

Persecution of Christians in Iran

Sara Afshari, Monday 8 April 2019

This brief overview forms part of a much bigger article on the persecution of Christians in Iran that will be published by Article 18 in the near future.

The year, 2019, marks 40 years of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The year also recalls 40 years of persecution of Christians by the Islamic state, starting with the assassinations of Bahram Dehghani-Tafti (1980) and the beheading of Revd. Sayah (1979). Since then many churches have been closed and most of churches' properties confiscated. Hundreds of Christians have been arrested, and several house churches raided.

Soon after the revolution, “a social transformation and radicalisation of Islam in Iran took place in order to bring about the Islamic ‘utopia’” (Afshari 2017). However, the regime not only failed to keep its promise but also brought tougher restrictions on people, using religion (Shia Islam) to justify their power over people. Disillusionment with Islam (the government’s interpretation) and the regime caused significant numbers of people to search for alternative spiritual meaning and hope.

Increasing numbers of people started attending the churches and converted to Christianity. This was something the Islamic government did not want to see (Article 18, Borji 2019).

The relentless pressure forced the Church to go underground, giving birth to the “house-church” movement, which soon spread across the country – in both rural and urban areas.

The election of Ahmadinejad (2005 – 2009) brought an even more intolerant approach towards Christian evangelicals especially. More churches were closed down, and church properties were confiscated.¹ Ahmadinejad started a systematic approach to eradicate evangelical churches and house churches. Therefore persecution of Christians extended “beyond church leaders to include regular church members – particularly converts -who faced apostasy charges in Revolutionary Courts, which were punishable by death” (Article 18, Borji 2019).

October 2010 opened a new chapter in Christian persecution in Iran. The Supreme Leader, Khamenei, in his famous speech of 19 October 2010 to Qom² seminarians, called house church movements a national security threat: “enemies of Islam” and “with a goal to undermine religion in society”. Security officials and religious leaders appointed by the Supreme Leader throughout the country took the message as an official memo to crack down on Christian activities and house churches. From this time forward not only the pressure and persecution of Christians increased, but also a new method was added to their harassment and intimidation which is a strategic hate campaign and incitement of hatred within the State and state supported media using all kind of media platforms such as online, blogs, social media, radio and TV.

In this presentation I would like to highlight three strategic issues in relation to the FCO addressing persecution of Christians Iran.

1. The complexity of the Iranian System

One can argue that one of the main reasons for the ineffectiveness of the international efforts in relation to their negotiation with the Iranian government regarding Christian persecution and freedom of religion in general, is related to the complexity of the structure of the Iran government, which can be difficult for foreigners to understand. On the one hand, Iran claims to be a democratic country with elected president and parliament, on the other hand, it has a non-elected Supreme

