



**Gender Discrimination at Its Worst:
An Overview of the Discriminatory
Laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran
in Family Life**

**Submission to the United Nations Working Group
on Discrimination against Women in Law and in
Practice**

Gender Discrimination at Its Worst: An Overview of the Discriminatory Laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Family Life

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About Justice for Iran (JFI)

Established in July 2010, Justice for Iran (JFI) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit human rights organization. It aims to give a voice to the voiceless.

The mission of JFI is to address and eradicate the practice of impunity that empowers officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran to perpetrate widespread human right violations against their citizens, and to hold them accountable for their actions.

JFI unravels the truth and seeks justice for ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTs, women, and those who are persecuted because of their political beliefs. To achieve its mission, JFI researches, documents, validates, and litigates individual cases. It further raises public awareness and participates in human rights advocacy through the United Nations.

Introduction

Justice For Iran presents this submission to the United Nations Working Group on Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice on the occasion of its 9th session in New York, which is scheduled for a dialogue with States and civil society organizations on the theme of discrimination against women in law and in practice in family and cultural life. Drawing on its regional expertise, Justice For Iran focuses, in this submission, on Iranian laws and practices that enforce direct and de jure discrimination against women in the following areas:

1. Minimum age of marriage;
2. Right to contract marriage;
3. Rights of women during marriage and at its dissolution, to, *inter alia*, physical and mental integrity, free choice of profession and employment, freedom of movement, transfer of citizenship and nationality, divorce, guardianship and custody of children, and equal share of inheritance;
4. Polygamy; and
5. Stoning as a punishment for *zina* [adultery or having sex outside marriage]

The analysis of the above issues will disclose a daily reality of widespread and systematic discrimination against Iranian women, impairing or nullifying their equal enjoyment and exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms. As will be demonstrated, the Iranian government is not just failing to undertake special legal reforms and practices to promote non-discrimination and gender equality but is, indeed, doing everything within its power to perpetuate, endorse and entrench traditional practices involving discrimination, coercion and violence against women.

1. Minimum Age of Marriage

Article 1041 of Iran's Civil Code sets the legal age of marriage at 13 for girls and 15 for boys. The same Act allows girls below 13 and boys below 15 to be wed subject to the permission of their father or paternal grandfather and the approval of a competent court.¹

Official statistics released by the Iranian government between 2006 and 2011 reveal that the number of officially registered marriages involving girls under the age of 15 have increased from 33,383 in 2006 to 39,831 in 2011. Official statistics released in 2012 showed 1,537 girls below the age of 10 and 29,827 girls between the ages of 10 and 14, as being married. The real numbers are likely to be much higher, considering especially that only 24 provinces out of Iran's 32 provinces have provided statistics regarding this subject. At 1,411 cases, Ardebil, a province in northwest Iran, had the highest rate of marriage for girls below the age of 10, a number 67 times more than the next highest province. These numbers suggest that Iranian judges are routinely allowing guardians to coerce children below the age of 10 into harmful sexual activities,

¹ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/99682>.

rendering the minimum age of marriage, which is set at 13, almost entirely meaningless.²

According to the first Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, sexual experiences are permitted with girls of all ages provided that they do not involve sexual intercourse. His now-infamous fatwa (religious edict) decreed as follows:

Anyone who has a wife less than nine years of age is not allowed to engage in sexual intercourse, whether she is his permanent or temporary wife. However, having other forms of sexual pleasures such as touching with lust, hugging, and *tafkhez* [the rubbing of penis between buttocks and thighs] are permitted, even if she [the wife] is a nursing baby.³

This view has informed the approach of Iranian judicial and government authorities toward the issue of minimum age of marriage, leading them to either defend the practice of forced and early marriage on religious grounds or frame it as a private matter with which they cannot intervene.

In 2002, the Guardian Council, a powerful clerical body that is in charge of ensuring the compatibility of all laws passed by the Parliament with Islamic laws, rejected the legislative initiative to increase the minimum age of girl marriage to 15. More recently, in 2013, it asked that the Parliament amend Article 27 of the *Bill for the protection of children and adolescents who either have no guardian or have abusive guardians*, which sought to declare the marriage of a custodian to his adopted child illegal. The amended text of the Article recognizes the legitimacy of such a marriage provided that a competent court considers it to be “in the best interests of the child”.⁴

The Guardian Council has taken the foregoing positions on the ground of ensuring consistency with the principles of Sharia law, and without any regard to the harmful effects that the practice of forced and early marriage has proven to have upon children, particularly in terms of vulnerability to physical, sexual and mental violence, loss of access to education and employment, and increased risk of maternal mortality and other pregnancy-related complications.

