

Human Rights in Post-Election Iran

Analyses of June 18 Presidential Elections and its Consequences for Human & Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in Iran

Analysts, Advocates & Activists in Iran, US, UK, Canada & Germany will Participate

In Person or Via Zoom

At least 4 Iranian activist, former prisoners or their relatives will appear live from Iran to provide eyewitness reports and analyses of the situation on the ground.

The symposium will be held on Wednesday, June 30th, at the National Press Club of Washington from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm, with a buffet lunch to follow from 12:15 to 1:00 pm and about 90 minutes after lunch for mingling and private meetings.

This will be a hybrid meeting, webcast live and via Zoom, with presenters evenly divided between in-person and virtual appearance.

There will be about 50 invitees, mostly members of the US media, representatives of think-tanks and the Iranian-American community.

Several hyphenated-Iranian organizations and individual activists residing in the US, Canada, UK, Germany, and Human Rights advocates in Iran representing a cross-section of the political beliefs have endorsed this symposium and will participate in it.

It is funded by a group of Iranian-American individuals plus the Norouz Charitable Foundation, a US non-profit corporation.

A concerted effort is being made to keep the focus as much as possible on human rights issues, and away from ideological or partisan discussions.

Background Information

It is 42 years since the sun set on the fortunes of the Iranian people – 42 years of oppressive clerical rule that has **devastated** the Iranian society and economy, plundered its resources and murdered anyone brave enough to openly oppose it. The clerics have turned Iran into a pariah state that is a primary source of instability in the Middle East. Besides massive embezzlement, national resources are squandered on funding and training organizations such as Hezbollah of Lebanon, the Houthis of Yemen, Hamas in Gaza, etc., that have been classified as terrorist organizations. Additionally, a

variety of militia groups in Iraq and Syria are recruited, trained, and financed by the regime.

As part of the JCPOA agreement, the Obama Administration released 1.2 billion dollars to the Iranian regime. Instead of allocating the funds to the bare necessities that are in short supply, they were mostly diverted to terrorist organizations supported by the regime. (Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Lebanese Hezbollah openly boasted that as long as the mullahs remain in power in Iran, Hezbollah is guaranteed to thrive.)

In the current round of renegotiations of the JCPOA, the Iranian people believe that the US is in a much stronger negotiating position. The Iranian economy is on the brink of collapse. They expect the US to remain true to its ideals and demand adherence to the Universal Charter of Human Rights. This should become a non-negotiable constant in any dealings with Iran.

Arrests, targeted murders, and extra-legal executions continue at an alarming rate – both as punishment and as intimidation. Following the general strikes and mass demonstrations of 2019 that was precipitated by a sudden price increase on fuel, at least 1500 demonstrators of all ages and sexes were mowed down by the security forces over a period 48 hours. Mass arrests followed. Today the Iranian society is in upheaval, but through sheer savagery, the people are cowed into submission.

Over the past few years many Iranian journalists, political activists, and lawyers who dared defend them, were arrested, some disappeared, others given long prison terms. Others received the death penalty and hanged in public – all on false charges.

The latest journalist executed by the regime was Ruhollah Zam who lived in France, lured to Iraq, abducted, taken to Iran and executed. Last week a civil rights activists sentenced to five years in prison died of unknown causes. The list of such prisoners is very long but the following are names of a few that have become prominent because of their courage: Mr. Mohammad Nourizad, Ms. Narges Mohammadi, Ms. Soheila Hejab, Ms. Zeynab Jalalian, Mr. Hashem Khastar, Mr. Mohammad Moradi, and civil rights lawyer Mrs. Nasrin Sotoodeh who was sentenced to 38 years in prison and 140 lashes but commuted to 12 years in prison and 40 lashes, after a public outcry.

Another example of the callousness of the regime is the shooting down of the Ukrainian Airlines aircraft by Iranian military in which 176 lives, mostly Iranians were lost. For the first 3 days following the incident, the regime denied involvement before admitting to their action. Families of those who perished were forbidden from publicly mourning the death of their loved ones. Another example of wanton disregard for any law is the incarceration of two young, gifted gold-medal winners of a science competition. They have been held in solitary confinement over the past year without being charged.

What puzzles many Iranians – both in Iran and diaspora – is that US media, except in rare cases, seems oblivious to massive and sustained

atrocities committed against journalists and their defenders. Just as the treacherous and unconscionable murder of Adnan Khashoggi became a cause célèbre, the execution or disappearance of over fifteen Iranian journalists and the fate of literally hundreds of political activists rotting in the dungeons of the clerical regime deserve attention of the media. Since 2010 the regime has executed 6182 people, 160 of which were women and 63 were Juveniles. So far this year, the regime has executed 176 people, 6 of them women. (Source: [Iran Human Rights Iranhr.net](http://IranHumanRightsIranhr.net))