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Press Statement**Sean McCormack**

Washington, DC

March 8, 2007

Iranian Women Protests

The United States is deeply concerned by reports that Iranian authorities attacked peaceful women's rights protestors in Tehran today at a gathering to mark International Women's Day. These repressive actions by the regime highlight an alarming trend of intolerance toward the expression of independent views by the Iranian people.

The regime's actions today follow the beatings and arrests of more than 30 women earlier this week. Those brave women had gathered outside a courthouse in Tehran to show solidarity with five women on trial for organizing a June 2006 protest against gender-discrimination laws.

The United States stands with the women of Iran, who courageously struggle for their universal rights and justice in their country. We continue to work with the international community through the United Nations, foreign governments, and international NGOs to focus attention on the Iranian regime's abuse of its own citizens. We call on the Iranian government to improve its own human rights situation before more Iranians suffer for attempting to exercise their universal rights and freedoms.

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