

STATE VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIVIDUALS
SUSPECTED OR
CONVICTED OF ORDINARY CRIMES
IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
IN 2012



SUMMARY REPORT FOR
THE UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
MARCH 2013

Published by
Abdorrahman Boroumand
Foundation



**State Violence Against Individuals
Suspected or Convicted of
Ordinary Crimes
In The Islamic Republic of Iran in 2012**

**Summary Report for the United Nations
Human Rights Council**

**A report of the
Abdorrahman Boroumand
Foundation**

March 2013

About the Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation

Through its programs of research, documentation, publications, and outreach, the Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation for the promotion of human rights and democracy in Iran aims to draw attention to the serious human rights violations, including breaches of due process of law and frequent use and arbitrary application of the death penalty in Iran; to stimulate awareness and discussion of these issues among Iran's citizens; and to promote an active approach to ending these human rights violations, while restoring the dignity of the countless men and women who have fallen victim to them.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Table of Contents | 1 |
| Introduction | 3 |
| Section I – Executions Carried Out Based on Judicial Decisions | 5 |
| Executions in 2012..... | 6 |
| by charge..... | 6 |
| by age..... | 6 |
| by gender..... | 6 |
| by nationality..... | 6 |
| by province..... | 7 |
| by province (per million inhabitants) | 8 |
| Public executions in 2012..... | 9 |
| by province..... | 9 |
| Section II –Extra-judicial killings and Deaths in Clashes with Law Enforcement Forces. 10 | |
| Deaths in clashes and extra-judicial killings in 2012..... | 11 |
| by province..... | 11 |
| by reported cause | 12 |
| Deaths in clashes with security forces in 2012..... | 13 |
| by province..... | 13 |
| Section III – Failure to Comply with the Obligation to Protect the Right to Life.. 14 | |
| Section IV – Torture and Cruel and Inhuman Punishment..... 17 | |
| A / Torture of Suspected Ordinary Criminals..... | 17 |
| B / Forced labor camps for petty drug dealers | 20 |
| C / Amputations and Floggings | 21 |
| Amputations from 2000 to 2012 (inclusive)..... | 22 |
| by province..... | 22 |
| by reported charge | 22 |
| by gender | 22 |
| Floggings in 2012 | 23 |
| by charge..... | 23 |
| Conclusion | 25 |

"In one case, the entire process – the investigation, the issuance of the verdict, and implementation of the verdict – took only 20 hours. This case demonstrates that cases about which the public is sensitive can be dealt with promptly and that the judgment can be implemented without delay."

Hojatoleslam Mohammad-Ali Fazel,
May 2007

INTRODUCTION

This summary report has been prepared for the member states of the United Nations Human Rights Council based on information and reports collected in 2012 by the Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation (ABF), a U.S.-based non-governmental organization.¹ The data regarding **executions, extra-judicial killings and assassinations, deaths in clashes, amputations, and floggings** contained in this report were obtained and collected from Iran's official and governmental news sources, websites of various provincial capitals' judiciary centers, interviews carried out by ABF, and reliable reports from human rights institutions inside and outside Iran. In the absence of independent field investigation, and considering the serious and increasing restrictions on free speech in Iran, the data presented in this report cannot be exhaustive. It is rather meant to substantiate a trend and to draw the international community's attention to the widespread nature of state violence, which affects thousands of ordinary people, often among the most vulnerable, in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation urges the Member States of the UN Human Rights Council to support the resolution renewing the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran during the upcoming session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, to condemn the systematic violations committed in Iran, and to call on the leaders of Iran to comply with their international obligations.

¹ The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation is a non-governmental, non-profit organization, founded in April 2001 and dedicated to the promotion of human rights and democracy in Iran. The Foundation is an independent organization with no political affiliation and is committed to promoting human rights awareness through education and the dissemination of information as necessary prerequisites for the establishment of a stable democracy in Iran. Please visit us at www.iranrights.org.

SECTION I

EXECUTIONS CARRIED OUT BASED ON JUDICIAL DECISIONS

In the year 2012, ABF has collected reports of a total of **540 judicial executions**. Of these, 322 were obtained from Iran’s semi-official and governmental news sources and/or websites of provincial capitals’ judiciary centers. 218 were based on reports of human rights institutions inside and outside Iran.

The official information on executions lacks details and Iran’s judiciary does not provide access to court records. Therefore, in most instances, it has not been possible to obtain further details about the identities of the accused or criminal charges brought against those executed and/or killed extra-judicially, nor the evidence presented against them. The tables and figures in Section I provide further details of executions.

Drug-related charges, sometimes in conjunction with other charges, are reported in the majority of execution cases. The table below includes individuals convicted of any drug-related charges, such as possession, sale, smuggling, and trafficking of drugs:

| Less than 10 kg | 10 to 100 kg | 100 to 1000 kg | More than 1000 kg | Unknown |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|---------|
| 195 | 38 | 35 | 12 | 189 |

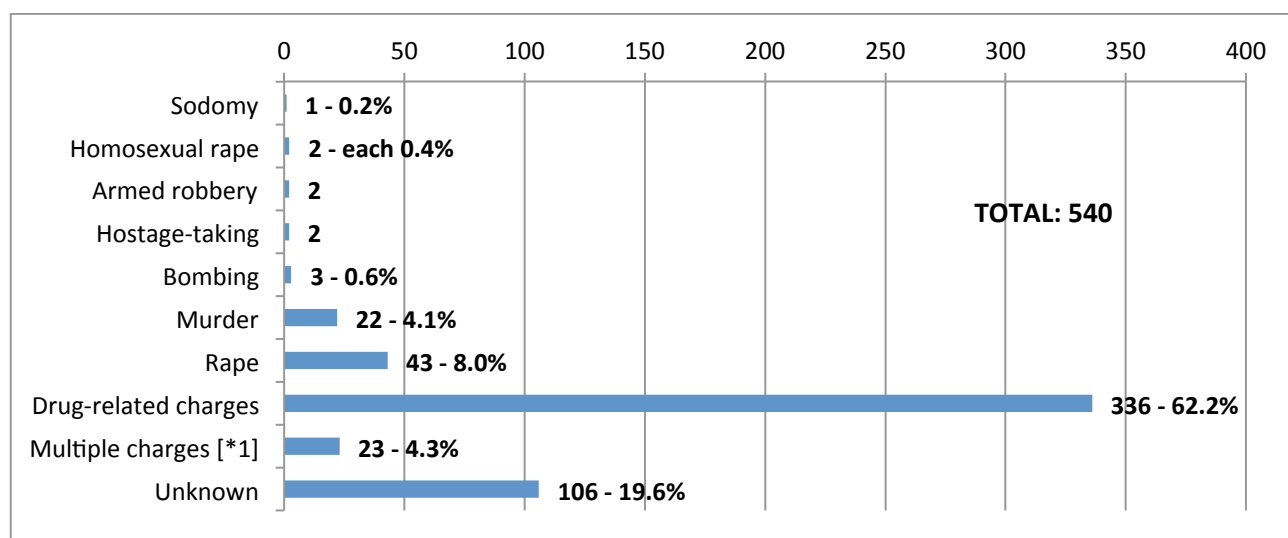
Meanwhile, **possession or transportation of drugs** alone, even in relatively small amounts, is a frequent cause of execution:

Note: Some of the individuals executed in 2012 were convicted and executed solely for **possession and transportation** (not purchase and sale or trafficking) **of relatively small amounts of drugs**. For instance, Mehr News Agency reported on 15 May 2012 that one individual was executed in Zanjan Province Central Prison for possession of 49 grams of crystal meth. In another report by this same news agency, Mr. Nazarali Moradi, 53, was hanged on 5 January 2012 in the town of Varamin’s Khorin Prison, for possession of 215 grams of heroin. The table below lists the charges as announced by the Iranian media and official reports:

| Less than 500 g | Less than 1 kg | Less than 2 kg |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 6 | 16 | 27 |
| Less than 5 kg | | Less than 10 kg |
| 52 | | 56 |

The following pages present a detailed analysis of information relating to judicial executions, including: the charges on which victims were convicted and executed; the distribution of executions by age, gender, and nationality of the victim; and the geographical distribution of all judicial executions, as well as the subset of judicial executions carried out in public.

