenei himself and the corrupt structure of the ruling regime"], 28 January 2026, https://x.com/nargesfnd/status/2016562859744936350 (in Persian); BBC Persian, بیانیه تعدادی از فعالان سیاسی و کنشگران مدنی: نگران سرنوشت ایران هستیم ["Statement by number of political activists and civil society advocates: We are concerned about Iran's future"], 18 July 2025, https://www.bbc.com/persian/articles/c0epj538qqqo (in Persian); Akhbar Rooz, بیانیه ۱۷ نفر از فعالین مدنی: رفراندم آزاد، مجلس موسسان، دولت ملی و فراگیر ["Statement by 17 civil society activists: A free referendum, a constituent assembly, and an inclusive national government"], 18 July 2025, https://akhbar-rooz.com/2025/07/18/23403 (in Persian).

outlet to pursue their demands for a new system of governance that respects and upholds their human rights.

Globally, Amnesty International advocates for legal changes, including to the constitution, when this is required to guarantee human rights without discrimination and uphold the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law. The organization believes such changes are required in Iran, where the country's constitution facilitates crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations.

Accordingly, the organization urges all states and international and regional bodies to address the constitutional drivers and root causes of crimes under international law in Iran rather than only their symptoms. This requires them to analyse the constitution within the framework of international human rights law and standards and to devise transformative, people-centred diplomatic strategies grounded in international law that would support the space for Iranian civil society to advocate for the adoption of a rights-respecting constitution.

Advocacy and campaigning efforts for rights-respecting constitutional change cannot begin under conditions of systematic repression, where civic space is crushed; peaceful dissent is criminalized; dissidents, protesters and other civil society actors languish in jail or, even worse, have been executed or face the death penalty following grossly unfair trials; and demands for change are met with crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations.

It is, therefore, crucial that states, as well as regional and international organizations, move beyond general expressions of concern and adopt coordinated diplomatic strategies anchored in clear benchmarks and timelines.

Such strategies should include sustained coordinated diplomatic pressure on the Iranian authorities to implement, among other recommendations, a halt to the unlawful use of firearms and force against protesters, accompanied by legislative amendments to the Law on the Use of Firearms by Armed Forces in Necessary Incidents (Law on Firearms) to bring it into line with international human rights law and standards; a halt to widespread and systemic patterns of arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other sexual violence; the unconditional release of protesters, dissidents and others arbitrarily detained for exercising their human rights; the removal of legal and political barriers – as entrenched in the constitution and the Law on the Activities of Political Parties and Groups (Law on Parties) – that impede the formation of independent political parties and deny or impermissibly restrict the rights to equality and non-discrimination, freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and meaningful participation in public affairs; the establishment of an immediate moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty; and the provision of unfettered access to Iran for the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran and other UN experts and independent international organizations to investigate human rights violations, inspect prisons and detention centres and observe trials.

In parallel, states and international organizations should explicitly call on Iranian authorities to recognize that international human rights law protects peaceful advocacy for a new rights-respecting constitution-making process and for institutions of governance that are consistent with the rule of law and international human rights. Such advocacy falls squarely within the protected exercise of the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs and is intrinsically linked to the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Where calls for legal changes, including to the constitution, seek to challenge discriminatory religious or ideological frameworks imposed by the state, they are also protected under the right to freedom of thought, conscience and belief.

The international community should, therefore, support, as appropriate and at the request of Iranian stakeholders, inclusive dialogue among civil society actors and the provision of technical

expertise on constitutional design and institutional reform grounded in international human rights law and standards.

By elevating these demands within international and multilateral forums, the international community can contribute to building the enabling conditions under which the development of an inclusive, nationally owned process for human rights changes, including to the constitution, may eventually become possible.

14.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IRANIAN AUTHORITIES

14.3.1 UNLAWFUL USE OF FORCE AND FIREARMS

Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of ministry of interior officials and members of security councils at national, provincial and county levels, unlawfully used force and firearms, including intentional lethal force, resulting in mass unlawful killings and injuries amounting to torture and other ill-treatment.

Issue clear instructions to all security forces to cease and desist from the use of firearms against protesters for the policing or dispersal of assemblies, and to respect the international threshold governing the use of firearms. This threshold limits their use to the targeting of individuals in exceptional circumstances where it is strictly necessary to confront an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and only when less extreme measures are insufficient to achieve this objective. In determining the minimal force capable of confronting such a threat, the risks posed to other people, including assembly participants and bystanders, must also have been carefully assessed.

Issue clear instructions to all security forces to cease and desist from other forms of force that are highly likely to cause death such as repeated baton strikes to the head or the direct targeted firing of tear gas canisters from very close range including to disperse, intimidate or punish protesters, or to protect property. Ensure that any use of force that puts life in danger is permitted only to counter a threat to life, or at a minimum, of serious, life endangering or life-changing injury, and where no lower degree of force is available that would be likely to achieve the legitimate law-enforcement objective.

Issue clear instructions to all security forces to immediately cease and desist from the intentional lethal use of force, that is using force in a manner that does not allow a chance of survival. International law permits the intentional lethal use of force only when it is strictly unavoidable to protect life and when the death of the person against whom intentional lethal force is used is the sole means of stopping an imminent threat to the life of another individual.

Prohibit, in law and practice, the use of shotguns loaded with birdshot during protests, recognizing that their use always violates the absolute prohibition of torture or other ill-treatment and that they must never be employed in law-enforcement operations.

Prohibit, in law and practice, the use of all weapons and ammunition which are inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading by design and should never be used in law enforcement, including rubber-coated metal bullets and electric shock batons.

- Adopt strict regulations on the procurement, storage, distribution and use of weapons and ammunition, ensuring that all equipment deployed in law-enforcement operations enables compliance with the principles of necessity and proportionality as well as with the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Weapons used in policing must be

designed to minimize harm, prevent unwarranted injury and protect third persons. Weapons that are not developed and tested for law enforcement purposes, including those intended for hunting or other non-policing functions, must never be deployed in law-enforcement operations.

- Repeal the Law on Firearms and the Executive By-Laws on the Note to Article 3(5) of the Law on Firearms, which permit members of the security forces to use firearms to disperse protests without any regard for the high threshold imposed by international law and standards and grant them immunity from criminal responsibility for unlawful killings and other unlawful conduct. Immediately adopt legislation and accompanying regulations that:
  - explicitly incorporate and comply with the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms) and the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests, including the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, precaution and non-discrimination; the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; the thresholds governing the use of firearms and other forms of potentially lethal force and the highest threshold governing the intentional lethal use of force;
  - repeal all legal and regulatory provisions that grant members of the security forces immunity from individual criminal responsibility for unlawful killings and other harm resulting from the unlawful use of force and firearms; and
  - ensure that all acts amounting to crimes under international law or other serious human rights violations are subjected to prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations, and that individuals reasonably suspected of responsibility are prosecuted in fair trials before civilian courts.
- Substantially amend the Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces and the Law on the Punishment of Crimes by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran to remove all mandates, powers and provisions that are incompatible with international human rights law, including those that authorize, encourage or tolerate the unlawful use of force and firearms, the suppression of peaceful assemblies, or any involvement of military forces in protest-related law-enforcement functions. Ensure that amendments:
  - affirm the obligation of commanders and superiors to prevent, suppress, punish and report human rights violations, in line with international standards on command and superior responsibility;
  - contain explicit prohibitions on unlawful orders, including orders to use force and firearms in violation of international human rights law and standards;
  - establish clear procedures requiring members of the security forces to refuse and report unlawful orders without fear of retaliation; and
  - require mandatory reporting, investigation and disciplinary action in all cases involving allegations of unlawful use of force and firearms, and ensure that disciplinary mechanisms operate independently and transparently, with referral to civilian prosecutors for conduct that may amount to crimes under international law or other serious human rights violations.
- Seek international assistance to overhaul all laws and policies, training curricula, operational doctrines and internal regulations governing the use of force and firearms, crowd management and public order policing, arrest procedures and intelligence and surveillance activities during

protests to ensure full compliance with international human rights and policing standards, including the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms, the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, and the UN Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests.

- Take action to ensure that all members of the security forces are properly trained in international human rights law and that their training includes, as an absolute priority, instructions to respect international law and standards governing the use of force and firearms.

  Guarantee public access to information regarding the orders and operational guidelines issued to all security and law-enforcement bodies on the use of force and firearms, including by declassifying internal documents related to the commission of crimes under international law and human rights violations, such as those documented in this report, to ensure public transparency and accountability.

- Declassify and disclose the orders, resolutions and operational guidelines issued to security forces regarding the use of force and firearms during the repression of protests, including those in 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2026. In this regard, grant public access to internal documents related to the repression of protest movements, particularly those linked to the commission of crimes under international law and serious human rights violations documented in this report, in order to ensure transparency and accountability.

14.3.2 FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

Recognize that the crimes against humanity committed in the context of repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising form part of a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population who are opposed to or critical of the Islamic Republic system, and that this attack is rooted in the authorities' long-standing denial of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Amend Article 27 of the constitution, removing the clause that limits the right to freedom of peaceful assembly to gatherings that "do not disrupt Islamic principles" and fully recognize the right of peaceful assembly, in law and in practice, as protected under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Revoke or substantially amend, with a view to bringing into conformity with international human rights law and standards, vaguely worded provisions of the Islamic Penal Code that unduly restrict and criminalize the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, such as Articles 498, 499, 500, 508, 513, 514 and 610. Any restrictions on freedom of expression must be strictly compatible with Article 19 of the ICCPR, and peaceful protest and the expression of dissent must not be criminalized.

Revoke the Law on Parties, which restricts the right to hold assemblies to licensed parties and imposes repressive discriminatory criteria for forming and joining political organizations and the Law on the Police Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Police Force Law) which tasks the Police Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (known by its Persian acronym, FARAJA) with suppressing "unpermitted" gatherings and "unauthorized activities". Seek international expertise and technical assistance, among others, UN bodies and international experts, to adopt new legislation that fully recognizes the rights to freedom of association and peaceful assembly, in law and in practice, as protected under the ICCPR, including the right to form and join political parties without discrimination, and to exercise the right to peaceful assembly without prior authorization.

- Conduct a comprehensive review and revoke or substantially amend all laws and regulations that unduly restrict the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly or establish mandates, structures, chains of command and operational powers inherently incompatible with international human rights law. These include, but are not limited to, provisions in the constitution, the Police Force Law, the Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Law Regarding the Determination of Duties and the Organization of the State Security Council, the Islamic Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Law on Firearms, and the Law on Parties.

- Ensure that no one is subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention and prosecution, including for the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.
  Desist from using internet shutdowns to clamp down on human rights; reinstate access to social media platforms and enact legislation in line with international human rights law that recognizes the fundamental role that the internet plays in the exercise of human rights.

- Immediately and unconditionally release all protesters and others arbitrarily detained, including people sentenced to death, solely for the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.
  Immediately drop any charges stemming solely from the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association or peaceful assembly and quash all convictions and sentences issued against protesters and others on this basis.

14.3.3 SECURITY SECTOR REFORM, DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

Take immediate steps, in law and practice, to remove military entities, including the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Islamic Republic of Iran Army, from any role in protest policing or public order operations, and ensure that all functions related to law enforcement and public order policing, including the regulation of assemblies, are assigned exclusively to non-military law-enforcement bodies that operate under effective civilian oversight and in compliance with international human rights law and standards.

Dissolve and demobilize all the IRGC structures, including Basij units and Security Cohorts, whose mandates are inherently incompatible with international human rights law. Ensure that all members of these units are fully disarmed and that weapons, ammunition and related equipment are securely collected in accordance with international standards and best practices.

- Recognize that a comprehensive restructuring of the security sector is a fundamental priority, ensuring that the mandates, command structures, training and operational protocols of all police forces involved in protest-response operations are fully aligned with international human rights law and standards. Seek international assistance and technical expertise from the international community including UN bodies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental expert organizations to create the strategic and operational framework for this restructuring to be carried out in compliance with international law and standards and under effective civilian control and oversight.

- Seek technical assistance from the international community, including UN bodies and international experts to establish robust, transparent, human rights-based vetting procedures applicable across the security apparatus to remove any individual reasonably suspected of responsibility for crimes under international law or other serious human rights violations,

including those documented in this report, until allegations concerning them have been independently, impartially and effectively investigated.

- Guarantee public access to information regarding the structure, regulations, chain of command and operational guidelines of all security and law-enforcement bodies, including by declassifying internal documents related to the commission of crimes under international law and human rights violations, including those documented in this report, to ensure public transparency and accountability.

  Establish independent, well-resourced civilian oversight and complaints mechanisms with powers to receive complaints, conduct investigations, compel production of evidence, make binding recommendations and refer cases to prosecutorial authorities.

14.3.4 ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of ministry of interior officials, members of security councils at the national, provincial and county levels, and prosecutorial and judicial authorities, committed enforced disappearances. Acknowledge that the available evidence provides reasonable grounds to conclude that the authorities committed the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance.
Immediately inform families of the fate, whereabouts and legal status of their detained relatives in state custody and cease and desist from the practice of enforced disappearance.

- Ensure that detainees have, by law and in practice, immediate and regular access to the outside world, in particular to their lawyers and families.

  Ensure that all allegations of enforced disappearance are adequately investigated, that those suspected of ordering, planning, carrying out or otherwise assisting or facilitating the commission of such crimes, as well as superiors who knew or should have known that a subordinate was committing or had committed enforced disappearance but did not take all the reasonable and necessary measures within their power to prevent, repress or punish the crime, are prosecuted in proceedings that conform to international fair trial standards and without recourse to the death penalty, and that victims receive adequate reparations.

  Enact legislation making enforced disappearance a crime in domestic legislation, in accordance with international law.
  Ratify or accede to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

14.3.5 PLACES OF DETENTION

Prohibit, in law and practice, all secret, unofficial or unregistered detention places as well as any facilities operated by security bodies outside civilian oversight. Ensure that all persons deprived of their liberty are held exclusively in officially recognized places of detention and are promptly registered in a centralized register of detainees, accessible to detainees' lawyers and families at all times, upon request and without delay.

Publish an up-to-date list of all officially recognized places of detention in a form that is readily accessible to lawyers and members of the public.
Establish an independent, efficient and well-resourced body with supervisory and oversight powers over all prisons and detention centres and with access to all persons deprived of their

liberty, and amend the laws and regulations related to the Prisons Organization to bring them in line with international standards. The established body must put in place gender-sensitive policies that recognize the heightened risk of women and girls who are deprived of their liberty of experiencing rape and other forms of sexual violence. The prevention of rape and other forms of sexual violence should be part of the overall efforts and mechanisms put in place to prevent torture and other ill-treatment in detention centres.

- Allow unannounced, independent and unrestricted inspections by the UN Fact Finding Mission on Iran and other independent monitors to all places where protesters and others detained in relation the November 2019 protests, the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising or January 2026 uprising are or were at any point deprived of their liberty.

14.3.6 TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of ministry of interior officials, members of security councils at the national, provincial and county levels, and prosecution and judicial authorities, intentionally inflicted severe physical and mental pain and suffering amounting to torture on protesters and others targeted in the context of the crackdown, both during protest dispersals and while in custody.

Protect all protesters from torture and other ill-treatment during protest-response operations by issuing urgent instructions to all security forces to cease and desist from any practices that amount to torture or other ill-treatment or punishment, including those documented in this report.

