

National Office

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LRC

Legal Resources Centre

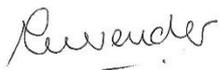
16 February 2021

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT/ THE LRC CONDEMNS THE PERSECUTION OF THE BAHA'I COMMUNITY IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

1. The LRC was established in 1979 to use the law as an instrument of justice, challenging the legal structures of apartheid. Since its inception, the LRC has always engaged in strategic legal interventions aimed at ensuring that all persons regardless of the race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation realise and enjoy their fundamental human rights.
2. South Africa's painful and dark history was characterized by the segregation of white and black people, racial persecution and the demoralizing and degrading stripping away of black persons fundamental human rights, such as land ownership. Black people were violently evicted from their land and their homes and banished to the sterile and barren quarters of the country known as Bantustans. South African courts at that time played a significant role in using oppressive laws to persecute and oppress black people.
3. Over the past 40 years, the LRC has played a significant role in dismantling apartheid and played a major role in the writing of our Constitution. Our bill of rights is a cornerstone of our democracy, it enshrines the rights of all people and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. Central to these democratic values is the imperative to promote and uphold the rule of law.
4. The LRC is therefore deeply concerned by the continued persecution of the Baha'i people at the hands of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The LRC condemns the recent confiscation and closure of businesses and property owned by the Baha'i community, harassment and intimidation of student activists, restrictions

- on property ownership, restrictions on employment opportunities and the denial and restrictions on access to education for people of the Baha'i faith.
5. Shockingly these human rights violations have been seemingly condoned or legitimized through the judiciary in 2 court judgements that confiscated land belonging to the Baha'i community in Iver, Iran.
 6. These acts are surely a road map to an Apartheid State and should never be permissible.
 7. We ask that the Islamic Republic of Iran to heed the UN General Assembly Resolution A/C.3/75/L.31 which calls upon them *"to eliminate, in law and in practice, all forms of discrimination on the basis of thought, conscience, religion or belief, including economic restrictions, such as the closure or confiscation of businesses and properties, the cancellation of licences and the denial of employment in certain public and private sectors, including government or military positions and elected office, the denial of and restrictions on access to education, including for members of the Baha'i faith, and other human rights violations against persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities, and to end impunity for those who commit crimes against persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities;"*
 8. The LRC fully supports the Global efforts of the Baha'i International community are continue advocating for the rights and freedoms of those who are being persecuted by the Islamic Republic of Iran based on their Baha'i faith.

Sincerely,



Nersan Govender

National Director

Legal Resources Centre