

# UN General Assembly approves resolution on Iran human rights by a wide margin

## IN BRIEF

- **For the 23rd time since 1985, the UN General Assembly has expressed concern over human rights violations in Iran**
- **This year's vote passed by one of the widest margins ever, reflecting strong condemnation by the international community**
- **The resolution follows a report issued by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that took note of Iran's continued use of torture, its poor treatment of women, and its failure to protect the rights of minorities, such as the Bahá'í, Sufi, Baluch and Kurdish communities**

**U**NITED NATIONS — For the 23rd time since 1985, and by one of the largest margins ever, the United Nations has once again approved a resolution that condemns Iran's failure to meet its obligations under international human rights law.

By a vote of 78 to 45, with 59 abstentions, the UN General Assembly confirmed a resolution that expressed “deep concern at serious ongoing and recurring human rights violations.” The final vote for what has become an annual resolution on Iran came on 21 December 2010.

The resolution specifically expressed concern over Iran's “intensified crackdown on human rights defenders and reports of excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions, unfair trials and allegations of torture,” as well as its “pervasive gender inequality and violence against women,” and its discrimination against minorities, including members of the Bahá'í Faith.

“The world community has clearly spoken. It is outraged at Iran's continued and intensifying violations of human rights,” said Bani Dugal, the principal representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations.

Ms. Dugal noted that the resolution documents a wide range of violations — from torture to the oppression of women to the persecution of minorities. “All of this has been going on for too long, and it is high time that Iran pays heed to the call of the international community and complies with the standards of international law,” she said.

The resolution devoted an entire paragraph to Iran's treatment of members of the Bahá'í Faith, cataloging

an extensive list of recent anti-Bahá'í activities. These included: “increasing evidence of efforts by the State to identify, monitor and arbitrarily detain Bahá'ís, preventing members of the Bahá'í faith from attending university and from sustaining themselves economically, the confiscation and destruction of their property, and the vandalizing of their cemeteries...”

It also expressed concern over the recent trial and sentencing of seven Bahá'í leaders, saying they were “repeatedly denied the due process of law.”

The five-page document echoes concerns expressed by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who issued a report in October that criticized Iran's use of torture and the death penalty, its poor treatment of women, and repeated violations of due process of law, as well as its failure to protect the rights of minorities, such as the Bahá'í, Sufi, Baluch and Kurdish communities.

Put forward by 42 co-sponsors, the resolution also calls on Iran to cooperate with international human rights monitors and to allow them into the country.

“The Bahá'í International Community strongly welcomes this resolution, not only for its clear-sighted view of what is happening in Iran but also for its call for increased monitoring,” said Ms. Dugal. “As the resolution notes, it has been more than five years since Iran allowed UN officials into the country to investigate reports of human rights violations — something that is clearly unacceptable, especially for a country that claims to the world that it has nothing to hide.”