**UPR Submission**

**34th session of UPR Working Group (November 2019)**

**Islamic Republic of Iran**

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[**www.odvv.org**](http://www.odvv.org)

**About ODVV**

1. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organization in Special Consultative Status to ECOSOC. ODVV was established in 1988 in Tehran and has been active in the field of human rights and humanitarian activities.

2. ODVV is also associated to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), a member of the UN Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), AMAN Network of Rehabilitation Centers in the Middle East and North Africa and International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT). ODVV has cooperated with international organizations in a variety of issues and has working relations with many NGOs in Iran and around the globe.

3. ODVV is focused on promoting human rights, supporting victims of violence, empowering Iranian civil society, and offering human rights consultations to the Iranian institutions and organizations. ODVV is actively involved in running various human rights education courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences. Other activities include:

- Participation in UN Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva;

- Publication of different books and booklets on human rights such as Rights of the Child, Unilateral Coercive Measures (Economic Sanctions), Racism, Racial Discrimination, Islamophobia and Xenophobia;

- Publishing Defenders Quarterly (in English), human rights news and developments Weekly (in Farsi), updating ODVV websites in English, Farsi and Arabic;

- Internship for Iranian and international students.

4. ODVV is submitting the following report on the human rights situation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to contribute to the improvement of the human rights situation.

**Constitutional and legislative framework**

**Citizenship Charter**

1. Islamic Republic of Iran has ratified Charter of Citizenship Rights and the government has committed itself to take action, in collaboration with other State branches and governmental organs within the scope of their competencies, resources and capabilities, and within the framework of the Constitution, to promote and protect human rights of all citizens. ODVV Notes the ratification of the Citizenship Charter and the government follow up on the implementation of the Charter; the fact that all government bodies are obliged to report on the activities aiming at the Charter implementation; the submitted reports will go under reviews and the measures adopted by the government organs will be assessed through various methods such as field monitoring and opinion polls.

**Recommendation:**

1. Taking note of the adoption of the Charter and government’s follow up on the implementation, also taking note of dozens of government’s workshops and seminars on citizens’ and human rights, ODVV would like to recommend the government to make more efforts to guarantee the implementation of the Charter and add to the clarity of the implementation mechanism so that the valuable document makes more contributions to promotion of human rights in the country.

**Right to life, liberty and security of the person**

**Amendments to Death Penalty Law**

1. The amendments to the law that would determine punishments for drug related crimes came into effect in November 2017 and increased the threshold for the use of the death penalty in drug cases. The amendment that abolishes capital punishment for some drug-trafficking offences saved the lives of more than 5,000 prisoners on death row in [Iran](https://www.theguardian.com/world/iran). Following the revision of the law, the chief Iran’s judicial system, asked the officials to halt executions of those affected by the new amendments, reconsider their cases and commute their sentences if possible.

**Recommendation:**

1. ODVV welcomes the amendments to the law and the positive impact on protection of the right to life and encourages the government to consider making further revisions to the death penalty law.

**Right to Work**

**Adoption and Implementation of the 'no-retirees' law**

1. in 2018 “The Act of Amendments to the Law of Prohibition of Re-employment of Retired Employees” was ratified and implemented. The new law bans retirees from holding government positions. Currently many individuals who had been retired were prohibited from continuing work in civil and governmental posts. The Act is applied to directors of government executive bodies and institutions that receive public budget.
2. Following the increase of unemployment rate as a result of economic sanctions, the proper implementation of this Act creates employment opportunities for young people in civil and governmental positions, which is noted by ODVV.

**Refugee’s Rights**

**Adoption of the Citizenship Bill for Children Born of Iranian Women-Foreign Nationals**

1. According to the adopted legislation, women that have foreign husbands are able to pass their Iranian nationality to their children which was not previously possible.

**Afghan Refugee Children’s Rights to Education is Guaranteed**

1. With the efforts of NGOs and relevant authorities of Iran in 2017, all undocumented and documented Afghan refugee’ children enjoy the rights to free education for 12 years. Following the Order, in 2018, the number of Afghan students registered in Iranian schools increased to 7 times higher than the previous year.

**Recommendation:**

1. ODVV welcomes the decision to offer free education to refugees considering it as a positive development however, witnessing the negative consequences of the United States Unilateral measures on all human rights in Iran and the fact that all resources available to governmental and non-governmental institutions are shrinking as a result of sanctions, making the government feel the huge burden of offering free education to Afghan refugees, ODVV encourages Iran government to discuss the issue of resettlement of more Afghan refugees in European countries.
2. ODVV also urges UNHCR to provide more funds to Iranian NGOs that support Afghan refugees.

**Children’s Rights**

**Child Abuse Text Message Centre and Social Emergency Service**

1. Iran has supported 13 recommendations on the promotion of “the rights of the child” in the Second UPR Cycle and 4 recommendations that specifically suggest the government to reduce violation against children.
2. The National Children’s Rights Authority text message center was launched on the 2nd of June 2018. The center receives reports on child abuse, monitors social harms on children. The center focuses on raising the awareness of all of society as well as culture building on the observation of children’s rights to reduce child abuse. The center targets child laborers, children with dysfunctional families, street children, children deprived of education and children who due to poverty, addiction, unemployment, divorce of parents are threatened by underage marriage.

**Adoption of the Generalities of the Protection of Children and Juveniles Draft Bill**

1. The Generalities of Protection of Children and Juveniles Draft Bill was adopted on 24 September 2018. The legislation contributes to prevention of child abuse, trafficking in children and protection of children and juveniles rights. The Bill criminalizes child labour, sexual exploitation, cyberspace abuse, forcing children to commit offenses, child pornography and sale of children. Also any form of abuse and harassment of children and juveniles which results in physical, mental harms are also criminalized. The Bill aims at protection of children from physical and mental abuse, giving them the right to defense in the criminal justice process, right to identity freedom and independence of expression of opinion, the right to have equal opportunity for education and play.

**Recommendations:**

1. ODVV notes all the efforts to address child abuse which is assessed by local counselling specialists as “good practice”. The establishment of the text message center and the hotline service as practical steps taken by the government to reduce violation against children. ODVV notes the accelerated government efforts to address the situation of children who live under violence as it even addresses violence reports delivered by third parties. ODVV requests Iran’s government to run awareness raising campaigns on the already existing services at national level and expand the coverage of the existing services at the same time since the practical steps seriously reduce domestic violence against children and women.
2. Taking note of the adoption of the draft legislation to protect children and juveniles, ODVV calls on Iran’s government to fortify its efforts to guarantee the full adoption and implementation of the legislation.

**Women’s Rights**

1. At the moment a special government task force is focused on divorce and to address the issue, widespread education is offered to couples. There are “before marriage”, “during marriage” and “after marriage” education courses offered to couples. Also, all who apply for divorce need to take compulsory counselling sessions.

**Recommendation:**

1. On behalf of people working in counselling centers and offer services to deal with domestic violence, including the ODVV counselling clinic, the organization calls on the government to assign compulsory counselling sessions for spouses who commit domestic violence[[1]](#footnote-1), announcing that the return of the victimized spouse is conditional to taking counseling sessions.
1. . At the moment, all who apply for divorce need to take compulsory counselling sessions and the same can be applied to the case of domestic violence. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)