

Iran National Front - Abroad

(Chapters: USA, Germany, Sweden, Holland, France and Belgium)

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The Honorable Kofi Annan,
Secretary General of the United Nations
United Nations
New York City, NY 10017

Your Excellency,

Your statement that the United Nations offers a unique legitimacy in present-day international relations has been embraced by many who regard the UN and your office as essential in today's world of increasing acceptance of democracy, respect for human rights, and resolution of conflict through non-violence. The UN has successfully helped establish legitimate political systems in South Africa, Namibia, and Cambodia, to name but a few spectacular achievements.

Iran National Front, which is the oldest and most respected pro-democracy organization in Iran, was established in 1949 under the leadership of the late Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh with the main objective of securing free and fair elections. In the past 54 years, INF has struggled for independence, democracy, civil liberties, human rights, and the rule of law in Iran.

Today, a most serious conflagration of violence threatens to engulf Iran. On the one hand, the fundamentalist clerical clique ruling Iran has lost all legitimacy and rules despotically based on coercion and harsh repression without any regard for the will of the majority of the Iranian people. On the other hand, the hardline faction, which has just imposed its total control, has a dark history of violating international laws, breaching international norms of conduct, and increasing hostilities with other nations and powers in order to divert the attention of the public away from its domestic crisis.

Iran National Front-Abroad appeals to you to use your good offices and the powers of the UN to help the Iranian people to freely choose a legitimate political system in a UN supervised referendum. We believe that the only way to resolve the serious crisis in Iran is to hold a UN supervised referendum to replace the theocratic dictatorship with a democratic and secular republic.

As the UN Commission on Human Rights reports have made explicit, there have been prolonged human rights crises in the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to the numerous published reports of the Special Rapporteurs of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly and explicitly violated Articles 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Iranian government is a signatory of the UDHR which obligates it to adhere to all its stipulations including Article 21, which declares:

“(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.”

Free and democratic elections do not exist in Iran. Only candidates who support the fundamentalist clerical rule are allowed to run for office. In other words, all Iranians who prefer another system of government are excluded and harshly repressed. The Council of Guardians screens and vets even candidates who are supporters of the fundamentalist clerical system. Despite the harsh tyranny, the overwhelming majority of the Iranian people have relied upon peaceful means to resist the theocratic oligarchy. So, when one faction within the ruling cliques in 1997 promised reforms, it was welcomed by a huge majority of the population. However, due to the failure of the reformists within the ruling system to improve the situation, they have lost support among the population. In the February 20, 2004 elections, the hardline-controlled Guardian Council even barred reformist members of the clerical ruling establishment, including about 80 incumbent members of the Islamic Majles, from participating in the elections.

What is politically significant is that under the leadership of the opposition, the overwhelming majority of the Iranian people boycotted the elections on February 20, 2004. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, where the election stamp on ones identity paper may be needed to get food coupons, government employment, and services, not to participate in the elections is an active act of civil disobedience.

We would like to express our gratitude to the UN for its concern over the flagrant human rights violations in Iran over the past two decades. If it were not for the annual reports of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the human rights crisis would have been far more severe in Iran. However, the recent events require more proactive attention of the Secretary-General. The situation in Iran is deteriorating fast, and the tensions are increasing dramatically. The most violent faction of the ruling clerics is in the process of even eliminating their fellow reformists within the fundamentalist ruling cliques. The overwhelming majority of the people, frustrated with lack of freedom and harsh clerical rule, took huge personal risks to boycott the elections. The IAEA has found evidence of violations of the regime's previous accords. The region has witnessed several major wars and much bloodshed. Under the rule of this repressive regime, elements for a violent eruption are present and only a spark may trigger an explosion.

The only way out of the present crisis is a UN supervised referendum enabling a peaceful transition to a democratic and secular republic in Iran. We believe that the UN should reaffirm its historical role and bring to the attention of the fundamentalist regime respect for the UDHR and respect for the free vote of the Iranian people. This is the only way to avoid a violent conflict in Iran. We urge you, Mr. Secretary-General, to help prevent violence through peaceful means to achieve the aspirations of the Iranian people to bring about democracy and freedom to Iran.

Highest regards,
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