- Define torture and other ill-treatment as a crime in domestic legislation in line with international law and standards, including the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ensuring that the definition of torture is not restricted to when it is carried out "for the purpose of extracting confession or acquiring information" as it currently is under the constitution, and encompasses pain or suffering that is inflicted on an individual as a form of punishment or intimidation or coercion or for any reason based on discrimination.

- Uphold the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, and introduce the necessary safeguards, including access to a lawyer of one's own choosing from the time of arrest and prompt access to medical examinations by an independent doctor upon being taken into custody, during transfers, and periodically during detention, to protect everyone deprived of their liberty.
  Ensure that all statements and other forms of evidence obtained as a result of torture and other ill-treatment are excluded from evidence in all proceedings, except when used against alleged perpetrators to prove that torture occurred.

- Guarantee that individuals in state custody have access to timely and adequate health care, including prevention, screening and treatment, free of charge and without discrimination, including for injuries sustained during protests and/or as a result of torture and other ill-treatment in detention.

Urgently address cruel and inhuman conditions in Iran's detention centres and prisoners to ensure international standards, including the Nelson Mandela rules and the UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules) that set out a minimum level of humane treatment of all prisoners, are met. These include ensuring that all places where those deprived of their liberty are held are properly

ventilated, kept clean at all times, and equipped with heating and cooling facilities suitable for the climate, and that every person deprived of their liberty is provided with adequate access to sanitary toilet and shower facilities, bedding, personal hygiene products, clean clothing suitable for the climate, food of adequate nutritional value for health and strength, and potable drinking water. Women and girls must be provided with facilities and materials required to meet their gender-specific hygiene needs, including sanitary and menstrual products provided free of charge.

- Develop a national protocol for the investigation of allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, that is in line with the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture (Istanbul Protocol), recognizing that any independent and impartial investigation must preclude state agencies accused of involvement in alleged violations from investigating their own personnel or affiliates.

- Immediately take steps to address the systematic failure in fulfilling obligations under international law to conduct prompt, thorough, independent and impartial criminal investigations into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, against protesters and others targeted during protest crackdowns, and to prosecute all public officials against whom there is sufficient admissible evidence in fair trials, without recourse to the death penalty.
  Immediately provide survivors of torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, access to appropriate, gender-specific and free healthcare, including both medical and psychological treatment and counselling.

- Ratify or accede to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol.

14.3.7 RAPE AND OTHER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of prosecutorial and judicial authorities who provided cover-ups, perpetrated rape and other sexual violence against those arrested and detained in connection with the protests.
  Ensure that rape and other forms of sexual violence are defined in domestic criminal law. These definitions must be consent-based and consistent with international human rights law and standards.

- Develop a national protocol for the investigation of allegations of rape and other sexual violence, that is in line with the Istanbul Protocol, recognizing that any independent and impartial investigation must preclude state agencies accused of involvement in alleged violations from investigating their own personnel or affiliates.

  Immediately take steps to address the systematic failure in fulfilling obligations under international law to conduct prompt, thorough, independent and impartial criminal investigations into allegations of rape and other forms of sexual violence, against protesters and others targeted during protest crackdowns, and to prosecute all public officials against whom there is sufficient admissible evidence in fair trials.

14.3.8 FAIR TRIALS

- Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of ministry of interior officials, members of security councils at the national, provincial and county levels, and prosecutorial and judicial authorities, carried out

mass arrests and arbitrary detentions without any regard for due process guarantees and fair trial rights. Affirm that the available evidence provides reasonable grounds to conclude that the elements of the crime against humanity of imprisonment are met.

Seek international expertise and technical assistance from the international community, including UN experts or expert mechanisms, to conduct a comprehensive review of Iran's Code of Criminal Procedure to identify provisions that are inconsistent with international human rights law, and repeal or substantially amend them to bring the legislative framework into full conformity with international standards.

- Uphold international standards of fairness in all trials, including by ensuring that detainees have access to a lawyer of their choosing from the time of arrest and throughout the investigation, trial and appeal processes.
  Ensure that individuals deprived of their liberty are promptly informed of their rights, including the rights to notify a third person, access legal counsel, challenge the lawfulness of detention and remain silent, and ensure that statements obtained in violation of the right to notification of rights are not admissible at trial.

- Provide all people accused of a criminal offence with adequate time and facilities to prepare a defence, including adequate facilities to communicate in confidence with their lawyer and timely access to all relevant information about the charges and court proceedings including the information on which the prosecution intends to rely.
  End the use of televised forced "confessions", which breach the right to the presumption of innocence and the right not to be compelled to testify against oneself or to confess guilt.

- Guarantee the right of all persons charged with a criminal offence to an open hearing and ensure that any exceptions to this right are prescribed in law and narrowly defined.

  Ensure that all individuals charged with criminal offences have the right to be tried in their presence, and that all trial and appeal proceedings provide the accused with the right to an oral hearing where they can be present and be represented by counsel and may bring evidence and examine witnesses.

- Repeal the Note to Article 48 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which denies individuals charged with certain offences, including national security offences, the right to access an independent lawyer of their own choosing and allows them only to appoint lawyers approved by the head of the judiciary.
  Ensure that statements or confessions made by a person deprived of their liberty other than those made in the presence of a judge and with the assistance of a lawyer have no probative value in proceedings.

- Enact legislation to ensure that, in line with the principle of presumption of innocence, the burden of proof is on the prosecution to show, beyond reasonable doubt, that statements of the accused have been given voluntarily.

  Require courts to issue public, reasoned judgements in all criminal cases, allowing the public to know the essential findings, evidence and legal reasoning relied upon to convict and impose sentences.

- Grant UN Special Procedures and the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, as well as other international monitors and representatives of embassies in Iran, access to detention facilities and the ability to observe trials.

14.3.9 WOMEN AND GIRLS

Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of executive, prosecutorial and judicial authorities, discriminately targeted women and girls, and committed the prohibited acts documented in this report, including murder, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, rape and other forms of sexual violence, as a means to not only suppress political opposition but also enforce gender discrimination. Affirm that the available evidence provides reasonable grounds to conclude that the elements of the crime against humanity of gender persecution are met.
Abolish the discriminatory and degrading practice of compulsory veiling against women and girls, and revoke all laws, regulations, policies and practice whereby women's dress in public or private life is monitored or controlled by, at the instigation of or with the acquiescence of state agencies.

- Guarantee women's equal access, in law and in practice, to all public and political positions, including the highest offices of the state. This requires repealing constitutional provisions that restrict eligibility for leadership roles to Islamic male clerics and that otherwise discriminate against women. Women must be eligible to serve as head of state, as head of the judiciary and in all bodies exercising legislative, executive, judicial, prosecutorial or oversight functions, without discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, political opinion or any other status.

- Conduct a comprehensive review and repeal all constitutional, legal and policy provisions that discriminate against women and girls. Enact and enforce laws and policies that guarantee full equality for women and girls in public and political life, including equal access to employment, education, and participation in public affairs. Amend personal status and family laws to ensure equality in marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance and other civil matters.

  Introduce and enforce effective legislation and administrative measures to prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based and sexual violence, including marital rape, early or forced marriage and domestic violence. Repeal any provisions that mitigate or exonerate perpetrators and ensure that survivors have access to protection, support services, reparations and justice in fair proceedings that comply with international human rights standards.

  Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women without reservations and ensure that domestic laws and practices are in full compliance with this convention and with other international obligations.

14.3.10 ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

Publicly acknowledge that, in repressing the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of executive, prosecutorial and judicial authorities, discriminately and disproportionately targeted Kurdish and Baluchi protesters with the prohibited acts documented in this report, including murder and torture. Affirm that the available evidence provides reasonable grounds to conclude that the elements of the crime against humanity of persecution, on intersecting political and ethnic grounds, are met.

Conduct a comprehensive review of policing practices in provinces home to Iran's Kurdish and Baluchi communities, including deployment patterns, weapons used, command structures and standing strategic and operational orders, with the aim of eliminating discriminatory practices and ensuring full compliance with international standards on the use of force and firearms.

- Address structural discrimination across the security sector and judicial processes that makes Kurdish and Baluchi protesters and dissidents disproportionately vulnerable to arbitrary

deprivation of life, including through both unlawful killings during protest dispersals and arbitrary executions, and adopt targeted measures to eliminate institutional bias within security forces and the judiciary.

Immediately end the unlawful practice of branding advocacy for minority rights as "criminal separatist activity". Stop using national security or territorial integrity pretexts to unlawfully kill, arbitrarily detain, torture, silence or intimidate protesters, dissidents and human rights defenders belonging to ethnic and linguistic minorities solely for peacefully expressing their identity or political views or demanding their individual or collective human rights. Ensure that all people can freely express their opinions on minority rights and governance arrangements without fear of arrest, prosecution or harassment. Any restrictions on expression must be strictly limited to speech that amounts to incitement to discrimination or violence, and under no circumstances may peaceful advocacy or dissent be criminalized.

- Guarantee, constitutionally, and in law and in practice, equal access to all public and political positions, including the highest offices of the state, for all individuals belonging to Iran's ethnic and linguistic minorities, including Ahwazi Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluchis, Kurds and Turkmen. All individuals must be eligible to serve as head of state, as head of the judiciary and in all bodies exercising legislative, executive, judicial or oversight functions, without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity or language, including where such identities intersect with religion or belief.

- Conduct a comprehensive review and repeal all constitutional, legal and policy provisions that discriminate against or have a discriminatory impact on Iran's ethnic and linguistic minority communities including where such identities intersect with religion or belief. Enact and enforce anti-discrimination legislation that explicitly prohibits discriminatory conduct or impact based on racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious grounds.

  End discrimination, in law and practice, against members of ethnic minorities, including Ahwazi Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluchis, Kurds and Turkmen, including in access to education, employment, appointment to political office and participation in public affairs, as well as to adequate housing, water, electricity and other essential services necessary for economic development, including the development of industrial, agricultural and other activities necessary to enjoy their rights to an adequate standard of living.

  Provide adequate legal and policy guarantees to ensure non-discrimination, transparency and accountability in the allocation, distribution and use of state resources and public investment. Take effective measures to reverse the long-standing pattern of underinvestment in regions predominantly populated by ethnic minorities, and address the resulting marginalization and disproportionately high levels of poverty. Ensure that budgetary processes, development plans and investment decisions are carried out in a transparent, participatory and non-discriminatory manner, so that all ethnic communities benefit equally from public spending and economic development initiatives.

  Take effective legislative, administrative and policy measures to ensure that members of minority communities can receive education in their mother tongue and have adequate opportunities to learn and develop their own languages. Promote, protect and support the expansion of minority languages in education, media, cultural life and public affairs, in line with international human rights standards guaranteeing the collective right of minorities to use, preserve and develop their language.

  Adopt constitutional legal and institutional safeguards to guarantee effective representation and meaningful participation of members of ethnic minority communities in decision-making

processes at the national, provincial and county levels.

14.3.11 RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Overhaul the constitution to remove all provisions that violate or undermine the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief and fully guarantee the right to freedom of religion or belief for everyone, without coercion, discrimination or punishment, in line with Article 18 of the ICCPR. This includes repealing provisions that require laws and policies to be grounded in "Islamic principles", as interpreted by the authorities, without regard for the plurality of religions and beliefs in the country or the rights to freedom of religion or belief and non-discrimination for individuals who adhere to other religions, beliefs or none; that restrict the exercise of human rights or justify human rights violations in the name of Islamic principles; and that restrict eligibility for leadership roles to Islamic male clerics and that otherwise discriminate against religious minorities or individuals who do not believe in Shia Islam.

- Guarantee, constitutionally, and in law and in practice, equal access for all individuals belonging to religious minorities, as well as those holding dissenting, atheistic or agnostic beliefs, to all public and political positions, including the highest offices of the state. All individuals must be eligible to serve as head of state, as head of the judiciary and in all bodies exercising legislative, executive, judicial or oversight functions, without discrimination on the basis of religion or belief.

  Repeal all laws, regulations, policies and practices that condition the enjoyment of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights on adherence to Islam or on belonging to a state-recognized religion.

- Abolish all laws, policies and practices that criminalize religious practices, conversion, or the expression of beliefs not aligned with the state's interpretation of Shia Islam, and immediately and unconditionally release all individuals detained solely for the exercise of their right to freedom of religion and belief.

  End discrimination, in law and practice, against members of religious minorities, including Baha'is, Christians, Gonabadi Dervishes, Jews, Sunni Muslims, Yaresan and Zoroastrians, including in access to education, employment, child adoption, property, inheritance, places of worship, political office and participation in public affairs.

  Cease the persecution of members of religious minorities, including arbitrary detention, unjust prosecution, torture and other ill-treatment, forced evictions, land expropriation and forcible closure of businesses.

- Conduct a comprehensive review and repeal all constitutional, legal and policy provisions that discriminate against or have a discriminatory impact on the basis of religion or belief. Enact and enforce anti-discrimination legislation that explicitly prohibits discriminatory conduct or impact based on religion or belief, including for individuals who identify as non-religious or hold dissenting beliefs.
  Introduce and enforce effective legislation and administrative measures to protect religious minorities as well as individuals who identify as non-religious or hold dissenting beliefs from violence, discrimination, coercion, hate speech and vigilantism by non-state actors. Repeal any provisions that mitigate or exonerate perpetrators and ensure that survivors have access to protection, support services, reparations and justice in fair proceedings that comply with international human rights standards.

14.3.12 VICTIMS' FAMILIES AND SURVIVORS

Publicly acknowledge that, during and in the aftermath of the 2022 Woman Life Freedom uprising, security forces, with the complicity of ministry of interior, prosecutorial, judicial and other state officials, severely deprived families of those killed of their fundamental rights with intent to discrimination on political grounds intersecting with familial association and as a means to suppress demands for truth, justice and reparation and to enforce a political system steeped in repression and impunity for serious human rights violations. Affirm that the available evidence provides reasonable grounds to conclude that the elements of the crime against humanity of persecution against victims' families are met.

- Cease patterns of harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrests and detentions against survivors, victims' families and human rights defenders seeking truth, justice and reparation for the crimes against humanity documented in this report and other human rights violations and crimes under international law.

Establish a competent, independent and impartial reparation mechanism to ensure that survivors of the crimes against humanity documented in this report and other human rights violations and crimes under international law access their right to reparation. Full reparations must include restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition. Reparative measures should be tailored to the needs of survivors and be proportionate to the gravity of the violations that they suffered.

14.3.13 DEATH PENALTY

Immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty and commute all existing death sentences.

- Cease the use of the death penalty as a weapon of repression against protesters and dissidents, and quash all convictions and death sentences imposed after grossly unfair trials. If charged with internationally recognizable offences, defendants must be granted fair retrials, excluding torture-tainted and/or coerced "confessions" and other unlawfully obtained "evidence", and without resort to the death penalty.
- Pending abolition of the death penalty, repeal provisions in the Islamic Penal Code that impose the death penalty for acts that are not internationally recognizable criminal offences, fall under the peaceful exercise of human rights or do not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" under international law.

14.3.14 IMPUNITY AND AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY

- Publicly acknowledge that the crisis of impunity in Iran for crimes under international law is driven and sustained by a constitutional structure that places the judiciary and prosecution services under the control and authority of the commander-in-chief and Supreme Leader, who leads and oversees the security forces responsible for committing crimes under international law.