Executions in 2012 by charge



***1 – In 2012, 23 individuals (4.3% of the total) were executed on charges that they had committed multiple capital crimes. These crimes were reported as:**

| No. of Victims | Charge | No. of Victims | Charge |
|----------------|--|----------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Drug-related charges, Armed robbery | 6 | Murder, Armed robbery |
| 2 | Drug-related charges, Homosexual rape | 4 | Murder, Rape |
| 1 | Drug-related charges, Murder | 1 | Rape, Sexual blackmail |
| 6 | Participation in terrorism, Membership in Salafist groups | 1 | Rape, Sodomy |
| 1 | Murder, Drug-related charges, Cooperation with Israeli intelligence, Bombing | | |

Executions in 2012 by gender

Executions in 2012 by age

| Age | Percentage (of cases where age was reported) | Reported judicial executions, 2012 |
|----------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Under 20 years | 2.7% | 4* |
| 21-30 years | 39.2% | 58 |
| 31-40 years | 33.1% | 49 |
| 41-50 years | 18.9% | 28 |
| Above 50 years | 6.1% | 9 |
| unknown | -- | 392 |

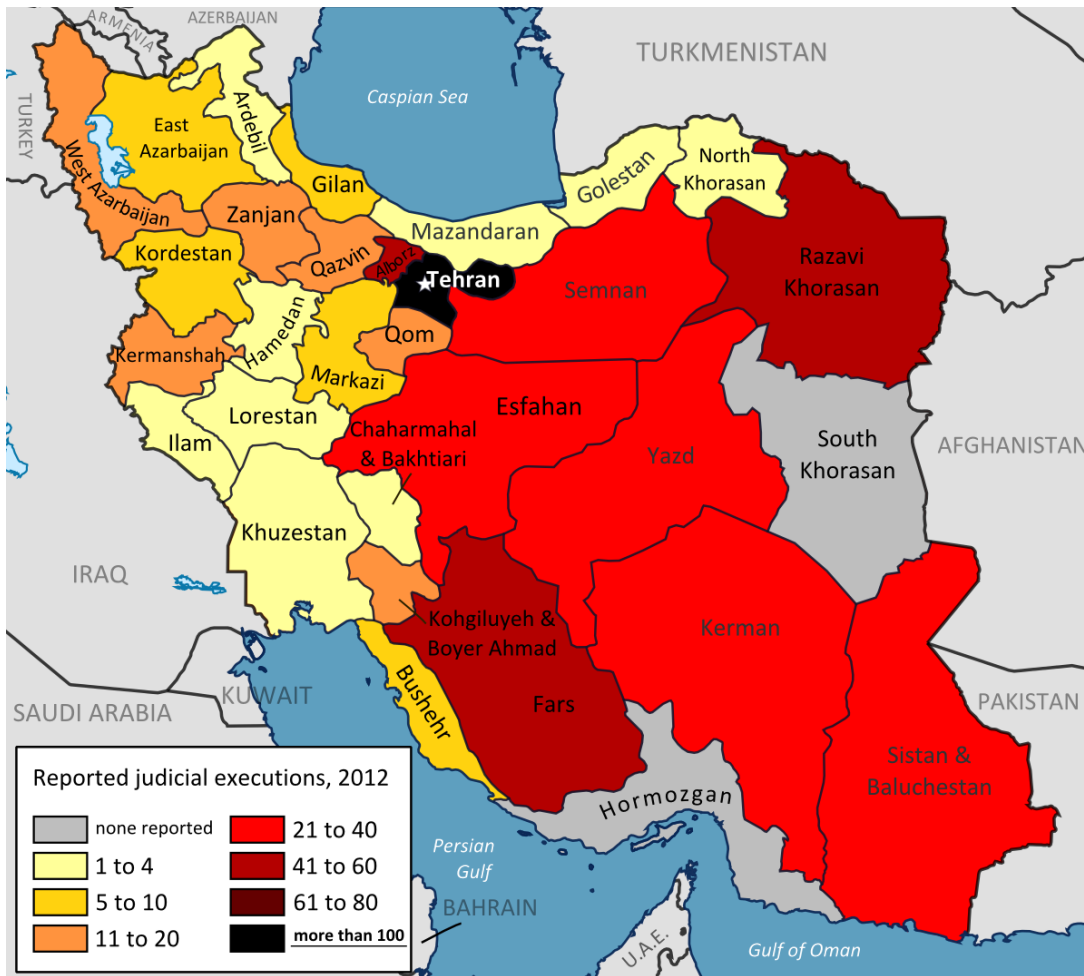
**Three of these convicts had committed their alleged crimes before the age of 18.*

| Gender | Percentage (of cases where gender was reported) | Reported judicial executions, 2012 |
|---------|--|------------------------------------|
| Male | 98.3% | 530 |
| Female | 1.7% | 9 |
| Unknown | -- | 1 |

Executions in 2012 by nationality

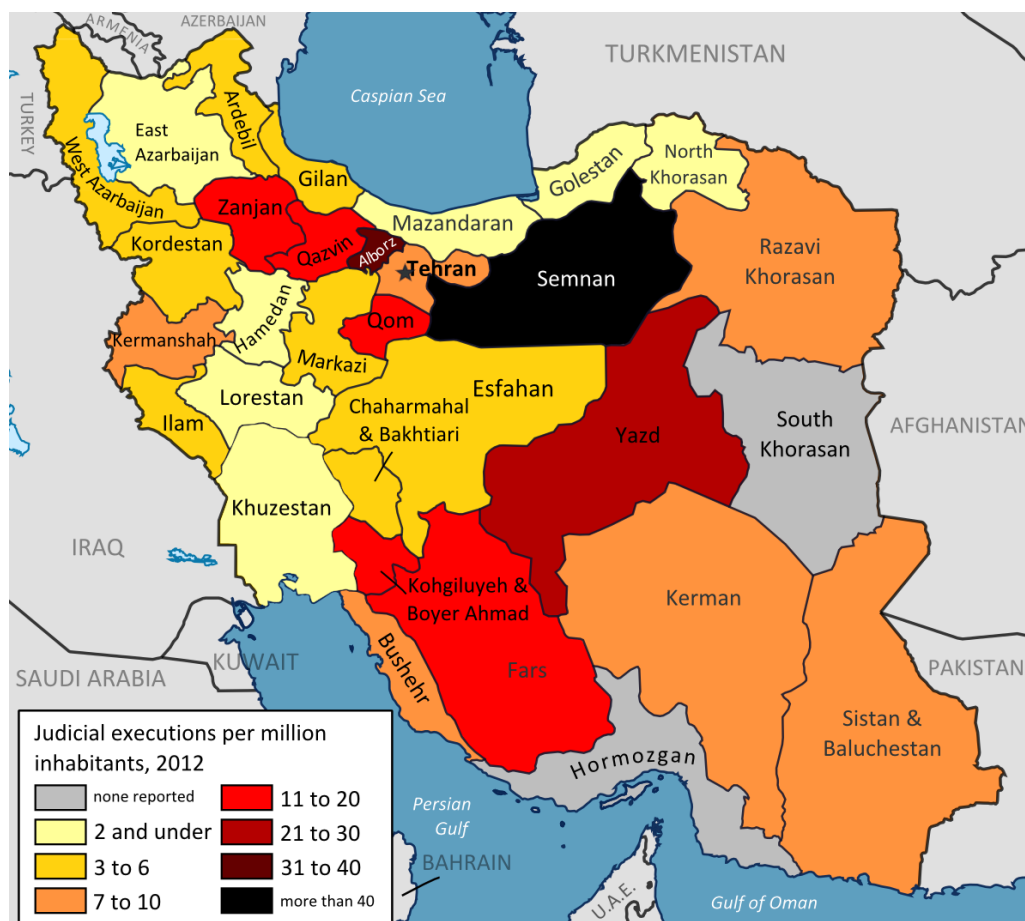
| Nationality | Percentage (of cases where nationality was reported) | Reported judicial executions, 2012 |
|-------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Iranian | 90.9% | 310 |
| Afghan | 8.8% | 30 |
| Pakistani | 0.3% | 1 |
| Unknown | -- | 199 |

