

## STRONG CONDEMNATION OF THE REPRESSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN IRAN

Since its establishment in 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran has never seen a bolder challenge than the current protests sweeping across Iran started by schoolchildren and young people during the end of 2022.

The brutality through which the Iranian regime wanted to stop the force of the youth met bravery and the unbreakable will of young people who desire freedom for their country, a country which at present is being subjected to the rule of extremists who use the country's resources to promote terrorism all around the world<sup>1</sup>.

The siege of several university campuses serve as a reminder that the regime is ready to use any means necessary against the Iranian protestors, including torture<sup>2</sup> and executions<sup>3</sup>. The death in police custody of Mahsa Amini — who had been arrested three days earlier for failing to follow strict rules on head coverings<sup>4</sup>— was just the last straw for a people fed up with repression.

Iranian authorities' are also enforcing a strict control of information and independent reporting which makes the number and identities of those killed hard to verify but it is clear that the victims are young men, women, even children who have been shot, while the number of confirmed victims are by the hundreds (thus, the true number of figures may be significantly higher). The Iranian regime is not allowing international organisations to visit the country and carry out proper verification procedures in an attempt to hide its hideous crimes<sup>5</sup>.

The Iranians' peaceful protestors seek only greater freedom, control over the institutions that govern them and, ultimately, to democratise the country. However, the Iranian regime refuses to allow its citizens to choose their own destiny and to allow public institutions to belong to the Iranian people —not to the current extremist elite.

This is a point of no return for the regime in Tehran. Europe must not allow such flagrant violations of fundamental human rights and human dignity to go unpunished<sup>6</sup>. We need to support the protestors, especially the women and girls of Iran who have stood up to the regime.

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<sup>1</sup> “Despite lethal repression, Iran's protests continue”, The Economist, 12 October, 2022. From: <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2022/10/12/despite-lethal-repression-irans-protests-continue>

<sup>2</sup> “Iran protests: Family finds signs of torture on man's exhumed body”, BBC, 19 October, 2022. From: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-64025754> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-64025754>

<sup>3</sup> “Iran: Quash death sentences of young protesters subjected to gruesome torture”, Amnesty International, 27 January 2023. From: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/01/iran-quash-death-sentences-of-young-protesters-subjected-to-gruesome-torture/>

<sup>4</sup> “BBC identifies young people killed in Iran's protests”, BBC, 24 October 2022. From: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-63242100>

<sup>5</sup> “For all its brutality, the Iranian regime cannot stop the force of youth: UN expert”, Arab News, 28 October, 2022. From: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2189721/middle-east> <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2189721/middle-east>

<sup>6</sup> “Iran: Brute Force Used in Crackdown on Dissent”, 12 January 2023. From: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/12/iran-brute-force-used-crackdown-dissent>

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We must also bear in mind that the current Iranian regime, apart from promoting terrorism<sup>7</sup>, is one of the greatest allies of authoritarian dictatorships which massacre their own population like Venezuela or provides the means to commit crimes against humanity in Ukraine<sup>8</sup>.

Europe must act now. The Iranian regime must be stopped.

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<sup>7</sup> "Country Reports on Terrorism 2019: Iran", Bureau of Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State. From: <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/iran/>

<sup>8</sup> "Russia will likely continue drone attacks on civilian targets in Ukraine trying to break the Ukrainian will to fight", Euromaidan press, 1 January 2023. From: <https://euromaidanpress.com/2023/01/01/russia-will-likely-continue-drone-attacks-on-civilian-targets-in-ukraine-trying-to-break-the-ukrainian-will-to-fight-isw/>