

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

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9 April 2026

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 58/21 and 52/7.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning Mrs. Lindsay Foreman and Mr. Craig Foreman, two nationals of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, married, who according to our sources are deprived of their liberty in Evin prison, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and about whom we have serious concerns in particular about their physical and mental health, the conditions in which they are detained, their treatment by the Iranian authorities, the legal proceedings against them, and that they have been arrested, prosecuted and sentenced as leverage in violation of Iran's obligations pursuant to the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages. We are cognisant of that the hostilities between the United States of America and Israel, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, notwithstanding the recently negotiated ceasefire, puts their lives at great peril.

According to the information received:

In November 2024, Mrs. Lindsay Foreman and Mr. Craig Foreman (the "Foremans") commenced an overland motorcycle journey from Europe to Australia. During this journey, Mrs. Foreman, described as a life coach holding a doctorate in psychology, intended to conduct research into the concept of a "good life".

On 31 December 2024, the Foremans entered the Islamic Republic of Iran from Armenia, reportedly in possession of valid visas and pursuant to a pre-arranged itinerary coordinated through a licensed Iranian travel agency. They intended to transit Iran within approximately five days, continuing thereafter to Pakistan.

On 3 January 2025, while travelling from Isfahan to Kerman, the Foremans were reportedly arrested by members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. No formal charges were presented at the time of arrest, nor were reasons provided. It is alleged that, instead, an official stated to Mrs. Foreman: "We know you are spies; no one is coming to save you."

Between early January and late February 2025, the Foremans were held separately in solitary confinement in Kerman Prison for a cumulative period of 56 days. They were later placed together in a shared cell, separate from the

general prison population. During this period, Mrs. Foreman was returned to solitary confinement on three further occasions, namely on 13 February, 24 February, and 8 March 2025.

In the shared cell, the Foremans were reportedly forced to sleep on a concrete floor, with only a thin blanket provided for bedding. They were given allegedly inadequate food, and the overall conditions were unsanitary. They were confined to the cell for 23 hours a day and allowed only ten minutes outside. Their sole form of exercise consisted of running in a “figure-eight” pattern within the small space. These conditions had a serious impact on their physical and mental health.

By May 2025, Mrs. Foreman was experiencing significant difficulty walking due to back problems caused by the cramped conditions and sleeping on the floor. Both Mrs. Foreman and Mr. Foreman also lost weight during this period of detention. Furthermore, and for the first seven months of their detention, they were denied all phone contact with their family.

During this period, the Foremans were allegedly subjected to daily interrogations of an abusive nature, conducted in the absence of legal counsel. In January 2025, Mr. Foreman was interrogated for fourteen consecutive days, while Mrs. Foreman was interrogated for a period approaching one month and, subsequently, on a further occasion on 8 May 2025.

It is reported that these interrogations were conducted at varying undisclosed locations. The Foremans were blindfolded during transportation to, and throughout, such interrogations. It is further alleged that Mr. Foreman was deliberately caused to collide with walls while being escorted by prison guards. During the interrogation of 8 May 2025, Mrs. Foreman was allegedly compelled to make admissions, to sign documents in Farsi without translation, and to affix her fingerprint to blank pages.

On 10 January 2025, a relative of Mr. Foreman reportedly filed a missing persons report with the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

On 21 January 2025, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reportedly notified the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Iran that the Foremans were detained in Kerman. A first consular visit, reportedly conducted in the presence of Iranian officials, took place in February 2025. Subsequent visits occurred on 27 March 2025, lasting approximately nine minutes, and on 12 May 2025.

On 15 February 2025, Iranian State media reported that two British nationals had been arrested and imprisoned on security-related charges.

Between February and April 2025, Mrs. Foreman reportedly submitted twelve written requests for access to legal counsel. Although prison authorities repeatedly indicated that such access would be granted, no effective access materialised during this period.

On 15 April 2025, the Foremans were assigned a State-appointed lawyer. No meeting took place, however, until the Foremans undertook a hunger strike in order to secure access. When a meeting did occur on 30 April 2025, no interpreter was provided, thereby severely impairing their ability to communicate with counsel and to prepare a meaningful defence.

