

To the Progressive Forces of Iran and around the World: Help us and ask why our loved ones were executed!

Mr. Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary General,

As you are aware, in August and September of 1988 hundreds of political prisoners were put to death by firing squads of the Islamic Republic of Iran after undergoing years of torture in the prisons and after months in which family visits had been banned. In some prisons there were mass hangings.

Weeks before this atrocity, the families of political prisoners expressed their deep anxiety about the possibility of the imminent catastrophe. Unfortunately no one chose to hear these concerns until the tragedy took place and hundreds of noble, selfless and freedom-loving individuals were sacrificed. These were our spouses and children.

Please note that most of them had already received their sentence of imprisonment in the regime's show trials and some had almost completed serving their sentence and were about to be released. They were executed with absolutely no legal justification, no fair trial and solely for their beliefs and their refusal to endorse the regime.

We, the families of the victims of this barbaric act, were kept in the dark for several months, only to receive a bag of personal clothing of our loved ones at the end. We were warned not to hold memorial services or wakes for our loved ones.

Sixteen years have now passed and we are still deprived of the most basic right of a mother or a spouse to know when and why our loved ones were murdered, where they have been buried and whether the victims were allowed to write a will or testament.

We, the families of the victims of this national tragedy, expect you and your office to assist us with our inquiries and demand of the authorities of the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran to:

- Officially disclose the names of the murdered victims of the bloody September 1988;
- Release the information on the date of execution and the burial site of our loved ones to us, the grieving families;
- Give reasons for their re-trial and revised sentence, and identify the authorities of the Islamic Republic who permitted this;
- Declare under what charges our loved ones were executed.

We have repeatedly contacted the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic and requested answers to the above questions, but we have not received any response from any of them. In face to face contacts with the authorities the mourning families receive nothing but abuse. We, the parents and families of these honourable victims of this atrocity, have been insulted and threatened at the Khavaran cemetery, where many of these martyrs have been buried, just for

fixing signs and placing flowers. They do not allow us to mark the graves of our loved ones in any way. In some cases, they have even destroyed the graves of political prisoners killed by the previous regime, hoping to wipe out the memory of any non-conformist activists.

We will not rest until all aspects of this crime are made public, and until its perpetrators are brought to justice.

We call for the assistance of the progressive people of Iran and the world to help us uncover the graves of these victims and obtain the formal disclosure of their names, and to reveal the dark side of this tragedy. In particular, we ask you to help us and demand answers to the above questions from the authorities of the regime of the Islamic Republic [of Iran].

Best regards,

Signed by a number of the families of the victims of the national catastrophe of mass executions

Attached are the names of many of the martyrs, those available to us, and pictures of the mass graves in the Khavaran cemetery.

CC: UN Human Rights Commission
UN Human Rights Reporters
Progressive organisations and parties of Iran and around the world.