

NEW ZEALAND WOMAN COMMENTS ON GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR GENDER EQUALITY

North Christchurch resident, Rohiyyeh Faramarzi, says a global campaign being launched in June to support gender equality in Iran serves as a poignant reminder of the atrocities suffered by women at the hands of the Iranian authorities. Mrs Faramarzi left Iran as a refugee in 1980.

The campaign honours the 40-year anniversary of the execution of 10 women in Shiraz that shocked the world. The women were hanged in a single night in a city square on the orders of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Their crime was refusing to renounce their beliefs in a faith that promotes principles such as gender equality. "Gender equality is absent and criminalised in Iran," says Mrs Faramarzi, who was related to two of the women.

Global leaders at the time led a wave of appeals for condemned Baha'i women and men to be released from their death sentences, but to no avail. In an attempt to coerce them into recanting their faith, the women were hanged one by one. While most were in their 20s, the youngest was only 17.

The [#OurStoryIsOne](#) campaign links their story to the struggle for gender equality by Iranian women over decades. Today Iranian women of all faiths and backgrounds are sacrificing and uniting in a search for social justice and a better future.

Sadly, the women executed in Shiraz are not Mrs Faramarzi's only relatives to lose their lives at the hands of the Iranian authorities. As recently as 2017 the family suffered losses.

Mrs Faramarzi said global campaigns like this give a voice to innocent people whose lives are cut short. It ensures their stories are told and their memory is kept alive. "We must be their voices."

"If a government treats its hardworking, law abiding and peace-loving people like this, where will it stop?"

She believes the key message of the campaign should be highlighted globally to raise awareness and seek justice for innocent Iranian citizens.

The Baha'i International Community invites people around the world to support the campaign through the arts, social media posts, public events and memorials. "It's a way of honouring the longstanding struggle and efforts towards gender equality in Iran," said Mrs Faramarzi.

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For more information contact:

Maria Reynen Clayton, Coordinator, Office of Public Affairs, BAHAI FAITH NEW ZEALAND,
Mob: +64 22 647 7744 | Email: maria.reynenclayton@bahai.org.nz

References:

[Ten Baha'i women executed together 40 years ago: Global campaign honors them in support of gender equality in Iran, calling for public creative contributions](#)