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Message of Solidarity



His Excellency Mr. Kofi ANAN
Secretary-general
Of the United Nations
New York

Dear Sir,

The horrible terrorist act which brought destruction to the United Nations' Center in Baghdad, in which dozens of its personnel lost their lives, among them, the most notable Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, the high-ranking representative of UN, is no doubt a dark crime which has been perpetrated against all humanity.

The brutal assault on the United Nations' Center in Baghdad - an international organ with a mission no other than serving the interests of Iraqi citizens and sincere endeavor aiming at the re-establishment of peace and stability in this country - can by no codes of morale be justified.

Accordingly, while strongly condemning this brutal immoral act, I would like, on behalf of Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan and the Kurdish people in Iran, to convey to you and the families of the victims of such a blatant savage stunt my most heartfelt condolences.

I am fully confident, though, incidents of this sort can never prevail over the willpower of international community, and the United Nations will resolutely carry on with its efforts to assist the Iraqi people to relieve themselves from this misery.

I wish you every success in your sacred mission.

Most Sincerely Yours,

Abdulla HASSANZADEH
Secretary-general
Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan
21. 8. 2003 - Paris

A Consecrated Day and an Important Message

On the 16 of August 2003, the 58th anniversary of PDKI's establishment, the Secretary-general, Abdullah Hassanzadeh, made a remarkable speech. He, in his speech, after highlighting a number of attributes and traits of this



Party, talked about the current conditions in Iraqi Kurdistan and said, "We hope that the golden opportunities in Iraqi Kurdistan can become a model for all the parts of Kurdistan." In this part of his speech, he also stated that "The Kurdish leadership has fostered a proud legacy for itself and its people; however, there still exists an unaccomplished task: the Kurdish house has not been united, the way the Kurdish nation wants."

The Secretary-general, in this speech, also spoke of the current situation in Iran; after emphasizing on the fact that "Now that the skepticism over the division of power in Iran between reformists and hardliners have elapsed," he expressed content that "all the freedom activists in Iran have arrived at this conclusion that this struggle must be diverted against the whole of the establishment, and so as long as this government holds on to power, no real changes in Iran can be brought about in favour of freedom, democracy, human rights and social justice".

The Secretary-general also turned to an important issue that has been the headline of

Kurdish media, and the theme of discussions among various political groups of Iranian Kurdistan these days; the issue of forming a united front consisting of political parties and figures of Iranian Kurdistan. In this regard too, after

referring to PDKI's endless efforts for such an ambition, the Secretary-general reiterated the views and policies of the Party and stated: "Any united front must consist of all active political parties...A coalition or a front can be realistic when it is formed by all, and each side participates according to its weight." In this regard, to evict some concerns, he stated, "Kurdistan is neither entirely under the domain of PDKI, nor it is under the domain of PDKI and any other party; Kurdistan as



proven, is the centre of struggle, freedom and democracy and pluralism. It has been like this and it will remain as such."

The honourable Secretary-general, at the end of his speech, reverted to the 16 of August and affirmed, "I proudly claim that today is 58 years that the people of Iranian Kurdistan have given their trust to our Party and have encircled its demands. We as Party activists must strive to make this honourable relationship even stronger. Also from this audience, I promise the people of our country that PDKI is still the foundation of their conviction and it will remain faithful to its demands and political objectives."

PDKI Statement Regarding the Student Uprisings of 1999

The freedom-seeking movement of the people of Iran has seen a fresh development in the last few months. Those open letters that various groups and segments of Iranian population write to the regime's officials, to bring up to date the domestic and world opinion, prove that there is a clear and firm confrontation between the popular mass and the whole of the establishment. It is also clear that the peoples' latest uprising has no halt until the final victory - regime change in Iran.

In this regard, the Iranian student movement that enjoys a contented history in the course of Iranian

struggle for freedom has taken a greater and much more active role. This year's commemoration of the 18 Tir tragedy (July 9 1999), the ruthless crack-down of the students uprising by the dogmatic rulers of the regime, has been considered as a new start to give the freedom movement of students and the rest of Iran a new momentum. A few months ago, students and many other dissident groups had decided to commemorate the attack on students with a unique immensity to mark the foundation of a new course of confrontation...

→ *continued on page 14*

The Federal Court of Argentine's Verdict renewed Iranian Regime's disgrace after Mykonous Trial

Juan José Galeano, the Judge of one of the federal courts of Argentine the international warrant for 8 Iranians charged with the 1994 bombing of a Buenos Aires Jewish centre that killed 85 people and wounded some 200. Hadi Soleimanpour, the former ambassador in Argentine is one of these people. Last March, the Judge in charge of the file also asked the international police to arrest four Iranian officials in connection with this bombing. Ali Fallahian, the former intelligence Minister that was also ordered to be arrested in 1996 in connection with Mykonous trial, and Mohsen Rabbani, the former cultural liaison of the Iranian embassy in Argentine are among these four people. The delivery of the verdict disrupted relations between Tehran and Buenos Aires, which led Iran to recall its ambassador to Tehran.

