

**Human Rights Council, 52<sup>nd</sup> Session (27 Feb – 18 Apr 2023)**  
**Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Islamic Republic of Iran**  
**Oral Statement**

Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Harm Reduction International, jointly with other seven organisations, welcome the report on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the concern expressed for the “exponential upsurge” in drug-related executions.

Iran remains one of the most active countries in imposing death sentences and executing people for drug offences. Figures from the Abdorrahman Boroumand Centre for Human Rights in Iran reveal a staggering 92% increase in confirmed drug-related executions between 2021 and 2022, with around 40% of those executed for drug offences are identified as Baluchis, despite them accounting for roughly 2% of the total population of the country.

As transparency is extremely limited, and information is mostly reported by civil society organisations and local activists at great personal risk, actual figures are likely to be higher. Nevertheless, drug control clearly remains key in the punitive arsenal of the state.

Against this backdrop, we are concerned about the failure of the international community to take meaningful actions against such blatant violation of international standards. The silence of fellow States as well as leading UN agencies in the face of such grave developments risks being misconstrued as tolerance – if not complicity – and jeopardises the fragile progress towards full abolition of the death penalty.

We call on this Council and its Member States to take urgent and concerted action against this and other violations committed by Iranian government in the name of drug control, and to ensure all UN agencies remain active on the issue.

We thank you for the opportunity to speak.

**Co-sponsoring organisations:**

1. Abdorrahman Boroumand Center for Human Rights in Iran
2. Capital Punishment Justice Project (CPJP)
3. Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation
4. Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort (ECPM)
5. HIV Legal Network
6. International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC)
7. World Coalition Against the Death Penalty