

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

ISSUE

The human rights situation in Iran continues to be a matter for grave concern to the Canadian Government. The 44th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations has examined this issue as did the 40th, 41st 42nd and 43rd sessions. This year the Government of Iran has invited the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to visit Iran in order to investigate the situation of human rights in that country.

BACKGROUND

Serious violations of human rights continue to be reported in Iran. Areas of particular concern are the allegations of persistent abuses of the inherent right to life and to the dignity of individuals, as well as reports of the treatment of minorities falling short of internationally accepted human rights standards. In his most recent interim report Mr. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, the Special Rapporteur of the CHR repeats his conviction that the persistence of acts inconsistent with the international instruments in force justifies both international concern and constant vigilance by the United Nations General Assembly and the CHR.

Information from various sources confirms that politically motivated mass executions took place in the second quarter of 1988. During 1989 the Special Rapporteur reports that politically motivated executions were also reported. Of concern is the dramatic increase of the number of executions for ordinary offenses, in particular for drug trafficking.

Some improvement of the situation of the Baha'is has been noted. Nevertheless adherents of the Baha'i faith continue to be harassed, although at a decreased level. According to the information at our disposal some Baha'is are still in prison and a small group has been executed.

At this year's United Nations General Assembly the Iranian Government decided to issue an invitation to the Special Rapporteur of the CHR to visit Iran and assured him that it will abide by all the normal practices and privileges granted by governments to Special Rapporteurs visiting to investigate human rights situations.

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada continues to express grave concerns over the situation of human rights in Iran despite some indications of improvement in the recent years. We welcome the invitation made by the Iranian Government to receive the Special Rapporteur and we look forward for his report on the situation based on evidence gleaned during his visit there.