In June, newly elected President Nestor Kirchner ordered the release of secret files of the intelligence services related to the bombing, an action which was hailed as a breakthrough in the case. The case has had domestic political implications in Argentina, where former President Carlos Menem has denied a report in the New York Times last year that he took a bribe from Iran to cover up its involvement

in the attack. The previous Presidents were also accused of concealing evidence to decelerate the investigation.

Asefi, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman considered the verdict politically motivated and without any legal basis, and claimed that "all cooperation was made with concerning bodies in regard to this case; however, it was evident from the start that this judiciary was not going to respect the judicial procedures.

Hadi Soleimanpour was arrested on Thursday, 21 of August in northern English city of Durham, and appeared at London's Bow Street Magistrates Court to hear charges against him in the first phase of a complicated British extradition process that would normally take months to conclude.

Surprisingly, when the German court was investigating the Mykonous Affair, and the government of Iran's involvement in this terror was becoming apparent day by day, the regime's foreign ministry was repeating the current claims; however, these flaw claims were neither able to derails the process of the court nor were they able to save the regime form humiliation at international stage.

The killing of two PDKI cadres by regime's security forces

On Thursday, July 22, 2003 a group of PDKI cadres were on their seasonal tour of the Kurdish regions in Iran in 'Meraw' region a suburb of Sanndaj, where they were ambushed by the paramilitaries of the regime. As a result of this ambush, two cadres, 'Amanulah Razaei' known as 'Hazhar' and 'Shamsadin Rostami' were gunned down.

PDKI Cadres routinely tour the Kurdish regions in Iran to propagate the Party's policies, and support the

burgeoning democratic forces within the population to destabilize the oppressive apparatus of the regime, and secure a long-term framework for the attainment of Kurdish national rights within an integral Iran.

We send condolences to the families of these two martyrs, and hope that their honourable course remains well-crowded.

Zahra Kazemi's Murder, the continuation of 'chain killings'..

In early July, the Islamic Republic's Foreign Policy faced several more challenges: The EU expressed its strongest opposition to Iran's nuclear attempts, and tied its economic and commercial relations with Iran's nuclear transparency and human rights. The ringleaders of the regime finally admitted to the arrest of top Al-Qaeda leaders after several months. As the Belgian head of state and other leaders of the Union had declared, due to concerns over Iran's nuclear program and human rights violations, meeting with Khatami, the Iranian President, were called off. Along with the meeting of the EU foreign ministers, Khamanie, the regime's supreme leader, in the ceremony of delivering the 'Shahab-3' missile to the Revolutionary Guards of the Islamic Republic, regarded the event as a historic movement to defend the dreams of Palestinian people, which in turn led to Israel's escalated concerns over Iran's strategic program. But, the controversial murder of Zahra Kazemi, a Canadian photo-journalist originally Iranian, was the most innermost challenge facing the regime in its international relations in this period. She was murdered by Iran's security forces, which resulted in the diplomatic skirmishes between Canada and the government of Iran.

According to 'Keyhan' newspaper, while in June 22, Zahra Kazemi was taking pictures from Evin prison suspiciously, she was captured at the prison's gate, and was handed over to the Intelligence Ministry two day later; consequently, on the 12 of July, the news of her arrest, torture and murder became the headline of international media especially Canadian and Iranian expatriates. Despite Stephen Hashemi (her only son) and the Canadian government's request to have her body repatriated to Canada, she was silently buried in Iran. According to 'Roydad' news website, "Her death is mysterious, and it is

clearly an intentional act. Her murder is an indication of continued 'chain killings' of writers, academics and political activists that has been in place since this regime's sway on power. We should not forget that the regime's claims of 'investigating these killings' have resulted in the imprisonment of defense attorneys and lawyers such as 'Naser Zarafshan'. One of the reason behind the silent burial of Zahra Kazemi is the closure of this murder case, and from the reactions of the regime's officials, it is apparent that the investigation of the case will also lead



Zahra Kazemi, the murdered photo-journalist

nowhere.

Even though Mr. Khatami ordered the study of the incident by the Intelligence and Islamic Guardian ministries, still the legal physician had stated that the death was the result of a blow to her head; however, the urgent burial and rejecting the repatriation of her body to Canada are indications that the security agents, with the order of senior officials, have committed such a crime. The coordination of the legal physicians and other authorities is quite surprising because a few day before her death, in the report of the investigating doctor sent to Stephen, stated that "Your mother's head sculpt has been broken and her brain has stopped functioning completely, and she is unconscious now." It was then the head of the international press of Cultural and Islamic Guidance Ministry stated that the

reason for her death was a brain paralysis.

