

H. Res. 744

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

December 1, 2022.

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders, and more than 10,000 have been dismissed from government and university jobs;

Whereas the Baha'i International Community documented a more than 50-percent increase in hate propaganda directed against the Baha'is in the 12-month period ending in August 2020, compared to prior years, with more than 9,500 such articles, videos, or web pages appearing in Iranian government-controlled or government-sponsored media;

Whereas, on December 16, 2021, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/C.3/76/L.28) criticizing Iran for human rights abuses and calling on Iran to carry out wide-ranging reforms, including—

- (1) “ceasing use of the death penalty and commuting the sentences for child offenders on death row”;
- (2) “ensuring that no one is subjected to torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment”;
- (3) “ceasing the widespread and systematic use of arbitrary arrests and detention”;
- (4) “releasing persons detained for the exercise of their human rights and fundamental freedoms”;
- (5) “improving conditions inside prisons”;
- (6) “eliminating discrimination against women and girls”; and
- (7) “eliminating discrimination against ethnic, linguistic, and other minorities”;

Whereas in the 2022 Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom issued in April 2022, it is reported that the Government of Iran—

- (1) “arrested scores of Baha’is across Iran, many of whom were held incommunicado or taken to undisclosed locations”;
- (2) “sent Ministry of Intelligence agents to search the home of a Baha’i citizen and confiscated her belongings”;
- (3) “continued to deny university education to Baha’is on account of their faith”;
- (4) “closed six Baha’i businesses”;
- (5) “demolished the homes of three Baha’is without warning”;
- (6) “announced the auction of thirteen Baha’i farms”; and
- (7) “continued to deny Baha’is the right to bury their deceased in empty plots at the Golestan Javid cemetery outside Tehran which the community has used for decades. Instead, Baha’is are being forced to use the

Khaveran mass grave site where victims of the 1988 prison massacres are buried”;

Whereas the Iran section of the Department of State’s 2021 Report on International Religious Freedom issued in June 2022 provides, in part—

(1) “Security forces in Shiraz and Mazandaran Province conducted multiple arrests of Baha’is in their homes or workplaces in the last week of September without providing reasons or charges.”;

(2) “Authorities continued to confiscate Baha’i properties as part of an ongoing state-led campaign of economic persecution against Baha’is. Authorities issued an order in April denying Baha’is permission to bury their dead in empty plots at the Tehran-area cemetery designated for Baha’is, forcing them to bury them at a mass grave site.”;

(3) “Authorities reportedly continued to deny the Baha’i, Sabean-Mandaean, and Yarsani religious communities, as well as members of other unrecognized religious minority groups, access to education and government employment unless they declared themselves as belonging to one of the country’s recognized religions on their application forms.”; and

(4) “Government officials continued to disseminate anti-Baha’i and antisemitic messages using traditional and social media.”;

Whereas, on July 4, 2022, the Baha’i International Community noted “The Iranian government’s systematic campaign to persecute the Baha’i religious minority accelerated again this past week with the arrest, court hearing or imprisonment of at least 18 more Baha’i citizens across the country, bringing the June total to 44 people.

Hundreds of others, meanwhile, also await summonses to court or to prison.”;

Whereas, on July 21, 2022, the Baha’i International Community announced “More than 20 Baha’is in Shiraz, Tehran, Yazd and Bojnourd, have been arrested, jailed or subjected to home searches and business closures since the beginning of July. Last month 44 Baha’is were arrested, arraigned or imprisoned, suggesting an escalating crisis in the Iranian government’s systematic campaign against the country’s largest non-Muslim religious minority. . . .”;

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8514) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals who are “responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009”; and

Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–158) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);

(2) calls on the Government of Iran—

(A) to immediately release the imprisoned or detained Baha'is and all other prisoners held solely on account of their religion;

(B) to end its state-sponsored campaign of hate propaganda against the Baha'is; and

(C) to reverse state-imposed policies denying Baha'is and members of other religious minorities equal opportunities to higher education, earning a livelihood, due process under the law, and the free exercise of religious practices;

(3) calls on the President and the Secretary of State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to immediately condemn the Government of Iran's continued violation of human rights, and demand the immediate release of prisoners held solely on account of their religion; and

(4) urges the President and the Secretary of State to utilize available authorities to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other individuals

directly responsible for serious human rights abuses, including abuses against the Baha'i community of Iran.

Attest:

Clerk.