

# Seven Missing Rights

The following are rights that the Iran constitution promises Iranian citizens. To be considered the legitimate leaders of Iran, the government of the Islamic Republic (IRI) must end torture and cruel punishment; free all nonviolent prisoners of conscience; and protect the following rights:

## 1. The Right to Free Speech

- a. The right to criticize the government, in public speech, print, and electronic media
- b. Access to that media (*The IRI operates all television news and limits access to the Internet*)
- c. Freedom from censorship in secular venues, from literature to the study of social sciences

## 2. The Right to Assemble

- a. Clearly mentioned in Iran's constitution, this includes peaceful protests and public gatherings

## 3. The Right of Free Association

- a. Freedom to associate with any group, with the opposite sex, and with religious minorities
- b. The right not to be considered guilty by association (*e.g.* for associating with minorities)

## 4. The Right to Free Elections

- a. Transparent voting in Iran, with an accessible voting trail to enable recounts
- b. The right to run in elections: In the IRI's current system, candidates are vetted by clerical bias (In Iran's constitution, the vetting is much less harsh: mostly a screening for criminal records)
- c. The right to demand an independently monitored re-vote if there is evidence of vote tampering

*According to Iran's own constitution, this democratic process is to be protected by law, and was part of the reform expected when the current regime took power in the Iranian revolution.*

## 5. The Right to Due Process of Law

In Iran today, you can be harassed or arrested without cause. Such tactics of control and intimidation by the IRI are against the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Iran has signed. Again, enforcement of Iran's constitution would ensure this right. We suggest institution of a constitutional court.

- a. This right includes freedom from any threats to your family, including threat of imprisonment
- b. The right to be presented with the evidence of charges against you
- c. The right to have a lawyer present during all legal proceedings
- d. For Iran's judiciary, this right prohibits the creation of courts without lawyers (Such as the one recently created to "show trial" forced confessions by Iran's opposition members. Many of Iran's lawyers refused to participate in the creation of such a court.)
- e. *Presumption of Innocence until Proven Guilty*
  - i. Freedom from detention as a means of intimidation and of silencing dissent
  - ii. Freedom from arbitrary imprisonment (*e.g.* for made-up charges that are not on law books)

## 6. The Right to Unionize

## 7. The Right to Free Practice of Religion

Under IRI rule, the Baha'i and other faiths have suffered persecution for thirty years. Historically, Iran was the first nation to institute religious tolerance, and then the first empire to enshrine basic human rights. It is a source of great shame to most Iranians today that Iran's religions cannot freely coexist.