



Briefing Book, January 2020

Iran's Human Rights Violators and Canada's Magnitsky Statutes

A Canadian Primer



The Canadian Coalition Against Terror (C-CAT) is a policy, research and advocacy group committed to developing innovative strategies in the battle against extremism and terrorism. C-CAT is comprised of terror victims, counterterrorism professionals, lawyers and others dedicated to building bridges between the private and public sectors in this effort.

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Dr. Ahmed Shaheed:

(UN special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief from 2011 to 2016)

“Those who violate human rights in Iran are not fringe or renegade officials. Rather, they hold senior positions in the executive branch and the judiciary, where they continue to enjoy impunity.

These officials control a vast infrastructure of repression that permeates the lives of Iranian citizens.

...Defiance of these norms often comes at a terrible cost, with Iranians frequently facing unjust detention, torture, and even death.”¹

Table of Contents

1. A Memo to the Reader -----	1
2. Canada-Iran Overview -----	3
> Canada-Iran-Relations Fact Sheet	
> Iran’s International Ranking as a Human Rights Violator	
> Iran’s International Ranking for Corruption	
3. The Magnitsky Act and Iran -----	8
>The Objectives of the Magnitsky Provisions	
> Can listing Iranian violators under the Magnitsky provisions have an impact on the Iranian regime?	
4. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights -----	11
The AMIA Bombing and Canada	
List #1: The AMIA Bombers	
5. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights -----	15
List #2: Abuse of Canadian Citizens and Residents	
6. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights -----	23
List #3: Key Violators of the Rights of the Baha’i Minority in Iran	
7. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights -----	31
List #4: Leading the Iranian Regime’s Industry of Repression, Torture and Execution	
8. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights -----	37
List #5: The 1988 Massacre	

Table of Contents

9. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights -----43

List #6: The Evin Prison

10. Iran’s Violators of Human Rights-----48

List #7: Execution of Juveniles, Stoning, Amputation and other Egregious Violence

Appendix

1. The Malevolence of the Iranian Regime – Quote-Unquote ----- 54

- a. Quote-Unquote #1 -- Canadian Leaders on the Iranian Threat
- b. Quote-Unquote #2 -- Iranian Leaders on the Iranian Threat
- c. Quote-Unquote #3 -- Iranian Religious Leaders on the Crimes of the Regime
- d. Quote Unquote #4 --The Plight of the Child under Iranian Law
- e. Quote Unquote #5 --The Plight of Women under Iranian Law
- f. Quote Unquote #6 --The Plight of Ethic and Religious Minorities in Iran

2. FAQS – Canada, Iran and Human Rights-----61

- a. Some have claimed that the regime can be held "accountable" for its ongoing terrorism and human rights violations through diplomacy alone. Is this true?
- b. Is religious discrimination sanctioned under Iran’s constitution?
- c. Does Iran discriminate against Muslim and non-Muslim ethnic minorities?
- d. Is honour-based violence against women legitimate under Iranian law?
- e. Has Iran’s unjust imprisonment of Iranian dual nationals from western countries increased since the signing of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA)?

Table of Contents

- e. Has Iran’s unjust imprisonment of Iranian dual nationals from western countries increased since the signing of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA)?
- f. Has Iran assassinated dissidents and others opposed to the regime living abroad?
- g. Has Iran abandoned its policy of assassinating dissidents living abroad?
- h. Has there been any improvement in Iran’s human rights record under the tenure of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani?
- i. Why is Iran widely acknowledged as world’s most egregious state-sponsor of terrorism?
- j. How much funding does Iran provide for global terrorism?
- k. Has Canada formally recognized Iran’s leading role in sponsoring global terrorism?
- l. Have Canadians been hurt or killed by Iran-sponsored terrorism?
- m. Are Iran-sponsored terror-proxies active in Canada?
- n. Aside from the Hezbollah presence in Canada are there other reasons for concern regarding Iranian influence and interference in Canada?

3. Selected Parliamentary Documents..... 83

- a. Global Affairs Canada Developmental Plan 2018-2019
- b. Global Affairs Canada (Nov. 15, 2018)
- c. Canada Gazette: Iran and Syria Listed as state Supporters of Terror (Jul. 2017)
- d. Passage of Parliamentary Motion Condemning Iranian Violations (Jun. 2018)
- e. Passage of Parliamentary Motion Recognizing the 1988 Massacre (Jun. 2013)

Table of Contents

4. Selected Articles-----89

a. “Trudeau should keep Iranian officials who target and murder Jews out of Canada”

Post Millennial -- by Danny Eisen (Jan. 9, 2018)

b. “Why is Canada sanctioning Saudis while ignoring Iran?”

National Post – by Danny Eisen and Sheryl Saperia (Dec. 11, 2018)

c. “Canada has the laws to target the world's worst. Now why won't we use them?”

National Post -- by Terry Glavin (Jun. 27, 2018)

d. “Put Iran In Canada’s Crosshairs”

Canadian Jewish News (CJN) -- by Sheryl Saperia (Jan. 24, 2018)

e. “In shift, EU sanctions Iran over planned Europe attacks”

Reuters (Jan. 8, 2019)

f. “Iran Intensifying Its Crackdown on Citizens Abroad”

The Washington Institute -- by Mehdi Khalaji (Nov. 2, 2018)

g. “Analysis: New pattern of Iran-backed assassinations abroad?”

The FDD -- by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross & Ali Alfoneh (Nov. 5, 2018)

h. “40 NGOs Issue Letter Demanding Iran Respect Human Rights”

Radio Farda (Nov. 13, 2018)

i. “Western strategy on Iran should focus on human rights, not nuclear weapons”

OPENCANADA – by Michel Petrou (Nov. 3, 2018)

j. “Iran is tormenting the Baha’i people — is Canada going to do anything about it?”

National Post – by Terry Glavin (Apr. 20, 2016)

Table of Contents

k. “Is Canada a safe haven for corrupt Iranian officials and their money?”

Toronto SUN – by Sheryl Saperia and Saeed Ghasseminejad (Jun. 13, 2018)

l. “Iranian-Canadians still fear theocratic regime”

Vancouver SUN – by Douglas Todd (Jan. 27, 2017)

m. “Victoria man Saeed Malekpour marks 10th birthday in Iranian prison”

Vancouver Sun – by Cheryl Chan (Jun. 5, 2018)

5. ENDNOTES113

A Memo to the Reader

1. The Magnitsky Act – On January 8, 2020 Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752 was shot down near Tehran by two Iranian surface-to-air missiles. 57 Canadians were among the 176 people killed. There has been much debate in Canada as to what if any action Canada should take against Iran in response to this incident, or in the event that Iran refuses to abide by its international obligations to cooperate with the investigation; to repatriate the remains of Canadians killed in the attack; and to compensate the families of the victims. One possible route that some have suggested is to list Iranian violators of human rights under the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, more commonly known as the Magnitsky law. The Act bars human rights abusers and any corrupt foreign official from entering Canada, freezes their assets and outlaws any dealings with them.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran – Iran is the globe’s most egregious state-sponsor of terrorism, and has imprisoned, tortured and murdered tens of thousands of Iranian citizens. Iran continues to be a global leader in the execution of minors; has imprisoned, tortured and murdered Canadian citizens; and is directly complicit in the war crimes being committed by the Assad regime. Iran is listed in Canada as a “State Supporter of Terrorism”.

3. The Objective of this primer – Despite Tehran’s global web of malevolent activities that include terror sponsorship; criminal networks engaging in narcotics trafficking and other illegal industries; and the plundering of billions of dollars of national assets by regime officials, not a single Iranian official has been listed for corruption under the Magnitsky Act. This primer has been compiled to assist in remedying that omission. It provides the names, faces and crimes of a very small selected group of offenders from amongst the thousands of Iranian regime officials who should be designated under the Magnitsky provisions. It also seeks to provide a framework for understanding the scope, breadth and depth of Iran’s malevolent behavior.

4. The Government’s Commitment – Listing key Iranian regime violators will fulfill the commitment of Global Affairs Canada that long predates the recent downing of flight #752 to implement a “robust sanctions regime|” to hold Iran accountable for its human rights violations.² . To be “robust” the listing must not be cosmetic or token in nature. It must target leading perpetrators and in sufficient numbers to provide a minimal level of impact and deterrence.

As noted by Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, the UN special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief: *“Those who violate human rights in Iran are not fringe or renegade officials. Rather, they hold senior positions in the executive branch and the judiciary, where they continue to enjoy impunity. These officials control a vast infrastructure of repression that permeates the lives of Iranian citizens.... Defiance of these norms often comes at a terrible cost....”*³

5. The Method – Determining which offenders to sanction amongst so many candidates is subject to a multitude of legal, political and moral considerations. This primer therefore has selected a small number of violators organized according to the category of offense. The categories provide an initial sorting of violators according to topics of particular interest to Canadian lawmakers, human rights advocates, and most importantly Canadian constituencies and individuals who have been impacted by the regime’s egregious violation. This indexation will assist lawmakers in determining which violators should be subject to sanctions and enable the general public to engage in a more informed public discourse on this matter.

The primer has collated information from various sources relying primarily on:

- a. [“Rights over Repression in Iran: The Case for Canadian Magnitsky Sanctions”](#) (Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights)
- b. [“Profiles of Iranian Repression: Architects of Human Rights Abuses in the Islamic Republic”](#) (Foundation for Defense of Democracies)
- c. <https://justice4iran.org/>- Justice For Iran (JFI) is a human rights organization dedicated to addressing the “practice of impunity that empowers officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran to perpetrate widespread human right violations against their citizens.” JFI researches, documents, validates, and litigates individual cases. It further raises public awareness and participates in human rights advocacy through the UN and the EU. JFI’s advisory board includes Payam Akhavan, a Professor of International Law at McGill University, who was the first Legal Advisor to the Prosecutor’s Office of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda at The Hague. He served with the UN in Cambodia, East Timor, and Guatemala and has appeared as counsel in cases before the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the European Court of Human Rights, and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Canada-Iran Overview

Background to Canada's Severance of Diplomatic Relations with Iran (1980-2012)

Iran's illegal and egregious actions against Canadian citizens; its status as the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism; its severe violation of the human rights of its own citizenry; and its flouting of the international community have generated tensions with Canada and other countries. As outlined below, the difficulties faced by both Liberal and Conservative governments in contending with the regime's four decades of aggression, long predates the closing of the Iranian embassy in Ottawa in 2012:

a. Canada closes embassy in Tehran (1980)

Fear of retaliation after Canadian diplomats rescue U.S. diplomats from Iranian hostage takers.⁴

b. Canada reluctant to reopen embassy (1980 – 1988)

(given Iran's history of kidnapping and torturing⁵ the American diplomats)⁶

c. Iran demands "apology" from Canada for rescuing American diplomats (1980-1986)⁷

d. Iran drops "apology" demands – low-level diplomatic relations established (1990) ⁸

Canadian embassy in Tehran re-opened (1988) – the ambassador returns.

e. Canada imposes "Controlled Engagement" restricting bilateral ties (1996)

Concerns over human rights; nuclear non-proliferation; Holocaust denial; threats to destroy Israel; and active opposition to the peace process led to a policy of "controlled engagement".

f. Iranian authorities torture, rape and murder Canadian Zahra Kazemi (2003)

Canadian ambassador recalled.

g. Canada introduces UN resolution against Iran's human rights abuses (2003)

Canada has introduced a similar motion every year since 2003.

h. Canadian ambassador returns to Iran (2004) ⁹

i. Iran reprimands Canada for human rights violations (2003)

Iran: Canada "has the worst, most backward and racist judiciary system."¹⁰

j. Canada imposes sanctions on Iran for nuclear violations (2006)

k. Iranian Parliament: Canadian embassy is a "den of spies" (2006)

Iranian lawmakers asked for an investigation into the activities of the Canadian embassy and threatened to shut it down.¹¹

l. Canada rejects two Iranian candidates for ambassador (2007)

amidst concerns about their involvement with storming of the U.S. embassy in Iran.¹²

m. Iran Continues to Imprison Iranian-Canadians and Permanent Residents (2008 ff.)

n. Canada Imposes SEMA Sanctions Against Iran (2010)

Special Economic Measures Act (SEMA) restricts economic activities between Canada and Iran.

o. Canada passes the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA) (2012)

Iran and Syria listed as State Supporters of Terrorism.

p. Ottawa warns Iranian embassy over recruitment of expats in Canada (Jul. 2012)¹³

q. Canada Freezes Relations with Iran, Expels Iranian Diplomats from Canada (Sept. 2012)

r. Angus Reid: "72% of Canadians support suspension of relations with Iran" (Sept. 19, 2012)¹⁴

Iran's International Ranking as a Human Rights Violator

Freedom House 2017 Report - Iran¹⁵

Iran's Aggregate Score – 17/100

(0=least free, 100=most free)

Human Freedom Index 2016 – Iran¹⁶

Iran's Human Freedom ranking – Iran ranked 157 out of 159 countries

Personal Freedom score – 3.9/10

World Justice Project Rule of Law Index (2014) – Iran¹⁷

Iran's ranking at 82 among 99 countries

measured by what Iranian citizens think of their justice system. With an overall score of .44, Iran ranked last among countries in the region.

WJP Rule of Law Index 2016 performance (1 is best)¹⁸

IRAN OVERALL GLOBAL RANK: 86/113

IRAN OVERALL REGIONAL RANK*: 5/7

World Democracy Audit – January 2017 – Iran¹⁹

Topics	Range	Ranking
World Democracy Audit overall ranking	1-154	140
Political Rights	1-7	6
Civil Liberties	1-7	6
Press Freedom	0-154	147
Corruption	0-154	110

Iran's International Ranking for Corruption

GAN – Business Anti-Corruption Portal

Snapshot



Companies operating or planning to invest in Iran face a very high risk of corruption. A powerful system of political patronage, nepotism and cronyism pervade all sectors of the economy. Irregular payments and bribes are often exchanged to obtain services, permits or public contracts. The Rouhani government has addressed the need to curtail corruption but fails to exert enough pressure on hardliners in control of key state institutions, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and the judiciary. While there are multiple laws in place that criminalize various forms of corruption in both the public and private sectors, they are not effectively enforced in practice and impunity is pervasive.²⁰

(Last updated: April 2017)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2017



The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople, uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

Iran ranked 130 of 175 countries and scored 30/100 on the corruption scale.²¹

The Magnitsky Act and Iran

The Objectives of the Magnitsky Provisions

http://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/sanctions/victims_corrupt-victimes_corrompus.aspx?lang=eng

Bill S-226, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, received Royal Assent on October 18, 2017. Popularly referred to as the Magnitsky Act, the legislation not only created a new legal framework, but it also amended other legislation, including the Special Economic Measures Act (SEMA). It allows the Governor in Council (GIC) to make orders and regulations to restrict dealings in property and freeze the assets of foreign nationals, if the GIC is of the opinion that:

- a foreign national is responsible for or complicit in, gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights against individuals in any foreign state who seek to obtain, exercise, defend or promote internationally-recognized human rights and freedoms or who seek to expose illegal activities carried out by a foreign public official;
- a foreign national acts as an agent of or on behalf of a foreign state in a matter relating to an activity described above;
- a foreign public official, or an associate, is responsible for or complicit in ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing acts of significant corruption; or
- a foreign national has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, an act of significant corruption by a foreign public official or their associate.

Bill S-226 also contained amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act which render inadmissible to Canada persons, other than permanent residents, who are subject to orders and regulations made under the new Act.

On 3 November, 2017, Canada imposed sanctions pursuant to the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act by enacting the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Regulations. These Regulations were made in response to three different sets of circumstances related to the case of Sergei Magnitsky, and incidents of corruption and gross human rights violations by officials linked to the Maduro regime and by officials in South Sudan. On February 16, 2018, Canada amended the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Regulations to include an additional foreign national from Myanmar, who is, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, responsible for, or complicit in, gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights against the Rohingya in Myanmar's northern Rakhine State.

Can listing Iranian violators under the Magnitsky provisions
have an impact on the Iranian regime?

The Magnitsky listings should serve as only one component of a long-term multi-pronged process aimed at deterring Iranian terrorism and human rights violations, and augmenting Canada's commitment to holding Iran accountable for its actions. Sanctions will also limit the regime's capacity to utilize Canadian resources for its nefarious activities.

These sanctions are neither designed nor intended to generate immediate change in regime behavior. In fact, none of the sanction regimes imposed by Canada over the years against countries like Burma or Zimbabwe for human rights violations were enacted on the basis of this very narrow threshold.

As noted by Dr. Richard, Nephew, one of the architects of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA):

[I]f there are important international leaders who are prepared to make certain stances clear about human rights, for instance, and their unwillingness to do business for human rights purposes ..., *that can allow for a leadership role that's outsized to the practical economic implication.*²²

Nephew further noted that:

...*Human rights sanctions against Iran have had an impact.* They certainly don't like them. The history of Iran, especially revolutionary Iran, is one of trying to get the rights of the population protected from the Shah, and I think there are a lot of people in the Iranian government who take great umbrage to being called a human rights violator. It cuts against a national sense of self. I'll tell you, we designated hundreds of Iranian officers, and when it was for missiles or support for terrorism, they didn't bat an eye. When it was human rights, they got very upset.²³

These listings would also be in sync with Minister Freeland's foreign policy speech outlining the government's foreign policy objectives, in which she stated that:

It is our role to set a standard for how states should treat women, gays and lesbians, transgendered people, racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious minorities and indigenous people.²⁴

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #1

The AMIA Bombing and Canada

IN September 2018, Argentinian President Mauricio Macri made a request at the U.N. He asked for help in pursuing the perpetrators of the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish Center in Buenos Aires which left 85 dead and 300 wounded. Compelling evidence compiled by authorities points unwaveringly to Iran's orchestration of the atrocity. Noting that Argentina will soon mark the 25th anniversary of the AMIA bombing, Macri declared that his country "will not waiver from its goal" of bringing those involved in these attacks to trial. He requested countries friendly to Argentina to assist by "avoiding hosting or sheltering under diplomatic immunity any of those accused which have international arrest requests and red notes from INTERPOL...."

AMIA and CANADIANS – Every year, on July 18, Argentinians congregate in front of the new AMIA building and a community-wide memorial act takes place with a one-minute long siren symbolizing the bomb going off. Over the last 25 years memorials have also been held in Canada and marked by major community organizations like the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA); Bnai Brith Canada; the Simon Wiesenthal Centre and the Argentinian Manitoban Association. Last year Minister Jim Carr addressed the memorial in Winnipeg.²⁵

The AMIA Bombers

The international community was appalled by the recent murder of 11 people in a synagogue in Pittsburgh. It is the duty as lawmakers not only to prevent such atrocities but to ensure that those who commit them are held accountable for their actions. While law enforcement in Pittsburgh has apprehended the assailant in the most recent attack, we in Canada can also take a stronger stand against these types of crimes.

This coming July, the Jewish community of Argentina will mark the 25th anniversary of the AMIA bombings, considered one of the worst terrorist acts against Jews since World War II. 85 people were killed and approximately 300 were wounded.

In 1994, the AMIA Association in Buenos Aires, which serves as the headquarters of the Federation of Jewish Argentine Communities, was bombed by Hezbollah operatives under orders of Iranian leaders. Some of those who ordered the bombing are still serving in the highest positions within the Iranian regime. Iran is the world's most egregious state sponsor of terror and listed as such under Canadian law.

We know who ordered and executed this atrocity, but they have never even been held to account. Two years after taking over the AMIA case, Argentine prosecutor Alberto Nisman produced an eight-hundred-page indictment charging seven Iranian officials in this crime. Nisman was later murdered as a "direct consequence" of his accusations that then-president Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner covered up Iran's role in the attack.

"The decision to carry out the attack was made not by a small splinter group of extremist Islamic officials," Nisman wrote, but was "extensively discussed and ultimately adopted by a consensus of the highest representatives of the Iranian government."²⁶ Drawing on the testimony of Iranian defectors, Nisman wrote that the decision was made on August 14, 1993, at a meeting of the Committee for Special Operations, which included 3 senior political and Iranian Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei. The committee convened to discuss a list of three potential targets. AMIA, the multi-story Jewish community center office building, was the first of the three to be discussed, and it was approved.²⁷

On March 15, 2007, Interpol issued red notices for some of these senior figures who have since risen through the ranks, including several on Rouhani's watch in the first six months of his presidency.

The AMIA Bombers

15 March 2007 - Media release

INTERPOL Executive Committee takes decision on

AMIA Red Notice dispute

INTERPOL's Executive Committee today issued its decision regarding the Red Notice dispute between the National Central Bureaus (NCBs) of Argentina and Iran in connection with the 1994 bombing of the AMIA building in Buenos Aires. ...the Executive Committee decided to endorse and adopt the conclusions of the report prepared by INTERPOL's Office of Legal Affairs that Red Notices should be issued for the following six individuals: Imad Fayeze Mughniyah, Ali Fallahijan, Mohsen Rabbani, Ahmad Reza Asghari, Ahmad Vahidi and Mohsen Rezai.

