Camp Ashraf

Along the borders of despair,
Pardes' scent floats in the air.
Revolution's daughters come,
tortured, raped, but not unsung
nor broken by their agonies.

They trade their tanks for symphonies
that sound upon the desert breeze
and bloom with courageous womanhood:
they tell themselves, 'We can and we should.'
Meetavaan va baayad—
new paradise planted by Woman's hand.

(Poet's note: "Pardes" is the Persian word for 'paradise', and is used by the Hebrew Bible to describe all the gardens that remind of us of an unspoiled world of Paradise.)

Carole Fontaine is the John Taylor Professor of Biblical Theology and History, in Newton, MA, and a representative of the Women's United Nations Report Network.