

Ahwaz Human Rights Organisation (AHRO)

Excellencies, my name is [inaudible] and it is an honor to address this Forum on behalf of Ahwaz Human Rights Organisation, representing an indigenous community in southwestern Iran in the region known as Khuzestan, and historically as Al Ahwaz. For generations, the Ahwazi Arabs have contributed to the cultural and economic life of their homeland. Yet, they continue to face denial of education in their mother tongue, underrepresentation in public life and severe environmental degradation. Recently, the situation has worsened severely. International organizations and UN special rapporteurs have reported unlawful executions, arbitrary arrests, and unfair trials, targeting Ahwazi activists. Clear violations of the ICCPR and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Minorities. For instance, conditions in [inaudible] prison remain alarming. Detainees are denied medical care and political prisoners are held alongside those convicted of violent crimes. The execution of 6 Ahwazi Arab political prisoners in October, and the death of 2 more in November due to the lack of medical treatment, highlight the urgency of intervention. Therefore, we offer 3 recommendations.

- 1) Establish an independent UN monitoring mechanism with access to detention facilities holding Ahwazi detainees;
- 2) Create a UNESCO-led program to support mother tongue education and protect Ahwazi cultural heritage;
- 3) Launch a UNDP-supported initiative to address the region's social and environmental injustices.

Your Excellencies, the recent loss of Ahwazi lives reminds us that inaction is never neutral; it silences voices already struggling to be heard. We urge this Forum to act with urgency to uphold the rights and dignity of Ahwazi Arabs. What is the point of amplifying minority voices if there is no one left to speak. Thank you.