Ali Fallahian²⁸—

Iran's minister of intelligence at the time of the AMIA attack. Germany also [maintains](#) an arrest warrant for Fallahian in connection with the assassination of five Kurdish opposition leaders in Berlin in 1992 and he is also wanted by Swiss authorities for his role in the 1990 murder of Iranian dissident Kazem Rajavi near Geneva.²⁹

supporters through radicalization programs for Latin American students. According to US court documents, one of Rabbani's disciples, Abdul Kadir, participated in a failed plot to attack the fuel lines at New York's JFK airport. Had it not been foiled; the attack might have been deadlier than 9/11. The culprits, convicted of the plot, are serving life sentences in American jails.³³

Mohsen Rezai³⁰

commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) at the time of the attack. Today, Rezai is secretary of Iran's Expediency Council, and was one of the six approved to run for president in 2013.³¹

Ahmad Vahidi³⁴

led the IRGC's Quds Force at the time of the attack. He became defense minister in 2009. Vahidi was named director of the Armed Forces Joint Command Council Strategic Defense Research Center on Rouhani's watch.³⁵

Mohsen Rabbani³²

helped build Iran's terrorist network in Latin America for 11 years before the attack while serving as Iran's cultural attaché in Buenos Aires. Today, Rabbani is reportedly cultivating Iranian

Ahmad Reza Asghari³⁶

a member of the IRGC, was the third secretary at Iran's Embassy in Argentina from 1989 until 1994. Asghari was employed by a front company operated by the IRGC, but later pursued a career as researcher at Iran's Foreign Ministry.³⁷

The AMIA Bombers

Ali Akbar Velayati

Interpol's guidelines preclude issuing red notices for presidents and foreign ministers. However, Argentina issued its own international arrest warrants for:

Iran's foreign minister at the time of attack, Velayati was indicted in 2006 by an Argentine judge and an international arrest warrant was issued. A presidential candidate in 2013, he is a senior advisor to Supreme Leader Khamenei.³⁸ In November 2013, Rouhani tapped³⁹ him to become head of the Center for Strategic Research of Iran's Expediency Council, which is widely seen as President Hassan Rouhani's internal think tank.⁴⁰

In 2016, an Argentine federal judge investigating the AMIA Jewish center bombing requested⁴¹ that Singapore and Malaysia arrest Velayati who was visiting at that time, but the request was unsuccessful. Another⁴² such request was made of Russia in 2018 when Velayati met Putin, but it too was unsuccessful.

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #2

Abuse of Canadian Citizens and Residents

Iranian-Canadians or permanent residents unjustly imprisoned by the Iranian regime

- a. **Kavous Seyyed-Emami (2018)** – Iranian-Canadian founder of Iran’s Wildlife Heritage detained by the IRGC in January 2018 and found dead in the Evin Prison two weeks later. Emami’s wife **Maryam Mombeini** was barred from leaving Iran but returned to Canada in October 2019.
- b. **Iranian-Canadian Abdolrasoul Dorri Esfahani (2016)** – sentenced in 2017 to five years in prison for espionage, is an accountant involved in the financial aspects of the Iran nuclear deal.
- c. **Canadian Permanent Resident Saeed Malekpour (2008)** – Malekpour was arrested in October 2008 after returning to Iran to visit his dying father. He was held and tortured in the Evin prison. In 2010, Malekpour was sentenced to death for “blasphemy,” but the sentence was overturned a year later. In 2013, he was sentenced to life in prison. He returned to Canada in August 2019.
- d. **Iranian-Canadian Pardiz Tanavoli (2016)**— a celebrated sculptor whose passport was seized July 2016 in Tehran returned to Canada 2 weeks later. Tanavoli said that Iranian officials had received complaints his art work was “disturbing public opinion” and “spreading lies”.
- e. **Canadian Permanent Resident Mostafa Azizi (2015)**– was arrested visiting his family in Iran. He was accused of insulting Iran’s supreme leader and colluding against the country in social media posts. The writer/ filmmaker was sentenced to eight years in prison but was released in 2016.
- f. **Iranian-Canadian Maziar Bahari (2009- 2010)** – He was arrested during a government crackdown to silence protests over disputed election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The journalist and documentary filmmaker was released on \$300,000 bail and allowed to leave to join his British wife in London that October. His release came after spending 118 days in the Evin prison. He was sentenced in absentia in 2010 to 13 years in prison and 74 lashes for espionage.
- g. **Iranian-Canadian Homa Hoodfar (June 2016)** – the Montreal professor was detained by the IRGC and was held in Iran’s notorious Evin prison. Iran’s prosecutor accused her of "dabbling in feminism". Hoodfar says members of the IRGC psychologically tortured her during dozens of interrogations. They threatened "they would send my dead body back to Canada."⁴³
- h. **Iranian-Canadian Hossein Derakshan (2008)** – The blogger is credited with igniting a blogging movement in Iran by posting simple online instructions on how to create sites in Farsi in 2001, earning the moniker “The Blogfather”. In 2010, court sentenced him to more than 19 1/2 years in prison. He was pardoned in 2014 by Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.
- i. **Iranian-Canadian Hamid Ghassemi-Shall (2008)** – was arrested on espionage charges while visiting relatives in Iran. He was sentenced to death the following year but was released in 2013.

- j. **Iranian Canadian Ramin Jahanbegloo (2006)** – jailed for “spying” this prominent professor from the University of Toronto was held in the notorious Evin prison. International pressure from the EU and 400 prominent international figures including Nobel laureates and scholars helped secure his release.

- k. **Iranian Canadian Zahra Kazemi (2003)** – a freelance photographer, who held in the Evin prison and later raped, tortured and murdered by Iranian officials.

Regime Abusers of Canadian Citizens and Residents

1. Mahmoud Alavi – Minister of Intelligence Since 2013

“Alavi has overseen the frequent arrest, torture, and murder of journalists, human rights defenders, dissidents, and ethnic and religious minorities. In particular, his tenure saw a wave of mass arrests targeting the peaceful Baha’i minority and persecutions against student leaders. He is also responsible for a program of **harassment and assassination of Iranians abroad**. In 2017, Alavi boasted of **operating regime agents in Canada**.”⁴⁴ “His department provides support to Hezbollah, Hamas, al-Qaeda, and the regime of Syria’s Bashar al-Assad. It maintains a presence in the Persian Gulf countries, Yemen, Sudan, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Europe, East and South Asia, and North and South America.”⁴⁵

2. Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi –Tehran Prosecutor General since 2009

“Dolatabadi indicted a large number of peaceful protesters, with many unjustly sentenced to harsh and lengthy prison sentences, and others sentenced to death. He was also responsible for the prosecutions of prominent environmentalists, including **Canadian citizen Kavous Seyed-Emami** – who thereafter died under suspicious circumstances in the notorious Evin Prison – and **McGill graduate Niloufar Bayani**, who is facing the death penalty.”⁴⁶ **Sanctioned by the EU and the U.S.**⁴⁷

3. Reza Farajollahi -- Chief judge of Supreme Court's 32nd branch

Farajollahi has a history of approving the execution sentences of many political prisoners, including **Canadian resident Saeed Malek-Pour**.⁴⁸

4. Hassan Firouzabadi – Senior Military Advisor to the Supreme Leader and former Chief of the Iranian Armed Forces from 1989 to 2016

“Firouzabadi has been involved in massive human rights violations, including overseeing the murder of peaceful protesters and the mass arrests and torture of civilians. He also issued an order to all military and security forces for the identification and monitoring of members of the peaceful Baha’i minority, which has featured prominently in their persecution. Firouzabadi publicly encouraged the persecution and prosecution of environmentalists, including **in particular Canadian citizen Kavous Seyed-Emami**, who later died in detention under suspicious circumstances.”⁴⁹ **Sanctioned by the U.S.**⁵⁰

5. Asghar Jahangir – Head of the Prison’s Organization since April 2014

In a March 2018, “the UN special rapporteur for human rights in Iran described Iran’s penitentiaries as ‘inhuman and degrading.’ In Evin Prison, for example, one shower serves up to 200 people, while as many as 28 prisoners reside in a cramped 20-square-meter cell. Today, approximately a quarter of a million people reside in more than 200 jails across Iran.”⁵¹ “Under Jahangir’s authority, prisoners are regularly subjected to physical and psychological torture, including rape and electric shock, and denied medical care and access to legal representation. Many die in detention as a result of this abuse. Among the hundreds of political prisoners and victims of these abuses are **Canadian permanent resident Saeed Malekpour and Canadian citizen Kavous Seyed-Emami**, the latter having suspiciously died in detention. Prior to his current appointment, Jahangir served as a close advisor to the head of Iran’s judiciary, who presided over the executions and torture of prisoners.”⁵²

6. Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi – Minister of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) since 2017

Since Jahromi’s assuming office, internet control, censorship, and surveillance by the state have expanded significantly. As Minister of the vast telecommunications infrastructure, Jahromi oversees the state controlled national internet, which restricts users to censored state approved content and propaganda. For instance, a search for the “**Kavous Seyed-Emami**” redirects users to websites affiliated with Iranian security agencies, containing fabricated and defamatory stories. Under Jahromi’s supervision, the ICT continues to suppress freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. From 2009-2013, he played a leading and direct role in developing the Intelligence Ministry’s online surveillance infrastructure and the 2009 crackdown on peaceful protests.⁵³

7. Mohammad Moghiseh – Head of Branch 28 of Iran’s Revolutionary Court.

Moghiseh is known as a “hanging judge”. His trials frequently last minutes and routinely result in death or lengthy prison sentences, often on the basis of forced confessions and with limited or no access to counsel. He is infamous for imprisoning human rights lawyers, including Nasrin Sotoudeh, recipient of an honorary Doctorate from York University. He also unjustly sentenced Canadian Permanent Resident, **Saeed Malekpour**, to death on false charges (later suspended under international pressure).⁵⁴

Moghiseh is also known for his harsh sentences against members of the Baha'i faith, including sentencing seven Baha'i leaders to 20 years imprisonment each.⁵⁵ Activists for an independent Kurdistan and members of Iran's repressed Sunni minority have also been similarly targeted. In 2014, Moghiseh sentenced four Sunni Kurds to death. "They were not even given the right to defend themselves in court," said a family member of one of the victims. "After their trial, Judge Moghiseh told them to 'be quiet! You are Sunni dogs who must be hanged!'"⁵⁶

Prior to his posting as a Judge in the early 2000s, Moghiseh held supervisory and prosecutorial roles at three of Iran's brutal prisons. In 1988, he played a key role in facilitating the state-engineered Death Committees that slaughtered thousands of political opponents. According to a 2011 report, several eyewitnesses accused Moghiseh "of actually hanging prisoners and participating in their torture." Others told stories of Moghiseh "supervising the death sentences and the tortures."⁵⁷ **Sanctioned by the EU.**⁵⁸

8. Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Ejei – First Vice Chief of Justice since August 2014 and judiciary Spokesman since September 2010

A former Minister of Intelligence, his department detained, tortured, extracted forced confessions from – and often murdered – dissidents and political figures. "As First Vice Chief of Justice, Mohseni-Ejei is integral in the gross human rights violations of the judiciary and has used his position as Spokesman to defend and advance its abuses.... He also defended the mistreatment of Canadian environmentalist **Kavous Seyed-Emami** and claimed he had committed "suicide" in prison, even before there was an autopsy report."⁵⁹ **Sanctioned by the U.S.**⁶⁰

9. Mohammad Sarfaraz (Aka: Haj-gha Sarafraz) – Former President of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) and Press TV

Under his direction Press TV, along with IRIB, has worked with the Iranian security services and prosecutors to broadcast forced confessions of detainees, including that of Iranian-Canadian journalist and film-maker **Maziar Bahari**, in the weekly program Iran Today. Independent broadcast regulator OFCOM fined Press TV in the UK GBP 100,000 for broadcasting Bahari's confession in 2011, which was filmed in prison while Bahari was under duress. He is also a member of the Supreme Council on the Virtual Space, responsible for censorship of the internet. **Sanctioned by the EU.**⁶¹

10. Sohrab Soleimani – Supervisor of the Office of the Deputy for Security and Law Enforcement of the State Prisons Organization

“Soleimani has overseen human rights abuses at Tehran’s notorious Evin Prison. This includes harsh interrogations, forced confessions, denial of access to medical care, and egregious torture that has often resulted in death. Many Canadian-Iranians and human rights heroes have been targeted under his tenure.”⁶² **Sanctioned by the U.S.**⁶³

11. Hossein Ta’ib (Ta’eb)– IRGC intelligence director

Ta’ib is the IRGC intelligence director, considered the most fearsome intelligence entity in Iran. It expanded its dominance after the so-called reformist Mohammad Khatami won the presidential election in 1997. It has since detained scores of political and civil rights activists, including individuals affiliated with the religious-national activists and Iran Freedom Movement. It played a pivotal role in suppressing widespread unrest and protests against the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2009. At the same time, Khamenei issued an edict promoting the IRGC intelligence apparatus to the level of an organization practically on par with the government’s Intelligence Ministry.

IRGC intelligence agents detained several prominent environmentalists on January 24, 2018 including the Iranian-Canadian founder of Iran’s Wildlife Heritage, **Kavous Seyyed-Emami**. Seyyed-Emami and his fellow environmentalists were charged with espionage. Two weeks later, it was announced that Seyyed-Emami had committed suicide at Tehran’s notorious Evin Prison, an allegation that Seyyed-Emami’s friends and family categorically rejected.⁶⁴ **Sanctioned by the U.S.**⁶⁵

12. Ezzatollah Zarghami – Member of the Supreme Council on Virtual Space: Forced Confession of Canadian Newsweek Journalist Maziar Bahari

Zarghami is a member of the Supreme Council on Virtual Space – the council responsible for internet censoring – and former Head of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) until

November 2014. Likely to currently be in a process of reassignment to another function. Under his tenure at IRIB, he was responsible for all programming decisions. IRIB has broadcast forced confessions of detainees and a series of "show trials" in August 2009 and December 2011. These constitute a clear violation of international provisions on fair trial and the right to due process.

IRIB was established as the main governmental agency in charge of the broadcasting policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and is responsible for producing numerous national and international television and radio channels. Ezzatollah Zarghami is the director and head of IRIB. He was appointed as the Director in May 2004 and reappointed in November 2009. Since his reappointment, Zarghami has pursued a policy of modernization in form but restriction in content.

According to human rights groups, Iran is using state-media transmissions to trample dissent. They point to distorted or false IRIB news reports and the broadcasting of forced confessions of political detainees, such as one involving a Canadian Newsweek journalist **Maziar Bahari**, who was forced to give a false confession in front of state media outlets while jailed in 2009. In March 2012, the European Union placed individual sanctions on Zarghami for authorizing, as head of IRIB, the broadcast in August 2009 and December 2011 of forced confessions of detainees and "show trials" that constituted a clear violation of international provisions on fair trial and the right to due process.

After the 2009 presidential election in Iran, jamming of foreign channels, particularly the BBC and Voice of America (VOA), increased in intensity. Then, in the wake of the Arab Spring movements, Iran increased its jamming of the BBC, VOA, and other Western networks with Persian-language news channels. Zarghami has admitted using such tactics, according to Iranian state media reports. **Sanctioned by the US and the EU.**⁶⁶

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #3

Key Violators of the Rights of the Baha'i Minority in Iran

“The Baha'i are not legally ‘persons’ in Iran”

(Terry Glavin –National Post)

There are about 35,000 adherents of the Baha'i faith in Canada spread across 260 Baha'i communities. About 7,000 of them are Iranian immigrants who fled their homeland following the Khomeinist takeover in 1979. Canada's Parliament was the first to formally recognize the faith by incorporating its governing institution, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Canada, by a special Act of Parliament in 1949.⁶⁷ The Baha'i faith has put down particularly deep roots in this country's aboriginal communities.

Violating the Rights of the Baha'i

Prof. Winston Nagan:

“Having grown up with the indignities of the apartheid system in South Africa, I bristle whenever ... anyone equates a government's treatment of a portion of its citizenry to apartheid. Usually, the claims are exaggerated. But in Iran today, the government's treatment of the Baha'i community bears striking similarities.”⁶⁸

Prof. Nagan, is the founding director of the Institute for Human Rights and Peace Development at the University of Florida. Originally from South Africa he is a former chair of the board of directors of Amnesty International, USA (1989-91)

a. Banned as Legislators

In South Africa, blacks were prohibited under the Constitution from being legislators. In Iran, Baha'is are constitutionally excluded from service in the parliament. By contrast, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Jews hold one or two seats each as part of their status as constitutionally recognized religious minorities.⁶⁹

b. Banned from Universities

In South Africa, the law prohibited “non-white” students from registering at and attending "white universities." In Iran, a confidential memorandum (the “Golpaygani Memorandum”) dated February 25, 1991, from the secretary of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council, Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani, and signed by the Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, provided that Baha'is “must be expelled from universities....”⁷⁰

c. Banned from Education

Baha'is have created an informal tertiary system of education known as the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE). Unwilling to accept even separate education, the government has several times raided homes where classes are held ... confiscating books and computers, arresting educators, and shortly thereafter outlawing BIHE activities. Declaring the provision of education to Baha'is illegal is reminiscent of the Bantu Education Act, No. 47 of 1953, which made it a crime to conduct a school for blacks without official permission.⁷¹

d. Banned from Employment

In apartheid South Africa, the law ... prohibited any black person from being employed as an “executive, professional, technical or administrative employee, manager or supervisor” in a business in a white area. Similar measures exist to subordinate the Baha’i. A provision in the Golpaygani Memorandum specifies that their livelihoods should be limited to “modest” ones and that their “progress and development” should be “blocked”. In a letter dated April 9, 2007, from the Public Places Supervision Office of the Public Intelligence and Security Force instructing heads of public intelligence and security forces to prevent Baha’is from engaging in a wide range of businesses including “high-earning businesses” and from receiving permits in 25 “sensitive business categories” ranging from the tourism to publishing, and a wide range of food businesses.⁷²

e. “Their blood can be spilled with impunity”

U.S. Department of State: Baha’i blood in Iranian law – is considered mobah, and it means that “their blood can be spilled with impunity”. In other words – when Baha’i are murdered there is no consequence – no compensation – no redress⁷³

f. Persecution “begins in kindergarten”

U.N. special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief: “It starts with kindergarten. Kindergarten staff are supposed to spot Baha’is so they can be under special surveillance... and “it would continue in higher education but Bahais are banned from university....”⁷⁴

g. Bodies Unburied - Burial Rights Denied - Cemeteries Closed

“In recent years, more than 40 Baha’i cemeteries have been attacked, vandalized or closed, and in numerous cases the burial of Baha’is has been blocked or interfered with by authorities,” said Diane Ala’i, the representative of the Baha’i International Community to the UN in Geneva. “The overall pattern that emerges is of a government-coordinated effort to make Baha’is invisible in Iran by eliminating one of the few remaining public signs of their existence – their own distinctive cemeteries – and to force them to abide by Muslim rites as yet another means to force Baha’is to deny their faith,” said Ms. Ala’i. “In another city ... the Baha’is were told that in order to be issued a permit to bury their deceased relatives, they must sign an undertaking. In this form, they are asked to have no marking on the graves except the names and dates of birth and death and not to create green space in the cemetery since that is considered a promotion of their faith.”⁷⁵

h. “Their marriages are illegal; their children are illegitimate”

Terry Glavin (National Post) – The Khomeinist regime, which considers Baha’i people “unclean”, excludes them from 25 separate employment categories. “Because they are not legally “persons” in Iran, Baha’i people are denied pensions and government services, their marriages are illegal, their children are ‘illegitimate’, they have no recourse to the courts, and they are banned from attending post-secondary institutions.”⁷⁶

Key Violators of the Rights of the Baha’i

1. Gholam-Ali Naeem-Abadi – Representative of Supreme Leader in Hormozgan Province

Prior to the murder of the Baha’i citizen Ataollah Rezvani, Gholam-Ali Naeem-Abadi and the Friday prayer leader of Bandar Abbas, had repeatedly provoked extremist forces to act against Baha’is in his talks, and had a part in inciting the hostile atmosphere in which the murder of Ataollah Rezvani and attacks on other Baha’i citizens took place. **Sanctioned by the EU.**⁷⁷

2. Mahmoud Alavi – Minister of Intelligence Since 2013

“Alavi has overseen the frequent arrest, torture, and murder of journalists, human rights defenders, dissidents, and ethnic and religious minorities. In particular, **his tenure saw a wave of mass arrests targeting the peaceful Baha’i minority** and persecutions against student leaders. He is also responsible for a program of harassment and assassination of Iranians abroad. In 2017, Alavi boasted of operating regime agents in Canada.”⁷⁸ “His department provides support to Hezbollah, Hamas, al-Qaeda, and the regime of Syria’s Bashar al-Assad. It maintains a presence in the Persian Gulf countries, Yemen, Sudan, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Europe, East and South Asia, and North and South America.”⁷⁹

3. Abbas Alizadeh (Movahhed) – Ministry of Intelligence

As a senior member of the Ministry of Intelligence, Abbas Alizadeh has been responsible for the violation of the rights of Baha’is in the city of Sari, the capital of the province of Mazandaran,

over the past three decades. He is in charge of Baha'i cases filed with the Ministry of Intelligence's detention center in Sari. Alizadeh is responsible for the extrajudicial arrests of several Baha'is and the interrogation and degrading treatment of Baha'i community members, including Foad Nai'mi, Sepideh and Soha Zamani, Jila Reza'i and Masoud Ataeian, who have been either detained or harassed because of their religion. According to the testimony of Jila Rezaei, who used to be a member of the group managing the Baha'i community in Sari, Abbas Alizadeh is also responsible for the destruction of the Sari Baha'i cemetery in 2009.⁸⁰

4. Hamid-Reza Moghaddam Far – IRGC Advisor

Currently the cultural and media advisor to an IRGC commander. When he was the Managing Director of Fars News Agency and the Deputy Commander of Cultural Affairs for the IRGC, Hamid Reza Moghaddam-Far was responsible for deliberately provoking hatred and incitement to hatred against the Baha'i faith through the content in Fars News.⁸¹

5. Hassan Firouzabadi – Senior Military Advisor to the Supreme Leader and former Chief of the Iranian Armed Forces from 1989 to 2016

Firouzabadi has been involved in massive human rights violations, including overseeing the murder of protesters and "the mass arrests and torture of civilians. He also issued an order to all military and security forces for the identification and monitoring of members of the peaceful Baha'i minority, which has featured prominently in their persecution. Firouzabadi publicly encouraged the persecution and prosecution of environmentalists, including Canadian citizen Kavous Seyed-Emami, who later died in detention under suspicious circumstances."⁸²

6. Mansour Gholami – Minister of Science, Research, and Technology (MSRT)

In the regime's view higher education is designed to inculcate students with the values of the Islamic Revolution, thereby ensuring their perpetuation. As Supreme Leader Khamenei declared in 2015, universities retain "the purpose of creating the new Islamic civilization." University administrators, he added, "should plan all tasks on the basis of this." The ministry has waged a campaign of repression against Iranian students, who routinely face imprisonment, expulsion, and denial of admission for defying Tehran's radical Islamist ideology.⁸³