Executions in 2012 by province



| Province | Reported judicial executions, 2012 | Province | Reported judicial executions, 2012 |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Golestan | 1 | Zanjan | 13 |
| Hamedan | 1 | Qom | 14 |
| North Khorasan | 1 | Qazvin | 15 |
| Khuzestan | 2 | Kermanshah | 17 |
| Chaharmahal & Bakhtiari | 3 | West Azarbaijan | 18 |
| Ilam | 3 | Esfahan | 22 |
| Ardebil | 4 | Kerman | 23 |
| Lorestan | 4 | Sistan & Baluchestan | 24 |
| Mazandaran | 4 | Semnan | 25 |
| Kordestan | 5 | Yazd | 29 |
| Markazi | 5 | Razavi Khorasan | 48 |
| Bushehr | 6 | Alborz | 49 |
| East Azarbaijan | 7 | Fars | 52 |
| Gilan | 9 | Tehran | 120 |
| Kohgiluyeh & Boyer Ahmad | 11 | Location unknown | 5 |
| TOTAL: 540 | | | |

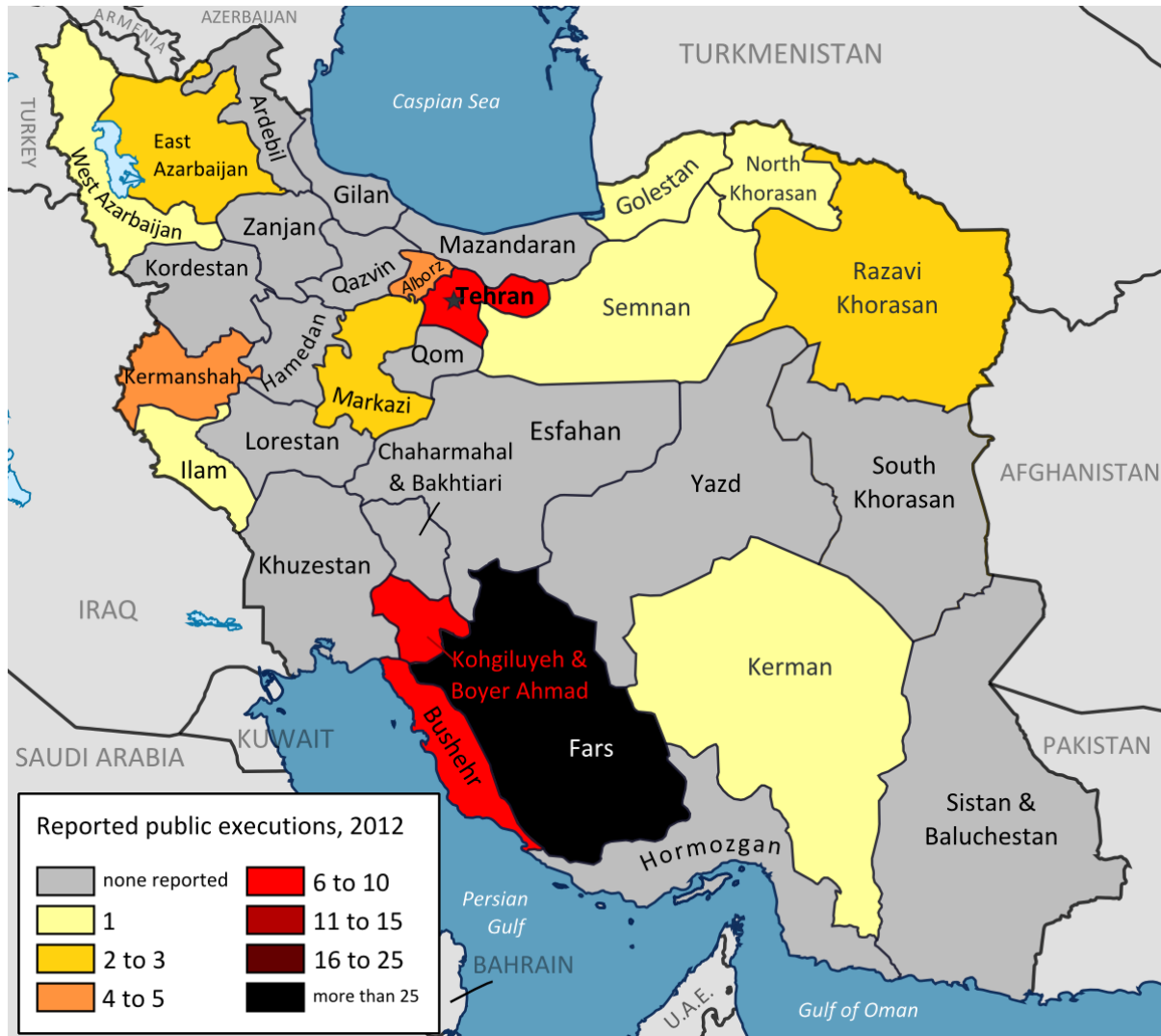
Executions in 2012 by province (per million inhabitants*)



| Province | Executions per million inhabitants, 2012 | Province | Executions per million inhabitants, 2012 |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Khuzestan | less than 1 | Bushehr | 7 |
| Golestan | 1 | Kerman | 9 |
| Hamedan | 1 | Kermanshah | 9 |
| North Khorasan | 1 | Razavi Khorasan | 9 |
| Mazandaran | 1 | Tehran | 9 |
| East Azarbaijan | 2 | Sistan & Baluchestan | 10 |
| Lorestan | 2 | Fars | 12 |
| Ardebil | 3 | Qazvin | 13 |
| Kordestan | 3 | Qom | 13 |
| Chaharmahal & Bakhtiari | 4 | Zanjan | 13 |
| Gilan | 4 | Kohgiluyeh & Boyer Ahmad | 16 |
| Markazi | 4 | Yazd | 29 |
| Esfahan | 5 | Alborz | 36 |
| West Azarbaijan | 6 | Semnan | 42 |
| Ilam | 6 | | |

**Population data is based on 2005 statistics. Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.*

Public executions in 2012 by province



| Province | Reported public executions, 2012 | Province | Reported public executions, 2012 |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| West Azarbaijan | 1 | Markazi | 3 |
| Golestan | 1 | Alborz | 4 |
| Ilam | 1 | Kermanshah | 4 |
| Kerman | 1 | Bushehr | 6 |
| North Khorasan | 1 | Kohgiluyeh & Boyer Ahmad | 6 |
| Semnan | 1 | Tehran | 7 |
| East Azarbaijan | 2 | Fars | 27 |
| Razavi Khorasan | 2 | | |
| TOTAL: 67 | | | |