This is not to mention the total disregard that it has displayed for Iran’s international human rights obligations under the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery. Article 34 of the CRC, which Iran ratified on 13 July 1994, provides

² Justice For Iran, *Stolen Lives, Empty Classrooms: An Overview on Girl Marriages in the Islamic Republic of Iran* (October 2013), online: <http://justiceforiran.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/JFI-Girl-Marriage-in-Iran-EN.pdf>.

³ Rouhollah Khomeini, *Tahrirul-Vasileh*, Vol. 2 (Darol Elm, 2008), p. 241. The text of the fatwa can be also accessed in Farsi via http://vccans.ir/Libraray/Ketabkhaneh/ketaabkhaaneh/tahrirolwasyla_imam_khomeini/tahrirolwasyla_imam_khomeini_jeld_4_01.html#link2 (Problem #12).

⁴ <http://rooznamehrasmi.ir/Laws/ShowLaw.aspx?Code=1344>.

that States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Article 10 of the ICESCR and Article 23 of the ICCPR, both of which Iran ratified on 24 June 1975, provide that marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses. Article 2 of the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions, which Iran acceded to on 30 December 1959, provides that States Parties undertake to prescribe suitable minimum ages of marriage with a view to bringing to an end the slavery-like practice of giving in a woman, without the right to refuse, for marriage on payment of a consideration in money or in kind to her parents, guardian, or family.

2. Right to Contract Marriage

Iran's Civil Code severely restricts the right of women to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage with their free and full consent. Article 1043 of the Civil Code makes "the marriage of a virgin girl, even if they have reached the age puberty, ... dependent on the permission of her father or her paternal grandfather."⁵ Women may bring a request to the General Court to quash the decision of their father or grandfather to withhold permission, on the ground that the decision is "unjustified", and to have the Court issuing them a permit with which they can approach the marriage registrar office. In order to obtain this permit, a female applicant must provide the General Court with "the full particulars of the man she wants to marry as well as the terms of the marriage and the amount of *mahriyeh* agreed upon."⁶ Article 1044 of the Civil Code sets out a similar application process for situations where a woman's father or paternal grandfather cannot be located and obtaining his permission proves impossible.⁷

The right of women to freely choose a spouse is also restricted by Article 1057 of the Civil Code, which imposes an absolute prohibition against "the marriage of a Muslim woman to a non-Muslim man"⁸ and article 1060 of the Civil Code, which requires women to apply for government permission before marrying a man of foreign nationality "even where there is no legal [i.e., religious] impediment". In order to obtain this permission, the couple must submit a large number of documents, many of which may not be easily obtained by Afghan and Iraqi refugees who have fled war-torn countries. Men of foreign nationality who marry Iranian women without obtaining government authorization may be pursued for prosecution and be punished by one to three year of imprisonment.⁹ There are no such restrictions for Iranian men who want to marry non-Iranian or non-Muslim women.

In recent years, Iranian authorities have implemented harsh regulations that make it extremely difficult for Iranian women to marry Afghan men. A circular published by the provincial government in Mazandaran province in 2010, for example, declared all marriages in the province between Iranian women and foreign nationals illegal, and indicated that individuals who fail to observe this regulation would be subject to punishment. Afghans, along with Iraqis, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis were specifically mentioned in the circular as foreign nationals that are "forbidden" from marrying

⁵ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/131308/>

Iranian women.¹⁰

3. Rights of Women During Marriage and its Dissolution

At the core of the Iranian legal regime governing the rights and responsibilities of women during marriage is Article 1105 of Iran's Civil Code, according to which "the position of the head of the family belongs exclusively to the husband." From this discriminatory arrangement has followed a range of restrictive and exclusionary laws that impair or nullify the recognition, enjoyment and exercise by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. This section provides a brief overview of some of the violations that may be considered most egregious.

3.1. Right to physical and mental integrity

Article 1108 of Iran's Civil Code obliges women to fulfill the sexual needs of their husbands at all times.¹¹ This is known as the requirement of *tamkin* [submission], which is defined as the duty of a married woman to respect and fulfill the right of her husband to unhampered sexual access. In return, the husband is obliged to provide his wife with maintenance. The failure of a married woman to comply with the wishes and commands of her husband by refusing, for example, to engage in sexual activity with him, constitutes *noshuz* [disobedience] and can disqualify her for maintenance rights. It can also constitute a legal ground for polygamy as well as assault and battery.

This legal framework facilitates and sanctions the commission of sexual violence and marital rape against women, which has been recognized to fit the framework of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment. Iranian government authorities must be held responsible for consenting to and condoning such discriminatory practices of sexual coercion, intimidation and punishment that are bound to cause feelings of pain, fear, anguish and inferiority in women and violate their right to respect for their human dignity and physical and mental integrity.