In early June 2025, the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office was informed that the Foremans would be transferred from Kerman to Evin prison; however, the timing of such transfer remained unclear. As of 8 July 2025, their location was confirmed as Kerman prison.

On 23 June 2025, the Evin prison was hit by airstrikes of the Israeli Defence Forces, in which up to 80 individuals lost their lives and significant areas of the prison complex were damaged.

On 28 July 2025, the Foremans were separated. Mr. Foreman was transferred to Tehran Bozorg prison, and Mrs. Foreman to Qarchak prison. During this transfer, the Foremans were led to believe that they were being released and were placed on a commercial flight to Tehran in civilian clothing. Upon arrival to the city, however, they were blindfolded, handcuffed, and returned to detention. Mrs. Foreman is reported to have described this experience as “the most pitiful, depressing moment [she has] ever experienced.”

On 29 July 2025, a judge declared the Foremans guilty of espionage, reportedly in the absence of any formal trial proceedings, thereby denying them the opportunity to present a defence or to challenge the allegations against them.

While detained at Tehran Bozorg prison, Mr. Foreman was subjected to conditions alleged to be manifestly inhumane. He was reportedly held in a cell with fifty-seven other inmates, with bunk beds stacked three levels high and infested with bedbugs and cockroaches. Access to clean drinking water and adequate nutrition was not ensured and depended upon the availability of funds in a prison account. For approximately one month, Mr. Foreman reportedly had no such funds and therefore lacked access to potable water, adequate food, which caused significant weight loss, and a change of clothing. He developed a dental abscess but did not receive adequate treatment. He was administered antidepressant medication, although the nature, dosage, and medical basis for such treatment remain unclear.

Mrs. Foreman’s conditions of detention at Qarchak prison were reportedly similarly severe. She was confined in a cell of approximately thirteen square metres with nine other women, in conditions of extreme heat (approximately 45°C), with unsafe drinking water, frequent power outages, and prolonged periods, of up to seventeen days, without funds to obtain basic necessities, including potable water and hygiene products. She lost weight. According to reports, between 16 and 25 September 2025, three female detainees died at Qarchak prison due to lack of adequate medical care, including one of Mrs. Foreman’s cellmates. These events prompted a hunger strike in protest. During this period, while suffering from a stomach infection, Mrs. Foreman was

allegedly subjected to the forced administration of intravenous treatment without explanation.

On 15 August 2025, Mr. Foreman was transferred to Evin prison.

On 27 August 2025, a first evidentiary hearing before the Tehran Revolutionary Court reportedly took place without prior notice.

In October 2025, Mrs. Foreman was transferred to Evin prison.

From 7 to 13 November 2025, the Foremans undertook a hunger strike, and Mrs. Foreman undertook a further individual hunger strike from 11 to 16 November 2025, in order to secure regular family contact. Following these measures, limited contact, consisting of approximately monthly joint visits and more frequent monitored telephone communications, was reportedly permitted.

On 17 February 2026, the Foremans were sentenced to ten years' imprisonment on charges of espionage. A summary judgment dated 24 February 2026 reportedly indicated that the court inferred espionage from, *inter alia*, Mrs. Foreman's "good life" research and her emotional responses during the proceedings.

During a telephone call on 3 March 2026, Mr. Foreman reportedly indicated that he might be transferred to Qom Prison, a development likely to further restrict family contact. The status of Mrs. Foreman at that time remained uncertain.

In early March 2026, the Foremans' legal representative reportedly ceased acting due to security and capacity constraints. No replacement counsel was appointed prior to the expiration of the twenty-day appeal period, which lapsed on 9 March 2026, thereby effectively foreclosing any practical possibility of appellate review.

Concerns for the Foremans' safety has intensified following airstrikes conducted on multiple sites across Iran by the United States of America and Israel, commencing on 28 February 2026, and presently paused on 8 April 2026. During communications with family members, the Foremans described explosions occurring in proximity, of approximately one kilometre of their place of detention.

