



**VIII General Assembly,  
27 – 29 October 2006,  
Taipei, Taiwan**

## **Member Resolution Repression and Persecution of Indigenous Ahwazi Arabs in Iran**

*The UNPO General Assembly;*

Notes that Iran is, multinational, a multi-ethnic and multilingual country, composed of Turks, Persians, Arabs, Kurds, Baloch, Turkmen, and other ethnicities, yet ruled by the 1/3 Persian minority since 1925, creating a cultural and linguistic apartheid;

Alarmed by the continuous mass arrests, torture and execution of indigenous Ahwazi Arabs in the southwestern province of al-Ahwaz (Khuzestan);

Emphasizes that the 5 million indigenous Ahwazis have lived in their ancestral land of al-Ahwaz for thousands of years, independently and autonomously, invaded and forcefully occupied by the Persian-dominated central government of Tehran only in 1925 and renamed to the Persian Khuzestan;

Observes that successive Persian-dominated regimes followed a policy of forced assimilation, ethnic cleansing, confiscation of indigenous Ahwazi farmer land, diversion of rivers of Karoon and Karkhe to central Persian provinces of Isfahan, Kerman and Yazd, along with total exclusion of the Ahwazis from the Iranian landscape, politically, economically and socially;

Notes that the state adopted Farsi (Persian) as the sole official language, though it is spoken by less than 30% of the population;

Concerned that the policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran appear based on the elimination of the national identity of Ahwazi-Arabs, as well as other nationalities, such as the Turks, Kurds, Baluchis, Turkmen and others;

Concerned that these policies have kept indigenous Ahwazis as backward, leaving half of its population in absolute poverty, and 80% of Ahwazi children suffering from mal-nutrition;

Notes that whilst our land produces over 4.5 million barrels of oil a day, funding 90% of the Iranian economy, indigenous Arabs live in abject poverty, as no part of the oil revenue of nearly \$ 70 billion yearly is distributed to Ahwazi-Arabs or to their region;

Recalls that Ahwazi demands for basic human rights, including education in our mother tongue, have often been labelled as "separatist", "secessionist," or called "stooges of foreign countries," and so constituting a "danger to security and territorial integrity";

Concerned that illiteracy is 4 times, and unemployment is 5 times, that of the non-indigenous population;

Recalls that Ahwazis in Iran cannot wear their national and ethnic dress and costume in official centres, and that government authorities in Khuzestan refuse to register and issue birth identity cards to indigenous Ahwazi newborn-babies who do not assume Persian or Shiite names;

Recalls that the governor general of Khuzestan, as well as all other provincial political, military and security commanders, officers, mayors and high and mid-level government and Industry official, have been appointed from non-Arabs outside of the native Arab population;

Concerned that since the Intifada (general uprising) of April 2005, nearly 25,000 have been arrested, and their whereabouts are in most cases still unknown, and that at least 131 have been executed;

Concerned that families and children as young as 2 and 4 are being detained and taken hostage, forcing parents who work underground into surrender;

Recalls that whilst Ahwazis ancestral land produces 90% of Iran's oil wealth, no portion of it is allocated to the people of the land, and that legislation to allocate 1.5% of the revenue to al-Ahwaz areas was recently defeated in Iranian Parliament for a third time;

Notes that the Ahwazis are caught in global and regional geopolitics, where even Arab countries of the Middle-East keep silent of the Ahwazi repression, and that some liberal forces of the Europe also a prone to ignore the plight of the Ahwazis due to political differences with the United States;

Expresses the belief that the prevailing status quo is untenable;

Notes that, as Iran represents about 40% of the OPEC production, an unstable al-Ahwazi territory would be catastrophic to international business;

Concerned that due to the strategic importance of and oil installations, the province is becoming fully militarized, and that efforts are being made to exclude journalists and observers, leaving major crimes unnoticed;

*Therefore, we, the UNPO General Assembly:*

1. Call upon countries and multi-national corporations, such as China's government owned Oil Company investing \$90 billion in oil exploration and production in Ahwazi, to consider the rights of indigenous population, and to adhere to the principle of Informed, Free and Prior consent, as adopted by the United Nations;
2. Condemn the repression and persecution of Ahwazi-Arabs, as well as other ethnic and religious minorities in Iran;
3. Request that the UN Human Rights Council and the EU Parliament establish an investigation or a fact finding mission to al-Ahwaz, as well as the other ethnic areas of Kurdistan, including Baluchistan and Torkoman Sahra.

**Submitted by:**

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