

(Video) UK Parliament Condemns Iranian Regime's Crackdown on Dissidents

MP Bob Blackman, "The IRGC, as the head of the snake attacks by the Houthis in the Red Sea, an illegal war in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon and war in Syria."

PARIS, FRANCE, February 5, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [National Council of Resistance of Iran \(NCRI\)](#) Foreign Affairs Committee in an article stated that London, February 1, 2024: In a strong show of support for the Iranian opposition and in the presence of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Affairs David Rutley, members of the United Kingdom's House of Commons condemned the Iranian regime's attacks against members of the People's Mojahedin of Iran (PMOI/MEK) who are residing in Albania.



London, Feb 1, 2024: In a strong support for the Iranian opposition and in the presence of Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State David Rutley, members of the United Kingdom's House of Commons condemned the Iranian regime's attacks against (PMOI) in Albania.

The resolution urges European governments, particularly the Albanian government, to confront the illegal activities of the Iranian regime and respect the rights of PMOI members in Ashraf 3 according to the 1951 Geneva Convention, the European Convention on Human Rights, and international law.

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Expressing deep concern over reports of threats against Iranian dissidents in Britain, the resolution calls upon the government to designate the (IRGC) as a terrorist organization.”

NCRI

The resolution strongly denounces the regime's escalating use of terrorism, espionage, cyber-attacks, and hostage-taking diplomacy to suppress and eliminate the democratic opposition in Iran, particularly the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI).

Furthermore, the resolution condemns the regime's actions against the NCRI since 2018, which strives for the establishment of a democratic republic with the separation of religion from the

state.

Expressing deep concern over reports of threats against Iranian dissidents in Britain, the resolution calls upon the government to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization.

The resolution also urges the government to collaborate with international counterparts to ensure that further sanctions against Iran are promptly enforced and that the Iranian regime is held accountable for its unlawful activities both domestically and internationally.

Here are selected passages from speeches delivered by multiple MPs during the parliamentary debate. You can access the complete text on the UK Parliament's website via this link.

[MP Bob Blackman:](#)

The IRGC literally runs and rules Iran, disregarding democracy, freedom of expression, and basic human rights. The majority of people live in fear of speaking out or engaging in political matters in any form, with vigorous covert intelligence deployed to all parts of the country, seeking to sift out any potential opposition that might pose a threat to the regime.

This debate comes at a time when the world has never been so unsafe. We have a war raging in Europe, attacks by the Houthis in the Red Sea, an illegal war in Gaza by the Hamas terror group, Hezbollah in Lebanon and war in Syria, as well as other dangerous militant groups.

The one thing that links all those examples is the IRGC, which stands as the head of the snake, funding, training and supplying weaponry to all those organizations. Its outreach and capabilities



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are frankly frightening.

The IRGC has been found to have supplied drones and weapons to Russia as Moscow and Tehran deepen their cooperation in a partnership that is likely to continue and intensify as they commonly seek to weaken the West. Furthermore, the IRGC provided significant direct funding and training to Hamas in the lead-up to the dreadful 7 October attacks. Most recently, the Houthis in Yemen have targeted shipping lanes in the Red Sea.

The Houthi militant group was set up by Iran and remains under its influence. Linked to those attacks, Iran announced that it had subsequently launched into low-earth orbit three satellites that the US believes can be used to more accurately target intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The regime in Iran ignites a threat not only to the international community but, perhaps most concerning, to the domestic security of the UK. Individuals with Iranian links, or who have spoken out against the IRGC in this country, have frequently been targeted. Furthermore, MI5 announced last year that it had intercepted a significant number of Iran-backed terror attacks.

The key point is that the current policy on Iran is not working. Its influence is stretching across the Middle East and further. It is time to look for an alternative solution, and I urge the Government to proscribe this merciless regime with utmost priority.

It is high time that we work together to banish this unlawful regime, to protect innocent protestors, and to champion free democratic rights across the world we often take those rights for granted.



