

**United  
Nations****Secretary-  
General****New York****26 October 2022****Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on attack at Shah Cheragh Holy Shrine in Shiraz, Iran****Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General strongly condemns the terrorist attack today on the Shah Cheragh Holy Shrine in Shiraz, Islamic Republic of Iran, for which the so called Islamic State claimed responsibility.

Such acts targeting religious sites are especially heinous. The Secretary-General stresses the need to bring to justice the perpetrators of this crime against civilians exercising their right to practice their religion.

The Secretary-General conveys his deep condolences to the bereaved families and the people and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He wishes a speedy recovery to the injured.

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High Council for Human  
Rights of the  
Islamic Republic of Iran

# **Reviewing the Methods that are used by Iranian Law Enforcement Forces to Deal with Riots**

**The High Council for Human Rights of  
The Islamic Republic of Iran  
(22 October 2022)**

*In the Name of GOD*

**The High Council for Human Rights of The Islamic Republic of Iran**  
**(22 October 2022)**

## **Reviewing the Methods that are used by Iranian Law Enforcement Forces to Deal with Riots**

During the recent riots, the police force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the principal guardian of public security and order exercised utmost restraint and tolerance and tried to calm the situation through the use of non-coercive methods with the aim to protect citizens and public and private properties. The martyrdom of tens of law enforcement officers and the injury of more than 5,000 , bear witness to the intensity of violence perpetrated by the rioters and the presence of violent elements in the non-peaceful gatherings who disturbed the public security and order.

The present report aims to examine how law enforcement agents dealt with the riots in three categories: **a)** instructions, bylaws, and code of conduct of the police on how to act against riots, **b)** field performance of law enforcement forces, and **c)** some examples of the use of extreme and targeted violence by the rioters against the law enforcement forces.

### **Instructions, Bylaws & Code of Conduct of Police**

In line with its' expertise-oriented approach, the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran provides focused training to all the forces under its command in various fields. Human rights constitute one of the main components of the curricula of the Specialized University of Law Enforcement Sciences<sup>1</sup>.

On the first day of the protests, which in some places morphed into riots in a wholly pre-planned manner, the Commander-in-Chief of the Law Enforcement forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran – in a bid to protect the rights of the citizens – signed off on a directive to all police forces throughout the Country to exercise maximum self-restraint. The directive emphasized upon the followings:

- Prohibition of carrying weapons by police forces during the protests;
- Prohibition of entering universities and education centers by police forces;
- Necessity to respect the rights of detainees, including the prohibition of any assault or offensive action thereagainst;
- Prohibition of any arbitrary detention;
- Provision of all treatment and medical services to detainees; and
- Guaranteeing the right of detainees to contact their families and having access to lawyers.

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<sup>1</sup> This University is mostly known as Amin Police Academy, which is affiliated with the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

## **Field Performance Law Enforcement Forces**

The Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran follows an intelligent and social-oriented model in dealing with unrest and riots.<sup>2</sup> The model is defined in several steps, on the basis of which individual and group training are predicted, planned and implemented. Based upon this model, before direct engagement for dispersing the rioters, police forces take the following measures as the first steps: negotiation, persuasion, use of water cannons and paintball guns, and the next steps would include the use of personal equipment (shield, anti-impact clothing, etc.), general equipment (LRADs, light projectors, sprinklers, etc.) and non-lethal weapons (paintball and tear gas) with a view to minimizing damage.

Examination of the records of missions assigned to the police over the last few years bears witness to the fact that whenever they have made interventions, there have been minimal complaints against them regarding respecting citizens' rights. According to this approach and in the face of the recent unrest and riots, it was tried to implement the necessary measures to maintain order and security of the society while minimizing the damage to the rioters and respecting the rights of citizens.

In order to protect the rights of female citizens, the women's police unit has been formed in six provinces, including in Tehran. This unit dealt with individuals participating in the riots, with advanced and specialized training and a deterrent approach. According to reports, they have had a successful and effective performance.