Seek and accept expert technical assistance from the UN and other international specialists and initiate civil society consultations to design and implement fundamental rights-respecting changes, including to the constitution, aimed at, among other things, creating an independent and impartial, judiciary capable of addressing impunity for crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law in accordance with international fair trial standards, without recourse to the death penalty. This would require:

- ensuring that the judiciary and prosecution services are structurally and operationally independent from the head of the state, security forces and all executive bodies responsible for law enforcement, intelligence and internal security;
- ensuring structural separation between prosecution authorities within the prosecution services and judges and other judicial authorities within the courts and the broader judiciary, guaranteeing that each operates as an independent institution with distinct mandates, functions, organizational structures and chains of authority, free from interference by one another or by executive or security bodies;
- overhauling appointment, promotion and disciplinary systems to ensure that judges, prosecutors and all others responsible for the functioning of the judiciary and prosecution services at all levels are selected through transparent, merit-based procedures that prioritize training and qualifications, integrity, fairness, impartiality and independence of personal or group interest, and embody safeguards against appointments based on partiality, prejudice or any discrimination against a person on the grounds of sex, religion, political or other opinion, national, social or ethnic origin, or other status.
- ensuring that all individuals, including those at the highest levels of power, can be held criminally responsible for crimes under international law, without immunity or constitutional protections that shield officials from investigation and prosecution;
- seeking technical assistance from the UN and international experts to establish robust, transparent, human-rights-based vetting procedures applicable across the judiciary to suspend and prevent the appointment to public positions of any individual reasonably suspected of responsibility for crimes under international law or other serious human rights violations, including those documented in this report, until allegations concerning them have been independently, impartially and effectively investigated; and
- incorporating crimes under international law into domestic law, including but not limited to genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, extrajudicial executions, and enforced disappearance, in line with definitions under international law, and include provisions on command responsibility and the non-applicability of amnesties and immunities.

Guarantee the right of victims, survivors and witnesses to be protected against intimidation and reprisals, through all phases of investigation and prosecution, including through the implementation of adequate support in court and not having to meet the defendant when appearing in court and in video hearings.

Take all other legal and practical measures to ensure individuals allegedly responsible for crimes under international law can be investigated, prosecuted and punished before independent, impartial and competent courts, in accordance with fair trial standards and without being subjected to the death penalty.

- Ratify or accede to the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court and make a declaration under Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute accepting the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court for crimes committed in Iran since the entry into force of the Rome Statute in 2002.

14.3.15 CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

- Recognize that peaceful advocacy for constitutional change and for a new system of governance fall within the protection of international human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association and participation in public affairs, and must not be criminalized.
  Stop criminalizing public debate on constitutional change, and immediately end the harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrest and prosecution of individuals or groups advocating peaceful, rights-based constitutional change and a new system of governance grounded in respect for dignity, democracy and human rights.

- Seek and accept technical assistance from international experts, including the UN, to design a transparent, participatory, civil society-driven and human rights-compliant process that enables protesters, dissidents, human rights defenders and all other stakeholders to freely voice their demands for fundamental change, including for a rights-respecting constitution and a new system of governance, without fear of repression or exposure to crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations. Create the enabling conditions for a diversity of civil society actors to form and join associations, and freely discuss constitutional options, including the development of an electoral framework for a future constitution-making process that is transparent, participatory and grounded in human rights.

14.3.16 COOPERATION WITH UN HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

- Fully and effectively cooperate with the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and other independent human rights investigators and mechanisms, and allow them unfettered access to all of the country to thoroughly, independently, impartially and effectively investigate crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in Iran, establish the facts and circumstances surrounding the crimes and violations, and collect, consolidate, analyse and preserve evidence, including in view of cooperation in any national or international legal proceedings, with a view to establishing accountability.

- Extend invitations to and accept requests for visits from the Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, including the Special Rapporteur on Iran; the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls, Its Causes and Consequences; the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association; the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions; and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, among others, allow them unrestricted access to prisons and detention centres, private and confidential access to victims, survivors and their families, witnesses and human rights defenders, ensuring that no individuals face intimidation or reprisals for communicating with UN human rights mechanisms, and for their assistance in support of the above objectives.

14.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO UN BODIES

14.4.1 SECURITY COUNCIL

Refer the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Hold open public meetings about the crimes against humanity committed in Iran in the context of lethal protest crackdowns, and adopt a resolution that includes strong calls for international

criminal justice, given the crisis of systemic impunity and lack of realistic accountability options at national level, and sends an unambiguous message to the Islamic Republic of Iran about the need to immediately end these crimes and allow unfettered access to the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran and the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, among other recommendations to the Iranian authorities above.

14.4.2 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran. To facilitate this, consider mandating the UN Secretary-General to propose context-specific legal options for an international criminal justice mechanism, and then identify the most suitable option to enable its implementation.

  Strengthen the language of the resolution of the UN General Assembly on the situation of human rights in Iran in response to escalating cycles of crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations in the context of protest crackdowns in Iran, particularly since the unprecedented protest massacres of January 2026. Such a resolution must be comprehensive, make explicit references to the findings of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran on the commission of crimes against humanity and the lack of realistic accountability options at national level, and include strong calls for international criminal justice.

14.4.3 HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

- Support the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran to enable it to continue its work.

  Actively explore options to establish additional structures and processes to collect, consolidate, preserve and analyse evidence of crimes under international committed in Iran, and establish individual responsibility for such crimes; build cases to criminal law standards in order to facilitate fair and independent criminal proceedings, in accordance with international law standards, in national, regional or international courts or tribunals that have or may in the future have jurisdiction over these crimes, and liaise with prosecution authorities around the world.

- Formally transmit the reports of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, once presented and on a continuing basis, to the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council.
  Ensure that resolutions related to the situation of human rights in Iran explicitly refer to the findings of this report and those of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran regarding the commission of crimes against humanity. Also ensure that they include strong calls for international criminal justice, given the lack of accountability options at national level.

- Extend the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran and urge the Iranian authorities to cooperate fully with them, including by reversing the practice of denying them access to the country.

14.4.4 SECRETARY-GENERAL

Bring to the attention of the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in repeated protest crackdowns in Iran, as documented in this report and by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, and stress the need for an international criminal justice mechanism, aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity, including the referral of the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, given the lack of realistic

accountability options at national level, heightening the risk of recurring atrocities against the civilian population.

Use reporting, as requested by the resolution of the UN General Assembly on the situation in Iran, to reflect the findings of crimes against humanity, as documented in this report and by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, and stress the need for international criminal justice given the lack of accountability options at national level; to analyse the constitutional drivers and root causes of these crimes against humanity and systemic impunity; and to remind the Iranian authorities that international human rights law protects peaceful advocacy by civil society actors for fundamental changes, including to the constitution, to ensure respect for international human rights law and standards, including the rights to non-discrimination and equality, to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and to participation in public affairs.

14.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS OF THIRD STATES

- Call on the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.
  Acting through the UN General Assembly, create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran. To facilitate this, consider mandating the UN Secretary-General to propose context-specific legal options for an international criminal justice mechanism and then identify the most suitable option to enable its implementation. Any such efforts must ensure the meaningful participation of survivors, Iranian human rights defenders and civil society actors.

  Actively support the resolutions of the UN Human Rights Council and General Assembly, highlighting patterns of serious human rights violations in Iran, and establishing reporting and accountability mechanism, in light of crimes against humanity documented in this report and by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. Ensure voting practices in these bodies reflect a principled commitment to preventing and ensuring accountability for crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law and serious human rights violations.

  Raise in all bilateral and multilateral engagements with Iranian authorities the findings of this report and of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran on the commission of crimes against humanity; refrain from justifying silence or appeasement for geopolitical or economic relations in the face of such heinous crimes; and use all platforms and joint statements to signal that pursuing international justice for crimes against humanity, in the face of systemic impunity at the national level, is a shared legal and moral responsibility, not a selective or politicized agenda.

- Adopt people-centred diplomatic strategies to prevent and respond to crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law and serious human rights violations committed in Iran, anchored in clear benchmarks and timelines. Such strategies should include sustained coordinated diplomatic pressure on the Iranian authorities to implement the recommendations in this report, including:

  - a halt to the unlawful use of firearms and force against protesters, accompanied by legislative amendments to the Law on Firearms to bring it into line with international human rights law and standards;

  - a halt to widespread and systemic patterns of arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, including rape and other sexual violence;

- the unconditional release of protesters, dissidents and others arbitrarily detained for exercising their human rights;
- the removal of legal and political barriers – as entrenched in the constitution and the Law on Parties – that impede the formation of independent political parties and deny or impermissibly restrict the rights to equality and non-discrimination, freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and meaningful participation in public affairs;
- the establishment of an immediate moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty; and
- the provision of unfettered access to Iran for the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran and other UN experts and independent international organizations to investigate human rights violations, inspect detention facilities and observe trials.

- Use available convening powers to initiate consultations with civil society and create diplomatic spaces for cross-regional engagement among states, with a view to developing a coordinated global diplomatic agenda to end crimes against humanity in Iran; to address their constitutional and structural drivers; and to support Iranian civil society-led calls for fundamental changes, including to the constitution, to ensure respect for international human rights law and standards, including the rights to non-discrimination and equality, to freedom of belief, religion, expression, association and peaceful assembly, and to participation in public affairs. The agenda should lead to calls on the Iranian authorities to recognize that international human rights law protects peaceful advocacy for a new rights-respecting constitution-making process and for governance structures consistent with the rule of law and international human rights law and standards.

  Support civil society initiatives aimed at addressing systemic impunity and advancing respect for human rights, including through peaceful advocacy for international justice and a rights-respecting constitution-making process.

- End all deportations of Iranians to Iran or to third countries where they would be at risk of onward transfer to Iran, on account of the serious human rights violations individuals would be exposed to upon return.
  Open safe and regular pathways to enable victims of human rights violations, whether they are in Iran or third states, to reach safety, and expand humanitarian visa programmes in response to the deteriorating human rights situation in the country.

- In the case of states parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), explore potential legal avenues before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), including by initiating negotiations with Iran regarding its compliance with substantive obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in light of the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, imprisonment, rape, sexual violence and persecution documented by Amnesty International and by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran against Baluchi and Kurdish protesters, and referring unresolved disputes to the ICJ for adjudication.

14.6 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROSECUTION OFFICES OF THIRD STATES

- Undertake criminal investigations, based on universal and other forms of extraterritorial jurisdiction, against Iranian officials allegedly responsible for crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law, including the officials named in this report, with a view to issuing arrest warrants, where sufficient evidence exists, irrespective of the absence or presence of the accused in the territory of the state concerned.
- Open structural investigations into crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in Iran, including those documented in this report, especially where victims may be present on the territory of third states, with a view to establishing command and decision-making structures and identifying and grouping potential perpetrators with a view to pursuing criminal accountability.

  Establish joint investigation teams to investigate crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in Iran, including those that are linked to repeated cycles of deadly protest crackdowns.
- Collaborate with the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, as well as local and international civil society organizations, to initiate cases and identify perpetrators, victims, survivors and witnesses.

ANNEX: COMPANION DOCUMENT ON 377 VICTIMS

This Annex reproduces a companion document titled *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising*, which Amnesty International is publishing alongside this report on 16 September 2026.[2983] The document lists the names and details of 377 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. The patterns of their deaths and the circumstances surrounding them are analysed in Chapter 5 of the report. The methodology of the organization in investigating reports of killings by security forces is explained in detail in Chapter 2 of the report.

2983. Amnesty International, *Lives Cut Brutally Short: Victims of Crimes Against Humanity During Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising* (Index: MDE 13/1349/2026), 16 September 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/1349/2026/en



LIVES CUT BRUTALLY SHORT

VICTIMS OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING IRAN'S 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a movement of 10 million people which mobilizes the humanity in everyone and campaigns for change so we can all enjoy our human rights. Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and individual donations. We believe that acting in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere can change our societies for the better.

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Cover photo: A collage of the photographs of 335 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. They include individuals killed by security forces during protest dispersals, in militarized areas or in state custody; individuals who died after release from custody, with reports indicating that their deaths were prison-related; and individuals who died in suspicious circumstances that suggest state agents killed them. For 42 of the total 377 victims recorded by Amnesty International, the organization was unable to find a photograph. All but one of these 42 victims were from Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority.
All photographs © Private

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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INTRODUCTION

This document accompanies an Amnesty International report titled *Architects of Atrocities: State Machinery Orchestrating Crimes Against Humanity in Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising*, published on 16 September 2026. As part of the research for that report, Amnesty International gathered and analysed a voluminous body of information and evidence about the deaths of 377 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. This companion document lists the names of these 377 protesters and bystanders, together with information on the location and date of their deaths, as well as photographs where available.

The methodology of the organization in investigating reports of killings by security forces is explained in detail in the report.

This document contains four main sections, corresponding to the categories used by Amnesty International to classify victims according to the circumstances of their deaths.

The first section features 326 victims – 264 men, 13 women, 46 boys and three girls – who were killed by security forces during protest dispersals or in areas near protests that were ongoing or had recently occurred, where there was a militarized presence of security forces. The section contains 23 subsections, each dedicated to a province in which victims were killed. The provinces are listed in alphabetical order: Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Ghazvin, Gilan, Hamedan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Markazi, Mazandaran, North Khorasan, Semnan, Sistan and Baluchistan, Tehran, West Azerbaijan and Zanjan.

As detailed in the report, with respect to 233 of these 326 victims, Amnesty International was able to conduct investigations and gather sufficient information to support the legal conclusion that the killings were unlawful. This means that the security forces used firearms or other means of lethal force against the victims not to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious injury, but to disperse, intimidate or punish them and create a climate of terror and fear through a militarized presence.

With respect to the remaining 93 victims recorded as killed during protest dispersals or in militarized areas, Amnesty International considers it highly likely that further investigation and access to evidence would confirm that their killings were also unlawful, given the well-documented patterns of unlawful use of firearms against protesters across the country. Credible reports published by other human rights organizations and media outlets on many of the remaining killings further support this assessment.

The second section features 18 victims – 17 men and one woman – who died in state custody after they were arrested in the context of protest crackdowns. The victims are listed alphabetically by their first name. The victims died in 10 provinces: Alborz, Fars, Kermanshah, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Markazi, Sistan and Baluchistan, Tehran and West Azerbaijan. As detailed in the report, Amnesty International considers that Iranian authorities should be presumed responsible for these deaths, and they have failed to rebut this presumption.

The third section features 23 victims – 12 men, seven women, two boys and two girls – who died in suspicious circumstances with numerous indicators suggesting that state agents caused their deaths. The victims are listed alphabetically by their first name. They comprise. These victims died in 10 provinces: Alborz, Bushehr, East Azerbaijan, Esfahan, Fars, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Mazandaran, Sistan and Baluchistan, and Tehran.

The fourth section features 10 victims – five men, two woman, two boys and a girl – who died after release from custody. The victims are listed under two subsections. The first subsection features five victims who allegedly died

as a result of physical injuries sustained through torture and other ill-treatment. The second subsection features five other victims who died by suicide shortly after release, with reports published by journalists or human rights defenders alleging that they took their own lives due to mental harm caused by torture or other ill-treatment in custody. In each subsection, the victims are listed alphabetically by their first name. These victims died in eight provinces: Alborz, East Azerbaijan, Golestan, Kerman, Khuzestan, Mazandaran, Tehran and West Azerbaijan. As detailed in the report, Amnesty International considers that these deaths warrant independent and impartial investigations into whether the individuals' treatment in custody contributed to their deaths and whether state authorities bear responsibility.

Amnesty International believes that the total number of victims is likely to be much higher. The organization has on file over 150 additional names reported online as individuals who were killed by the security forces during the protest period. However, the organization was unable to obtain sufficient information about these reported deaths.

