



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU concerning
the human rights situation in the aftermath of the presidential
elections in Iran**

The European Union is closely following developments in Iran in the aftermath of the presidential elections on 12 June.

The EU reiterates its commitment to human rights and democratic values, not least freedom of expression and association. These are universal human rights, and the EU recalls that Iran has committed itself to these rights as a State Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The EU deplores the violations of freedom of expression and freedom of the press – national as well as international – in connection with the events following elections day. Restrictions remain at an even higher level than before the elections.

P R E S S

The EU is deeply concerned about the continued imprisonment of journalists, human rights defenders and political activists in post-electoral Iran, for example Mohsen Mirdamadi and Behzad Nabavi. Journalists that are still imprisoned include Mohammad Ghouchani, Ahmad Zeidabadi and Bahman Ahmadi Amouie. At least 4 000 people were arrested nationwide in the aftermath of the elections. Some have been released, but many others remain in detention. These arrests were often accompanied by brutal force, such as the cases of journalist Issa Saharkhiz and human rights lawyer Shadi Sadr. The EU is appalled by alarming reports of maltreatment and torture in prisons and detention centres. The EU calls on the Iranian authorities to carry out thorough investigations into allegations that have been made.

The EU is deeply concerned by the mass trials – five so far – of around 150 prisoners accused of crimes against national security, for example the case of scholar Kian Tajbakhsh who has been sentenced to 12–15 years of imprisonment. The EU is concerned about the sentences that have been handed down so far, as there are reports of detainees not being informed about their charges and being denied access to independent legal counsel. These cases fall short of international standards regarding fair trial that Iran has subscribed to and in many cases also grossly violate Iranian constitutional and legal provisions. The European Union calls on Iranian Authorities to release journalists and individuals detained for political offences.

The EU condemns all death sentences, not least for political offences. The EU is gravely concerned that at least four persons have been sentenced to death in one of the five mass trials. These persons appear to have been arrested prior to the June presidential elections, but sentenced in show trials without regard to the right to fair trial in accordance with standards laid down in international human rights law.

The EU is also concerned about the substantial rise in death sentences in Iran and recalls the EU's long-standing opposition, under all circumstances, to capital punishment. Furthermore, the EU recalls that any miscarriage or failure of justice in the application of capital punishment represents an irreparable and irreversible loss of human life.

The EU continues to call on the Iranian authorities to abolish the death penalty and, in the meantime, to establish a moratorium on executions as urged by United Nations General Assembly resolutions 62/149 and 63/168.

The Candidate Countries Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