## **Some Examples of Use of Extreme & Targeted Violence by Rioters against Law Enforcement Forces**

During the riots, some individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, certain foreign countries and Persian-language media outlets abroad – in addition to systematically and continuously inciting people to violence and teaching them how to use firearms, *armes blanches* and incendiaries – perpetrated the most violent actions against public and private properties, State-owned buildings and even against people and police forces. Some examples of these violent behaviors are: running over nine police officers in Tehran, cutting the throat of an officer in Amol, setting fire to another officer in Mashhad, launching physical attacks on those who refused to participate in the gatherings and

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<sup>2</sup> On the strength of Articles 4 and 55 of the Law on the Use of Weapons by Armed Forces Officers in Necessary Cases, police officers are authorized to use firearms in order to restore order, control illegal marches, quell riots, disorder and unrest that cannot be controlled without the use of weapons, maintain order and security during illegal armed marches, armed unrest and riots, and to defend themselves and the lives of other civilians.



accompany the rioters, disturbing public order, violating the rights of citizens, especially women and children, inflicting widespread damage upon public and private properties, including by creating roadblocks and preventing the police from performing duties thereof to maintain public order as well as preventing the free movement of emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire engines.

Many public and private properties were either set ablaze or looted during the violent riots. A significant number of law enforcement officers and ordinary people were also killed or injured by firearms and *armes blanches* brandished by the rioters. Civilian administrative centers and public services such as banks, ATMs, ambulances (despite patients being on board), public transportation, police cars, fire engines, and religious places – many of which were destroyed and burned – were subject to a systematic and wide range of attacks. The rioters have hitherto burned or destroyed more than 1200 banks, places, cars and motorcycles. As a result of the riots, dozens of law enforcement officers and those safeguarding the security of the people have been martyred and over 5,000 of them have also sustained injuries. The aforementioned statistics are emblematic of the restraint exercised by the security forces on the one hand, and the violence perpetrated by those taking part in the non-peaceful assemblies and riots on the other. It is evident that the judicial system, by virtue of the law, has recognized the right to lodge a complaint for all the people who have been financially and physically injured during the riots, as well as the families of those who have lost their lives – the judicial system will spare no effort in order to pursue justice. Furthermore, judicial cases have been filed for all the deceased to investigate the cause of the death and those involved therein to act according to the law accordingly.

It should be noted that terrorist groups have played a proactive and undeniable role in inciting and encouraging rioters to resort to maximum violence against law enforcement forces and citizens. In this framework, they have issued several calls and statements to implement and operationalize their agendas in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It should be noted that based upon relevant international documents such as the code of conduct for police officers and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, should protesters deviate gatherings from the peaceful nature thereof (by carrying firearms, resorting to hate speech and inciting to violence), the police of each country are obliged to restore order, security and peace to the society and if needed, use different equipment within the framework of the law. Therefore, police officers can use firearms for legitimate self-defense or in defense of others when deemed necessary to save lives. Nevertheless, the use of force is prescribed only in emergencies – and that too, in a limited, temporary manner and in accordance with the law.

Regrettably, specific human rights mechanisms and certain countries described the riotous assemblies that disrupt the security and public order, as “peaceful” which resulted in encouragement of violence. It is evident that using weapons and resorting to violence against people and police forces as well as attacking public and private properties and setting them on fire are not instances of peaceful protests, and cause legal liability. Public order requires that the holding of any assembly be notified to the police. The importance of the presence of the police is to ensure that no harm is inflicted upon the gathering and to guarantee public security and order. However, the police never resorted to force from the outset. They adopted a five-pronged approach when dealing with rioters and illegal gatherings in the following order: **a)** exercising tolerance and restraint, **b)** calling for calm through speeches and verbal warnings, **c)** dispersing gatherings without resorting to deterrent means, **d)** if necessary, using control equipment according to the law, and **e)** arresting rioters.