WOMEN PRISONERS IN I.R. IRAN
Report on women in prisons and detention centres

ALL HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL IN IRAN
Südwind is an Austrian non-governmental organization, founded in 1979, and has been in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 2009. Since 2010 Südwind has participated in the Human Rights Council, delivering statements and organising parallel events amongst others on human rights in Iran.

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September 2013
Executive Summary

Following the Iranian revolution in 1979, thousands of women from all walks of life have been criminalised for their refusal to observe the official Islamic dress code or Hejab or comply with the rules and legislation which denied their human rights. They have also been arrested, detained, interrogated, tortured, imprisoned or even executed for their beliefs. At present and according to our information, at least 48 women are held in various prisons as political prisoners. The actual figures are more than this. The Islamic Republic of Iran had never published accurate data on the number of prisoners, either political or for other reasons. In addition, many families prefer to stay anonymous even in cases of execution of family member. The report is compiled from information within the country, testimonies and personal accounts as well as information gathered through social media.

In Iran, women’s rights activists, along with the rest of female population live in constant fear and lack of security and safety in their private and public lives. The state apparatus has allocated huge resources into the security police, intelligence and the moral guidance forces which patrol the streets and have the power and authority to detain citizens without due legal authorization and due process. Ironically, while legally and constitutionally women have fewer rights than men in many areas such as divorce, custody of children, employment, travel and inheritance, in terms of prison and punishment they enjoy equal rights. Women are subjected to sexual and verbal abuse and in cases assault and rape.

Protesters demanded the release of female political prisoners at the Place des Nations in Geneva
This report has been compiled based on the interviews and reports by women who have experienced prison and who have been subjected to or witnessed detention, interrogation, and torture and lived in the inhumane environment of prison in Iran.

In the cities other than Tehran, women prisoners are often kept in the same ward as common criminals. In Tehran, women are sent to common criminal wards as a form of punishment.

In a visit to a detention centre in the city of Esfahan, Mahmood Sorush, director of centre for infectious diseases at the Ministry of health admitted that: “Concentration of high population in prisons would cause the spread of contagious diseases which will ultimately put a high burden on the prison budget and the society at large.”

Statistics suggest that Iran’s prisons are old and overpopulated. In some places prisons hold 4 times more than the international standards. There are about 7,500 female common criminals which comprise %4 of the prisons population. The average age is between 19-40.

Yet, prisons lack basic environmental and hygiene standards and prisoners are deprived of basic human rights. According to Iran’s prison laws children are permitted to stay with their mothers up to 14 years of age. This means that children grow up in an unsuitable environment and suffer prison alongside their mothers. Basic principles for the treatment of prisoners which was adapted at the 68 plenary meeting of UN General Assembly (A/RES/45/111/1 December 1990) and Convention on the Right of Child which Iran is a signatory are not observed in Iran’s prisons.
Prisons

1- Evin prison, Tehran

Upon release from prison, Atefeh Nabavi recounts her observations of the women’s ward on her Facebook page:

“While in the common ward, our room was adjacent to where mothers and children were kept. This meant that while some mothers tried to clean it, this section was the noisiest and dirtiest with odour of stale milk, excrement and urine made breathing difficult. It was a hotbox for skin diseases and lice and drove some mothers to the brink of madness, while others did not care.

The upside was the presence of children made the prison empty of its sense. Seeing the children around gave us a sense that drove our miseries away which was painful as well. There was this sweet little girl with curly hair and white teeth which she showed with constant smile. Her favourite playing area was around the toilets and the showers. She would run around bare feet and watch us from under the doors. Children often barged into our room and drove us crazy with their hysterical screams so much that we sometimes boarded ourselves by placing a bed against the door. The fact was that our room was a sanctuary and a safe place and sometimes we would give in. Manijeh, my roommate used to say: “It does not matter. Let them in. we will wash the floor later”.

A child, ‘M’ did not speak and her mother who had a heavy sentence for smuggling seemed not to bother. She had homosexual tendencies which were not unusual in prison. One of the first months of my imprisonment we heard voices from the room nearby and then the clatter of broken glass and flasks and….. ‘M’s mother had thrown her out of bed. We rescued her from her mother’s grip and she cried for long time. I think after that incident she stopped speaking.

One day during break I saw ‘M’s mother holding her and crying. She was looking at her in bewilderment. She was 3 at the time and it was best to be sent out of prison into the care of the state. The next morning 5 of the children from the ward left among their crying mothers to go into state care. According to some prisoners these children often returned to prison as adults.

2- Amol prison

Women’s prison in Amol is only 80 square meters and is located in the parking area of the city’s revolutionary court. According a woman prisoner, in such a small space 70-110 women are often kept there. Due to the rainy and damp climate of the north cities in Iran, the hall lacks enough oxygen and prisoners suffer chronic headaches. There is only one hour break daily which is often cut for punishment. One shower and one toilet caters for all. Women have to provide for their hygiene and since they are poor, stealing from each other brings about fights. There are no cells to keep those who are supposed to be sent into solitary. Therefore, prisoner is often kept in the basement which is often wet with rain water. Upon release, prisoners suffer various illnesses. Addicted women are kept with those with HIV, AIDS, hepatitis, cancer and tuberculosis. There had been cases where a prisoner has died of cancer in there. Prisoners have no right to medical care. About 4-6 children are often kept with their mothers. They are often removed into state care after 2 years of age. Food is low quality even for pregnant woman and women in lactation. A small fridge is only functional in summer time. No workshop or training is provided for women. They have little or no visitations and even if they do, they are often deprived of the opportunity as punish-
ment for disobeying prison rules. Young girls are often sexually assaulted by other women.