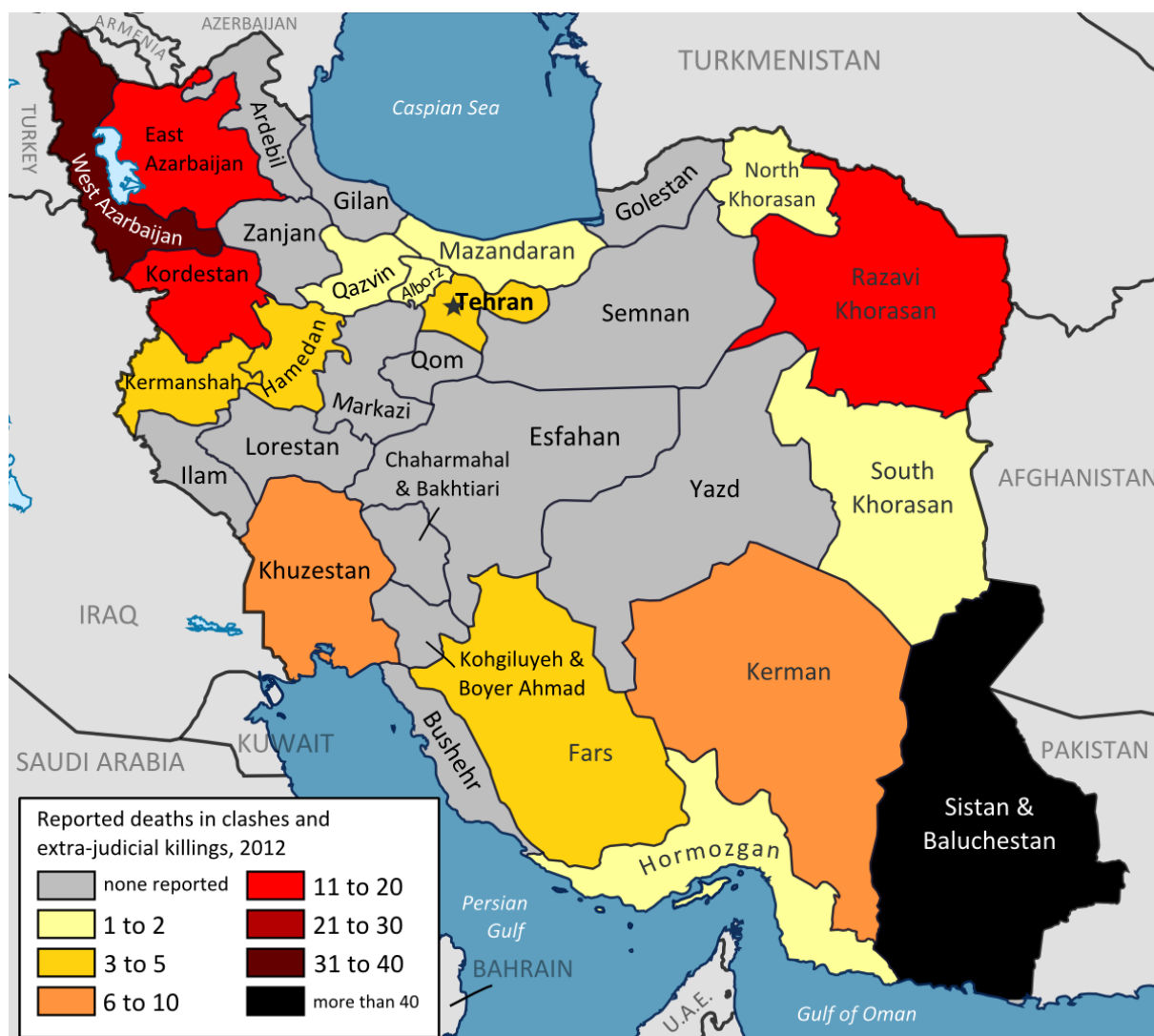
SECTION II

EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS AND DEATHS IN CLASHES WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT FORCES

Every year, scores of individuals are killed in clashes with the Islamic Republic of Iran's Law Enforcement Forces or killed extra-judicially in incidents involving abuse of force and firearms, "hasty shootings," or unclear circumstances. Those statistics will be considered separately below.

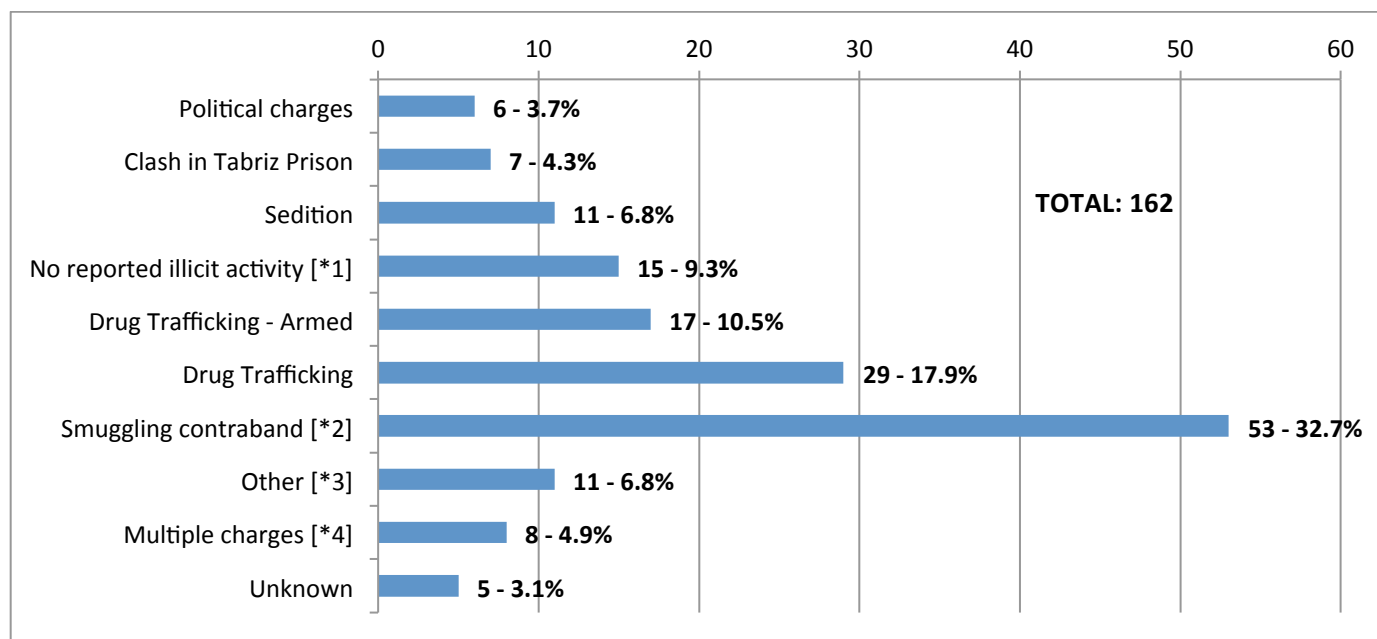
Note: All information pertaining to casualties from clashes has been obtained from semi-official and governmental sources and from news agencies of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Of these reports of 65 recorded cases of deaths in clashes with law enforcement bodies, 36 were reported to have resulted in the discovery and confiscation of firearms. In 4 of the reported cases of clashes, 3 members of the Iranian police forces are mentioned as having been killed or injured.