Profile photographs were available for inclusion for 335 of the victims and photographs of gravestones or grave sites for 257.

For 42 of the 377 recorded victims, Amnesty International was unable to find profile photographs. All but one of these 42 victims belonged to Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority. For 120 victims of the recorded 377 victims, Amnesty International was unable to find photographs of their gravestones. Most of these 120 victims (88) similarly belonged to Iran's oppressed Baluchi minority. The underrepresentation of Baluchi victims in the photographs available for inclusion reflects the marginalization of the Baluchi community and the particular challenges Amnesty International encountered in its efforts to identify Baluchi victims killed in Sistan and Baluchistan province, which are explained in detail in the report.

In Sistan and Baluchistan, individuals may be known by different surnames: an official surname under which their birth is registered and a tribal name which may be shared by multiple individuals. In listing the names of Baluchi victims, Amnesty International has included, in brackets at the end, the name believed to be the victim's tribal name. The organization has also included alternative first names or surnames reported for the same victim in brackets, where relevant.

Individuals from Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority may be known by different first names: an official first name under which their birth is officially registered and a Kurdish name preferred by the individual or their family. This reflects discriminatory civil registration practices that have historically prevented the registration of many Kurdish names. To facilitate future tracing in official records Amnesty International has used the officially registered first name when identifying Kurdish victims. Where relevant, the organization has also included the victim's preferred Kurdish first name in brackets.

In the case of Zhina Mahsa Amini, Amnesty International has listed her Kurdish first name first, followed by her officially registered first name. Given that her name is widely known, the rationale for prioritizing the officially registered first name does not apply in her case.

In a few instances, victims from other communities across the country were also known by a first name other than their officially registered name. In such cases, the alternative name is included in brackets.

Amnesty International honours the memory of the protesters and bystanders whose lives were brutally cut short during the Woman Life Freedom uprising and their aspirations for a future of dignity, freedom and equality in Iran. The organization also pays its tribute to the memory of Zhina Mahsa Amini and all women and girls in Iran who have been killed, tortured or otherwise harmed through decades of enforcement of discriminatory and degrading compulsory veiling laws and other discriminatory laws, policies and practices. Amnesty International stands in solidarity with women and girls, the families of those killed, and all survivors in pursuing truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.

As part of its efforts to secure justice and address the crisis of impunity in Iran, which has fuelled recurring atrocities, Amnesty International is calling on the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. In parallel, given the gravity and scale of crimes committed, the high risks of recurrence, and the political dynamics within the UN Security Council, Amnesty International urges the UN General Assembly to create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran.

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

ALBORZ PROVINCE



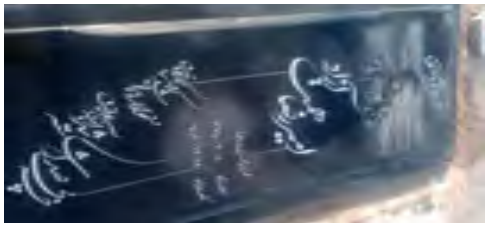




ABBAS SHAFIEI

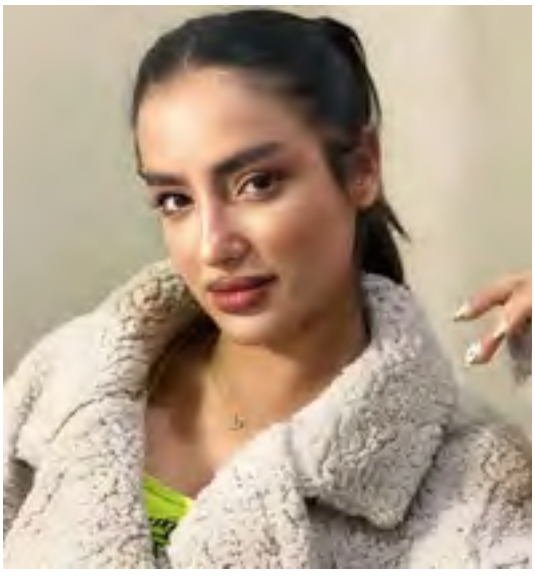
Age: 41
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





AMIR REZA HEMATAZAD

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 23 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





HADIS NAJAFI

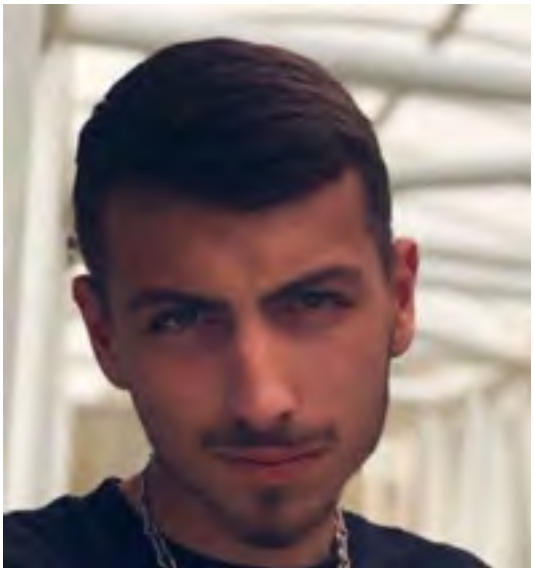
Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





KAMRAN SHAHBAZI

Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





KAN'AN AGHAEI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





KOMEIL AMIRKHANLOU

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





MEHDI LEILAZI

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





MAHMOUD KESHVARI

Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 23 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





MEHDI HAZRATI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





MEHDI SALEHIPOUR

Age: 52
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





MEHRAN SHEKARI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





NIMA NOURI FAMOUR

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





PARSA REZADOOST

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Savojbolagh, Alborz





ROUZBEH KHADEMIAN

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Fardis, Alborz





SARINA ESMAILZADEH

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz





SEPEHR AZAMI

Age: 24
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Karaj, Alborz

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

EAST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE









AYSAN MADANPASAND

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tabriz, East Azerbaijan





ALI ARAGHI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tabriz, East Azerbaijan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

ESFAHAN PROVINCE












AHMAD SHOKROLLAHI

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Esfahan, Esfahan





ALI ABBASI

Age: 24
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Semirom, Esfahan





MAHSA MOGOYEE

Age: 19
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Fouladshahr, Esfahan





MORAD BAHRAMIAN

Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Semirom, Esfahan





MOSLEM HOUSHANGI

Age: 34
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Semirom, Esfahan





JAVAD MOUSAVI

Age: 40
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Esfahan, Esfahan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

FARS PROVINCE












AMIRREZA OLADI

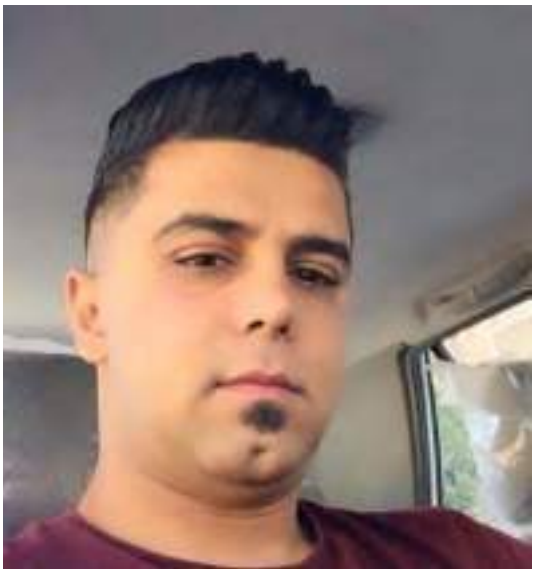
Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shiraz, Fars





ARMAN EMADI

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Marvdasht, Fars





ESMAIL SHANBEDI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 15 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shiraz, Fars





HOSSEIN SHIRAZIPOUR

Age: 41
Date of fatal incident: 19 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shiraz, Fars





OMID MOAYEDI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 15 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shiraz, Fars





SAJJAD GHAEMI BAHMAN BIGLOU

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shiraz, Fars

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

GHAZVIN PROVINCE









ALIREZA FATHI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Alvand, Ghazvin



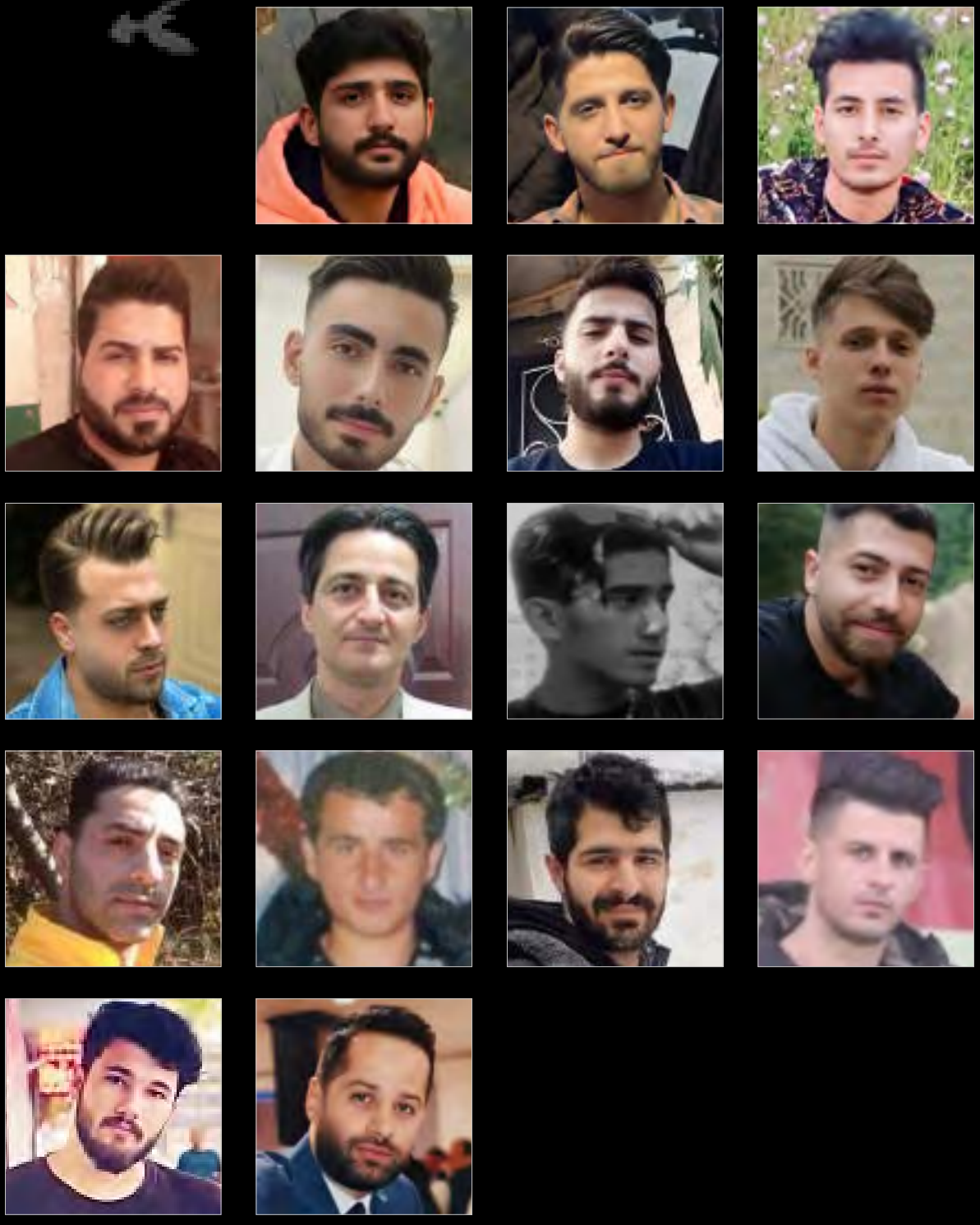


JAVAD HEYDARI

Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghazvin, Ghazvin

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

GILAN PROVINCE

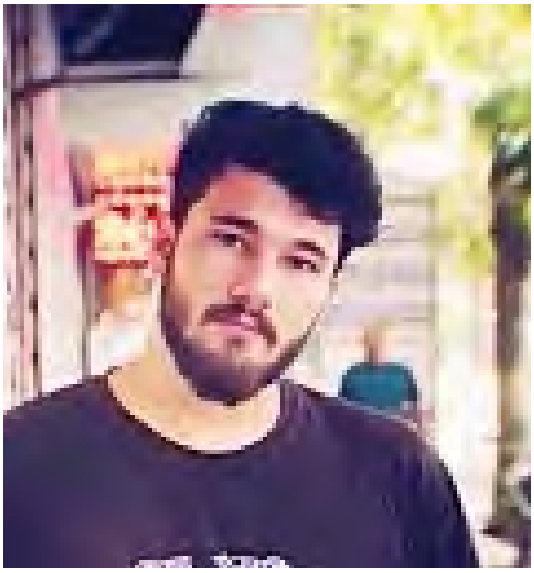






ABBAS MIRMOUSAVI

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Langarud, Gilan





ABOLFAZL AKBARIDOOST

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Langarud, Gilan





AMIR NOROUZI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Bandar Anzali, Gilan





AREF GHORBANPOUR

Age: 34
Date of fatal incident: 29 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Lasht-e Nesha, Gilan





BEHNAM LAYEGHPOUR

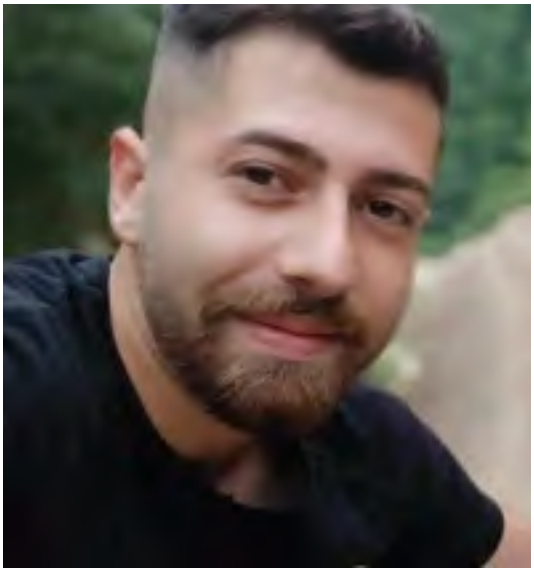
Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rasht, Gilan





ERFAN ZAMANI

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 3 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Lahijan, Gilan





FARZIN LOTFI

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rezvanshahr, Gilan





JAVAD REZAEI

Age: 47
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Lahijan, Gilan





MAZIAR SALMANIAN

Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rasht, Gilan





MEHRAB DOLATPANAH

Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Talesh, Gilan





MEHRAN BASIR TAVANA

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 15 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Someh Sara, Gilan





MEHRAN SAMAK

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 29 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Bandar Anzali, Gilan





MOHAMMAD RASOUL MOMENIZAD

Age: 24
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rasht, Gilan





MORTEZA NOROUZI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Langarud, Gilan





NADER KOUHKAR

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rudsar, Gilan





POUYA AHMADPOUR PASIKHANI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rasht, Gilan





SASAN GHORBANI

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rezvanshahr, Gilan





YASIN JAMALZADEH

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Rezvanshahr, Gilan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

HAMEDAN PROVINCE







HAMID SANEIPOUR

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Hamedan, Hamedan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

