



Iran

Iran

15 February 2011

Brutal suppression of peaceful protesters requires the international community to revisit its policy

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Iranian League for Defence of Human Rights (LDDHI) are alarmed at the extent of violence and repression of the state security forces and police against peaceful demonstrators gathering in several Iranian cities, mainly the capital Tehran, Isfahan, Mashhad, Shiraz, and other large cities yesterday. This repression is yet another signal to the international community to revisit its policy in support of the Iranian civil society.

While official police reports on yesterday's demonstrations claimed 150 people had been arrested, two persons killed and several injured, according to our information, the number of detainees in the capital Tehran alone is at least ten times that figure. In addition, scores of activists had been detained in the days leading to the 14th February protests. Hundreds of protesters have been badly injured as a result of beatings by plain-cloths agents, baton charges and tear gas attacks by the police.

Beyond repressions in the street, calls for the leaders of the opposition to be executed were echoed throughout the Parliament, when 223 of its 290 members signed a petition today calling for the highest possible punishment (i.e. the death penalty) for those leaders. Since the Presidential Election of June 2009: Tens of peaceful protesters have been killed in the streets or under torture in custody; several prisoners of conscience have been executed for participating in the peaceful protests or disseminating information about them; hundreds of protesters, journalists, writers, film-makers, women's rights and human rights activists, lawyers and others have been arrested, and a number of them have been convicted in show trials on trumped up charges and sentenced to long-term imprisonment and long-term ban on professional and public activities; hundreds of others have fled the country and taken refuge abroad; several newspapers and publications have been closed down; several political organisations have been banned.

Vice-president of FIDH and President of the Iranian League for the Defence of Human Rights, Karim Lahidji said:

"By again brutally suppressing peaceful protesters, the Iranian authorities pursue their repression. The international community must now act coherently with its mobilisation in Egypt and Tunisia, and use its best leverages in support of the Iranian civil society, notably in, supporting a resolution condemning the escalation of the situation and establishing a special rapporteur on human rights in Iran; urging private enterprises and media organisations to enable free all telephone, television, wire and satellite communications within, to and from Iran, in accordance with freedom of speech; sanctioning a list of top level officials and key human rights offenders, through the freezing of their assets and visa bans."

<http://www.fidh.org/Brutal-suppression-of-peaceful-protesters>