

One Million Signatures Campaign demanding changes to discriminatory laws in Iran

1. Shirin Ebadi 2. Simin Behbahani 3. Shahla Lahiji 4. Shahla Ezazi 5. Babak Ahmadi 6. Farzaneh Taheri 7. Tahmineh Milani 8. Manijeh Hekmat 9. Maedeh Tahmasebi 10. Narges Mohamadi

Iranian law considers women to be second class citizens and promotes discrimination against them.

It is noteworthy that legal discrimination of this type is being enforced in a society where women comprise over 60% of those being admitted to university. It is generally believed that laws should promote social moderation by being one step ahead of cultural norms. But in Iran the law lags behind cultural norms and women's social position and status.

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According to Iranian penal codes, a girl at nine years of age is considered to be an adult. If she commits a crime which is punishable by execution, the courts can indeed sentence her to death. If a man and a woman become paralyzed as a result of an accident, the punitive damages provided to the woman according to law is half that of those provided to the man. If a man and a woman are both witness to a crime, the law does not recognize the woman as a witness, but the man can serve as a witness.

The law allows fathers, who obtain the permission of the courts, to wed their daughters even before the age of 13 (legal age of marriage) to a 70 year old man. The law does not allow mothers to serve as the financial guardians of their children, or to make decisions regarding their child's place of residence, foreign travel, or medical care. The law allows men to practice polygamy and gives them uncontested rights to divorce their wives at whim.

These are only a few examples of the inequities and discriminatory practices against women, which can be found in Iranian law. Without a doubt, women of lower socio-economic status or women from religious and ethnic minority groups suffer disproportionately from legal discrimination. On the other hand, these unjust laws have promoted unhealthy and unbalanced relationships between men and women and as a result have had negative consequences on the lives of men as well. Specifically we can point to the high dowries, that many women demand as a condition of marriage, which in essence are reflective of the lack of a sense of security resulting from legal discrimination and their unequal status under the law.

On the other hand, the Iranian government is a signatory to several international human rights conventions, and accordingly is required to bring its legal code in line with international standards. The most important international human rights standard calls for elimination of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, etc. The undersigned ask for the elimination of all forms of legal discrimination against women in Iranian law and ask legislators to review and reform existing laws based on the government's commitments to international human rights conventions.

The Initial Signatures: 1. Shirin Ebadi 2. Simin Behbahani 3. Shahla Lahiji 4. Shahla Ezazi 5. Babak Ahmadi 6. Farzaneh

Taheri 7. Tahmineh Milani 8. Manijeh Hekmat 9. Maedeh Tahmasebi 10. Narges Mohamadi 11. Naser Zarafshan 12. Homa Zarafshan 13. Ardeshir Rostami 14. Rakhshan Banietemad 15. Moniro Ravanipour 16. Babak Takhti 17. Banafsheh Hejazi 18. Mahvash Sheikh-ol-eslami 19. Fariborz Rais-Dana 20. Jafar Panahi 21. Shiva Dolatabadi 22. Homa Khodaverdi 23. Shahla Sherkat 24. Farideh Ghairat 25. Khadijeh Moghadam 26. Shahla Entesari 27. Parvin Ardalan 28. Fariba Davoudi Mohajer 29. Homa Maddah 30. Jelve Javaheri 31. Maryam Hosseinkhah 32. Farnaz Seyfi 33. Noushin Ahmadi Khorasani 34. Zohreh Arzani 35. Rezvan Moghadam 36. Sussan Tahmasebi 37. Bita Tahbaz 38. Mona Mohammadzadeh 39. Tala Taghinia 40. Golnaz Malek 41. Nahid Jafari 42. Setareh Sajadi 43. Mansoureh Shoajee 44. Mahsa Shekarloo 45. Firouzeh Mohajer 46. Taraneh Amir Teymouri 47. Parvin Zarrabi 48. Vida Biglari 49. Zara Amjadian 50. Tara Ahmadi 51. Parisa Kakai'e 52. Nahid Mirhaj 53. Maryam Mirza 54. Zhila Baniyaghoob 55. Mahboubeh Hosseinzadeh 56. Elnaz Nateghi 57. Bahareh

Hedayat 58. Eman Mozafari 59. Fakhri Shadfar 60. Bahareh Baghaie 61. Mahsa Jazini 62. Farideh Ghaeb 63. Niloofar Ensan 64. Pooyeh Madadi 65. Faranak Artia 66. Sonia Ghafari 67. Nargess Teybat 68. Hana Darabi 69. Simin Marashi 70. Ehteram Shadfar 71. Delaram Ali 72. Parvaneh Ale Bouyeh 73. Fakhri Nami 74. Negar Rahbar 75. Nahid Keshavarz 76. Sahar Sajadi 77. Kaveh Mozafari 78. Leila Nazari 79. Lili Eslami 80. Masoumeh Hayat-Gheibi 81. Sara Loghmani 82. Masoumeh Loghmani 83. Elnaz Ansari 84. Parinaz Atabaki 85. Nasim Soltan-Beighi 86. Javane Javaheri 87. Saeed Nour-

Mohamadi 88. Somaye Rashidi 89. Shima Farzad-Manesh 90. Farshad Ghare- Daghi 91. Forugh Ghare-Daghi 92. Sedighe Nasiri 93. Sepideh Gilisian 94. Fazele Khalili-Nejad 95. Fatemeh Nejati 96. Mahdis Farah-Bakhshi 97. Azam Heshmat 98. Elahe Soroush-Nia 99. Maziar Samiee 100. Hومان Kazemian 101. Mina Rabiee 102. Sara Esmi-zade 103. Farid Hashemi 104. Nahid Tavassoli 105. Fariba Vafi 106. Sima Sayah

Sign the petition: International Support for Women's Campaign