

**An Open Letter
from a group of academics, writers, artists, journalists
and Iranian activists throughout the world
to the Baha'i community**

**We are ashamed!
A century and a half of oppression and silence is enough!**

In the name of goodness and beauty, and in the name of humanity and liberty!

As Iranian human beings, we are ashamed for what has been perpetrated upon the Baha'is in the last century and a half in Iran.

We firmly believe that every Iranian, "without distinction of any kind, such as, race, color, sex, language, religion, politics or other opinions," and also without regard to ethnic background, "social origin, property, birth or other status," is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, from the very inception of the Baha'i Faith, the followers of this religion in Iran have been deprived of many provisions of human rights solely on account of their religious convictions.

According to historical documents and evidence, from the commencement of the Babi Movement followed by the appearance of the Baha'i Faith, thousands of our countrymen have been slain by the sword of bigotry and superstition only for their religious beliefs. Just in the first decades of its establishment, some twenty thousand of those who stood identified with this faith community were savagely killed throughout various regions of Iran.

We are ashamed that during that period, no voice of protest against these barbaric murders was registered;

We are ashamed that until today the voice of protest against this heinous crime has been infrequent and muted;

We are ashamed that in addition to the intense suppression of Baha'is during its formative decades, the last century also witnessed periodic episodes of persecution of this group of our countrymen, in which their homes and businesses were set on fire, and their lives, property and families were subjected to brutal persecution – but all the while, the intellectual community of Iran remained silent;

We are ashamed that during the last thirty years, the killing of Baha'is solely on the basis of their religious beliefs has gained legal status and over two-hundred Baha'is have been slain on this account;

We are ashamed that a group of intellectuals have justified coercion against the Baha'i community of Iran;

We are ashamed of our silence that after many decades of service to Iran, Baha'i retired persons have been deprived of their right to a pension;

We are ashamed of our silence that on the account of their fidelity to their religion and truthfulness in stating this conviction, thousands of Baha'i youth have been barred from education in universities and other institutions of higher learning in Iran;

We are ashamed that because of their parents' religious beliefs, Baha'i children are subjected to denigration in schools and in public.

We are ashamed of our silence over this painful reality that in our nation, Baha'is are systematically oppressed and maligned, a number of them are incarcerated because of their religious convictions, their homes and places of business are attacked and destroyed, and periodically their burial places are desecrated;

We are ashamed of our silence when confronted with the long, dark and atrocious record that our laws and legal system have marginalized and deprived Baha'is of their rights, and the injustice and harassment of both official and unofficial organs of the government towards this group of our countrymen;

We are ashamed for all these transgressions and injustices, and **we are ashamed** for our silence over these deeds.

We, the undersigned, asked you, the Baha'is, to forgive us for the wrongs committed against the Baha'i community of Iran.

We will no longer be silent when injustice is visited upon you.

We stand by you in achieving all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights.

Let us join hands in replacing hatred and ignorance with love and tolerance.

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26. Attar, Mahmood, Pharmacist and Human Right Supporter - Italy
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32. Azarkolah, Houman, Actor- France, Paris
33. Azarli, Katayoun, Writer and Poet – Germany
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36. Bagherpour Khosro, Poet /Journalist – Germany
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39. Baradaran Monireh, Writer/Human rights activist – Germany
40. Barati, Mehran, Researcher – Germany, Berlin
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42. Behnia, Kamran, Physicist -France, Paris
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44. Bishetab Reza, Writer – France, Paris
45. Borghei, Mohammad, Writer and University Lecturer- USA
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47. Boroumand, Roya, Executive Director, Boroumand Foundation – USA, Washington
48. Chehabi, Houchang- Esfandiar, Professor – USA, Boston
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50. Daneshvar Hamid, Actor/Theatre Director – France, Paris
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52. Daryani, Hossein, Stage Actor – Germany, Berlin

53. Dastmalchi, Parviz, Writer and Political Analyst – Germany, Berlin
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57. Djalali Chimeh Mohammad (M.sahar), Poet - France, Paris
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59. Doai, Babak, Music Player and Teacher – Belgium
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68. Fani Yazdi Reza, Political analyst - USA

69. Farahani, Fereshteh, Human Right Activist - Netherlands
70. Farhoudi Vida, Poet/Translator- France, Paris
71. Farid, Siamak, Human Rights Activist – Belgium, Brussels
72. Farshi, Ebrahim, Writer, Theatre pedagogue and Stage Actor – Germany, Cologne
73. Fattah, Abbasali, Political Activist – Australia
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80. Ghahraman, Sasan, Publisher/Writer/Journalist – Canada, Toronto
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88. Golchin, Ali, Advocate and Lawyer – USA, San Diego
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92. Hamidi, Hamid, Human Right Activist – Netherlands
93. Hamidi, Nasrin, Human Right Activist - Netherlands
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95. Hajzadeh Fallah, Masoud, Engineer, Designer – Sweden
96. Harandi, Farideh, Lawyer - USA
97. Hashemizadeh, Iraj, Architect and Journalist – Austria, Gratz
98. Hassibi, Mohammad, Political Activist – USA
99. Hatami, Parviz, Human Right Activist – USA
100. Hekmat, Bijan, Political Activist – France, Paris
101. Heyrani, Aref, Contractor – USA, Burton
102. Homayonpour, Shohreh, Teacher – USA, Washington
103. Homayonpour, Kouros, Student Activist – USA, Washington
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120. Kamali, Shaghayegh, Singer and Music Teacher – Germany, Münster
121. Karami, Nasser, Political Analyst - Germany
122. Karimi Behzad, Political Activist – Netherlands
123. Kassraei Farhang, Writer/Actor – Germany, Wiesbaden
124. Kaviany, Massoud, Professor – USA, Michigan
125. Kavir, Mahmood, Poet, Writer and Researcher – Great Britain
126. Kazemi, Monireh, Women Right Activist – Germany
127. Keshavarz, Mehran, Ex-Political Prisoner and Human Right Supporter - Norway
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160. Mohtasham, Yashar, Human Right Activist – France, Paris
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163. Mossaed Jila, Poet/Writer - Sweden, Göteborg.
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175. Omidmehr, Mahzad, University Lecturer and Researcher- Denmark
176. Omidmehr, Mehraz, University Lecturer, Denmark
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179. Paki, Morteza, Human Rights Activist – Netherlands
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189. Rahimi, Khosro, Program Maker of Radio Sepehr - Sweden, Götteborg
190. Rahnamai, M.J., Music Researcher and Poet - Netherlands
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192. Ranjbar, Kazem, Doctor of Sociological Politics –France, Paris
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197. Razavi, Rasoul, Human Right Supporter – Germany, Bonn
198. Saadati, Mansour, Chemical Engineer and Human Right Supporter –Canada
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203. Sahimi, Muhammad Professor, University of Southern California – USA
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205. Salary, Babak, photograph – Canada
206. Samadpouri, Ali, Political Activist and Journalist - Belgium
207. Samadany, Faramarz, Chemistry Engineer and Human Right Supporter - USA
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218. Shafie, Minoo, Human Right Activist - Denmark
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239. Zahedi Mitra, Theatre Director – Germany, Berlin
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