

(Video) Free Iran 2021: Assertive Western Response Needed After Iran Selects Human Rights Abuser As President

Western isolation and sanction of the Iranian regime's president-elect would only reinforce the message already delivered by the Iranian people

PARIS, FRANCE, June 29, 2021

/EINPresswire.com/ -- With its sham election on June 18, the Iranian regime appointed one of its worst criminals as its next president. Ebrahim Raisi established his reputation for brutality very early in the history of the theocratic regime, as one of the key figures on the Tehran "death commission" in the 1988 massacre of the political prisoners that were responsible for most of the approximately 30,000 political prisoners who were killed nationwide.



Free Iran Grand Gathering in Paris.

In March 2019, Raisi assumed leadership of the Iranian judiciary, on appointment from the regime's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Soon thereafter, he was given an opportunity to reaffirm his commitment to violent repression as a tool for securing the regime's hold on power. As judiciary chief, Raisi had primary influence over the government response to mass demonstrations that emerged in November 2019.

“

The Free Iran World Summit is sure to feature detailed accounts of the progress that Iranian activists have made in fighting back against Raisi's legacy, and that of the entire regime inside Iran.”

NCRI

Although the spark for that nationwide uprising was the announcement of a sudden hike in gasoline prices, its message was much the same as the anti-government uprising that spanned much of January 2018 and featured chants such as “death to the dictator” in well over 100 cities

and towns.

The 2019 uprising was even larger, reaching nearly 200 localities, and the regime's resulting anxiety was immediately obvious. Khamenei ordered authorities to put down the unrest by any means necessary, and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps promptly followed up by the opening fire on crowds of protesters throughout the country, killing approximately 1,500. About 12,000 known or suspected activists were arrested around the same time, and Amnesty International later confirmed that many of these individuals had been tortured at the hands of intelligence institutions and the judiciary for months on end.

His actual and potential promotions reflect a longstanding pattern of impunity for human rights abuses in the Iranian regime, and especially for participants in the 1988 massacre.

Iranian officials have expressed confidence in that impunity through direct or indirect commentary on the massacre and other such crackdowns on organized dissent. In 2017, following the release of an audio recording of major officials made in the midst of the 1988 massacre, the recently-departed Justice Minister Mostafa Pourmohammadi said he was "proud" to have helped carry out "God's command" of death for members of [the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran \(PMOI/MEK\)](#) – the main target of the death commissions' inquiries.

Raisi used similar language in his first public remarks as president-elect when he was challenged over his role in the killings. He too professed to be proud of everything he had done in service of the system of absolute rule by religious clerics. Raisi ridiculously conflated that defense of the regime with the defense of human rights, implying that even mass killings can promote some larger goal that is beneficial to all. Such rhetoric arguably doesn't even warrant a response, but it certainly does call out for proponents to be isolated, sanctioned, and held accountable for that which they will certainly never repent on their own.

This is exactly the sort of response that was recommended within days of Raisi's election, by members and supporters of [the National Council of Resistance of Iran \(NCRI\)](#). Last week, Ali Safavi, a member of the NCRI's Foreign Affairs Committee, moderated a panel discussion on this topic which featured US ambassador Lincoln Bloomfield, British human rights barrister Geoffrey Robertson, and former United Nations human rights official Tahar Boumedra. The participants expressly urged Western powers and the UN to launch formal inquiries into the 1988 massacre, and potentially into other unresolved Iranian crimes, with an eye toward international prosecution.

The speakers at that event were not naïve about the prospects for actually initiating prosecution against a man who is about to become Iran's head of state. Nonetheless, they rightly insisted that far-reaching diplomatic isolation of such individuals can convey a valuable message, as can simple contributions to the publicity surrounding crimes and human rights abuses. The potential power of that message will soon be highlighted in another NCRI event, this one taking place simultaneously in a number of Iranian expatriate communities linked together via a live internet stream.

[The Free Iran World Summit](#) is sure to feature detailed accounts of the progress that Iranian activists have made in fighting back against Raisi's legacy, and that of the entire regime, inside Iran. The stories of Iranian "Resistance Units" are especially important for the international community to hear at this moment in time because they highlight a struggle for democracy and human rights that the US and Europe can begin actively supporting before the inevitably repressive Raisi era begins.

One way or another, Western powers must respond to the regime's decision to elevate Raisi's legacy. The proper response may be made easier by knowing that the Iranian people have already condemned Raisi on their own, both through protests branding him the "henchman of 1988" and through an electoral boycott that resulted in the lowest electoral turnout ever for this month's presidential election.

Western isolation and sanction of the Iranian regime's president-elect would only reinforce the message already delivered by the Iranian people, and in so doing it would finally make clear to them that in a conflict between those people and the clerical regime, the international community will stand firmly on the side of freedom.

Shahin Gobadi

NCRI

+33 6 50 11 98 48

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/545068918>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.