3- Esfahan prison

In a visit to the women’s prison in Esfahan by members of ‘Esfahan Women’s Lawyers Association’, one member recounted her observations:

“We arrived at around 9am and after initial ceremonies where our identity cards were taken away we were accompanied by a warden into the prison compound. There were two gates which separated the men and women’s ward. We were warned not to have intimate conversations with prisoners. The warden was walking ahead and as she opened the door, a nauseating odour wafted into our faces. Our bags were taken away and we were told not to take any money with us as it might be stolen! At the end of the corridor where the warden’s office was located we could see a court yard with washing hanging from a rope. A number of women were walking and laughing. We told the warden that we would like to offer our services to the prisoners free of charge. Along the way some accompanied us into a room which was tiled to the ceiling. There were bunk beds along side the walls with clean sheets. A number of babies and 10-12 older women were there. One of the younger women explained that older prisoners live here because there are no stairs and the toilets and shower is nearby. We saw a 70 year old woman who was serving life for drug trafficking and a 20 year old woman who was there because she was unable to pay diyeh (compensation).

Esfahan’s MP, Mr Mohammed Taghi once said that: ‘Esfahan’s prison had the original capacity of 2,200. Now, 8,000 prisoners are kept there. It makes it difficult for some to even stretch their legs. He said he had mentioned this to the authorities many times.’

4- Vakilabad prison, Mashhad

This prison was once located outside the city’s boundaries but with the city expansions, it is not inside the city parameters. After the revolution additional buildings were added to the existing site, nevertheless, it holds far more than its capacity. What is more distressing is the way women are treated. Upon arrival, prisoners are kept in the quarantine for days or even months. The room has the capacity for 30 people but sometimes over 100 people are kept in there. Detainees are not allowed fresh air and exercise. Many are drug addicts and considering their deprivation they often lose control and become aggressive.

5- Adelabad prison, Shiraz

Adelabad is Shiraz’s central prison and the women’s ward is located inside it. A few years ago the women’s prison was transferred to another site. Last year, prisoners were transferred back for a number of reasons including space. The wards are divided according to the nature of crime: murder, embezzlement, addiction etc. There is no separate ward for prisoners of conscious and according to information 3 women belonging to Gonabadi Dervishes and a new convert to Christianity are kept in there without charge.

6- Langarood prison, Qom

Accounts of a woman prisoner who wishes to remain anonymous.

I stayed in that prison for 6 months. Women prisoners often said: ‘This is the end of world! Is there any other place worse than this?’

We were 150 women in three rooms, a long corridor and 3 old toilets and 3 showers. The rooms were about 3x4 square meters and floors were covered in grey carpet. The carpet in the corridor had a different colour. Each room had bunk
beds installed on the sides shared among 50 women. Those with longer prison sentences had priority to the beds. The rest slept on the floor or in the corridors. This was an issue for quarrel as they could not sleep with lights on in the corridors.

A clergy director once admitted to a group of women prisoners that the rooms were originally designed for 25 but there is no other place to house the extra number.

There were constant queues for toilets and showers. One was often out of order. Showers were very dirty with hair, shampoo etc. everywhere. The bins had no cover and flies roamed around them and in the stew pots during distribution. Life was horrible. Due to sheer number of prisoners it was hard to keep the place clean. There were women with children, often toddlers. A woman with a 7 months old baby was there and another had given birth before I arrived. One of my roommates said the woman was addicted to crack and could not take care of her baby. In such occasions the child would go into the care of the state. I saw another woman with a 2 year old toddler boy whom often smacked and hurt him.

I often thought of the future of these children who experienced such horrors. Women were placed in rooms according to their crimes. The room where I stayed housed those who had been prosecuted by the revolutionary court, Drug dealers and murderers lived together. In the other two rooms those with crimes related to robbery, prostitution (also were called gol forush-flower sellers) and drug addicts.

This prison had a lot to tell on the abuse of human rights. I once saw a girl who was addicted to crack. She was in her twenties, very frightened, would not eat much and slept most of the time or stared into space. Whenever the gates opened for a new prisoner she would try to run out. Sometimes she became aggressive during the day if she was awake at night. Other prisoners avoided her as they considered her ‘unpure’ due to addiction. Prison staff would not interfere with prisoners’ bickering unless the situation was dangerous. Once, the addicted young woman began screaming and calling on her parents to come and take her away. She was knocking at the door, asking to be let out. A tall, stout woman who was accused of plotting to murder her brother-in-law woke up and came down from bed, asking who was making the noise. Others were agitated and encouraged her to shut the girl up. The warden came in and took the girl outside to the little yard. There in the cold of January they opened the hose into her mouth until she almost suffocated. It was so painful to see her struggling to get away.

