

## **Human Rights Symposium 2006 - Symposium Announcement**

### **A Glance at Systematic Violation of Human Rights in Iran**

**Toronto, January 27, 2007**

New Date: January 27, 2007

Time: 11:00 am – 6:00 pm

Place: University of Toronto – Room (TBA)

The first Human Rights Symposium organized by Iranian Queer Organization (formerly PGLO) will take place in Toronto, Canada.

This symposium serves to highlight the systematic marginalizing, stigmatizing and violating basic human rights of sexual, ethnic, religious and political minorities in Iran as well as women and children. It will also explore the ongoing struggle for civil and civic rights in Iran and investigate the myriad forms of discrimination, persecution and torture and their consequences for people living at the margin of Iranian society.

Iranian law defines homosexuality as crime punishable by death, denies women's equal rights with men, persecutes political dissidents and civil and human rights activists, discriminates against Muslim minorities such as Sunnis, brands Baha'is as heretics, harasses Jews as potential collaborators with the state of Israel, deprives ethnic and linguistic minorities of speaking in their mother tongues, refuses to ban death penalty for minors and gives free hand to child abusers.

Iran's violation of human rights has been repeatedly documented and reported by Human Rights Organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. Human Rights Watch in its 2002 reports that:

"The Council of Guardians repeatedly blocked bills passed by the Parliament in such areas as women's rights, family law, the prevention of torture, and electoral reform. The judiciary, deployed as one of the conservative's strongest weapons, further undermined the rule of law with arbitrary closures of newspapers and imprisonment of political activists." <http://pglo.net/english/hrw-report.pdf>

In this symposium, the expert panelists will discuss the current status of Iranian people who live at the border of Iranian social, political, religious, ethnic, linguistic, sexual, and gender lines. It further explores the different ways in which these categories are legally, culturally and socially constructed so as to perpetuate and maintain further marginalization and otherizing millions of people.

This symposium is an initiative of Iranian Queer Organization (IRQO) based in Toronto. Its aim is to create a collaborative space with other Human Rights defenders and organizations to advocate human rights in Iran. As such it invites all the interested individuals and organizations to join hands with IRQO in its effort. Please support us in our struggle; do not abandon us .

All further information will be posted on the symposium web site:

<http://www.irqo.net/hrs/hrs2006.htm>

IRQO (PGLO) web site:

<http://www.irqo.net/>

Individuals and organizations interested to support this symposium can donate through the security PayPal in our web site by clicking on our donate icon: <http://www.irqo.net/>

-----  
Arsham Parsi  
Secretary-General  
Persian Gay & Lesbian Organization – PGLO  
(Recently Renamed IRanian Queer Organization – IRQO)  
<http://www.pglo.net>  
<http://www.irqo.net>  
Email: [arsham@pglo.net](mailto:arsham@pglo.net)  
Office Phone: 001-416-548-4171  
Cell Phone: 001-416-985-PGLO (7456)