

“No one is thinking of the flowers.
No one wants to believe
that the garden is dying...”

More than a month has passed since the war began. Homes, schools, and hospitals have been targeted and in the midst of this, prisoners are trapped in a dual confinement: with no way to escape and no shelter to keep them safe. Their families, similarly caught in the dangers and hardships of war, have little means to help.

Should we not be their voice?
Should we not shine a light on this darkness?

By signing and sharing this statement, we can take a small step towards raising awareness. Each signature may help save a life.

Our hearts must ache for the “garden.”

April 17, 2026

Dr. Mai Sato — UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran

Dr. Alice Jill Edwards — UN Special Rapporteur on Torture

Dr. Morris Tidball-Binz — UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions

We, a number of Iranian and non-Iranian individuals, as well as associations and organizations committed to human rights, would like to draw your attention to the urgent and dangerous situation facing prisoners, including political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, in Iran. We urge you to use all means at your disposal to compel the Iranian government to grant their immediate conditional release. With the escalation of the war that began on February 28, 2026, the lives of thousands of prisoners

have been placed at risk, and their situation has grown more dire each day. Prior to the April 7th truce, Israeli and U.S. military forces launched extensive attacks on various cities and villages across the country. In many cities, prisons are located near or even within Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (“IRGC”) compounds, placing prisoners at severe risk of airstrikes and missile attacks by U.S. and Israeli forces. The Israeli military has previously demonstrated its willingness to target prisons, as seen in June 2025, when it carried out strikes on Evin Prison.

In addition to the direct dangers posed by U.S. and Israeli military attacks, the war and the mobilization of police and the IRGC has disrupted the provision of essential services, including food and medical care for prisoners. Furthermore, prisoners—especially political prisoners and prisoners of conscience—face the risk of execution or other forms of abuse by the repressive forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (“IRI”); a State that has repeatedly threatened, in times of crisis, to take revenge on political prisoners under charges such as “treason”. For example, in 1988, following the ceasefire during the eight-year war with the Iraqi government, nearly 5,000 political prisoners were executed in Iranian prisons. Such a tragedy could be repeated. As of

today, April 17, 2026, the IRI has already carried out several executions, although the exact number remains unclear due to the lack of governmental transparency. For example, on March 19th, Saleh Mohammadi, Saeed Davoudi, and Mehdi Ghasemi were publicly executed in Qom. On March 30th and 31st, four political prisoners—Babak Alipour, Pouya Ghabadi, Mohammad Taghi Sangdehi, and Akbar Daneshvar-Kar—were executed. On April 2nd, Amirhossein Hatami, an 18-year-old detained during the January 1, 2026 protests, was executed. On April 4th, two political prisoners, Abolhassan Montazer and Vahid Bani Amerian, were executed by firing squad. On April 5th, Mohammadamin Biglari and Shahin Vahedparast were executed. These cases demonstrate the IRI's continued use of the death penalty against dissidents.

The situation is particularly dire in three major detention centers in Tehran—among the largest prisons in the country: Evin Prison, Ghezel Hesar Prison, and Greater Tehran Prison (also known as Fashafouyeh). These facilities hold hundreds of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The concern amongst prisoners' families is also growing. Weekly family visits have been disrupted due to the war and many families have been left without any information about their loved ones. As of Monday, March 2nd, some political prisoners from Evin Prison have been transferred to other locations, including Fashafouyeh Prison—a facility that, even before the war, suffered from severe

overcrowding, lack of clean drinking water, and extremely poor sanitary conditions.

Across Iran—from Evin Prison to detention centers in Marivan, Zanjan, and elsewhere—prisoners are trapped in the grip of war and state repression. The regime is neither able to maintain normal and humane conditions for prisoners nor willing to release them. According to a directive of Iran's Supreme Judicial Council issued in January 1986 (Resolution No. 211, adopted during the Iran–Iraq War and still valid), in times of crisis such as war, the judiciary is obligated to take measures to protect prisoners, including granting conditional release to those convicted of non-violent offenses. By implementing this directive, a substantial number of prisoners—especially political

prisoners and prisoners of conscience, as well as thousands arrested during the January 2026 protests—should be released. Since the outbreak of the war, many lawyers have called for the enforcement of this directive. So far, United Nations bodies and international non-governmental organizations have not responded to this critical situation. We urge you to act without delay to exert pressure on the Islamic

Republic of Iran in order to help save the lives of thousands of Iranian prisoners.

Respectfully,

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