

April 18, 2011

Ms. Navanethem Pillay
High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations

On April 16, 2011, a group of Sunni, Arabic speaking Iranians, of the province of Khuzestn, City of Ahvaz, located in the south of Iran, protested their unagreeable plight through peaceful demonstrations. Unfortunately, they were suppressed violently by the government. Pursuant to the violent attack, sporadic conflicts have also been detected.

During such conflict more than 12 persons were killed, more than 20 were injured and tens were apprehended. Families and friends of the deceased have been silenced with the threat of the governmental authorities. Those who conducted interviews with the Arab language press have also been arrested.

With regard to the geographical importance of the province of Khuzestan and the fact that the Arab speaking Iranians of this region, have suffered extensive discrimination and lived under inappropriate conditions during the last thirty-two years in the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is the probability of expansive conflicts in the future.

At your discretion, please take any and all measures to request the unconditional release of those who have been illegally arrested during the recent Khuzestan conflicts. Also, please provide this report to the Special Rapporteur to be designated for the Islamic Republic of Iran and let it be reflected in the file on Violations of Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

With best regards,

Shirin Ebadi
Human Rights Advocate and 2003 Nobel Laureate

CC: His Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations; The Honourable members of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions; The Honourable UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief