



HRA Voices Grave Concerns Regarding Upcoming OHCHR Visit to Iran

admin 📅 January 26, 2024



“Critical Preconditions must be met before travel to safeguard accountability and protect human rights”

February 26, 2024

Mister High Commissioner, Madame Deputy High Commissioner

We are writing today to express profound concerns regarding the planned visit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to Iran, scheduled to take place from 2 to 5 February 2024.

While we recognize the importance of engaging with national authorities to address human rights issues, and encourage such engagement, we also recall that, until now, Iran has only engaged with UN mechanisms when such engagement suits their needs—notably to sway public opinion through misinformation at home and abroad. We believe due to evidenced past practice to instrumentalize *UN mechanisms*, several critical factors must be taken into consideration before proceeding with the visit.

The timing of the proposed visit is highly problematic, given its proximity to the upcoming session of the Human Rights Council (HRC). There is a considerable risk that Iranian authorities will exploit the visit to undermine support for the renewal of the crucial accountability mechanisms in place—Using this instance of engagement to debunk the factual and evidence based reports set to be delivered in the coming

months. Past instances underscore the need for caution and provide for a need to reconsider the visits timing.

Given the trip goes forward, HRA has set forth critical issues and preconditions that must be addressed given the trip has been scheduled ahead of any consultation with civil society.

1. HRA urges the OHCHR to highlight Iran's complete lack of cooperation with the FFMI to date.
2. HRA urges the OHCHR to **insist on visiting detention centers** as a precondition to their visit. The DHC cannot adequately conduct a visit on the situation of executions without a thorough site visit of Iran's detention centers. The startling numbers: **798 in 2023**, and **more than 55** since the start of the year alone warrant a clear directive in this regard.
3. HRA urges the OHCHR to **insist on meetings with following groups** of individuals as a precondition to their visit: **dual-national prisoners, including those on death row** such as Jamshid Sharmahd and Ahmadrza Jalali, **political prisoners from prominent cases of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement that remain held after trials lacking any semblance of due process, imprisoned political and civil activists**, and importantly, **the lawyers** handling cases despite having been restricted by rules and regulations that fly in the face of international standards of the free and independent exercise of the legal profession and the right to fair trial, most **recently observed** by Ms. Margaret Satterthwaite and Dr. Javaid Rehran, UN Special Procedures mandate holders.
4. **HRA urges the OHCHR to conduct meetings taking steps to ensure the safety and security of all participants and their families throughout.**



We appreciate your attention to these concerns and trust that the OHCHR will approach this matter with the utmost diligence and commitment to upholding human rights principles.

Human Rights Activists (In Iran)

For more information please contact Skylar Thompson, Director of Global Advocacy and Accountability at Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRA) [skylar\[at\]hramail.com](mailto:skylar[at]hramail.com)

[Facebook](#)[Twitter](#)[LinkedIn](#)