



ASSOCIATION TO DEFEND FREEDOM & HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN- AUSTRALIA

Annual Report 2025



OCTOBER 30, 2025

ASSOCIATION TO DEFEND FREEDOM & HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN- AUSTRALIA

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Introduction

Over the past year, the world witnessed profound political, economic, military, and social developments—changes that shook not only geographic borders but also the global conscience. Iran and Iranian communities, both inside the country and in exile, were no exception.

Inside Iran, the regime's judiciary—acting on behalf of the entire ruling system—executed more than **1,200 people in less than nine months**, marking one of the most brutal and unprecedented periods of human rights violations in recent decades.

On the international stage, the long-standing and failed policy of appeasement toward the Iranian regime—pursued for years under the illusion of preventing military conflict—demonstrated its failure once again during the **twelve-day war between Iran and Israel in June 2025**.

Amid these dynamics, the decisive and unprecedented actions of the Australian Government in confronting the regime's terrorist and destabilizing activities—including the expulsion of the ambassador and three regime diplomats, restricting the operations of the embassy, and initiating the formal process of listing the IRGC as a terrorist organisation—marked an historic turning point in Iran–Australia relations. These bold decisions, made after years of hesitation, renewed hope within the Iranian exile community in Australia and further underscored the importance of our civic, cultural, and human rights efforts.

All these circumstances had a significant impact on the sensitive issues of asylum, human rights, and essential humanitarian needs—core areas of our work—and consequently increased our responsibility to support and advance the vital needs of our community.

In this report, in addition to reviewing part of our activities over the past year, we have sought to address the key areas of our work. We must note, however, that it was not possible to document all our activities within this report. The reason is clear: over the past year, we spent more than **174 days**—that is, nearly half of the entire year—engaged in protests, holding exhibitions, social programs, cultural initiatives, and other human rights activities. Detailing such an extensive range of work exceeds the scope of a single report.

Nevertheless, these intense and continuous efforts reflect, above all, our deep and shared need to take part in social transformation and reveal the firm and intertwined determination of our members to pursue a greater purpose: strengthening the Iranian community, defending human rights, and striving for a future rooted in freedom, justice, and human dignity.

We hope that this report—despite its brevity—can reflect a portion of our collective efforts and fulfil, even in a small way, our responsibility to truth.

With appreciation,

Editorial Committee

Association to Defend Freedom & Human Rights in Iran – Australia

Social Activities

“Change is the outcome of the shared will of those who believe the world can be a better place.”

— Inspired by Martin Luther King



From the beginning of November 2024 and the fifth anniversary of the nationwide uprising of November 2019, the Association's social awareness-raising activities entered a new phase—energized by renewed motivation and a strong presence in the streets and public spaces. During this period, multiple exhibitions showcasing human rights violations in Iran—particularly the situation of women, children, refugees, and prisoners—were held across Sydney, including at Town Hall, Hyde Park, and in front of the New South Wales State Parliament.

The continuation and expansion of these programs throughout 2025 reflected the commitment and dynamism

of the Association's members in responding to widespread human rights abuses in Iran, regional crises, and their repercussions in Australia. Due to the increasing need for public awareness, activities that were previously held three days a week expanded to four days during certain periods, and a new location was added for gatherings and cultural-social programs.

Overall, it should be noted that in the past year alone, we devoted at least **174 days** to exhibitions, protest actions, information tables, and other civic activities. The month of May alone accounted for **19 days** of continuous action.

For more than seven months, our ongoing street exhibitions in front of the NSW State Parliament drew significant positive attention from lawyers, parliamentarians, and Australian citizens. Constructive conversations with passers-by provided a valuable opportunity to convey the true voice of the Iranian people and Iranian refugees in Australia, helping expand public support for freedom and justice in Iran.



Continuing this path, and with the cooperation of other Iranian groups and our supportive friends, the structure and coordination of the Association's social, cultural, and multicultural activities reached a new level. Several virtual educational courses were also held in collaboration with the Iranian community in Europe, playing an important role in enhancing members' knowledge, skills, and motivation for active participation in social affairs.