At this prison, whipping prisoners for various reasons was common. Women addicts who had illicit relationships knew what was expected of them if they were found out. When a prisoner was due for release she would receive the whip before leaving. The scars from previous cases could be seen on some. Nevertheless, whipping never stopped their addiction. Some believed they were strong enough to receive 70 lashes. On one occasion, a 30 year old woman who was 8 months pregnant was sentenced to 70 lashes. When she gave birth and was due for release she could not convince the judge that she had not had a relationship with a man who was seen in the corridor of the building where she lived. She got the lashes.

7- Gharachak prison, Varamin

Gharachak prison consists of seven prefabricated halls, each having beds for a small number of prisoners. In each room over 200 prisoners are housed. There is no system for clean air to circulate in the halls and the odours and gas from the sewage system infiltrate and creates a respiratory problem for the prisoners. There are only 2 toilets and two showers for this large number of occupants. Some are forced to use the space between beds to relieve themselves. Prisoners have to use these two showers to wash dishes and clothes as well as themselves. The canteen is an unsafe place as
quarrels between those who serve food use foul language and the prisoners are rife. Some of the prisoners are young and suffer serious malnutrition in prison. The outside area for exercise and fresh air has the capacity for 60-70 people but 400 women use the same space.

8- Vozara detention centre, Tehran

This temporary detention centre is located in an affluent part of the capital. At the entrance two cage-like cells welcome men and women who are brought in. Women are detained on anti-Islamic, immoral behaviour (mainly improper hejab or in the company of a boyfriend or possession of drugs or prostitution). A room in the basement is allocated for interrogation and or flogging which is either performed on the soles of feet or the back. The section allocated to women lacks any facility and toilets outside the cells are extremely dirty.

Shiva Shekari, member of Women Studies Centre believes: “Increase in the number of street women who come to this centre is related to the discriminatory and unjust laws. Women are generally poorer than men and in case of divorce they do not get enough support to stand on their own feet and therefore are driven into prostitution. In many parts of the world safe houses keep vulnerable women until they can stand on their feet. In Iran, there no such schemes to protect women.”

Witness Accounts

1. First Witness

Zhila Baniyaquoob, journalist and women’s rights activist has recently been released from a one year prison sentence. She posted a note on her Facebook page on 6 September about how other prisoners counted down her last days in prison. She states that Mahvash Shahriyari a 65 year old Baha’i prisoner of conscience serving a 20 year sentence left her a poem. Zhila added the woman’s heartbreaking hand written note on her page. The short poem speaks volumes:

“Saddened on arrival
Then get used to it and stay.
Jubilant as they leave and you
Sit here with a pen in hand
and
a poem
for nobody.”

2. Second Witness

A young woman who has experienced both Hor detention centre in central Tehran (Temporary centre managed by the revolutionary guards’ intelligence) and Evin prisons divides the judicial system in dealing with detainees into 3 phases:

“The first thing I remember of the moments after arrest were the threats and intimidation”

“Do you know what it means to instigate acts against national security?”
Do you know how many are in prisons for the same crime?

We will take you where no one can hear your voice.

Have you heard of ward 209?

Do you know what solitary confinement means?"

In fact, before I was taken into any court and charged with any crime they were telling me what the verdict was!

During the first 10 days after my arrest my family were kept in the dark. They searched hospitals, morgues and asked the police with no avail. Then they were contacted and surety was demanded for my release.

After I was taken to Hor I was left in a hall which had no furniture and I stood there for hours. I was told I had to wait until a judge decides what to do with me.

I do not remember the exact number of people but I am sure there were over 100 kept in small 6x9 meter cells. I met a very young Bahai girl who had been beaten badly and was in a bad condition. We spoke for a while but in the middle of the night she was removed from there.

I was kept at this centre for 8 days where detainees from various walks of life were also kept in the same room. Among them there were 2 students and a lawyer who was accused of insulting the regime and instigating acts against national security. We had to pay for our food as we were there temporarily and our names were not on the official list. We put our money together and managed to buy one meal a day; bread, milk and cheese. Others gave us a share of their food.

We were stripped searched several times while no one talked to us about our cases. We had to take all our clothes off and stand naked in front of women guards. They would go through our clothes with no explanation given to the nature of the search apart from causing humiliation.

One night a large group who had apparently been detained for possession of satellite dishes and were watching a forbidden programme were brought into the building. We could hear voices of worried families outside who wanted their loved ones released. Late that same night a number of us were taken to a van and ordered to lie down on the floor then it left the compound. We understood they were taking us to the Evin prison. There, we were forced to squat on the corridor, then strip searched and kicked into a room by a heavily-built man whom they called Haji Javad. Later, we were taken to a separate cell. I spent 38 days in solitary. I was interrogated 3 times, out of which once my interrogator was a woman. In each cell there was a toilet and a basin but we could take a shower every 10 days and since the water was cold (It was November) and I had a cold I did not take showers. We had to pay for cleaning materials. Drinking water was the lukewarm tap water and food was horrible. I had to sleep on the floor and cover myself with my coat which would not cover all my body. During this time I was once allowed to phone my father and ask him to prepare the bail. Apart from the once that I was taken to the court to hear my case where I saw Judge Hadad, I was not allowed out. The cell door was always locked. On several occasions an interrogator called Haj Hamid came to my cell (twice at midnight) and told me pack my stuff: ‘You are free to go.’ When I followed him to the corridor, he started shouting and insulting me with explicit sexual language demanding the reason why I was out of my cell!

