



Dr. Hassan Rouhani
President
Islamic Republic of Iran

Your Excellency:

On May 19, 2017 Iranian voters elected you to a second term as president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The promises you made during the campaign to address human rights issues in the country energized many of Iran's citizens. We, the undersigned human rights organizations, call upon you to select a cabinet that reflects these commitments and fulfils your pledges to the people of Iran.

You vowed your administration would “not accept gender discrimination and injustice.” You defended journalists arrested for reporting on corruption and denounced those who were involved in media censorship. Memorably, in a speech at a campaign rally in Hamadan on May 8, 2017, you said “the people of Iran don't accept those who only hung and imprisoned people for the past 38 years,” interpreted by many as a reference to Mr. Raisi's alleged role in grave human rights abuses, including the mass executions of political prisoners in 1988.¹

As a first step to meet these promises, we urge you to not to reappoint Mr. Mostafa Pourmohammadi to his position as Minister of Justice that he was appointed to in 2013 and to investigate these serious allegations against him in a transparent manner. With Mr. Pourmahammadi serving as the Minister of Justice, it is hard to imagine that an impartial and transparent investigation can be lead by the administration.

Human rights groups have documented Mr. Pourmohammadi's involvement in the 1988 mass executions. In 1988 Mostafa Pourmohammadi reportedly represented the Ministry of Information on a three-person committee that ordered the execution of thousands of political prisoners. Over the course of three months, Pourmohammadi and co-panelists traveled to prisons, conducted interrogations, and handed down death sentences to political prisoners deemed “disloyal” to the Islamic Republic or apostates.

The majority of those executed were already serving prison terms handed down by the revolutionary courts following unfair trials. Many had not even been accused of violent acts. Others remained in prison despite having served out their sentences years earlier, and some were nearing the end of their terms. Those executed also included women and prisoners who had been arrested and sentenced to prison in their teens.

Moreover, in a later position as deputy to the Minister of Intelligence, Pourmohammadi was allegedly

¹ Inna news agency. (May 8, 2017). <https://goo.gl/dwbyht>.

implicated in the “serial murders” of prominent intellectuals in Iran in 1998 by agents of the Intelligence Ministry.

Mr. President, considering Mr. Pourmohammadi’s record, renewing him in his position does not reflect the promises you made and the trust many voters have placed in you. Ahead of your upcoming second term that begins on August 5, we call upon you to appoint a new Minister of Justice with a proven commitment to the principles of human rights.

We thank you for attention to these important matters and look forward to hearing from your office in the near future.

Sincerely,

Roya Boroumand, Executive Director
Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation

Kamran Ashtary, Executive Director
Arseh Sevom

Shahin Helali Khyavi, Director
Association for Human Rights of the Azerbaijani People in Iran

Taimoor Aliassi, UN Representative
Association pour les Droits Humains au Kurdistan d'Iran-Genève (KMMK-G)

Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan, Executive Director
Ensemble Contre La Peine de Mort (ECPM)

Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East Director
Human Rights Watch

Mani Mostofi, Director
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Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, Executive Director
Iran Human Rights

Shahin Milani, Legal Director
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