

Mandates of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

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Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran; and Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 24/7, 23/7, 24/5, 25/18, 26/7, 25/24, and 23/25.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning the situation of Ms. **Mehdieh Golrou**, who has been held in detention without charges.

Ms. Mehdieh Golrou is a student activist and woman human rights defender. She is a member of the Council for Defence of Educational Rights.

According to information received:

Ms. Mehdieh Golrou, was arrested on 24 October 2014 in Tehran, shortly after she had participated in a peaceful protest to denounce a series of acid attacks against women on 22 October 2014 in Isfahan. She was taken to Evin Prison, where she was held in solitary confinement for 60 days, before being moved to

another cell. The authorities have not introduced charges against her and her case has been referred to branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran. Although Ms. Golrou is allowed family visits, these visits are always attended by officials. She has not however been allowed to meet with the defence lawyer appointed by her family.

Ms. Golrou was previously arrested on 2 December 2009. She spent two years and 4 months in prison on charges of propaganda against the State. She was also banned from school due to her past student activities.

Concern is expressed at the arrest and detention of Ms. Mehdieh Golrou. Further concern is expressed at the lack of transparency regarding the absence of charges, her conditions in prison, the denial of her release and the denial of her right to meet with her lawyer.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations or to express an opinion on whether or not the detention of Ms. Golrou is arbitrary or not, the above allegations appear to be in contravention of the right not to be deprived arbitrarily of her liberty as set forth in article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the right to fair proceedings before an independent and impartial tribunal, as set forth in article 10 of the UDHR and article 14 of the ICCPR, and the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, as set forth in articles 19 and 20 of the UDHR and articles 19 and 21 of the ICCPR.

Concerning Ms. Golrou's attendance at a peaceful protest, we wish to recall resolution 24/5, in which the Human Rights Council reminded States of their obligation to respect and fully protect the rights of all individuals to assemble peacefully and to take all necessary measures to ensure that any restrictions on the free exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly are in accordance with their obligations under international human rights law.

In regards to Ms. Golrou's lack of access to her defense lawyer, we would also like to refer your Excellency's Government to the Basic Principles on the Role of lawyers, in particular principle 1 which provides for the right of access to a lawyer for everyone and principle 8 which provides for free communication with a lawyer in full confidentiality.

We wish to refer your Excellency's Government to the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, also known as the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, in particular articles 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8.

We would also like to draw your attention General Assembly resolution 68/181 whereby States expressed particular concern about systemic and structural discrimination and violence faced by women human rights defenders and urged to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of women human rights defenders and to integrate a gender perspective into their efforts to create a safe and enabling environment for the defence of human rights.

The full texts of the human rights instruments and standards recalled above are available on www.ohchr.org or can be provided upon request.

In view of the urgency of the matter, we would appreciate a response on the initial steps taken by your Excellency's Government to safeguard the rights of Ms. Golrou in compliance with international instruments.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and any comment you may have on the above mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide information concerning the legal grounds for the arrest and detention of Ms. Mehdeh Golrou and how such measures are compatible with international human rights norms and standards, in particular those related to the right to security and liberty, the right to fair trial and the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of assembly.
3. Please provide information concerning the national legislation related to freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly.
4. Please indicate what measures have been taken to ensure that women human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate work in a safe and enabling environment without fear of harassment and criminalization.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person responsible of the alleged violations.

Your Excellency's Government's response will be made available in a report to be presented to the Human Rights Council for its consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Mads Andenas
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

Frances Raday
Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of
discrimination against women in law and in practice

Maina Kiai
Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and
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Gabriela Knaul
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Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic
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Rashida Manjoo
Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and
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