“Gholami presides over Iran’s higher education system and his ministry screens university applicants for their loyalty to the regime and perpetuates a discriminatory system founded on religious and ethnic exclusion. In this apartheid-like system, members of the peaceful Baha’i faith are barred from attending university altogether. Gholami has coordinated with the Intelligence Ministry to help oversee the monitoring and arrests of students and professors on campus. This includes facilitating violent attacks against peaceful student demonstrators, leading to serious injuries and deaths. Gholami has overseen the suppression of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and is in gross violation of these human rights.”⁸⁴

7. Hojjatol-Islam Asadollah Jafari – Prosecutor-General of Mazandaran Province

Jafari was responsible for illegal arrests and violations of the rights of Baha'i detainees and keeping them in solitary confinement in the Intelligence Detention Center. Six concrete examples of cases where due process was violated have been documented. Jafari has prosecuted cases that have resulted in many executions. **Sanctioned by the EU.**⁸⁵

8. Ali-Mohammad Besharati-Jahromi – Former interior minister, former head of IRGC intelligence: kidnapping, torture and murder of dissidents and Baha’i

Jahromi spearheaded kidnapping, torture and murder of dissidents around Jahrom prior to the 1979 revolution. He acted as a consultant to the Friday Prayer Leader of the city, and identified, tortured, and murdered citizens, and often threw their remains into aqueducts around Jahrom. According to witnesses, he was involved in or incited harassment, torture, and murder including acid attacks, burning, cutting, maiming and the violent killing of Baha’is, political activists, leftists and Mojahedin, among others, in Jahrom. During the first months of 1981 and following repeated complaints and appeals by survivors and family members of political prisoners.”⁸⁶

9. Editor-in-Chief of Kayhan Newspaper

Editor-in-Chief of Kayhan newspaper which publishes anti-Baha'i op-eds and reports – most of them authored by Shariat-Madari himself. His newspaper portrays Baha'is as dangerous and active enemies of the Islamic Republic.⁸⁷

10. Mohammad Moghiseh – Head of Branch 28 of Iran’s Revolutionary Court

Moghiseh is known as a “hanging judge”. His trials frequently last minutes and routinely result in death or lengthy prison sentences, often on the basis of forced confessions and with limited or no access to counsel. He is infamous for imprisoning human rights lawyers, including Nasrin Sotoudeh, recipient of an honorary Doctorate from York University. He also unjustly sentenced Canadian Permanent Resident, Saeed Malekpour, to death on false charges later suspended under international pressure).⁸⁸ Moghiseh is also known for his harsh sentences against members of the Baha’i faith, including sentencing seven Bahai leaders to 20 years imprisonment each.⁸⁹ Activists for an independent Kurdistan and members of Iran’s repressed Sunni minority have also been similarly targeted. In 2014, Moghiseh sentenced four Sunni Kurds to death. “They were not even given the right to defend themselves in court,” said a family member of one of the victims. “After their trial, Judge Moghiseh told them to ‘be quiet! You are Sunni dogs who must be hanged!’”⁹⁰ Prior to his posting as a Judge in the early 2000s, Moghiseh held supervisory and prosecutorial roles at three of Iran’s brutal prisons. In 1988, he played a key role in facilitating the state-engineered Death Committees that slaughtered thousands of political opponents. According to a 2011 report, several eyewitnesses accused Moghiseh “of actually hanging prisoners and participating in their torture.” Others told stories of Moghiseh “supervising the death sentences and the tortures.”⁹¹ **Sanctioned by the EU.**⁹²

11. Meysam Nili – Editor-in-Chief of Raja News

As the Editor-in-Chief of Raja News, Nili was responsible for deliberately provoking hatred and incitement to hatred against members of the Baha’i faith by using false accusations, inflammatory terminology, and repugnant imagery in content published in Raja News. Raja News is close to hardliners in Iran and a strong supporter of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.⁹³

12. Seyed Reza Moosavi-Tabar – Head of Revolutionary Prosecution in Shiraz

Mossavi-Tabar is responsible for illegal arrests and ill treatment of political activists, journalists, human rights defenders, Baha'is and prisoners of conscience, who were harassed, tortured, interrogated and denied access to lawyers and due process. He signed judicial orders in the notorious No. 100 Detention Centre (a male prison), including an order to detain female Baha'i prisoner Raha Sabet for three years in solitary confinement. **Sanctioned by the EU.**⁹⁴

13. Masoud Velayati (Aka: Masoud Moazallahi) – Prosecutor

Currently prosecutor for the city of Kahnouj and former investigator of the 7th branch of Public and Revolution Court's Prosecutor Office in Kerman Province. As the interrogator of branch 7 of Kerman Prosecution, Velayati has been in charge of security cases. He is one of the authorities responsible for illegal acts and violations of the rights of Baha'is in Kerman.⁹⁵

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #4

Leading the Iranian Regime's Industry of Repression,
Torture and Execution

Leading the Regime's Industry of Repression

1. Hossein Ashtari – Chief of the Law Enforcement Force (LEF)

Ashtari and his LEF brutally suppress peaceful protesters and women's rights defenders, and violently enforce discriminatory laws. Under his tenure, his officers have fired live ammunition into crowds and beaten demonstrators. Ashtari also oversees unofficial detention centres where prisoners are regularly abused and have died in detention. His force plays a key role in the online censorship regime, where its cyber unit monitors the internet and arrests and tortures cyber dissidents.⁹⁶ The LEF has also contributed to Bashar al-Assad's atrocities in Syria advising and assisting Assad's security forces in order to preserve his grip on power. In 2011, Ahmad Reza Radan, then-deputy chief of the LEF, visited Damascus to share his expertise in forcibly subduing protests.⁹⁷ The Obama administration sanctioned the force, Radan, and other LEF officials for the human rights abuses in Iran and Syria. The EU in 2011 sanctioned former LEF chief Esmail Ahmadi-Moqaddam, Radan, several other lower-ranking LEF officials, and the cyber police unit. The LEF's current leaders including Ashtari, have escaped designation.⁹⁸

2. Seyyed Alireza Avaei (Avae) – Minister of Justice since August 2017

As the U.S. Mission to the UN noted in February 2018, Avaei is "responsible for some of the worst human rights violations in Iran..."⁹⁹ In his earlier role as a prosecutor, Avaei was notorious for the arbitrary executions of thousands of innocents and extrajudicial killings of political prisoners.¹⁰⁰ During the 1988 massacres, Avaei served on the "death commission" in Dezful charged with selecting those to be murdered. Avaei's victims were denied any form of due process. According to one eyewitness ..., the "trial of 60 people had lasted less than one hour".¹⁰¹ "He was described by witnesses as one of the cruelest killers of the massacre, sentencing many juveniles to death. He was the main person in charge of executions at the UNESCO Prison in Dezful where nearly all political prisoners were executed, including the hanging of minors on Avaei's orders. He also oversaw the show trials of hundreds of peaceful protesters following the 2009 Green Revolution, seeking death and long-term prison sentences. Some of those sentenced died in prison under torture. Avaei continues to perpetrate and promote massive human rights abuses as Minister of Justice."¹⁰² **Sanctioned by the EU.**¹⁰³

3. Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli – Minister of the Interior since August 2013

Appointed by President Rouhani in 2013, Fazli previously held multiple leadership roles in the state-run Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), the regime's primary propaganda organ. In May 2018, the US sanctioned the IRIB's director-general, for censoring multiple media outlets and broadcasting the forced confessions of political prisoners.¹⁰⁴ As minister, Fazli has overseen the banning of peaceful public gatherings and civil society organizations, and the promotion of radical regime ideology. He has encouraged the harassment of human rights activists and repression of labour union organizers, and curtailed women's access to the workplace.¹⁰⁵ Fazli also helps manage the Law Enforcement Force (LEF) of Iran, known for its brutality, its role in censorship and its assistance to Syrian President Assad in suppressing protests. By presiding over Iran's pseudo-democratic elections, which allow only regime loyalists to run for office, Fazli's Ministry perpetuates the illusion of popular sovereignty.¹⁰⁶

4. Gholamhossein Gheibparvar – Commander of the Basij Militia since 2016

As Commander of the Basij, Gheibparvar "has aggressively recruited volunteers to fight in Syria, many of whom subsequently died on the front lines."¹⁰⁷ Within Iran, the Basij has murdered and maimed peaceful protesters, and targeted dissidents and ethnic and religious minorities.¹⁰⁸ Gheibparvar's forces also perpetrate violence against women and brutally enforce discriminatory laws and practices.¹⁰⁹ "The Basij also targets Iranian women abroad who publicly oppose Tehran's austere dress code. In March 2018, Masih Alinejad, a prominent Iranian activist currently living in the US, received a death threat from a top Basij official for her advocacy against the mandatory hijab. "In his message," she wrote in the Washington Post, "he said I'd be butchered because I had been insulting the sanctity of Iran's revolutionary and Islamic values. He warned that one of his agents in the US would cut out my tongue and slash my breasts before killing me."¹¹⁰ In November 2016, Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani described the Basij as "crucial" to the export of Iran's Islamic Revolution. "The Basij, a subsidiary of the IRGC, differs from other security agencies through its extensive reliance on volunteers, thereby legitimizing it as a grassroots movement. Some 50,000 branches of the Basij operate in the country's 31 provinces, with a presence in mosques, government offices, factories, hospitals, schools, and universities.¹¹⁹ Credible estimates of its membership range from three million to five million,

though only about 100,000 to 200,000 serve as full-time, active duty, and paid personnel. Perhaps most infamously, the Basij captured the world's attention in 2009 when its forces shot and killed 26-year-old philosophy student Neda Soltan, who became a symbol of resistance after a video of her final moments went viral. Nine years later in 2018, the Basij, along with other security forces, has once again worked to subdue nationwide protests through force."¹¹¹

5. Sadegh Amoli Larijani – Chief Justice of Iran since 2009

As head of Iran's judiciary, "Larijani has personally signed off on countless death sentences including stoning, hanging, execution of juveniles, and public executions such as those where prisoners were hung from bridges in front of thousands. He oversees a system that institutionalized the deprivation of the right to a fair trial, and where sentences of torture – including amputations and the dripping of acid in the eyes of the convicted – and execution are regularly delivered.... This includes the execution of juveniles and the targeting of civil society leaders. Larijani and his family have also been implicated in significant corruption and embezzlement of public funds."¹¹² **Sanctioned by the U.S.**¹¹³

6. Ali Asghar Mir-Hejazi Intelligence – Advisor to the Supreme Leader

Since the beginning of Khamenei's leadership, Mir-Hejazi has been chief of the Supreme Leader's Intelligence and Security Division.¹¹⁴ He began his career as a commander in the Committee of the Islamic Revolution (a post-revolutionary military organization parallel to the police that was later disbanded), and served as a deputy in the intelligence ministry's international affairs office before moving over to Khamenei's office.¹¹⁵ He is responsible for planning many of the regime's most egregious human rights violations including severe and violent crackdowns against peaceful protesters following the June 2009 elections. As a close confidante of Khamenei, Mir-Hejazi plays a key role in designing and implementing the regime's mass domestic repression, including the targeting of Iranian civil society leaders.¹¹⁶ **Sanctioned by the U.S.**¹¹⁷

7. Mostafa Pourmohammadi – Past Justice Minister, Recent Minister of the Interior

Pourmohammadi has overseen egregious human rights violations in Iran. During the 1988 Massacre, he was a member of the Tehran "death commission" determining the execution of prisoners based on their religious or political beliefs, killing over 5,000 innocents. As Director of

Foreign Operations of the Intelligence Ministry, he oversaw the program of assassinations of dissidents and diaspora leaders, including political leaders and notable writers and journalists living abroad. Pourmohammadi used his Ministerial positions to perpetrate human rights violations in a tenure marked by criminality and impunity.¹¹⁸

8. Ebrahim Raisi – Former Presidential Candidate, Custodian of Astan Quds Razavi

Astan Quds Razavi is an international conglomerate with a real-estate portfolio worth an estimated \$20 billion, which effectively functions as a slush fund for Iran’s supreme leader. Raisi helps generate the funds that enable Tehran to suppress dissent at home and export terror abroad. Raisi reports only to the current supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who appointed him in March 2016.⁶⁸ The endowment receives no oversight by any other government body. The enormous wealth of Astan Quds Razavi makes it a crucial target for Magnitsky sanctions¹¹⁹. The move should be in concert with a similar sanctioning of the Execution of Imam Khomeini’s Order, or EIKO, another foundation tied to the supreme leader.⁷⁰ Like Astan Quds Razavi, EIKO has investments – worth an estimated \$95 billion, according to a 2013 Reuters report – that remain off the books.⁷¹ It was sanctioned by the Obama administration in 2013.¹²⁰

Raisi served as the Deputy Chief Justice between 2004-2014 and Attorney General from 2014-2016, approving scores of death penalties and presiding over the prosecution of countless dissidents. Raisi also served on the Tehran “death commission” tasked with determining the murders of political prisoners during the 1988 massacre, often based on interrogations of several minutes.¹²¹ Thirty years later, the systematic massacre of thousands of political dissidents remains the most egregious atrocity committed by the Islamic Republic against its own people since its founding in 1979. During Raisi’s presidential bid in 2017 he attained international prominence and the incumbent, Hassan Rouhani, wasted no time in attacking him for his role in the 1988 massacre. Rouhani declared that Iranians would reject “those who only knew executions and prison for 38 years.” In response, Raisi doubled down: His campaign page on the Telegram messaging service posted a video justifying the slaughter.¹²²

9. Abolghassem Salavati – Head of Branch 15 of Iran’s Revolutionary Court

Widely known in Iran as a “hanging judge,” Salavati has presided over the “trials” of numerous dual and foreign nationals. Salavati has imposed draconian sentences, including the death penalty, lashes, and elongated jail terms, on countless political prisoners. For Iranians, Salavati

“serves as the foremost symbol of Tehran’s domestic repression and the radical Islamist creed that drives it.” He heads Branch 15 of Iran’s Revolutionary Court which effectively serves as an agent of Iran’s Intelligence Ministry and IRGC. In Salavati’s courtroom, trials often last a few minutes. Salavati himself frequently serves as prosecutor as well as judge. He habitually accepts sentencing recommendations from the IRGC and the Intelligence Ministry and the regime consistently brings him cases when it seeks to make an example of a political prisoner.¹²³

10. Abbas Salehi – Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance (MCIG)

According to Mostafa Mir-salim, who led the MCIG from 1994 to 1997, journalism is “not a profession. Rather, it must be perceived as an ideological mission aimed at confronting the cultural onslaught” from the West.”¹²⁴ Salehi oversees this system “of censorship and propaganda which vets all forms of entertainment and culture and only grants a license to those who promote the narrow agenda of the regime. Salehi helps monitor those in the arts and cultural industries – facilitating the arrests of those license-holders who do not follow regime strictures – and the imprisonment and torture of those who publish without a license.”¹²⁵ “Salehi has attempted to cultivate an image of moderation, often blaming other, seemingly more hardline clerics for the ministry’s failure to reform. But this rhetoric serves as a fig leaf for an inherently repressive government body established to facilitate censorship and advance the regime’s revolutionary agenda.”¹²⁶

11. Sohrab Soleimani – Supervisor of the Office of the Deputy for Security and Law Enforcement of the State Prisons Organization

“Soleimani has overseen human rights abuses at Tehran’s notorious Evin Prison. This includes harsh interrogations, forced confessions, denial of access to medical care, and egregious torture that has often resulted in death. Many Canadian-Iranians and human rights heroes have been targeted under his tenure.”¹²⁷ **Sanctioned by the U.S.**¹²⁸

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #5

The 1988 Massacre

“Thousands of prisoners were blindfolded and paraded before the death committee which directed them to a conga line leading straight to the gallows. They were hung from cranes, four at a time, or in groups of six from ropes hanging from the stage of the prison assembly hall. Their bodies were doused with disinfectant, packed in refrigerated trucks and buried by night in mass graves the locations of which were ... withheld from their families”.¹²⁹

In June 2013 the Parliament of Canada passed a motion condemning the massacre as a crime against humanity and seeking to establish September 1 as a day of solidarity with political prisoners in Iran.

Some of the family members of those murdered now live in Canada

The 1988 Massacre

“Thirty years later, the systematic massacre of thousands of political dissidents remains the most egregious atrocity committed by the Islamic Republic against its own people since its founding in 1979.”

1. Asma Jahangir – The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran:

(Aug. 14, 2017): “Between July and August 1988, thousands of political prisoners, men, women and teen-agers, were reportedly executed pursuant to a fatwa issued by the then Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini. A three-man commission was reportedly created with a view to determining who should be executed. The bodies of the victims were reportedly buried in unmarked graves.”

2. The 30th Anniversary

2018 marked the 30th anniversary of the 1988 execution of thousands of Iranian political prisoners at the instruction of Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini. Some estimate the number of victims to be as high as 30,000 people.

3. Canada – the first to recognize the 1988 Massacre

In June 2013 the Parliament of Canada passed a motion condemning the massacre as a crime against humanity and seeking to establish September 1 as a day of solidarity with political prisoners in Iran. The motion was presented by Liberal MP Irwin Cotler; Conservative MP James Bezan and NDP MP Paul Dewar. The initiative was driven by the “Massacre88 Campaign”, whose spokesman was Kaveh Shahrooz, is a Toronto lawyer who lost his uncle Mehrdad in that massacre.

The 1988 Massacre – Iranian leaders in their own words:

Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazari, Khomeini’s former heir apparent, “The biggest crime in the history of the Islamic Republic”

In August 2016, Montazari’s son, Ahmad, published a recording of his father chiding those responsible for following Khomeini’s orders. In the audio recording taped in 1988, while the executions were still being carried out, Montazari is heard lashing out against those responsible for carrying out Khomeini’s edict: “In my view, the biggest crime in the history of the Islamic Republic, for which history will condemn us, has been committed at your hands,” Montazari admonished four judiciary officials directly involved in the executions....“Your names will be written in history as criminals...”¹³⁰

“Death Committee “Member – current Justice Minister Mostafa Pourmohammadi (2016): “We’re Proud”

We’re proud to have carried out God’s order regarding the munafiqin [literally meaning hypocrites, a term used by Iranian officials to refer to MKO members] and stood up strongly against the enemies of God and the [Iranian] nation.”¹³¹

Tehran’s acting Friday Prayer leader, board member of Assembly of Experts, Ahmad Khatami: “Deserve a medal of honour”

“Confronting them [imprisoned dissidents] and wiping out the munafiqin [members of the anti-regime group People’s Mujahedin Organization, or MKO] was one of the imam’s most righteous and valuable actions, and all of the persons who complied with his edict should be awarded a Medal of Honor.”¹³²

Ali Khamenei, Iran’s Supreme Leader, official website, June 3, 2017

“Recently, there have been some voices and advocates of those voices attacking [the incidents of] the 1980s. My advice is, [especially] to all those thinkers and intellectuals who judge [the incidents of] the 1980s, not to exchange the place of martyr and executioner.”¹³³

Members of the “Death Committees”

The Justice for Victims of 1988 Massacre in Iran (JVMI) has collected extensive information regarding the perpetrators of the massacre and has assembled a list of 96 individuals who acted as members of the Death Commissions in 1988 or supervised their operations. Many of the perpetrators continued as of the summer of 2017 to hold key positions in various branches of the Iranian government. Seventeen other members of the Death Commissions are currently holding judicial offices including the post of Supreme Court judges. Two Members of Parliament, seven members of the Assembly of Experts and two members of the powerful State Expediency Discernment Council are also among the members of the 1988 Death Commissions.

The following are the names supplied by the JVMI of perpetrators of the massacre currently holding key positions (for full biographical details see <https://iran1988.org/>):

1. ALI ABDOLLAHI ALI-ABADI

Coordinator of the Headquarters of the Armed Forces

2. ABBASALI ALIZADEH

Appeals Court Judge

3. YADOLLAH ALIZADEH

Deputy Prosecutor General of Iran

4. ALIREZA AVAIE

Minister of Justice (since September 2017)

5. SEYED MORTEZA BAKHTIARI

Deputy Custodian of Astan Quds Razavi conglomerate.

6. AKBAR FEIZ EINODDIN

Judge in Branch 16 of the Supreme Court

7. GHOLAM-HOSSEIN MOHSENI-EJEI First Vice Chief and spokesperson of the Judiciary; member of the State Expediency Council

8. MIR-NAGHI GHAZIPOUR

Head of the second branch of the Administrative Justice Court

9. MOHAMMAD SADEGH GHOLAMI

Expert in the Supreme Court

10. MUKHTAR HEYDARZADEH

Head of the logistics section of the Administrative Justice Court

11. ASSADOLLAH IMANI

Member of Assembly of Experts and Supreme Leader's representative in Fars province

12. SALMAN KHODADADI

Member of Parliament and Chair of its Committee on Social Affairs

13. ZEINOLABEDIN QORBANI LAHIJI

Member of the Assembly of Experts and representative of the Supreme Leader in Gilan Province

14. ABDOLREZA MESRI

Member of Parliament

15. ALI MOBASHERI

Supreme Court judge Death Decree: Formation of Death Commissions

16. MOHAMMAD MOGHISSEH

President of the 28th branch of the Revolutionary Court

17. MUSTAFA POUR-MOHAMMADI

Advisor to the Chief of the Judiciary

18. MORTEZA MOQTADAEI

Member of Assembly of Experts

19. HOSSEIN-ALI NAYYERI

Head of the Supreme Disciplinary Court for Judges and Vice President of the Supreme Court

20. BRIG. GEN. AHMAD NOURIAN

Coordinator of the Tharallah Garrison in Tehran

21. HAJ KHALIL NOROUZI

Head of Inspections in the Judiciary in Zanjan

22. EBRAHIM RAISI

Head of Qods Razavi Endowment Foundation and President of Governing Board of the Fifth Assembly of Experts

23. ALI RAZINI

Head of the 41st Branch of the Supreme Court

24. MOHAMMAD MOHAMMADI REYSHAHRI

Member of Assembly of Experts

25. MOHAMMADREZA SABER

Supreme Court judge

26. MOHAMMAD SALIMI

Head of the high court for determining judges' competence

27. MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN AHMADI SHAHROODI

Member of Assembly of Experts

28. ABBAS-ALI SOLEIMANI

Member of Assembly of Experts and the Supreme Leader's representative in Zahedan

29. GHOLAMREZA KHALAF REZAI-ZARE'

Supreme Court judge

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #6

The Evin Prison

Iran is dotted with many regime detention and torture centres. But the one that Canadians might be familiar with is the Evin Prison. It is one of the most notorious facilities in Iran. Canadian citizens and residents have been held, tortured and murdered there. In April 2017, the US imposed sanctions on the Evin prison and the Tehran Prisons Organization pursuant to Executive Order 13553 (targeting actors responsible for human rights abuses in Iran on or after June 12, 2009)¹³⁴.

