

Urgent Statement of Concern Regarding the Mass Killing of Protesters and the Imminent Risk of Executions in Iran

We unequivocally condemn the widespread and systematic killing of Iranian citizens carried out by the authorities of the Islamic Republic during the nationwide uprising of January 2026.

According to information published by independent and credible sources, thousands of people have been killed across Iran.

Reports document the extensive use of lethal force against civilians and protesters in public streets, alongside the violent suppression of predominantly peaceful demonstrations. These acts constitute an alarming escalation of state violence against the population.

During this crackdown, human rights organizations have reported the mass arrest of thousands of individuals, most of them young people. These detentions have occurred under conditions of profound uncertainty regarding the fate of detainees, their place of detention, and the manner in which they are being treated. Serious concerns persist regarding enforced disappearances, denial of legal representation, and the absence of basic procedural safeguards.

Of particular and grave concern is the fact that many detainees are reportedly being charged with offenses such as terrorism, espionage, or moharebeh (“enmity against God”). Under the laws of the Islamic Republic, such charges may lead to capital punishment, especially in circumstances where access to fair trials, public hearings, and transparent judicial proceedings is systematically denied.

In light of the Islamic Republic's documented record and established judicial practices, and in view of recent explicit threats issued by senior judicial authorities calling for swift and severe punishment, there is a serious and credible fear that the state may imminently issue and carry out heavy sentences, including executions of protesters. These actions appear aimed at entrenching political control through terror, without regard for due process, human life, or the irreversible consequences of such crimes.

The killing of unarmed civilians, the arbitrary and extrajudicial detention of non-violent protesters, and the open threat of executions constitute clear evidence of systematic and unlawful violence by the state. These acts represent flagrant violations of fundamental principles of international human rights law, including the right to life, the prohibition of arbitrary detention, and the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly.

We urgently call upon the international community, human rights organizations, international institutions, and independent media to respond to this crisis with immediacy and responsibility. The lives of thousands of detainees are in imminent danger. Silence or inaction at this critical moment risks enabling a humanitarian catastrophe with irreversible and irreparable consequences.

This statement is issued to explicitly and unequivocally condemn the ongoing killings and to urge immediate action to prevent the continuation and escalation of a grave human tragedy.

A group of Iranian artists, writers, and cultural activists

SIGNATORIES

(in alphabetical order)

Farnaz Abdoli – Interdisciplinary Artist – Germany

Mahnaz Afshar – Actress – Germany

Shohreh Aghdashloo – Actress – United States of America

Tara Aghdashloo – Filmmaker – England

Borzou Arjmand – Actor – United States of America

Noshabeh Amiri – Journalist – France

Azad Andalibi – Essayist, Editor, Editor and Editor-in-Chief – Turkey

Behrouz Badrouj – Director of Photography – Germany

Baharan Baniahmadi – Writer and Actress – Canada

Ehsan Bayatfar – Director – Australia

Hosein Behboudi – Producer – England

Niloofar Beyzaie - Playwright and Theatre Director – Germany

Mahmoud Chokrollahi – Writer – France

Reza Dormishian – Writer and Director – France

Kaveh Ebrahimpour – Filmmaker – Canada

Amir Etminan – Film Editor – Turkey

Elaheh Esmaili – Documentary Filmmaker – England

Kaveh Farnam – Filmmaker and Producer

Parastou Forouhar – Visual Artist – Germany

Pezhman Golchin – Writer and Philosophy Researcher – Germany

Googoosh – Singer and Actress - United States of America

Setareh Ghorbani – Translator and Writer – France

Barbad Golshiri – Tapographer – France

Pejman Hadadi – Musician and University Professor - United States of America

Ata Hayati – Cinematographer – France

Fahimeh Hekmatandish – Photographer - Sweden

Helen Hemmati Hammarström – Director and Dramaturg – Sweden

Hamidreza Javdan - Actor and Theatre Director – France

Sorour Kasmal – Author, Translator and Publisher – France

Hana Kamkar – Singer, Actress and Filmmaker – Germany

Mehrangiz Kar – Writer and Lawyer

Ehsan Karami – Actor and Singer - United States of America

Daryan Karami – Director – France

Yaghoub Keshavarz – Writer and Director – Sweden

Hadi Keykaoosi – Writer – Italy

Sahar Kianoush – Painter – Italy

Atefeh Khademolreza – Writer and Filmmaker – Canada

Zahra Khanloo – Author and Translator – Turkey

Hossein Khandan – Filmmaker - United States of America

Nasser Khoshnavis – Photographer – Belgium

Nafiseh Laleh – Screenwriter and University Professor – Turkey

Massoud Mafan – Publisher and Member of PEN International - Sweden

Leila Maleki – Sound Designer – England

Setareh Maleki – Actress – Germany

Mahsa Malekmarzban – Translator – Sweden

Bahman Maghsoudlou – Author, Director, Producer and Member of PEN America – United States of America

Shokooh Mirzadegi – Writer – England

Abbas Milani – Historian, Iranologist, and Director of the Iranian Studies Program at Stanford University – United States of America

Farnaz Mohammadi – Curator and Artistic Director – Canada

Mahdieh Mohammadkhani – Singer - United Arab Emirates

Nafise Motlaq – University Professor and Documentary Filmmaker – Turkey

Saeed Nasiri – Director – Turkey

Tinoush Nazmjou – Publisher – France

Ilia Nick – Writer and Translator – France

Shirin Neshat – Filmmaker - United States of America

Sam Nobakht – Writer and Director – Sweden

Esmail Nooriala – Writer – England

Partow Nooriala - Poet and Writer – United States of America

Jafar Panahi – Writer, Director and Producer – Iran

Soheil Parsa – Director – Canada

Mehdi Rahmani – Filmmaker

Mohammad Raslouf – Filmmaker – Germany

Mehdi Razi - Filmmaker – Sweden

Mojtaba Rouhandeh – Author – France

Adib Rostami – Musician – England

Mahsa Rostami – Actress – Germany

Farzin Sabooni – Actor – Canada

Nader Saeivar – Writer and Director - Germany

Hamid Saeidi – Composer and Grammy Award-winning Musician - United States of America

Massoud Salari – Writer and Journalist – France

Hayedeh Safiyari – Film Editor and Member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences – Sweden

Sina Sarlak – Singer - United States of America

Homa Sarshar – Journalist - United States of America

Nahid Persson Sarvestani - Documentary Filmmaker – Sweden

Nima Sarvestani – Filmmaker – Sweden

Naval Sharifi – Actress – France

Mozhdeh Shamsai – Actress - United States of America

Mohammad Reza Shams - University Professor & Filmmaker – Australia

Mona Seif – Editor – France

Katayoon Shahabi – Producer – France

Mojgan Shajarian – Singer - United States of America

Firouzeh Sodjoudi - Journalist – Germany

Ghazaleh Soltani – Filmmaker – France

Kiya Tabassian – Musician and Composer – Canada

Ladan Tabatabaei – Actress - United States of America

Shabnam Tolouei – Actress & Director - United States of America

Houshang Touzie – Actor and Director - United States of America

Farhad Vilkiji – Art Director & Director – Holland

Mana Yeganeh – Producer – France

Assosiation of Iranian Film & Theatre Artists Abroad (AIFTAA)

Woman, Life, Freedom International Film Festival

Karevan Theatre – Sweden