



High Council for Human
Rights of the
Islamic Republic of Iran

**Assemblies & Riots: Contradictory
Approaches & Double Standards Pursued
by Certain Western States & International
Human Rights Mechanisms**

**The High Council for Human Rights of The
Islamic Republic of Iran
(13 December 2022)**

In the Name of GOD

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Assemblies & Riots: Contradictory Approaches & Double Standards Pursued by Certain Western States & International Human Rights Mechanisms

Despite the fact that in the U.S. and Europe, riots are suppressed, in total support of the governments, these countries have backed the riots taking place in Iran over the last two and a half months in a completely contradictory manner, describing them as “peaceful protests” and called on the Islamic Republic to refrain from confronting them. Having been supporting the rioters, the U.S. and certain Western countries have even imposed sanctions on the Iranian police. Not only do these countries continue with such deceptive and politically-charged behaviors, but unfortunately, the international human rights mechanisms also adopt different behaviors and policies vis-à-vis similar situations in which political factors play a key and prominent role. The present report touches upon some recent instances of dealing with protesters in certain countries, the double standard approach pursued by the West, and human rights mechanisms.

Launching Crackdown on & Threatening Protesters in England

Back in 2019, according to the orders of the London Police, any environmental-related gatherings in the British capital were stopped, and the police imposed a ban on all further protests planned to be staged by environmentalists. Following Britain’s violent handling of protests, the UK Parliament approved a law regarding the duties of the police, which gives the British police the freedom to tackle and use violence in response to peaceful gatherings.

Referred to as the “repression bill”, the Public Order Bill, on the one hand, causes a significant and unprecedented increase in the powers of the police force to impose undue restrictions on peaceful protests. On the other hand, it criminalizes any deprivation of public comfort and provides a sentence of up to 10 years of imprisonment for the usual cases that occur in peaceful protests.

The Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association has on several occasions expressed concern about the law and the courts proposed by the British Parliament to deal with climate protests. According to the Special Rapporteur, the law criminalizes legal methods of protest and increases the powers of the police to quell demonstrations. According to her, after the approval of the law in question, anti-gathering orders are more readily issued against

environmental protests, especially against peaceful ones, which would ultimately disrupt such activities.

Following the enactment of anti-human rights laws, the UK police prevented any attempt to hold peaceful gatherings in 2020, including protests for racial justice and a vigil for Sarah Everard, who was kidnapped and disappeared on her way home. On 16 May 2021, the British police also arrested four Blackburn-based young Muslims on charges of anti-Semitism while marching in support of Palestine in North London. This is while the Royal Court of Justice has rejected anti-Semitism charges brought against two out of them. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many demonstrations against corona-related quarantine were stopped by the London police. During the second national coronavirus quarantine in England, the Metropolitan Police also arrested over 150 people during protests against the government-imposed restrictions. According to figures released by the UK Home Office, more than 350 environmental protesters against oil and gas projects have been arrested in London since the very beginning of October 2022.

But the plans pursued by the British government to suppress protests are not limited to these cases. In the latest example, Suella Braverman, the British Secretary of State for the Home Department, has announced plans for widespread suppression of all forms of protests, including the suppression of environmental activists. According to Braverman, the UK police will be given new powers to take a “more proactive” approach vis-à-vis protests. She has also called such demonstrations a severe and dangerous disorder unrelated to freedom of speech and human rights, stressing that they must be stopped!

Rishi Sunak, the British Prime Minister, has recently tweeted about the increase in widespread protests and strikes staged by various organizations and companies in his country. The tweet reads: “This afternoon I met police chiefs to make it clear that they have my full support in acting decisively to clamp down on illegal protests.” The tweet goes on to say: “The public have had enough of this disruption and those breaking the law should expect to feel the full force of it.”

Meanwhile, following the recent protests and strikes in England, the government is reportedly planning to pass controversial so-called “anti-strike” legislation. The bill makes it very difficult for unions to strike. Moreover, the British army is said to be preparing to get engaged soon in order to bring the situation under control!

U.S. Police Killing of Possible Attackers

Attacking the police or security forces is severely punished in the United States. The U.S. police kill hundreds of people on an annual basis merely due to the possibility of holding an intention to attack the officers. This is while no attack actually takes place, and most police officers killing the people are acquitted in court. In addition, the American police's violent and brutal treatment of children, students and people of African descent as well as racism and discrimination between African diaspora populations and whites in the U.S. continue with no end in sight.