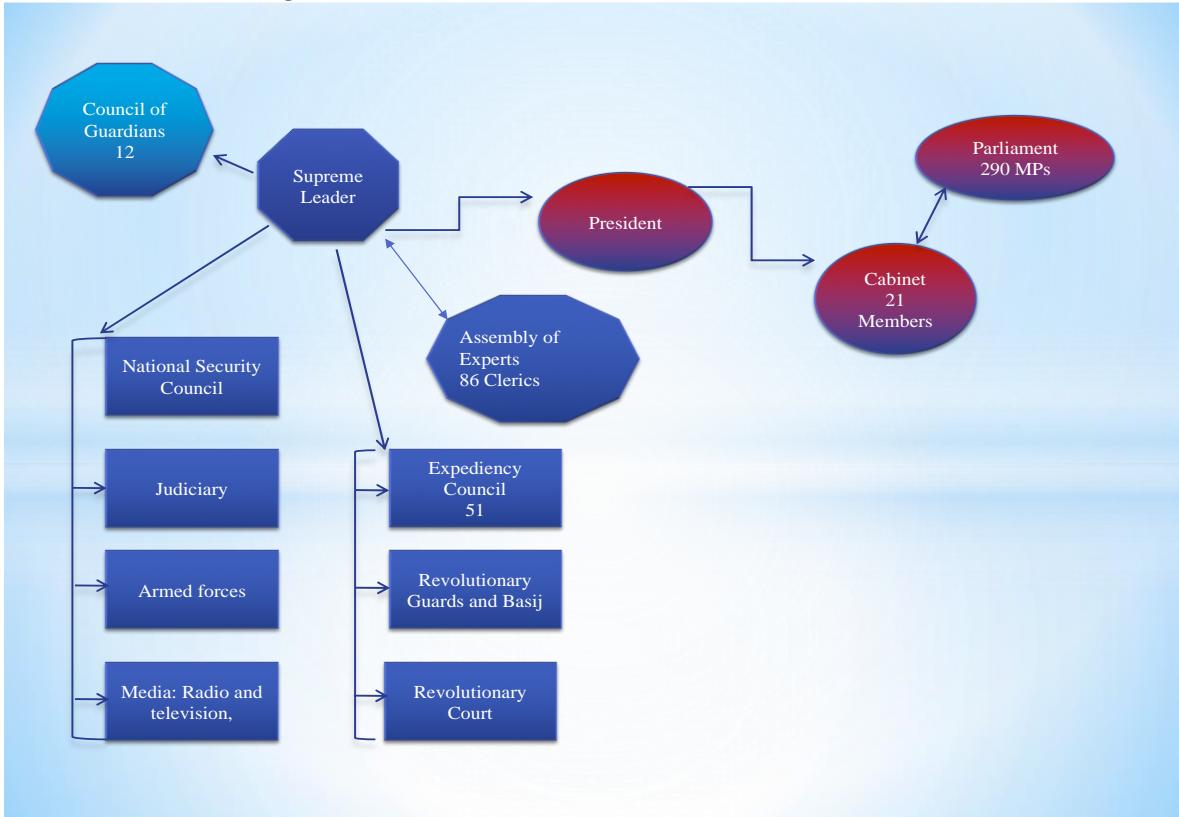
¹ Afshari Sara (2017), Forty Years of persecution of Christians in Iran, Article 18, Unpublished paper.

² <https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/30/iran-christian-pastor-faces-execution-apostasy>, (accessed 6 April 2019.)

Leader at the top (theocratic). In order to negotiate and interpret the government's actions, international players need to understand how Iran's power structure works.

The state structure is a combination of modern state and theocratic systems with the Supreme Leader as the head of the state.

Iran's structure of the government



Although the president is the second highest official position in the country his power is limited (see the above chart).

Any issue related to national security and the safeguarding of Islam is under the supervision of the SL. That means the restrictions and monitoring of freedom of religion and expression includes that Christian activities are under the control of the Supreme Leader's agencies, who are directly accountable to the SL, and that the President and his team cannot intervene in their work.

Therefore, negotiating freedom of religion for Christians or any religious minority groups with the president or his team may not change much except on one occasion when the SL agencies granted a favour to the presidential team and released a few individual prisoners, some of which, if they didn't leave the country, were rearrested later for example, Naderkhani's case.³

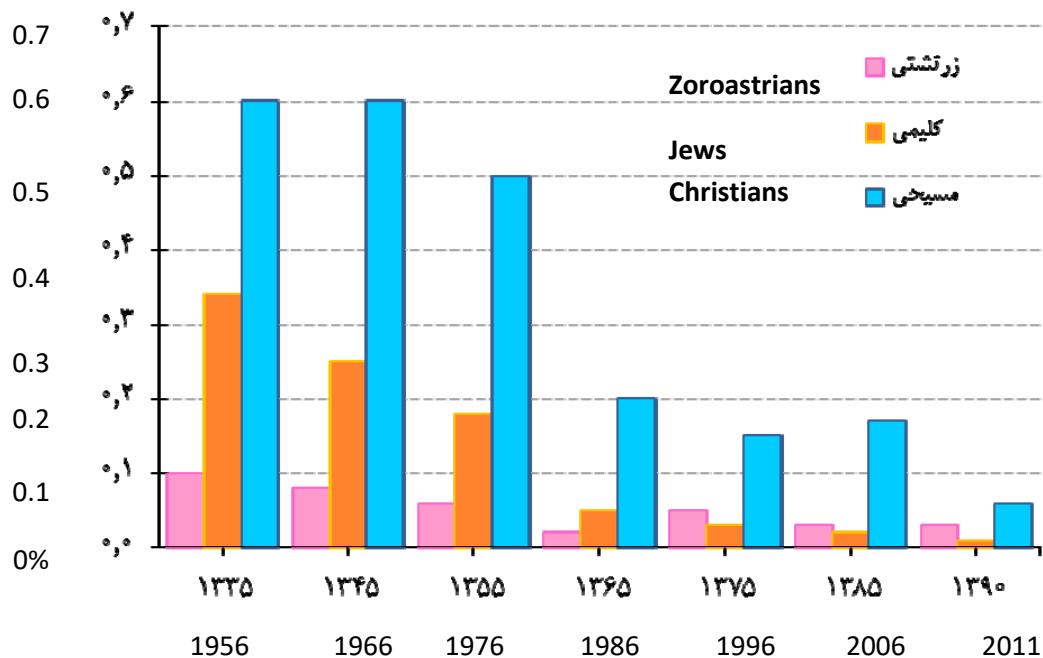
Recommendation: Therefore, the UK FCO perhaps needs to include the Supreme Leader in their negotiations with Iran regarding religious freedom, and/or seek a deeper understanding of the Iranian system. Moreover, any negotiation or diplomatic support for Christians should not single out Christians but address the whole issue of Freedom of Religion and expression.

