



# News

from the KNC Public Relations Committee

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## **Iran: A stubborn murderer of Kurdish human rights activists**



Ms. Zaynab Jalalian

In the past years, the Iranian despotic regime has been busier than ever before murdering Kurdish human rights activists. Sadly enough, the Kurdish activists are put on trial in an orchestrated court with very limited access to legal representatives or without any legal counsel at all.

Recently, the Iranian Revolutionary Court in Kermanshah sentenced another Kurdish activist, a twenty-seven year old Ms. Zaynab Jalalian to death. Sarcastically, in the matter of minutes, she was tried before the Court without a legal representation and was given death sentence for being an “Enemy of God.” After her sentence was read to her, she asked the Court if she could say good-bye to her mother. Her appeal was denied and she was not allowed to see her mother. Since her arrest in May 2008, Ms. Jalalian had been under constant physical-psychological torture and humiliation.

According to the Iranian judicial authorities, she was an enemy of God, because she was a Kurdish activist and struggled for the most basic human rights that have been suppressed by the Iranian state—the same state that was among the first 48 nations that on December 10, 1948 adopted the Declaration of Human Rights. Ironically today, while still a signatory to the same covenant, Iran executes activists and advocates who strive to promote the same rights. .

While we are concerned about Ms. Jalalian’s fate we realize that she is not alone in this fate -- there are about a dozen more Kurdish prisoners who are put on death row for promoting Kurdish human rights in Kurdistan-Iran. They include Ali Haydarian, Anwar Hosain Panahi, Arsalan Awlyae, Farhad Chalesh, Farhad Vakili, Farzad Kamangar, Fasih Basamani, Habiballa Lotfi, Hiwa Botimar, Ramazan Ahmed, Rostam Narkia, and Sherko Marafi.

Showing no regard for international norms and human dignity, Iran has been stubbornly murdering and imprisoning Kurdish activists. Perhaps Iran assumes that it can suppress the “just struggle” of more than ten million Kurds whose only claim is to have their own cultural and political identity within Iran. Without any doubt, such an assumption would lead Iran to a deeper internal disharmony and alienation. The motto that “there is no difference between Persians and non-Persians” has never held the truth while other ethnicities have been prevented from practicing their native cultures/languages. Therefore, it is time for the Iranian authorities to review their sectarian political culture and try to adapt a form of government that represents all ethnicities in Iran, and free all human rights activists.

Members of the ancient Kurds have been struggling for centuries to preserve their national identity; hence, the Iranian theocrats should not think that they would be able to silence them. Instead of resorting to a military solution, it would be wise for the Iranian authorities to amend Iran’s Constitution where all ethnicities are equal before the law and their unique identities are recognized and respected.