From March to October 2025, as part of the **"Free Iran 2025"** statement campaign, the Association continued its regular activities in front of the NSW State Parliament. This location became an effective platform for dialogue with parliamentarians, lawyers, and staff from governmental and non-governmental institutions, creating a space for deeper engagement and expanding support for the ideals of freedom and human rights in Iran.

Cultural & Educational Activities

“Education is an act of love; and love means faith in humanity and in its capacity for transformation.” — Paulo Freire

1. Fostering Collective Spirit & Motivation

To strengthen internal solidarity and volunteer morale, the Association engaged in multiple joint cultural and social initiatives over the year. These programs promoted teamwork, personal growth, and a shared commitment to our humanitarian mission.

2. Online Training in Partnership with European Iranian Communities

We successfully conducted three online training courses with European Iranian communities, covering:

- Social skills and effective communication in group settings
- Public education and awareness-raising strategies
- Leadership and management for voluntary work

These courses empowered our members and enhanced the quality of our cultural and civic activities.

3. Cross-cultural Engagement

Our members participated in several dialogues with leaders and representatives of other multicultural communities in Australia. These meetings fostered mutual understanding, raised awareness of shared concerns, and expanded our intercultural collaboration—especially around human rights and freedom in Iran.

4. Expanding Educational & Cultural Resources

A major cultural priority was the acquisition of rare books and publications on Iranian history, society, and culture—materials that are often unavailable within the Australian Iranian diaspora. We made these works accessible to the public, investing part of our operating budget to secure and preserve this archive. This effort has become both a spiritual and institutional resource, contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage and facilitating deeper cross-cultural understanding.

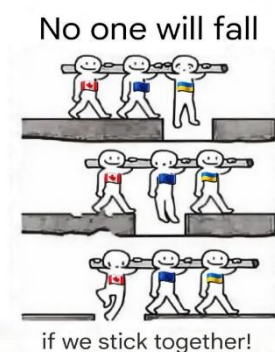


Charitable Activities

“Social justice is not a natural gift, but a collective achievement born of solidarity and moral commitment.” — Émile Durkheim

Social Equality and Support for Vulnerable Families

One of the fundamental purposes behind the establishment of our Association is the realisation of social equality and the promotion of this noble principle within the human community—an inherently universal value that must be actively upheld at all times and in all places. We believe that social justice is not a slogan but a moral and human obligation that strengthens and sustains free and dynamic societies from within.



Accordingly, the Association identified several Iranian refugee families who were facing critical medical, legal, and financial hardships in countries including Australia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and others, and placed them under its temporary protection. Many of these families, without such support, were exposed to life-threatening risks, untreated illnesses, and even the danger of deportation back to Iran.

Our support included legal and migration consultations, direct communication with lawyers specialising in refugee matters, covering medical expenses for patients with no income, providing emergency financial assistance, and following up their cases through written correspondence and direct contact with local authorities in various countries. Members of the Association, driven by deep empathy and social responsibility, worked tirelessly to ensure that no family felt abandoned in the face of the hardships of exile, and that hope for a new life remained alive within them.

Special appreciation must be extended to all members, volunteers, and donors whose dedication and selfless contributions provided the financial and human resources needed for these programs. Without their collective effort, the success and quality of these initiatives would not have been possible. Their cooperation not only saved the lives of vulnerable individuals but also embodied a powerful message of human solidarity and conveyed the awakened conscience of the Iranian community and its supporters in Australia to the world.

Our Association remains firmly committed to promoting a culture of compassion, defending human dignity, and advancing social justice within the Iranian community and beyond. We believe that no human being should ever be left alone in the face of oppression and injustice.

Parliamentary Diplomacy and Political Engagement

Federal Parliament

One of the most challenging and continuous areas of the Association's work is public diplomacy and parliamentary outreach. The reason for this challenge is clear: ministries and members of parliament, due to their wide-ranging responsibilities and the diversity of national issues, often lack the time to examine the internal developments of other countries in detail or to fully understand the needs and priorities of Australia's various migrant communities. For this reason, establishing and maintaining a systematic, consistent, and effective relationship with governmental and parliamentary institutions requires ongoing effort, daily follow-ups, and precise planning.