³ This is a case of an Iranian Christian pastor who was sentenced to death (but later acquitted) in Tehran as being a Christian having been born into Islam. He was released in 2013 but then re-arrested in July 2018

2. Persecution of Christians and migration.

Christian persecution and discrimination in Iran should not only be considered as a Human Rights' issue but also a domestic issue that links to the increase of refugees and asylum seekers from Iran.

The chart below has been taken from Iran's official data and statistic website, amar.com. It shows the decline of the three religious minority groups from Iran.⁴



Almost all Christian asylum seekers in Europe, UK and North America are from a Muslim background. Iranian Armenians and Syrians do not need to seek asylum as they can easily migrate to America.

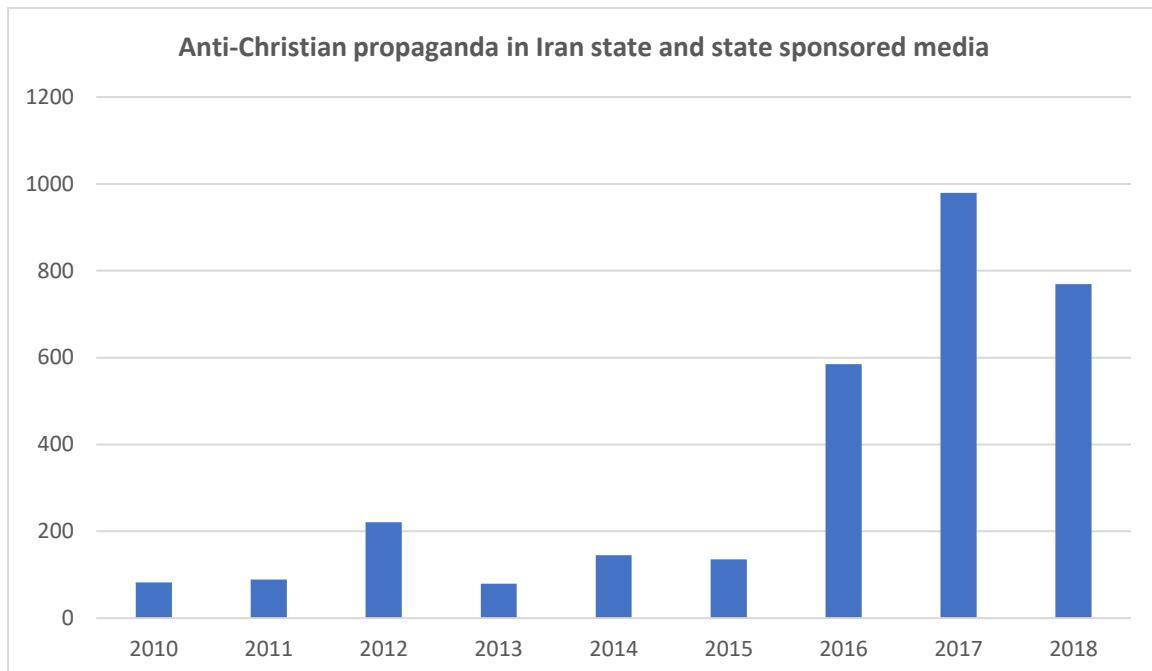
Recommendation: To reduce Christian refugees from Iran and to support their survival, it is important to put pressure on the Iranian government, to recognise Christians from a Muslim background, to reopen Farsi-speaking churches and allow them to worship together, and to guarantee their safety.⁵