Canadians who have been held in Evin prison

- a. **Iranian Canadian Zahra Kazemi (July 2003)** – a freelance photographer, who held in the Evin prison and later raped, tortured and murdered by Iranian officials.
- b. **Iranian Canadian Ramin Jahanbegloo (Apr. 2006 – Aug. 2006)** – was jailed for “spying” this prominent professor from the University of Toronto was held in the Evin prison. International pressure from the EU and 400 prominent international figures including Nobel laureates and scholars helped secure his release
- c. **Canadian Permanent Resident Saeed Malekpour (2008 - ?)** – Malekpour was arrested in October 2008 after returning to Iran to visit his dying father. He was held and tortured in the Evin prison. In 2010 he was sentenced to death for “blasphemy,” but the sentence was overturned a year later. In 2013, he was sentenced to life in prison and returned to Canada in Aust 2019.
- d. **Iranian-Canadian Hossein Derakshan (2008 – 2014)** – The blogger is credited with igniting a blogging movement in Iran by posting simple online instructions on how to create sites in Farsi in 2001, earning the moniker “The Blogfather.” In 2010, court sentenced him to more than 19 1/2 years in prison. He was pardoned by Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.
- e. **Iranian-Canadian Hamid Ghassemi-Shall (2008-2013)** – He was arrested on espionage charges while visiting relatives in Iran; was sentenced to death the following year; but was later released.
- f. **Iranian-Canadian Maziar Bahari (2009- 2010)** – He was arrested during a government crackdown to silence protests over disputed election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The journalist and documentary filmmaker was released on \$300,000 bail and allowed to leave to join his British wife in London that October. His release came after spending 118 days in the Evin prison. He was sentenced in absentia in 2010 to 13 years in prison and 74 lashes for espionage.

- g. **Canadian Permanent Resident Mostafa Azizi (2015-2016)** – was arrested visiting his family in Iran. He was accused of insulting Iran's supreme leader and colluding against the country in social media posts. The writer/filmmaker was sentenced to eight years in prison but was then released
- h. **Iranian-Canadian Homa Hoodfar (June 2016 – Sept. 2016)** – The Montreal professor was detained by the IRGC and was held in Iran's notorious Evin prison. Iran's prosecutor accused her of "dabbling in feminism". Hoodfar says members of the IRGC psychologically tortured her during dozens of interrogations. They threatened "they would send my dead body back to Canada."¹³⁵
- i. **Kavous Seyyed-Emami (January 2018)** – Iranian-Canadian founder of Iran's Wildlife Heritage detained by IRGC intelligence agents in January 2018 and found dead in the Evin Prison two weeks later.

Prison Authorities

1. Ali-Ashraf Rashidi-Aghdam – Currently an Official of the Prisons Organization – Served as Head of Evin Prison

Currently an official of the Prisons Organization. He served as the Head of Evin Prison, appointed in mid-2012. After his appointment, conditions in the prison deteriorated and reports referenced intensified ill-treatment of prisoners. In October 2012, nine female prisoners went on hunger strike in protest of the violation of their rights and violent treatment by prison guards.¹³⁶ **Sanctioned by the EU.**¹³⁷

2. Seyyed Bahram Reshteh Ahmadi - Evin Prosecution Centre

Ahmadi is a judge of an ordinary court of northern Tehran. Former Supervisor of Public Prosecution Office in Tehran. Deputy Head of the Office of Prison Affairs of Tehran Province. Former Deputy Prosecutor in Tehran until 2013. He ran Evin prosecution center. Was responsible for the denial of rights, including visits and other prisoner's rights, to human rights defenders and political prisoners. No information on him since 2013. **Sanctioned by the EU.**¹³⁸

3. Gholam-Hossein Esmaeili – Head of Tehran province's Department of Justice, former head of Iran's Prisons Organization

Head of Tehran province's Department of Justice and former head of Iran's Prisons Organization. He was complicit to the massive detention of political prisoners and covering up abuses performed in the jailing system. **Sanctioned by the EU.**¹³⁹

4. Mohammad Moghiseh – Head of Branch 28 of Iran's Revolutionary Court

Moghiseh is known as a "hanging judge". His trials frequently last minutes and routinely result in death or lengthy prison sentences. He is infamous for imprisoning human rights lawyers, including Nasrin Sotoudeh, recipient of an honorary Doctorate from York University. He also unjustly sentenced Canadian Permanent Resident, Saeed Malekpour, to death on false charges later

suspended under international pressure).¹⁴⁰ Moghiseh is also known for his harsh sentences against members of the Baha'i faith, including sentencing seven Bahai leaders to 20 years imprisonment each.¹⁴¹ Prior to his posting as a Judge in the early 2000s, Moghiseh held supervisory and prosecutorial roles at three of Iran's brutal prisons including the Evin prison.¹⁴² In 1988, he played a key role in facilitating the state-engineered Death Committees that slaughtered thousands of political opponents. According to a 2011 report, several eyewitnesses accused Moghiseh "of actually hanging prisoners and participating in their torture." Others told stories of Moghiseh "supervising the death sentences and the tortures."¹⁴³ **Sanctioned by the EU.**¹⁴⁴

5. Heidar (Heydar) Moslehi – Former Minister of Intelligence, torture, sexual abuse of prisoners

Head of the organization for publications on the role of the clergy at war. Former Minister of Intelligence (2009-2013). Under his leadership, the Ministry of Intelligence has continued the practices of widespread arbitrary detention and persecution of protestors and dissidents. The Ministry of Intelligence continues to run Ward 209 of Evin Prison, where many activists are being held for their peaceful activities in opposition to the ruling government; interrogators from the Ministry of Intelligence have subjected prisoners in Ward 209 to beatings, mental abuse, and sexual abuse. In recent months, prisoners in Ward 209 have reported forced confessions and interference by the Ministry of Intelligence in the judicial process; one detainee from the ward was executed after a forced confession and another was executed when torture failed to yield a confession. As the Minister of Intelligence, Moslehi bears responsibility for the ongoing abuses. **Sanctioned by the U.S. and the EU.**¹⁴⁵

6. Hojattollah Souri (a.k.a Hojjattollah Khodaei Souri) – Former head of Evin Prison

Former head of Evin prison until 2012. Current position unknown. As head of Evin prison, he bears responsibility for severe human rights abuses, such as beatings, mental and sexual abuses. Member of the National Security and Foreign policy. Parliamentary deputy for Lorestan Province. Member of the Parliamentary Commission for Foreign and Security Policy. Sanctioned by the EU.¹⁴⁶

Iran's Violators of Human Rights – List #7

Execution of Juveniles, Stoning, Amputation and other Egregious Violence

Iran executes more juvenile offenders than any other country in the world, in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child which Iran has ratified. According to Iran Human Rights (IHR) reports, at least 55 juvenile offenders were executed between 2008 and 2018 in Iran. Amnesty International recently reported the execution of 85 juvenile offenders between 2005 and 2018. According to the same report, at least 80 juvenile offenders are on death row in Iranian prisons. However, the actual number is significantly higher as there is no information about juvenile offenders in many Iranian prisons.¹⁴⁷

Execution of Juveniles, Stoning, Amputation and other Egregious Violence

Amnesty International (Canada) – “IRAN: stop putting kids to death”

“Iran has the shameful status of being the world’s leading
executioner of juvenile offenders....”¹⁴⁸

UN Recommendations on use of Amputations and Floggings – Rejected by Iran

The UN Special Rapporteur (2017): “

... [Iran] rejects the notion that amputations and floggings amount to torture and maintains that
they are effective deterrents to criminal activity.¹⁴⁹

1. Seyyed Alireza Avaei – Minister of Justice: Sentenced Many Juveniles to Death

As the U.S. Mission to the UN noted in February 2018, Avaei is “responsible for some of the worst human rights violations in Iran....”¹⁵⁰ In his earlier role as a prosecutor, Avaei was notorious for the arbitrary executions of thousands of innocents and extrajudicial killings of political prisoners.¹⁵¹ During the 1988 massacres, Avaei served on the “death commission” in Dezful charged with selecting those to be murdered. Avaei’s victims were denied any form of due process. According to one eyewitness of Avaei’s tribunal, the “trial of 60 people had lasted less than one hour.”¹⁵² “He was described by witnesses as one of the cruelest killers of the massacre, sentencing many juveniles to death. He was the main person in charge of executions at the UNESCO Prison in Dezful where nearly all political prisoners were executed, including the hanging of minors on Avaei’s orders. He also oversaw the show trials of hundreds of peaceful protesters following the 2009 Green Revolution, seeking death and long-term prison sentences. Some of those sentenced died in prison under torture. Avaei continues to perpetrate and promote massive human rights abuses as Minister of Justice.”¹⁵³ **Sanctioned by the EU.**¹⁵⁴

2. Mohammad-Bagher Bagheri – Vice-chairman of the Judiciary Administration – Complicit in 240 executions

Vice-chairman of the judiciary administration of South Khorasan province, in charge of crime prevention. In addition to his acknowledging in June 2011, 140 executions for capital offences between March 2010 and March 2011, about 100 other executions are reported to have taken place in the same period and in the same province of South Khorasan without either the families or the lawyers being notified. He is, therefore, complicit in a grave violation of the right to due process that contributes to the excessive and increasing use of the death penalty. **Sanctioned by the EU.** ¹⁵⁵

3. Ali Farhadi – Prosecutor: Execution of Juveniles

Deputy director of General inspection office of Iran and former prosecutor of Karaj. Responsible for demanding the death sentence for a juvenile. **Sanctioned by the EU.** ¹⁵⁶

4. Sadegh Amoli Larijani – Head of the Judiciary: Executed Juveniles, Stoning, Amputations

As head of Iran’s judiciary, “[Larijani has personally signed off on countless death sentences including stoning, hanging, execution of juveniles, amputations and public executions such as those where prisoners were hung from bridges in front of thousands. He oversees a system that institutionalized the deprivation of the right to a fair trial, and where sentences of torture – including amputations and the dripping of acid in the eyes of the convicted – and execution are regularly delivered, making Iran the country with the highest rate of executions per-capita in the world. This includes the execution of juveniles and the targeting of civil society leaders. Larijani and his family have also been implicated in significant corruption and embezzlement of public funds.”¹⁵⁷ **Sanctioned by the U.S.** ¹⁵⁸

5. Davood Rahmani -- Former Head Tehran Prison System: invented torture known as the “grave”

Current position unknown. Due to his acquaintance with Asadollah Lajevardi, prosecutor of

Tehran, he was appointed as the head of Ghezel Hesar Prison. His tenure at Ghezel Hesar prison is regarded as "the era of fear." He later became head of Tehran's prison system. In 1983, Rahmani invented the torture method known as "grave." In this method, the prisoner was to sit continuously and without contact with other prisoners while harnessed on three sides by sheets of plywood (length of 2 meters and width of 80 centimeters) and wearing a blindfold, remaining in absolute silence. Even while eating, no sound was to be emitted from hitting the silverware to the plates. The length of this wearisome torture was dependent on the resistance of the prisoner. It would end when the prisoner would stop resisting and announce willingness to express his disgust towards his group or friends. The stronger willed prisoners were subject to this torture method for so long that many of them lost their mental balance and health forever. Throughout the entirety of the torture, loudspeakers broadcast religious sermons, calls to prayer, and Koran recitation and, later on, interviews with people who had given in. The goal was to control the attention of the prisoner and his movements and through those, his will and thoughts. While the sense of hearing of the prisoner is saturated with the broadcasted material, his other senses are completely limited and under the control of the torturer.¹⁵⁹

6. Ali Razini – Head of Branch 41 of the Islamic Republic’s Supreme Court: Stoning

Razini presided over summary trials, frequently issuing death sentences to political prisoners. During his tenure in Mashhad, he sentenced many young women to death for disproportionately mild crimes, such as distributing flyers. Among the young women sentenced to death by Razini in the early 1980s, a few were discovered to have been raped prior to execution, by prison guards. Families of the young women realized this shortly after the executions, when the guards delivered dowries to them at their homes. Earlier when he served as Chief of the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic, Ali Razini issued stoning sentences.¹⁶⁰

7. Mohammad Imani Yamchi – Judge at Branch 6, East Azerbaijan Appeals Court: Stoning

Yamchi confirmed death by stoning in the case of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, who was charged with the crime of 'sexual relations outside of marriage'. The case attracted international attention. Her sentence was commuted and she was freed in 2014 after nine years on death row.

8. Mohammad-Taghi Mesbah Yazdi –Theorist of Violence – Chain-murders of the 1990s

Theorist of violence and Jihad. His name has been mentioned as one of the grand ayatollahs who gave the permission to the MOIS agents responsible for the chain-murders of the 90s. The Chain murders of Iran, or Serial murders of Iran, were a series of 1988–98 murders and disappearances of certain Iranian dissident intellectuals who had been critical of the Islamic Republic system in some way; the murders and disappearances were carried out by Iranian government internal operatives. The victims included more than 80 writers, translators, poets, political activists, and ordinary citizens. and were killed by a variety of means—car crashes, stabbings, shootings in staged robberies, injections with potassium to simulate heart attack—in what some believe was an attempt to avoid connection between them.¹⁶²

Appendix

More information on Canadian Policy
and Iran's Human Rights Violations

The Malevolence of the Iranian Regime

Quote-Unquote

Canadian Leaders on the Iranian Threat

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Iran, Terrorism and Reasonability in Syria:

“Countries that have been supportive of the Assad regime [Iran and Russia] bear some of the responsibility for the chemical attacks on innocents, civilians and children last week...”¹⁶³

“We will continue to work alongside our allies to ensure security in the world and to engage with Iran in a responsible way that highlights both the human rights abuses at home and its sponsorship of terrorism abroad.”¹⁶⁴

Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper

on the Danger of the Iranian Regime:

“...Other countries, however, constitute unambiguously a clear and present danger.... First among these is the Government of Iran. I speak not merely of its appalling record of human rights abuse, or its active assistance to the brutal regime in Syria, or its undeniable support of terrorist entities, or its determined pursuit of nuclear weapons, rather it is the combination of all these things with a truly malevolent ideology that should concern us.”¹⁶⁵

Former Prime Minister Paul Martin on Iran’s Genocidal Threats:

“...This call for genocide coupled with Iran's obvious nuclear ambitions is a matter that the world cannot ignore. And Iran must know, in no uncertain terms, that the free nations of the world will not tolerate its intransigence.”¹⁶⁶

Former Liberal Foreign Affairs Critic Bob Rae:

“List the IRGC”

“The Liberal Party of Canada, through the Hon. Bob Rae, Official Opposition Critic for Foreign Affairs, and Mark Holland, Official Opposition Critic for Public Safety, has called on the...government to...designate the IRGC as a terrorist organization immediately.”¹⁶⁷

Iranian Leaders on the Iranian Threat

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on Change:

“Ours is a fundamental antagonism”

“The change of behavior they want ... is in fact a negation of our identity Ours is a fundamental antagonism.”¹⁶⁸

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on the importance of the IRGC:

“Today the IRGC has a determining effect on all international political balances and calculations... If one day this corps ceases to exist in our society, the authority of our Islamic Revolution shall collapse.”¹⁶⁹

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on the IRGC:

“Certainly, there will be corruption.”

“If the guns, the money, the newspapers, the websites is gathered in one place [the IRGC], certainly there will be corruption.”¹⁷⁰

Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad:

Iran is a train “without breaks”.¹⁷¹

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini – founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran

“We shall confront the world with our ideology.”¹⁷²

**Ayatollah Abdol-Hamid Masoumi-Tehrani, a prominent Iranian cleric
critiques the Iranian regime's abuse of religious minorities**

“The ... morals of the people of our land were brought low when some among the learned and those who are charged with the promotion of morality have in fact sullied the values of humanity, of honour and of religion with the dust of deceit, lies, tyranny, and immoral acts, fruitless talk, and empty promises –all in the pursuit of their own worldly gain.”¹⁷³

**Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, designated by Khomeini as his successor was later
marginalized and held under house arrest for his critique of the regime:**

A regime that uses clubs, oppression, aggression against [the people's] rights, injustice, rigged elections, murder, arrests, and medieval or Stalin-era torture, [a regime that] gags and censors the press, obstructs the media, imprisons intellectuals and elected leaders on false allegations or forced confessions... - [such a regime] is despicable and has no religious merit....¹⁷⁴

**Ayatollah Hossein Kazemeini Boroujerdi, spent 11 years in prison in Iran and was
tortured for preaching tolerance – his sentence has ended but the regime continues
to hold him in inhumane conditions**

“The product of this Islamic Revolution will be proven to have been nothing more than privation, desperation and downright chaos which will have been wrought on the children of Iran.”¹⁷⁵

“It shall be noted by future generations that I have made the world aware of the dire situation in Iran numerous times. Those of you who are well aware of our desperate plight, hear our cries, and remain indifferent shall be remembered for generations to come. I implore you to sympathize with our plight and understand that we are being silenced. We are asking for help once again.”¹⁷⁶

The Plight of the Child under Iranian Law

“The [UN] Special Rapporteur regrets that the information she received did not reveal any notable improvement in the situation of human rights in the country.”

Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran (2017)

Human Rights Watch (2016): “Iran is almost certainly the world leader in executing juvenile offenders”¹⁷⁷

Amnesty International (Canada) (2016)– “IRAN: stop putting kids to death”

“Iran has the shameful status of being the world’s leading executioner of juvenile offenders...”¹⁷⁸

Report by the European Parliament (2017) – “At least 122 children executed”

[Iranian] law authorises the judiciary to execute juvenile offenders – at least 122 have been executed since 2000, among which 26 were reported to be 15 at the time of the crime they were accused of committing.¹⁷⁹

The UN Special Rapporteur – “78 juveniles on death row as of December 2016”

“...The vast majority of executions of persons convicted as juveniles are not officially reported by the Government. While the number of convicted children is unknown, there were definitely over 78 juveniles on death row as at December 2016. Some of them had been languishing for years under the death sentence. ... Fifteen children were sentenced to death for the first time under the revised juvenile sentencing guidelines of the 2013 Islamic Penal Code.”¹⁸⁰

UN Special Rapporteur (2016): “17% of all marriages involve underage girls and older men”

“Child marriage remains legally possible for girls aged 13 years and boys aged 15 years. Even younger children can be married with the permission of the court but the marriage may not be consummated until puberty. In June 2016, a spokesperson for the Tehran-based Association to Protect the Rights of Children stated that child marriages had reached alarming levels and stressed that approximately 17 per cent of all marriages in the country involved girls married to old men. (Forced marriage is, however, prohibited by law.)”¹⁸¹

The Plight of Women under Iranian Law

“The [UN] Special Rapporteur regrets that the information she received did not reveal any notable improvement in the situation of human rights in the country.”

Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran (2017)¹⁸²

“Discriminatory provisions such as those ... which stipulate that the value of a woman’s life is equal to half that of a man’s, remain in force”

UN Special Rapporteur: “The Special Rapporteur regrets that no progress has yet been made towards the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the elimination of legal provisions that discriminate against women in various areas. It is particularly disturbing that blatantly discriminatory provisions such as those contained in the Islamic Penal Code and which stipulate that the value of a woman’s life is equal to half that of a man’s, remain in force in the country. Of concern also is the possible adoption of new discriminatory legal provisions against women.”

Marital Rape in Iranian Law

UN Special Rapporteur: “The Iranian legal framework fails to adequately protect women from violence and to criminalize marital rape. She notes that certain provisions might even condone sexual abuse, such as article 1108 of the Civil Code, which obliges wives to fulfil the sexual needs of their husbands at all times.”

Honour-based Killing in Iranian Law

UN Special Rapporteur: “Similar concerns apply to provisions such as articles 301 and 612 of the Islamic Penal Code of 2013, which provide for lighter punishment if a murder is committed by a father or paternal grandfather of the victim and even allows judges to release the perpetrator without any punishment. These provisions, as observed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, pave the way for total impunity in the case of killings in the name of so-called honour.”

Renewed Crackdown on Women’s Rights Advocates

Amnesty International (2017) – “The authorities renewed their crackdown on women human rights defenders and increasingly likened any collective initiative relating to feminism and women’s rights to criminal activity. Women’s rights activists ... were subjected by the Revolutionary Guards to lengthy, oppressive interrogations, and threats of imprisonment on national security charges....”¹⁸³

The Plight of Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Iran

“The [UN] Special Rapporteur regrets that the information she received did not reveal any notable improvement in the situation of human rights in the country.”

Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran (2017)

“Deviant Faiths” – targeted and harsh treatment

The Special Rapporteur: “The Special Rapporteur is also concerned about the targeting and harsh treatment of Christians from Muslim backgrounds and members of various Sufi groups, ... which are considered “deviant faiths” by the authorities.... The Special Rapporteur is particularly concerned at the continuing systematic discrimination ... of adherents to the Baha’i faith.... In addition to arbitrary arrests, detentions and prosecutions of Baha’is, the authorities reportedly continue to destroy the community’s religious sites and cemeteries, while pursuing activities that economically deprive Baha’is of their right to work. This policy is in line with a 1991 directive issued by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution that calls on the authorities to systematically prevent the integration, progress and success of the Baha’i community in the country.”¹⁸⁴ (For more on the Baha’i see FAQ # 19)

Iran’s disadvantaged ethnic minorities -- entrenched discrimination

Amnesty International: Iran’s disadvantaged ethnic minorities, including Ahwazi Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluchis, Kurds and Turkmen, remained subject to entrenched discrimination, curtailing their access to employment, adequate housing, political office, and their exercise of cultural, civil and political rights. ...Ahwazi Arabs were imprisoned and subjected to torture and other human rights violations. They complained that the authorities repressed expressions of Arabic culture, including dress and poetry....

