

Association Arc for the defense of human rights and democratic and cultural demands of the Azerbaijani people – Iran “ArcDH”

Mr President,

The Iranian justice system is based on tactical deterrence that makes it impossible for the people to lay claim to their legal, national, and cultural rights, although these are guaranteed by international conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The independence of judges does not exist in Iran.

Two thirds of the population of Iran are non-Persian nations consisting in various ethnic groups, including the Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Turkmens, and the Balochi. Simply by belonging to one of these non-Persian ethnic groups one may be categorised as arrogant towards the Iranian justice. Although we are in the 21st century, the mentality of the Iranian government is still mediaeval and governed by racist ideologies.

In Iran, discrimination and racist acts against Azerbaijani Turks and other ethnic and religious minorities are still "invisible" and are not registered through official complaints or other mechanisms of data collection in the criminal justice system.

Azerbaijani Turks are often victims of violence committed by riot police during demonstrations for their legitimate demands. Following a tv-show for children on the Iranian State television, they publicly denigrated and humiliated Turks from Azerbaijan who, I would like to stress, are the biggest non-Persian nation in Iran. This provoked large peaceful protests on 9 November 2015 in all cities in Azerbaijan. According to official Iranian reports, nearly 130 people were arrested and are still in jail.

In addition to these arbitrary arrests, inmates are treated in a discriminatory way in the Iranian judicial system.

We should also note that language is an obstacle to the access to justice of ethnic minorities.

We regret that after 37 years

- The 15th principle of the Constitution of the IR that allows education in the mother tongue hasn't been implemented;
- Articles 19, 22 and 23 of the Constitution of the IR referring to social and cultural equality for all ethnic groups, and to non-discrimination are not respected.

Despite these constitutional principles, the CERD (Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) expressed its concern following reports of racial discrimination in particular against Azerbaijani communities by the media and in some declarations made by representatives of the authorities inciting racial discrimination or hatred.

Thus, the CERD recommended that the Islamic Republic of Iran take all necessary measures to ensure efficient protection of Arabic, Azerbaijani, Balochi and Kurd communities, as well as some non-national communities.

Jaleh Razmi (Jaleh Tabrizi)

President of ArcDH