Notwithstanding the ceasefire, it has been reported that, due to the military operations, the prison's administrative structures have near collapsed. Food distribution and medical care have largely been suspended, and the prison shop closed, causing panic and psychological stress among the prison population. Dozens of regular prison officers allegedly fled and have reportedly been replaced by Revolutionary Guards. Furthermore, several inmates were moved, without warning, to undisclosed facilities elsewhere.

At present, the Foremans are in separate cells in Evin prison, with visits occurring infrequently. Both have reported ongoing violence within the facility. Mr. Foreman has described frequent altercations between prisoners across

various wings and within his cell, without intervention by prison authorities. He is sleeping on a metal bunk, stacked three high. Mrs. Foreman has similarly reported daily incidents of violence and has expressed serious concerns for her personal safety. She is also reportedly sleeping on a metal bed where, on one occasion, she found a rat, and only has a thin blanket.

It is alleged that the Foremans have been wrongfully accused of espionage and are being unlawfully deprived of their liberty for the purpose of political leverage. The conditions of their detention constitute a significant source of distress, adversely affecting both their physical health and psychological well-being. Their reported deterioration in health, together with their overall circumstances, is said to pose a threat to their lives. It is feared that, in the absence of urgent intervention, they may suffer serious and irreversible harm.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we express grave concern regarding the reported deteriorating health of the Foremans, arising from, and/or exacerbated by, the overcrowded, unclean and violent conditions of their detention, which they have endured for over one year, and the cumulative impact on their physical and mental well-being.

In situations of detention, States assume a heightened duty of care and full responsibility for the life and physical integrity of detainees and must take all necessary measures to ensure their protection from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and ensure humane conditions of detention. Inadequate conditions of detention constitute violations of the prohibition of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and may, in certain circumstances, amount to torture. Where such conditions are sufficiently severe, they may pose an immediate or long-term risk to health and life.

Additionally, prolonged periods of solitary confinement allegedly imposed on both Mrs. and Mr. Foreman – up to 56 days in succession – would constitute prolonged solitary confinement, which is a prohibited form of torture under international human rights law, including rule 43 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the “[Nelson Mandela Rules](#)”).

Accordingly, we warn against the risk that the reported allegations, if established, could amount to a violation of Mrs. and Mr. Foreman’s right to life, protected by article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1975; their right to be free from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including the requirement of humane treatment in detention, protected, *inter alia*, by article 5 of the UDHR, and articles 7 and 10 of the ICCPR; as well as of their right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, recognised in article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, also ratified by Iran in 1975, and the requirement of equivalence of care for those detained as provided to those in the community (rule 24, Nelson Mandela Rules).

We recall that the obligation to respect and ensure the right to life extends to reasonably foreseeable threats, even where such threats have not yet materialised

([CCPR/C/GC/36](#)). In the context of war, Iran has responsibility to establish safe evacuation corridors for prisoners and ensure that detainees have essential necessities such as food, water, electricity and basic hygiene. Allowing foreign detainees to call home and be visited by consular personnel and independent monitors are all legal obligations, even when a country is under attack.

We further emphasise that the prohibition of torture is absolute and non-derogable and constitutes a *jus cogens* norm of international law. Within this framework, we underscore that the inadmissibility of evidence obtained through torture or other ill-treatment is an essential component of this prohibition and applies in all circumstances ([A/HRC/25/60](#)) and a key guarantee against unfair trial.

We remind your Excellency's Government that persons deprived of liberty must be informed promptly of the reasons for their arrest and of any charges against them. They must have access to legal representation, adequate medical care, prompt judicial review, and effective remedies. They must be treated with humanity and dignity, and be permitted contact with their families and consular representatives, and visits from independent monitoring bodies.

We are further of the view that, if established, the above circumstances may also constitute violations of the Foremans' right to liberty and security of the person and not to be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention, enshrined in article 9 of the UDHR and article 9 of the ICCPR; and the right to due process and fair trial, guaranteed in article 10 of the UDHR and 14 of the ICCPR.