HORMOZGAN PROVINCE

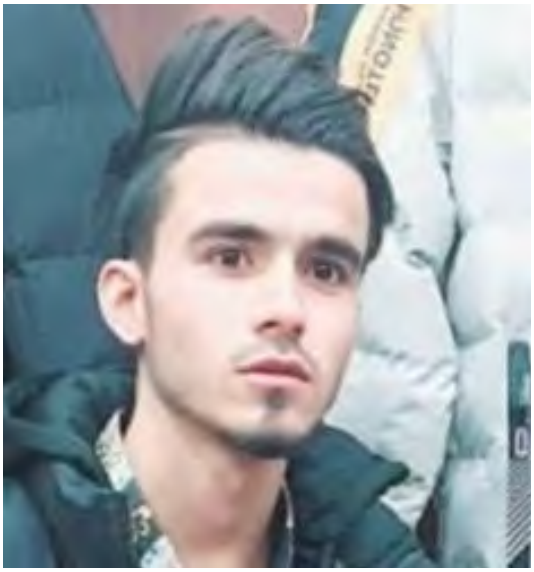






HAMED MOLAEI

Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Parsian, Hormozgan



HAMED SEDIGHI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Gheshm, Hormozgan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

ILAM PROVINCE







MOHSEN GHEYSARI

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ilam, Ilam

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

KERMANSHAH PROVINCE







AFSHIN ASHAM

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghasr-e Shirin, Kermanshah





AMIRHOSSEIN BASATI

Age: 15
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kermanshah, Kermanshah





ANOUSHIRVAN (AMIR ALI) FOULADI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Kermanshah





ARDALAN GHASEMI

Age: 51
Date of fatal incident: 10 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kermanshah, Kermanshah





ARIAN MORIDI

Age: 19
Date of fatal incident: 9 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Salas-e Babajani, Kermanshah





ARMIN SAYADI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 12 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kermanshah, Kermanshah





BAHAODDIN VEISI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 20 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





BORHAN ELIASI

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 31 December 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





ERFAN KAKAEE

Age: 51
Date of fatal incident: 20 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





ESMAIL GOLANBAR

Age: 39
Date of fatal incident: 21 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





IMAN MOHAMMADI

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Kermanshah





JAMAL AZAMI

Age: 34
Date of fatal incident: 21 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





JOHAR FATTAHI

Age: 60
Date of fatal incident: 21 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





MASOUD TEIMOURI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 21 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah





MINOO MAJIDI

Age: 62
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kermanshah, Kermanshah





REZA SHAHPARNIA

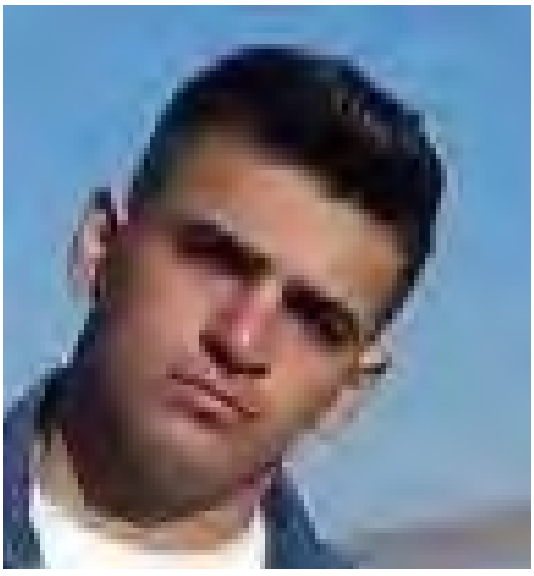
Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kermanshah, Kermanshah





SAEED MOHAMMADI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Eslam Abad-e Gharb, Kermanshah





SINA NADERI

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 12 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kermanshah, Kermanshah



TAHSIN MIRI

Age: 44
Date of fatal incident: 21 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Javanroud, Kermanshah

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

KHORASAN RAZAVI PROVINCE











ABOLFAZL ADINEZADEH

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi





ALI MOZAFARI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghouchan, Khorasan Razavi





MEHDI BABRNEJAD

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghouchan, Khorasan Razavi

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

KHUZESTAN PROVINCE















ALI MOLAEI

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan





ARTIN RAHMANI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan





ASHRAF NIKBAKHT

Age: 45
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan





HAMID REZA SHARIATI

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan





KIAN PIRFALAK

Age: 9
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan





MILAD SAEEDIANJOU

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan





MOHAMMAD GHAEMIFARD

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 22 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Dezful, Khuzestan





MOHAMMAD KHAJAVI

Age: 38
Date of fatal incident: 23 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Dezful, Khuzestan





SEPEHR MAGHSOUDI

Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Izeh, Khuzestan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

KOHGILUYEH AND BOYER-AHMAD PROVINCE



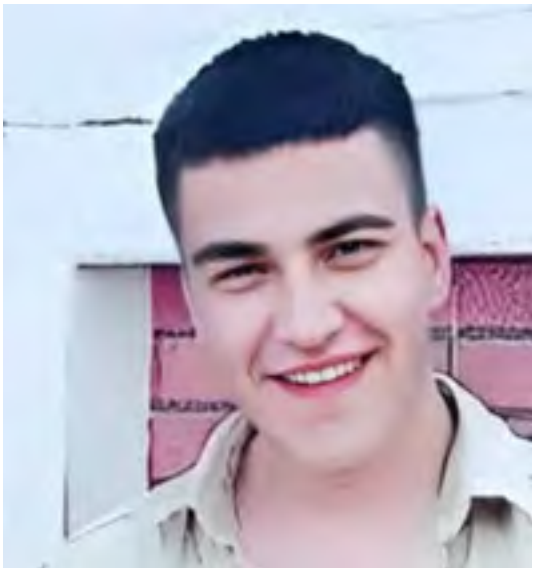


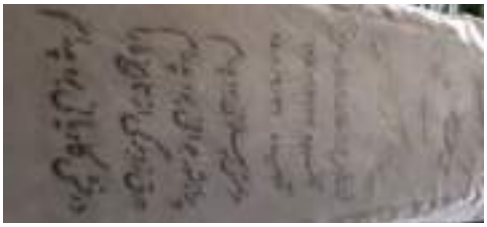




MEHRDAD BEHNAM ASL

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad





PEDRAM AZARNOUSH

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh Boyer Ahmad

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

KURDISTAN PROVINCE





ABDOLRAHMAN BAKHTIARI

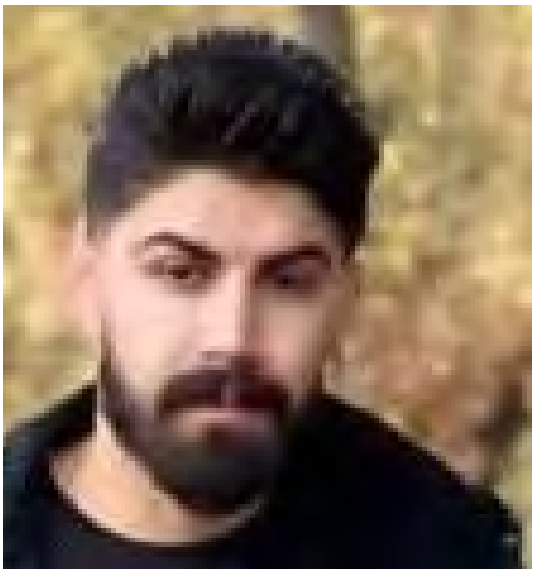
Age: 66
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Saqqez, Kurdistan





ARAM HABIBI

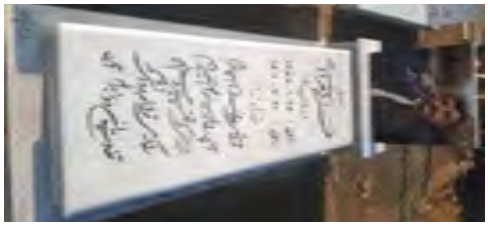
Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan



ASOO GHADERI

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Baneh, Kurdistan





AZIZ MORADI

Age: 46
Date of fatal incident: 12 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





BORHAN KARAMI

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kamyaran, Kurdistan





DANIAL PABANDI

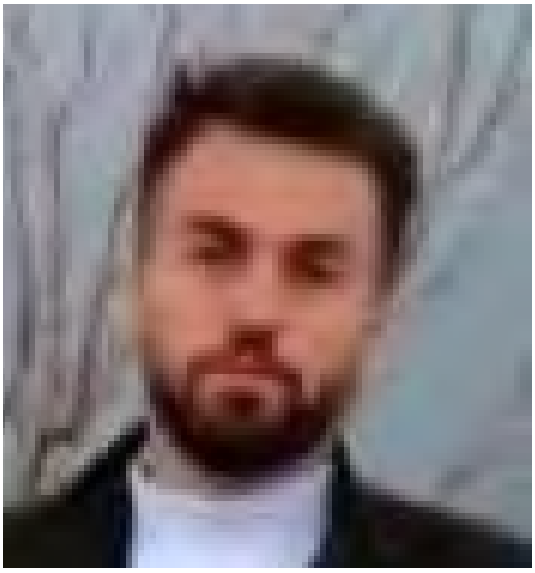
Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Saqqez, Kurdistan





DARIUSH ALIZADEH

Age: 33
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





DASTAN RASOUL

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 28 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Choman, Kurdistan





FARHAD KHOSRAVI

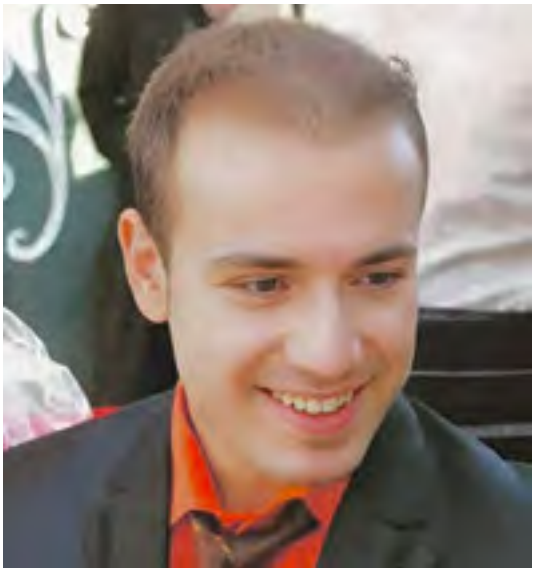
Age: 41
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





FEREYDOON FARAJI

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Baneh, Kurdistan





FEREYDOON MAHMOUDI

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 19 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Saqqez, Kurdistan





FOAD GHADIMI

Age: 40
Date of fatal incident: 19 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Divandareh, Kurdistan





FOAD MOHAMMADI

Age: 45
Date of fatal incident: 15 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kamyaran, Kurdistan





FOAD SAVARI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 19 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Divandareh, Kurdistan





HABIBOLLAH FATHI

Age: 62
Date of fatal incident: 19 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Divandareh, Kurdistan





HOSSEIN ABDPANAH

Age: 72
Date of fatal incident: 19 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





HOUMAN ABDOLLAHI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 7 December 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





ISA BIGLARI

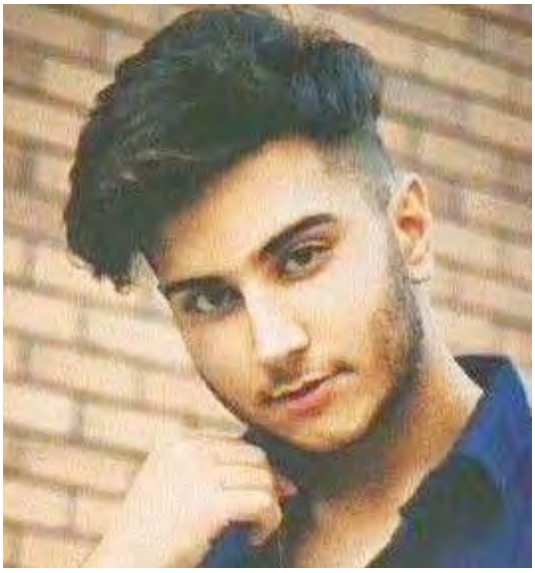
Age: 40
Date of fatal incident: 15 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





MOHAMMAD AMINI

Age: 33
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan

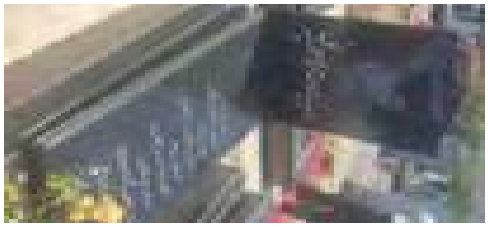




MOHAMMAD ARIAN KHOSHGAVAR

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





MOHAMMAD HOSSEINI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 12 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Saqqez, Kurdistan





MOHAMMAD KEYWAN DARVISHI

Age: 42
Date of fatal incident: 24 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





MOHAMMAD SHARIATI

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





MOHSEN MOHAMMADI

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 19 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Divandareh, Kurdistan

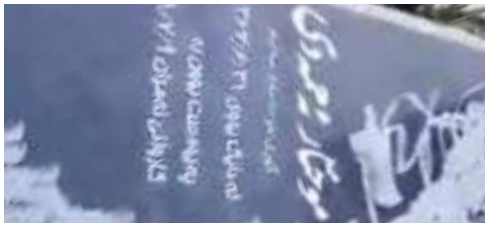




MOHSEN NIAZI

Age: 33
Date of fatal incident: 20 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Dehgolan, Kurdistan





MOKHTAR AHMADI

Age: 37
Date of fatal incident: 1 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mariwan, Kurdistan





MOMEN ZANDKARIMI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 2 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





MOTALEB SAEED PEIRO

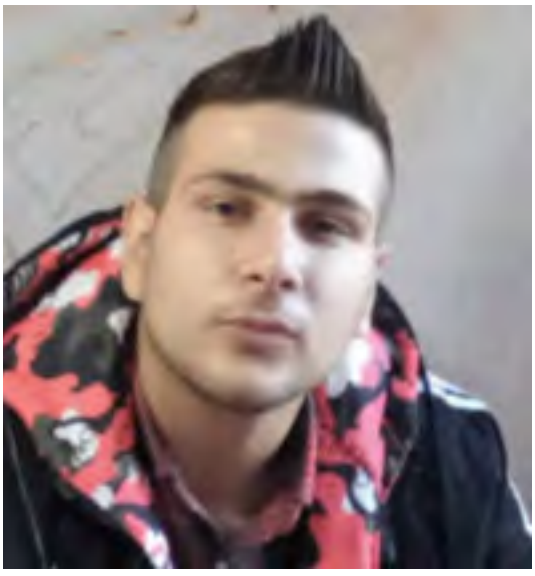
Age: 40
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Baneh, Kurdistan





PEYMAN MANBARI

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





REZA KAZEMI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Kamyaran, Kurdistan





REZA LOTFI

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 19 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Dehgolan, Kurdistan





SARINA SAEDI

Age: 15
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





SHAHOU BAHMANI

Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





YAHYA RAHIMI

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





ZANIAR ALLAHMORADI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 15 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sanandaj, Kurdistan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

