

(Video) Iranian Opposition Gathering To Call for an End to Tehran's Impunity

Recent protests in Iran highlighted the Iranian public's demand that regime authorities be held accountable on the international stage for their wrongdoing.

PARIS, FRANCE, July 22, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Saturday and Sunday, the National Council of Resistance of Iran will be holding its annual Free Iran World Summit calling for increased assertiveness in the international community's policies toward the Iranian regime.

Since the end of 2017, the Iranian regime has undergone several anti-regime uprisings.

The first of these prompted a speech from the regime's supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, which acknowledged that the NCRI's main constituent group, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, had steered that uprising toward a message of regime change.

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MEK

Since then, similar calls for a wholesale change of regime have grown out of every major protest, including those which initially focus on specific issues such as recent cuts to food subsidies and a building collapse in the city of Abadan which was a consequence of the regime's corruption.

The persistence of that unrest entails the defiance of worsening repression.”

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less than two months later, spurred on by the regime's attempted cover-up of a missile strike that brought down a commercial airliner near Tehran.

Those protests highlighted the Iranian public's demand that regime authorities be held accountable on the international stage for their wrongdoing.

Yet the response from the international community was muted and has remained so in the face of various fresh examples of that wrongdoing.

Sadly, the United States and Europe have been offering "concessions" to the Iranian regime.

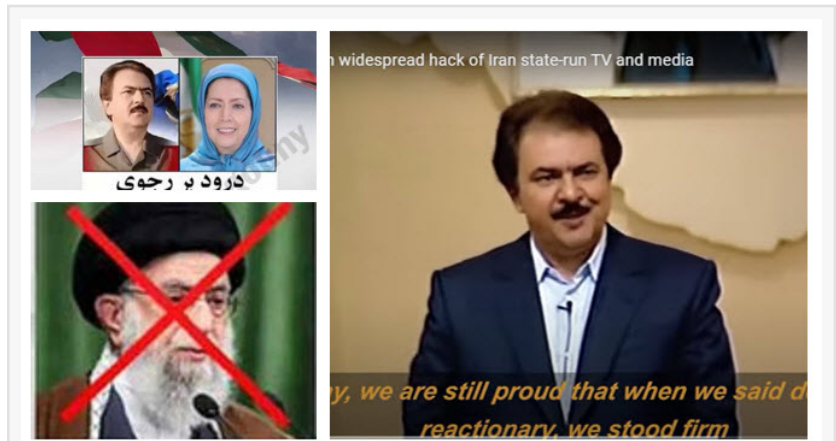
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Free Iran World Summit 2022 underscores the emerging effects of appeasement on things like the regime's drive for nuclear weapons capability, its use of hostage-taking and terrorism as tools of statecraft, and its tendency of violating the basic rights of Iranians.

The regime's commitment to the latter phenomenon was made apparent last year when Khamenei installed Ebrahim Raisi as president of his regime.

That same decision clarifies the extent to which Tehran has come to expect impunity in such matters, following decades of Western conciliation.

In the summer of 1988, Raisi served as one of four members of the Tehran "death commission"



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that oversaw mass executions of political detainees at Evin and Gohardasht Prisons.

Those killings comprised a major portion of the nationwide massacre of political prisoners which claimed over 30,000 lives over the course of three months.

Just over three decades later, as head of Iran's judiciary, Raisi played a major role in the November 2019 crackdown.

His ascension to the presidency in June 2021 was regarded by opposition activists as an endorsement of the same tactics of political repression that had defined the 1980s, and this perception was quickly reinforced by sharp increases in Iran's rate of executions.

Tehran has been able to continue offering political rewards to participants in the 1988 massacre because it has come to expect no international demands of accountability in such matters.

This failure of policy was acknowledged in 2020 by several UN human rights experts, who wrote in an open letter to Iranian authorities that the international bodies' "failure to act" upon reports of the massacre had "had a devastating impact on the survivors and families as well as on the general situation of human rights in Iran."

If mass shootings in 2019 and an ongoing escalation of Iran's already world-leading rate of executions are the effects of that inaction, one can the effect of similar inaction over matters of more direct significance to the international community.

In fact, one does not even need to imagine. In recent years, Tehran has accelerated its practice of taking foreign and dual nationals hostage, no doubt after concluding that prior prisoner



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The plot was ultimately thwarted by European law enforcement, but it had the potential to be the worst terrorist attack on the continent to date, and last year a Belgian court sentenced Assadi, a diplomat-terrorist, to 20 years in prison.

exchanges and accompanying concessions have proven that practice to be lucrative.

Currently, at least 20 such individuals are being held captive in Iran, with some of them facing decades in prison or even execution on the basis of clearly fabricated charges.

Yet far from sparking a critical reappraisal of Western responses to that practice, some of the latest hostage-takings seem poised to prompt the release of particularly notorious Iranian criminals like Assadollah Assadi.

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Tehran has loudly protested the prosecution and sentencing, thus reiterating its expectation of far-reaching impunity.

In March, the Iranian regime and Belgium signed a treaty to set the stage for Assadi's release, which was revealed to the public only at the end of June, when it was presented to the Belgian parliament for ratification.

The has been approved, allowing Assadi to be exchanged for a Belgian national whose dubious arrest was only recently acknowledged.

Assad's potential release and the disgraceful Iran-Belgium treaty inspire similar exchanges involving other European nations.

In particular, the persistence of conciliatory strategies may undercut a major step toward holding that regime accountable for the 1988 massacre and other unresolved crimes against humanity.

Earlier this month, a court in Stockholm handed down a life sentence for one participant in that massacre.

The former Iranian prison official Hamid Noury had been arrested in 2019 on the principle of universal jurisdiction over serious violations of international law, and his prosecution could serve as a guide for more of the same, ending the era of Tehran's impunity.

The Belgian treaty now stands alongside a general persistence of Western appeasement in casting doubt on whether it ever will.

The answer to that question may very well depend on whether the international community listens to the voices of the Iranian people via the Free Iran World Summit.

But if they do, as they should, then they will hear those voices calling out for assertive policies that hold the regime accountable for the 1988 massacre and every other criminal act that has gone more or less unanswered over more than 40 years.

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