3.2. Right to free choice of profession and employment

Article 1117 of Iran's Civil Code allows a husband to prevent his wife from working in a profession or trade deemed "incompatible with the interests of the family or with his or his wife's dignity".¹² In the past, the decision as to what constituted incompatibility with family interests lay entirely within the powers of the husband. Article 18 of the Family Protection Law changed this to make the validity the husband's decision to prevent his wife from pursuing a certain profession, dependent upon the approval of a competent court.¹³

¹⁰ Justice for Iran, *Iran: An Afghan Free Zone?* (June 2012), online: <http://justiceforiran.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Iran-anAfghanFreeZone-layout-Final.pdf>; Human Rights Watch, *Unwelcome Guests: Iran's Violation of Afghan Refugee and Migrant Rights* (November 20, 2013), online: http://www.hrw.org/node/120431/section/9#_ftn214.

¹¹ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778>.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/97187>.

The Iranian government frequently purports that the Family Protection Law provides women with a similar opportunity. In reality however, Article 18 of the Family Protection Law subjects the exercise of this opportunity by women to the condition that it “does not interfere with the livelihood of the family”.¹⁴ This is while there is no such condition for men who seek to prevent their wives from working. Underlying this gendered formulation is the assumption that men are the primary breadwinners and women the primary caregivers. Besides this, the Family Protection Law cannot be considered neutral in its treatment of men and women, given the social context of inequality that shapes the lives of women in the country and requires that they remain committed, first and foremost, to household and family duties. As currently drafted, this law allows men to impair the right of women to work in the name of protecting the sanctity of family life, and makes Iranian judicial authorities deeply and actively complicit in the perpetration of this human rights violation.

3.3. Right to freedom of movement

Articles 1005 and 1114 of Iran’s Civil Code provide men with the exclusive right to determine the place of their wives’ residence. A wife will be considered *nashezeh* [disobedient] and unworthy of spousal maintenance rights if she leaves her husband’s home against his will, even if it is for escaping a situation of domestic violence. This rule applies unless the wife can prove to the court that she faces a significant risk of bodily harm, threatening her life and personal safety.¹⁵

Iranian law also allows men to nullify the right of their wives to leave the country. According to article 18 of the Passport Law, women need the written agreement of their husbands in order to be issued a passport. Men are entitled, under article 19 of the same law, to impose a travel ban on their wives and have their passports confiscated.¹⁶

3.4. Right to pass on nationality and citizenship

Article 976 of Iran’s Civil Code denies women the right to pass on their nationality to children.¹⁷ Citizenship is considered to be a “blood right” that can only be transmitted through the father. As a result, Iranian men who marry women of foreign nationality can pass on citizenship to their children but Iranian women who marry men of foreign nationality cannot.

Until 2006, children of Iranian women who had foreign husbands were not issued national identification papers and were deprived of access to education and primary health care. Since then, a new law has entered into force that allows children of Iranian mothers to apply for Iranian citizenship once they pass the age of 18 but only if their parents’ marriage is officially approved.¹⁸ As noted earlier, Iranian authorities implement harsh regulations that make it extremely difficult for Iranian women and Afghan men to register their marriages, leading many of these couples to enter into religious or traditional marriages. As of 2010, the Iranian government estimated that

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778>.

¹⁶ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/96904>.

¹⁷ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778>.

¹⁸ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/97918>.

32000 such unofficial marriages had taken place between Iranian women and Afghan men. Children born out of these marriages continue to remain in legal limbo and experience daily realities characterized by discrimination, violence and absolute lack of entitlement, including to education and primary health care.

3.5. Equal right to divorce

Iranian women do not enjoy equal right to divorce. A man is entitled to divorce his wife whenever he wishes provided that he fulfills certain conditions such as paying his wife's alimony (Article 1133 of the Civil Code).¹⁹ A woman must, however, prove that she is enduring an intolerable level of difficulty and hardship in the marriage in order to be able to obtain divorce (Article 1130 of the Civil Code).²⁰ Examples of such hardship include "the husband having a drug or alcohol addiction which damages the marital life, and which he refuses to quit in a period prescribed by a doctor ... the husband being sentenced to five or more years of imprisonment ... the husband mistreating the wife in a manner that is intolerable in her condition ... [and] the husband being afflicted with some incurable mental illness or contagious disease that disrupts the marital life."²¹ In practice, women are frequently unable to obtain divorce even when they meet the threshold of hardship described above because judges expect women to reconcile with their husbands and accept a certain level of physical and mental violence as a fact of family life.²²

3.6. Equal right to guardianship and custody of the child

The family law regime in Iran distinguishes the concepts of guardianship and custody from each other. Guardianship refers to the power to make decisions on behalf of a child in relation to property and financial matters and to authorize courses of action for which a guardian's consent is typically needed. These include, for example, obtaining passport, travelling out of the country or undergoing surgery. Custody refers to the exercise of parental responsibility for day-to-day decisions relating to a child's care and upbringing.