LORESTAN PROVINCE







SEPEHR BIRANVAND

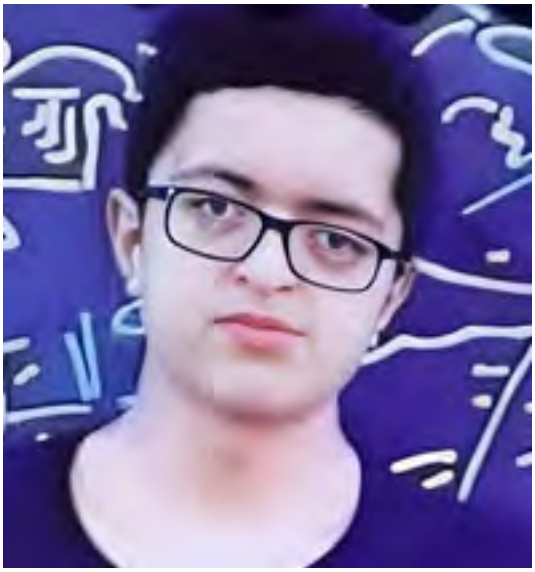
Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 9 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khorramabad, Lorestan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

MARKAZI PROVINCE









ALIREZA KARIMI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 9 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Arak, Markazi





SINA MALAYERI

Age: 34
Date of fatal incident: 22 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Arak, Markazi

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

MAZANDARAN PROVINCE

























ABOLFAZL BAHOU

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghaem Shahr, Mazandaran





ABOLFAZL MEHDIPOUR

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Babol, Mazandaran





ALI FAZELI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Amol, Mazandaran





AMIR HOSSEIN SHAMS NATERI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Noshahr, Mazandaran





ERFAN REZAEI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Amol, Mazandaran





GHAZALEH CHALABI

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Amol, Mazandaran





HADI CHAKSARI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Amol, Mazandaran





HANANEH KIA

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Noshahr, Mazandaran





HOSSEINALI KIA

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Noshahr, Mazandaran





MEHRZAD AVAZPOUR

Age: 46
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Noshahr, Mazandaran





MILAD ZARE

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Babol, Mazandaran





MOHAMMAD FALAH

Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Amol, Mazandaran





MOHAMMAD HASSAN TORKAMAN

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Babol, Mazandaran

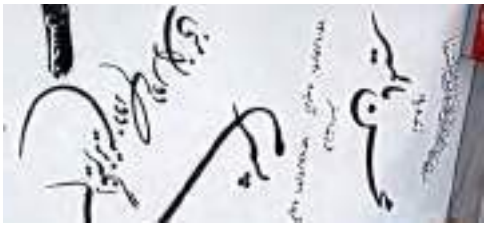




MOHAMMAD JAVAD ZAHEDI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Sari, Mazandaran





MOHSEN MALMIR

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Noshahr, Mazandaran





RAHIM KALIJ

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghaem Shahr, Mazandaran





SHABAN (MOHSEN) MOHAMMADI KOUCHAKSARAEI

Age: 37
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Ghaem Shahr, Mazandaran





SHIRIN ALIZADEH

Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Abbas Abad, Mazandaran





SINA LOH MOUSAVI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Amol, Mazandaran

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

NORTH KHORASAN PROVINCE







AMIRHOSSEIN MOSADDEGH SHARIFPOUR

Age: 20

Date of fatal incident: 6 December 2022

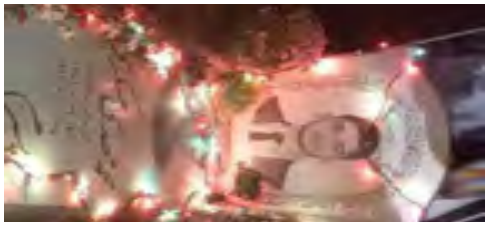
Location of fatal incident: Bojnourd, North Khorasan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

SEMNAN PROVINCE







MOHAMMAD MEHDI ASGARI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Garmsar, Semnan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

SISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN PROVINCE







ABDOLGHAFOUR NOURBARAHOUIE (DAHMARDEH)

Age: 38

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABDOLHAMID NAROUIE

Age: NA

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABDOLKHALEGH (OMAR) SHAHNAVAZI

Age: NA

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABDOLLAH GANGOUZEHI RIGI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABDOLLAH NAROUIE

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABDOLLAH SHAHBAKHSH (NAHTANI)

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABDOLMALEK SHAHBAKHSH

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABDOLMALEK SHAHNAVAZI (KAMALKHAN ZEHI)

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABDOLMANAN (ABDOLRAHMAN) RAKHSHANI (BALUCHIKHAH)

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABDOLSAMAD BARAHOUIE

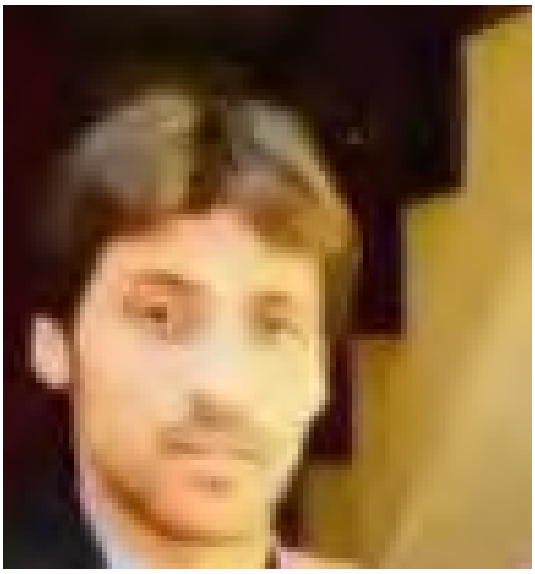
Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABDOLSAMAD SABETIZADEH (SHAHOUZEHI)

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABDOLVAHID TOHIDNIA

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABDOLMAJID BALUCHZEHI SHAHBAKHSH (RIGI)

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ABUBAKR ALIZEHI

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ABUBAKR NAHTANI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ADEL KOUCHAKZAY (BARICHI)

Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 28 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





AHMAD SARANI

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AHMAD SARGOLZAIE

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AHMAD SHAHBAKHSH

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ALI AGHELI NAROUIE

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ALI AKBAR BARAHOUIE

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ALI AKBAR HALGHEH BEGOUSH

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ALI BARAHOUIE

Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



ALI KORD KOLAHOURI (MORADZEHI)

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMIN GALEHBACHEH (BARAHOUIE)

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMINOLLAH GHALJAIE

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMIR HAMZEH NAROUIE

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMIR HAMZEH SHAHNAVAZI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMIR MOHAMMAD GAMSHADZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMIR MOHAMMAD MIRSHEKAR

Age: 2
Date of fatal incident: 2 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AMIRHOSSEIN MIRKAZEHI PARNIAN (RIGI)

Age: 19
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



AZIM MAHMOUDZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan



AZIZOLLAH KOBDANI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



BALAL ANSHINI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



BALAL RAKHSHANI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



BEHZAD RIGI

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



DANIAL SHAHBAKHSH

Age: 11 to 14
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



EBRAHIM GORGIJ

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan & Baluchistan



ESMAIL HOSSEINZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ESMAIL SHAHBAKHSH

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





FARZAD SHAHBAKHSH

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





GHOLAM MOHIUDDIN SHIROUZEHI

Age: 44
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



HABIBOLLAH YAGHOUBI NAJIB BARAHOUIE

Age: 36-37
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



HAMID ISAZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



HAMID NAROUIE

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



HAMZEH NAROUIE

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



HASTI NAROUIE

Age: 6
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



HEYDAR NAROUIE RASHID

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



JABER SHIROUZEHI

Age: 11 to 14
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



JALIL GHANBARZEHI (SHAHBAKHSH)

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



JALIL MOHAMMADZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





JALIL (KHALIL) RAKHSHANI (GHANBARZEHI TANHA)

Age: 25

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





JAMAL ABDOLNASSER MOHAMMADHASANI (BARAHOUIE)

Age: NA

Date of fatal incident: 2 October 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





JAN BIBI NAROUIE

Age: NA

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



JAVAD POUSHEH

Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



KAMBIZ RIGI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan





KHODANOOR LAJEI

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 1 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



LAL MOHAMMAD ALIZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



LAL MOHAMMAD ANSHINI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MAHMOUD BARAHOUIE

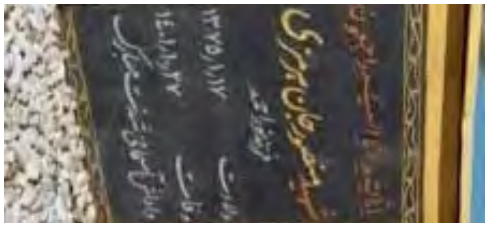
Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MAHMOUD SHAHNAVAZI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MANSOUR HORMOZI

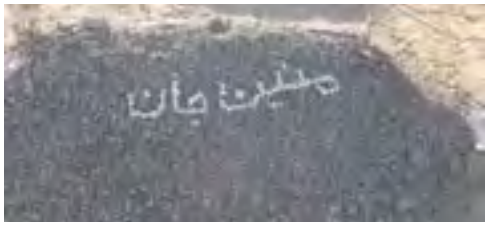
Age: 24
Date of fatal incident: 1 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MANSOUR RAKHSHANI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MATIN GHANBARZEHI

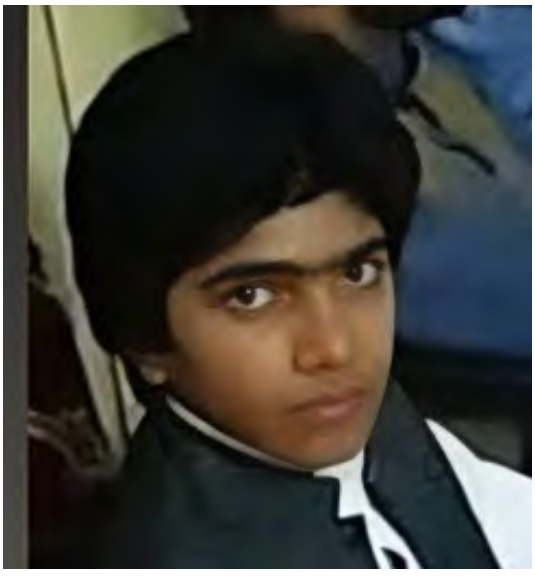
Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MEHDI ANSHINI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOBIN MIRKAZEHI (MIRBALUCHZEHI)

Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD ALI ESMAILZEHI (GAMSHADZEHI)

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD AMIN GAMSHADZEHI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD BARAHOUIE

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOHAMMAD EGHBAL SHAHNAVAZI (NAYEBZEHI)

Age: 16

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOHAMMAD FAROUGH RAKHSHANI

Age: NA

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOHAMMAD GHALJAYEE

Age: NA

Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022

Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD RAKHSHANI

Age: 12
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD RIGI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD RIGI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOHAMMAD SADIGH (RAFEH) NAROUIE

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOHAMMADREZA ADIB TOUTAZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





MOHIODDIN SHAHBAKHSH

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHAMMAD SHAHBAKHSH (MIRBALUCHZEHI)

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOHSEN GAMSHADZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOLAVI OMID SHAHNAVAZI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOSAYEB SHAHBAKHSH

Age: 9
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOSTAFA BARICHI

Age: 24
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



MOUSA DOEIRA (ANSHINI)

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



NAJMODDIN TAJIK

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





NEMATOLLAH KOBDANI (BARAHOUIE)

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



OMID NAROUIE

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 28 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



OMID SAFARZEHI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



OMID SARANI

Age: 13
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



OMRAN HASSANZEHI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



OMRAN SHAHBAKHSH

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



RAHIMDAD (ABDOLLAH) SHAHLIBAR

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan



SADEGH ARAMESH (BARAHOUIE)

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan





SAEED SOHRABZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan





SALAHEDDIN GOMSHADZEHI

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





SAMER HASHEMZEHI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



SAMI HASHEMZEHI

Age: 33
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



SOLEIMAN ARAB (SALMAN MALEKI)

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 2 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



SODEYS KESHANI

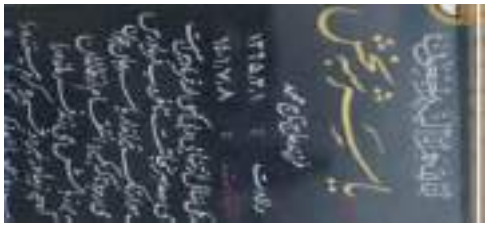
Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



YASER BAHADORZEHI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan





YASER SHAHBAKHSH

Age: 36
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan



YASER SHAHOUZEHI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





YOUNES MIRBALUCHZEHI (SALAHSHOURAN)

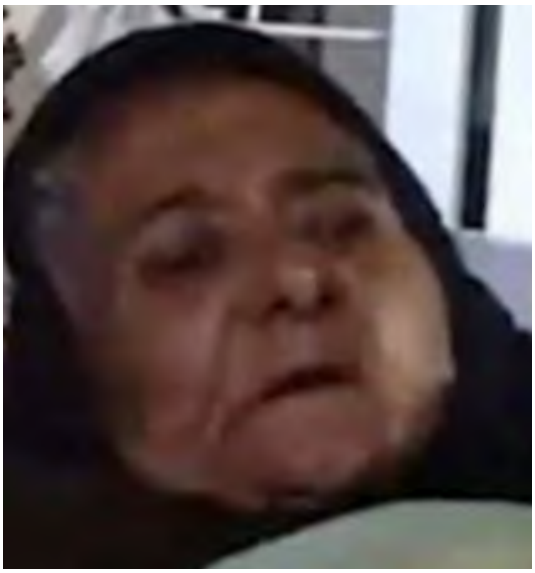
Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 4 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan





YOUNES NAROUIE

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





ZARBIBI ESMAILZEHI

Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan

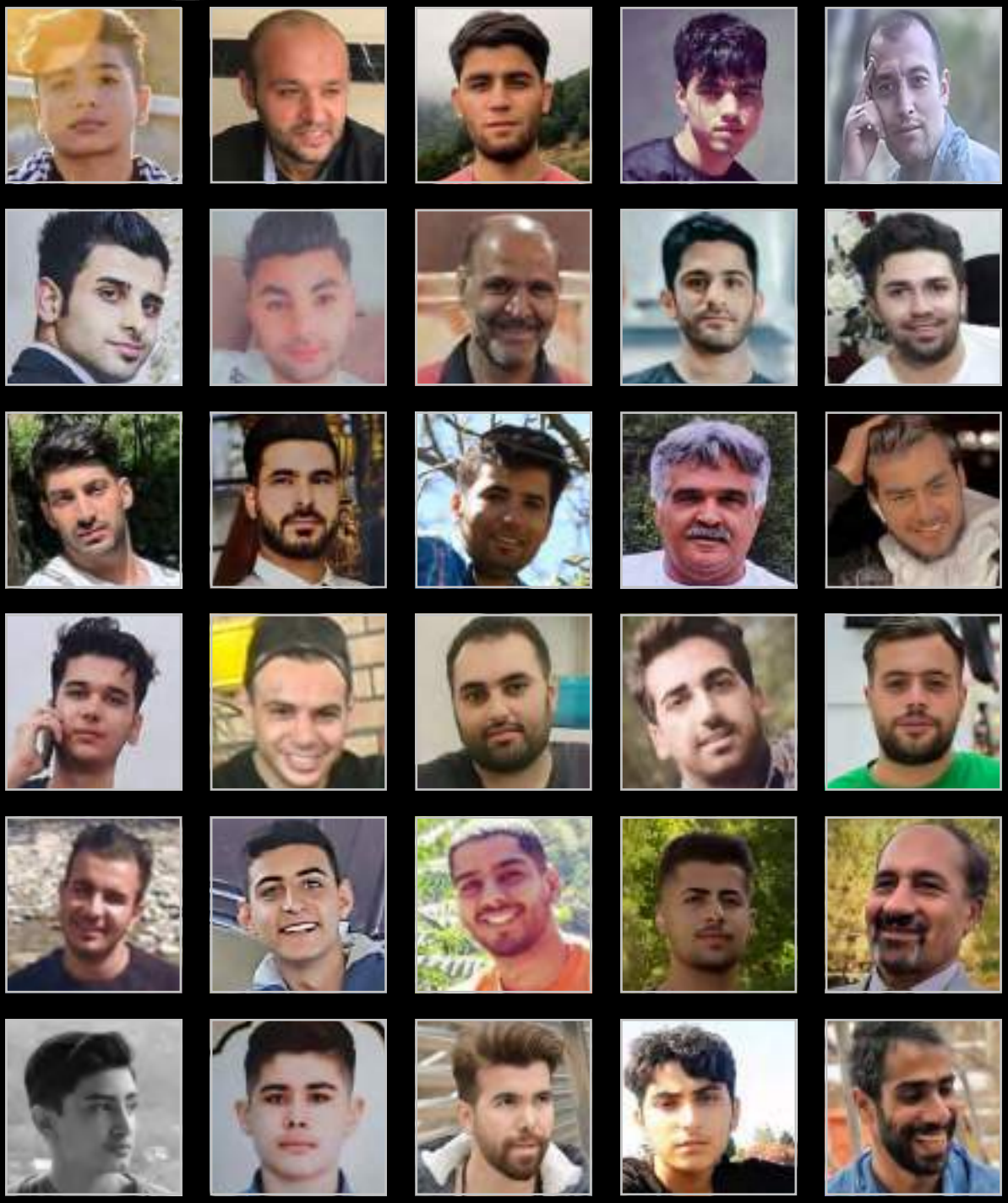


ZOLEIKHA TARZI

Age: 88
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

TEHRAN PROVINCE







ABOLFAZL AHMADPOUR

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 22 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