Her son in an interview with BBC said that her mother had been detained, tortured, paralyzed and murdered by Iran's security forces. Even though the regime's authorities had stated that Zahra Kazemi had disregarded respecting regulations and had taken pictures from restricted site, however, according to a few other reports she had been detained while taking pictures from a student protest, and she had died from excessive torture in Evin prison. Saeed Mortazavi (Head of Tehran's Courts, and also known as the 'press butcher') had initially regarded Kazemi as a foreign spy student, and considered he capture a successful operation.

It is evident that assertion and allegations are part of the existing philosophy of the Islamic Republic of Iran; so far a considerable number of citizens have been killed in the unlawful courts of the regime all accused of manufactured allegations. If the Iranian authorities are not ready to return Kazemi's body to Canada solely because her mother requested for her burial in Iran, the other concealing reason is disguising the truth of this shocking incident; the regime is concerned that the Canadian government might uncover the truth behind this murder (through medical examination of the body) and prove the fact that she was killed by the agents of the regime, so this crime can be unveiled like any other crimes committed by the establishment.

However, the murder of Zahra Kazemi is another undeniable evidence of the existence of torture, barbaric acts and human rights violations in Iran under the authority of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is also an indication that the Islamic Republic and its entire establishment are incapable of reform and incompatible with international standards.

Women Rights from the Perspective Reflections of Dr. Ghassemlou (On the 14th Anniversary of his assassination)

Dr. Ghassemlou, the competent leader had lectured much about women's deprivations, the difficulties facing their advancement, and the equal rights of woman and man in society in many occasions, which have been published extensively in PDKI's media. He had a deep understanding of the equal rights of man and women; he believed that Kurdish woman must stand up for her own rights. This is an excerpt of one of his speech made on the March 8, 1988, the World Women Day.

"The reality is that our country is an underdeveloped country; however, the most deprived segment of the disadvantaged Kurdish society is, in fact, Kurdish women; their deprivation is not a sign of the guiltiness, rather, unfortunately, the Kurdish society posses a tradition that restricts women's participation in the affairs and struggle of our country. I should also add that Kurdish women, mostly, if they have the opportunity, they do not show such a readiness so as to put the weight of their responsibilities on their shoulders. To accomplish a major task,

which is the attainment of women's rights, often talked about, we refer to the difficulties facing women because these impediments exist. Coincidentally, as we speak of hardship facing Kurds, and reiterate that if Kurdish problem is to be solved, Kurdish people must have control over their destiny and the right to self-determination. So women's issues are similar; they must have the right to determine their future; if they fail to do that, others will not bear the burden.

Of course, one of the worst effects of the Islamic Republic is women's increasing deprivation. This does not mean that they were better-off and equal

"Now if our Iran is a prison for every Iranian and all the oppressed nationalities, it is a larger prison for Kurdish women. As a result, the struggle for women's freedom and their rights for self-determination are in no way apart from the struggle of our people for democracy and autonomy."



A woman helping a PDKI amputee with Dr. Ghassemlou's portrait

in the previous regime; however the reality is that now under the Islamic Republic, women that were most active and engaged in various segments of society, have now been forced into the kitchens, and have in fact been imprisoned under the black cover. Now if our Iran is a prison for every Iranian and all the oppressed nationalities, it is a larger prison for our sisters. As a result, the struggle for women's freedom and their rights for self-determination are in no way apart from the struggle of our people for democracy and autonomy."

Whenever democracy has spread and nations have attained their full rights, women have also secured more freedom. The struggle for women's rights is even lengthier than achieving autonomy. Of course, we all know, and we have stated repeatedly that the struggle for autonomy might be very long; however, the struggle for women's rights goes beyond autonomy. Our sisters, particularly the younger generation must prepare themselves for the days

ahead to keep the torch of struggle stand still.

In our organization and political strife, we must devote a special portion to women who consist of half of the population. As you know, our Party respects the full rights of women along men; however, injecting this into a larger society needs much more efforts. This distance must be eventually eradicated. In our opinion, the more women participate in social and political life, the more developed the society will become, and the more women engage in the political movement of a nation, the more advanced that movement and the mounting chances of its victory.

Amnesty International (AI) Annual Report on Human Right conditions in Iran A Few Words

AI in its latest report (2003) for the period of January to December 2002 has highlighted several instances of human rights violations such as arrest and detention of political figures, students, journalists, and academics, unlawful trials for the detainees and preventing them to have access to lawyers or family members, violations of freedom of expression and association by the judiciary, execution and stoning. The report also views the intensifying political and social tensions during the year, and the rivalry among the camps favouring social reform and the hardliners adversely affecting the human rights under the reign of the regime of Islamic Republic of Iran.