MP Holly Lynch, "Last year, we heard from MI5 and the head of counter-terrorism policing that Iran had intervened to disrupt up to 15 kidnapping and assassination attempts in the UK. That is why the argument for proscription is such a powerful one ."



MP Martyn Day , " Proscription would be a tangible step in the UK in the furtherance of freedom and democracy in Iran. We should also support calls for the UN to dispatch international observers to visit Iran's prisons and to meet those detained by the regime."

To oppose the Iranian regime is no longer a political calculation but a simple humanitarian choice. We must support the Iranian people and acknowledge the legitimacy of the Iranian opposition if we are ever to see a free and democratic Iran.

I find it difficult to understand why we do not take the ultimate step and proscribe the IRGC in its entirety. I, for one, will continue to lobby for that to be done, as will Members from across the House.

I understand that the Minister cannot answer that today, but the Government needs to consider the matter and come forward. We have proscribed Hamas, Hezbollah, and, recently, Hizb ut-Tahrir, so surely the head of the snake must be proscribed. We can then look forward to a free and democratic Iran, and, as we always say, next year in a free and democratic Tehran.

MP Holly Lynch:

Last year, we heard from the director general of MI5 and the head of counter-terrorism policing that they had intervened to disrupt up to 15 kidnapping and assassination attempts in the UK coming from Iran.

That is why the argument for proscription is such a powerful one. It would not be merely symbolic; it would be about granting the security services and police forces in the UK additional powers to truly dismantle any foothold that the IRGC has in the UK that allows it to facilitate those assassination attempts, which we must close down.

MP Jim Shannon:

Iranian-backed groups have attacked a US base in Jordan, and this brought about an increase in tensions between the West and Iran, despite Iran's denial of its involvement in the attack it got its proxies to carry out it.

As armed conflict and violence increase, the oppression of religious minorities increases tenfold. For someone to be a Shi'a, a Baha'i, a Christian or a member of an ethnic minority in Iran decreases their life expectancy.

Although we may not be able to force Iran to change its laws, we can place further requirements on their doing trade with the UK. When we look at trade last year, we see that the UK exported nearly £224 million of trade to Iran, and in return, Iran sold back some £190 million.

What regulations and policies are companies required to adhere to for such trade to occur? Are there any human rights and religious freedom requirements in place, or inspections of companies in Iran to ensure that they adhere to human rights working conditions and do not discriminate against religious minorities in hiring or in the workplace? These are the things I

would like to see.

MP Martyn Day:

[In Iran] corruption persists across all levels, with powerful actors such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps operating beyond scrutiny. Media and civil society face restrictions hindering their role as independent watchdogs for ensuring transparency and accountability.

The regime, as we have heard, is ruthlessly held in place by its intelligence and security force the IRGC and is supported by the wider apparatus of the state, including the judiciary, the Ministry of Intelligence, the police and others.

Iranian authorities have extensively used Iran's repressive machinery to censor discussion of these issues and persecute women, human rights defenders and anti-death penalty activists.

Political activists who support democratic change have been particularly vulnerable to detention and death over many years, despite which the organized resistance, the People's Mujaheddin Organization of Iran or the [People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran \(PMOI/MEK\)](#) have remained determined to establish a free democratic and secular republic, and I wish them every success with that struggle.

As we have heard, Iran is the biggest state sponsor of terrorism. This exporting of international terrorism by Iran cannot and will not be tolerated, nor should be its support for Russia in the war with Ukraine, use of cyber-attacks, or hostage-taking diplomacy, and I condemn the involvement of Iranian officials in the killing of US servicemen.

Although I welcome the recent announcement of additional sanctions on senior Iranian officials, I wonder why we are not taking an even stronger approach.

At a minimum, we should urgently proscribe the IRGC as a terrorist organization. I have lost count of the number of times that I and others have called for that action.

