11 October 2022

Dr Mohammad Reza Mofatteh

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran

151 Te Anau Road

Hataitai

WELLINGTON 6021

Dear Mohammed,

Thank you for your letter of 7 October. It is disappointing that you will not accept the invitation to meet with me, so I will take the opportunity to address here the points that you raise in your letter.

It is profoundly disappointing that you refer to the death of Mahsa Amini as “such a domestic matter”. I am left with the impression that you mean that deaths in the custody of the “morality police” are routine – a tragically-truthful admission that humanitarian groups endorse.

I find your excuse for Miss Amini’s detention, that the police were confronted with “the impossibility of redressing the state of her attire when facing the police”, implausible (at the minimum). Putting aside the wisdom of the “hijab law”, I would note that civilised countries use infraction notices and warnings for low level violations and such countries find those solutions very ‘possible’.

Further, providing me a long list of bureaucratic organisations that will be involved in your government’s ‘investigation’ of the tragedy does not provide confidence. Your government has already released exculpatory intimations absolving itself from responsibility. Only an investigation by a truly impartial body can suffice, which body would need to be entirely disconnected from the Iranian Government and free of its influence.

I note from an interview with Miss Amini’s father which has been circulated on social media, that her family in no way accept the Iranian government’s version of her death. Her family clearly states that her body was covered in bruises and that she had no undiagnosed health conditions. The reports add that other girls who were arrested for the same reason, witnessed Miss Amini being in great distress and being punched in order to silence her screams.

I must also convey condemnation in the strongest possible terms, as to your government’s brutal response to the protests that have occurred since Miss Amini’s death, which brutality has reportedly led to the deaths over 180 civilians.

It's so disappointing that you are not prepared to engage in any kind of honest dialogue about these events. It is no longer clear why you are in New Zealand as a diplomat if you're not prepared to engage with the New Zealand people on behalf of the Irani government.

Yours sincerely,

David Seymour

ACT Leader, MP for Epsom