The woman interrogator’s behaviour was very respectful. She told me that she worked in the Sepah’s (revolutionary guard) intelligent section. She advised me to read everything before signing and not to answer any questions if the accusations are not explained clearly. The two males who interrogated me for 2 hours kept threatening me and my family. They said they have also detained my father and he would be their guest for a long time. What they deman-
ded as bail was property in Tehran. No property from other cities was accepted which meant detainees from other cities than Tehran had to spend longer periods in prison.

However, I was finger-printed in Evin and charged ‘Against national security and insulting the sanctities of religion! Needless to say that I do not have a piece of paper in my possession to prove my guilt or innocence. Once, 4 years after my release when I required an approval from a government agency I was denied on charges of ‘against national security’. The second round when I was detained for shorter time I was again bombarded with being ‘a threat to my family’. The sense of guilt stayed with me for a long time.”

3. Third witness

A woman’s right activist Shahnaz had been arrested 3 times and collectively sentenced to 16 years and 6 months.

“Before I was arrested for the second time, I was continuously threatened by the intelligence. A man by the name Mirzaie would call me several times a day and demanded I go to the intelligence offices. One day, there was a knock at the door and when I opened 2 men were standing there and 3 others in a car nearby. I demanded an official court order for my arrest and I was about to close the door. They attacked me and carried me to a car where they threw me into it. There were 2 men and a woman in that car. The only people who witnessed my arrest were my ailing mother who was in bed and saw everything while shaking and my 8 year old daughter, Hesna who came out of her room, wailing and asking the men to let me go. After I was taken in, the men went to the house and confiscated my personal belongings. After the incident while I was in prison, my daughter became ill with high fever and cold sweat and would faint for hours and talk in her sleep.

The third time I was arrested, my house was surrounded by the intelligence personnel. Three men and 2 women attacked me and dragged me into a vehicle and drove to Sepeh’s (revolutionary guard) intelligence prison. Again all this happened in front of my ailing mother and wailing daughter. Later, when my daughter’s psychological problems increased they took her to a psychologist who prescribed anti-depressant medicine but warned she might become paralysed! “

Denial of prisoners’ basic rights

According to a report published on Kalameh website: “Prison authorities claim political prisoners go on leave from prison.” This is not true. For example, Mahvash Shahriari who is serving a 20 year sentence; so do Shabnam Madadzadeh and Kobra Banazadeh Amir Khizi. A number of these women have young children. Faran Hesami and Maryam Akbari’s children are about 3-7 years old.

There is no accurate number of prisoners of conscience as it is constantly fluctuating but according to Kalameh (1 September 2013) 29 are kept in Evin. Prisoners are kept in a small hall and are rarely allowed to have fresh air. This hall which is called Methadone hall lacks proper ventilation and prisoners are allowed out one hour every week and that is to go to a small courtyard.

Prisoners have no right to call their families. The only time they see a family member is during weekly visits on Sundays. Once they decided to collectively go to the prison director and put their demands to him.

Long-lasting effects of prison on women and children
Accounts of prisoners after release indicate that women who have experienced prison often suffer from various illnesses. They have little hope for future and feel depressed and lonely especially those who have left the country. Many suffer headaches due to blows on their head by the interrogators to get confessions. A woman who was released on bail believes that each detainee faces problems of her own. Quarrel among family members on the issues which results to the imprisonment of a member, fear of harassment and threats to other members, heavy bails and financial burden leaves further pressures on the detainees even during interrogations.

Searching children on arrival and unfriendly behaviour leaves a long-lasting effect on children. A woman explains that after 4 years out of Iran, her daughter is still having nervous seizures at night. Her weight is less than her peers as her appetite is not good. She misses her family back in Iran and cries a lot.

R.M another woman says her son starts sweating and trembles if he sees a police or even a police car.

M.B recounts that she met a woman who was detained as Bahá’í and she talked to her in prison in Shiraz. The woman said that she lived in Tehran and it was heart-breaking to see how she missed her daughter. The guards who were searching her daughter before letting her in were telling her to stop political activities because of her daughter. This woman talked about her daughter’s heart beat and silent crying. She was there for a month without visitation.

Behaviour of some guards in Evin had at some stage worsened to a point that prisoners threatened to stop seeing their families. The children and young girls and boys were often the targets of intrusive searches. The regime claims searches are necessary to combat drug smuggling. This is against the fact that drugs are plentiful in common criminal wards and not where prisoners of conscious are held.