The judiciary, one of the institutions under the control of the hardliners and run by the supporters of 'Velyat-e-Faghih', according to this report, "has responded to expressions of social and political criticism with mounting curbs on freedom of expression and association, including arbitrary arrests; politically motivated prosecutions of students, writers, academics, members of parliament and prominent

advocates of reform; and the arbitrary closure of pro-reform publications. Unfair trials, especially of such people, as well as torture and televised "confessions" continued to be reported. The judiciary used the death penalty and judicial



sentences of flogging as a means of punishment in cases relating to freedom of expression."

It is close to a century that the written fundamental rights of Iran recognizes freedom of press as a legitimate right for the people; however, almost all experts agree that within the last 100 years, except a few short periods, the people of Iran have basically not enjoyed anything of 'freedom of press'; especially after the revolution of 1979, we have witnessed repetitive violations of freedom of press, the closure of papers, detainment of publishers and writers, and finally torture and judicial

agony. In more than twenty times of listing the regime of Islamic Republic in the group of human rights violators by the international community, the breach of the freedom of press has also been the prime offence committed by the regime. In the recent report titled 'Attacks on freedom of expression and association' has been inserted 'Scores of students, academics and journalists were arbitrarily arrested and many faced politically motivated criminal charges based on defamation or security laws. Trials in this

context usually fell short of international fair trial standards and continued to be heard in special courts and frequently behind closed doors, resulting in the imprisonment of people solely on account of their beliefs. Many of the arbitrary arrests of student leaders in January and November were carried out in the manner of abductions, with several students "disappearing" for days. Prisoners of conscience, such as student leader Ali Afshari, faced new charges apparently designed to prolong their imprisonment. Others were released only to be immediately rearrested.'



The report, in this part, has also mentioned the 7 years imprisonment sentence of Hojjatoleslam Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, the 96 years jail term for members of Milli Mazhabi (national-religious association), the death sentence and the 74 lashes for Hashem Aghajari, and finally Mohammad Ali Dadkhah's 5 year sentence and the ban from practicing law for 10 years in connection with the defense of his clients.

Under the medieval authority of Islamic Republic, set aside the defendants, the defense attorney have also not been exempted from prosecution. Their offence, also 'spreading lies' and defending those who have been dragged to courts in connection with their freedom of speech and association. In a regime that certain lawmakers are not immune from prosecution, imprisoning defending lawyers must be a usual business. The report, in this regard, titled 'Lawyers and human rights defenders at risk' states 'Lawyers, who require authorization from the judiciary to practice law, continued to face judicial harassment. Those known as human rights defenders were particularly targeted. Lawyers were occasionally contacted by judicial representatives and told not to represent certain people or face a summons.' The report, in this section, has referred to

the trial of 6 people, including Mohammad Ali Dadkhah and Abdolfattah Soltani, "all of whom had defended cases concerning freedom of expression and association, were charged with vaguely worded offences such as "spreading lies" in connection with the carrying out of their professional duties. After trials that violated the laws governing the legal profession, they received sentences that prohibited them from practicing law and included prison terms, often suspended."

In a totalitarian state

Torture and ill-treatment, including of prisoners of conscience, continued to be used, usually in cases where judicial or security officials denied detainees access to lawyers and relatives... The death penalty and cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments were used against people charged for trying to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and association.

such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, acts of torture and ill-treatment to create fear and terror, and extract confessions from the victims are legitimate. The usage of force and torture from the first day of this regime till now has been going on in various forms, and it has also taken a much broader scope, where many of the victims have lost their lives, due to excessive physical beatings. This time too, AI, as previously, has exposed the acts of torture and ill-treatment and stated "Torture and ill-treatment, including of prisoners of

conscience, continued to be used, usually in cases where judicial or security officials denied detainees access to lawyers and relatives...The death penalty and cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments were used against people charged for trying to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and association. At least 113 people, including six women, were executed, many in public. At least two people were reportedly executed by stoning and at least one execution was broadcast on television. As in previous years,

there was a surge in public executions and floggings between July and September. At least 84 people were flogged. The true numbers of executions and floggings may have been

considerably higher. Political organizations, for example, reported that 450 people were executed in 2002."

Even though, this report does not narrates the notorious extents of continuous violations of human rights in Iran, the fact is that the violation of human rights in Iran is not just a practice; rather, the fundamental roots must be sought in the political-legal structure of the Islamic regime's religious establishment. The Constitution of the system is an evident document of legal discrimination and oppression.

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:



Leaders and representatives of a dozen of the main Iraqi political parties, incorporating different sensitivities and identities forming Iraqi culture and society, participated in the Socialist International Conference 'Building Democracy in Iraq - Working for Peace in the Middle East' held in Rome on 18-19 July. Israeli and Palestinian political leaders and delegates were equally present to address current developments and prospects for moving forward the peace process in the region. The meeting, hosted by the Democrats of the Left, DS, whose delegation was headed by its General Secretary Piero Fassino and President Massimo D'Alema, and the Italian Democratic Socialists, SDI, led by Chair Enrico Boselli, was chaired by SI President António Guterres.

