

**New York University**  
**Student Bar Association**  
Proposed October 30, 2006  
Adopted November 6, 2006

**A Resolution Denouncing the Denial of Higher Education to Bahá'ís in Iran**

**Whereas:** New York University was created as “a center of higher learning that would be open to all, regardless of national origin, religious beliefs, or social background;”<sup>1</sup> and

**Whereas:** New York University, including New York University School of Law, has adopted an antidiscrimination policy that prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion;<sup>2</sup> and

**Whereas:** The members of the New York University Student Bar Association (“SBA”), as students of New York University School of Law, recognize the vital importance of higher education and the necessity of providing all people with educational opportunities as a means of personal empowerment and societal advancement; and

**Whereas:** Iran is one of the 48 member states of the United Nations General Assembly that voted to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, Article 18 of the Declaration states that “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;” and Article 26 of the Declaration states that “everyone has the right to education” and that “higher education shall be made equally accessible to all on the basis of merit;”<sup>3</sup> and

**Whereas:** The Iranian government continues its systematic efforts to persecute Bahá'ís in Iran, denying basic human and civil rights to followers of the Bahá'í Faith, solely on the basis of their religion, and several governments and international bodies, including the United States and the United Nations, have spoken out repeatedly against the persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran;<sup>4</sup> and

**Whereas:** The Iranian government has embarked on a campaign to systematically deny opportunities for higher education to all Bahá'ís, solely on the basis of their religion;<sup>5</sup> and in particular has, for the last three academic years, publicly pledged that Bahá'ís would be allowed

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<sup>1</sup> New York University, “History of NYU,” available at <http://www.nyu.edu/about/history.html>.

<sup>2</sup> New York University Office of Equal Opportunity, “Affirmative Action Policy,” at <http://www.nyu.edu/eo/>.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” available at <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., United Nations Press Release: “Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief Concerned About Treatment of Followers of Bahá'í Faith in Iran,” available at <http://www.unhchr.ch/huricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/5E72D6B7B624AABBC125713700572D09?opendocument>; “The Bahá'í Question: Cultural Cleansing in Iran,” available at [http://question.bahai.org/002\\_2.php](http://question.bahai.org/002_2.php); State Department, “Iran: U.S. Concerns and Policy Responses,” available at <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/64413.pdf>; “Religious Prisoners Congressional Task Force: The Islamic Republic of Iran,” available at: <http://www.house.gov/pitts/initiatives/humanrights/hr-rp-iran.htm>; Amnesty International, “IRAN: Dhabihullah Mahrami: Prisoner of Conscience.” <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engMDE130341996?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES%5CIRAN>

<sup>5</sup> The Bahá'í International Community, “Closed Doors: Iran’s Campaign to Deny Higher Education to Bahá'ís,” available at <http://denial.bahai.org/>.

to enroll in institutions of higher education, but has instead refused to admit them to universities unless they deny their religion:<sup>6</sup>

**LET IT THEREFORE BE RESOLVED THAT:**

**Section 1:** The SBA denounces the persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran and the denial of higher education to Bahá'ís solely on the basis of their religion; and

**Section 2:** The SBA urges the Dean of New York University School of Law, as steward of a prestigious institution of higher education that is adamantly opposed to discrimination, to denounce the denial of higher education to Bahá'ís in Iran solely on the basis of their religion, and to communicate and publicize his denunciation in letters to one or more of the following entities: the United Nations Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the United Nations Executive Director of UNICEF, and Iran's representatives to the United Nations; and

**Section 3:** The SBA urges the President of New York University, as the head of a prestigious institution of higher education that is adamantly opposed to discrimination, to denounce the denial of higher education to Bahá'ís in Iran solely on the basis of their religion, and to communicate and publicize his denunciation in letters to one or more of the following entities: the United Nations Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the United Nations Executive Director of UNICEF, and Iran's representatives to the United Nations; and

**Section 4:** The SBA urges the Student Senate of New York University, as the student voice a prestigious institution of higher education that is adamantly opposed to discrimination, to denounce the denial of higher education to Bahá'ís in Iran solely on the basis of their religion; and to communicate and publicize its denunciation in letters to one or more of the following entities: the United Nations Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the United Nations Executive Director of UNICEF, and Iran's representatives to the United Nations.

*[Note: Copies of materials generated by presidents, deans, faculty, and student representative bodies of other universities are available upon request to the Secretary of the Student Bar Association]*

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<sup>6</sup> The Bahá'í International Community, "Closed Doors: Iran's Campaign to Deny Higher Education to Bahá'ís: The Current Situation," available at <http://denial.bahai.org/002.php>.