Deaths in clashes and extra-judicial killings in 2012 by province



| Province | Reported deaths in clashes and extra-judicial killings, 2012 | Province | Reported deaths in clashes and extra-judicial killings, 2012 |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Hormozgan | 1 | Fars | 4 |
| North Khorasan | 1 | Kerman | 6 |
| South Khorasan | 1 | Khuzestan | 7 |
| Qazvin | 1 | East Azarbaijan | 11 |
| Alborz | 2 | Razavi Khorasan | 11 |
| Mazandaran | 2 | Kordestan | 17 |
| Hamedan | 3 | West Azarbaijan | 40 |
| Kermanshah | 3 | Sistan & Baluchestan | 42 |
| Tehran | 3 | Location unknown | 7 |
| TOTAL: 162 | | | |

Deaths in clashes and extra-judicial killings in 2012 by reported cause



***1 – These include instances where security forces shot a person suspected of illicit activities (such as carrying drugs) or while crossing the border for purposes other than trafficking or smuggling.**

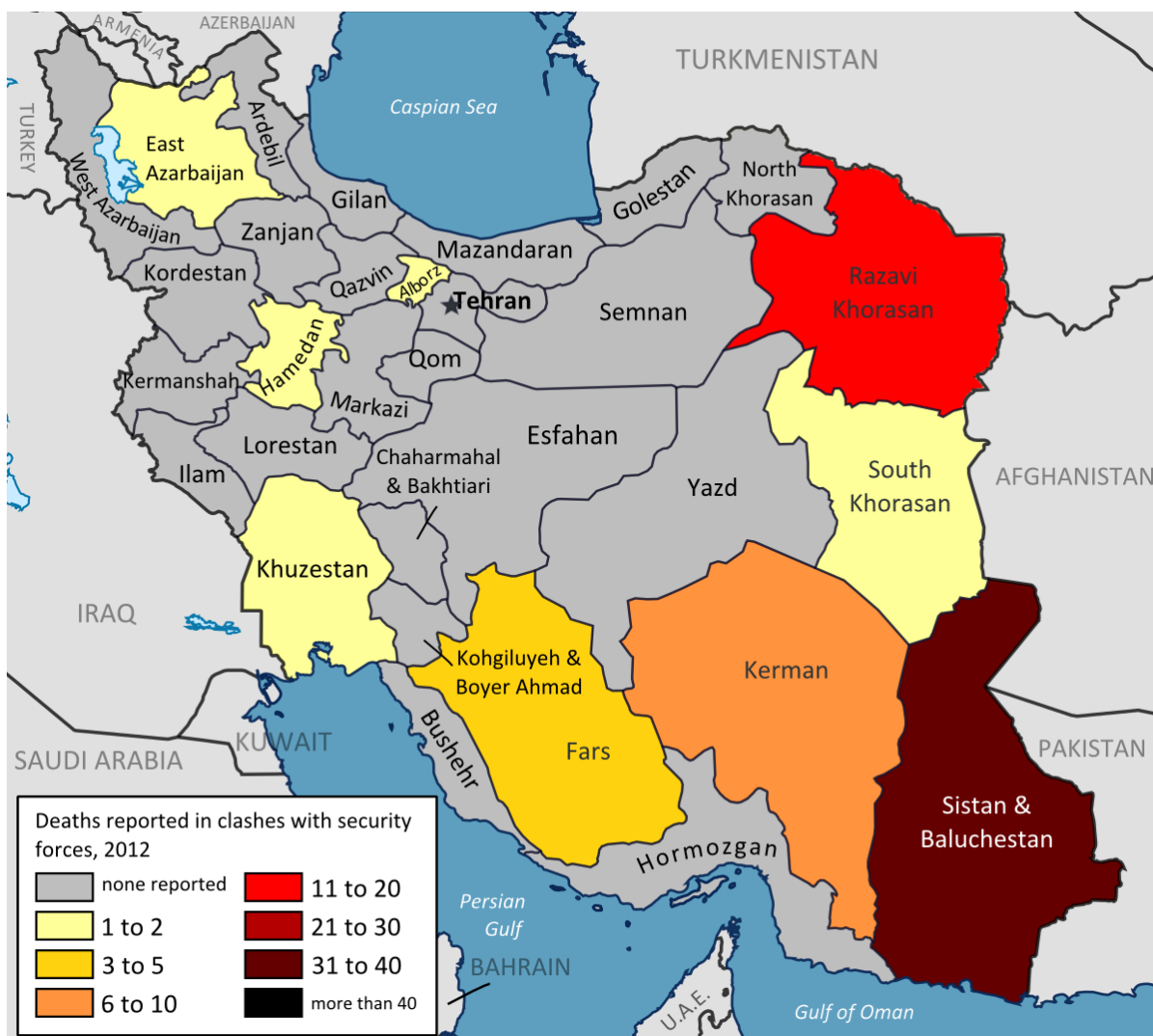
***2 – Examples of such contraband goods include cigarettes and clothing.**

***3 – Other individuals were killed for reasons reportedly related to offenses against morality, such as breaking fast (1) or suspicion of drinking alcohol (1); altercations with the police (3), murder of three members of the provincial police (1), terrorist activities (1), hostage-taking (2), accusation of storing weapons (1), and theft of electricity (1).**

***4 – In eight cases, multiple causes were said to have precipitated a victim’s death. They were listed as:**

| Victim | Charges | Victim | Charges |
|--------|--|--------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Protests • Graffiti about boycotting Parliamentary elections • Tearing down pictures of the candidates | 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedition • Drug trafficking |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propaganda against the regime • Sympathizing with the MKO | 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addict in the rehabilitation camp • Complaining about harsh camp conditions |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banditry • Enmity with the state | 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banditry • Enmity with the state |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedition • 3 counts of murder • Confrontation with security officers resulting in their deaths • Kidnapping • Intimidation | 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedition • Clashes with security officers resulting in their deaths • Kidnapping • Intimidation |

Deaths in clashes with security forces in 2012 by province



| Province | Deaths reported in clashes with security forces, 2012 | Province | Deaths reported in clashes with security forces, 2012 |
|-------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| Alborz | 1 | Fars | 4 |
| East Azarbaijan | 1 | Kerman | 6 |
| Hamedan | 1 | Razavi Khorasan | 11 |
| South Khorasan | 1 | Sistan & Baluchestan | 32 |
| Khuzestan | 2 | Location unknown | 6 |
| TOTAL: 65* | | | |

**Based on government reports, of 65 recorded cases of death in clashes with Law Enforcement Agencies, 36 were reported to have contained discovery and confiscation of firearms. In 4 of the reported cases of clashes, there is mention of 3 members of the Iranian police forces having been killed or injured.*

SECTION III

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE OBLIGATION TO PROTECT THE RIGHT TO LIFE

The numbers mentioned above attest to the existence of widespread extrajudicial state violence in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Notwithstanding the fact that (in many cases) information about the aftermath of the killings is scarce, ABF is deeply concerned by the numerous cases of probable violation of the right to life and the **apparent pattern of impunity for Law Enforcement Agencies** or other state agents responsible. Based on the available information, the Iranian authorities most often fail to conduct a thorough, effective, and independent investigation about the cases of individuals reportedly killed by law enforcement forces or other state agents. In too many cases the state fails to punish the individuals allegedly responsible or to provide the victims with adequate and effective remedies, in accordance with its obligations under related international human rights standards, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 2, 6, 14 *inter alia*. In some cases, authorities reportedly threaten victims' families and deter them from seeking justice.

ABF is concerned that such impunity, and the lack of transparency in investigations when they take place, in addition to the overall absence of public scrutiny, encourages, rather than deters, the abuse of violence by those responsible for maintaining public safety and social peace. Impunity by Law Enforcement Agencies is vastly underreported, but over the past several years, ABF has collected reports that are indicative of a broader pattern of human rights violations by Law Enforcement Forces. A sample of these cases is given below.

Case No.1

Ebrahim Lotfollahi

Mr. Ebrahim Lotfollahi, a 27-year-old student from Sanandaj, a city in Kordestan, a province in the western part of Iran, mostly inhabited by the Kurdish minority, was arrested on campus by security forces for an unknown political charge on 6 January 2008. After two days, he called from the Central Prison of Sanandaj and informed his family that he had been arrested and needed some personal items such as clothes; but when his family went to the prison, the prison authorities told them that he was not held there. There was no information about Mr. Lotfollahi for 9 days. Finally, on 15 January, 2008, the Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MoIS) called the Lotfollahis and informed them...

Case No.1 / Ebrahim Lotfollahi (cont'd)

...that he had hung himself in detention and that the body was already buried. However, according to his family, there was some evidence in the forensic reports that he was beaten up. The family filed a complaint, but, after 5 years, not only had the court closed the case, but the family was threatened by the security forces not to follow up with the case again. There has been no further progress on the case as of January 2012.