Members of the Iraqi Governing Council present at the Conference for their first international activity since the establishment. A message to the Conference was also received from Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General.

The first day of debates continued the dialogue undertaken by the Socialist International mission in Baghdad in mid-June and was organised into five different panels covering some of the essential elements for building democracy in Iraq. The first concentrated on 'From dictatorship to democracy: creating the new institutions', the second panel on 'Guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Iraqis', the third panel was 'Civil society and women's participation in the political process', the fourth 'For a future of inclusion: empowering people in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society', then the fifth panel 'Regional and International perspectives for the new Iraq'. Conclusions of the meeting, 'A strategy for a sustainable democratic, free and united Iraq', were presented by DS President Massimo D'Alema. Discussions on the second day, centring on 'Working for Peace in the Middle East', were introduced by Piero Fassino, DS General Secretary, followed by Thorbjørn Jagland, Chair of the SI Middle East Committee (DNA, Norway) and counted with the participation of Shimon Peres, Chair of the Israel Labour Party; Yossi Sarid, Leader of Meretz, and Nabil Shaat, Foreign Minister of the Palestinian Authority, as

well as representatives of other Socialist International member parties.

In this part of his speech Mr. Jagland referred to the importance of democracy in Iran and stated: "In 1979, the people of Iran in general rose up for freedom and democracy. This coincided with the meeting of Socialist International in Oslo, where a number of distinguished figures were present at the meeting who are not in our warm gatherings any more. The revolution that started in 1979 was aimed at bringing freedom and democracy; regrettably, as we all know a handful of 'reactionaries' took power, and we witnessed that instead of freedom and democracy, tyranny ruled over the country. However, now we encounter the 1979 circumstances, meaning that the people of Iran, in general, are in favour of fundamental change to evict dictatorship and establish freedom and democracy. We as the SI must fully support the democratic forces of Iran for realizing these precious objectives, because if freedom and democracy are well-established in Iran, it will have direct effect on the whole of the region."

In this conference, the PDKI representative abroad, Dr. Khosrow Abdullahi presented a speech on the situation of Iran. António Guterres welcomed the speech and ascertained that there are dictators in the region, and stated that SI is the supporter of democratic forces, and you must count on our assistance.



Dr. Abdullahi's Speech

Dear President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends,

Before I begin, allow me convey the warm greetings of the PDKI leadership, particularly the Secretary-general, Abdullah Hassanzadeh, and wish your Conference success and fruitful results.

Friends and comrades! We as a political movement representing a segment of Iranian society, the Kurds of Iran, are delighted that the issue of democracy in Iraq and the peace between the Israelis and Palestinians have

attracted the attention of the world community in general and IS in particular. However, as you all know, there are countries in the region that are desecrated with dictators, where no signs of democracy are evident nor human rights are respected, Iran being one of them. It has been a quarter of century that people in Iran live in tyranny. Extrajudicial executions, mass killings and disappearances, systematic imprisonment and torture, public executions have become part of daily life of different segments of society in general and writers, journalists, academics, defense attorneys, students, women and ethnic and religious minorities, especially the Kurds and Bahaias. I will only refer to a few cases:

From January 2003 to May 2003, at least 250 people have been executed. Within the last year, more than 100 newspapers and journals have been shut down and their editors and owners have been put on trial, and a considerable number of these people have been sentenced to imprisonment and public

In these difficult circumstances it is appropriate if we expect the SI to declare its full support and solidarity with this difficult, but brave struggle, which the people of Iran are carrying for freedom, democracy and human rights.



Dr. Khosrow Abdullahi, PDKI Representative Abroad

beatings. Just in July, 6 more journalists, among them, Mr. 'Sahar-Khiz' have been detained accused of 'activities against the regime' and sent to prison. According to our sources, the numbers of journalists that currently live behind bars are 23 people. Another journalist, Ms. Zahra Kazemi, an Iranian with Canadian citizenship who had been detained in Iran, died under severe beatings and torture.

Finally, in the process of latest student demonstrations supported by the people, according to official figures more than 4000 people have been detained, where 2000 of them are still in custody. In regards to the victims of state terrorism of the Islamic Republic internationally, I will remain silent, because you are all aware of it. I only remind you of the assassination of the Party Secretary-generals, Dr. Ghassemlou and Dr. Sharafkani and five of their associates after the meetings of SI, the first in 1989 in Vienna, and the second in 1992 in Berlin by the terrorists of the regime of Iran.

Friends and comrades! In these difficult circumstances it is appropriate if we expect the SI to declare its full support and solidarity with this difficult, but brave struggle, which the people of Iran are carrying for freedom, democracy and human rights.

I appreciate your patience

Iranian Kurd Refugee Crisis: Three Responsible Parties

03 September 2003 - KurdishMedia.com - By Agit Can

The current Iranian Kurd refugee crisis is a result of active and/or passive crimes committed by three parties who are anything but strangers to the trials and tribulations of the persecuted Kurdish nation.

