

Thank you Madam Chair , for giving me this opportunity as member of AhwazMonitor Organization to bring to your attention the plight of Ahwazi minority in Iran. The Alahwaz cause did not start yesterday or last year, but rather it has been an issue for the past century.

Alahwaz, Arabistan or Khuzestan, inhabited by millions of indigenous Arabs with a shining history since ancient times.

The political history of Alahwaz ranges from being an independent entity to subjected of compulsion of regional powers specifically during Qajar dynasty.

The colonial competition for influence between the great powers for hegemony over the Middle East region and its revenues, especially after discovering oil, contributed significantly to the emergence of Reza Shah and the idea of establishing a central government in Iran that

ultimately led to eliminating the form of governance in Iran which was based on collective regional kingdoms rule also known as *Mamalik-e Mahrouseh* (protected countries).

In 1925, during the reign of Reza Shah, the local autonomy of Alahwaz or Arabistan has been overthrown and its political status went from having state to annexed to Iranian state. since then The name of the province has changed from Arabistan to Khuzestan and same policies applied to many Arab cities and villages in a bid to impose major demographic transitions to the region.

Over the time, the Central state in Tehran attracted large numbers of immigrants, from Persian provinces to work within oil company providing them with great life concessions in order to change the demographic structure of the region.

Ahwazi Arabs have contributed considerably to the success of revolution in Iran in 1979 but their demands for human rights always rejected by the state leaders.

Since the advent of theocratic regime of Iran, Ahwazi Arabs systematically received grave denial of their identity and existence on their lands by the state officials and media outlets and yet the only two constitutional articles concerning minority's rights<sup>15&19</sup> are not implemented.

Shifting power in Iran between the conservatives and the so-called reformists did not change the state's attitudes toward other nations in Iran including Ahwazi Arabs Kurds and Azerbaijani etc.

With All that being said, apparently the Iranian government is continuing its persecution policies undermining ethnic minorities rights in Iran therefor giving minorities impression that this state does not representing them in all aspects.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, minorities in Iran are suffering oppression, aggression and cruel practices and as result they urge international community to establish solid and effective legislations that explicitly recognise and protect their struggle for human rights including the right

of self determination and building their own states.