



*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*

Ref. 2050/2694940

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 letter No. AL IRN 15/2025 dated 29 September 2025 enclosed with the Joint Communication from Special Procedures, has the honor to transmit herewith, comments from the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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, 30 October 2025



Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Emails: [registry@ohchr.org](mailto:registry@ohchr.org)

No:

Date:

### In the Name of God

Regarding the joint communication from some mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, dated 29 September 2025 (Reference No. AL IRN 15/2025) concerning section 41 of Behesht Zahra Cemetery, it is stated that:

1. Cemeteries across the country, regardless of individuals' affiliation with particular religions, ethnicities, or groups, generally undergo changes in land use over time in accordance with urban development regulations. According to Note 6 of Article 96 of the Municipal Law, public cemeteries are considered public property and are owned by the municipality. Moreover, pursuant to Article 45 of the Municipality's Financial Regulations, cemeteries are classified as municipal public assets. Furthermore, according to Article 9 of the Cemetery Health Regulations, each deceased's burial site is allocated for a period of 30 years. Considering the legal foundations and the explicit provisions in the preamble of the aforementioned regulations, a public cemetery is intended for general public use and is not private property for individuals to exercise ownership rights. Additionally, due to population growth and urban development plans in most major cities across the country, the issue of cemeteries being located within urban areas is inevitable. In Tehran, regional cemeteries have been completely closed, and even large cemeteries such as Mesgarabad Cemetery (with hundreds of thousands of graves) have been converted into parks and cultural buildings. Currently, in Tehran, more than 35 local cemeteries that have been previously closed are ready for land-use change. This issue is not unique to Tehran and follows the same pattern in other cities as well. In the holy city of Qom, about 25 cemeteries have been closed, and even the historic Isfahan cemetery known as Takht-e Foulad has been completely closed and repurposed. In Shiraz, two major cemeteries have also undergone land-use changes; one has been converted into a park called "Bagh-e Melli" and the other into a city bus terminal.
2. The issue concerning Section 41 of Behesht Zahra (PBUH) Cemetery is no exception to this rule. For nearly 40 years, no bodies have been buried in this section. Field and documentary investigations indicate that the graves in this section lack inscriptions, identification markers, or any religious and customary



No:

Date:

signs, and the exact identity of the deceased is unknown. Furthermore, based on inquiries with the units of registration and archives of the Behesht Zahra (PBUH) Organization, there is no official information, verified maps, grave identification records, or registration documents available regarding Section 41. Over the past decades, this section has been abandoned and without any official use, and legally falls under regulations pertaining to unknown or unregistered graves. According to monitoring and review of surveillance cameras, only one grave has had visitors, with a woman visiting once or twice a year to pay respects to her deceased.

3. Since, under Article 634 of the Islamic Penal Code, exhuming graves without religious or legal authorization is considered a criminal offense, the Behesht Zahra (PBUH) Organization has strictly adhered to this principle and has refrained from any action that would violate religious or legal norms. In addition to complying with these religious and legal regulations, the organization has undertaken organizing Section 41 in accordance with Article 55 of the Municipal Law (pertaining to public health, order, and the management of cemeteries) as well as the Executive Regulations on Cemeteries (approved by the Ministry of Interior), in coordination with the Tehran Governor's Office. These actions have been carried out within the inherent duties of the municipality and the Behesht Zahra (PBUH) Organization. The measures taken have been limited solely to surface leveling, environmental cleaning, and organizing the public space, with the aim of serving the public and preserving the dignity of the cemetery, and in this regard, no identified or documented graves have been disturbed. In fact, these measures have been taken due to the significant increase in the number of visitors to the cemetery sections adjacent to Section 41 (which are historically more recent), based on the necessity to organize visits and provide essential services (including the construction of a parking lot), and in response to repeated requests from the public.
4. Considering the aforementioned points, the claims raised in the communication by the rapporteurs are not confirmed. It is recommended to refrain from repeating baseless assertions and allegations, which are motivated by political and propaganda purposes and are put forward by certain hostile media outlets and news agencies against the Islamic Republic of Iran.