



COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF REFERENDUM IN IRAN

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CSRI deploras Shirin Ebadi's remarks that human rights have improved in Iran in the past twenty-five years.

In a speech made to the Council of Foreign Relations on June 7th, Shirin Ebadi, winner of 2003 Peace Nobel Prize, claimed that: "The situation of human rights in Iran compared with 24 or 25 years ago is much better" and "Iranian lawyers and activists concerned with human rights in the Islamic republic are making slow but significant progress in laws protecting women and children".

Shirin Ebadi, as a lawyer of dissidents who were murdered by the government agents in 1999, is completely aware that the human rights have not improved, but worsened under the mullahs' regime in the past twenty-five years. CSRI would like to remind Mrs. Ebadi, that about 120,000 Iranian people, including children as young as 13, have been executed by the Iranian regime. Hanging in public, stoning to death, Limb amputation of hands and legs, eye gouging, flogging in public,...are only some of the inhuman punishments imposed by the mullahs' regime. The United Nations Human Rights Commission has condemned Iran in at least fifty resolutions for systematic abuse of human rights.

Only a couple of days before Mrs. Ebadi's speech, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch organization, issued statements on the alarming rise in human rights abuses in Iran. Amnesty International ranked Iran third in the world in execution sentences, with 108 people executed in one year, many in public. Only in May 2004, the Iranian media reported four executions in public, four cases of flogging, one mutilation of hand and numerous arrests of students and reporters who protested or spoke out against the government.

The experience of the past quarter of century has shown that no faction in the Iranian government is prone to reform or respect for human rights in Iran. Mrs. Ebadi has to take side with the workers, university students, teachers, farmers, and other Iranians who protest daily against the entirety of the mullahs' regime.

CSRI challenges Mrs. Ebadi to use her position as a Nobel Prize laureate to speak the truth about the atrocities committed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and not become another propaganda instrument for the mullahs' regime. As a woman, Mrs. Ebadi knows better than anyone that until the mullahs rules Iran, there will be no improvement in human rights. The only way to bring peace, democracy and basic human rights to Iran is to push for a democratic regime change through a referendum under international supervision.

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