

[TRANSCRIPT OF ORIGINAL NEWS ARTICLE IN ENGLISH]

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Baha'is ask Guam to protest oppression

Proof: U.N. reveals secret document outlining Iran's official policy to eliminate Baha'is

The Iranian government's continuing systematic oppression of the Baha'i community of that country has taken a new turn with the removal of corpses from the Baha'i cemetery in Tehran. The graves are being destroyed and the bodies loaded into trucks and removed to a destination unknown to the Baha'is, a news release from the Baha'i Community of Guam said.

The government's official high-level policy to oppress and persecute the 350,000-member Baha'i community in Iran was recently revealed in a United Nations report released this February to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

This previously secret document, issued by Iran's Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council, and endorsed in the handwriting of Ali Khamenei, successor of the late Ayatollah Khomeini, listed specific action to be taken to "confront and destroy" the cultural roots of the Baha'i Faith. The policy also, according to quotations from the memorandum, aims to treat the Baha'is of Iran "such that their progress and development shall be blocked".

The document, published by Special Representative, Professor Reynaldo Galindo Pohl of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, who has been investigating charges of human rights violations in Iran for the Commission since 1985, is seen by the International Baha'i community as a further attempt by the Iranian government to create an environment where the Baha'i community in Iran can be slowly strangled without arousing international attention.

According to local Baha'i spokesperson, Annabelle L.H. Aguon, "The world has known for years that Baha'is have been targets of persecution in Iran. However, this document brings to light the degree to which the persecution of the Baha'is is controlled and condoned at the highest levels of the Iranian government. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the Mariana Islands has, along with the rest of the Baha'i world, sent letters of protest to the Iranian government over this recent and disgraceful action."

Aguon says that representatives of the Marianas Baha'i community are approaching the Governors of Guam and the CNMI, as well as other local government leaders, in order to seek support for an international campaign to bring the contents of this document to the attention of governments, NGOs and the world at large.

Since 1979, more than 200 Baha'is have been executed or killed in Iran, hundreds more have been imprisoned, and thousands have been deprived of jobs, pensions, and/or education. Although the rate of killings slowed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in April 1992 a Baha'i businessman in Tehran was executed solely for his religious beliefs, triggering concern that a new round of killings might be

underway. The current action of digging up and removing the bodies of the Baha'is buried in the cemetery of Tehran is certainly a further step in implementing the objective of destroying the cultural roots of the Baha'is, as stated in the secret document.

The Tehran Baha'i cemetery, which contains thousands of graves, is of historic significance to the Baha'i community of Iran and to the whole Baha'i world.

[The content above was transcribed from the original document. If you find any typographic error, kindly email us using the 'Contact' page form.]