Case No.2

Habib Hosseindust Taleshani

Mr. Habib Hosseindust Taleshani was a 23-year-old male from a family who were mostly sympathizers of the Mojahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), a banned opposition group, a large number of whose members live in exile, especially at Camp Ashraf in Iraqi territory. At the age of 20, in 2005, Mr. Hosseindust accompanied his mother and younger sibling to Camp Ashraf but returned to Iran one month later. After his return, he was constantly summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MoIS), questioned about his stay, urged to cooperate with the MoIS and to testify against his family members. On 4 March 2010, at 11:00 p.m., an agent of the MoIS, along with some other men, came to his grandmother's house in Rasht, a city in the north of Iran, to pick him up. The following day, at 6:00 a.m., Mr. Hosseindust's body was found at a nearby cemetery, hanging from a tree. The forensic report mentioned that he had been hanged twice with two items: first with his own pants and then with a flag of Iran. It took 5 days for the authorities to allow the family to retrieve the body from the morgue. His brother was summoned to the Prosecutor's Office of Rasht and was threatened not to file any complaint against the MoIS; he was then handed a letter stating that his complaint was not acceptable. The family was also threatened not to hold a public funeral.

Case No.3

Peiman Alkhani

Mr. Peiman Alkhani, a 24-year-old Kurdish citizen from Aghbarzeh, a small village on the border between Iran and Turkey in Azarbaijan-e Gharbi Province. This village is inhabited by the Kurdish minority and most residents of it are *kulebar* (small smugglers) who earn a living by transporting tea, cigarettes, oil, and other goods between Iran and Turkey. Mr. Alkhani was a *kulebar* from the age of 17, owing to the absence of job opportunities in the area. On 21 January 2009, Mr. Alkhani was ambushed by the Iranian police force while crossing the border. He was shot once, fell from his horse, and was arrested by the police. Then a police officer approached him and shot him several times in the leg at close range. He was left on the spot for hours before the police allowed his family to pick him up and take him to the hospital. Due to these incidents, he lost his ability to walk, for years, and remained in poor condition. The Alkhanis filed a complaint against the responsible police officer, but on 15 June, 2009, the court exonerated the officer, arguing that Mr. Alkhani had been shot from a long distance while he was crossing the border illegally and that, therefore, the shooting was justified under the current laws. In an interview with ABF, Mr. Alkhani alleged that the evidence was distorted in court and that the police never ordered the *kulebars* to stop. He told ABF: “I did not get a lawyer, because the others, who had lawyers, did not get anywhere. A lawyer told me, ‘at best they will pay you *diah* (blood money)’ Two other people [from our village] were killed in 2009, two or three months after I was shot. Their family brought a lawsuit too; but their cases were also closed in a similar way. To some, [the authorities] pay *diah*, to some they don’t.”

SECTION IV

TORTURE AND CRUEL AND INHUMAN PUNISHMENT

A / Torture of Suspected Ordinary Criminals

Individuals suspected of and arrested for alleged ordinary crimes are taken to the “*Edareye Agahi*,” or **Criminal Investigations Office**. The *Edareye Agahi* is a **branch of the IRI’s Police Force** and, as such, functions within the framework and is an enforcement arm of the Iranian Judiciary. It is roughly the equivalent of the detective section of any U.S. police force, and of the “Police Judiciaire” in the French system, with **much broader powers**, including “crime investigation, detection, and prevention; identifying, arresting, and interrogating suspects and preventing their flight; fighting the traffic of narcotics; fighting corruption and other illegal activities; border control and treaty enforcement; and maintaining order, security, and public welfare,” among other responsibilities.

Throughout the years, this office has been given much leeway in the manner in which it conducts its business, which has included the use of **unorthodox and often illegal means**, such as severe beatings, threats of sexual assault, flogging, burning, and various other forms of torture that go far beyond the concept of police brutality, as commonly understood in democracies. Years of conducting investigations and interrogations in this manner, for the purpose of extracting information and forced confessions on behalf of the Judiciary, too often with impunity, has led to **widespread use of violence against detainees** by *Agahi* agents, immediately following the arrests.

This pattern of behavior, which has become customary and violates not only international police norms and rules of international human rights law, but also national Iranian laws, has created a dangerous and lethal interrogation environment for individuals arrested on suspicion of having committed ordinary crimes; for individuals accused of a crime; and sometimes even for witnesses. While information is scarce on the treatment of ordinary citizens arrested and interrogated in *Agahi*, over the years, there have been reports of cases that are indicative of a serious but rarely and poorly addressed pattern of human rights violations, as seen in the cases cited below.

Case No.1

Mr. Nasser

Mr. Nasser was arrested on 23 December 2001 for stealing several pigeons. He was transferred to the Criminal Investigations Office of Ramhormoz in Khuzestan Province in southwestern Iran, where he was severely tortured. He was flogged with wire cables, slapped, subjected to a “*qapani*” (reverse hanging by the arms) and another method of torture called “*joojeh*” or “chicken” [kebab]. He described this method of torture:

“Tying my thumbs together with a narrow thread, they sat me on the ground and handcuffed my arms. I felt a heavy load on my neck; somebody...

Case No. 1 / Mr. Nasser (cont'd)

...was sitting on top of me, pushing downward so hard that I felt as if my vertebrae would break at any moment. My entire body was in a folded position; my head and hands were on my knees. The officials brought a long cylindrical stick and passed it over my right arm and under my right leg. While the stick was on my left arm, they lifted me and put the two ends of the stick on tables so that I remained suspended in the air.”

Then, they forcefully put his fingerprints on confession statements. When Mr. Nasser was brought to a judge, the officers covered up the story by saying that he had injured his spine in a car accident. After his release, Mr. Nasser filed a complaint against the Ramhormoz Judicial Police, but the complaint never reached a conclusion. Those responsible were merely transferred from the Criminal Investigations Office to another section (*EtemadMelli*, 22 April 2007).

Case No.2

Mr. Ramin Ya'qubi

On 14 July, 2011, Mr. Ramin Ya'qubi was arrested by the police at a house party in Dorud, a city in Lorestan Province in western Iran. Following his arrest, he was transferred to Police Station No. 11. There, all the other defendants arrested along with Mr. Ya'qubi were released on bail, but because he could not afford bail, he was forced to remain in detention. His mother visited him and stayed with him until 2:00 a.m. He was fine and in good health at that point. At 8:00 a.m. the next day, the agents of the Criminal Investigations Office retrieved him to be taken to court, but proceeded to beat him prior to his appearance before the judge. The judge ordered that he remain in detention for one week, due to his obviously dire physical condition, but the warden refused to admit him to the prison. The judge then overruled the warden and Mr. Ya'qubi was accepted. In prison, his health rapidly deteriorated to the point that at 4:00 a.m., he was transferred to a hospital, where he finally died. His family filed a complaint against the agents of the Criminal Investigations Office but did not receive a response (*Jaras*, 7 September 2011).

Case No. 3

A former prisoner of conscience

A former prisoner of conscience was arrested by the Criminal Investigations Office sometime in 2006 in Masjedsoleiman, a city in Khuzestan Province in southwestern Iran. Charged with forgery and consuming alcoholic beverages, he was severely tortured: officers beat him, burnt his fingertips, and hanged him by his arms for an extended period of time. According to the report, as a result of the hanging, the detainee's arms were to be cut off from the shoulders (*Advar News*, 25 October 2006).

Case No. 4

A death in detention

The mother of a young man allegedly killed under torture by the Criminal Investigations Office of Karaj (Alborz Province, just outside Tehran) filed a complaint with Mr. Mirkuhi, the vice president of the Tehran Judiciary, in late October 2005. The mother of the victim alleged that a group of armed robbers raided her son's house some time in 2001. In a clash with the police forces, one police officer was killed and the robbers were arrested. Her son was taken to the Criminal Investigations Office of Karaj to testify, but, the next morning, his mother was notified of his death in detention. The family filed a complaint in Branch 119 of the Karaj General Courts, but, after 3.5 years, they have not received any response (*Fars News Agency*, 1 November, 2005).

