**DOIW condemns the killing of Mahsa Amini and those who have protested her death in detention**

Statement of the Democratic Organisation of Iranian Women – 23rd September 2022:

Victory to the united struggle of the brave women and men of Iran; For liberty, and freedom from theocratic tyranny and the repeal of all laws that undermine women's human rights!

DOIW emphatically condemns the killing of Mahsa (Gina) Amini, by the security forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We convey our condolences to Mahsa’s grieving family and to all freedom-loving women and men of Iran. The regime’s Guidance Patrol arrested this young woman of 22 as she travelled on Tehran’s Metro with her brother under the pretext of having "bad hijab". As a result of the brutality of the regime’s guidance patrol and beatings while in custody, Mahsa Amini died in hospital on 16th September. This new crime of the Islamic Republic has provoked the anger of the long-suffering people of Iran. The name and memory of Mahsa Amini has turned into a rallying cry for the people who have come out to the streets to rise up against oppression, dictatorship and social injustice. On Mahsa’s temporary gravestone, is written: “Darling Gina, you won’t die, your name will become a byword”. Today, Mahsa Amini’s name has indeed become the rallying cry for the people rising for freedom.

In the past forty years, the reactionary Islamic regime of Iran has used systematic violence to secure its self-interest, and to trample shamelessly on the social and human rights of the people of Iran, particularly the women of Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran has presided over deepening poverty, economic and social insecurity, promoted the practice of embezzlement and hypocrisy in the state, has plundered the national wealth for the personal interest of the ruling elite and their associates, and has been directly responsible for violence and crimes against countless women and men. These have ranged from the forced hejab and medieval laws against women, to the torture, rape and execution of hundreds of girls and women supporters of left-wing organisations or mojaheds during the 1980s, or the mass killings of political prisoners in the summer of 1988, the execution of Fatemeh Modaresi, the consultant member of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran in 1989, the brutal murder of other dissidents such as Parvaneh Forouhar in the 1990s, and Zahra Kazemi, Zahra Bani Yaqub, among others, in the torture chambers of the regime, and the murder of Neda Agha Soltan in street demonstrations. These atrocities continue to this day and the people have had enough.

The regime’s denial of responsibility over the death of Mahsa Amini has fuelled people’s anger. At first the regime claimed that Mahsa had died due to ill health, something that her family have denied vehemently. The regime’s contradictory position on this tragedy, mimics their denials and lies immediately after the Revolutionary Guards’ downing of the Ukrainian plane over Iran in December 2019.

The people of Iran have been living with the fallout of the regime’s neoliberal policies, with its resultant poverty, deepening class divide and prevalent corruption, with the poor, women and the young bearing the brunt, and they have little to lose in this unequal fight.

Street clashes continue to rage in more than 80 cities and towns in Iran, despite access to the internet having been curtailed to stop communications. The women and men of our country have shown indescribable courage to stand against the brutal security forces of the regime and despite the heavy cost in this unequal struggle - fists against bullets - they are holding fast. The echo of people’s slogans conveys their demands: “Death to Dictatorship”, “Down with Theocracy”, and latterly “Woman, Life, Freedom” - a slogan that has emerged in these protests to reflect women’s particular aspirations - is a reminder of Marx’s position that a society is only free when its women are free. Today, the women of Iran are fighting courageously for their freedom and for the freedom of the society from theocracy.

Since Thursday 22nd September, different organisations, including Iran Human Rights have announced that at least 31 have been killed in the protests. Some reports put this figure at 50. There are reports of the arrest of a large number of protesters, including reporters, civic and political activists, women, students and former political prisoners. At present the prisons of Iran are full of workers’ rights activists, teachers, national minorities, religious minorities such as the Baha’is, dissenters, artists, and students.

At present, the Islamic Republican regime continues its brutal suppression, cutting off the internet and access to social networks. In 2019 during the people’s uprising, more than 600 innocent people were killed among them 23 children and youngsters under the age of 18. The regime cut off the internet then too (killing with the lights out), and shamelessly lowered the official number killed to 224 people instead. Then the regime accepted no responsibility for its atrocities, and in September 2022, the regime is repeating its brutal suppression of the people as before.

Today, too, the regime’s guns are aiming at the hearts of the women and youth of Iran. Ra’isi, the President of the regime, was one of the main perpetrators of the murder of thousands of political prisoners in 1988. Just as he spoke of human rights at the UN General Assembly, on the 21st of September, the 15 year old Abdollah Mohammadpur, and the 16 year old Amin Ma’refat were shot dead by the regime’s armed police. The mass arrests continue all over Iran.

DOIW condemns the brutal suppression of the people and believes that victory in the fierce struggle that is ahead of us, for democratic rights and freedoms, social justice, and an end to discrimination, in other words, the realisation of the protesters’ demand “Woman, Life, Liberty”, can be secured only through the united struggle of all progressive social and political forces and the dismantling of the religious dictatorship that rules Iran. Our victory depends on the separation of religion from the state, and the establishment of a national and democratic republic in Iran.

Finally, the Democratic Organisation of Iranian Women, appeals to all progressive forces the world over, especially progressive women’s organisations, to condemn this latest atrocity perpetrated by the Islamicists in Iran- the arrest and killing of Mahsa (Gina) Amini under the pretext of carrying out “religious laws and decrees”- and condemning the killings in Iran especially of our young people, and to condemn the detention of freedom fighters in our country. With your solidarity you can extend the reach of these protests and let our brave people’s call for justice be heard worldwide.

Democratic Organisation of Iranian Women

23rd September 2022

Copied to:

Women’s International Democratic Federation, UN Human Rights Commission