Within this framework, in November 2024, on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the November 2019 uprising in Iran, the Association succeeded in organising an official briefing session at the Federal Parliament of Australia. The special guest speaker was Mr. Alireza Jafarzadeh, Deputy Representative of the National Council of Resistance of Iran in the United States, who provided valuable analysis on the situation in Iran, the necessity of supporting the Iranian people, and the role of the international community.

State Parliaments

Throughout the past year, we also held regular and constructive meetings—both online and in person—with state and federal MPs. Below are three key achievements that resulted from a series of continuous activities and follow-ups by our members.

Tasmanian Parliament

- **March 2025:** A majority of members of the Tasmanian Parliament endorsed the global “Free Iran 2025” declaration. This action symbolized bipartisan solidarity across Australian political parties in support of the rights of the Iranian people.

New South Wales Parliament

- **8 May:** A meeting with NSW MPs hosted by Ms. Sonia Hornery and Ms. Anna Watson at Parliament, focusing on the role of Iranian women and the launch of signature collection for the Free Iran 2025 statement.
- **7 August:** A parliamentary session held in the Jubilee Room to commemorate the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners, attended by MPs, the Director of Human Rights Watch Australia, the head of the Refugee Council, and various civil society representatives. The special guest speaker was Ms. Safoura Saadian from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran.
<https://vimeo.com/1108617211/e96363c7f2?share=copy>

- **28 August:** A representative of the Association delivered a speech at a Federal Parliament event marking the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, invited by the office of Senator David Shoebridge.
- **23 October:** The NSW Legislative Council passed a resolution supporting the Free Iran 2025 declaration.

ACT Parliament

Over the past year, members of the Association had the opportunity to hold a series of in-person meetings with leaders of all political parties in the ACT Legislative Assembly. These discussions were constructive, and the steadfast support and solidarity expressed by these representatives were deeply valued. Their engagement not only strengthened mutual understanding but also provided important educational insights for our members. We extend our appreciation to these representatives for their support and commitment.



Refugees and Asylum Support for Seekers

“No human being is illegal; every human has the right to seek safety and freedom.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt

Supporting refugees and asylum seekers has been one of the fundamental principles and core objectives of our Association since its establishment. In a world where injustice, war, and political repression force many to leave their homes and homelands, it is our human and moral duty to stand by them and defend their right to live freely and safely.

Case Follow-ups and Achievements

With the finalisation of Australia’s federal election results in May 2025, it was expected that the new government would take effective steps toward resolving the situation of thousands of asylum seekers who have lived in uncertainty for years. Fortunately, over the past year, as a result of the Association’s continuous and coordinated efforts, four Iranian asylum seekers whose cases were being followed by the Association were able to secure their residency status and were officially recognised as refugees in Australia.

This achievement was the result of years of persistent efforts in the face of restrictive and unjust policies that had long ignored the basic rights of asylum seekers, including access to education, healthcare, and social support. This success is not only a victory for the asylum seekers themselves, but also a message of hope, solidarity, and trust in the path of civil resistance for the entire Iranian community in Australia.

The successful cases in Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales demonstrated that legal advice and organised follow-up, consultation with specialised lawyers, and financial and psychological support for asylum seekers can lead to tangible outcomes.

Challenges Faced by Iranian Asylum Seekers in Australia

Iranian asylum seekers in Australia face a complex set of multilayered challenges. Legal uncertainty during the assessment of their cases, limited access to health services, lack of the right to work and study, and the psychological pressures caused by years of waiting are only some of their difficulties. Many of these individuals, due to the absence of family support, are at risk of social isolation and mental health struggles.

Australia’s increasingly strict asylum-seeker policies over the past decade—including reduced access to humanitarian visas and the removal of certain financial supports—have further worsened their living conditions. They often experience depression, anxiety, and economic insecurity, while their only hope lies in non-governmental and human rights organisations such as ours, which stand beside them through voluntary and humanitarian efforts.