B / Forced labor camps for petty drug dealers

The use of torture against alleged ordinary criminals is not limited to the interrogation period and the *Agahi Police*. In the late 2000's, for example, individuals arrested as "hooligans" were sent to *Kahrizak*, a makeshift prison on the outskirts of Tehran. Former prisoners had reported as early as 2007 the **death of a number of prisoners as a result of unusually harsh treatment and hunger**. It was only in July 2009, when the Tehran Prosecutor sent a group of protesters there, that *Kahrizak* made it to the news. After only a few days of detention in *Kahrizak*, at least 3 young men died, including Mohsen Ruholamini, the son of an influential member of the ruling elite.

The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation is deeply concerned about the probable existence of similar prisons or labor camps throughout Iran, where minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners are violated and prisoners' lives are at risk.

Since 2010, ABF has collected several news reports from Iran in which police and prison officials have mentioned the government's decision to create **forced labor camps for petty drug dealers** as a deterrent and in order to relieve overcrowded prisons. According to these officials, forced labor camps, which are meant to house between 30 and 40 thousand petty drug dealers, were approved several years earlier, but their completion was slowed down, due to limited budget allocations.

Hard labor and particularly harsh conditions in these camps are anticipated to be "effective in the deterrence, punishment, and education of these individuals, as well as in their spiritual, mental, and faith-related rehabilitation, in order to prevent them from committing such acts in the future."

(Quote from Deputy Director of the Anti-Narcotics Police headquarters, December 2010).

"These individuals will not be taught any skills in these camps. In order to punish them, they will be put under tremendous work pressure."

- Anti-Narcotics Police Chief, November 2010

On 1 March 2013, the Head of the Organization of the State Prisons and Security and Corrective Measures reported the **transfer of ten thousand prisoners, drug offenders, to forced labor camps**. These camps in Tehran (Hassanabad), Kerman, and Sistan and Baluchestan are not operational yet but those in Esfahan and Khorasan Razavi provinces have received ten thousand prisoners. In the absence of serious and persistent international attention, these "forced labor camps" may turn into "death camps" for the weakest prisoners.

C / Amputations and Floggings

The Islamic Republic of Iran's judiciary continues to implement **cruel and inhuman punishments, such as amputations and floggings**. These sentences are not always publicized, and **the exact number of cases remains unknown**. Amputations and floggings may or may not be carried out in public, but, in all cases, these punishments are cruel and degrading and amount to torture. ABF, which has collected information on flogging and amputations over the past 10 years, is deeply concerned by the fact that such systematic and widespread violence against the most vulnerable categories of citizens has not drawn sufficient attention and hopes that the data below will help raise awareness of the use of cruel and inhuman punishment in Iran.

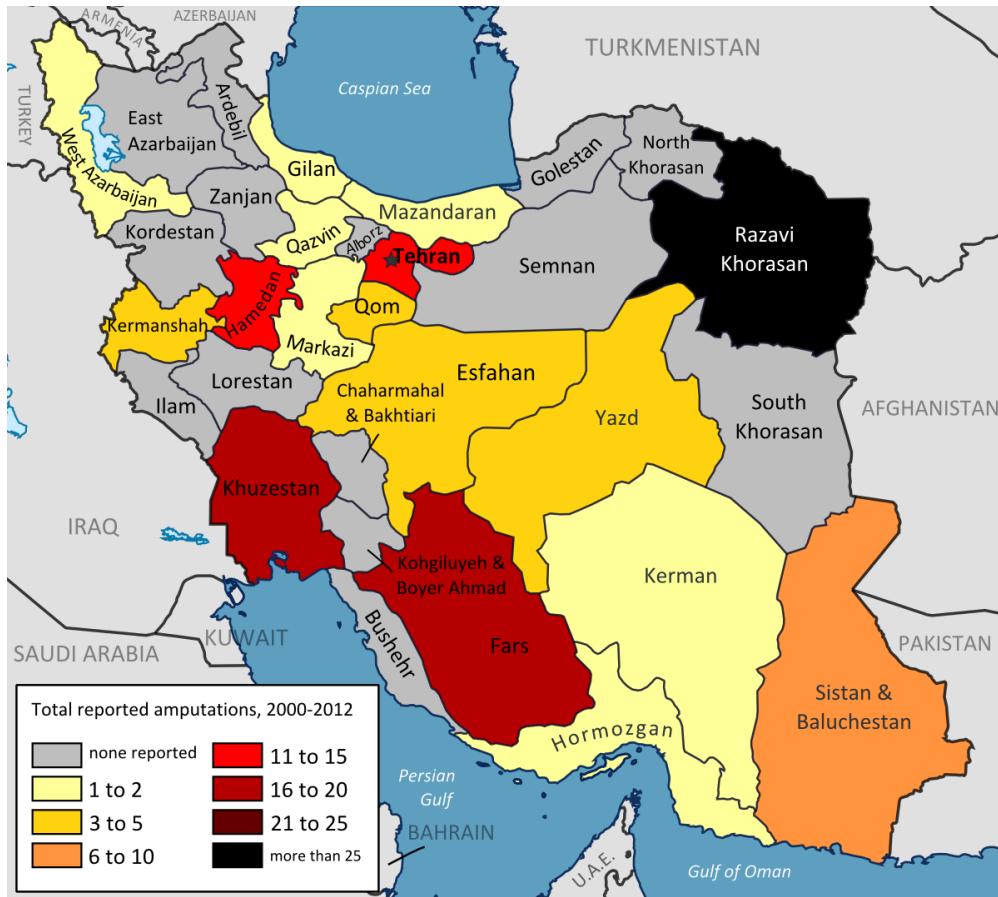
The treatment of detainees and prisoners, as described in Section IV, is incompatible with universal standards demanding freedom from torture and with Iran's international obligations – such as Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). International human rights bodies, such as the United Nations Human Rights Committee, have repeatedly emphasized that the prohibition on torture must be extended to include corporal punishments, such as flogging and amputation. These penalties for criminal offenses are recognized as being incompatible with international standards on the prohibition of torture, including Article 7 of the ICCPR.²

The information below includes reported cases of amputations between 2000 and 2012 and implemented flogging punishments in 2012. The data on these punishments is not exhaustive.

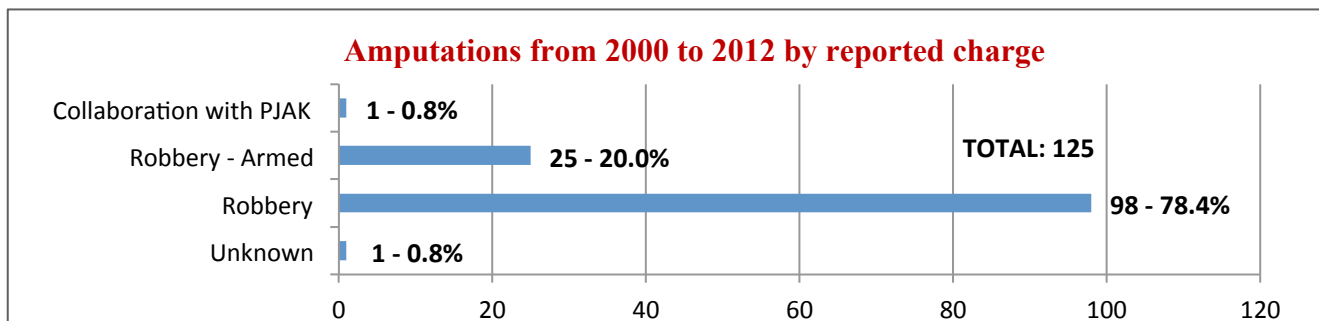
The **flogging data** visualized below does not include, for example, more than 10,000 flogging sentences that have been implemented in the last 9 months of 2012, according to a statement by the Head of the Mazandaran Province Judiciary.