Lack of security in prisons and detention centre

There is little or no guarantee on the security and safety of women who are taken away by a number of men often in the middle of the night. Apart from the women themselves, this leaves tremendous anxiety and fear among family members as for days or weeks they would be unable to get to know the whereabouts and situation of their loved one. There have been fatal incidents which confirm anxiety and fear. Such as the following incidents:

In 2007, Dr Zahra Baniyaqoob, 27 was walking with her fiancé in a park in the city of Hamadan. They were stopped by the patrol from the Moral and guidance and she was taken to the centre for questioning. She called her father in Tehran and asked him to come over to release her. Her body was delivered to her family 48 hours after detention. They claimed she had hanged herself. This claim had never been accepted by Zahra’s family who to this day seek justice for their daughter.

In 2003, Zahra Kazemi, an Iranian-Canadian journalist who was on an official mission to report on the students’ unrest, was arrested in front of the Evin prison. She was murdered while in custody. Dr Shahram Azam who worked at the ministry of defence at the time and who fled Iran to Canada later said that he examined her body. He found signs of extreme torture, rape, broken skull and many other signs of whipping and beatings. Nargess Mohammadi the vice president of Defenders of human rights center’s health deteriorated when she was detained and in prison. She was ill when released and had to cope with a nervous disorder and was paralysed and bed-ridden for months. She was arrested at the same night as her 3 years old daughter came back home from hospital after a surgery. Mrs Mohammadi was arrested in front of her twins at 12 in the night. The daughter who still had pain was crying and needed the mother for nursing. During the interrogations Mrs Mohammadi was, in addition to all other political accusations, accused
of being a very bad mother, since she was involved in human rights activities and was arrested although the children needed her. She never gained full health after her release.

**Common problems among prisons**

Lack of minimum comfort in living conditions, poor-quality food, psychological pressures, and continued interrogations of prisoners of conscience, lack of fresh air, natural light and crowded noisy atmosphere leaves long-lasting and permanent physical and psychological damages on the prisoners. The pressures intensify if the prisoner is exiled from their home town to a remote prison. The right to legal representation and the presence of lawyers are denied. Indeed, many lawyers are in prison themselves along with those they had represented. Medical care is little or non-existence and prisoners suffer chronic illnesses. Some have died shortly after release. Added to all this, sometimes prisoners of conscious are kept in the same wards as murderers, addicts and smugglers.

**Iran’s prisons and prisoners: present situation**

In Iran, ‘miscarriage of justice’ is systematically carried out and interpreted as ‘justice’. Men and women who come from the educated and intellectual circle of the Iranian society are systematically harassed, detained, interrogated, tortured and waste the best years of their lives behind bars without committing any crime. Persecution of the elite of the society has continued for decades. Those who advocate basic rights to freedom of thought and expression are sentenced on unsubstantiated and vague phrases such as ‘Enmity against God’, ‘Acts against national security’, ‘insulting the sanctities of religion’.

On close examination of cases from women prisoners’ of conscience, it could be understood that none had committed any crime apart from striving for the welfare of the Iranian society and improvement in the law and practice to create an equitable, just and fair society where all can benefit and live in peace.

We have indicated in our previous reports that in Iran, access to data and accurate information is difficult either from the state or the families. The Islamic Republic of Iran and its judiciary and prison system do not publish accurate information and data on the prisoners; number, nature of crime etc. Families and even prisoners themselves are in most cases reluctant to speak and hide their experiences from researchers and activists.

However, given the situation, this report was compiled with the effort of a number of dedicated people both inside and outside the country and information in it is as accurate as it possibly can be.

**We urge the Human Rights Council to demand that:**

The Islamic Republic of Iran to act on two levels:

- Firstly, improvements on the facilities to bring them in line with national prison regulations and international standards. These include: proper ventilation, air conditioning, warming system in the wards. Access to regular daily fresh air and exercise. Access to clean showers and toilets and proper hygiene. Proper nutritious food. Access to telephone and regular visitations. Regular leave to visit family especially mothers with young children. Iran is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Right of Child and must comply with its recommendations.

- In the short term however, we urge the Human Rights Council to consider the issues raised in this report as grave abuse of women’s human rights particularly those of prisoners of conscience and common criminals.

- Secondly, we urge Iran to allow UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, Dr Ahmed Shaheed to visit Iran, inspect prisons and interview pri-
soners and submit his report to the Human Rights Council.

-Iran to review the cases of all prisoners of conscious and arrange for their immediate release.

-Furthermore, we urge the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide grounds for Iran to join the CEDAW and comply with its contents which are basically equal rights for women in all areas of private and public life. Eradication of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls in law and practice .

Appendix

List of women prisoners of conscious in Iran. Photos were not available for all.

1. Atiyeh Anvari

Member of the Baha’i community. On 22nd May 2012, she was arrested in Isfahan by the Intelligence agents, who raided and searched her home and confiscated some of her personal belongings.

2. Bahareh Hedayat

Bahareh Hedayat, born in Tehran in 1981. She was a student of Economic Science. The 28th branch of the Revolutionary Court sentenced her to nine and half year’s jail, two years of which for participation in women’s peaceful protests at Haft Tir Square in June 2006.