Supportive Actions of the Association

In line with its mission, our Association has undertaken various supportive activities, including:

- Providing legal and migration advice through cooperation with volunteer lawyers and legal institutions.
- Offering financial and medical support to asylum seekers who are ill or without income.
- Corresponding and communicating with local representatives and humanitarian organisations to raise urgent concerns and request support.
- Collaborating with civil and international institutions to draw attention to the situation of Iranian asylum seekers in Australia and neighbouring countries.



Participation in International Gatherings and Conferences

“No change in the world is possible without cooperation and solidarity among human beings.”

— Nelson Mandela

Participation in international gatherings and conferences is not only a reflection of the commitment and active presence of the Iranian community on the global stage, but also a symbol of empathy, unity, and a shared belief in universal values of freedom and human rights.

Collective attendance at these events—which often bring together hundreds or even thousands of activists and advocates from various countries—creates a valuable opportunity to exchange experiences, expand networks, and amplify the voice of the Iranian people at the international level. Such engagements reflect the common aspirations of nations striving for justice, freedom, and human dignity.

Over the past year, delegations from our Association, through both individual and collective efforts, successfully participated in several major conferences and gatherings of Iranians in Europe and the United States. The effective presence of Association members in these events not only conveyed the message of resilience and hope from the people of Iran but also enabled us to engage in constructive discussions with human rights institutions, political figures, and non-governmental organisations, thereby expanding the scope of our activities.

Participation in these international forums not only enhanced the Association’s credibility and social influence but also ensured that our members returned with renewed experiences and energy, applying them toward strengthening domestic and regional projects.

Below are some of the most significant conferences and gatherings in which representatives of the Association took part:

- **8 March Demonstration (International Women’s Day) – Washington, D.C., USA**

Attendance of the Association’s representatives in solidarity with the global movement of Iranian women and in honour of the women leading the frontline resistance against religious tyranny.

- **Major Brussels Gathering – 6 September**

Participation of the Association’s delegation in the European-wide gathering of the Iranian Resistance and presentation of the annual report on the activities of Iranians in Australia.

- **New York Demonstration – 23 September**

Presence in front of the United Nations Headquarters during the UN General Assembly; emphasis on recognising the crimes of the regime as crimes against humanity.

- **Conference of Young Iranians in Exile – 22 October, Paris**

Engagement of the Association's youth members in discussions on the future of a free Iran and the role of the second generation of exiles in achieving democracy.



Statements, Campaigns, and Global Advocacy

The most important campaign in which we actively participated this year was the “No to Executions” campaign — a movement that continues to this day. Over the past year, through extensive letter-writing, phone calls, emails, and other forms of communication, we actively supported the “Tuesdays for No to Executions” initiative, the *Free Iran 2025 Statement*, as well as campaigns advocating for the rights of refugees.

• “No to Executions” Campaign

Our active involvement in this global campaign continued throughout the year. We participated in three nationwide demonstrations held in June, July, and October 2025 as part of this movement.

This campaign, in parallel with the “Tuesdays for No to Executions” strikes — which have now continued for over 90 weeks — has become a symbol of the bond between freedom-seeking Iranians inside the country and those in the diaspora. In one of the statements, more than 15 nonprofit institutions and organisations expressed their support for the “No to Executions” declarations.

• Global Free Iran 2025 Statement

This statement symbolically included the demands of the Iranian people and our Association. Some of these demands were reflected in the Australian Government’s actions against the ruling regime in Iran, including the expulsion of the regime’s ambassador from Australia.

Unfortunately, due to the federal elections in Australia, we were unable to present this statement directly to federal representatives. However, the response from communities, human rights organisations, and members and representatives of labour unions was highly positive.

We will continue to engage in and support these important, effective, and essential campaigns for our community.