Turkish police, presumably acting with at least tacit approval from the Turkish government, are forcibly deporting Iranian Kurdish refugees, sending them back to Iran from whence they fled. The majority of these refugees are members of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) or party members' families. The Turkish police are deporting these refugees with full knowledge that, immediately upon entering Iran, they will be arrested and face incarceration accompanied by torture, and, perhaps, execution to follow.

Both Turkey and Iran are signatories of 1951 International Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, an additional convention to safeguard the rights of refugees. The most basic right of refugees is that they be protected from being forced to return to situations of danger. However, Turkey is ignoring its obligation to do just that by returning these Iranian Kurds to their oppressor and showing no regard for the inevitable consequences of doing so.



The Iranian Kurd refugees attained refugee status while in Iraqi Kurdistan. Little security was available for them in Iraqi Kurdistan, as Iranian agents had infiltrated this autonomous area bordering Iranian-administered territory. Thus, these refugees were forced to flee to a third state, Turkey. Turkey has demonstrated that it has no interest in providing even temporary safe haven for the refugees, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has yet to take any steps to help these refugees as the Turkish police return them to their persecutor. A major humanitarian disaster is happening at this very moment, and the world is closing its eyes and turning its back.

"We are demanding that Turkey respect the fundamental rights of refugees in general and Iranian Kurdish refugees in particular, which means offering them at least temporary safe haven within Turkey," says Sharif Behruz, Canadian

Representative of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI). "Turkey is taking advantage of the inactivity of the United Nations to do this to the refugees. If the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) had acted earlier and taken more positive measures regarding these refugees, then they would have been settled in a third country with no problem. Due to this inaction, Turkey is much freer to decide how to deal with the refugees. The Iranian government has a history of ill treatment of prisoners, especially Kurdish prisoners. These asylum seekers, as prisoners, will be regarded as infidels and counter-revolutionaries, and will face life in prison if not execution. The Iranian regime also has a history of searching for these asylum seekers who have fled Iran and we are appealing to the Iranian government to respect their rights as well."

If the ongoing crime against the Iranian Kurdish refugees, currently being perpetrated by the Turkish and Iranian regimes, is allowed to continue with nothing but silence from the UNHCR, an unhealthy precedent will be set for the millions of refugees throughout the world.

US sets sights on Iran

By Roger Hardy
BBC Middle East analyst - 30 July 2003

In the first piece in a special four-part series on the United States and Iran, Roger Hardy looks at the debate in Washington over how to deal with the Islamic regime.

The Bush administration has been piling up the pressure on the mullahs who rule Iran - accusing them of sponsoring terrorism, developing weapons of mass destruction and denying freedom to their people. But does the United States favour a change in the regime's behaviour - or a change of regime?

There has been a distinct toughening of the US administration's attitude to Iran ever since President George W Bush famously declared it part of an "axis of evil" 18 months ago.

In the eyes of this administration, the Iran of the ayatollahs - like North Korea and Saddam Hussein's Iraq - is guilty of two main things,



which in Washington's view are interrelated - supporting terrorism and developing weapons of mass destruction. And it's above all the recent evidence about Tehran's nuclear programme which has made Iran a hot issue in US policy-making circles.

Nuclear programme

Michael Eisenstadt is a military expert at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, an influential think-tank: "This has been a major issue for US policy-makers for at least the last

decade. However, recent revelations - prompted by leaks by an Iranian opposition group, which were then confirmed by the US Government - have led people to conclude that Iran is a lot further along on its nuclear programme than previously believed. "Some people believe that perhaps within two or three years the Iranians might have enough fissile material to produce their first bomb. On the other hand, there are US Government estimates which say that we're talking about a timeframe toward the end of the decade," he says. "So it's not clear exactly when the programme might bear fruit. What is clear is that if the programme is to be stopped, action has to be taken now," he says.

In the eyes of this administration, the Iran of the ayatollahs - like North Korea and Saddam Hussein's Iraq - is guilty of two main things, which in Washington's view are interrelated - supporting terrorism and developing weapons of mass destruction.

But what action? The administration is sharply divided between the so-called

"realists" - who favour using concerted diplomatic pressure on Iran - and the hard-liners, known as "neo-conservatives" or "neo-cons", who favour "regime change".

One of the well-known neo-cons is Joshua Muravchik of the right-wing think-tank, the American Enterprise Institute. He links the need for democratic change - not only in Iran but throughout the Middle East - directly to the 11 September attacks against New York and Washington. "I think that what hit home to Americans at 9/11 was that we have to, not just retaliate, but really try to defuse this threat. And I think that the terrorism - Middle Eastern terrorism - comes out of a poisoned political culture," he says.

'Replace tyrannies'

For the neo-cons, the tyrannies of the Middle East must be replaced with democracies, preferably by peaceful means - but they don't rule out the use of force.