Violent Response to Peaceful Protests in Germany

Following a sit-in protest in Germany, the German Minister of the Interior took to Twitter and said: "Blocking escape routes puts lives at risk. We saw that in a terrible way this week in Berlin. The police have my full support for a crackdown."¹

On the other hand, over 3,000 German police and security forces arrested 250 political opponents under the pretext of plotting to stage a *coup d'état*. There is a 71-year-old man among those arrested. Arresting these people – who only sought to change the German political system gun-free and without closing the street and killing the police – on suspicion of subversion and restricting any support for them on social networks is considered suppression of freedom of expression and opinion.

In yet another move, the German government seeks to pass a law that will expel its opponents from all government jobs under the pretext of extremism.

Yellow Vests Demonstrations in France

After nearly a month since the beginning of protests and strikes in France and on the fourth anniversary of the formation of the Yellow Vests Movement, hundreds of thousands of *gilets jaunes* protesters have poured onto the streets of the capital Paris and other cities; however, the demonstrations led to widespread clashes with the riot police.

In one of the recent gatherings taking place in Paris, the French police used tear gas and batons against the yellow vests demonstrators, who were around 680 people and had taken to the streets to protest against the president and demand better living and

¹https://twitter.com/NancyFaeser/status/1588232077849382912?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Eetweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1588232077849382912%7Ctwgr%5Eb5fe852848bcdf07d776cd7b014f1f577e18c6b%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dw.com%2Fen%2Fgerman-minister-urges-clampdown-on-illegal-climate-protests%2Fa-63645520

improved workers' conditions. In some areas, the situation worsened as clashes escalated.

As the protests continued in December, over 90,000 security forces and several armored combat vehicles were used against 123,000 protesters across France. According to the news, the number of arrestees and detainees reached 1,385 and 975, respectively. 118 protesters also sustained injuries.

In general, widespread protests in France against rising inflation and the energy crisis are severely suppressed by the police. 30 gatherings at high schools in which many students had participated turned violent as the police clashed with the pupils. The French police also arrested 170 people under the pretext of violence and property damage after the football match between Morocco and Spain. The police used batons and tear gas against those who had come to the streets.

Violent Treatment of Peaceful Protests & Declaration of Public Order Emergency in Canada

From 14 to 23 February 2022, the Canadian Prime Minister declared a state of public order emergency to spell an end to the massive truckers' protest dubbed the "Freedom Convoy". These truckers were protesting the mandatory vaccination and border restrictions imposed following the COVID-19 pandemic.

While invoking the Emergencies Act, Justin Trudeau announced that the necessary powers would be given to the police to arrest and fine the protesting truckers in order to suppress the protests. He also claimed that declaring a state of public order emergency to clear out the truckers' protests was a measured and right move.

Justifying the use of force to silence the truckers' protests, the Canadian prime minister said: "It was clear that it wasn't that they just wanted to be heard. They wanted to be obeyed." He cited the "threats of serious violence" and local police not having a credible plan to restore order, leaving him with no choice but to invoke the Emergencies Act.

This is while, in a separate statement, the Canadian prime minister has said that occupying the streets is different from protests, adding that forcing the government to change public policies under the pretext of people's dissatisfaction is concerning.

Key Points:

1. Egged on by incitement and backing of particular States, media outlets and terrorist groups, the recent assemblies in the Islamic Republic of Iran morphed into riots, causing violations of the fundamental rights of citizens, including but not limited to the right to personal liberty and security, the right to freedom of movement as well as the right to health and safety. On the contrary, the Islamic Republic of Iran took a responsible policy and established an investigative committee to launch inquiries into the possible physical and financial damages and the violations of the rights of all parties. Nevertheless, the West and the United States exploited the Human Rights Council in a politically-motivated move and held a special session to establish a so-called mechanism to investigate the recent riots in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
2. This is despite the fact that most European countries have been the scene of protests over the past months. Albeit demonstrations and protests in European countries were utterly peaceful, they were suppressed and dispersed with the most severe attacks by law enforcement forces. The same countries that consider themselves supporters of the rioters in Iran are – both in law and in practice – committing the most heinous crimes to systematically violate the right to peaceful assembly.
3. In this framework, the passive and politically-motivated role played by some international human rights mechanisms should not be neglected. Their silence and inaction vis-à-vis the systematic violations that have taken place in certain western countries which claim to be championing human rights but instead have left no stone unturned to support the rioters and riots in Iran under the pretext of protecting and promoting human rights are very detrimental to human rights.
4. Be advised that there should be a clear boundary between peaceful and non-peaceful gatherings, especially those in which violence, firearms, *armes blanches*, and hate speech are used. Peaceful gatherings should be supported, and non-peaceful ones must be dealt with according to the law. Countries should also note that sooner or later or under certain conditions, they will face similar situations to Iran (like some countries mentioned in the present report). Therefore, they should avoid any contradictory and double-standard behaviors. It is impossible to support and describe the riots in another country as peaceful based on political objectives and violently suppress them in one's own country.