Collaboration and Engagement with Leading Australian Organisations

“Dialogue and cooperation among nations are the keys to building a more just and humane world.”
— Kofi Annan

In line with expanding cultural and social engagement and strengthening the ties between the Iranian community and Australia’s civil society institutions, our Association established close cooperation over the past year with several leading organisations, including *Pax Christi*, the *Edmund Rice Centre*, and the *Bill Crews Foundation*.

Human Rights Day Commemoration

As part of these collaborations, a major Human Rights Day ceremony was held in Sydney with the participation of social activists, civil society representatives, and human rights supporters. The special guest speaker was **Ms. Elham Zanjani** from the Women’s Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, who delivered an online address discussing the situation of women and political prisoners in Iran.

This event created a valuable opportunity for dialogue on global human rights challenges—particularly concerning Iran—and received positive feedback from the attending organisations. Other speakers at this conference included the President of the Edmund Rice Centre, the Mayor of Liverpool, the head of the Bill Crews Foundation, the Director of Climate Justice at the Edmund Rice Centre, and the representative of our Association.

Participation in Social and Intercultural Events

Throughout the year, our Association also played an active role in multiple multicultural and civil gatherings in Sydney and other parts of Australia, including:

- Participation in the International Workers’ Day march (1 May) in Sydney, advocating for workers’ rights and social justice.
- Participation in the *Palm Sunday* rally (13 April), focusing on support for refugees and ending racial discrimination in Sydney.
- Attendance at the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women gathering, in solidarity with women worldwide—especially the women of Iran—in Sydney.
- Celebration of *Nowruz* on 28 March, hosted by Dr. Yolanda Lucire, one of the long-standing supporters of the Iranian Resistance, warmly welcomed by Australian and international guests.

- Participation in the multicultural *Iftar* event at the Bill Crews Foundation on 26 March, which beautifully reflected cultural coexistence and mutual respect among diverse communities.
- Participation in the annual *Cross-Link Church* conference on 24 October, aimed at strengthening connections among Australia's religious, civic, and cultural communities.



Diplomatic Developments in Iran–Australia Relations

Diplomatic relations between Iran and Australia have continued uninterrupted since the exchange of diplomatic missions in 1968. These relations have seen periods of increased engagement in economic, political, and cultural spheres, particularly during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. However, the positions of various Australian governments on international issues have varied over time, and concerns—especially regarding human rights—have consistently been raised by civil society.

In August 2025, the new Australian Government took a significant step by expelling the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran along with three other diplomats and reducing the embassy's operations to a "semi-closed" status. At the same time, the government announced that it was taking practical steps to list the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist or sanctioned organisation. These actions—strongly symbolic and politically charged—received broad attention among civil society organisations and the Iranian diaspora in Australia and worldwide.

Political Significance and Implications

The actions taken by the Australian Government during this period generated considerable hope and motivation among human rights activists and freedom-seeking Iranians. These measures were seen as a government response to the destructive behaviour and hostile, interventionist activities of the Iranian regime that threaten Australia's national cohesion from abroad.

All diplomatic, political, security, and economic steps taken by the Australian Government against the regime's malign activities deserve acknowledgement and appreciation. Undoubtedly, our efforts in exposing the regime's true inhumane nature have been influential in shaping these outcomes.

Role and Opportunities for Civil Society

For the Iranian community and civil society organisations in Australia, this situation presents an important opportunity to strengthen engagement with government authorities and human rights bodies. It allows them to present well-documented evidence of human rights violations and destructive activities.

Continued advocacy, broad public awareness efforts, and collaboration with international actors can enhance the impact of government decisions and play a key role in curbing unlawful activities and weakening the regime's interventionist networks.

Attacks and Threats by Agents of the Iranian Regime

“In the face of oppression, silence is the greatest ally of the oppressor.” — Desmond Tutu

Over the past year, unfortunately, the scope of threats, harassment, and organised attacks by agents and operatives affiliated with the Iranian regime expanded against members of the Iranian community and activists of our Association. The aim of these actions was to create fear, sow division, and obstruct our civil awareness-raising activities.