Freedom House: “The regime cracks down on Muslims who are deemed to be at variance with the state ideology and interpretation of Islam. ...Sunni Muslims complain that they have been prevented from building mosques in major cities and face employment discrimination for government jobs.”¹⁸⁵

“One fifth of the executions carried out in Iran in 2016 concerned Kurdish prisoners”

“Violations of the rights of ethnic minorities continue to be reported in the country. Almost one fifth of the executions carried out in Iran in 2016 concerned Kurdish prisoners. Among those executions, 21 were related to the crime of “moharebeh” (waging war against God and the State) and 1 to membership in a Kurdish political party. Kurdish political prisoners are said to represent almost half of the total number of political prisoners in the country.”¹⁸⁶

FAQS

Canada, Iran and Human Rights

a. Some have claimed that the regime can be held "accountable" for its ongoing terrorism and human rights violations through diplomacy alone. Is this true?

There is little if any precedent suggesting that Iranian violations can be mitigated by merely engaging in diplomatic disapproval or issuing condemnatory statements ungrounded in a concrete legislative format:

a) Past Precedents –The Iranian regime has made itself unabashedly clear over the last 40 years, that it will not reciprocate or moderate its positions in response to western outreach efforts. For decades US presidents and other world leaders have taken turns making numerous and excessively generous offers to the regime to look past the regime’s blood-soaked history and open a new page of diplomatic engagement. These offers were rebuffed.¹⁸⁷ Even the much-lauded Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) is widely acknowledged as having resulted from prolonged sanctions against the regime.

b) Current Iranian Escalation – Iran was provided with an opportunity with the signing of the JCPOA to further its interests and standing by demonstrating some semblance of good will on issues related to human rights and terrorism, that have been at the core of western concerns regarding the regime. One might have expected the regime to capitalize on the thaw and open a profitable new page with countries willing to largely forgive and forget the brutality that has characterized the Islamic Republic since it was founded.

But Iran has responded as it always has to every outstretched hand from the west – with greater regional belligerence; more executions; more amputations and more vitriol towards Iran’s minorities. The regime’s vast industry of atrocities including the execution of juveniles and members of the LGBT community has only expanded since nuclear sanctions were lifted under the JCPOA. As noted by the Hon. Irwin Cotler – it is recently reelected President Rouhani who has overseen this “massive execution binge”. His regime executes one person every 8 hours for any of the 80 capital offenses in the Iranian Penal Code including crimes of "corruption on earth" and "enmity with God." It is the same President Rouhani who has rewarded and promoted the worst of Iran’s human rights violators and has presided over nine government ministries that are responsible for every manner of abuse that Tehran has chosen to inflict on its people. Iran’s relentless pace of human rights violations have been documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the UN Special Rapporteur¹⁸⁸ on human rights in Iran, and a host of other human rights organizations monitoring Iranian behaviours.

c) Iran has rebuffed Canada’s outstretched hand – Despite the Trudeau government’s stated commitments and efforts on reengagement, Iran has continued its policy of unjustified and unprovoked imprisonment of Canadian dual-nationals. Iran has committed similar violations with the nationals of other western countries that supported the JCPOA and are currently reengaging with Iran.

d) “It's going to take you 30 years to really construct a viable and unbreakable peace” – Even Dr. George Lopez of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, who has testified in the Canadian Senate against the use of broader American-style sanctions conceded that it could take decades for reengagement to create viable change in Iran.¹⁸⁹ Decades of terrorism and regional carnage while corrupt Iranian government entities fill their coffers through Canadian business deals is an unacceptable ratio of return on this unfounded prediction – one based on a much-disputed premise that there are truly moderate forces in the Iranian government to work with. Even Lopez himself was very circumspect in this regard stating that:

Although many of us were hopeful with the 2013 election of Mr. Rouhani, seemingly a moderate, and his subsequent signing of that agreement [the nuclear agreement] with the West, it's clear that he has neither the political leverage nor the inclination to change some long-standing Iranian behavior with regard to the Baha'í and internal dissent.”¹⁹⁰

b. Is religious discrimination sanctioned under Iran's constitution?

Yes – it is essentially mandated in Iran's constitution.

“[Twelver Shia Islam is] – the only religion deemed ‘revolution compliant’ by the state. First, the Iranian Constitution itself enshrines discrimination by stating in its article 13 that the only recognised religious minorities are Iranian Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians – however, even they do not enjoy equality. For instance, evangelical Protestant Christians suffer persecution, and there are significant pressures on Jews and Zoroastrians to publicly pledge allegiance to the government and curtail their activities. Furthermore, the situation of the Baha'is – the largest non-Muslim religious community in Iran – is alarming. They are, according to the former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, the most severely persecuted religious minority in Iran (UN General Assembly, 2016). This is an intentional, state-engineered and state-directed religious persecution that has not abated over the last 38 years. Their persecution is systematic, embedded, far-reaching and includes severe human rights violations such as suspicious killings without investigation, the destruction of cemeteries, a relentless incitement of hatred, the exclusion from civil service and universities, and the mass closure of private businesses. The Citizens' Rights Charter, which was released with much fanfare by President Hassan Rouhani on 19 December 2016, does very little to address human rights concerns despite its 120 articles, mainly due to its non-binding nature, general language, loopholes and legal limitations.”¹⁹¹

c. Does Iran discriminate against Muslim and non-Muslim ethnic minorities?

Yes. **The UN Special Rapporteur** on Human rights in Iran notes that the Government accepted only 2 out of the 25 recommendations regarding ethnic and religious minorities made during the 2014 universal periodic review.¹⁹²

Amnesty International: Iran's disadvantaged ethnic minorities, including Ahwazi Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluchis, Kurds and Turkmen, remained subject to entrenched discrimination, curtailing their access to employment, adequate housing, political office, and their exercise of cultural, civil and political rights. ...Ahwazi Arabs were imprisoned and subjected to torture and other human rights violations. They complained that the authorities repressed expressions of Arabic culture, including dress and poetry....¹⁹³

Freedom House: "The regime cracks down on Muslims who are deemed to be at variance with the state ideology and interpretation of Islam. ...Sunni Muslims complain that they have been prevented from building mosques in major cities and face employment discrimination for government jobs."¹⁹⁴ (for more see Quote-Unquote #6)

d. Is honour-based violence against women legitimate under Iranian law?

U27N Special Rapporteur (2017): "...Certain provisions might even condone sexual abuse, such as article 1108 of the Civil Code, which obliges wives to fulfil the sexual needs of their husbands at all times. Similar concerns apply to provisions such as articles 301 and 612 of the Islamic Penal Code of 2013, which provide for lighter punishment if a murder is committed by a father or paternal grandfather of the victim and even allows judges to release the perpetrator without any punishment. These provisions, as observed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, pave the way for total impunity in the case of killings in the name of so-called honour."¹⁹⁵

e. Has Iran's unjust imprisonment of Iranian dual nationals from western countries increased since the signing of the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA)?

Yes. The increase was noted in a 2016 report by the European Parliament¹⁹⁶, and has included US, Canadian and European nationals. Iran in fact has not denied it. See the following excerpt from an Iranian newspaper:

Financial Tribune (Mar. 2017): An Iranian lawmaker said western intelligence services and spying networks are trying to "inflict damage on our country" by taking advantage of dual nationals. "Iran is under no obligation to turn a blind eye on the activities of dual nationals and the US claims are totally unfounded.

Indeed, countries seeking to maintain their dignity and independence will never let foreign agents and their espionage activities infiltrate into their territory," stated Mohammad Javad Abtahi told ICANA on Monday.

Over the past few years, especially after the nuclear deal, dozens of dual nationals have been arrested and convicted in Iran on what has been seen as an intensified campaign to counter hostile intelligence activities against the country. Referring to the rise in detentions after the nuclear accord, the lawmaker dismissed any allegations about Iran's excessive use of power and likened espionage networks in post-JCPOA period to "depressed snakes who crawl out of their dens" and stressed that this can be deemed as a reason for the crackdown. Abtahi said the western intelligence services are misusing those with dual nationality to inflict damage on the Islamic Republic. "The spies holding dual nationality are mainly set to penetrate sensitive positions and intelligence, security and cultural communities," he said. "That being the case, our intelligence services must be extremely cautious about dual nationals' activities."¹⁹⁷

f. Has Iran assassinated dissidents and others opposed to the regime living abroad?

Prof. Payam Akhavan – McGill University, Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague

"Until very recently, Iran's biggest trading partner was the EU. ...[M]ore than 200 Iranian dissidents were assassinated in the streets of Berlin and Paris and very rarely was the Iranian government held to account. So the West has been part of the reason why the regime has literally gotten away with murder."¹⁹⁸

Since 1979, the senior leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been linked to at least 162 extrajudicial killings of the regime's political opponents in 19 different countries around the world. Several high-ranking Iranian officials have in fact admitted to this practise. For more please the excerpt below:

"No Safe Haven: Iran's Global Assassination Campaign" (The Iran Human Rights Documentation Center):

Since 1979, the senior leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been linked to at least 162 extrajudicial killings of the regime's political opponents in 19 different countries around the world. These operations flourished in contravention of both international and national legal regimes and were planned at the highest levels of state. Many of those responsible are still in power today.¹⁹⁹

Agents of the Islamic Republic have assassinated opposition figures in the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, India, and Pakistan in Asia; Dubai, Iraq, and Turkey in the Middle East; Cyprus, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Norway, Sweden, and Great Britain in Western Europe; and across the Atlantic in the United States. Attacks are often planned in such a way as to heighten their psychological impact by grouping

attacks in a particular location or on a particular organization together. The IRI has favored close quarter assassinations carried out with firearms or knives over the use of explosives. In support of these operations, the Iranian government has made extensive use of trusted surrogates, most notably the Lebanon-based terrorist group Hezbollah, as well as its own intelligence agents.

A tactic particularly favored by the IRI is infiltrating an undercover operative into an opposition organization to facilitate attacks. The use of a “Trojan horse” is designed to undermine trust among members of the Iranian dissident community. In its public statements, the IRI has also frequently sought to place the blame for an individual attack on rival opposition organizations or power struggles within a particular group in a further attempt to undermine the cohesion of the opposition movement.²⁰⁰

g. Has Iran abandoned its policy of assassinating dissidents and others opposed to the regime living abroad?

Apparently not – despite promises²⁰¹ to do so. See below:

A warning from Brigadier General Hossein Salami – Deputy Commander of the IRGC

Tasnim News Agency (2016): “We warn the enemies of Islamic Republic of Iran: Do not make this mistake again as the revolutionary forces will chase them and kill them anywhere in the world. For chasing our enemies, we do not have any limit or red line and our armed forces have proved this in the last few years.”²⁰²

“Iran Intensifying Its Crackdown on Citizens Abroad”

Mehdi Khalaji – Washington Institute: (The regime is once again targeting dissidents in Europe and arresting dual nationals, giving Washington and the EU common cause to sanction senior Iranian officials.²⁰³

Iranian diplomatic missions abroad “tools to project power in ways not seen since the 1990s”

The Daily Beast (Oct 12, 2018) Elements of Iran’s clandestine services are making increasingly bold and potentially dangerous moves across Europe and Africa, using diplomatic missions abroad as tools to project power in ways not seen since the 1990s, say security officials and counterterrorism experts.²⁰⁴

1. (January 8, 2019) Reuters: “In shift, EU sanctions Iran over planned Europe attacks”

The European Union on Tuesday froze the assets of an Iranian intelligence unit and two of its staff, as the Netherlands accused Iran of two killings on its soil and joined France and Denmark in alleging Tehran plotted

other attacks in Europe. The move ... marks the first time the EU has enacted sanctions on Iran since lifting a host of curbs on it three years ago following its 2015 nuclear pact with world powers.

2. (Oct. 31, 2018) Denmark's security forces say they have arrested a man over an alleged plot by the Iranian intelligence service to assassinate an Iranian-Arab opposition figure on Danish soil

CNN –The alleged plan had meant to target the leader of the Danish branch of the separatist Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of Ahwaz (ASMLA), Danish Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Anne Møller Ege told CNN. The suspect is a Norwegian citizen of Iranian descent and was arrested on October 21, Ege said. The Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) allege the man conducted reconnaissance for Iranian authorities who planned to kill the opposition leader. ASMLA, which Iran classifies as a terror organization, advocates for an independent Arab state within the Iranian province of Khuzestan. In a statement on Wednesday, PET said it has been working on the "highly unusual and very serious" case for "an extended period of time." The plan was foiled in late September following a "comprehensive police operation" across Denmark that saw bridges shut down and train operations suspended, the statement said. "Plans by a foreign intelligence service to assassinate an individual in Denmark are in no way justifiable," the intelligence service added.

Denmark will push for new EU-wide sanctions against Iran following the suspected assassination attempt, the ministry confirmed, adding that the government would be discussing "the issue of an Iranian intelligence agency's illegal activities in Europe" with international allies. "This is an issue we will be dealing with within the EU, but of course we will work with any other states who are willing to cooperate with us on implementing sanctions against Iran," the Danish Foreign Ministry said. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted his approval of Denmark's actions in apprehending the "assassin" in the alleged plot, which he was part of a decades-long campaign of terror orchestrated by Tehran. UK Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt has affirmed that the UK is "with Denmark all the way." Rasmussen tweeted a message of thanks to the UK government for its support, posting a picture of his meeting with British Prime Minister Theresa May and saying Denmark would work "in close collaboration" with the UK and other countries to "stand up to Iran."

3. (July 6, 2018) The Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) confirmed that two Iranian embassy staff had been expelled from the country.

AIVD declined to provide further explanation publicly. According to Dutch state broadcaster NOS, the expulsions took place on June 7²⁰⁵, a month prior to a spokesperson for Dutch intelligence confirming them. Tehran responded by summoning the Dutch ambassador²⁰⁶ and condemning the deportation of its diplomats.

More details about this incident emerged in *Mashregh News*, a state-backed Iranian news outlet close to the IRGC. According to that publication, expulsion of the Iranian diplomats was related to the investigation

of two murder cases in the Netherlands that Dutch authorities attributed to Iranian agents²⁰⁷. Mashregh News explained that the first case was the Nov. 8, 2017 murder of Ahmad Mola Abou Nahez, also known as Ahmad Nissi, the founder of the ASMLA. Nahez was gunned down by an unidentified assailant in front of his home in The Hague.²⁰⁸

Mashregh News reported that the second murder investigation leading to the expulsion of Iran's diplomats was the Dec. 15, 2015 assassination of Mohammad-Reza Kolahi Samadi in the Almere municipality.

Kolahi Samadi, a former member of MKO, had been on the Islamic Republic's wanted list since a spectacular bombing of the Islamic Republican Party headquarters in 1981. Seventy-five high-ranking regime officials, including Supreme Court chief Mohammad Beheshti, were killed in the attack.

Paul Vugts, a local crime reporter, explained to the BBC that Kolahi Samadi's widow had told police that her late husband had confided his hidden past to her in 2000. He confessed²⁰⁹ that he was responsible for the 1981 bombing. Vugts further told the BBC that Dutch police suspected a common criminal in Kolahi Samadi's shooting. Vugts said that, though Iran had used Hizballah to assassinate people in the past, his sources think Hizballah "recruited criminals from the Dutch drug scene to carry out this killing." He explained that Iran did not want its "fingerprint on this assassination."²¹⁰

In the coming months, the legal proceedings against the individuals arrested for their role in these plots will likely provide more detailed information. But we can already see a set of disturbing developments suggesting that the Islamic Republic may be turning the clock back to the bad old days of assassinating its political opponents in Europe.

4. (June 30, 2018) Iranian diplomats arrested in Iranian plot to bomb Paris gathering

A more publicly prominent incident occurred in France, centering on the June 30, 2018 gathering in Paris of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), a political front of the resistance Mojahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO). The French government has accused Iranian intelligence of plotting to bomb NCRI's Paris gathering²¹¹, and a long *Wall Street Journal* report published on Oct. 31 extensively details European intelligence assessments of this plot.²¹²

Authorities arrested the alleged plotters in several European countries. Assadollah Assadi, an Iranian diplomat based in Austria, was arrested in Germany²¹³ on charges of providing a bomb to two Belgian nationals of Iranian origin. He allegedly met in Luxembourg with a husband and wife known as Amir Sadouni and Nasimeh Noami and gave the bomb to them there. When Sadouni and Noami were arrested by Belgian police, they reportedly were in possession of half a kilogram of explosives²¹⁴ and a detonator. Later, authorities arrested²¹⁵ a certain Merhad A. in France on charges of being an accomplice.

Tasnim News Agency, an Iranian news outlet close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has since released photos of Sadouni at MKO gatherings²¹⁶, claiming they show that MKO itself staged the Paris plot as an act of provocation. Indeed, Belgium initially granted Sadouni asylum²¹⁷ as a member of MKO. But the photos could also be interpreted as evidence of the regime's use of Sadouni to spy on MKO, a role that European officials conclude²¹⁸ he has taken on for Iran in recent years.

5. (May 2017) Iranian Dissident Saeed Karimian Assassinated in Turkey

Karimian and his business partner, Mohammad Shallahi, were shot and killed on the street of an upscale neighborhood in Istanbul. Karimian was shot 27 times, while Shallahi was shot three times. The number of wounds is rather telling. Karimian was clearly the target, but Shallahi was an inconvenient witness. Iran had just tried Karimian in absentia for spreading propaganda against the regime. His company dubs Western television programming into Farsi and makes it available in Iran, thus undermining attempts by the regime to control the media and making Karimian a problem. ...At least 162 Iranians, whether they were monarchist, nationalist or democratic activists, have been murdered [by Iran] in the U.S., Europe and Asia. What is striking about this earlier campaign is the similarity in the modus operandi used in the Karimian murder. Many of those earlier victims ... were gunned down in their homes or on the street. In most cases, victims were shot or stabbed multiple times, just as Karimian was shot nearly 30 times on a public street.²¹⁹

6. (January 2017) Germany: Iran Plotted Assassination of German Lawmaker and French Professor

A Pakistani man accused of spying on a German government official on behalf of Iran was reportedly part of a wider plot to assassinate pro-Israel activists in Europe. German courts convicted Mustafa Haidar Syed-Naqfi on espionage-related charges for spying on Reinhold Robbe, a former lawmaker and ex-head of the German-Israeli Society in 2015, a pro-Israel advocacy group. The 31-year-old engineering student was also reportedly accused of spying on a French-Israeli professor at a Paris business school on behalf of Tehran during that time. The verdict found Mustafa guilty of spying for the Quds Force (IRGC) from mid-2015 to his arrest in July 2016.²²⁰ German prosecutors claimed that Syed-Naqfi was ordered to identify Jewish and Israeli institutions in Germany and other Western European countries as potential targets for terrorist attacks. German authorities believe his preparations were "a clear indication of an assassination attempt."²²¹

h. Has there been any improvement in Iran's human rights record under the tenure of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani?

No. According to most human rights experts the situation has remained unchanged or has worsened:

The UN Special Rapporteur (2017): "The Special Rapporteur regrets that the information she received did not reveal any notable improvement in the situation of human rights in the country."²²²

The Hon. Irwin Cotler (Senate testimony 2017): "...That has to do with whether human rights violations, as has been suggested in previous witness testimony, have abated in Iran, particularly since the signing of the nuclear agreement. I wish that were so, but the record discloses exactly the opposite. You don't need to take my word for it; just look at the reports of the UN Special Rapporteur for human rights in Iran, ...Since Rouhani came to power, the rate of executions has dramatically increased.... Let me mention the Baha'i as

a case study. Their situation has worsened, not improved. Similarly, with regard to targeting dual-nationals, that has increased, not lessened. I can go on. I have written elsewhere about 12 indicators that demonstrate that the situation re human rights in Iran has worsened.”²²³

Amnesty International (2017): “The Iranian authorities have waged a “vicious” crackdown on human rights defenders since Hassan Rouhani became president, demonising and imprisoning activists....”²²⁴

Human Rights Watch (2017): “Despite three years in his office, President Hassan Rouhani has not delivered on his campaign promise of greater respect for civil and political rights. ...[T]he hardline factions that dominate ... continued to crackdown on citizens ... in blatant disregard of international and domestic legal standards. Iranian dual nationals ... were at particular risk of arrest by intelligence authorities....”²²⁵

Report of the European Parliament (2017): “Similarly, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Iran concluded that political and legislative reform has not produced tangible effects. More specifically, there is a major gap between the legislation that has been put in place and the practices implemented by the state in violation of fundamental human rights.”²²⁶

Freedom House (2016): “Human rights abuses continued unabated in 2016, with the authorities carrying out Iran’s largest mass execution in years and launching a renewed crackdown on women’s rights activists. ... There were no indications that President Hassan Rouhani, a self-proclaimed moderate ... was willing or able to push back against repressive forces and deliver the greater social freedoms he had promised.”²²⁷

Mohsen Sazegara, president of the Research Institute on Contemporary Iran, and a founding member of the IRGC (2015): “Human rights abuses have not only continued, but also increased in many respects ... Responding to a question about whether Rouhani had the power to change the situation in Iran, Sazegara stated that “he can do many things by the tools that he is in executive power... and support at least the basic freedoms of the people of Iran but he has not done anything.”²²⁸

Report of the European Parliament (2017):

“Similarly, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Iran concluded that political and legislative reform has not produced tangible effects. More specifically, there is a major gap between the legislation that has been put in place and the practices implemented by the state in violation of fundamental human rights.”²²⁹

More from the UN Special Rapporteur:²³⁰

Recommendations on Capital Punishment -- Disregarded

The Government received a total of 70 recommendations relating to the use of capital punishment during the universal periodic reviews. ...To date, none of the recommendations has received effective follow-up.

She observes that the recently amended Criminal Procedure Code, which mandates the Supreme Court to review all death sentences ... does not seem to have led to any significant change in this respect.

