



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/HRC/1/NGO/43
28 June 2006

ENGLISH ONLY

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
First session
Agenda item 4

**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 60/251
OF 15 MARCH 2006 ENTITLED “HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL”**

**Written statement* submitted by the International Federation for the Protection of
the Rights of Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic & Other Minorities, a non-governmental
organization on the Roster**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is
circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 June 2006]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the
submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Statement on Civil and Political Rights

Southern Cameroons

In 1993 it was requested of the Government of Cameroon to authorise the UN Special Rapporteur (SR) on Torture to conduct a fact-finding mission under his mandate. The mission took place from 12 to 20 May 1999, during which the SR, Sir Nigel Rodley, collected first-hand information indicating that torture was widespread and repeatedly used indiscriminately against people in arrest in Cameroon. Sir Rodley subsequently made a series of recommendations to the Government on measures to be adopted in order to comply with commitments to putting an end to torture and other ill-treatment (E/CN.4/2000/9/Add.2).¹

Whilst appreciative of cooperation from the Government of Cameroon, the SR noted with concern that despite the fact that Cameroonian law criminalises torture, reflecting the definition of torture contained in article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which the State is a party, it was “clear from the mission that the law is flagrantly disregarded by police and gendarmerie officials.”²

In his report, the SR recommended that; “the highest political authorities should proclaim in public statements and internal governmental instructions that torture and other ill-treatment committed by public officials will not be tolerated”; “[t]he gendarmerie and police should establish special services designed to investigate complaints of, and to weed out, serious wrongdoing, such as torture”; and “the Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and on the independence of judges and lawyers should be invited to visit the country.”³

At its 31st Session (November 2003), the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) considered and welcomed the third periodic report of Cameroon (CAT/C/CR/31/6), whilst adopting several critical conclusions and recommendations. CAT voiced particular alarm at the seemingly widespread practice of torture in Cameroon, and was “troubled by the sharp contradictions between consistent allegations of serious violations of the Convention and the information provided by the State party.”⁴ In particular the Committee noted with concern; reports of the systematic use of torture in police and gendarmerie stations after arrest; reports of torture, ill-treatment and arbitrary detention; and the reluctance of victims or their relatives to lodge complaints, through ignorance, distrust or fear of reprisals.⁵

On 11 November 2005, Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC) Vice Chairman Nfor Ngala Nfor and Bui County Chairman Stephen Kongso were detained and held incommunicado for several weeks. On 07 May 2006 reports detail a series of arbitrary arrests in the area of Southern Cameroons; Mr Humphrey Mbinglo and twenty other SCNC members were arrested during a press briefing and held for a month under detention at

¹ [http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2000.9.Add.2.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2000.9.Add.2.En?Opendocument)

² [http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2000.9.Add.2.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2000.9.Add.2.En?Opendocument)

³ “Section B: Recommendations”

[http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2000.9.Add.2.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2000.9.Add.2.En?Opendocument)

⁴ <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/03160cd35c14bdd0c1256e68003617ac?Opendocument>

⁵ <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/03160cd35c14bdd0c1256e68003617ac?Opendocument>

Bamenda Central Prison without criminal charges and in poor, inhumane conditions.⁶ The international community should be greatly alarmed at the fact that arbitrary arrests and unjust treatment of SCNC members continues unabated.

In light of the CAT conclusions and recommendations and further to recent alarming reports of arbitrary arrests and detention of the leaders and members of the SCNC, the Human Rights Council is urged to

call upon Cameroon to provide further information in follow-up on the recommendations made by the SR and the CAT in particular in terms of successful actions taken to end arbitrary detention; torture, ill-treatment in police and gendarmerie stations and prisons; and work undertaken to ensure the protection of victims and witnesses against any intimidation or ill-treatment; and

request that the Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and on the independence of judges and lawyers be invited to visit Cameroon.

Balochistan

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has expressed its concern at the increasing number of reported disappearances and systematic torture at the hands of security and intelligence agencies, stating that in particular, a number of such reports from Balochistan “reflected a distinct pattern of persecution”, despite being largely inaccessible to national media and human rights monitors.⁷

In December 2005 and January 2006 HRCP sent a fact-finding mission to parts of Balochistan to document and report on the human rights situation. In both Dear Bugti and the Kohlu area, the mission received reports of indiscriminate bombing and that action by armed forces had led to deaths and injuries among civilians, including women and children.⁸

Many complained about the heavy deployment of paramilitary forces in the area and use of excessive force, and there were alarming reports of summary executions. Furthermore, across Balochistan the HRCP found widespread instances of ‘disappearances’ and of torture inflicted upon people held in custody.

