We, the members of the Freedom Online Coalition, express serious concern regarding the human rights violations committed by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran since December, 28 2025.

We are deeply alarmed at the reports of mass injury and deaths of peaceful protestors who are exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

On January 8, 2026, authorities imposed a near-total shutdown of Internet and communications services, severely restricting digital connectivity across the Islamic Republic of Iran. This shutdown, which reflects a longstanding and worsening pattern by the government to restrict freedom of expression online, has prohibited peaceful demonstrators from exercising their right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and provided cover for a crackdown on peaceful demonstrators. It has severely limited documentation of human rights violations, and local reporting by citizens and journalists alike, at the very moment when transparency is most critical.

By shutting down Internet and telecommunications services, the Islamic Republic of Iran acts contrary to its obligations under Articles 19, 21, and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which it is a party. The Internet and communication services shutdown also disrupts access to essential services including healthcare and emergency services, prevents financial transactions, cripples economic activity, and limits the ability of journalists and human rights defenders to document abuses. In addition to these immediate harms to life and wellbeing, the FOC is gravely concerned by this intensification of the government's broader actions to control domestic digital connectivity, censor speech, and restrict access to information.

Taken together, the Internet shutdown and the government's use of lethal force, arbitrary arrests, denial of due process, and the threat of execution reflect an escalating pattern of repression aimed at silencing dissent and shielding abuses from scrutiny.

The Freedom Online Coalition is particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact of internet shutdowns and related repressive measures on persons in vulnerable situations. For these populations, the loss of digital connectivity further exacerbates existing barriers to accessing essential services, emergency assistance, information, and support networks, and heightens their exposure to violence, discrimination, and abuse. Such impacts deepen existing inequalities and undermine the principles of equality and nondiscrimination enshrined in international human rights law.

We welcome the Human Rights Council resolution SS 39/1 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in the context of the repression of nationwide protests starting on 28 December 2025, and we call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to immediately restore full Internet access and telecommunications services for all.

We also call on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to refrain from imposing shutdowns of Internet and communications services, blocking or filtering of services, or other measures intended to disrupt individuals' ability to access and disseminate information or communicate safely and securely. The Islamic Republic of Iran must comply with its international human rights obligations under the ICCPR. The Government of the Islamic

Republic of Iran has the obligation to protect its own citizens, including those who may be in vulnerable situations, as well as journalists and human rights defenders. It must guarantee freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association without fear of reprisal.

We stand in solidarity with the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran in their courageous calls to exercise their rights to freedoms of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly, and association, online and offline.

To view the list of signatories, please visit the [FOC website](#).

Joint Statement on Internet Shutdowns in the Islamic Republic of Iran
February 2026