Accordingly to article 1180 of Iran's Civil Code, guardianship belongs primarily to the father or paternal grandfather of a minor child.²³ Custody can be, however, assumed by either of the parents. In a divorce situation, mothers are allowed to have custody of their minor children until the age of seven. Past this age, the custody of the child is devolved upon the father (article 1169).²⁴ A mother who wishes to retain custody can, however, request that the Court determine custody based upon the best interests of the child.²⁵ This arrangement tends to be frequently abused by men who do not have a genuine interest in caring for children and who start a custody dispute for the sole

¹⁹ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Mohammad H. Nayyeri, *Gender Inequality and Discrimination: The Case of Iranian Women* (a Legal Commentary commissioned by Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre, 2013), p. 38-41, online: http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/publications/legal-commentary/100000261-gender-inequality-and-discrimination-the-case-of-iranian-women.html#.Utxoh_30DqQ.

²³ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92778>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

purpose of inflicting pain and suffering on their former wives.

A particularly egregious provision in this relation is article 1170 of the Civil Code, which deprives women of the right to custody as soon as they remarry. This deprivation applies irrespective of the age of the child concerned.²⁶

3.7. Equal Share of Inheritance

Iran's Civil Code violates the right of women to equal share of inheritance in several serious ways. According to article 913 of the Civil Code, a surviving wife may inherit only one-quarter of his husband's estate if the deceased left behind no children and one-eighth of his estate if the deceased left behind children. In the former case, the remainder of the estate goes to the government (article 949) while in the latter case, it is divided between the deceased' children in accordance with article 907 of the Civil Code, which requires the inheritance of each brother to be twice as much as each of his sisters. By contrast, a surviving husband inherits one quarter of his deceased wife's estate when there are children and the entirety of it when there are no children.

Women's right to equal share of inheritance is also violated by articles 946 to 948 of the Civil Code which exclude real estate from the kind of properties that may be inherited by a surviving wife. Since 2009, a wife may receive the value of her share of inheritance from the land of her deceased husband. She cannot still however inherit the land itself.²⁷

4. Polygamy

Iranian law discriminates between men and women by allowing men the exclusive right to be married to two permanent wives and as many as temporary wives. In an effort to restrict polygamy, articles 16 and 17 of the Family Protection Law of 1975 restricted the right of men to marry a second wife on a permanent basis to the following conditions: provision of consent by the first wife; inability of the first wife to perform her marital duties; failure of the first wife to be obedient to her husband; affection of the first wife with insanity or a serious incurable disease; conviction of the first wife; addiction of the first wife to harmful substances; abandonment of family life by the first wife; infertility of the first wife; and disappearance of the first wife.²⁸ A punishment term of six months to one year of imprisonment has been defined for men who fail to register their permanent marriages in accordance with national legislation.²⁹ Men do not, however, have to fulfill any substantive or procedural conditions in order to enter into temporary marriages. According to article 21 of the Family Protection Law of 2013, the registration of these marriages becomes mandatory only if the temporary wife becomes pregnant, or the parties make a mutual agreement and/or set registration as a condition precedent.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ <http://www.dadkhahi.net/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=972>

²⁸ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/97187>.

²⁹ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/92683>.

³⁰ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/840814>

5. Stoning as a Punishment for Adultery

Article 225 of Iran's new Islamic Penal Code prescribes the grotesque punishment of stoning as a penalty for people convicted of *zina* [adultery or sex outside of marriage].³¹ Article 104 of the old Penal Code dictated the manner of execution and the type of stones that should be used, noting that they must be large enough to cause pain but not so large as to kill the victim immediately.³² This specific article has been removed from the new penal code; however, the method of execution it outlines is based on Sharia law and does therefore still apply pursuant to article 15 of the Regulations for the Implementation of Sentences of Hanging, Stoning and Amputation.³³

Although applying to both men and women in theory, the criminalization of adultery has been, in practice, overwhelmingly directed against Iranian women because Iranian men have on the one hand a unilateral right to divorce and on the other hand a right to marry two permanent wives in polygamous marriages and an unlimited number of temporary wives in *Mut'a* [temporary marriages]. This arrangement, as the United Nations Working Group on Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice has recognized in its Background Note on Adultery, establishes a discriminatory criminal regime regarding marital infidelity for women and men.³⁴

