

The Iranian people have suffered enough: UK statement at UN

Thank you Mr Chair.

The United Kingdom wishes to thank Canada for bringing forward this timely resolution.

In recent months, the human rights situation in Iran has continued to deteriorate. Two months ago, we witnessed the tragic death of Mahsa Amini: a shocking reminder of the repression faced by women in Iran. We deplore the violent suppression of women's rights, and enforcement of the mandatory hijab and chastity law by Iran's so-called Morality Police.

We also find Iran's response to the protests movement that followed Mahsa's death truly abhorrent. Over 326 Iranians have lost their lives and over 14,000 have been arrested. The death sentence announced last week, for a protestor, signifies a shocking worsening of the situation.

It is for these reasons that we welcome Germany and Iceland's efforts to call a Special Session of the Human Rights Council on 24 November, which we hope will mandate a robust investigation into protest-related human rights violations in Iran.

Sadly, such repression remains systematic in Iran. In the first six months of 2022, Iran executed at least 251 people. The UN also called out Iran for executing a juvenile offender in November 2021.

The UK supports the essential work of the Special Rapporteur in shining a spotlight on Iran's human rights violations. We welcome his efforts to expose the systematic repression of minority groups, as well as continued restrictions on media freedom and internet access.

Mr Chair, the Iranian people have suffered enough. It is time their fundamental freedoms were upheld, including the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and speech both online and offline. Iran's leaders must choose another path. Now is the time to stop blaming external actors, to hold up the mirror and start listening to the voices of their people. Yet Iran continues to suppress the voices of civil society, and report of Member States attempting to block NGO access to the room today are a further concern. The UK encourages all Member States to now join us in voting yes on this resolution.

Thank you.