3. Hate speech against Christians in Iran.

In recent years, especially since 2010, the state has expanded their harassment and discrimination against Christians into the internet, social media, radio and television, mainly against Protestant and convert Christians and house churches,. To separate Protestant Christians from traditional churches, the state has created new terminology called: Masihiat Tabshiri (Evangelical Christianity and/or Zionist Christianity).

⁴ <https://www.amar.org.ir/news/ID/2918/%D9%86%D9%AF%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%AA-%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%88-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%82%D8%B1%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%AE%D9%8A%D8%B1> accessed 29 November 2018.

⁵ Moreover, though apostasy is a crime under Islamic law, its crime has not been clearly defined in Shia practice. For that reason, the Iran Panel Codes have not specifically assigned any punishment for the apostate. There is no agreed understanding among clerics and Shia Islamic scholars on what actually constitutes apostasy.



Rahpoyan institution is a good example of state sponsored media that produce and distribute hate propaganda against Christians.

On their website **Rahpoyan Institution** explains their strategy in this way:

“Following the Supreme Leader’s speech in Qom [October 2010] on house churches, Zionist Christianity and false mysticism, the Rahpoyan Institution began its work, according to the Leader’s instructions and guidelines, to confront and prevent the activities of evangelical movements. After a long period of study on evangelical movements and their activities, the institution has strategised their activities more coherently to achieve the following goals.”⁶

The website prints eight goals among which are:

- recognising the strategy of enemies and confronting the Cold War based on the Leader’s guidelines.
- focusing on the activities of Zionist Christianity to warn the public about it and to fight against it.
- using existing capacities in the Islamic communities and among the elite [clerics and other officials] to confront Zionist Christianity and the residents of the Crusade camp.
- publicising the latest news of the evangelical movement’s activities inside the country.
- monitoring the dynamics of their methods among the youth population and their possible strategy.⁷

Since October 2010 until December 2018 Rahpoyan produced 1818 critical views and anti-Christian items, including hate speech and incitement of discrimination and hatred against Christians in forms of news, views, interviews, video clips, articles and so on.

⁶ <http://rahpoyan.blog.ir/page/about-me>, (6 April 2019).

⁷ <http://rahpoyan.blog.ir/page/about-me>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

Below is a translation of their thematic categorisation of their archive and the number of entries for each category:

	Number of items
Zionist Christianity	603
Characteristics of Zionist Christianity	294
The scholars of Zionist Christianity	28
The anatomy of Crusade camps	284
The leaders of evangelical/Zionist movements	98
Zionist Christian organisations	68
Building churches	126
Satellite channels	134
Crusade camps and the youth	9
Zionism	27
Evangelical Christianity	2
A page from history	114
False defendant of Christianity	26
Criticism of Christianity	52
Criticism of the Bible	21
Total from Oct 2010 – Dec 2018	1818

The main themes of the hate propaganda include:

Political accusations:

- accusing Christians of plotting against the regime and Islam⁸
 - accusing Christians of treason: “being part of the Green movement”⁹ and the provoking of public opinion to rise up against the Islamic system in 2017.¹⁰
 - accusing Christians of spreading lies and rumours against the Sepah, Basij, and other security organisations.¹¹
 - claiming to obtain documentation that shows Christian Zionists’ strategy against the government.
 - accusing Christians of starting a Soft War against the regime.¹²

⁸ <http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/16438/%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA%E2%80%8C-%D8%BE%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%8C>