Proscription would be a tangible step in the UK in the furtherance of freedom and democracy in Iran. We should also support calls for the UN to dispatch international observers to visit Iran's prisons and to meet those detained by the regime.

We should all support the democratic aspirations of the Iranian people. I pay tribute to the work of the Resistance Units that emerged in late 2017 and have helped inspire Iranians to defy the prevailing tyranny.

Ultimately, Iran's future must be decided by its own people, but given that they have virtually no avenues for reform, the people have no option but to resist, to demonstrate, to defend themselves, and to seek alternative forms of opposition. Iran has been witnessing a massive

popular uprising a call for freedom and democracy largely led by women and young people.

The bravery of Iranian citizens standing up against brutality and dictatorship is beyond inspiring. I wish them every success in seeking a new democratic and secular republic in Iran. It will be better for them and the world when they succeed.

MP Wayne David:

If the Iranian regime is repressive at home, it is guilty of aggression abroad. In fact, it is among the world's foremost state sponsors of terrorism. Iran, through its so-called proxies, is guilty of helping to initiate violence across much of the Middle East. Iran has supplied huge support to Hamas in Gaza.

It has supplied and supported Hezbollah in Lebanon and is still doing so. In Iraq including in Kurdistan and in Syria, Iranian-sponsored militants have attacked US forces.

On Sunday, an Iran-backed group was responsible for a drone attack on a US military base in Jordan that resulted in the death of three American soldiers and the injury of many other people.

As we all know, the Houthis, who again are closely linked to the Iranian regime, have been conducting missile and drone attacks on international shipping in the Red Sea. Of course, the US and the UK have been undertaking surgical strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen, and Labour [the Party] is on record as supporting that proportionate action.

Further afield, the Iranian regime has developed close links with Russia and has supplied a large number of drones that are being used in Ukraine, so there can be absolutely no doubt about the Iranian regime's malign influence across the Middle East and the world.

One additional measure ought to be the total proscription of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

I understand that there is ongoing debate in the Government about this, but if they do not bring forward appropriate measures that would lead to a total ban of the IRGC in this country, Labour will do so if it forms a Government. If the Government does that now, Labour will support it. I hope that the Government will respond in a truly positive way.

David Rutley, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs:

We will not tolerate Iran's illegal threats against UK-based journalists, its escalating nuclear program, its desperate coalition with Russia, or its reckless use of proxies in the region.

The Iranian authorities responded to the protests with intimidation and violence, by killing at

least 500 people and detaining 19,000. They showed complete disregard for the rights of their own people.

There have been fewer protests since then, but we should not take that as evidence of a diminishing appetite for change among the Iranian people. Suppressing dissent may momentarily silence the people, but it will never kill their desire for a more just future.

We are actively disrupting Iranian malign activity by means of a range of tools. This is about using effective measures to curb Iran's destabilizing activity, which has been highlighted by the hon.

Member for Halifax and others throughout the debate. The UK maintains sanctions on more than 400 Iranian individuals, entities and aligned groups for roles in weapons proliferation, regional conflicts, human rights violations and terrorism, and more than 47 IRGC officials have been sanctioned since October 2022.

In conclusion, it is clear that Iranian authorities are imposing policies at odds with the values of freedom and democracy. As has been said across the Chamber, their upcoming elections are clearly not going to be free and fair, and will not address the concerns set out in this debate. For as long as that remains the case, we will continue to work across government, and with the international community, to hold Iran to account for its unacceptable behavior.

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The repression of women and girls, the uninhibited use of the death penalty and violent crackdowns on dissenting voices within Iran cannot go unchallenged, but that is also true of Iran's behavior in the region and beyond.

We will continue to work with international partners to make it clear to Iran that we will not stand for destabilizing activity that threatens our values and our security, and indeed the security of the region.

Iran: Freedom and Democracy, please view this important text by using the link below .

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-02-01/debates/3C9440F2-72AB-49DB-9D78-45D024C67A34/IranFreedomAndDemocracy>

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