Since the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979, Amnesty International has documented at least 77 cases of stoning, but believes that the true figure may well be higher. Most of those sentenced have been poor, illiterate, or otherwise marginalized women who were coerced into signing false confessions that they did not understand and who were denied access to legal counsel. Many belonged to ethnic minorities which did not speak Persian, the language of courts, and could not therefore understand what was happening to them in the legal process or even that they faced death by stoning.³⁵ Many were also victims of early and forced marriage and had experienced a longstanding pattern of physical and sexual abuse as well as forced economic dependence. They had been drawn into adultery because of their inability to obtain divorce from their abusive husbands.

In her 2013 Report to the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women drew attention to the case of an incarcerated woman in the Islamic Republic of Iran that clearly illustrates the link between prior violence and crime, and also the disproportionate punishment often meted out to women. The woman was a victim of domestic violence and was forced into prostitution by her husband. One of her clients killed her husband, and the woman was convicted of adultery and of being an accomplice to murder. The male client was sentenced to an eight-year prison term and the woman was sentenced to death by stoning.³⁶

³¹ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/news/show/845002>.

³² <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/845048>.

³³ <http://haghgostar.ir/ShowPost.aspx?id=687>.

³⁴ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12672&>.

³⁵ Amnesty International, *Execution by Stoning*, MDE 13/095/2010 (December 2010), online: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/095/2010>.

³⁶ <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/A-68-340.pdf>.

Beside subjecting women to an abhorrent form of cruel and inhuman punishment, the classification of adultery as a crime punishable by stoning also provides impunity for men who commit 'honour' killings. Under Article 302 of the Penal Code, a man is exempted from the punishment of *qesas* [retaliation] and *diya* [blood money], the prescribed penalties for murder under the Iranian Penal Code, if he kills his wife or a female member of his family as she is committing adultery.³⁷

Recommendations

Justice For Iran urges the United Nations Working Group on Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice to bring the violations that were discussed in this submission to the attention of the Islamic Republic of Iran and call upon it to take the following steps with a view to eliminating discrimination against women:

1. Minimum Age of Marriage

- Increase the minimum age of marriage to 18 and take all necessary action, including legislation, to ensure that the marriage of a girl child shall have no legal effect
- Take all appropriate measures to eliminate the practice of forced and early marriage and to ensure that women have the right to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent
- Exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts that are aimed at coercing a child into forced and early marriage, whether those acts perpetrated by the state or private persons.
- Provide reparation to victims of forced and early marriage

2. Right to Contract Marriage

- Take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same right to enter into marriage
- Repeal discriminatory laws and regulations that impair or nullify the right of Muslim Iranian women to marry adherents of others religions or persons of foreign nationality, and permit women to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage, without discrimination on grounds of gender, religion or nationality

3. Rights during Marriage and at its Dissolution

- Repeal all provisions of the Civil Code which constitute discrimination against women in matters relating to marriage, divorce and family relations, and take all appropriate measures to ensure, on a basis of equality between men and women, the same rights and responsibilities for men and women during marriage and at its dissolution
- Abolish the requirement of *tamkin* with a view to ensuring respect for women's right to physical and mental integrity, and exercise due diligence to prevent,

³⁷ <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/news/show/845002>.

investigate and punish acts of violence against women, including those involving marital rape

- Take all necessary action, including legislation, to allow women free choice of profession and employment and freedom of movement, without discrimination, and abolish the current unlawful arrangements which allow men to prohibit their wives from working in a certain profession or acquiring a passport with the consent of the judicial authorities
- Allow Iranian women to transfer their nationality to their children, without discrimination, and ensure that children born to Iranian women are given access to adequate shelter, food, health care and education, irrespective of their father's nationality or official marital status
- Ensure that women and men have the same rights and responsibilities as parents in matters relating to their children and that determinations in custody and guardianship proceedings are decided based upon "the best interests of the child"
- Take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which bar women from receiving an equal share of inheritance

4. Polygamy

- Eradicate all national family and penal provisions that establish a discriminatory criminal and family law regime regarding marital infidelity for women and men

5. Stoning as a Punishment for Adultery

- Enact legislation that bans stoning as an illegal punishment and revise the Penal Code to ensure that it does not permit the use of any form of the death penalty or flogging for those convicted of *zina* [adultery]
- Decriminalize consensual sexual relations between adults
- Repeal all national penal provisions which condone violence against women and exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish men who murder their wives or other female relatives on suspicion of adultery or other so-called 'honour crimes'