ABOLFAZL AMIRATAEI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shahr-e Rey, Tehran





AHMADREZA GHALJI

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





ALI ROUZBAHANI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





ALI SEYEDI

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Robat Karim, Tehran

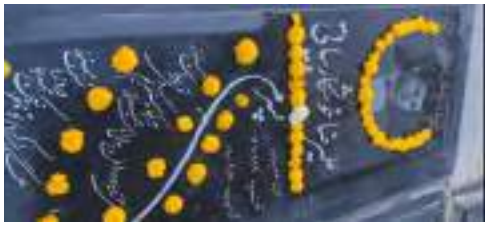




ALIREZA HOSSEINI

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 23 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Eslamshahr, Tehran





ALIREZA KHOSHKAR BAYATI

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 7 December 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





AMIR MEHDI FARROKHIPOUR

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 27 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





ASGHAR AGHAEI

Age: 53
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





ASGHAR HAZHIR LOTF

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





EHSAN KHAN MOHAMMADI

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 1 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





ERFAN KHAZAEI

Age: 30
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shahriar, Tehran





ERFAN NAZARBEIGI

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 29 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Lavasan, Tehran





HAMID FOULADVAND

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Pakdasht, Tehran





HAMIDREZA ROUHI

Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MEHDI HOSSEINI

Age: 54
Date of fatal incident: October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MEHDI ZARE

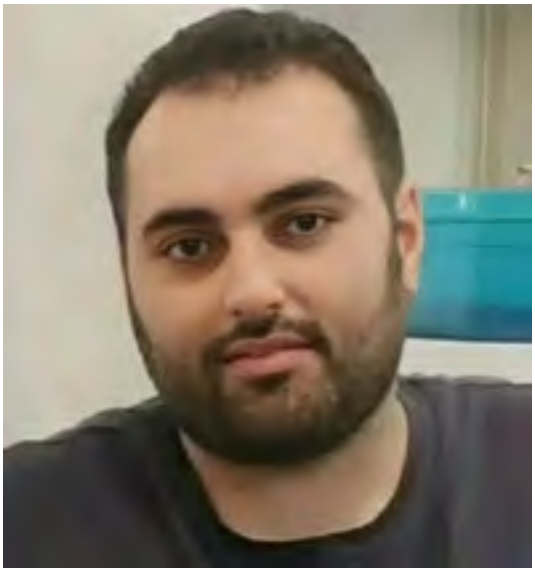
Age: NA
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MILAD JAVIDPOUR

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 22 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MILAD OSTAD HASHEM

Age: 37
Date of fatal incident: 25 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MOHAMMAD AMIN TAKALI

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 30 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN MOROVATI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Gharchak, Tehran





MOHAMMAD JAMEH BOZORG

Age: 59
Date of fatal incident: 24 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Malard, Tehran





MOHAMMAD JAVAD FARMANI

Age: 23
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shahr-e Rey, Tehran





MOHAMMAD REZA ESKANDARI

Age: 25
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Pakdasht, Tehran



MOHAMMAD ZAMANI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Baharestan, Tehran





MOHAMMAD ZARE'I

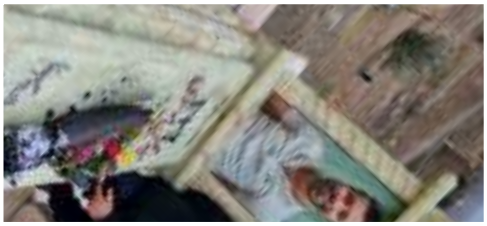
Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Gharchak, Tehran



MOHAMMADREZA SARVARI

Age: 14
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Shahr-e Rey, Tehran





MOHSEN MOUSAVI

Age: 33
Date of fatal incident: 8 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran





MOHSEN PAZOUKI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Pakdasht, Tehran





SIAVASH MAHMOUDI

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Tehran, Tehran

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

WEST AZERBAIJAN PROVINCE







ABDOLLAH MAHMOUDPOUR

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Balou, West Azerbaijan





ABDOLSALAM GHADER GOLVAN

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Oshnavieh, West Azerbaijan





AMIN MAREFAT

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Oshnavieh, West Azerbaijan





AMIR (FARJAD) DARVISHI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Urumieh, West Azerbaijan





AMIR FERASATISHAD

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 18 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





AMJAD ENAYATI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





ASA'D RAHIMI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





ASLAN (NIMA) SHAFAGHDOOST

Age: 17
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Urumieh, West Azerbaijan





AVAT GHADERPOUR

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 18 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





AZAD HOSSEINPOURI

Age: 31
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





DANESH RAHNAMA

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Balou, West Azerbaijan





EBRAHIM SHARIFIFAR

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





ESMAIL (SIMKO) MOLOUDI

Age: 35
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





FAYEGH MAMGHADERI

Age: 37
Date of fatal incident: 15 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





FERESHTEH AHMADI

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





GHAFOUR MOLOUDI

Age: 51
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





HEZHAR MAMKHOSRAVI

Age: 19
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





HIVA JANJAN

Age: 32
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





JALAL GHORBANI

Age: 45
Date of fatal incident: 20 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





KAMAL FEQHI

Age: 46
Date of fatal incident: 12 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





KARVAN GHADER SHOKRI

Age: 15
Date of fatal incident: 20 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





KHALEGH (KAMAL) AHMADPOUR

Age: 34
Date of fatal incident: 18 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





KOBRA SHEIKHEH

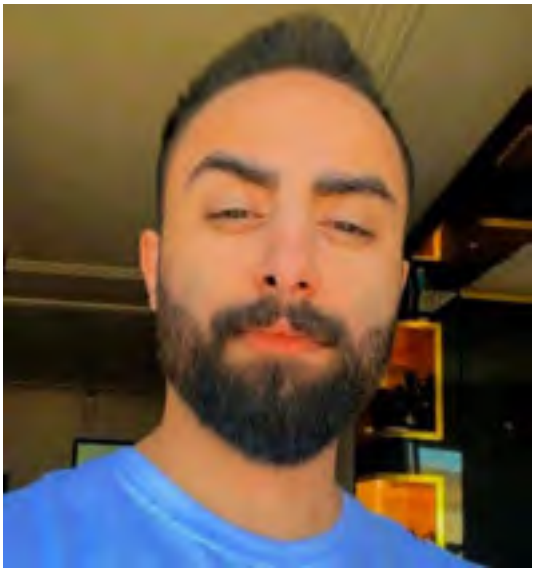
Age: 59
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





KOUMAR DAROFTADEH

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 30 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





MASOUD AHMADZADEH

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





MEHRAN RAHMANI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





MILAD MAROUFI

Age: 22
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





MILAN HAGHIGHI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Oshnavieh, West Azerbaijan





MOHAMMAD AHMADI GAGASH

Age: 43
Date of fatal incident: 18 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





MOHAMMAD AMIN (SHAMAL) KHADIRIPOUR

Age: 33
Date of fatal incident: 18 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





MOSTAFA SHABANI

Age: 45
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





SADRODDIN LITANI

Age: 27
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Oshnavieh, West Azerbaijan





SALAR MOJAVER

Age: 26
Date of fatal incident: 16 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





SAMAD BARGINIA

Age: 52
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





SHAHOU KHEZRI

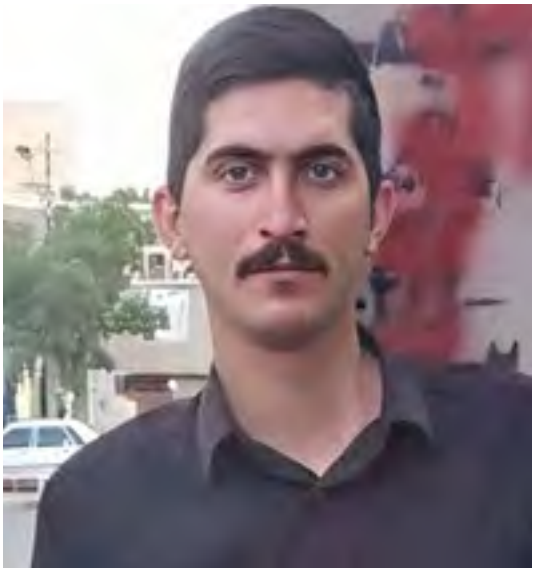
Age: 20
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





SHAHRIAR MOHAMMADI

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 18 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





SOLEIMAN SHOKRI

Age: 28
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





SOLEYMAN (SHOURESH) NIKNAM

Age: 34
Date of fatal incident: 17 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan





TAHER AZIZI

Age: 29
Date of fatal incident: 20 November 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





ZAKARIA KHIAL

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 20 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan





ZANIAR ABOUBAKRI

Age: 21
Date of fatal incident: 27 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Mahabad, West Azerbaijan

DEATHS DURING PROTEST DISPERSALS AND IN MILITARIZED AREAS

ZANJAN PROVINCE











MEHDI MOUSAVI NIKOU

Age: 16
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zanjan, Zanjan





MEHRDAD GHORBANI

Age: 18
Date of fatal incident: 21 September 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zanjan, Zanjan





RASOUL HADDADI

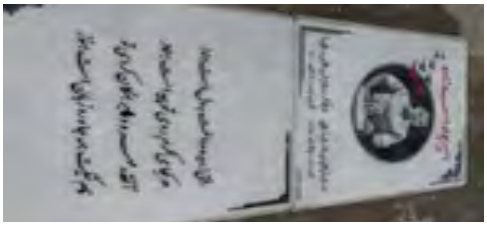
Age: 67
Date of fatal incident: 26 October 2022
Location of fatal incident: Zanjan, Zanjan

DEATHS IN CUSTODY



LIVES CUT BRUTALLY SHORT
VICTIMS OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING IRAN'S 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING
Amnesty International





AMIRJAVAD ASADZADEH

Age: 36
Date of arrest: 19 November 2022
Date of death: 20 November 2022
Date of notification of death: 20 November 2022
Location of death: Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi





DARYA NAZMDEH

Age: 28
Date of arrest: 3 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of notification of death: November 2022
Location of death: Karaj, Alborz





EHSAN GHASEMIFAR

Age: 36
Date of arrest: 30 November 2022
Date of death: 30 November 2022
Date of notification of death: NA
Location of death: Karaj, Alborz





ESMAIL DEZVAR

Age: 39
Date of arrest: 9 October 2022
Date of death: 9 October 2022
Date of notification of death: 9 October 2022
Location of death: Saqqez, Kurdistan





HAMED BAJIZEHI (BARAHOUIE)

Age: 24
Date of arrest: 2 October 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of notification of death: 17 October 2022
Location of death: Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan





HAMED SALAHSHOUR

Age: 22
Date of arrest: 25 November 2022
Date of death: 30 November 2022
Date of notification of death: 30 November 2022
Location of death: Dezpart, Khuzestan





HAMID GOLI

Age: 46
Date of arrest: 19 October 2022
Date of death: 27 October 2022
Date of notification of death: 12 November 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





HEYMAN AMAN

Age: 25
Date of arrest: 18 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of notification of death: 23 November 2022
Location of death: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





MEHDI KARAM ASHTIANI

Age: 50
Date of arrest: 1 October 2022
Date of death: 1 October 2022
Date of notification of death: January 2023
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





MEHRSHAD SHAHIDINEJAD

Age: 19
Date of arrest: 26 October 2022
Date of death: 26 October 2022
Date of notification of death: 27 October 2022
Location of death: Arak, Markazi





MOHAMMAD LOTFOLLAHI

Age: 21-22
Date of arrest: 26 October 2022
Date of death: 27 October 2022
Date of notification of death: 27 October 2022
Location of death: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





MOJTABA GHENA'ATI KHALARI

Age: 29
Date of arrest: 30 December 2022
Date of death: 6 January 2023
Date of notification of death: January 2023
Location of death: Shiraz, Fars





OMID HASSANI

Age: 20
Date of arrest: 17 November 2022
Date of death: 18 November 2022
Date of notification of death: 18 November 2022
Location of death: Sanandaj, Kurdistan





RAMIN FATEHI

Age: 48
Date of arrest: 13 October 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of notification of death: 21 October 2022
Location of death: Saqqez, Kurdistan





RAMIN KARAMI

Age: 31
Date of arrest: 12 October 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of notification of death: 20 October 2022
Location of death: Kermanshah, Kermanshah



SAMAN GHADERBEIG

Age: 34
Date of arrest: 15 November 2022
Date of death: 16 November 2022
Date of notification of death: 16 November 2022
Location of death: Boukan, West Azerbaijan



SAMAN RAHMANI

Age: 28
Date of arrest: 11 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of notification of death: 12 November 2022
Location of death: Shahr-e Ghods, Tehran

