



*Mission Permanente
de la République Islamique d'Iran
auprès des Nations Unies
et des autres Organisations Internationales à Genève*

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

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The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and with reference to the latter's Communication No. AI IRN 16/2022 dated 31 August 2022 concerning **Mr. Salman Rushdi**, has the honor to transmit, herewith, the comment of the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran in that regard.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 8 November 2022



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High Council for Human
Rights of the
Islamic Republic of Iran

The Comments of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the 31 August Correspondence of Special Procedures Mandate-holders about Salman Rushdie

The High Council for Human Rights of The
Islamic Republic of Iran
November 2022

In the Name of GOD

The High Council for Human Rights of The Islamic Republic of Iran
(1 November 2022)

The Comments of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the 31 August Correspondence of Special Procedures Mandate-holders about Salman Rushdie

Citing a phrase from an article of an international instrument regardless of the meaning of other phrases contained therein defeats the purpose of those signing the correspondence. Although the “right to freedom of expression” is specified in Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the phrases before and after it include rights that should be paid attention to and respected. The very beginning of the said Article states that: “everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference”; therefore, it is obvious that harassing the holder of the belief is prohibited. Although Paragraph 2 of the aforementioned Article touches upon the right to freedom of expression, Paragraph 3 of the same Article considers the exercise of the said right under certain conditions and has subject it to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: “for respect of the rights or reputations of others”, “for the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.”

In light of the foregoing, simply citing the freedom of expression without considering the criteria contained in the aforesaid Article makes it impossible to promote the desired freedom of expression. In addition, freedom of expression cannot be a license for insulting religious sanctities and embarking on religiophobia.

Salman Rushdie’s unwise move to write a derogatory work has hurt the feelings of more than one and a half billion Muslims worldwide, causing mental and physical abuse.

Such an insulting act is considered a flagrant violation of human rights, because his move is a glaring example of a blatant violation of the provisions contained in international human rights instruments, especially Article 19 of the ICCPR. Therefore, the foregoing person himself and his supporters are responsible for any extremism and disorder. Despite claiming to be a Muslim and being fully aware of the consequences of his actions, Rushdi has taken an action contrary to the principles and religious foundations of Muslims around the world, not accorded any respect to the rights or dignity of a large population of people around the globe, thus endangering public order, threatening the health of human society, and ignoring public morality.

Numerous reports indicate that the atmosphere of insulting the sanctities of Muslims and Islamophobia in Western countries continues to complicate the

situation for Muslim people living therein. For example, in France alone, there were 100 and 154 attacks on Muslims in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

It is evident that the right to freedom of expression is respected for someone who has not transgressed the limits of social duties thereof; this is while the foregoing person has abandoned his social responsibility as a *soi-disant* writer and committed a gross violation of the criteria contained in Article 19 of the aforesaid Covenant. Not only is his blasphemous act a clear violation of international standards, but it is even considered a crime under the Blasphemy Act, which has legal validity in England.

The special procedures mandate holders' "grave concern" expressed in the correspondence is baseless. They have, in fact, flagrantly violated the fundamental rights of many members of human society by supporting a wrongdoer and disrupting the real freedom of expression. Such support has launched a broadside against the basis of religious tolerance and caused violations of the rights and dignity of others, as well as disrupting security, public order and health. As a matter of fact, they have flagrantly violated the Code of Conduct for Special Procedures Mandate-holders (A/HRC/RES/5/2); and, instead of trying to promote human rights, they have laid the ground for degradation thereof. It is seriously expected that the Special Procedures Mandate-holders will adhere to the procedures of the abovenamed Code. Under the pretext of respecting freedom of expression, they shall not support a violation of human rights – a move that sows the seeds of hatred and discord among many people.

It is a matter of profound regret and utter surprise that the Special Procedures Mandate-holders, the authorities of the Human Rights Council as well as other human rights mechanisms have hitherto not condemned the foregoing person's violations of the provisions of Article 19 of the aforesaid Covenant, which have been accompanied by insulting, inciting and hurting the feelings of more than one and a half billion Muslims across the world! Apparently, bringing up claims about violations of freedom of expression by Salman Rushdie, who has insulted the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), has become an excuse to justify unwise behaviors such as insulting Islamic sanctities.

While denouncing Salman Rushdie's blasphemous and divisive action to insult Islamic sanctities and cross the red lines of more than one and a half billion Muslims – thereby exposing himself to people's wrath – the Islamic Republic of Iran denies any connection whatsoever with the attacker.