3. Besmeh Al-Jabour

She is an Iraqi citizen, member of the Commerce ministry of Iraq and manager of Al-Ras-hid hotel in Baghdad. She is being held in 209 ward of Evin prison. Her emotional and physical situation is alarming. She was accused of spying and sentenced to 5 years’ imprisonment. She is not allowed to contact her children or any family members and was not allowed to meet Iraq’s ambassador in Tehran.

4. Behnaz Zaker

She was arrested at the Airport before a scheduled flight to Sweden at 2012 and kept in prison in undetermined circumstance. She is still in 209 section of Evin prison without any trial.

5. Farah Vazehan

Farah Vazehan (age 50), was arrested shortly after Iran’s 2009 street protests. She, along with her family members, were taken to 209 sections at Evin Prison. Judge Salavati at Branch 15 of Tehran’s Revolutionary Court originally sentenced her to death due to allegations of “Taking part in street protests” and “Enmity with God by cooperating with MJO, group opposing the government.” This sentence was later overthrown by the country’s Supreme Court to 17 years of imprisonment.
6. Fariba Kamal Abadi

Fariba Kamalabadi, a Baha’i prisoner who was an administrator at “Yaran-e Iran”, a Baha’i organization. She has been kept behind bars since her arrest in 2006. Fariba was handed a 20-year prison sentence of which she has served 5 years without her right to furlough.

7. Faran Hesami

Faran Hesami, female Baha’i and an online Baha’i university professor. She is 38 years old, mother of a 3 year old child, a graduate of university of Ottawa, Canada she was arrested with her husband Kamran Rahimian on 13th September 2011. Judge Salavati, at the 15th branch of the revolutionary court prosecuted them each to 4 years imprisonment.

8. Hanieh Farshi Shotorban

Haniye Farshi, 38 years old, was arrested in June 2011. and sentenced to 7 years imprisonment by "Moghidee” judge of Branch 28 Revolutionary Court in April 2012. She was accused of “agitating public opinion by spreading lies and insulting venerable issues and insulting the leader”, by analyzing and criticizing religious principles. She was also interrogated about her activities on the Facebook.

9. Hakimeh Shokri

On 5th December 2010 Hakimeh was arrested along with two others (Neda Mostaghim and Mehdi Ramezani) during a gathering of the Mourning Mothers. The trial was held on 10th of March 2011 by Judge Moghidee. Hakimeh and the other two individuals were charged with “espionage” and “acting against national security”, and were sentenced to three years imprisonment.

10. Zjila Karamzadeh Makvandi

Jila Karamzadeh Makvandi, a poet and member of the Laleh Mourning Mothers was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment in February 2011. During her second trial the sentence was reduced to 2 years in jail and 2 years suspended jail effective in a period of 5 years.

11. ZJinus Nourani

She is a Baha’i citizen from city of Semnan. She was arrested by agents of intelligence ministry because of being a Baha’I Zjinus was sentenced to 1 year imprisonment.

12. Kobra Banazadeh Amirkhizi

Kobra Banazadeh Amirkhizi, 60 years old political prisoner. She is now imprisoned in women's ward of Evin prison. She has been denied medical attention despite being in critically ill. Kobra was arrested at Tehran International Airport when she was about to fly to Iraq to meet her brother in January 2009 and was sentenced by Judge Moghidee to 5 years imprisonment.

13. Kefayat Malek Mohamadi

Kefayat Malek Mohamadi, 65 years old was arrested at Mehr Abad Airport in year 2009 while she was heading to Iraq to visit her relatives. She was sentenced by Judge Moghidee to 5 years in jail under the false charges of acting against the national security.

14. Leva Khanjani:

Leva, a Baha’I citizen was arrested on 3 January 2010 and released on bail 1 March 2010. On 25 August 2012, she reported to Evin prison to begin serving her 2 year sentence.
15. Manijeh Najm Araghi

Manijeh Najm Araghi is a writer and the secretary of the Writers’ Association of Iran. She was rearrested after awhile and was charged for being a member of the Writers’ Association of Iran, distributing the announcements of Mohammad Mokhtari and Mohammad Jafar Pouyande, two writers brutally killed by the regime. She was sentenced to 1 year in jail and is currently at Evin Prison.

16. Manijeh Nasrollahi

Manijeh Nasrollahi was sentenced to 3 years in prison. She was charged with practicing Baha’i faith and attempting to spread the Baha’i faith. She has served two years of her prison term.

17. Maryam Akbari Monfared

Maryam Akbari Monfared has been arrested by the security police who invaded her house during the protests following the disputed presidential election in 2009. She has been sentenced to 15 years imprisonment at Rajaei Shahr by the District 15th of revolutionary court. She is mother of 3 children. Several members of her family were political activists and prisoners of during 1980’s and 4 of them have been executed.

18. Mahsa Amrabadi

Mahsa Amrabadi, journalist, member of editorial committee of the banned Etemad Newspaper. She has been accused of agitating against the regime through interviews and reports. She was sentenced to 2 years and is at the women’s ward of Evin prison. She has been also sentenced to 4 years suspended imprisonment.

