

UN Human Rights Council Special Session on Iran: UK statement

Thank you High Commissioner and Special Rapporteur for your powerful statements this morning.

Mr President,

Sarina Esmaelzadeh, 16 years old, in Karaj.

Minoo Majidi, a 62-year-old mother of 2, in western Kermanshah.

Sixteen year old Nika Shakarami, last heard from by a friend whilst being chased down a street during a protest in Tehran, identified by her parents in a morgue nine days later.

Hananaeh Kia, a 23-year-old hairdresser, recently engaged, walking home from a dentist appointment in Nowshahr.

Hadis Najafi, a 22-year-old video blogger.

Mahsa Mogouyi, 18 years old, in central Fouladshahr.

Ghazaleh Chalabi, 33 years old – shot in the head while filming protests in her hometown. Her last words, caught on film, were “Do not be afraid”.

Mr President, High Commissioner, Colleagues,

We are all too familiar with the tragic story of Mahsa Jina Amini. However – these names are just some of the other women and girls who have lost their lives at the hands of the Iranian security services since Mahsa died. We don't have the time today to pay tribute to them all by name. But let me send a clear message to their families, their friends that their deaths will not be forgotten.

Let us remember:

The more than 350 people killed.

The countless children that have lost their lives.

The thousands of people currently detained.

The people sentenced to death.

All for simply exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

Sadly, this is not a one-off. Let's also remember the hundreds who died in the violent crackdown on protests in 2019 and the thousands more killed and detained over so many years, in contravention of their human rights.

Today let's send a clear message: that Iran must stop suppressing the voices of women and girls; that the appalling state-led violence must end; that there must be justice for victims.

And that this Council stands firmly behind the girls, women, mothers and daughters of Iran – supporting their call for Women. Life. Freedom. Zan. Zendegi. Azadi.

Thank you.