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Iran's silent plan to destroy the Baha'i community

WASHINGTON—The Iranian government is actively employing systematic measures in an effort to eradicate the Baha'i community—the largest non-Muslim religious minority in Iran—as a viable entity, the Baha'i International Community has warned on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

Around 60 Baha'is currently remain imprisoned in Iran while tens of thousands more experience educational, economic and cultural persecution on a daily basis.

Baha'i homes are routinely raided and members of the community are arbitrarily arrested and detained. Baha'i run businesses are shut down and sealed, and thousands of young Iranian Baha'is are denied access to higher education or are routinely expelled from universities for practicing their faith.

“These systematic measures by the Iranian government to deny Baha'is even their basic rights constitute facets of a policy to destroy the Baha'i community as a viable entity,” said Diane Alai, Representative of the Baha'i International Community to the United Nations.

Since a spate of executions that ended only under international scrutiny, the government's anti-Baha'i strategy has focused on social, economic, and educational discrimination in an effort to mollify international critics.

A secret memorandum signed by Iran's Supreme Leader in 1991 outlines a strategy to block the progress and development of the Iranian Baha'i community as well as 'deny them employment if they identify themselves as Baha'is' among other steps.

After four oppressive decades, Baha'is continue to be regularly arrested, detained, and imprisoned for practicing their faith despite promises by Hassan Rouhani to end religious discrimination.

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For more information about religious persecution and the rights of the Baha'is in Iran, please contact the U.S. Baha'i Office of Public Affairs at 202-833-8990, or visit publicaffairs.bahai.us.