19. Maryam Jalili

Maryam Jalili, new convert to Christianity has been sentenced to 2.5 years imprisonment due to converting to Christianity.

20. Mahvash Shahriari – Sabet

Mahvash Shahriari – Sabet, 60 years old, is one of the seven Bahai leaders arrested 5 years ago. After two years of undetermined status and confinement at section 209 of Evin Prison, she was sentenced to 20 years in jail. This sentence was confirmed during her second trial. In spite of her critical health condition, prosecutors have denied her temporarily leave to meet her family and seek medical treatment. She has spent six month in solitary confinement.

21. Maasoumeh Yavari,

Maasoumeh Yavari, housewife, mother of 2 children, ages 4 and 11. She was a protestor against the fraudulent presidential elections and has been sentenced in Branch 28 of the Revolution Court to seven years prison in the Rajaee Shahr Prison.

22. Mitra Zahmati

Mitra is a new convert to Christianity and was arrested on May 2011 and currently is kept in ward 209 section of the Evin prison. She has spend several month of her prison time in sporadic prison cells in solitary confinement. She had been sentenced to 2.5 years prison which was confirmed by the appeal court as well.

23. Mitra Azmayandeh

She is 17 years old a Bahai citizen from the city of Esfehan. She was arrested on June 3rd of 2011 by agents of intelligence ministry and is currently being held in prison.
24. Negar Malekzadeh

Negar Malekzadeh was arrested on 2 April 2012 in Mashhad and taken to undisclosed location. Her arrest came after she had co-organized an exhibition for a group of young Bahá’ís. The exhibition was held to raise funds for disadvantaged children.

25. Nahid Ghadiri

Nahid is a Bahá’í citizen who had been arrested twice, once on 4 August 2005 and again on 16 March 2010. She is serving a 10 years sentence under the conviction of “Acting against the national security by being involved in the Bahá’í community.”

26. Neda Majidi

Neda was arrested on 17 December 2012 in Sangesar, Semnan, with her nine month old baby, “Sorena” and is currently being held in prison to serve 6 months term.

27. Nasim Soltan Beigy

Nasim Soltan Beigy, former student activist at University of Allame Tabatabaie. In November 2010, she was sentenced by the revolutionary court to 1 year suspended sentence for agitating against the regime and 3 years for “acting against national security”.

28. Nazanin Khosravani

She is a reformist journalist. Nazanin Khosravani worked at the political desks of reformist newspapers including Norooz, Kargozaran, and Sarmayeh. Nazanin was arrested on 3 November 2010 and sentenced to six years in prison on charges at branch 26 of Tehran’s Revolutionary Court by judge Pir Abbasi on charges of “Assembly and collusion for acting against national security,” and “propagating against the regime”.

29. Nasrin Sotoudeh

Nasrin Sotoudeh, human rights lawyer was arrested in September 2010 on charges of spreading propaganda and conspiring to harm the state security and was imprisoned in Spetmeber 2011. She was sentenced to 11 years in prison, barred from practice and leaving the country for 20 years. An appeals court later reduced Sotoudeh’s sentence was reduced to six years, and the ban to practice and travel to ten years. She is currently serving her sentence.

30. Naghmeh Zabihian

Naghmeh was one of the Bahá’ís arrested by the intelligence agents on 17 February 2012, while participating in a handicraft exhibition held to raise funds for disadvantaged children. She has been in prison ever since.

31. Noushin Khadem

Teacher at the Bahá’í online University founded in 1987 for the Bahá’í children were banned from higher education. She had been sentenced to 4 years of prison at Evin.

32. Reyhaneh Haaj Ebrahim Dabbagh

Reyhaneh Haaj Ebrahim Dabbagh, was arrested on January 2009 and sentenced to death by the revolutionary court for participating in demonstrations and sending pictures and films from demonstrations abroad. Her conviction was later reduced to 15 years imprisonment at the Rajaei shahr prison.

33. Rozita Vaseqi

Rozita had been arrested twice, once on 4 August 2005 and once on 16 March 2010. She has now been sentenced to 5 years imprisonment and is currently serving her term in prison in Mashhad.
34. Shabnam Madad Zadeh

Shabnam Madad Zadeh, was the Vice President of the “Daftare Tahkim Vahdat” (a student organization) and a member of the Islamic Association of Karaj University. She was sentenced by Judge Moghisee to 5 years in jail to be spent at Rajai Shahr Prison. She is currently at Evin Prison.

35. Shidrokh Firoozian

Shidrokh Firoozian is a member of the Baha’I community was arrested on 12 Feb 2013 in Semanan by Intelligence agents at her home.

36. Sadighe Moradi

Sadighe Moradi, 51 years old, is one of the survivors of the 1980’s political prisoners’ massacre in Iran. She was arrested by the revolutionary guards and sent to solitary confinement, where she was undergone bodily and psychological tortures. She was under constant pressure to participate in a TV confession program. She was finally sentenced to 10 years in jail and has been exiled to Gohar Dasht.