Recommendations on Stopping the Execution of Juveniles -- "Limited Developments"

The Islamic Republic of Iran has reportedly executed the highest number of juvenile offenders worldwide, over the past decade. Despite an absolute ban on the practice under international law, the Islamic Penal Code still explicitly provides for the death penalty for boys of at least 15 lunar years of age and girls of at least 9 lunar years.... The Special Rapporteur is aware that ... the Government introduced the "Criminal Procedure Bill in respect of Juveniles and Children" in Parliament for review. According to note 3 to article 33 of the bill, the judiciary should consider alternative punishment of two to eight years' imprisonment in a juvenile correctional facility for juvenile offenders convicted of crimes that carry the death penalty or life imprisonment. The Special Rapporteur regrets the limited developments towards the adoption of the law

Recommendations on Children Viewing Public Executions -- Disregarded

...[T]he serious concerns expressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child about the impact on children of those executions have so far been disregarded.

Recommendations on use of Amputations and Floggings -- Rejected

The Government did not accept any of the 20 recommendations regarding torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment made during the 2014 universal periodic review. As highlighted in previous reports, the Government rejects the notion that amputations and floggings amount to torture and maintains that they are effective deterrents to criminal activity.

Iran accepted only 3 out of 16 recommendations regarding freedom of expression

The Government accepted 3 out of 16 recommendations regarding freedom of expression.... The Government, however, rejected a number of other recommendations indicating that they were contrary to the country's fundamental values, Islamic tenets and the Constitution.

Rouhani Commitments to Press Freedom -- Unfulfilled

The Special Rapporteur welcomes the declaration made by President Rouhani in November 2016 about the necessity for journalists to feel safe while doing their jobs, and notes that similar declarations had been

made in the past. ... it does not as yet seem to have been translated into concrete measures to guarantee the freedom of the press. On the contrary, threats against press freedoms continued to be reported....

Recommendations on Equal Rights of for Women – Rejected

The Government accepted 27 out of 60 recommendations regarding the rights of women However, it rejected recommendations aimed, inter alia, at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and girls and ensuring equal treatment of women in law and in practice. The Special Rapporteur regrets that no progress has yet been made towards the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the elimination of legal provisions that discriminate against women in various areas....

Iran Accepts 2 out of 25 Recommendations on Discrimination against Ethnic Minorities

The Special Rapporteur notes that the Government accepted only 2 out of the 25 recommendations regarding ethnic and religious minorities made during the 2014 universal periodic review.

Iranian Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi confesses to "assassinations against opponents of the regime abroad" within his ministry's activities outside the country (2014)

The Iranian Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi confessed to "assassinations against opponents of the regime of the Islamic Republic abroad" within his ministry's activities outside the country, as he emphasized in a statement published by The Iranian Judiciary new agency: "The assassinations, included the leader of Jaysh al-Nasr Baluchi, Abdul Rauf Rigi, his nephew and other people in Pakistan."²³¹

National Post: Hamid Abutalebi, Iran's choice for UN, linked to assassination of dissident in Rome: court documents (April 2014)

An Iranian diplomat that America is refusing to accept as Tehran's next ambassador to the United Nations was implicated in the death of an Iranian dissident in Rome in the 1990s, court documents obtained by The Daily Telegraph reveal. Hamid Abutalebi was accused of overseeing the alleged assassination by Iranian agents of Mohammad Hossein Naghdi in Rome in 1993 when he was the Iranian ambassador in Italy. Mr Naghdi was shot on a Rome street in a murder that has never been solved. Investigations continued into the case until 2008 when the Rome Supreme Court published evidence, obtained by The Daily Telegraph, that the Iranian state had ordered his death. Abolghasem Mesbahi, a former Iranian intelligence agent based in Germany, alleged to the police investigation that the agent sent from Tehran to kill Mr Naghdi was supervised and controlled in Italy by Mr Abutalebi. He alleged that the ambassador had been involved in the mission alongside Amir Mansur Assl Bozorgian, the head of Iranian intelligence in Rome.²³²

Iranian who Attempted to Assassinate the Saudi Ambassador in D.C. Sentenced to 25 years (May 2013)

An Iranian American ... Manssor Arbabsiar, 58, pled guilty to charges of murder-for-hire and two counts of conspiracy for his role in attempting to orchestrate the 2011 bombing assassination of Saudi Ambassador Adel al-Jubeir while the ambassador dined at an upscale Georgetown restaurant. Prosecutors said Arbabsiar was recruited by a cousin who was a senior official in the Quds Force, which is designated terrorist entity. The group is part of the Revolutionary Guard Corps, which is closely aligned with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Arbabsiar made a number of trips to Iran in 2011, and the plot evolved into a planned assassination. Prosecutors said he made calls to a Quds Force official after his arrest that the FBI secretly recorded. And despite persistent financial trouble, he made a \$100,000 down payment on the \$1.5 million fee demanded by a man he thought was a Mexican drug cartel associate who would carry out the bombing. In fact, the purported assassin was a confidential source for the Drug Enforcement Administration. Prosecutors, in arguing for the maximum-year sentence, said Arbabsiar understood that any bombing would result in mass casualties but didn't care.²³³

i. Why is Iran widely acknowledged as world's most egregious state-sponsor of terrorism?

Hezbollah Leader Hassan Nasrallah

(June 24, 2016)

"Hezbollah's budget, its income, its expenses, everything it eats and drinks, its weapons and rockets, are from the Islamic Republic of Iran....

As long as Iran has money, we have money."²³⁴

Iran: What is the "Iran Threat Network"? – Terrorism is at the strategic core of what officials have dubbed the "Iran Threat Network" (ITN). The ITN, as described by Scott Modell of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), is "the global apparatus that Iran has used for more than three decades to promote the goals of the Islamic Revolution. It consists of a network of government and nongovernmental organizations that are involved in crafting and implementing the covert elements of Iran's foreign policy agenda, from terrorism, political, economic, and social subversion; to illicit finance and weapons trafficking; and nuclear procurement and proliferation."²³⁵

Iran: "The Central Banker of Terrorism" – According to the U.S. State Department's Country Reports on Terrorism 2016, Iran remains the world's leading state-sponsor of terrorism. U.S. officials have therefore correctly described the regime as the "central banker of terrorism".²³⁶ The Iranian regime has a nine-digit line item in its budget to support terrorism, sending hundreds of millions of dollars to terrorist groups annually.²³⁷ These funds support dozens of terrorist groups globally including Shia, Sunni, and non-Islamic groups across the globe.

Iran: Terrorism as Foreign Policy – As noted Daniel Byman of the Brookings Institute in his testimony before the U.S. Congress: “Relationships with terrorist and militant groups are integral to Iran’s foreign policy.” For Iran terrorism is not simply one tactic amongst many. It is a morally mandated tool to pursue a key tenet of Iran’s constitution and the objective of the Ayatollah Khomeini: to export “our revolution to the whole world” and to establish an Islamic state “world-wide”.²³⁸

j. How much funding does Iran provide for global terrorism?

The U.S. State Departments 2016 Country Report on Terrorism lists 58 "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," (many of them are also designated as terrorist entities by Canada) of which over a dozen are allied with Iran.²³⁹ **Terrorism experts maintain that has Iran invested billions of dollars in terrorism:**

a) Congressional Report – According to a 2015 report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), Iran’s defense budget ranges anywhere between **\$14 billion to \$30 billion** a year and much of that money goes to fund terrorist groups and rebel fighters throughout the region. (“Some ... experts claim that Iran’s defense budget excludes much of its spending on intelligence activities and support of foreign non-state actors,” the report states, stressing that actual military spending could far exceed the \$30 billion that Iran discloses annually. Similarly, another study claims that actual funding for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Force’s Al Quds Force is much greater “than the amount allocated in the state budget, as the group’s funds are supplemented by its own economic activities.”)²⁴⁰

b) The Terror Budget – The CRS report gives “low-ball” estimates for each of the groups supported by Iranian funding. Researchers estimate Iran spends between **\$100 million and \$200 million per year** on Hezbollah, **\$3.5 billion to \$15 billion** per year in support of Syria’s Assad Regime, **\$12 million to \$26 million** per year on Shiite militias in Syria and Iraq, **\$10 million to \$20 million** per year to support Houthi rebels in Yemen and tens of millions per year to support Hamas terrorists in Israel.²⁴¹

c) Hamas – As early as 1995 CIA director James Woolsey testified that Hamas has received **\$100 million** from Iran.²⁴² In June 2006, Hamas announced that Iran had provided it with another **\$120 million**²⁴³ and later in December Iran pledged another **\$250 million** to Hamas leader Ismael Haniyeh. It was estimated Iran was providing Hamas with \$20-25 million per month to cover its governing budget as well as supplying the Gaza-based terror group weapons, technical assistance and military training. In 2010 Hamas approved a \$540 million budget admitting that the vast majority comes from “foreign aid”. Palestinian sources identified the lion’s share to be coming from Iran.²⁴⁴

In 2015, according to a senior Western intelligence official, Iran’s Revolutionary Guards transferred

tens of millions of dollars to Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam brigades.²⁴⁵ And just recently Iran has emerged once again as the main benefactor of Hamas. Israel. As announced by Hamas leader Yehya al-Sinwar: "Relations with Iran are excellent, and Iran is the largest supporter of the Izz el-Deen al-Qassam Brigades with money and arms ... The relationship today is developing and returning to what it was in the old days...."²⁴⁶

k. Has Canada formally recognized Iran's leading role in sponsoring global terrorism?

Yes.

Iran is Listed in Canada as a State Supporter of Terror – Iran is listed in Canada (and in the U.S.) as a State Supporter of Terrorism. On July 1st, 2017, the *Canada Gazette* reported that after a review, the Foreign Minister determined that Canada will continue listing Iran and Syria as "State Supporters of Terrorism" under the provisions of the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA) passed by Parliament in 2012.

Iran was Found Liable for Terrorism by the Canadian Courts – Courts in Canada and the U.S. have found Iran liable for supporting terrorism. Just recently the Ontario Appeals Court upheld a \$1.7 billion judgment against Iran for its support of terrorism. Justice Hourigan stated that "*The fact that a foreign government would engage in the sponsorship of such atrocities is chilling.... awarding damages that may have a deterrent effect is a sensible and measured response to the state sponsorship of terrorism and is entirely consistent with Canadian legal morals.*"

l. Have Canadians been hurt or killed by Iran-sponsored terrorism?

Yes.

Several Canadians were murdered in Hamas terrorist attacks, including Mr. Scott Goldberg, a father of seven who was murdered when a Hamas terrorist incinerated a busload of travelers in January 2004 in Jerusalem.

Other Canadians have been injured in Hamas attacks, including Dr. Sherri Wise of Vancouver. Dr. Wise was severely injured in a Hamas triple suicide bombing while visiting Jerusalem in 1997.

Iran has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in Hamas, and both American and Canadian courts have found Iran liable for its sponsorship for Hamas. Similarly, the American courts have found Iran liable for its support of al-Qaeda²⁴⁷ and the events of 9/11²⁴⁸, in which 26 Canadians lost their lives.

Iran's past and ongoing support of the Taliban also renders it complicit in any injury or death suffered by Canadians who fought in Afghanistan.²⁴⁹

m. Are Iran-sponsored terror-proxies active in Canada?

Public Safety Canada

Hezbollah has networks around the world, including in Canada, and uses the networks for recruitment, fundraising and procurement.”²⁵⁰

Hezbollah Expert Mathew Levitt:

“Hezbollah has been active in Canada since the 1980s raising money through criminal activities and charity, procuring dual-use items, and sometimes engaging in potentially preoperational surveillance of principally Jewish and Israeli targets ... produces false travel documents in Canada and in a few instances fugitive Hezbollah operatives ... have been found hiding in Canada.”²⁵¹

* * * * *

A 2016 report by the Department of Public Safety stated that Hezbollah “has networks around the world, including in Canada, and uses the networks for recruitment, fundraising and procurement.”

It notes correctly that Hezbollah is an extremist group ideologically inspired by the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 and supported by the Iranian state that “remains one of the world's most capable terrorist groups”.²⁵² These activities across the globe have been funded to the tune of billions of dollars by Iran as candidly admitted by Hezbollah Leader Hassan Nasrallah in a recent statement:

“Hezbollah’s budget, its income, its expenses, everything it eats and drinks, its weapons and rockets, are from the Islamic Republic of Iran.... As long as Iran has money, we have money.”²⁵³

The organization has been active in Canada for decades and Canadian recruits have been involved in terrorist acts in various countries.²⁵⁴

As noted by Mathew Levitt “Canadian officials sometimes refer to their overall program of tracking Hezbollah’s activities... as the “the Hezbollah Investigation” as if it were one single case ...The terminology signals the government’s holistic approach to the organization.... The RCMP produced a paper aimed at clarifying the activity likely to happen ... by people who may be Hezbollah sympathizers, supporters, members and all the way to trained militants and terrorist operatives.”²⁵⁵

Selected examples of Hezbollah’s Canadian involvements are listed below:

a) 2016 Government Report on “The Terrorist Threat to Canada”: “Hezbollah is supported by the Iranian State and has networks in Canada”

“Hezbollah is an extremist group ideologically inspired by the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 and supported by the Iranian state. It remains one of the world's most capable terrorist groups. The Government of Canada listed Hezbollah as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code in 2002. Hezbollah has networks around the world, including in Canada, and uses the networks for recruitment, fundraising and procurement.”²⁵⁶

b) CSIS: Hezbollah tied to organized crime in Canada (2014)

“Hezbollah members in Canada are involved in organized crime, according to Canadian Security Intelligence Service reports and documents. Members of the outlawed group — banned as a terrorist entity in Canada since 2002 — also are secretly engaging in fundraising, procurement of materials and intelligence gathering, according to a "threat assessment" report by the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre. Hezbollah's activities here were among the subjects the spy agency expressed concern about in a "top secret" 10-page letter he wrote and delivered last July to Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney, soon after he was sworn in. CSIS director Michel Coulobme's letter described ongoing programs and threats. “Hezbollah is widely considered to be one of the most operationally capable terrorist organizations in the world,” Coulobme wrote in his letter, obtained under the Access to Information Act.”²⁵⁷

c) CSIS: “Hezbollah deliberately seeks Canadians because of internationally accepted passports” (2014)

“The terrorist group Hezbollah has been seeking operatives with Canadian passports, a senior intelligence official told MPs reviewing a bill ... that could strip terrorists of their citizenship. Appearing before the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service official said Canadian passport holders were being actively sought by terrorist groups. “We see certain terrorist organizations in particular target the use of the Canadian passport because of its value, ...” said Michael Peirce, the CSIS Assistant Director of Intelligence. “And they will seek out dual nationals for the purpose of using that passport to facilitate travel. And we’ve seen that, at least some indications, in regard to Hezbollah, for instance. So that document is an extremely valuable document and gaining citizenship in order to be able to use that document is a noted goal.”

²⁵⁸

d) Canadian terrorist, who was a senior Hezbollah member, killed by Syrian rebels

“Fawzi Ayoub was a hijacker, international terrorist operative and senior member of Hezbollah. He was also a naturalized Canadian citizen.... The 48-year-old former Toronto supermarket employee,

who rose through the ranks of Hezbollah despite his tendency for getting arrested before completing his missions, was declared a “martyr” on a Facebook page filled with photos of him in battle fatigues. The Lebanese-Canadian had been on the FBI’s Most Wanted Terrorist list since 2009....”²⁵⁹

e) Hezbollah Scouted Targets in Canada (2012)

“In Canada, Hezbollah is “primarily involved in logistics and operational support activities and fundraising destined for terrorist purposes overseas, but the group has scouted targets in Canada, and after terrorist chief Imad Mugniyah was assassinated in Damascus in 2008, Canadian security officials warned the Jewish community that Hezbollah might be planning a revenge attack.”²⁶⁰

f) Hezbollah uses Canada as base: CSIS Agency wiretaps show suspected operatives using laundered money to buy materiel (2002) (selected examples):²⁶¹

“Operatives in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal”

“[CSIS] documents detail how Hezbollah has laundered tens of thousands of dollars through Canadian banks while drawing on the accounts to shop for military equipment. Hezbollah agents shopped for blasting devices, night-vision goggles, powerful computers and camera equipment ... [I]ntelligence reports show the group has been using Canada in recent years to buy materiel, forge travel documents, raise money and steal luxury vehicles. CSIS reports ... show that in 1999 and 2000, Hezbollah sent detailed shopping lists to agents who were allegedly part of a network with operatives in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal who filled the orders and shipped the equipment back to Lebanon....”²⁶²

“The “Miracle Strike”

“Canadian Hezbollah agents also discussed a scam they called a “miracle strike,” which involved taking out life insurance on someone and then having them killed in a bombardment in Lebanon.”²⁶³

“A vast cross-Canada network”

“The extent of Hezbollah operations ... first came to light in the 1990s when ... Mohammed Hussein al-Husseini was arrested for deportation. He told CSIS about a vast cross-Canada network. ... In two cases, alleged Hezbollah agents wanted for terrorist activities overseas were found hiding out in Edmonton and Ottawa. One of them has been charged with taking part in a 1993 bombing attack in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 Americans. “Hezbollah has members in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto – all of Canada,” Mr. Al-Husseini, a member of Hezbollah's security organization, told CSIS before he was deported in 1994.”²⁶⁴

Hezbollah collecting Information on Canada – “in case there’s a problem”

“Hezbollah wants to collect information on ... life in Canada, its roads and so on, in case there's a problem with Canada.” He was reportedly referring to videotapes of Canadian landmarks sent to Hezbollah.”²⁶⁵

g) Hezbollah websites hosted in Canada, U.S., says University of Toronto’s Citizen Lab

In a report released Nov. 17, 2011 the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab found that Canada-based servers host websites for more than a dozen ministries of the Syrian government. They also host the website for the Hezbollah media arm Al-Manar.

As the Canadian government has sanctioned all three groups, the findings raise important legal questions, said Deibert... “We encourage governments, civil society, and the private sector to seriously consider how best to handle the expanding responsibilities of web hosting companies and how due process and proper accountability mechanisms can be normalized in ways that protect free speech and access to information, while avoiding support for human rights abuses and repressive regimes...”

The website for Al-Manar -- the official media arm of the Lebanese political party, Hezbollah -- is hosted on Canada- and U.S.-based web servers and employs Canada-based web servers to stream its TV broadcast globally. Al-Manar satellite broadcasts have been banned by the US, France, Spain, and Germany as well as the European Union. The United States includes Al-Manar on its specially designated nationals list, a list of entities with which U.S. persons are generally prohibited from dealing, and the assets of which are blocked. Canada currently classifies Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.²⁶⁶

h) Who is Mohamad Hassan Dbouk and why did he come to Canada?

Hezbollah operative Said Harb assisted Mohammed Hassan Dbouk to come to Canada from Lebanon in 1998:

“Dbouk, whom Harb would later testify had received extensive military training before coming to Canada, ran the Canadian arm of Hezbollah’s dual-use item procurement efforts. Dbouk and his brother-in-law, Ali Adham Amhaz, were working under the direction of Haj Hassan Hilu Laqis, who was at that time the chief military procurement officer for Hezbollah in Lebanon. Items destined for Hezbollah included GPS and surveying equipment, camera and video devices, computer equipment, night vision goggles, and mine and metal detectors. Dbouk was deemed a pivotal Hezbollah operative”²⁶⁷

“In 2001, Mohammad Dbouk was indicted in U.S. federal court under Operation Smokescreen.U.S. Attorney Robert Conrad, whose office successfully prosecuted the Hezbollah case in Charlotte, testified before the U.S. Congress that according to intelligence he’d examined,

“Dbouk is such a major player in the Hezbollah organization that on five separate occasions his application to be a martyr was rejected.” Given his overall intelligence, his military training, and his expertise in information operations, Dbouk was too valuable a commodity to expend on a martyrdom mission.”²⁶⁸

i) “Hezbollah members in Canada receive and comply with direction from the Hezbollah leadership hierarchy in Lebanon”

“... What is surmised is that in the past Canada has been used by some of these groups as a safe house. The premise is that there are no attacks on Canadians or Canadian assets because it's valuable [to terrorists] because of its proximity to the United States. But where's the evidence? Nobody knows but CSIS,” said Janice Stein, a professor at the University of Toronto who is a specialist on the Mideast.

In a 19-page summary of evidence released Friday in support of government efforts to deport Hani Abdel Rahim Hussein Sayegh, accused of being a key participant in the June 1996 truck bombing, Canadian authorities reported that “Hezbollah has established an infrastructure in Canada that can assist and support terrorists seeking a safe haven in North America. Hezbollah members in Canada receive and comply with direction from the Hezbollah leadership hierarchy in Lebanon.”²⁶⁹

n. Aside from the Hezbollah presence in Canada are there other reasons for concern regarding Iranian influence and interference in Canada?

