

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets]

[Personal information has been **redacted**.]

The Honourable Mr. Abolhassan Banisadr, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

With respect, [we] wish to present for your attention [the fact] that since the establishment of the Islamic Republic in our beloved Iran, close to 22 months ago, in spite of the expectations of the Baha'i community from the regime of Islamic justice, and after years of being subjected to oppression and tyranny, this defenceless community, which [is larger] than all other religious minorities in our beloved country of Iran, has [been subjected to] all kinds of new atrocities and pressures, and strange accusations have been added to the previous allegations. Even though the Baha'i community has, by word and deed, proven its strict obedience to the government of the Islamic Republic, yet the lives, properties and honour of the members of this community all over the country have fallen prey to malicious and spiteful motives of the ill-wishers and fanatic elements:

- The dismissal of hundreds of honest and faithful Baha'i employees from government and government- affiliated organizations;
- Disregard for their earned rights;
- Attacks and raids on Baha'i homes in some cities and towns;
- Battery and assault, and [Baha'is'] being forced to recant their personal belief;
- Setting fire to homes and business stores;
- Looting Baha'i properties;
- Refusal to allow burial of the dead;
- Detention of Baha'is in various cities with no proof of any guilt;
- Execution of a number of them merely for their religious belief;
- The kidnaping of 14 distinguished members of the Baha'i community since last year, including nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Iran, with no information of their whereabouts, their fate or whether they are still alive. These members are elected annually in order to manage the internal affairs of the community and to solve problems of its members;
- Seizure and confiscation of all properties, possessions and historic sites belonging to the Baha'i community;

These are only part of the oppression and tyranny against the innocent community of Baha'is, and despite numerous attempts and pleas to the authorities, these atrocities and deprivations have not yet subsided.

The main purpose for submitting this plea, to you and to other authorities, as defenders of the masses, is two recent terrifying incidents which took place near Birjand, violating all religious and moral

principles, bringing even greater sorrow and despair than before to the members of the Baha'i community of our beloved Iran. It is quite conceivable that such actions, repeated by the fanatics and the people heedless of the interests of the state, can heavily damage the reputation and prestige of Islamic Republic.

The details of the incidents are as follows:

At 11:30 p.m. on Friday, 30 Aban 1359 [21 November 1980], in Khunik Village in Birjand, about fifteen masked intruders attacked the home of Mr. Rahmatollah Khuniki, who lived with his wife and two innocent children. They carried with them clubs, sticks, rocks and pickaxes and broke in through the roof, entering the home, setting it on fire using oil and firewood, and seriously beating and injuring Mr. Rahmatollah Khuniki. Mr. Khuniki, despite his injuries, found his way to his Muslim relatives and sought help from them; however, the perpetrators managed to escape prior to their return. The incident was reported immediately to the local religious leaders, the gendarmerie [police] station and the committee.

While [they were] investigating this case, a more distressing event took place two nights later in the Village of Nuk in Birjand, where a Baha'i family was living, resulting in the death of Mr. Gholam-Reza [Mohammad-Hosein] Masoumi and severe injuries and burns to his wife. It is reported that at 10:00 p.m. on Sunday, 2 Azar 1359 [23 November 1980,] a group of unidentified people, presumably the same attackers of the Khunik Village incident, covered in masks, attack the residence of the late Mr. Masoumi, laced the entrance door with oil and set it on fire. Using shovel, pickaxe, club and rock, they seriously beat and injured Mr. Masoumi and his wife. Mr. Masoumi tried to seek help from the local residents, but the assailants stopped him on his way, poured oil on the injured and beaten body of this hard working and innocent villager, and set him on fire alive, killing him in a most horrific manner. They then dragged his body and threw it in a ditch and set it on fire again. The innocent wife of this deceased man died in the hospital two days later due to severe burns and injuries to her body.

Even though the prosecutor of the Judiciary of Birjand and the gendarmerie [police] station have conducted preliminary investigations, there are suspicions that justice may not be served in this case and the attackers, perpetrators and murderers may not receive a deserved retribution for their savage acts, and this incident will give rise to boldness and recklessness in the ill-wishers and so-called Muslims, causing similar inhumane incidents to be repeated in other places.

We therefore bring this to your sublime attention, who are among the few guardian authorities and defenders of the masses, so that, according to religious and moral obligation, you may hearken to the voice of the oppressed and the innocents, currently living under the shadow of the Islamic government, to administer justice and not allow such inhumane acts to be repeated by ungodly people under the reign of the Islamic Republic, the religion of beneficence, wisdom, forbearance and exhortation. All the chapters of the Holy Book of its religion start with the name of the God, Who is the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

With respect,

On behalf of the Baha'i Community of Iran

[two signatures]

[Copies to:]

1. Ayatollah Montazeri
2. Hojatoleslam Seyyed Ahmad Khomeini

3. Hojatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of Parliament
4. Ayatollah Mousavi Ardebili
5. Ayatollah Mahdavi Kani
6. Supreme Judiciary Council
7. Commission for Article 90 of the Islamic Consultative Assembly
8. All members of the Islamic Consultative Assembly

Address: [redacted]