



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Misc. org "B"  
Iran

2 June 2009

Dear Ms. Dugal,

I would like to thank you for your letter dated 8 May 2009 concerning the arrest by the Iranian authorities of seven leaders who had been coordinating the activities of the Baha'i community.

Since their arrest, both the High Commissioner for Human Rights and I have expressed our concerns to the Iranian authorities about their detention and the absence of due process in their cases. In my annual report to the General Assembly on the human rights situation in Iran, I have also expressed my concerns on reports received about members of the Baha'i community being subjected to arbitrary detention, false imprisonment, confiscation and destruction of property, denial of employment and Government benefits and denial of access to higher education.

I will continue my efforts to ensure that the seven leaders of the Baha'i community are assured of their right to due process and other basic human rights.

Yours sincerely,

  
BAN Ki-moon

Ms. Bani Dugal  
Principal Representative of the  
Baha'i International Community  
to the United Nations  
New York

2009

29 - 04890

Astrid Melchner/NY/UNO  
22/05/2009 09:25 PM

To "Kishore Mandhyan" <mandhyan@un.org>  
cc Sandar Hla/NY/UNO  
bcc  
Subject Fw: Draft response by the SG to the Baha'i International Community

Dear Kishore,

Here is a draft reply prepared by OHCHR to the Baha'i community letter. (Sandar, can you pull out the original letter? If you search the log under Bani Dugal it should come out).

Best

Astrid  
Ann Syauta

----- Original Message -----

From: Ann Syauta  
Sent: 05/22/2009 07:12 PM EDT  
To: Astrid Melchner  
Cc: Laila Bourhil; Jessica Neuwirth; Craig Mokhiber  
Subject: Draft response by the SG to the Baha'i International Community

Dear Astrid,

Hope you are well. Attached below is a draft response by the SG (as prepared by Laila and revised by Rory in Geneva) to the letter sent by the Baha'i International Community concerning the arrest of seven leaders.

Laila has consulted with DPA and they are of the view that the letter should be sent by the HC and not the SG. Laila has informed them that the response simply reiterates information contained in the SG's report to the GA on the situation of human rights in Iran and referred to the HC's call for more high-level interventions on human rights issues. It is, however, up to the EOSG to decide on the best course of action.

For your information, a similar letter was also sent to the HC and a response is being prepared from our side.



Draft reply.doc



- 050809 SG letter.pdf



- 030409 Eng ltr to Prosecutor General IRAN.pdf

Best,  
A.

Ann M. Syauta  
Human Rights Officer  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
New York Office  
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United Nations



Nations Unies

Executive Office of the Secretary-General  
Cabinet du Secrétaire général

To: Mr. Nambiar,

Please find attached for your approval and the Secretary-General's signature, a letter addressed to Ms. Bani Dugal, Principal Representative of the Baha'i International Community, regarding the arrests of seven leaders from the Baha'i community by Iranian authorities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicholas Haysom'.

Nicholas Haysom  
1 June 2009

cc: Mr. Kim

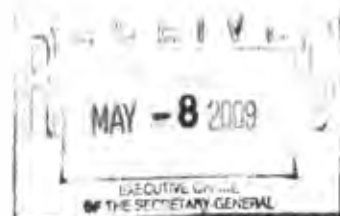
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BAHÁ'Í  
INTERNATIONAL  
COMMUNITY

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ACTION  
COPY

8 May 2009

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon  
Secretary-General  
United Nations

Excellency,

On 15 May 2008 and 12 February 2009, the Bahá'í International Community wrote to you regarding the summary arrest by the Iranian authorities of the entire group of seven leaders who had been coordinating the activities of the Bahá'í community – Iran's largest religious minority.

On 14 May 2009, these individuals will have been held in the infamous Evin prison for one year during which they have been subjected to harsh interrogations with long periods in solitary confinement without being charged formally with any crime or allowed access to their legal counsel. Nobel laureate Mrs. Shirin Ebadi. As you are no doubt aware Mrs. Ebadi has been harassed and threatened since taking on their case and has not been given access to their case files.

On February 10, 2009, the Iranian Student News Agency (ISNA) quoted Tehran deputy prosecutor Hassan Haddad as having said that the investigation of these individuals was complete and that "the case will be sent to the revolutionary court next week" and that these Bahá'ís are accused of "espionage for Israel, insulting religious sanctities and propaganda against the Islamic Republic". The international protest expressed by governments and civil society was immediate and widespread, causing the Iranian authorities to pause and rethink their approach. Now twelve weeks later, not only has their case not been referred to the court, but we are being told that there may be an additional and even more serious charge of "spreading corruption on the earth" ("mufsed fel-arz" in Persian), which, according to several sources on Iranian interpretations of Islamic law, is punishable by execution.

Excellency, the accusations against these Bahá'ís are entirely without foundation. We are extremely concerned, because their plight as leaders of the Bahá'í community of Iran is only a part of a wider, systematic official campaign of oppression and cultural cleansing, directed toward the entire Bahá'í community in Iran. These innocent Iranians are being persecuted, and may be condemned to death for no reason other than their religious beliefs.

On 4 March 2009, the Bahá'í International Community addressed an open letter (attached herewith) to Iran's Prosecutor General outlining the tragic history of the persecution of Bahá'ís in that country, explaining their innocence in the face of accusations made by the government, and asking for fairness in any upcoming trial of the above mentioned seven Bahá'í prisoners. This

letter refutes the many allegations that have been made by official and unofficial spokespersons over the past year and was issued **after** a series of **statements** from Ayatollah Najafabadi, quoted in the Iranian news media, leveling charges at the Bahá'ís and stating that the ad hoc arrangements that tended to the spiritual and social affairs of the Bahá'í community of Iran were illegal.

**Excellency**, the Bahá'í **International Community** is **compelled** to write to you at this **time** because the situation has **reached** a level of severity that warrants your urgent attention. At this time, given the gravity of the situation, we urge you, Excellency, to **take** this **matter** up with the highest level of the **government** of the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to ensure that the lives and rights of these individuals are protected and that they **are** given a fair trial in accordance with international norms and **standards** and in the **presence** of an independent observer. In the absence of an adequate response from the Iranian authorities we believe a public **statement** from your Office would be warranted.

Please **accept** Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bani Dugal', written in a cursive style.

Bani Dugal  
Principal Representative  
to the United Nations

Encl.