Yes.

a) Iran’s Spymaster: Lobbying Group for Iran is Active in Canada (2017)

“Mahmoud Alavi, Iran’s intelligence minister, in recent remarks bragged about the Islamic Republic’s ability to operate an unnamed “lobby group” in the United States, Canada, and England, remain devoted to the “Islamic revolution” and are working to promote this agenda in their adopted homelands. “They have a lobby group for the Islamic Republic of Iran which does not cost us money,” Alavi said, without naming the specific organization. ... A group of nearly 100 prominent Iranian dissidents working to undermine the regime petitioned Congress in February to investigate ... and determine if [the regime] is actively helping to push a pro-mullah agenda.”²⁷⁰

b) Iran Looking to Strengthen ties with pro-Regime Lobby Groups Abroad (2017)

Saeed Ghasseminejad, an Iranian dissident and associate fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, told the Free Beacon that several years ago Iran implemented a formal plan to “strengthen its ties with anti-war and pro-regime lobby groups. “This included bolstering ties with Iranian dual nationals in the West and certain organizations in Europe and the United States to help “change the unfriendly governments’ policies and actions regarding the regime,” according to Ghasseminejad. This network is tasked with discrediting Tehran’s opponents and stopping efforts to foster regime change in Iran, Ghasseminejad said. “They are specifically concerned about any prospect of regime-change and cooperation between the U.S government and Iranian opposition groups,” he said.”²⁷¹

c) Iranian Embassy Official in Ottawa: Plans to recruit Iranian-Canadians under the guise of “cultural outreach” (2012)

In an interview for the Iran-based website for Iranian expatriates in Canada, the cultural affairs attaché at the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa Hamid Mohammadi urged Iranian-Canadians to “occupy high-level key positions” and “resist being melted into the dominant Canadian culture.” He welcomed the increasing numbers of Iranians living in Canada, estimating them at about half a million and deeming this number advantageous for Iran, noting that part of this community, the second generation of which was already integrating into the influential government apparatus Mohammadi went on in the interview to describe Iran’s intention of recruiting Iranian-Canadians to serve Iran under the cover of cultural activity: “By 2031, the total immigrant population of Canada will increase by 64%, and the number of Iranians will increase due to birthrate. So therefore, we need to put into effect very concentrated cultural programs in order to enhance and nurture the culture in this fast-growing population. It is obvious that this large Iranian population can only be of service to our beloved Iran through these programs and gatherings.”²⁷² The Tabnak website, identified with Iran’s Expediency Council secretary Mohsen Rezai, criticized Mohammadi’s

statements, claiming that they provided a sufficient pretext for Canadian authorities to subject Iranian-Canadians to pressure and scrutiny.²⁷³

d) DFAIT to Iran: “Don’t Interfere” in Canada (2012)

“Iranian-Canadians have rejected the oppressive Iranian regime and have chosen to come to Canada to build better lives... The Iranian embassy should not interfere in their choices. Canadian security organizations will act to prevent threats and intimidation of Canadians.”²⁷⁴

e) Martin Rudner (Canadian Centre of Intelligence and Security Studies): “I could picture the Iranian embassy making a call...” (2012)

“I could picture the Iranian embassy making a phone call to an individual who doesn’t necessarily want to help them and say something along the lines of, ‘You have relatives back in Iran, and those relatives could be in jeopardy if you don’t help us.’”²⁷⁵

f) Toronto Star: “Canada is a Haven of Choice for Iran's Regime Elite” (2011)

Payam Akhavan, Professor of International Law at McGill University, a former UN war crimes prosecutor, and founder of the Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre (Nov. 21, 2011)

“There are numerous accounts in the Iranian community of the Islamic Republic elite and their families making Canada their home and investing hundreds of millions of dollars in real estate projects in Toronto and elsewhere, spreading their illicit wealth, pernicious influence and menacing networks in our country. This may benefit the economy. But it is clearly a security threat. And it is a grave insult to the many Canadians of Iranian origin who are victims of this same elite, not to mention the millions of Iranians fighting for democracy.”²⁷⁶

Selected Parliamentary Documents

Global Affairs Canada Departmental Plan 2018-19

Global Affairs Canada will continue implementation of the whole-of-government strategy for Canada's diplomatic, development and security/stabilization engagement in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, including working with the Department of National Defence to maintain Canada's role as a leading member of the Global Coalition against Daesh.

The department will also continue to employ other strategic initiatives such as reengagement with Iran to advance Canada's political, economic and security interests in the region, **while continuing to hold Iran to account for human rights violations and to implement a robust sanctions regime.**

http://www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/publications/plans/dp-pm/dp-pm_1718.aspx?lang=eng

Canada welcomes international community's call for Iran to meet human rights obligations

From: Global Affairs Canada

Statement

November 15, 2018 - Ottawa, Ontario - Global Affairs Canada

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs, issued the following statement welcoming today's adoption of the resolution on the situation of human rights in Iran in the UN General Assembly's Third Committee, during the assembly's 73rd session:

"The adoption of this UN resolution by countries from every region of the world sends a strong message to the Iranian regime that it must respect human rights.

"It also voices the support of Canada and the international community for the people of Iran in their struggle to enjoy the rights and freedoms to which they are entitled.

"Canada urges the Iranian regime to address the grave human rights concerns raised in this resolution."

Quick facts

- Introduced by Canada and 43 co-sponsors, this year's resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly's Third Committee on November 15, 2018, with 85 member states voting in favour.
- The resolution will also be presented for adoption by the UN General Assembly in plenary in mid-December.
- Reports by the UN Secretary-General and the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran reveal that the human rights situation has worsened in the past year, with a systematic crackdown on protestors, journalists and social media users that followed increasingly widespread protests.
- The use of the death penalty against juvenile offenders has continued at an alarming rate. There have also been reports of torture; arbitrary arrests and detention; trials that fail to adhere to due process standards; restrictions on freedom of expression, both online and offline; and intimidation of human rights defenders, showing that Iran has failed to adhere to international rights standards.
- Discrimination against women and girls, members of recognized and unrecognized religious minorities and of other marginalized and vulnerable groups remains persistent.

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July 1, 2017

Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland:

Iran and Syria to Remain Listed in Canada
as “State Supporters of Terrorism”



Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland:

Iran and Syria to Remain Listed in Canada
as “State Supporters of Terrorism”

The Canada Gazette is the official newspaper of the Government of Canada. It is considered the official notice to all Canadians of public notices, new acts, regulations and proclamations. On July 1st, 2017, the Gazette reported that Canada will continue listing Iran and Syria as “State Supporters of Terrorism”.

Iran and Syria were initially listed under the provisions of the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA) passed by parliament in 2012. **The recent review determined that there are “still reasonable grounds” for these two states to remain listed.** Listed countries can be sued in Canada by terror victims, for their sponsorship of terrorism.²⁷⁷

Canadian Parliamentary Motion Condemning Iranian Violations

42ND PARLIAMENT, 1ST SESSION

MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2018

Business of Supply
Opposition Motion—Iran

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC)

moved:

That the House:

- (a) strongly condemn the current regime in Iran for its ongoing sponsorship of terrorism around the world, including instigating violent attacks on the Gaza border;
- (b) condemn the recent statements made by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei calling for genocide against the Jewish people;
- (c) call on the government to (i) abandon its current plan and immediately cease any and all negotiations or discussions with the Islamic Republic of Iran to restore diplomatic relations, (ii) demand that the Iranian Regime immediately release all Canadians and Canadian permanent residents who are currently detained in Iran, including Maryam Mombeini, the widow of Professor Kavous Sayed-Emami, and Saeed Malekpour, who has been imprisoned since 2008, (iii) immediately designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a listed terrorist entity under the Criminal Code of Canada; and
- (d) stand with the people of Iran and recognize that they, like all people, have a fundamental right to freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, including freedom of the press and other forms of communication, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of association.

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2018

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Business of Supply]

The Speaker:

I declare the motion carried.

Canadian Parliamentary Motion Recognizing the 1988 Massacre

making Canada the first country to officially recognize the 1988 Massacre of thousands of Iranians by the Iranian regime

41ST PARLIAMENT, 1ST SESSION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2013

Iran

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP):

Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among parties, and I believe if you seek it you will find unanimous consent for the following motion, jointly seconded by the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake and the hon. member for Mount Royal.

I move:

That, this House condemn the mass murder of political prisoners in Iran in the summer of 1988 as a crime against humanity,

honours the memory of the victims buried in the mass graves at Khavaran cemetery and other locations in Iran,

and establishes September 1 as a day of solidarity with political prisoners in Iran.

(Motion agreed to)

Selected Articles

THE POST MILLENNIAL

January 9, 2019

“Trudeau should keep Iranian officials who target and murder Jews out of Canada”*Danny Eisen is co-founder of the Canadian Coalition Against Terror.*

Last September, Argentinian President Mauricio Macri made a request of the international community that Canada and other western countries should accede to. It relates to a matter of growing international concern – anti-Semitism and the violent targeting of Jews.

Iranian anti-Semitism

In his speech before the UN General Assembly, Macri asked his colleagues for help in pursuing the perpetrators of two devastating attacks against Jewish targets in Argentina.

The first was the 1992 attack on the Israeli Embassy which killed 29 people and injured 242. The second was the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish Center in Buenos Aires, which left 85 dead and 300 wounded.

About a month after Macri’s appeal, Jews were targeted once again, this time in the United States, when a single anti-Semitic assailant gunned down 11 Jews in a Pittsburgh synagogue. But, unlike the Pittsburgh gunman, the culprit in Argentina was not a single hate-filled individual, but a hate-promoting foreign state – the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Unlike the Pittsburgh shooter, who was apprehended and charged with multiple counts of murder, none of those responsible for the Argentinian

attacks have been brought to justice, even though the identities of the AMIA bombers are widely known.

The compelling evidence compiled by authorities points unwaveringly to Iran's orchestration of the atrocity.

Based on this evidence, INTERPOL issued red notices, akin to international arrest warrants for: Ali Fallahian, then Iran's intelligence minister; Mohsen Rabbani, then-cultural attaché at Iran's embassy in Buenos Aires; Ahmad Reza Asghari, also a diplomat at its embassy; Ahmad Vahidi, a former Iranian defense minister; and Mohsen Rezai, then-commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.

These notices remain in force, but unsurprisingly Iran has refused to cooperate. Argentina issued its own arrest warrants for Ali Akbar Velayati, a former Iranian foreign minister, and for the now deceased former president of Iran Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Bringing the culprits to justice

Noting that Argentina will soon mark the 25th anniversary of the AMIA bombing, Macri declared that his country "will not waiver from its goal" of bringing those involved in these attacks to trial, and requested countries friendly to Argentina to assist by "avoiding hosting or sheltering under diplomatic immunity any of those accused which have international arrest requests and red notes from INTERPOL...."

The Argentinian president will face an uphill battle.

Unlike the anti-Semitic Pittsburgh attacker and his ilk who have been denounced and reviled across the western world, Iran continues to be pursued if not courted by Canada and other European countries. Hardly if ever is there mention of Iran's lethal assaults on the Argentinian Jewish community. Matters will be made even more difficult for Macri by virtue of the status of the Iranian culprits.²⁷⁸

Prosecutor killed for uncovering damning evidence

As noted by Argentine prosecutor Alberto Nisman: “The decision to carry out the attack was made not by a small splinter group of extremist Islamic officials.” It was “extensively discussed and ultimately adopted by a consensus of the highest representatives of the Iranian government” at a meeting on August 14, 1993, which included three senior political figures and Iran’s current Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei.

The committee discussed three potential targets, but the multi-storied AMIA centre was ultimately chosen as the preferred objective.

The evidence against Iran was damning, but Nisman uncovered other information related to the attack which would eventually cost him his life. He was found shot to death in January 2015 one day before his scheduled appearance before Congress to present his new evidence.

Originally declared a suicide, his death was later determined to be a homicide, and a “direct consequence” of his well-researched indictment of Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, then-president of Argentina, for conspiring with Iran to derail the investigation and obscure the regime’s role in the AMIA attack.

Fernandez now faces charges that include treason while other officials in her government face other charges for their collusion with Iran. The investigation into Nisman’s murder is ongoing.

How Canada can help

The current Argentinian president therefore is to be lauded for attempting to restore the integrity of the AMIA investigation and Canada should assist him, utilizing the tools provided under Canadian law to do so. The weapon of choice for Mr. Trudeau would be the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, more commonly known as the Magnitsky Act.

The law bars human rights abusers and corrupt foreign officials from entering Canada, freezes their assets, and outlaws any dealings with them.

Canada’s public listing of the AMIA killers would ensure that as a matter of Canadian

law, the AMIA perpetrators are denied anonymity and impunity. Once listed, they would be unable to shelter themselves or their finances in Canada, which, according to parliamentary testimony in May 2018, has become something of a haven for the families and finances of Iranian regime insiders.

Trudeau's promise to fight anti-Semitism

This would also lend some legislative substance to Prime Minister Trudeau's recent apology addressing Canada's abysmal record in closing its doors to Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis.

In those remarks before Parliament, Mr. Trudeau also promised to do more to fight the upsurge of anti-Semitism and the violent targeting of the Jewish community.

The Prime Minister cannot undo the deaths of those Jews refused entry to Canada. Nor can he retroactively give sanctuary to the Jewish refugees forced to return to Hitler's Europe. But he *can* publicly and formally close Canada's gates to those like the AMIA killers who wantonly murder Jews as a matter of ideological principle. He *can* refuse physical and financial shelter to the proxies of an egregiously anti-Semitic Iranian regime that targets Jews only because they are Jews.

Doing so would also constitute the first step in fulfilling his government's promise of implementing a "robust sanctions regime|" to hold Iran accountable for its human rights violations.

Given Trudeau's recently-stated and very legitimate concerns regarding the ubiquity of anti-Semitism and the targeting of Jewish institutions, the listing of the AMIA perpetrators would seem to be an appropriate place to begin. ²⁷⁹

NATIONAL POST

December 11, 2018

Why is Canada sanctioning Saudis while ignoring Iran?

By Danny Eisen and Sheryl Saperia

Iran has executed thousands of its own citizens and it has the blood of more than one Canadian on its hands

Despite the Trudeau government's efforts to reach out to the Muslim world, Ottawa has recently found itself in a state of estrangement from two of the Middle East's most formidable Islamic states.

Over the course of 2018, Saudi Arabia and Iran essentially recused themselves, albeit in different ways, from normative engagement with a Canadian government that has never lifted a legislative finger against either of them. Notably, both took this turn amidst disputes with Canada related to their human rights violations involving Canadian residents and citizens. The schism has highlighted the need for Canada to re-examine its assumptions regarding national interests and human rights advocacy, as autocracies become increasingly more muscular and brazen in offending the human rights sensibilities of Western countries.

The murky nature of human rights diplomacy has now reared its head again, with Ottawa imposing sanctions on 17 Saudi nationals who were identified as responsible for the murder and dismemberment of Washington Post journalist and Saudi citizen, Jamal Khashoggi.

The sanctions represent the first time Canada has employed the provisions of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, more commonly known as the Magnitsky Act, against officials of a Middle Eastern regime. The law bars human rights abusers and corrupt foreign officials from entering Canada, freezes their assets, and outlaws any dealings with them.

Regrettably, these Saudi listings represent a somewhat unfortunate first foray in a region so heavily populated with human rights abusers. It constitutes an almost official nod by Ottawa to the Saudi narrative that claims these individuals — and not the regime or its leadership — bear responsibility for the Khashoggi debacle. This has enabled Canada to project an image that it is doing “something” right, while bolstering the Saudi leadership claim that it has done nothing wrong. This works reasonably well for both parties, but very poorly for the objectives of the Magnitsky statute.

The Khashoggi case is also an odd starting point for addressing Saudi human rights violations as this is hardly Riyadh’s first experience with dismembering dissidents and other undesirables.

Beheadings, amputations and crucifixions are ordered by Saudi courts quite regularly and, unlike the Khashoggi incident, very publicly. But they have never resulted in Canadian sanctions. Clearly, though, not all dismemberments are equal.

Canada did not want to be out of step with Western allies that have taken particular umbrage at the Khashoggi killing, and Ottawa found a way to do so that, from a Saudi perspective, would be acceptable. Ottawa is perhaps hoping that such restraint will play well in rehabilitating Canada’s troubled relationship with the Kingdom at a later stage. The Saudi listings have also highlighted another glaring omission: Ottawa’s refusal to list any member of the most malevolent regime in that region — the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Unlike the Saudis, Iran is not a key economic ally or a strategic asset in a Middle East that the regime has sought to destabilize. Unlike Tehran, Riyadh has not ordered the bombing of foreign embassies and Jewish community centres. Nor is Saudi Arabia, despite its rich history of funding Islamist extremism, the current global leader in the state-sponsorship of terrorism. That distinction also belongs to Iran, which was the subject of a parliamentary motion passed last June with the support of the Trudeau government. The motion condemned Iranian misbehaviours and called for designating the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist entity, which the Canadian government has yet to act on.

There is therefore a certain incongruence in Ottawa’s listing of 17 Saudis involved in one grisly murder, while failing to list even a single member of the Iranian regime, which is home to thousands of the worst human rights violators on the planet. Tehran has been directly complicit in the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Syrians; it has executed and tortured tens of thousands of its own citizens; it continues to plan bombings and assassinations in Western countries; and it has the blood of more than one Canadian on its hands.

Yet in contrast to the Khashoggi case, the international community is not clamouring to impose sanctions on Iran's vast industry of oppressors, and Ottawa seems unmotivated to act, perhaps hoping to leverage the gesture in future negotiations with the regime.

Ottawa is likely to be disappointed. While Riyadh may reward Canada for leaving the Saudi royal family off the Magnitsky list, an Iranian pass is unlikely to produce a comparable dividend and temper Tehran's rejection and disdain for Canada's efforts at re-engagement. Indeed, Iran has an almost spotless record of neither reciprocating nor moderating its behaviours in response to outreach efforts from the West. Furthermore, Iran may well have concluded that Canada will eventually submit to Iranian terms for re-engagement, on the assumption that Ottawa's apparent hunger for diplomacy will overtake its commitment to principle. Tehran must be resolutely disabused of that perception. Robustly listing Iranian violators under the Magnitsky legislation, in concert with designating the IRGC as a terrorist entity, would be important and necessary first steps to that end.²⁸⁰

Danny Eisen is co-founder of the Canadian Coalition Against Terror. Sheryl Saperia is Director of Policy for Canada at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

National Post

Terry Glavin: Canada has the laws to target the world's worst. Now why won't we use them?

Our adoption of the Magnitsky law was a rare and hard-won victory for human rights activists. So far, however, the legislation seems only to be gathering dust

[TERRY GLAVIN](#)

June 27, 2018

When Canada joined the United Kingdom and the United States last October in adopting a new and innovative international mechanism to isolate and quarantine globetrotting police-state thugs and their dirty money, hopes were high. But so far, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, more commonly known as the Magnitsky law, appears to be gathering dust.

Canada's adoption of the law, which allows Ottawa to freeze the assets of human rights abusers, was a rare and hard-won victory for human rights activists.

During the 2015 election campaign, Justin Trudeau's Liberals had promised to bring in the law, but after Stephane Dion was appointed Foreign Affairs Minister in Trudeau's first cabinet the momentum stalled, sputtered, and then came to a dead stop. Dion was determined to reopen a "dialogue" with Vladimir Putin, whose kleptocratic regime in Moscow was facing stiff international sanctions after Russian troops invaded Ukraine and the Kremlin annexed Crimea in 2014.

Dion's successor, Chrystia Freeland, had been a fervent champion of the Magnitsky law, and in her early innings, things were looking up

... Quite a few Canadian companies backed Dion in opposing the adoption of a Magnitsky law. So did a circle of senior Global Affairs officials who were intent on throwing off the hard anti-Kremlin line Canada had staked out during Stephen Harper's years in the prime minister's office. But after the law won an enthusiastic cross-party consensus in the House and the Senate, Dion was shuffled out of cabinet in January, 2017, later taking up an appointment as Canada's envoy to the European Union and ambassador to Germany.

Dion's 113

successor, Chrystia Freeland, had been a fervent champion of the Magnitsky law, and in her early innings, things were looking up.

Passed in October, last year, the reach of the law was expanded to bar any corrupt foreign official from entering Canada, to freeze their assets and outlaw any dealings with them. Only three weeks after the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act was passed, 52 Russian, South Sudanese and Venezuelans were targeted.

... But Ottawa's approach to the containment of international criminals and their dirty money isn't exactly impressive.

Two months ago, a Transparency International survey of the G20 countries put Canada at the bottom of the list, with South Korea, in a ranking of G20 countries' diligence to expose and root out money being moved around by corrupt officials. The opacity of Canada's corporate registration laws has given rise to the term "snow washing" to describe how internationally sanctioned entities can easily engage in money-laundering in Canada. Another problem with the Special Economic Measures Act: any entity sanctioned for doing business with, say, Syria, can evade Canada's sanctions laws by simply registering a Canadian subsidiary anonymously and carrying on as if the laws didn't exist.

The government set aside \$22 million over five years to get the Magnitsky law up and running. "I don't know," Kolga said, "but what are they doing with those funds?"

The Magnitsky law was intended to apply sanctions more directly, and be readily enforceable. But so far, it looks like the consensus of the House of Commons and the Senate doesn't count for much, and Stephane Dion and his circle of supporters in the Global Affairs bureaucracy ended up having things their way, after all.²⁸¹

PUT IRAN IN CANADA'S CROSSHAIRS

Sheryl Saperia – Canadian Jewish News

January 24, 2018

"...The IRGC was created in 1979 with a two-fold mandate: to defend the Islamic Revolution from domestic enemies and to spread the revolution abroad. To that end, it violently represses pro-democracy protesters inside Iran and finances terrorist groups around the world. The Canadian government commendably addressed the latter conduct by listing the IRGC's Quds Force as a terrorist entity in 2012. Ottawa should now slap Magnitsky sanctions on the appropriate commanders, deputy commanders and other senior officials within all the branches of the IRGC for their human rights abuses.

But the IRGC should also be held accountable under the act for enriching itself at the expense of the Iranian people. Indeed, the Revolutionary Guards, along with EIKO, share a great deal of responsibility for the fact that Iran is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. (Transparency International ranked it 130th out of 168 countries on its corruption perception index.)

EIKO is a vast holding company controlled by the supreme leader, which, according to an important 2013 Reuters report, has assets and commercial operations worth an estimated \$95 billion. More than half of that wealth comes from its real estate portfolio, which was amassed through the "systematic seizure of thousands of properties belonging to ordinary Iranians."

EIKO was originally created by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to fund specifically approved charities in Iran, with the assets seized from those associated with the Shah's government and perceived as enemies of the young revolutionary state. Khomeini later expanded the mandate to confiscate property from dissidents. He draws on this illegitimately obtained money to maintain his power.

If Ottawa is serious about using its newly minted Magnitsky Act for its designed purpose, the next logical step – especially in light of the recent protests in Iran – is to target Ayatollah Khomeini and his senior officials within the IRGC and EIKO, for their corruption and human rights abuses.²⁸²

REUTERS

January 8, 2019

In shift, EU sanctions Iran over planned Europe attacks

COPENHAGEN/BRUSSELS/AMSTERDAM (Reuters) - The European Union on Tuesday froze the assets of an Iranian intelligence unit and two of its staff, as the Netherlands accused Iran of two killings on its soil and joined France and Denmark in alleging Tehran plotted other attacks in Europe.