%D8%B5%D9%87%D8%AC%D9%86%D9%80%D8%C%D8%8C%D8%8B%D8%A7%D8%8C-
%D9%85%D9%86%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%B4%D8%AF-%D8%B3%D9%86%D8%AF-
%DA%A9%D8%B4%D9%81%E2%80%8C-%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87-%D9%86%D9%82%D8%B4%D9%87-
%D8%AA%D8%B3%D8%AE%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86, (accessed 6 April 2019).
9 <a href="http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/16343/%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%B2-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%B4%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B9%D9%87-%D9%82%D8%AD%D8%B7%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D8%A7-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%B4-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-
%D8%AE%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁰ [http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/16492/%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-%D9%86%D9%82%D8%B4-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AA%D8%BA%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%87-1396](http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/16492/%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-%D9%86%D9%82%D8%B4-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AA%D8%BA%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%BA%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%87-1396) (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹¹

- claiming evangelical centres of the world use a variety of methods and techniques to attack Islam and the Islamic system in Iran and provoke people against the rule of the Supreme leader and create conflict within the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- Christian evangelicals are spies of the west and Israel.¹³
- the efforts of the Christian media are intended to stop Iran from supporting Hezbollah and the Resistance Front.
- it is more about politics than religious evangelism.

Historical and national accusation:

- evangelical Christianity is the enemy of “our Christian compatriots”.¹⁴

Anti-Islamic movements

- anti-Islamic movement
- hostility with Islam and provoking the society against Islam and the regime¹⁵
- accusing Christian media of working together with the West to destroy Islam and create division among Muslims.¹⁶
- the purpose of Christian media is the destruction of Islam and Muslims and to deceive faithful and revolutionary youth.¹⁷
- the character destruction of the clergy is on the agenda of the Christian media¹⁸

Religious accusations:

- blasphemy and insulting the prophets¹⁹

¹² <http://adyannews.com/fa/news/70448/%D9%86%D9%82%D8%B4-%DA%A9%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%BA%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%B3-%DA%A9%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%86%DA%AF%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%84>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹³ <http://adyannews.com/fa/news/72487/%D8%AD%D8%B6%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D9%85%DB%8C>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁴ <http://feraghvaadyan.ir/Portal/home/?news/235338/235442/235672/%DA%A9%DB%8C%D9%86%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%B2-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%87%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁵ <http://www.ferghenews.com/fa/news/16425/%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D9%85-%D8%B4%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%88-%D8%A7%D8%AE%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%81%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C-%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁶ <http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/16425/%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D9%85-%D8%B4%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%88-%D8%A7%D8%AE%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%81%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C-%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁷ <http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/15060/%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁸ <http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/14304/%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%A8-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B1-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

¹⁹ <http://mafaz.ir/content/20%اعضای20%نهادم>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

- introducing evangelical Christians as cult-like practices:²⁰
 - doctrinal corruption
 - accusing the Bible of insulting the prophets such as Abraham and Jacob
 - mocking clergy.

Social issues:

- accusing Christians of human trafficking, and migration and conversion²¹
 - moral corruption
 - vilifying Christians of provocative dancing and drinking alcohol during worship in order to attract the youth.²²
 - accusing Christian evangelicals of taking advantage of refugee situations²³
 - using the testimonies of converts to Christianity, who later return to Islam, to insult Christians
 - widespread moral and financial corruption among Church officials and pastors²⁴
 - Christian music as the ghost of the promotion of Zionist Christianity in Iran.²⁵

Using traditional churches against evangelical Christians:

- for propaganda on religious freedom as well as
 - to introduce evangelical Christianity as false Christians
 - to create division between Armenian and Protestant Christians.²⁶

Anti-Christian campaign

Every year before Christmas and Easter Iran launches campaigns against Christians both through media as well as a crackdown on house churches.²⁷ The pattern of the campaign normally is as follows:

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<http://feraghvaadyan.ir/Portal/home/?news/235338/235442/235698/%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%C%E2%80%8C-%D8%AE%D9%88%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%D8%C%D8%A7%D9%86-%DA%A9%D9%87-%DA%A9%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D8%A2%D9%86%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A8%D8%DB%8C%D8%AD-%D9%86%D9%85%DB%8C%E2%80%8C%D9%86%D8%AF!-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%85%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A8-%DA%A9%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%A7-%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%AC%DB%8C%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D8%BA%D8%E2%80%8C%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1--%D8%B9%DA%A9%D8%B3-%D9%88%D9%81%DB%8C%D9%84%D9%85.> (accessed 6 April 2019).

