

Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Human rights implications of recent violence in Iran 2022-2023

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Spoken

003 – Human rights implications of recent violence in Iran

Hearing Date: 21 December 2022

Topic: Sponsorship campaign

Senator Claire Chandler

Question

"CHAIR: Finally, there's a campaign underway to encourage members of parliament to sponsor people detained in Iran and people who are at risk of execution, to try and exert pressure on the regime not to carry out those actions against those individuals. We heard a little bit about this at the start of the hearing today. Does the government have a position on this campaign?

Mr Innes-Brown: It's the first I'm hearing of it, so I'd like to take that away and think about it.

CHAIR: If you can provide to the committee any response to that on notice, once you've had a think about it, that would be appreciated.

Mr Innes-Brown: Sure"

Answer

The Australian Government remains deeply disturbed by reports of the arbitrary detention and death sentences handed down to protestors.

We are aware of campaigns in several countries regarding the sponsorship of Iranian prisoners at risk of execution.

As the Foreign Minister said on 18 January 2023, the Australian Government does not name specific individuals being persecuted in Iran as it may make things worse for them, and could put their family and friends at risk. This is based on expert advice, including from our embassy in Tehran, and in line with the approach taken by governments in like-minded countries.

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Hearing Date: 21 December 2022

Topic: DFAT meetings with Australian Iranian community representatives

Senator Jordon Steele-John

Question

" Senator STEELE-JOHN: Would you be able to provide to us on notice the number of times that departmental representatives have taken meetings with representatives of the Australian Iranian community and which organisations were present in those meetings?

Mr Innes-Brown: Sure. I'm happy to take it on notice"

Answer

As at 4 January 2022, DFAT representatives have engaged with representatives of the Australian-Iranian community on four occasions in the period since the protests began in Iran on 16 September 2022.

Meetings were with the Kurdish Lobby of Australia, the Persian Australian Community Association of the ACT, and the organisation of Iranian Australian Health Practitioners.

DFAT notes that the Iranian community is diverse and that individuals have also been in contact to express their views and concerns. DFAT is keen to engage with the diaspora and welcomes the correspondence and engagement with the community.