Legal Advocacy and Judicial Response

In August and September 2024, the local police in New South Wales successfully identified and arrested one of the attackers who, through physical assaults in May 2024, had caused injuries to several members of our Association. The case proceeded to court, and although the attacker admitted guilt and confessed to the assault, she temporarily evaded imprisonment by presenting falsified documents and fabricated claims, including assertions of psychological illness.

However, following further investigations, Australia’s Counter-Terrorism Units filed new charges against her based on newly acquired evidence and requested the court to reopen the case and conduct a more thorough examination of her background and connections. This development represents an important step toward protecting the security of the Iranian exile community and confronting the infiltration of regime operatives on Australian soil.

Continued Threats and New Legal Actions

Unfortunately, these attacks and threats persisted throughout 2025 in various forms. In September and October, new reports were filed with the police concerning harassment, threatening phone calls, and attempts to create an atmosphere of fear by individuals suspected of cooperation with Iranian security agencies. In response, a new formal complaint has been prepared by the Association against one of these individuals and submitted to the NSW Police for identification and legal action.

The Association’s Position

Our Association firmly declares that no attempt at intimidation, division-making, or attack on civil activists will deter us from pursuing our humanitarian and freedom-seeking goals. As part of Australia’s free society, we strongly believe that no one is above the law and that any individual or group who threatens the safety and freedom of others must be held accountable.

We remind these regime agents that wherever even a spark of justice and rule of law exists in this world, the people of Iran and the awakened conscience of the international community will bring these criminals before the seat of justice.

Our Message

Members of the Iranian community in Australia, with faith in freedom, unity, and civil resistance, march forward more determined than ever in their cultural and social assertion of the human rights of the Iranian people.

Conclusion and Future Outlook

The Association, despite its challenging yet honourable path, remains steadfast in upholding the principles of freedom, justice, and equality. In the coming year, with the support of dedicated volunteers and like-minded institutions, we will continue to strengthen our cultural, social, and humanitarian activities.

We believe that culture, education, and awareness are the enduring pillars of any social movement, and that only through knowledge, solidarity, and a commitment to humanity can a free, humane, and equal future be secured for the Iranian people.

Our Association once again calls on the Australian Government to review its migration policies, expedite the processing of asylum cases, and uphold its obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Human dignity, the right to a decent life, and freedom from fear and discrimination are inherent and non-negotiable rights for all human beings, and as part of Australia's civil society, we remain committed to defending these universal values.

The collaborations, partnerships, and active presence of the Association across various arenas over the past year not only strengthened the bond between the Iranian community and Australia's civil society but also created an effective platform for presenting the values and democratic aspirations of the Iranian people at the international level.

The continuation of these interactions will play a key role in enhancing mutual understanding, fostering social cohesion, and expanding public support for human rights causes.

Ultimately, we firmly believe that collective determination and teamwork can transform many social challenges and injustices. As a dynamic part of the Iranian community in Australia, our Association is committed to working tirelessly to improve social conditions, enhance public awareness and safety, and advance the struggle for a free, democratic Iran based on gender equality—because this path is not a dream, but an inevitable and achievable future.

Acknowledgements

The Association to Defend Freedom & Human Rights in Iran–Australia extends its sincere appreciation to all institutions, groups, and individuals who supported and accompanied us throughout the past year. We gratefully acknowledge all those who played a meaningful role in advancing the Association’s humanitarian, cultural, and social objectives:

- The Australian Supporters of Democracy in Iran, for its unwavering solidarity with the rightful struggle of the Iranian people.
- The Sydney Solidarity Choir, especially for their continuous support and valuable artistic performances at the Association’s cultural events.
- Dr. Yolanda Lucire, whose generous hospitality and steadfast support significantly strengthened the cultural and social activities of the Association.
- Pax Christi, the Bill Crews Foundation, and the Edmund Rice Centre, for their constructive and impactful cooperation in expanding joint social and human rights initiatives.
- Honourable Members of Parliament, who stood with the freedom-seeking Iranian community through their principled positions and political support over the past year.
- All benefactors, supporters, and volunteers, whose financial, moral, and voluntary contributions made it possible for the Association’s work to continue.