² See Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, A/60/316, 30 August 2005.

Amputations from 2000 to 2012 (inclusive) by province

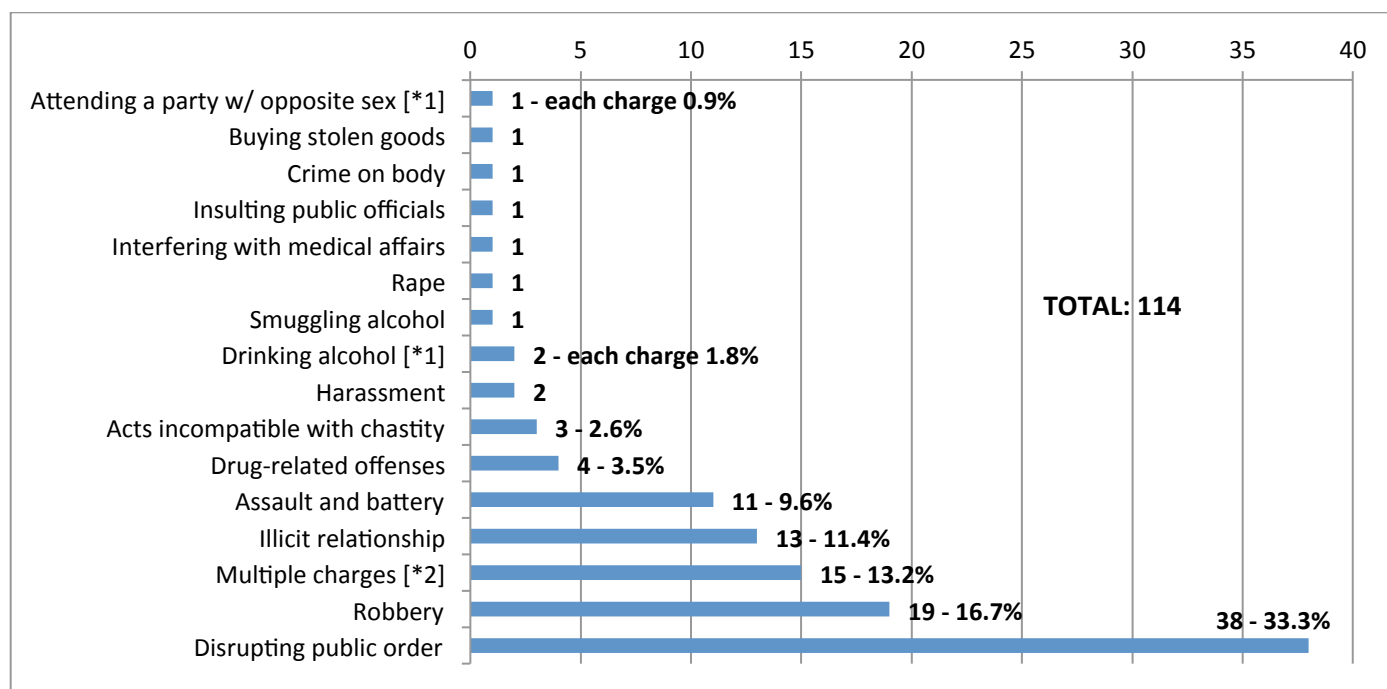


| Province | Reported amputations, 2000-2012 | Province | Reported amputations, 2000-2012 | Province | Reported amputations, 2000-2012 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| West Azarbaijan | 1 | Mazandaran | 2 | Tehran | 14 |
| Gilan | 1 | Qom | 3 | Hamedan | 15 |
| Hormozgan | 1 | Esfahan | 4 | Khuzestan | 19 |
| Kerman | 1 | Kermanshah | 4 | Fars | 20 |
| Markazi | 1 | Yazd | 5 | Razavi Khorasan | 27 |
| Qazvin | 1 | Sistan & Baluchestan | 6 | | |
| TOTAL: 125 | | | | | |



Amputations by gender: From 2000 to 2012, all reported victims of amputation were male.

Floggings in 2012 by charge (when a charge was reported)



***1 – The testimony of former prisoners, gathered by ABF, suggests that floggings of individuals arrested for attending parties with members of the opposite sex, or for drinking alcohol, are in reality far more numerous than this graph would suggest.**

***2 – In 2012, 15 individuals were flogged on multiple charges. These charges were reported as:**

| Victim | Charges | Victim | Charges |
|--------|--|--------|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulting public officials Acting against national security by attending illegal gatherings | 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propaganda against the regime Illegal gathering Collusion |
| 2-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulting Imam Jom'eh Illegal entry with intention of attacking security forces; Illegal gathering Ignoring officers' orders | 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robbery Crime on body |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illicit relationship Robbery with assault and threat | 11-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robbery Carrying and illegally possessing arms |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illicit relationship Illegal act | 13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robbery Sedition |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kidnapping Stealing victims' belongings | 14-15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robbery Drinking alcohol |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robbery Highway Robbery Harassment of women and girls | | |

The flogging data visualized above is not exhaustive; rather, it is meant to give an indication of the charges for which the punishment of flogging is implemented. The total number of individuals flogged in 2012 is unknown. ABF has collected reports of 132 cases of flogging; however, flogging is vastly underreported. To give just one example, according to a statement by the Head of the Mazandaran Province Judiciary, 10,814 flogging punishments were meted out in this single province over the course of 9 months in 2012. ABF found an additional 18 reports of floggings for which no charge was listed.

CONCLUSION

The annals of the Islamic Republic of Iran are rife with official statements acclaiming the decisiveness of police and the courts and statements encouraging summary judicial proceedings and the beating of suspects. The unleashing of such **unconstrained state violence** in the name of combating criminality has done little to eradicate, for instance, addiction or trafficking. **Executions mount, in other words, but have no restraining effect.**

As countries around the world move toward abolishing the death penalty or limiting its use to only the most heinous crimes, the Islamic Republic's violent policy of execution, particularly its drug-eradication campaign, continues without a visible deterrent impact and without drawing much in the way of national or international attention. Official statistics in the first decade of the twenty-first century do not allow for optimism. Iranian officials recognize that Iran continues to face a “drug crisis.” In 2005, 60 percent of the prison population was serving time for drug offenses. According to the Head of the State Welfare Organization, drug use was growing at a rate four times greater than the rate of population growth. In 2008, officials estimated the number of individuals arrested and detained in Iranian prisons every year to be more than 700,000. Some 200,000 were arrested between March and September 2010 for addiction or drug-dealing. **According to the Head of the state's Prison Organization, drug addicts/dealers comprised more than half the prison population in 2010 and 43% in 2012. In 1979, they made up 5 percent.**

The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation (ABF) is deeply concerned by the mounting state violence and by the impunity granted to law enforcement agencies in Iran. Disturbing information regarding the opening of forced labor camps – already home to 10,000 alleged petty drug dealers – requires the international community's immediate attention. The 2009 tragedy of Kahrizak Prison is an indication of the potential for humanitarian disasters exacerbated by the establishment of forced labor camps, which duplicate aspects of the Kahrizak Prison abuses on an incommensurably larger scale.

Considering the dire situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, ABF calls upon the United Nations Human Rights Council to renew the urgently needed mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to take strong action to ensure that the Iranian authorities will immediately close down the forced labor camps.

Copyright © 2013 Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation

The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation
3220 N Street NW, Suite #357
Washington, D.C. 20007
www.iranrights.org

Tel. 202-465-7184 • Fax 202-536-4177

Note: The maps in this report were adapted from a map of Iran presented by Wikimedia Commons (<http://bit.ly/XVBmms>), available under a Creative Commons - Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported license.



A publication of **The Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation** for
the promotion of human rights and democracy in Iran

3220 N Street NW, Suite #357, Washington D.C. 20007

Tel. 202-465-7184 • Fax 202-536-4177

www.iranrights.org