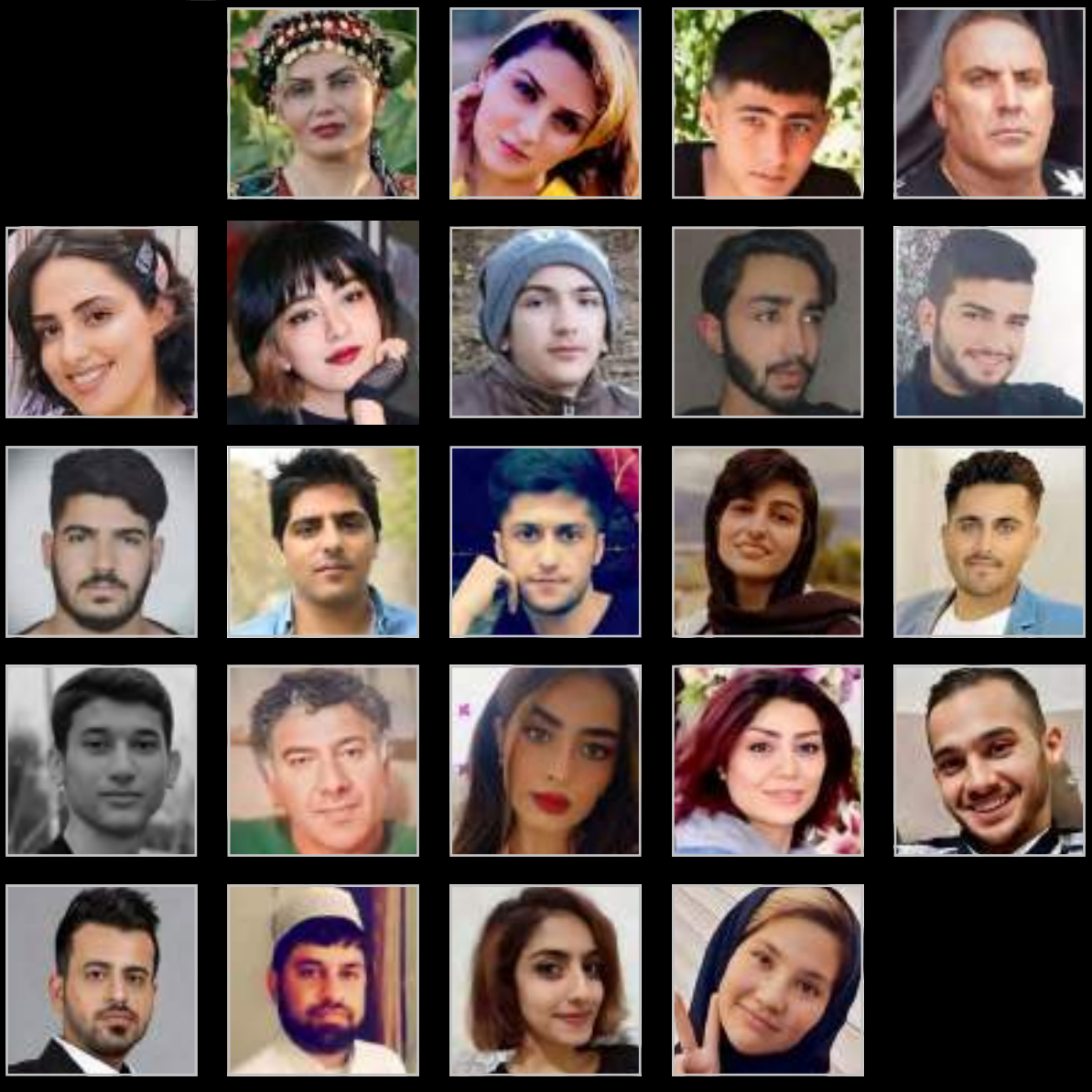




SHADMAN AHMADI

Age: 34
Date of arrest: 8 December 2022
Date of death: 8 December 2022
Date of notification of death: 8 December 2022
Location of death: Dehgolan, Kurdistan

SUSPICIOUS DEATHS







AHMAD GOUDARZI

Age: 41
Date of disappearance: 3 November 2022
Date of death: 13 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 13 December 2022
Location of death: Karaj, Alborz





AIDA ROSTAMI

Age: 37
Date of disappearance: 12 December 2022
Date of death: 13 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 13 December 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





AMIR MOHAMMAD (ILYAD) RAHMANIPOUR

Age: 17
Date of disappearance: 29 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of body discovery: 2 December 2022
Location of death: Firouzabad, Fars





AMIRHOSSEIN GHORBANI MALMALI

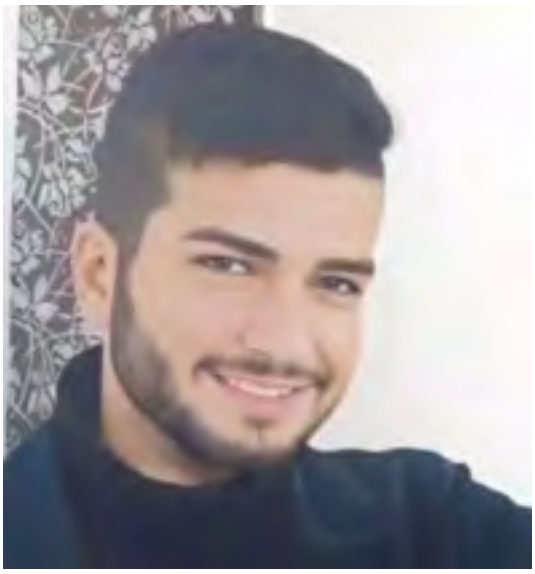
Age: 18
Date of disappearance: 3 November 2022
Date of death: 4 November 2022
Date of body discovery: NA
Location of death: Izeh, Khuzestan





ARIANA SEYF

Age: 20
Date of disappearance: 1 December 2022
Date of death: 1 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 1 December 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





ARVIN GOLZARI YEKTA

Age: 17
Date of disappearance: 24 September 2022
Date of death: 25 September 2022
Date of body discovery: 25 September 2022
Location of death: Fouladshahr, Esfahan





ATEFEH NAAMI

Age: 37
Date of disappearance: 18 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of body discovery: 26 November 2022
Location of death: Karaj, Alborz





AYLAR HAGHI

Age: 21
Date of disappearance: 16 November 2022
Date of death: 16 November 2022
Date of body discovery: 17 November 2022
Location of death: Tabriz, East Azerbaijan





BEHNAZ AFSHARI

Age: 22
Date of disappearance: 25 October 2022
Date of death: 27 October 2022
Date of body discovery: 27 October 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





BEHZAD PAREH

Age: 20
Date of disappearance: 1 December 2022
Date of death: 1 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 1 December 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





DONYA FARHADI

Age: 22
Date of disappearance: 7 December 2022
Date of death: 7 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 15 December 2022
Location of death: Ahvaz, Khuzestan





ERFAN SARIKHANI DASHTI

Age: 21
Date of disappearance: 18 October 2022
Date of death: 21 October 2022
Date of body discovery: 21 October 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





HAMIDREZA NOKHBEH ZAEIM

Age: 32
Date of disappearance: 18 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of body discovery: 20 November 2022
Location of death: Karaj, Alborz





MILAD KHOSHKAM

Age: 27
Date of disappearance: 6 November 2022
Date of death: NA
Date of body discovery: 13 November 2022
Location of death: Shiraz, Fars





MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN HAJIANI

Age: 27
Date of disappearance: 11 November 2022
Date of death: 12 November 2022
Date of body discovery: 12 November 2022
Location of death: Bushehr, Bushehr





MOHAMMAD HOSSEINI

Age: 22
Date of disappearance: 20 October 2022
Date of death: 20 October 2022
Date of body discovery: 20 October 2022
Location of death: Saqqez, Kurdistan

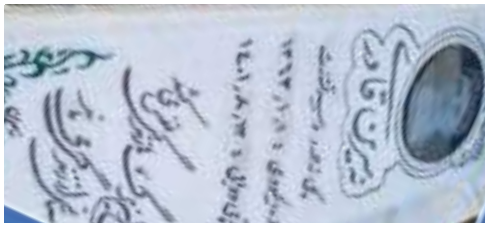




MOHAMMADREZA BALI LASHAK

Age: 46
Date of disappearance: 2 November 2022
Date of death: 2 November 2022
Date of body discovery: 2 November 2022
Location of death: Noshahr, Mazandaran





NASRIN GHADERI

Age: 37
Date of disappearance: 4 November 2022
Date of death: 4 November 2022
Date of body discovery: 5 November 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





NIKA SHAKARAMI

Age: 16
Date of disappearance: 21 September 2022
Date of death: 21 September 2022
Date of body discovery: 29 September 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





SAEED BOYERI

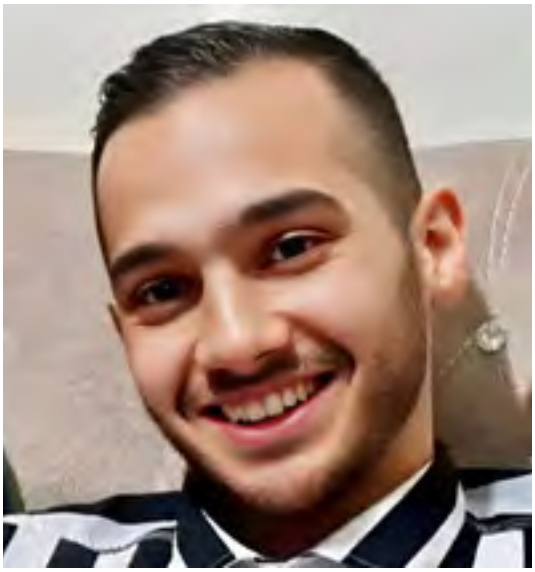
Age: 18
Date of disappearance: 18 December 2022
Date of death: 19 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 19 December 2022
Location of death: Fouladshahr, Esfahan





SETAREH TAJIK

Age: 17
Date of disappearance: 22 September 2022
Date of death: 22 September 2022
Date of body discovery: 22 September 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





SHAHABODDIN HASHEMI

Age: 25
Date of disappearance: 6 December 2022
Date of death: 8 December 2022
Date of body discovery: 8 December 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran





YOUSEF RAISI

Age: NA
Date of disappearance: 31 October 2022
Date of death: 31 October 2022
Date of body discovery: 31 October 2022
Location of death: Lashar, Sistan and Baluchistan

POST-CUSTODY DEATHS

DEATHS LINKED TO TORTURE-RELATED PHYSICAL INJURIES









BARZIN HAMZEHZADEH

Age: 15
Date of arrest: Late November 2022
Date of release: NA
Date of death: 2 January 2024
Location of death: Sardasht, West Azerbaijan





MARYAM ARVIN

Age: 29
Date of arrest: 26 November 2022
Date of release: 13 December 2022
Date of death: 7 February 2023
Location of death: Sirjan, Kerman



MOHAMMAD HAJI RASOULPOUR

Age: 57
Date of arrest: 23 November 2022
Date of release: 13 December 2022
Date of death: 19 December 2022
Location of death: Boukan, West Azerbaijan





SETAYESH SHARIFINIA

Age: 16
Date of arrest: NA
Date of release: 27 December 2022
Date of death: 13 January 2023
Location of death: Kordkoy, Golestan





SHAHRIAR ADELI

Age: 27
Date of arrest: 22 November 2022
Date of release: 3 December 2022
Date of death: 9 December 2022
Location of death: Sardasht, West Azerbaijan

POST-CUSTODY DEATHS

SUICIDES LINKED TO TORTURE-RELATED MENTAL HARM









ABBAS MANSOURI

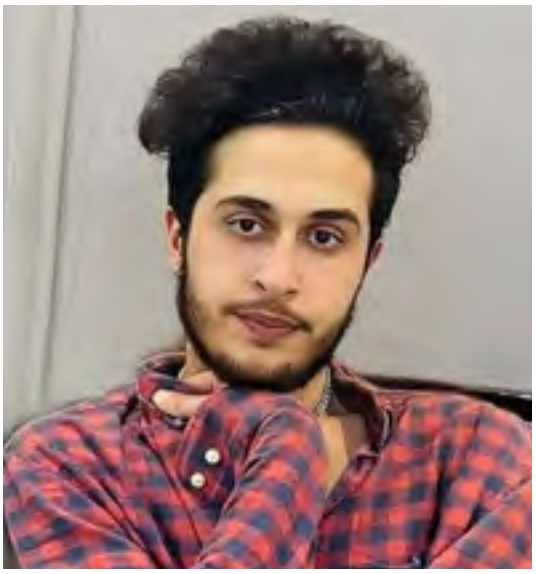
Age: 19
Date of arrest: 16 November 2022
Date of release: 5 December 2022
Date of death: 12 December 2022
Location of death: Shoush, Khuzestan





ARSHIA EMAM GHOLIZADEH

Age: 16
Date of arrest: November 2022
Date of release: Late November 2022
Date of death: 26 November 2022
Location of death: Hadishahr, East Azerbaijan





FARHAM NIKPOUR

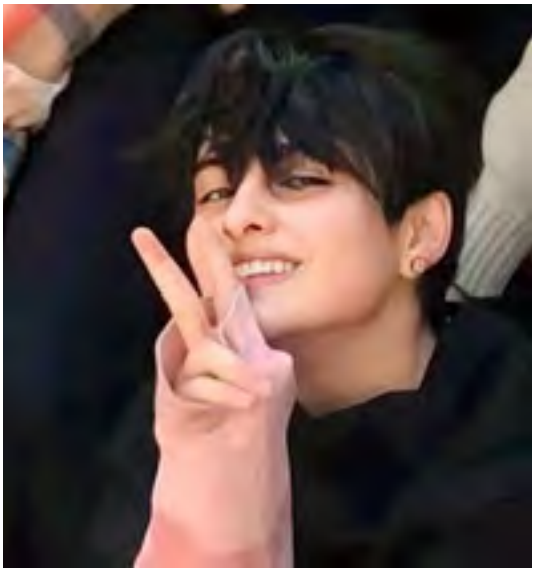
Age: 20
Date of arrest: 21 September 2022
Date of release: Late September 2022
Date of death: 14 February 2023
Location of death: Amol, Mazandaran





MOHSEN JAFARIRAD

Age: 36
Date of arrest: 26 October 2022
Date of release: 5 November 2022
Date of death: 8 January 2023
Location of death: Karaj, Alborz





YALDA AGHA FAZLI

Age: 19
Date of arrest: 26 October 2022
Date of release: 6 November 2022
Date of death: 11 November 2022
Location of death: Tehran, Tehran

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info@amnesty.org


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LIVES CUT BRUTALLY SHORT

VICTIMS OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY DURING IRAN'S 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

During its research for its report *Architects of Atrocities: State machinery Orchestrating Crimes Against Humanity in Iran's 2022 Woman Life Freedom Uprising*, Amnesty International gathered information and evidence about the deaths of 377 protesters and bystanders who lost their lives during the Woman Life Freedom uprising. In this document, Amnesty International lists their names, together with information on the location and date of their deaths, and photographs where available.

Amnesty International honours the memory of protesters and bystanders whose lives were brutally cut short during the Woman Life Freedom uprising and their aspirations for a future of dignity, freedom and equality in Iran. The organization also pays its tribute to the memory of Zhina Mahsa Amini and all women and girls in Iran who have been killed, tortured or otherwise harmed through decades of enforcement of discriminatory and degrading compulsory veiling laws and other discriminatory laws and practices.

Amnesty International is calling on the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Iran to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and on the UN General Assembly to create an international criminal justice mechanism for Iran, aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity.

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SEPTEMBER 2026
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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ARCHITECTS OF ATROCITIES

STATE MACHINERY ORCHESTRATING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN IRAN'S 2022 WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM UPRISING

Iranian authorities committed crimes against humanity to crush the Woman Life Freedom uprising between September and December 2022. They unlawfully killed hundreds of protesters and bystanders, including children, and persecuted their families. They subjected thousands more to arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance or torture or other ill-treatment, including rape and other sexual violence. Amnesty International has mapped the chains of command behind these crimes and identified 87 officials who should be the subject of criminal investigations.

Amnesty International's research involved interviews with 270 people and analysis of over 2,000 videos and extensive documentary evidence, including official statements, leaked official documents, court and forensic records.

Impunity for the crimes against humanity in 2022 paved the way for more atrocities, culminating in the massacre of thousands of protesters by security forces on 8-9 January 2026.

Any further delay by the international community in pursuing international justice dangerously contributes to the normalization of mass protest killings.

Amnesty International is calling on the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Iran to the International Criminal Court and on the UN General Assembly to create an international criminal justice mechanism aimed at prosecuting those most implicated in crimes against humanity in Iran.

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