



## Iran - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 4 January 2012

### Information on the current security situation

In February 2011, the *United States Department of State* notes that:

“The Islamic Republic of Iran has faced armed opposition from a number of groups, including the Mujahideen-e Khalq (added to the U.S. Government’s Foreign Terrorist Organizations list in 1999), the People’s Fedayeen, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (added to the U.S. Government’s Foreign Terrorist Organizations list in 2009), and the Baluchi group Jundallah (added to the U.S. Government’s Foreign Terrorist Organizations list in 2010).” (United States Department of State (17 February 2011) *Background Note: Iran*)

The *United States Department of State* in a report issued in April 2011 reviewing events of 2010, notes:

“The government severely limited citizens’ right to peacefully change their government through free and fair elections, and it continued a campaign of postelection violence and intimidation. The government committed extrajudicial killings and executed persons for criminal convictions as juveniles and through unfair trials, sometimes in group executions. Security forces under the government’s control committed acts of politically motivated violence and repression, including torture, beatings, and rape. The government administered severe officially sanctioned punishments, including amputation and flogging. Vigilante groups with ties to the government, such as Basij militia, also committed acts of violence.” (United States Department of State (8 April 2011) *2010 Human Rights Report: Iran*, Introduction)

A report issued in August 2011 by *Human Rights Watch* states:

“As in years past, the government, including the judiciary, has failed to hold accountable officials responsible for committing serious human rights violations. There have been no comprehensive or transparent investigations into government repression, including the killings of demonstrators and custodial deaths of detainees.” (Human Rights Watch (29 August 2011) *Human Rights Issues Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran, Submitted by Human Rights Watch to the UN Human Rights Committee on the occasion of its Pre-Sessional Review of Iran*, p.2)

*Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* in September 2011 notes:

“Afghan officials say fighting erupted in western Afghanistan when Iranian security forces crossed the border and opened fire on Afghan border guards, RFE/RL’s Radio Free Afghanistan reports.” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (14 September 2011) *Afghan, Iranian Forces Clash On Border*)

A report published in September 2011 by *Agence France Presse* states:

“Iran has yet to decide on a call by Kurdish rebels for a ceasefire in a major offensive it launched along the Iraqi border last week, the elite Revolutionary Guards said on Monday. The Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK) announced earlier it would observe a truce from Monday and called on Iran to reciprocate to prevent further bloodshed.” (Agence France Presse (6 September 2011) *Iran 'undecided' on Kurdish rebel ceasefire*)

This article also points out:

“PJAK rebels have clashed repeatedly with Iranian forces in recent years, drawing retaliatory bombing of their rear-bases in mountainous border districts of Iraqi Kurdistan.” (ibid)

In October 2011 a report published by the *United States Congressional Research Service* notes that:

“Some groups have been committed to the replacement of the regime virtually since its inception, and have used, or are still using, violence to achieve their objectives. Their linkages to the Green Movement are tenuous, if present at all, and some indications suggest these movements want to dominate any coalition that might topple the regime.” (United States Congressional Research Service (26 October 2011) *Iran: U.S. Concerns and Policy Responses*, p.17)

This report also points out that:

“Some armed groups are operating in Iran’s border areas, and are generally composed of ethnic or religious minorities. These groups are not known to be cooperating with the mostly Persian members of the Green Movement.” (ibid, p.20)

In November 2011 *BBC News* states:

“Seventeen soldiers have been killed in an explosion at a military base near Iran's capital Tehran, officials say. The blast occurred when weapons were being moved inside a Revolutionary Guards depot, a spokesman for the elite unit told state TV.” (BBC News (12 November 2011) *Iran explosion at Revolutionary Guards military base*)

This report also states:

“There have been occasional unexplained explosions in Iran before.” (ibid).

A document released in November 2011 by the *United Nations Human Rights Committee* notes:

“The Committee continues to be deeply concerned about the extremely high and increasing number of death sentences pronounced and carried out in the State party, the wide range and often vague definition of offences for which the death penalty is applied, and the large number of capital crimes and execution methods. The Committee is also concerned about the continued use of public executions, as well as stoning, as a method of execution. It also notes with concern the high rate of State executions in ethnic minority areas.” (United Nations Human Rights Committee (29 November 2011) *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article*

*40 of the Covenant: Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee - Islamic Republic of Iran, p.3).*

This document also states:

“The Committee is concerned that there has not been a full, impartial and independent investigation into allegations of killings, torture and other ill-treatment during and following the 12 June 2009 presidential elections, and that the high-level officials responsible have not been held accountable.” (ibid, p.4)

In December 2011 a paper produced by the *International Federation for Human Rights* states:

“The dimensions of gross human rights violations in Iran are expanding beyond imagination in every possible direction. The list is very long: torture and other cruel and inhuman punishments, arbitrary and often very long pre-trial detentions and extremely non-standard and unfair trials frequently based on vaguely worded charges often even used to issue and implement death sentences, execution of dissidents and juveniles and the use of death penalty for non-serious offences, growing discrimination against women and women's rights defenders, as well as against all religious minorities and groups, and ethnic communities, suppression of all kinds of dissent and opposition, extremely heavy-handed crackdown on political activists and organisations of all hues and civil society institutions, increasing number of political prisoners and the massive pressures on them, denial of freedoms of assembly, association, expression and press, censorship of books and blocking of various websites and blogs.” (International Federation for Human Rights (8 December 2011) *Iran: Suppression of freedom, prison, torture, execution... A state policy of repression*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

## **Sources Consulted**

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