



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 March 2024

English only

Human Rights Council
Fifty-fifth session
26 February–5 April 2024
Agenda item 6
Universal periodic review

Written statement* submitted by Association of Iranian Jurists Defending Human Rights, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 February 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Ongoing Human Rights Violations in Canada

Introduction

The Association of Iranian Jurists Defending Human Rights is deeply concerned about the ongoing situation regarding the rights of Indigenous peoples, migrants, and minorities in Canada, particularly the increasing incidence of discrimination and violence against these groups. Besides Indigenous rights, Canada has also violated the rights of other marginalized groups including detained migrants, people with disabilities and older people. There are a multitude of significant human rights issues in Canada requiring attention, including in relation to socio-economic disadvantage and poverty, systemic discrimination and the proliferation of hate, and access to employment, education, health and housing.

In particular, the situation of Indigenous peoples as one of the most pressing human rights issues facing Canada today. Many communities continue to live without access to basic needs such as safe drinking water, suitable sanitation, food security and adequate housing, and Indigenous women and girls continue to bear a disproportionate burden of violence. In addition and of particular concern, Canada continues to grapple with the legacy of residential schools and the ongoing and traumatic discovery of unmarked graves.

Decades of structural and systematic discrimination against Indigenous peoples have led to widespread grievances that persist across Canada. In recent years, the Canadian government's policies and actions towards Indigenous peoples and other minorities have been characterised by structural and systematic discrimination. Issues such as the inadequate provision of services to Indigenous communities, the lack of access to clean and safe water in many of these communities, and the violation of the rights of children and families due to the lack of funding for child and family services in Indigenous communities are just some of the challenges we face.

The assessments conducted by independent organisations and the information gathered from statistics make it clear that there are fundamental problems in the area of human rights violations against Indigenous peoples and other minorities in Canada that require the immediate attention of the Canadian government.

In addition, we would like to draw attention to the Canadian government's response to reports and recommendations aimed at addressing discrimination and violence against Indigenous women. Despite the Canadian government's announcement to bring about "transformative change", the government's performance in this regard has been labelled a "failure" by the Native Women's Association of Canada.

Also there is a global concern about anti-Indigenous racism, reports of forced or coerced sterilization of Indigenous women, the legacies of colonialism and the lack of access to education and health care .

In light of these facts, it is imperative that the Canadian government take effective action to address human rights violations against Indigenous peoples, migrants and minorities. Furthermore, we call on the Human Rights Council to monitor possible human rights violations in Canada and take the necessary measures to prevent and address these issues.

the Government of Canada should take the necessary measures to fulfil its obligations under international human rights law by taking concrete measures to address the root causes of discrimination and violence against Indigenous peoples, migrants and minorities and to bring its domestic policies and practises into conformity with its international commitments to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights for all persons within its territory.

Recommendations:

To the Government of Canada:

1. **Implement international obligations:** Fully and effectively implement international human rights obligations, in particular those contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the rights to water, for migrants and for minorities.
2. **Improve access to services:** Improve access to basic services such as clean and safe water in indigenous communities and provide sufficient financial support for the care of children and families in these communities.
3. **Accelerate transformative change:** Accelerate the implementation of transformative change and political and social reforms to combat discrimination and violence against indigenous peoples and minorities.
4. **Engage with local communities:** Actively involve indigenous peoples and minorities in decision-making processes and policy implementation to ensure their rights and well-being.
5. **Improve monitoring and official reporting:** Strengthen monitoring of government performance and official reporting on progress and achievements in the implementation of human rights-related policies and programmes.

These recommendations, if seriously implemented, can contribute to the advancement of the human rights and social well-being of Indigenous peoples, migrants and minorities in Canada.

To the Human Rights Council:

6. **Monitoring and advocacy:** strengthen monitoring of the human rights situation in Canada, particularly with respect to indigenous peoples, migrants and minorities, and urge the Canadian government to fulfil its international human rights obligations.
7. **Review and Assessment:** Conduct regular reviews and assessments of Canada's compliance with international human rights standards and commitments, focusing on issues such as access to clean water, the protection of indigenous peoples' rights, and the prevention of discrimination and violence against minorities.
8. **Dialogue and engagement:** facilitate dialogue and engagement between the Government of Canada and Aboriginal, migrant and minority communities to address human rights issues and ensure their voices are heard in decision-making processes.
9. **International co-operation:** promote international co-operation and sharing of best practises in addressing human rights issues, promote solidarity and support efforts to improve the human rights situation in Canada.
10. **Accountability and follow-up:** Ensure accountability for human rights violations in Canada and follow up on Human Rights Council recommendations to address systemic issues and improve human rights protections for all people in Canada.

By implementing these recommendations, the Human Rights Council can play an important role in promoting and protecting human rights in Canada and holding the Canadian government accountable for its obligations under international law.

Conclusion

In light of the issues raised and the recommendations made, it is clear that the human rights situation in Canada, particularly with respect to Indigenous peoples, migrants and minorities, requires urgent and effective action.

The Canadian government must fulfil its international human rights obligations and make further efforts to prevent discrimination and violence against these groups. In addition, the Human Rights Council should play a more active role in monitoring the human rights situation in Canada and holding the Canadian government accountable. By working together and heeding the recommendations, we can accelerate the improvement of the human rights situation in Canada and help create a more just and sustainable society for all people in the country.

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/canada>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/amnesty-international-indigenous-canada-report-1.6792508>