

Supporting Iranian women in their fight for human rights from members at the University of Iceland

Recent human rights violations against Iranian women and those protesting the death of Mahsa Amini on September 13, 2022, call for academics and researchers at the University of Iceland to reflect and act. We express our solidarity with Iranian women sacrificing their lives to fight for freedom and respect for human dignity today and in the future. Since Mahsa Amini's death, hundreds of people have been killed and thousands arrested because of the Iranian government's harsh and violent response to protests across the country. We, members of the university community in Iceland, strongly condemn the savage attacks on university students and faculty in Iran who are protesting in support of Iranian women.

Forcing women to wear veils is a violation of women's bodily autonomy. Mahsa Amini's tragic murder is the most recent example of the government's long-standing institutionalized sexism and misogynistic politics. In protest,

women have been cutting their hair and setting their hijabs on fire. The authorities have responded by using violence. On October 2, 2022, students at Sharif University were beaten, shot at, arrested, and held hostage by Iranian security forces.

Universities have traditionally been places where freedom of speech and expression have been nurtured and protected. Any attack on the freedom of one university community is an attack on the freedom of us all.

We believe that women's rights are human rights, and women who risk their lives for freedom and justice should have their political and ethical activism, and bravery in times of violence, applauded and supported. In addition, we encourage awareness amongst students and faculty of Icelandic universities of the events taking place in Iran. We encourage opening spaces for dialogue and support for those directly affected by these events.

Therefore we, academics and researchers at the University of Iceland call for an end to the state-sponsored violence toward Iranian women and students who fight for their justice, equality, and freedom of speech. We call for solidarity with Iranian women and all people who suffer human rights violations, whether sexual minorities, students, disadvantaged people, religious, and ethnic marginalized groups, and those who lost their loved ones in the name of freedom and justice.

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