²¹ <http://rahpoyan.blog.ir/post/n1715>. (accessed 6 April 2019).

²² <http://basirat.ir/fa/news/199009/%DA%A9%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AE%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D9%88-%D8%A8%D9%87-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%86>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

²³ <https://www.aparat.com/v/dIW1z?vref=recom>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

²⁴ <https://www.aparat.com/v/dIW1z?vref=recom>, (accessed 6 April 2019).

²⁵ <http://adyanews.com/fa/news/75667/> (accessed 6 April 2019).

²⁶ <a href="http://ferghenews.com/fa/news/16137/%D8%AE%D8%B4%D9%85-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AD%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D8%B8%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B8%D9%85-%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%AD%D9%81%D8%B8%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87, (accessed 6 April 2019).</p>

Anti-Christian propaganda and incitement of hatred have fatal consequences when the Supreme Leader's agencies such as Sepah and the Basij draw on them as justification for targeting Christians with violence. This becomes more dangerous especially when the hardliners receive a green light from Khamenei, who calls them "commanders of the soft war" and orders them to bypass the law and "act on their own sense of religious duty" and act in a "fire at will" form. His order, especially to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Basij paramilitary forces, means as Shirin Abadi explains: "Fire at will means that these kinds of individuals can bypass the law, including common law", therefore "the first side effect of this order is lawlessness and the violating of citizens' rights" (Iran human rights 22 June 2017).²⁸ For that reason hate speech against Christians on Iran's state and state sponsored media is of a great concern and should be stopped.

Recommendations:

- International powers should negotiate with the Iranian authorities, including the Supreme Leader, to halt hate propaganda against Christians.
- they should enter into a binding agreement with Iran to promote religious freedom and to end incitement to hatred and discrimination against Christians.
- they should initiate appropriate sanctions aimed at ending religious persecution.
- the Iranian State must be held accountable to ICCPR article 20.2 that states "any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law." It should, therefore, most formally prohibit and take criminal measures against those who engage in and produce any form of hate speech, not only against Christians but also against other minority groups.

Questions and Answers

Q: Can I refer you back to Page 2 of your statement- there is a real spike in the anti-Christian propaganda in 2017. It was obviously quite substantial in 2016 and 2018, but can you account for the 2017 spike at all?

A: I am glad you asked me that. This year again there was another famous speech Khamenei did, the Supreme Leader - in Tehran University on 7 June, when he used the phrase "Fire at will", and what he did he called on Basij - this is a paramilitary volunteer group, Khamenei called them "commanders of the soft war" and ordered them to bypass the law and "act on their own sense of religious duty" and act in a "fire at will" form. This caused great concern and so shortly after this he clarified his comments saying by "fire at will" I didn't mean bypassing the law, I was referring to responding from a social and cultural point of view. So his agencies took that as needing to increase their media propaganda, and through media propaganda you increase your effectiveness in a "cultural way." That is why you see more hate speech during 2017, it came after Khamenei's speech. talking about "firing at will." So the spike came about as a direct result of the Supreme Leader's speech.

Q: We heard from a previous witness that an Iranian would not seek help from any sort of diplomatic mission, be it British or American, because they would be monitored and therefore accused of being a spy - I wondered whether you had any knowledge of anybody that has sought help in Iran?

A: No. For example, I myself was arrested a few times and was in prison 2 or 3 times and all these times one of the accusations I received was that I was a spy for Britain and the reason they said this is because I was baptised in the Episcopal church. And on one of these occasions I responded "Oh, I didn't realise I was a British spy, where can I go to get my salary?" They didn't like my joke.

²⁷

²⁸ <https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/06/iranian-nobel-laureate-blasts-khameneis-fire-at-will-policy-against-domestic-opponents/>, (assessed 5 April 2019).

I think again in my first recommendation, especially Britain, the UK if they want to support persecution of Christians in Iran, they have to do it under the umbrella of FoRB not to single out Christians because it may make it much harder for Christians in Iran and it would be like a confirmation of their accusations against us. That is why it is difficult to go to any embassy in reality for help.

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