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III. 15:00-18:00: clay 1

Minorities and the exercise of police powers

On the 7th of November 2015 the Iranian state TV broadcasted a racist filthy show insulted millions of the biggest ethno-linguistic community in Iran, the Turks.

This racist TV program caused massive demonstrations, which lasted for over a week in many cities. Iranian authorities acted brutally against peaceful assembly of large number of people in many cities such as Urmia, Zanzan, Tabriz, Meshkin Shahr, Ardabil, Khoy, Ahar, Tehran as well as other cities.

Gatherings were to peacefully demonstrate against racism and ask for the minority rights such as education in the mother language and non-discrimination against Turks in Iran. Police and security forces attacked and beat protesters and arrested over 150 people in different cities, about many of whom there is no exact information.

I need to mention that, this is not the first time that Iranian state media uses official channels to insult Turks or other ethnic communities in Iran.

Regular arbitrary arrests and detention of many Turkic speaking civil right and minority rights activists and journalists as well as ill-treatment and unfair judicial proceedings and orders have continued over the last 30 years of administration by the ruling Islamic Republic of Iran.

Every single activity from naming children, shops, firms, factories and institutions in own mother language till peaceful gatherings for the protection of native environment such as Urmia Lake, or preservation of mother native language all are considered to be political and against national security.

Therefore, I as a representative of the Iranian ethnic and language communities who constitute the majority of populations in Iran, ask the. Iranian government to respect the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and act upon useful recommendations made by the UN Committee on this

Convention. The Islamic Republic of Iran must recognize the basic human rights of many ethnic and linguistic minorities in Iran and adopt such policies to guarantee their cultural and political rights. The Iranian regime must also implement and act based on non-discrimination, programs and initiatives to promote tolerance and respect to minority rights.

Thank you very much

Shahin Helali Khyavi

Association for the human rights of the Azerbaijani people in Iran (AHRAZ) concentrates on minorities' human rights situation, especially Azerbaijani Turks in Iran. AHRAZ is an independent and non-governmental foundation. AHRAZ members are present in Europe and North America and collaborating with varied human rights organizations and foundations. sh.khvavinahraz.org www.ahraz.org