



PEACE NEGOTIATIONS
POST-CONFLICT CONSTITUTIONS
WAR CRIMES PROSECUTION

PILPG Circle of Former Ambassadors to the UN Human Rights Council Statement in Response to the Human Rights Situation in Iran

The Public International Law & Policy Group's Circle of Former Ambassadors to the UN Human Rights Council joins worldwide support for, and admiration of, women and protesters of all genders in Iran for their courageous defiance against the Iranian regime's systematic oppression of women and girls. The Circle condemns the Iranian regime's violent crackdown on peaceful protests. It expresses deep concern about reports of continued suppression of the rights to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and other human rights across the country.

The tragic death in custody of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini on September 16, three days after her arrest by the morality police for allegedly violating Iran's rules requiring women to wear a hijab, sparked outrage across the country and the world. For decades, Iran's religious laws and policies related to personal status, employment, and dress code have discriminated against women, depriving them of their freedom of choice.

The Circle is closely following developments as Iranians across the country have bravely taken to the streets to demonstrate, demanding accountability and justice for the death of Mahsa Amini, as well as democracy and their fundamental rights and freedoms to be guaranteed. We are equally dismayed by the lack of transparent investigation in the case of 16-year-old Nika Shahkarami, whose family learned she was dead more than a week after she disappeared during protests on September 20.

Calls to the Iranian government for accountability and human rights guarantees have gone unheard in the past. This reflects the persistent and institutional impunity for serious human rights violations and judicial harassment of civil society activists, human rights defenders, lawyers, artists, journalists, and women's movement activists. In addition, Iran persistently rejects most of the UN Human Rights Council member states' recommendations concerning ratifying core human rights treaties, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT).

As a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Iran must ensure the equal enjoyment of all civil and political rights. Contrary to that, a growing number of reports describe the disproportionate, violent, and lethal response of Iranian authorities to the protests, including alleged arbitrary arrests and detentions, gender-based and sexual violence, excessive use of force, torture, and enforced disappearance. According to Iran Human Rights, at least 277 protesters have been killed since September 16. Several thousand are reportedly arrested and may now face public trial.

Remaining deeply invested in issues of justice and accountability, the Circle reiterates concerns of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) over Iranian officials' refusal to be held accountable and the UN Secretary-General's [call](#) to security forces to "refrain from using unnecessary and disproportionate force" against peaceful protestors to avoid further escalation.

The international community should stand united in solidarity with protesters in Iran as the violent crackdown continues. Political leaders and international and regional human rights organizations must continue to unambiguously respond to and condemn repression, violent action, and persistent impunity of severe human rights violations in Iran.

In light of the above, the PILPG Circle of Former Ambassadors to the UN Human Rights Council:

- Reiterates the grave concern of OHCHR, the UN Secretary-General, Special Procedures, UN Women, and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and welcomes all statements condemning the actions of the Iranian regime. The Circle joins the UN human rights experts' [call](#) for a prompt, independent, and impartial investigation into Mahsa Amini's death to ensure accountability and justice. The Circle calls for the responsibility of the prosecutor and authorities to reveal the full investigation into the death of Nika Shahkarami and all other innocent women and men detained and tortured by Iranian security forces.
- Notes with approval the efforts of the US, Canada, UK, and European Union to address the situation in Iran by also imposing targeted sanctions and restrictive measures against Iranian officials engaged in the violent

suppression of peaceful protests and the shutdown of internet access, including members of the morality police.

- Strongly supports [calls](#) for removing Iran from the UN Women - Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), requesting the member states of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to take appropriate action. There should be no place on the principal body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women for a state that is so violently repressing women's rights.
- Calls upon the newly appointed UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk, to take the lead in initiating prompt action to address the human rights situation in Iran and to respond to the [call](#) of 43 organizations, as well as [UN human rights experts](#) to the member states of the UN Human Rights Council "to hold a Special Session as a matter of urgency given the gravity of crimes under international law."
- Encourages UN Human Rights Council members to consider using a Special Session to agree on establishing independent investigative reporting and robust accountability monitoring mechanisms in the case of recent brutal human rights violations in Iran.

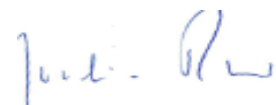
Women, youth, and citizens protesting in Iran, whose bravery warrants respect and solidarity from the world, have already accomplished a great deal by creating a genuine movement for change. The PILPG Circle of Former Ambassadors to the UN Human Rights Council affirms its support for the peaceful protests in Iran and Iranian women's demands for accountability, justice, and human rights for all. The rights to peaceful protest, assembly, and freedom of expression must be guaranteed at all times. Responsibility for serious human rights violations, justice for all affected people, and an end to impunity must be prioritized.

November 3, 2022

Names

Signatures

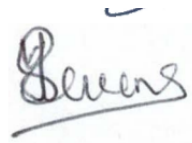
Joachim Rucker
Former Ambassador of Germany



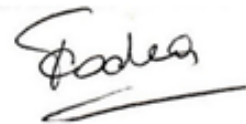
Keith Harper
Former Ambassador of the United States of America



Yvette Stevens
Former Ambassador of Sierra Leone



Filloreta Kodra
Former Ambassador of Albania



Tudor Ulianovschi
Former Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova

Tudor Ulianovschi

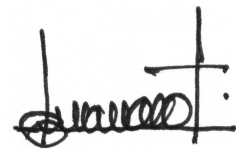
Amanda Ellis
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Vojislav Suc
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Jorge Lomonaco
Former Ambassador of Mexico



Zorica Maric Djordjevic
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