The first phase in this process was the toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. But - as Judith Yaphe of Washington's National Defense University explains - the neo-con agenda extends

"I think that the terrorism - Middle Eastern terrorism - comes out of a poisoned political culture"

*Joshua Muravchik,
American Enterprise Institute*

well beyond Baghdad: "I think that Iran, yes, is clearly the target that many of the neo-cons have in mind. First we're going to do Iraq - and then there's Iran, and there's Syria. "But on that list also is Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states and ultimately even Egypt. All of the map of the Middle East was to be re-made in the shape of what Iraq would be - ie democratic," she says. "Well, Iraq isn't going to be what they would like it to be, at least for quite a long time. Does that change their perspective? I don't think they always have a strong sense of reality," she says.

Unresolved debate

The debate between the realists and the neo-cons is often fierce, and it's unresolved. The result is that the administration speaks with different voices. The neo-cons are pleased when President Bush speaks out - as he has repeatedly - in support of Iranian students demonstrating for greater freedom. In contrast, the realists applauded when Secretary of State Colin Powell recently said the factional fight in Iran - between reformists and conservatives - was a

family quarrel in which America should not intervene.

George Perkovich of the

liberal think-tank, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, believes there is a fundamental contradiction in policy-making. "There are people who say, 'Let's try to make an arrangement, get a deal with the Iranian Government to stop its nuclear programme, give up these facilities that concern us - and we'll probably have to reassure them in various ways in order to get that arrangement'," he explains. "There's another group in the administration which says, 'No, we don't deal with satanic regimes. The government of Iran is evil - we don't deal with them. We don't negotiate with them, we don't offer them anything. We want them to leave.' "And so that conflict - between dealing with these people and saying 'No, they should just leave, there should be regime change' - makes US policy incoherent," he says.

One of the issues on which the two groups fail to see eye to eye is the question of how durable the current Iranian regime is - and what the alternatives to it might be.

PDKI Statement Regarding the Student Uprisings

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On the other side, the regime's rulers, scared to death of any freedom movement and apprehensive of their fate, are preparing themselves in various forms to confront students dissident movement. In this regard, to disperse students, they planned to take final examinations a week in advance so universities can close ahead of *18 Tir*. Here, the courageous and awakened students of Iran decided to start their protests ahead of schedule, and ruined the regime's evil tactics. For this reason, the announcement of privatizing universities became a premise for expressing their demands, and above all the demands of freedom-thirsty Iranians.

Now, following a week of student demonstrations, and despite all the crack-downs and brutalities, the protests are in their zenith. This year's students uprising have some distinctiveness that either did not exist in the years before or were less conspicuous. Among them: students demands are no longer restricted to students solely, rather, they have mirrored the demands of all the people of Iran; the protests, unlike the previous demonstrations, are not mainly against the ruling elite, rather, it has attacked the whole of the establishment. More importantly, the demands are expressed dauntlessly; they explicitly recite the riddance of the regime and speak of surfacing a popular administration. We are delighted and hopeful that these series of protests are not restricted to the University of Tehran, and every day new numbers of Iran's universities turn into the axis of resistance, and it is evident that before *18 Tir*, all the universities of Iran will be drawn in.

On the other hand, the people of Iran, particularly in Tehran, have decided to support their sons and daughters decisively, and not leave them alone on their fight for freedom and democracy. In the last week, if the regime's vigilantes had attempted to close down all the avenues leading to the University of Tehran to prevent the general public joining the wave of dissident students, the people of Tehran have turned all the city's streets into centres of confrontation, in a way that the whole city has turned into a large university.

The recent media coverage of student uprising is incomparable to previous protests;

lately, the news of student uprisings in Iran has turned into headlines of world media. This has attracted unique solidarity within the world opinion for the student movement and the freedom movement of the people of Iran. For the first time, a superpower such as the United States has declared support for the demands of the protesters and the freedom movement of the people of Iran. PDKI along with praising the immense uprising of the students in Tehran University and other universities of Iran, and along with offering boundless support for the legitimate demands of the dissidents that are in fact the demands of all the people of Iran:

-appeals to the members and supporters of the Party in Kurdistan and other parts of Iran to support this massive uprising and offer assistance in any way possible.

-appeals to all the Kurdish students in all the universities in Kurdish regions and other parts of the country to participate actively in this movement with a Kurdish identity and strive to embody the national demands of the Kurdish people and other deprived nationalities of Iran within the demands and slogans of this movement. Especially, it is appropriate that the memory of July 13, the anniversary of the assassination of our historical Kurdish leader by this regime, Dr. Ghassemlou be coupled with the memory of *18 Tir*, the brutal crack-down of Tehran University student uprising.

-And above all, we appeal to all the segments of Kurdish society to stand behind their young students and participate in these protests with all their abilities that will be held in Kurdistan universities.