In recent months, Iranian authorities have stepped up extrajudicial detentions and executions in the Balochistan province, by many believed to be a response to a spate of attacks by dissidents on government and security officials.⁹ Recent reports allege that more than ten Balochis, including Masood Naroui, Abdol Vahid Naroui, Abdol Hamid Naroui, have been executed, accused of aiding the Baloch armed resistance or for being involved in drug dealing.¹⁰

⁶ http://www.unpo.org/news_detail.php?arg=59&par=4528, [www.opendemocracy.net/democracy - africa_democracy/cameroon_3052.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-africa_democracy/cameroon_3052.jsp), www.unpo.org

⁷ http://www.hrcp-web.org/images/publication/balochistan%20report/pdf/balochistan_report.pdf

⁸ http://www.hrcp-web.org/images/publication/balochistan%20report/pdf/balochistan_report.pdf

⁹ <http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=7623>

¹⁰ http://www.unpo.org/news_detail.php?arg=66&par=4622

The Human Rights Council is called upon

to urge Iran and Pakistan to respect the economic and political rights of the indigenous Balochistan;

to request a high-level investigation into reports of extra-judicial, summary and arbitrary executions, torture and disappearances; and

to urge the government of Iran and Pakistan to end repression, human rights violations, extrajudicial killings and detentions of the Baloch minority in the respective countries.

Ahwazi Arabs in Iran

More than four million indigenous Ahwazi Arabs live in the south-western region of Iran, mainly in the province of Khuzestan (Al-Ahwaz) and constitute a historically marginalised indigenous, ethnic, national and linguistic minority in Iran.¹¹

On 15 April 2005 in the provincial city of Ahwaz, security forces reportedly opened fire on thousands of peaceful demonstrators killing at least sixty-one men, women and children, injuring over 800 and arresting thousands, according to *Amnesty International* (AI), *Human Rights Watch* (HRW) and *BBC*.¹²

A report (AI Index: MDE 13/006/2006) issued on 01 February 2006, documented arrests of Reza Haidari (11), Kazem Sayahi (14), Hashem Jassem Sawari (18), Hadi Washahi (17), Said Manabi (20), Saleh 'Abidawi, imam Sheikh Saleh al-Haydari, imam of Da'ira mosque and several others. These persons, all members of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority were reportedly arrested in the city of Ahvaz in Khuzestan province on 11 and 12 January 2006, and were feared being held incommunicado and at risk of torture or ill-treatment.¹³ The arrests took place after clashes in Ahvaz between Iranian security forces and members of the Arab Ahwazi community, in the context of an initially peaceful demonstration on occasion of the Muslim festival of 'Id al-Adha on 11 January, led by Sheikh Saleh al-Haydari, imam (prayer leader) of Da'ira mosque in Ahvaz. According to reports, demonstrators were demanding an end to the persecution of Arabs, poverty and unemployment among Arabs, and the release of political prisoners, estimated at several thousands, arrested since the April 2005 unrest in the Khuzestan province.

During the recent months of 2006, and as reported by several human rights organizations, a number of Ahwazi women, among them some pregnant and/or with their children, have been held for longer periods without access to legal aid or due process.¹⁴ On 27 February 2006, Mrs. Sakina Naisi (40), three months pregnant, was arrested and put in Sepidar Prison. Her treatment in prison eventually led to a forced abortion. On 08 March 2006, Mrs. Masouma Kaabi (28) and her son Aimad (4) were arrested and imprisoned in

¹¹ www.ahwaz.org.uk

¹² <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130762005?open&of=ENG-IRN>
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGMDE130652005?open&of=ENG-IRN>
<http://www.ahwaz.org.uk/HRW-report-Khuzestan.pdf>

¹³ <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130062006?open&of=ENG-IRN>

¹⁴ <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130282006?open&of=ENG-IRN>

Sepidar.¹⁵ On 31 March 2006, Mrs. Hoda Hawashem (24) with her sons Ahmed (4) and Osameh (2) were arrested and held at an unknown location. Mrs. Soghra Khudayrawi with her son Zeidan (4) were arrested on an unknown date, and also held in Sepidar prison. Furthermore, Ms. Fahima Isma'ili recently gave birth to her child Sal'ma whilst held in detention. The arrested women were all wives and relatives of politically active Ahwazi men.¹⁶

In early June 2006 the South-western Governor-General of Khuzestan (Al-Ahwaz) Amir Hayat-Moqaddam reportedly announced publicly that ongoing Ahwazi executions would continue, with twenty-one detainees facing imminent execution by Iranian security forces. To date, over 150 individuals have disappeared and are believed to have been held, tortured and executed by the Iranian security forces.¹⁷

IFPRERLOM notes with concern the recent wave of repression against the indigenous Ahwaz community and the tension that has mounted among the Arab population since April 2005, and appeals to the Human Rights Council

to urgently alert UN Secretary General, HE Kofi Annan, to the current situation in Iran regarding the human rights situation in Khuzestan;

to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of the remaining Ahwazi women and children being held in prison;

to call, as a matter of urgency, for a follow-up to the initial request by UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, to the government of Iran to arrange a visit; and

to put renewed pressure on Iran to end practices of unlawful arbitrary detention, execution and acts of repression against the indigenous Ahwazi Arabs, Balochis and other minority groups in Iran, especially with regard to minors.

- - - - -

¹⁵ Released on 28 April, <http://www.ahwaz.org.uk/2006/05/ahwazi-mother-and-son-released-by.html>

¹⁶ http://www.unpo.org/news_detail.php?arg=06&par=4238

¹⁷ http://www.unpo.org/news_detail.php?arg=06&par=4702