

# A New Vision for Iran: The Charter of Change

Monday 13 March 2023, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 15 February 2023).

## **20 independent trade union and civil organizations in Iran put forward their most basic demands in a joint statement.**

The demands presented in this charter encompass a range of social, political, and economic changes necessary for Iran. These demands seek to establish rights such as free expression, equal opportunities for women and LGBTQ+ community, better working conditions, job security, and an end to discrimination and corruption. The signatories of this charter hold the belief that the Iranian people can accomplish these changes with their abundant resources and educated populace. They also view such progress as essential for a prosperous future.

### **WOMEN, LIFE, FREEDOM**

Charter of minimum demands of independent trade union and civil organizations of Iran

Honourable and Gallant People of Iran!

In the forty fourth anniversary of the 1979 Revolution, the very economic, political, and social fabric of the country has so drastically unravelled by crisis that one cannot see any clear and achievable perspective for its ending whilst the current political set-up exists in the country. It is for this very reason that the oppressed people of Iran – women and men who are struggling for freedom and equality – have become the standard-bearers of a historical and fateful battle to end the inhumane conditions which exist, and they do so valiantly with unprecedented sacrifice in the streets of cities all over the country.

The standard of fundamental protests which has been raised today by women, students, pupils, teachers, workers, activists and artists, queers, authors, and the general oppressed public of Iran, in all places in the country, from Kurdistan to Sistan and Baluchistan, and has attracted unprecedented international support, is a struggle against misogyny, religious and national oppression, and is a revolution against all forms of religious or non-religious dictatorship which has been imposed on us – the vast majority of the people of Iran – for more than a century in the past.

These protests are defiant. They are risen from the context of great and modern social movements engulfing the country. These are the rising of a generation which does not intend to flinch to defeat, a generation which intends to put an end to a century of historical backwardness and no longer tolerates that the ideas of a modern, prosperous, and free society in Iran should remain in the margins.

After the occurrence of two great revolutions in the contemporary history of Iran, great social progressive movements of workers, teachers and retirees, women fighting for equality, students, the youth and those against capital punishment have now retained a position that they can impact the history of the country, and shape the political, economic and social structure of the society based on their mass actions from below.

It is for this reason that this movement intends to put an end for ever to the establishment of any power from above and be the harbinger of a social, modern, and humane revolution for the emancipation of the people from all forms of oppression, discrimination, exploitation and dictatorship.

We, trade and civil organisations, the signatories of this manifesto recognise that it is by concentrating our efforts to unite and connect social and trade union struggles that we can end the existing inhuman and destructive situation. It is for this purpose that we believe the realisation of the minimum demands listed below should be the first decrees and outcomes of the fundamental struggles which the people of Iran have waged. These demands are in our views the only way for the founding of a new, modern, and humane society in the country. We urge all those honourable people who believe in freedom, equality, and emancipation, whether they are in factories, at universities or schools or in localities or the world at large, to hoist the standard of these demands at the high summit of freedom.

Our demands are as follows:

1. Immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, the prohibition of any thought crimes for political, trade union or civil activities, and the public prosecution of perpetrators and authorities responsible for the oppression of people's protests.
2. Unconditional freedom of belief, expression and thought, press, forming of political parties, establishment of local and nation-wide trade union and civil organisations, assembly, strikes, marches, social networks, and audio-visual media.
3. Immediate abolition of any kind of capital punishment, execution, revenge killing, and the prohibition of all forms of mental and physical torture.
4. Immediate proclamation of the complete equality of women and men in all political, economic, social, cultural, and family domains, the unconditional removal and abolition of laws and conventions which discriminate against gender and sexual orientations, the recognition of LGBTQ+ rainbow society, decriminalisation of all sexual orientations, and unconditional recognition of the rights of all women to control their bodies and their destiny and to prevent any form of patriarchal control over them.
5. For religion to be recognised as a private affair of individuals and not allowed to interfere or be present in the political, economic, social, and cultural laws and norms of the country.
6. Provision of safety at work, job security, immediate increase in wages of workers, teachers, civil servants and all employed workers and retirees with the involvement, intervention, and agreement of their elected representatives of independent and nation-wide organisations.
7. Abolition of any laws and norms that are based on national and religious discrimination and oppression, the establishment of suitable supporting infrastructure for equitable distribution of state resources for the development of culture and arts in all regions of the country, and the provision of necessary and equal resources for learning and teaching of all spoken languages in society.
8. Dismantling of the organs of suppression, curtailment of the reach of state and direct and permanent engagement of people in the affairs of country through local and national councils. Removal of any state or non-state authority by electors at any time should be recognised as the fundamental rights of the electors.
9. Confiscation of the properties of all real or legal persons and all state, quasi-state or private institutions which have plundered directly or through state rents the properties and social wealth of the people of Iran. The proceeds of such confiscation should be spent immediately on modernisation and renewal of education, pension funds, environment, and the needs of regions and sections of the people of Iran who have been deprived and enjoyed the least resources during the reign of both regimes of monarchy and Islamic Republic.

10. Ending of the destruction of environment, implementation of major policies for the renewal of environmental infrastructures which have been destroyed in the past century. Returning to public ownership those parts of the environment (such as pastures, coasts, forests, and hillsides) which under the guise of privatisation have deprived the rights of public towards them.
  11. Prohibition of child labour and the provision of subsistence and education for every child irrespective of the economic and social circumstances of their families, the general provision of welfare through unemployment benefits and substantive social benefits for all people who have reached the legal age to work or are unable to work. Provision of free education and healthcare for all people.
  12. Normalisation of foreign relationships at the highest level with all countries of the world based on justice and mutual respect, banning of nuclear armament and endeavour for world peace.
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In our view, the aforementioned minimum demands can be immediately realized, given the potential and actual underground wealth in the country and the presence of an informed and capable populace, as well as a generation of motivated young people eager to enjoy a happy, free, and prosperous life. These demands can be met with the right action and determination.

The demands in this manifesto are the general outline of our beliefs and it goes without saying that as we continue in our struggle and as we gain strengths in our solidarity, we will endeavour to present them in further details.

These are the organizations that have signed the above-mentioned charter:

- Coordinating Council of Trade Union Organizations of Iranian Cultivators
  - Free Union of Iranian Workers
  - Union of Student Organizations of United Students
  - Center for Human Rights Defenders
  - Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Agro-Industry Co.
  - Council for Organizing Protests of Oil Contract Workers
  - Iran Cultural House
  - Bidarzani (Feminist collective)
  - The Call of Iranian Women
  - The Independent Voice of Ahvaz National Steel Group Workers
  - Labor Rights Defenders Center
  - Kermanshah Electrical and Metal Workers Union
  - Coordinating Committee to Help Build Labor Organizations
  - Union of Retirees
  - Council of Retirees of Iran
  - Organization of Leading Students
  - Council of Free-Thinking Students of Iran
  - Painters Syndicate of Alborz Province
  - Committee to Follow Up the Establishment of Labor Organizations in Iran
  - Council of Retirees of Social Security Organization (BASTA)
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**P.S.**

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