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Item 6, Universal Periodic Review

Mr. President,

On the 31.th of October in the UPR session for Iran, 20 members of the UPR working group requested an end to executions in Iran.

Since then there has been new elements which must be brought to the attention of this council:

- In his latest speech in the UN Human Right's Council, the Special Reporteur Mr. Ahmad Shaheed spoke of 252 executions in the last 10 weeks alone.
- Secretary General Ban Ki Moon stated on March 3.th that his office "remains deeply troubled by the continuing large number of executions , including political prisoners and juveniles".
- 6 young Kurdish political prisoners who were Sunnis were recently executed. They were convicted of *Moharebe* , "enmity against God". They were hanged on the 4th. of March.
- Iran holds the highest execution rate per capita in the world.

In addition to the rapid raise of executions, I would like to bring your attention to the following:

- On the 3.th of March a man was forcibly blinded in his left eye after being sentenced to "retribution in kind". The blinding of his right eye was postponed until a later date at his request. In addition to his punishment he was ordered to pay "blood money" and sentenced to 10 years in prison. Blinding, like stoning, amputation and flogging, these are forms of punishments prohibited by international law but in Iran such barbaric punishments are carried out by the state.

I would also like to bring the attention of this council to concerns raised by Amnesty International about the situation of women in Iran. In a recent article Amnesty states that new laws in Iran are reducing women to "baby- making machines". The age of criminal responsibility for girls is just under 9 years old but just under 15 years for a boy.

In September and October in Isfahan and other cities in Iran a wave of acid attacks against women were carried out. The target were women who did not fully obey the dress code of the Islamic Republic. Several women were blinded, one died and the faces of the rest were disfigured.

It is very unfortunate that Iran reject and refuses to implement and change the most important issues of concern raised by the working group on 31.th of October. And so human rights abuses in the country continues....

Thank you Mr. President