-PDKI appeals to all the people of Iran to join in hand together, and support the student uprisings, and once for all to be done with the regime of Islamic Republic of Iran. Meanwhile, we expect the international community to support the demands of Iranian people for freedom and democracy more decisively, and not allow the regime to use 'domestic affairs' to shed blood on the peaceful and calm uprisings.

**Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan
Political Bureau
17 June 2003**

Iranian Kurdish refugees in the Al Tash camp in Iraq

KALAR, Iraq, July 8 (UNHCR) – Things went from bad to worse for the Iranian refugees at the Al Tash camp outside Baghdad the day the government of Saddam Hussein fell in April. The three-month food ration the refugees of Kurdish descent received ran out in June. There was little water and electricity. And day and night gunfire and grenade blasts echoed through the camp. "We feared for our lives," said a 35-year-old car painter who calls himself Mansoor who left the camp over the weekend. He came to Kalar district, 140 km to the south of Sulaymaniyah in northern Iraq, over the weekend to look for a house to rent and then fetch his wife and two children he left at Al Tash. Mansoor is one of the 405 Iranians from Al Tash who local authorities say arrived in Kalar over the past several days. They say a steady exodus of refugees from Al Tash has been taking place because of the deteriorating situation in the facility caught in one of the more unstable areas in Iraq between the Coalition and well-armed Iraqi gunmen reportedly loyal to the old government.

The arrivals at Kalar say that of the 10,000 to 12,000 refugees at Al Tash before the war only about 25 percent remain, and they expect the rest to pack their bags soon unless aid agencies are able to help them leave. The area around Al Tash is currently a no-go zone for aid workers. When UN refugee agency staff visited the camp in late June, they were told that up to 500 Iranians were leaving the camp daily and moving northwards toward Sulaymaniyah. A UNHCR team travelled to Kalar on Tuesday (July 8) to look into the situation of the arrivals from Al Tash and ask them what their plans were. The refugees appeared to be in good shape. They were staying in rented houses or with relatives. They said they could not return to Iran for various reasons – mainly political – and planned to remain in the meantime at Kalar, a town of about 100,000 in a region populated mainly by Iraqi Kurds. "We have identified relocation sites for the Iranian refugees at Al Tash," says Iraj Imomberdiev, UNHCR's head of office in Sulaymaniyah. "We are prepared to receive them in these sites as soon as it is reasonably safe for us to transfer them." The local authorities approved the relocation sites and the movement of the refugees into the area.

UNHCR staffer Kamaran Ali said the agency is caring for some 3,500 Iranian refugees in Sulaymaniyah and Erbil, providing food ration cards, medical aid, funds to subsidise their rent and cash assistance for the most vulnerable. For now, humanitarian activities are extremely limited in Al Tash camp because of the continued security risks.

The camp houses Iranians who left their country after the fall of the Shah in 1979 and during the war between Iraq and Iran from 1980 to 1988. The former government established the camp in the mid-1980s to gather all the Iranian ethnic Kurds in the country in one place. Some of the residents in the camps were refugees recognized by UNHCR. Mansoor, who was forced to flee with his family after the Islamic theocracy took over his country, was one of them. Others were driven into Iraq during the initial stages of the Iraq-Iran war.

Because the Iranian Kurds were treated well by the old regime, they had been the object of resentment among the Arabs and subjected to violent attacks and robbery after the collapse of the previous government. "It was getting worse by the day, so I just decided to pack my family along with 30 other people in a pickup truck and left," said Jalal Wali, who left Iran in 1985 and never returned. "We were threatened all the time by the Iraqis. We had to go." Mansoor said that before the war, he used to sell perfume and toiletries from house to house, getting his merchandise on credit. He earned well, but since the end of the war, he has not ventured out of the camp because the Iranians have been attacked and robbed by Iraqi Arabs.

Many of those who fled Al Tash have reportedly slipped into Iran, but many of the arrivals feared venturing on the other side of the border, which is littered with land mines from the war. The frontier also is heavily militarized. The refugees say they have received recent reports of two returnees killed, but these reports could not be confirmed. For the moment, their biggest concern is getting settled and finding jobs. "We need help from God, but we also have to find jobs," said Mansoor.

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Photo by: Rasool Nafisi

"Often described as the international bill of rights for women, the Convention provides for equality between women and men in the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Discrimination against women is to be eliminated through legal, policy and programmatic measures and through temporary special measures to accelerate women's equality, which are defined as non-discriminatory." *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. New York, 18 December 1979*

"If the government of Iran's desire to become a signatory of this Convention and its Protocols were initiated in their respect and concern for human rights, prior to anything, they would bring about changes to their back-warded constitution, and reserve an appropriate and humane status for women within it, where women are deprived from their most fundamental rights: from the right of divorce and child custody to the right to bear witness and candidature for presidency and etc..." *Khadija Mazour, member of the PDKI Central Committee and the editor of quarterly JINAN.*