

[TRANSCRIPT OF ORIGINAL NEWS ARTICLE IN ENGLISH]

[Press release]

[Date:] 13 January 1982

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Australia News Release

Report on Baha'i executions

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Tony Street MP, said today he had received reports that eight of the nine members of the Iranian National Baha'i Council were executed late in December. There had been no reports of any trials having taken place.

The Minister also said that he had seen one report that the Iranian Supreme Court President, Ayatollah Mussavi Ardebili, had denied that such executions had occurred, and a later report quoting Ayatollah Ardebili as saying that the eight had in fact been executed, not for religious reasons but on charges of spying for foreign powers.

The Minister said that the Department of Foreign Affairs had called in the Iranian Charge d'Affaires to request him to advise his Government of the reports reaching Australia, to ask him to ascertain their truth and to point out our abhorrence of persecution on religious or any other grounds.

The Minister noted that there had been persistent reports of persecution and ill-treatment of Baha'is in Iran. Justifications published in the press in Iran had clearly shown that persecution was in fact occurring and that its motivation was religious intolerance rather than fear of subversive activities.

The Minister called on the Iranian government to make clear its commitment to the protection of basic human rights.

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