



B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL

Your Excellency:

On behalf of B'nai B'rith International – the world's oldest Jewish humanitarian and human rights advocacy organization, with members in over 50 countries and a singular record of accredited presence at the United Nations – we are writing to urge you to vote against the Iranian candidacy for the U.N. Human Rights Council during elections taking place on May 13th at the General Assembly. As you know, the vote will be by secret ballot and Iran would be denied a seat at the Council by failing to get a simple majority, or by receiving the lowest number of votes in its regional group should the election remains competitive. We strongly maintain that the election of Iran to this body would do profound, irreparable damage to the prospect of meaningfully reforming a vital but still greatly flawed institution and of redirecting the Council away from the current atmosphere of selectivity and politicization.

When deciding how to vote, U.N. Member States must take into account the contributions of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights. Iran's record in this regard is appalling. Since the presidential election in last year, the government of Iran has brutally suppressed citizen's right to free assembly and free expression. Those whom the government has broadly defined as members of the opposition have been detained and, in many cases, subjected to torture. Human rights defenders in Iran have faced similar treatment for years. Iran has also been a persistent and particularly egregious violator of the rights of women, children, and minorities.

We ask you to subject Iran's intolerable human rights record to serious consideration as you vote on May 13th. The election of Iran to a seat on the Human Rights Council would have grave ramifications for the credibility of the Council, which is already unacceptably limited. Over the past year, and over the course of many years prior, Iran has flagrantly violated the rights of its own people, not to speak of others victimized by foreign terrorist groups sponsored by its regime. Allowing such a Member State to win a seat at the Human Rights Council would serve as an added insult to the victims of the Iranian government and signal to the rest of the world that the Council is not serious about its mission to protect and promote universal human rights.

Sincerely,

Dennis W. Glick
President

Daniel S. Mariaschin
Executive Vice President