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1. General situation in Iran

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: January 2025

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The Iranian Revolution culminated in the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of an Islamic Republic in 1979. A growing secular sentiment amongst some religious officials and common Iranians advocating for the separation of the state and the religion in the country has been observed in the recent years.

Iran has experienced numerous protests, both domestically and internationally. The ‘Women, Life, Freedom’ protests, which originated in Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022, have sparked a significant movement advocating for women's rights and broader social freedoms. Demonstrators in Iran demand an end to gender-based discrimination and systemic oppression, facing severe crackdowns by authorities. This movement has transcended borders, inspiring solidarity protests across Europe and beyond.

Iran is among the leading practitioners of the death penalty, employing it against individuals convicted of crimes, including children, and under vaguely defined national security charges. The list of crimes punishable by death in Iran includes murder, rape, drug trafficking, armed robbery, kidnapping, terrorism, and crimes considered offences against the religion and the State. The death penalty is frequently used as a tool by Iranian authorities to instil fear and suppress opposition.

Political dissent in Iran endures significant repression. The Islamic Republic has responded to various forms of dissent by employing extensive surveillance both domestically and internationally, monitoring online activities, and using intimidation, lethal violence, imprisonment, and censorship to silence critics. Opposition parties and activists face intense scrutiny, arbitrary arrests, and harsh sentences.

Gender discrimination is institutionalised in Iran. Women face significant legal and social restrictions that deeply impact their lives, particularly in areas such as employment, education, and personal freedoms. Some women showed non-compliance in the streets and on social media to the State-imposed *hijab*. Women's rights activists often face severe persecution for their

advocacy stance.

Iranian authorities do not allow conversion from Islam to another religion. Most Iranians are considered Muslims, and conversion to Christianity is seen as apostasy and may be punished by death. The situation of ethnic and religious minorities in Iran, such as the Kurds, is marked by systemic discrimination and limited access to social, economic, and political rights. Other groups, such as Baha'is, have been increasingly targeted by the Islamic Republic.

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