Moreover, the arbitrary detention of foreign nationals on fabricated charges for the purpose of political or other leverage against their country of nationality constitutes hostage-taking, in violation of the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran acceded in 2006. Hostage-taking may amount to psychological torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, for which the General Assembly has recognised obligations to prevent hostage-taking as forms of torture ([A/RES/80/198](#)). It may also inflict severe suffering on the families of those detained ([A/HRC/88/55](#)).

In light of the foregoing, we respectfully recommend to you Excellency's Government to take all feasible precautions to protect Mrs. and Mr. Foreman and that they be provided, as a matter of urgency, with adequate and comprehensive medical care, including treatment in a civilian hospital; and to ensure that their detention is safe, humane and dignified.

We further respectfully call on your Excellency's Government to urgently reopen the proceedings against Mr. and Mrs. Foreman, as their case is considered an case of State hostage-taking for political leverage, and constitutes a distortion of how international relations should be carried out. People must never be pawns in inter-state relations. Given the serious allegations of irregularities in relation to the ground for their arrest, prosecution and conviction, it is our view that the cases against them should be reopened and quashed on the basis of these irregularities, which included absence of evidence, failure to provide legal representation of their choice and in a language they understand, lack of due process and fair trial safeguards, as well as allegations that their

interrogations were marred by torture and/or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, contrary to international treaty and customary law.

The circumstances of their arrest and continued deprivation of liberty, as well as the allegations of torture and ill-treatment, must be effectively investigated, pursuant to international standards, and those found responsible of any violation, must be held accountable.

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 as soon as possible on the initial steps taken by your Excellency's Government to safeguard the rights of the above-mentioned persons 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 also 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 of measures taken – and preparations – to protect and preserve the life, health and well-being of prisoners in Iran's prison system, including the Foremans specifically, during situations of armed conflict.
3. Please provide updated and detailed information on the present state of Mrs. and Mr. Foreman's physical and mental health. Please explain what measures have been taken, or may be envisaged, to protect their life and preserve their health and well-being, including timely access to adequate medical care, and in a civil hospital, as appropriate. Please assess them against international human rights standards.
4. Please provide detailed and updated information on the conditions of Mrs. and Mr. Foreman's deprivation of liberty and please assess them against international human rights law and standards, in particular, the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including the requirement of humane and dignified treatment in detention, and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the "Nelson Mandela Rules").
5. Please provide updated and detailed information on any investigation launched into the allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment allegedly suffered by Mrs. and Mr. Foreman, and their outcome, particularly with respect to accountability. Please explain whether any such investigation was conducted in compliance with international standards, including the United Nations Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading

Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol, 2022 edition). If no investigation was carried out, please explain the reasons why.

6. Please clarify all the circumstances of Mrs. and Mr. Foreman's arrest and detention, prosecution and criminal proceedings, and explain how such measures comply with international human rights standards, including the right not to be arbitrarily detained and the right to a fair trial. Please provide the evidentiary basis and full documentation for the criminal proceedings actioned against the Foremans, and the full judgment and sentencing, as well as the procedures for appeal.
7. Please provide information on measures being taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran to ensure the full implementation of the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages, including in respect of criminalization, investigation and prosecution of hostage-taking, preventing and cooperating in the prevention of hostage-taking, and easing the situation of Mrs. and Mr. Foreman and securing their release and safe departure from the country.
8. Please provide information about the Islamic Republic of Iran's intention to ratify or accede to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

This communication, and any response received from your Excellency's Government, will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) at the 60 days mark. Should Your Excellency's Government respond within 60 days, both the communication and the response, may be published before the 60 days mark. The communications and responses will also be made available in the subsequent periodic report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

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 persons responsible of the alleged violations.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information upon which the press release will be based is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the above-mentioned allegations. The press release will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government's to clarify the issue/s in question.

Please be informed that a copy of this letter will be sent to the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom, in Geneva.

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

Mai Sato
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Alice Jill Edwards
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punishment