The move ... marks the first time the EU has enacted sanctions on Iran since lifting a host of curbs on it three years ago following its 2015 nuclear pact with world powers. The decision, which includes designating the unit and the two Iranians as terrorists, follows last year's disclosure by Denmark and France that they suspected an Iranian government intelligence service of pursuing assassination plots on their soil. Copenhagen sought an EU-wide response.

...On Tuesday, the Dutch government publicly accused Iran of the plots, as well as two killings in 2015 and 2017, sending a letter to parliament to warn of further economic sanctions if Tehran did not cooperate with European investigations.

The letter signed by the Dutch foreign and interior ministers said Britain, France, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium met Iranian officials to convey "their serious concerns regarding Iran's probable involvement in these hostile acts on EU territory."

"Iran was informed that involvement in such matters is entirely unacceptable and must be stopped immediately ... further sanctions cannot be ruled out," the letter said....Paris accused Iran of a plot to carry out a bomb attack at a rally near Paris organized by the MEK. Denmark says it foiled a Iranian intelligence plan to assassinate an Iranian Arab opposition figure on its soil.

On Tuesday, the Netherlands said it had "strong indications" that Iran was behind the assassinations of two Dutch nationals of Iranian origin, in 2015 and in 2017. The latter was dissident Iranian Arab activist Ahmad Mola Nissi who was gunned down by an unidentified assailant in front of his home in The Hague. Iran denies any involvement in the killings.

Sanctions on the intelligence ministry, which is under the control of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, are unlikely to change what the European Union says are Iran's destabilizing activities in Europe and the Middle East....²⁸³

The Washington Institute

POLICYWATCH 3035

Iran Intensifying Its Crackdown on Citizens Abroad

Mehdi Khalaji

November 2, 2018

The regime is once again targeting dissidents in Europe and arresting dual nationals, giving Washington and the EU common cause to sanction senior Iranian officials.

...For years, many observers assumed that Iran had largely abandoned its agenda of killing dissidents abroad in order to build trust with the West and normalize relations with the international community. But these and other incidents show that the regime has been intently pursuing foreign assassination plots again for some time, in tandem with domestic maneuvers intended to ward off persistent political protests and intensified media pressure at home.

...To carry out such crackdowns, the regime uses a wide network of intelligence organs. Beside the main Intelligence Ministry and the Qods Force, the IRGC special forces wing responsible for extraterritorial operations, the Supreme Leader directly supervises several agencies capable of taking action against dissidents, including intelligence bureaus within the IRGC, the police, the regular army, the judiciary, the office of the president, and the Interior Ministry....

...Today, thousands of Iranians work abroad in academia, NGOs, Persian-language media, and other institutions. Iran's hardline regime casts the bulk of these citizens as major security threats and has shown signs of expanding its efforts to crack down on them wherever they are—whether by conducting acts of terror on European soil, preventing dual nationals from entering Iran, or arresting those who hold European, Canadian, or American citizenship.

Accordingly, Western governments need to stand behind the Iranian people, especially those who live within their borders or hold dual citizenship. Tehran's willingness to intimidate the diaspora through such blatant violations provides a common basis for U.S. and EU action, including intensified human rights sanctions on high-ranking Iranian political and military officials. ²⁸⁴

The FDD

[Analysis: New pattern of Iran-backed assassinations abroad?](#)

BY [DAVEED GARTENSTEIN-ROSS & ALI ALFONEH](#) | *November 5, 2018* | daveed@valensglobal.com |

...But incidents in three different European countries, which European officials have been increasingly public in discussing in recent days, suggest a possible reversion on Tehran's part. Is the Iranian regime trying to turn the clock back to the bad old days of the 1980s and early 1990s? Assassinations and orchestrated terrorist plots in Denmark, France, and the Netherlands underscore this concern....²⁸⁵

The US Department of Justice

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice
Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, March 23, 2018

Nine Iranians Charged With Conducting Massive Cyber Theft Campaign on Behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

Mabna Institute Hackers Penetrated Systems Belonging to Hundreds of Universities, Companies, and Other Victims to Steal Research, Academic and Proprietary Data, and Intellectual Property

[National Security Division \(NSD\)](#)
[USAO - New York, Southern](#)

18-35

RADIO FARDA

Forty NGOs Issue Letter Demanding Iran Respect Human Rights

November 13, 2018

Joint NGO Letter in support of UNGA Resolution on human rights in Iran-- 12 Nov 2018

Forty civil society organizations, including Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the New York based Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) have signed a letter deploring violation of human rights by the Islamic Republic in Iran and urging UN member states to support human rights efforts in the country.

Meanwhile they have called upon UN General Assembly to support Canada's resolution on human rights in Iran that is scheduled to be presented to the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly on November 14, 2018. The resolution on the promotion and protection of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran was presented to the Third Committee in the framework of the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

This annual resolution provides an opportunity for the General Assembly to review human rights violations in Iran over the last year and the many other human rights concerns that persist in the country, as reflected in reports issued by the UN Secretary-General and the Iran Special Rapporteur. The resolution also outlines how Iran should implement its national and international human rights obligations, AI said in a report late Monday, November 12. "We echo the UN Secretary-General's observation that this year has been marked by an intensified crackdown on protesters, journalists and social media users", in the wake of the wave of protests that erupted across Iran in December 2017 and continued into 2018, the signatories have assert.

On October, 24, the new UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran, Javaid Rehman said in his first report, "Mounting challenges in Iran should be met by a constructive response which places international human rights law at its heart." Presenting his first report to the General Assembly following his appointment in July, Javaid Rehman noted, "The challenges facing people in Iran these past months has been illustrated by numerous protests across the country". The Special Rapporteur also said, "The protests were fueled by discontent relating to the enjoyment of economic and social rights" and urged "the Government to both address the grievances underlying the protests, and also safeguard the right to freedom of association and assembly".

"In challenging times, the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, and access to information are all the more important." he added. ...The signatories have concluded, "The continued attention of the international community is required to ensure Iran upholds its international human rights obligations. By supporting resolution A/C.3/73/L.42, the UN General Assembly will send a strong signal to the Iranian authorities that the promotion and respect of human rights is a priority, and that genuine and tangible improvements to the situation are expected to ensure the dignity inherent to all persons in Iran."²⁸⁶

OPEN CANADA

Western strategy on Iran should focus on human rights, not nuclear weapons

If leaders like Trump and Trudeau are serious about the wellbeing of Iranians, their policies should aim to change the Iranian government's behaviour on human rights, not just end its nuclear program.

BY:

MICHAEL PETROU

Journalist, author and fellow-in-residence in Carleton University's Global and International Studies program

... At home, Iran continues a longstanding policy of crushing dissent. Hundreds are executed every year. Its jails house citizens guilty only of free thought. Iranian-Canadian journalist Zahra Kazemi was raped, tortured, and died in Iranian custody 15 years ago for the crime of taking photographs of protesters. Iranian-Canadian professor Kavous Seyed-Emami died in custody this February, after he was accused of espionage. Iran says he killed himself. His wife, Canadian citizen Maryam Mombeini, has not been allowed to leave the country. Iran's Baha'i religious minority is systematically persecuted.

Trump, when announcing America would pull out of the nuclear deal, paid lip service to human rights in Iran. But his focus, like that of his predecessors, is Iran's nuclear program.

Canada is little different. It continues to regularly sponsor UN resolutions condemning human rights violations in Iran. The Parliamentary Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development does good, if little-noticed, work highlighting these abuses. And Canada has listed Iran as a state sponsor of terror. But its policies with real teeth, namely sanctions, have always been related to Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. A bill that would have imposed non-nuclear sanctions on Iran recently died in the Senate, more than two years after it was tabled by a Conservative senator.

This focus on nuclear plays to Iran's strengths. The Iranian government and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) know they don't need nuclear weapons to survive. But they also know how worrying the possibility that they might get those weapons is to America and its allies, so they negotiate accordingly.

"Iran doesn't suppress resistance with enriched uranium or ballistic missiles. It does so with incarceration, press censorship and baton attacks."

What does threaten the survival of the Iranian government, far more than the absence of nuclear weapons, are Iranian citizens. They have lived under a repressive theocracy for almost 40 years. They continue to demand change — by the millions in mass protests following a disputed election in 2009, and again this winter in demonstrations in which more than 20 people died during clashes with security forces or in prison.

Iran doesn't suppress this resistance with enriched uranium or ballistic missiles. It does so with incarceration, press censorship, and baton attacks by the Basij militia of the IRGC.

.... If Trump, and, for that matter, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland, are serious about the freedom and wellbeing of the Iranian people, they need to craft policies aimed at changing the Iranian government's behaviour on human rights, not just ending its nuclear program. That should include sanctions and travel bans on individuals such as prosecutors, judges and IRGC commanders responsible for the worst abuses in Iran and elsewhere.

Canada's Liberal government should also be prepared to walk away from its promise to restore diplomatic relations with Iran. Negotiating such a rapprochement would no doubt be made more difficult were Canada to take a harder line regarding human rights and political freedoms in Iran. But that's an acceptable cost. Reopening the embassy can wait.²⁸⁷

NATIONAL POST

Terry Glavin: Iran is tormenting the Baha'i people — is Canada going to do anything about it?

The Baha'i are some of the most peaceful and accepting people around. But that hasn't stopped Iran from treating them as subhuman.

[TERRY GLAVIN](#)

April 20, 2016

...With the lifting of United Nations' sanctions following last year's U.S.-led nuclear weapons agreement with the Khomeinists, the mania for business deals with the regime and its state-owned enterprises (which run most of Iran's economy) has gone into hyperdrive. One of the Iranian economy's largest corporate landlords is the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), and Canada formally lists the IRGC's Qods Force, a key ally with Syrian President Bashar Assad in the ongoing massacre of his own people, as a terrorist entity.

It's hard to say where all the post-sanctions excitement will leave the Baha'i people. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's new government has expressed enthusiasm for renewed trade and diplomatic relations with the regime, and the Liberals' closing of the previous Conservative government's Office of Religious Freedom wasn't exactly an encouraging sign of continued human-rights diligence.

Canada has long shown leadership in shaming the regime about its contempt for human rights. Iran Accountability Week, during which MPs from all parties each "adopt" an Iranian political prisoner, is an annual event on Parliament Hill.

Carleton University, the University of Ottawa and McGill University each extend an informal accreditation to the "underground" Baha'i Institute for Higher

Education in Iran. Canada continues to lead in the United Nations' annual scrutiny of Iran's human rights record. But with so many lucrative trade deals being dangled in front of us, will Canadians persist in questioning the regime and holding it accountable for its thuggish treatment of religious and ethnic minorities, women, trade unionists, journalists and secularists?

"Canada should raise these questions and keep raising these questions in all its dealings with Iran," Gerald Filson, public affairs director of the Baha'i Community of Canada, told me the other day. Canadian businesses doing deals in Iran should insist on raising the same sorts of questions and should take every measure to guard against complicity with the regime's brutal practices, Filson said.

...The Baha'i case is not hopeless. The Khomeinist police state may be irredeemably corrupt, but its persecution of the Baha'i's people is not necessarily popular even among the ruling elites. Two years ago, the senior ayatollah Abdol-Hamid Masoumi Tehrani declared that Iran's Baha'i people were suffering from "blind religious prejudice." His pronouncement was not universally condemned.

"There is a sense of shame and honour in Iranian culture, so that's helpful," Filson said. "The government doesn't like attracting attention to their treatment of the Baha'i, and the Iranian government's mission to the UN does a lot of lobbying against any human rights focus. They put up a big fight at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, too."

So there's hope. Not much, but some. And in a post-sanctions context, Canadians should expect their government not just to remain vigilant, but to step up the pressure and show some real spine.²⁸⁸

Toronto Sun

“Is Canada a safe haven for corrupt Iranian officials and their money?”

June 13, 2018

By Sheryl Saperia and Saeed Ghasseminejad

The Trudeau government has been under heavy fire lately for its continued pursuit of re-establishing diplomatic ties with Iran, but a shift may be underway. On Monday, several members of the Liberal caucus were strongly supportive of a Conservative motion that calls for, among other things, an immediate cessation of any negotiations to restore diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic and a prompt designation of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a listed terrorist entity under the Criminal Code. They called on their colleagues to vote in favour of this motion. The vote takes place Tuesday afternoon.

Liberal support for this motion would be a welcome and commendable change in policy. The Iranian regime has not ceased its terrorist sponsorship, human rights abuses and incitement to hatred, and does not deserve to be rewarded with a normalized relationship with Canada.

A less examined angle of the Iran file was highlighted recently as the House of Commons Finance Committee undertook a review of Canada’s anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist financing legislation.

The term “snow washing” came up during these committee hearings, which refers to the process of laundering money and making suspect transactions appear legitimate by leveraging Canada’s international credibility and sound economy. Bring your dirty money to Canada, the idea goes, and it will become white as snow.

Witnesses were called to present their viewpoints, including one of the authors of this article. Many agreed that the opacity of corporate registration in Canada is a significant inducement to snow washing. As explained by attorney Mora Johnson, “Anyone can start a company in Canada. It costs about \$200 and the owner of the company can remain completely anonymous.” There is no requirement to register the true beneficial owners of a private company registered in this country. Consequently, money laundering, tax evasion, and the stashing of proceeds of crime can easily occur.

When a shell company with unknown owners buys expensive real estate in Vancouver or Toronto, many questions arise. “Is it a wealthy person who earned that money? Or is it the Hells Angels?” Johnson asked. “An Iranian or North Korean under UN sanctions? We have no idea.”

Shahin Mirkhan, appearing before the committee, went so far to say: “I’m sure you will direct FINTRAC [the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada] to check out the Iranian government officials who have dual citizenship in Canada. They are achieving money laundering to Canada from Dubai, Europe, and everywhere else.”

In Iran, it is no secret that Canada is viewed as a premiere destination for illicit wealth and its owners. One need look no further than the former CEO of Bank Melli, the largest state-owned bank in Iran, who fled to Canada after the judiciary sought to arrest him for his role in embezzling billions of dollars. This bank had been sanctioned at one time by the U.S. Treasury for providing financial services to Tehran’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs. It additionally provided services to Iran’s IRGC-Quds Force, a listed terrorist entity in Canada.

Iranian press has also reported that an unnamed employee at Tehran’s oil ministry stole tens of millions of dollars over a decade, and fled to Canada right after an arrest warrant was issued for him. He was reportedly a Canadian permanent resident.

Guidy Mamann, a well-known Canadian immigration lawyer, tells us that Iranian regime officials are likely coming to Canada through the Quebec investor stream or through the refugee system. For the latter, it would be relatively easy, Mamann suggests, for an Iranian official to claim that he fell out of favour with the government or the religious police, and to get landing under Canada’s refugee protection laws. The official could also lie by withholding the information that he is a government official. The next step is the application for permanent residency (PR) status. The PR application for refugees does not tend to inquire deeply about money and assets, and even if questions are asked, Canadian officials may not check to ensure truthfulness. The refugee brings with him his money – until then perhaps sitting in a Swiss account.

Under Quebec’s investor stream, high net worth foreigners can apply for permanent residency in exchange for making a \$1.2 million investment in Quebec. While other provinces have investor-style classes too, Quebec reportedly has the fewest safeguards.

It is also fairly easy to come to Canada as a student. One applies online and provides the required biometric information. Proof of funds must be shown, but there are no questions about whether that money was illicitly obtained. Upon graduating, the foreign student can apply for a three-year work permit. Mamann notes that such a person is virtually guaranteed to receive landing after obtaining one year of work experience and barring a

medical or criminal problem. With permanent residency, the individual can also become the recipient of his/her parents' funds of unknown provenance.

The Canadian immigration and financial supervisory systems should create a database to ensure that corrupt officials, politically connected businessmen, and human rights violators from systemically corrupt foreign states, such as Iran, are not able to use Canada as a money-laundering base and safe haven. Notably, this will also be helpful for identifying those individuals who ought to be subject to Magnitsky sanctions in Canada.

Surely, preventing such criminals from exploiting our system is a goal we can all agree on. Liberal support for today's motion could signal an important step in this direction.²⁸⁹

— *Sheryl Saperia is Director of Policy for Canada at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, where Saeed Ghasseminejad is an Iran Research Fellow.*

Vancouver Sun

Douglas Todd: Iranian-Canadians still fear theocratic regime

Many Iranian-Canadians are convinced that “agents” of the Iranian government are in Canada, watching for perceived troublemakers.

DOUGLAS TODD

Updated: January 27, 2017

Ramin Mahjouri of Paivand is one of the few Iranian-Canadians who openly criticizes Iran's repression of Baha'is.

The North Vancouver artist and publisher is willing to talk and write about issues most Iranian-Canadians won't speak of in public. As I have been researching the persecution of members of the Baha'i religion in Iran and Canada, I have kept running into Iranian-Canadians who readily admit Baha'i are being unjustly arrested in the Islamic Republic of Iran and harassed by some non-Baha'i Iranians in Canada.

The trouble has been that it's almost impossible to get an attributed quote from the Iranian-Canadians who tell me a significant proportion of other Iranian-Canadians have stereotypes about Baha'i. They fear critics of this Iranian prejudice will be subjected to government repercussion when they return to visit their repressive homeland.

Mahjouri is different. He openly says some Iranian-Canadians hold "ignorant" views about the Baha'i faith, whose five million members believe in peace and that a 19th-century Persian teacher named Baha'u'llah is the successor to Islam's prophet, Muhammad.

Mahjouri has challenged bigotry against Baha'is by publishing ads from businesses run by people who are Baha'i in his newspaper, Paivand, which is one of eight Farsi-language publications in Metro Vancouver.

Mahjouri has also editorially defended Metro Vancouver halal restaurants that have hired Baha'i as cooks, even while many Iranian Muslims are taught Baha'i are "unclean" and their touch contaminates food that is supposed to be prepared according to Islamic law. "Iranians believe all kinds of nonsense about Baha'i," said Mahjouri, 53, who is not religious and has no intention of returning to Iran, which he left when he was 19.

Canada is home to almost 200,000 people of Iranian origin. Most are Shia Muslims and many are secular, but about 7,000 are Baha'i who fled following the Islamic revolution in 1979. In Metro Vancouver, there are almost 45,000 Iranians, most of whom were born in Iran. They're concentrated in North Vancouver and West Vancouver, but also live in Vancouver's downtown core and Coquitlam.

Covering religion and migration issues over the years, I have interviewed dozens of Iranian-Canadians on and off the record. Virtually all have been educated and economically successful, relieved to be enjoying Canada's relative freedom, stability and tolerance.

But nearly all have been afraid to criticize the regime that runs their homeland. They're convinced agents of the Iranian government, currently ruled by Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini, are in Canada, watching for perceived troublemakers.

Iranian-Canadians are afraid to criticize their homeland's autocratic leadership because, when either themselves or family members return to Iran, they don't want to be questioned, have their passports confiscated or be tossed in jail. That still happens to Iranian-Canadians who return to Iran to visit or work.

Thousands of Iranian-Canadians travel back and forth each year to Iran to see family or advance their businesses, since many are "astronaut" immigrants who have spouses and children in Canada but find it easier to make money in Iran.

This week, some Iranian-Canadians who are afraid to go on the record about Iranian oppression introduced me to a second man who is willing to speak openly. "The human rights of many Baha'i are totally violated in Iran. Baha'i are also stereotyped and pointed at in Canada," said Bahman Doustdar. "But there's a taboo about talking about it." Doustdar is another non-religious Iranian-Canadian who has no intention of returning to Iran. He is also an artist, and publisher of the B.C. Farsi-language newspaper, Farhang.

Doustdar is tired of Canadian-Iranians being intimidated by the Islamic Republic of Iran, with whom Canada's Conservative government cut diplomatic ties in 2012.

Nevertheless, he and Mahjouri realize the worries Iranian-Canadians have about being detained when they return to Iran are legitimate. Some outspoken critics of Iran who live in Europe, Doustdar said, have even been assassinated.

As for members of the Baha'i faith who are Iranian-Canadian, I have not yet found one who will talk on the record about persecution in Canada. Gerald Filson, national public relations officer for the Baha'i of Canada, who is not Iranian, would speak only about how Baha'i continue to be killed, jailed, denounced and denied jobs in Iran. As for Doustdar, he believes there is a positive trend toward fewer Iranian-Canadians treating Baha'i as if they were "untouchables." He said: "Attitudes are not as bad as they were 15 years ago in Canada."

Nevertheless, both Doustdar and Mahjouri are worried that recent Iranian immigrants to Canada tend to be more religiously extreme than the first wave of Iranian newcomers in the 1980s.

A significant minority of immigrants to Canada who are tied to Iran's theocratic government, they said, are buying expensive houses, driving costly cars and establishing more conservative mosques in Metro Vancouver.

In the long run, Doustdar and Mahjouri believe, more Iranian-Canadians will eventually show the courage to speak out about injustices to Baha'i and other Iranian-Canadians in the Middle East and North America. But, until then, Mahjouri admitted he's paid a price for his Robin Hood personality, which causes him to speak out for the mistreated.

"I've been gossiped about. I've been denounced online. I've been called everything: An Israeli agent, an Iranian agent, a gay, a womanizer. At some point, your skin gets pretty thick."²⁹⁰

Endnotes

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- ¹ <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2018/10/29/profiles-of-iranian-repression/>
- ² https://www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/publications/plans/dp-pm/dp-pm_1718.aspx?lang=eng
- ³ <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2018/10/29/profiles-of-iranian-repression/>
- ⁴ Prior to the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, Canada and Iran maintained normal diplomatic relations. The first rupture with the Khomeinist regime erupted after Iranian revolutionaries seized the U.S. Embassy on November 4, 1979. 52 U.S. citizens were held by the hostage takers for 444 days. Some of these hostages were subject to torture. Six other American diplomats were hidden for more than two months by Kenneth Taylor, Canada's ambassador to Iran, and then fled Iran using Canadian passports. The Canadian embassy staff were subsequently evacuated and the embassy was closed. see <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/15/world/meast/iran-hostage-crisis-fast-facts/index.html>; and <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/ken-taylor-iran-canada/410827/>
- ⁵ <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/10/27/world/ac-six-things-you-didnt-know-about-the-iran-hostage-crisis/index.html>
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