37. Sanaz Tafazoli

Sanaz was arrested in Mashhad on 27 June 2011. Her home was searched by the authorities on the same day and personal items such as computer, Bahá’í books, CDs were confiscated. She was sentenced to 6 month in jail.

38. Soghra Gholam Nejhad

She is 48 years old and in solitary confinement in the 209 ward. She had been questioned under as two of her children are in Ashraf camp which belong to the MKO.

39. Sima Eshraqi

A member of the Baha’I community she has been sentenced on October 24, 2010 to 5 years
imprisonment on charges of “Propagating against government and acting against national security”. She is currently serving her term in prison in Vakil Abad Mashhad

40. Shiva Nazar Ahari

Shiva Nazar Ahari, (born 1984), a human rights activist. At the 26th branch of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of the Tehran, she was charged with „attempts to deface the Islamic government”, „assembly with intention of conspiring against the Islamic government”, „disrupting the public order” and ‘moharebeh’ or „waging war against God”. Shiva Nazar Ahari appeared at Evin on September 8, 2012, to serve a 4-year prison sentence

41. Sarah Mahboubi

Sarah Mahboubi is a Baha’i citizen which was prevented from going to school. She went to Sari prison to spend her 10 month jail time. Based on the news from weblog of „Campaign against education discrimination”, she was convicted to 10 month jail time which was approved by appeal court. One of her so-called felony was being a member of Facebook.

42. Samin Ehsani

Samin Ehsani, a Baha’i activist for children’s rights, has been sentenced to 5 years in prison. She was charged with “Propaganda against the regime, acting against national security, and de facto membership of the Baha’i community.” She was teaching and assisting Afghan children who are excluded from education in Iran. She was detained on August 17, 2011, and taken to the Evin Prison in Tehran.

43. Taraneh Torabi

She is a Baha’i from Semnan who was arrested on 22 September 2012 with her three month old baby and was taken to prison to begin serving her sentence. Taraneh Torabi’s sentence of 5 years and 10 months was reduced to 2.5 years on appeal. She is now serving her sentence with her infant son, Barman. Owing to the unsuitable and unhygienic condition of the prison, her son has started having respiratory problems.

44. Zahra Rahnavard

Zahra Rahnavard (Born in 1945), a Iranian writer, journalist, and a committed artist. She holds doctorate degrees in political science and sculpture. She is the former Dean of Alzahra University for women. Mrs. Rahnavard and her husband, Mir Hossein Mousavi, are currently held under house arrest.

45. Zohreh Nikayin (Tebyanian)

She is a Baha’i from Semnan who was arrested on 22 September 2012 with her 7 month old baby and was taken to prison to begin serving her sentence. Her long sentence has been reduced to 23 months. Due to the unhealthy conditions in prison, the baby was taken ill and ultimately taken out of prison.

46. Zahra (Mahbubeh) Mansuori

Age 60, Zahra was arrested on October 2011 and sentenced to 5 years in prison by Tehran’s Revolutionary Court. She was charged with having family ties with the opposition and also “Acting against the national security”. Because of her illnesses (cancer) her second trial her sentence was modified to 2 years in jail and 5 years suspended jail effective in a period of 5 years.

She has several illnesses and because of lack of medical care in prison this has got worse and the cancer has returned. Based on medical records and doctor’s advice, she has to be hospitalized outside prison she has been denied medical attention despite being in critical condition.
47. Anisa Fanaeian

Anisa Fanaeian, a Baha’i resident in Semnan was summoned to present herself to the Semnan prison on 19 January 2013 to serving the sentence of 22 months given to her. It has to be mentioned that her mother, Sahba Rezvani (Fanaeian) recently released from prison after serving a three years jail. Anisa Fanaeian was sentenced by Judge “Eien Alkmal” in Revolutionary Court in Semnan on charges of “Propaganda and belief in the Baha’i Faith” for 4 years and 4 months. Her conviction was later reduced to 22 months imprisonment.

48. Tina Mohebati

Tina Mohebati a 19 year old Baha’i was arrested on the evening of 23 October 2012 by the security forces in the city of Gorgan. Tina Mohebati was waiting at the bus station to travel to Tehran. Her whereabouts are unknown.

Unlawful detention of women from Kurdish region:

In the past few years, a number of young women have been arrested by the security forces on various charges:

Negin Tayebi

Student activist was arrested in August 2012 and transferred to Kermanshah’s Dizelabad prison.

Adibeh Kalantari

Student activist was arrested in July 2012 and transferred to Dizelabad prison.

Three Kurdish women

They lived in Meshad in the north east of country, Mahboubeh Khabooshani-Behnaz Rezazadeh and Mina Khabooshan were arrested in October 2012 and transferred to Kermanshah.

A teenager, ‘Periya. A.’

She (14) was identified by FATA the internet police, detained and taken to an unknown location and threatened to be dismissed from school if she continued her activities on the internet. Periya had written notes regarding the current social problems.

Safieh Sadeghi

She (23) was detained in October 2010. The revolutionary court in the city of Sanandaj sentenced her to 15 years imprisonment on charges of cooperation with Kurdish opposition groups.