2005 National Convention for a

Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran



DAR Constitution Hall Washington, DC April 14, 2005 Iranian-American Delegates from the following states came together on April 14, 2005:

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- · California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- . District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Massachusetts
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- · Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- · Pennsylvania
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- Vermont
- Washington
- Wisconsin

To call for a democratic, secular republic in Iran.



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2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran

A Message from the Convention Director

Dear friends of the convention,

Iranian-American delegates, along with those who share our passion for human rights, freedom and democracy, came together on April 14, 2005 to call for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran and declare their support for Iran's democracy roadmap announced by the Iranian opposition leader, Maryam Rajavi. The convention marked an unparalleled accomplishment for Iranian-American delegates from over 35 states.

The platform of the 2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran was organized on four planks:

Human Rights: The platform was based on the message that the Iranian regime must be confronted publicly and privately for its violations of human rights. Speakers addressed the need for direct and persistent international condemnations of human rights, gender apartheid, and violence against religious minorities in Iran.

Terrorism: The platform highlighted a message that Tehran continues to support terrorist groups and is encouraging instability in Iraq through its extensive network of extremists groups in the region. Speakers outlined strategies to deter future acts of terrorism sponsored by Tehran.

Nuclear Threat: The platform outlined Tehran's audacious pursuit of a nuclear program with an aggressive timetable. With various options on the table, Tehran senses indecision and disunity in the West. Speakers offered a roadmap for a cohesive approach Tehran's nuclear threat.

US Policy: The platform opened with a message that no one in Washington can claim that appeasement or a foreign war represent viable policy options on Iran. Speakers insisted upon a third policy option: support for change by the Iranian people and their resistance movement.

Our 2005 convention achieved a great deal and the credit belongs to our speakers, attendees, delegates, organizing committees and volunteers, who all contributed in immeasurable ways. My message to the Iranian-American delegates: You are without a doubt the hardest working, most efficient diaspora in political history and I thank you for everything that you are doing.

Let us go forward with the momentum and commitment that will carry us to a democratic, secular, republic in Iran.

Sincerely,

Zahra Sariri Convention Director

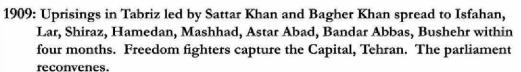
April 2005



2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran

Century of Struggle for Democracy

- 1906: Iran's Constitutional Revolution: Popular protests nationwide force the Qajar king, Mozzaffar od-Din Shah, to sign the constitutional decree. Iran's first parliament is convened.
- 1908: The Qajar king puts parliament under siege, ordering its bombardment by artillery fire. Leaders of the Constitutional movement are arrested.



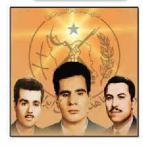
- 1920: Uprisings by Mirza Koochak Khan Jangali in northern Iran, Sheikh Mohammad Khiabani in northwest Iran, Col. Mohammad Taghi Khan Pesyan in northeast Iran against ruling dictatorship.
- 1952: July 21 nationwide uprising brings Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq to power forcing the Shah to flee Iran. Mossadeq had nationalized Iran's oil industry a year earlier.
- 1953: In August, a CIA engineered coup successfully topples Dr. Mossadeq.
- 1953: In December, three student leaders, Mehdi Shariat Razavi, Ahmad Qandchi, and Mostafa Bozorgnia, are murdered during student uprisings in Tehran.
- 1954: Dr. Hossein Fatemi, Foreign Minister during Mossadeq's tenure, executed on the orders of the Shah.
- 1963: Nationwide anti-Shah uprising brutally suppressed. All parties are banned, marking an end to the era of peaceful political activity.
- 1965: In September, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) is formed. Founding members Mohammad Hanifnejad, Saeed Mohsen, and Ali Asghar Badi'zadegan embrace a democratic Islam, rejecting the mullahs' fundamentalist interpretation of the religion, and Marxist philosophy.
- 1971: Members of the People's Fedayeen Organization clash with Security Forces in Siahkal, northern Iran, marking the start of armed struggle against the Shah.
- 1971: Sweeping raids by the SAVAK in August and September result in the arrest of PMOI founding members, Central Committee and ninety percent of cadres.
- 1972: Massoud Rajavi's death sentence commuted to life imprisonment in April, after intervention by François Mitterrand, Jean Paul Satre and Amnesty International.
- 1972: PMOI founders executed on eve of US President Nixon's visit to Tehran in May. Amir Parviz Pouyan and Massoud Ahmadzadeh, leaders of the Fedayeen Organization, killed in clashes with SAVAK.
- 1973: Muslim intellectual Dr. Ali Shariati tries to enlighten the masses, particularly students in effort to create social change. His denunciation of fundamentalist views gained popularity among young college intellectuals.









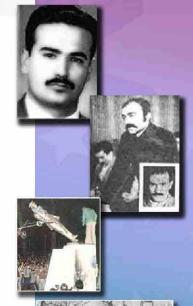






Century of Struggle for Democracy

- 1973: SAVAK raids eliminate Mojahedin's Muslim leadership, enabling Marxist elements to infiltrate and carry out coup within PMOI. The Marxists murder remaining PMOI Muslim leaders outside prisons, declare the movement Marxist, and assassinate U.S. officers and defense contractors.
- 1974: Massoud Rajavi, while in prison, denounces Marxists' coup, demands they release their hold on PMOI.
- 1974: Khosro Golesorkhi and Keramatollah Daneshiyan, two renowned political prisoners, executed.
- 1975: Several other leading political prisoners, including Bijan Jazani, executed in Evin prison.
- 1979: Anti-Shah uprising gains steam, forcing the Shah to flee Iran.
- 1979: Ayatollah Khomeini returns to Iran. In the absence of democratic leaders, he assumes the leadership of the revolution, calls for the establishment of an Islamic State.
- 1979: The Mojahedin boycotts vote on Constitution, declares it undemocratic, despotic.
- 1980: Massoud Rajavi is nominated as candidate for President. Khomeini vetoes Rajavi's candidacy despite earlier pledge not to intervene in the election.
- 1980: The People's Mojahedin takes part in parliamentary election. Despite widespread government rigging and fraud, it receives 17 percent of vote nationally, compared to the ruling Islamic Republic Party's 26 percent, but the regime prevents PMOI candidates from taking their seats in Parliament.
- 1980: Khomeini orders compulsory veiling for women, Mojahedin women rally to denounce forced veiling, defend women's right to choose their own clothing.
- 1981: PMOI organizes half-a-million strong demonstration in Tehran against dictatorship. Khomeini orders a crackdown. Revolutionary Guards open fire. Dozens are killed, hundreds wounded and thousands arrested and executed within days. The reign of terror begins.
- 1981: Massoud Rajavi announces the formation of the opposition coalition, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) in Tehran, and flies to Paris to introduce the opposition coalition and expose Iran's rights record.
- 1985: 5,000 parliamentarians, government figures and dignitaries voice support for NCRI's peace plan to end the Iran-Iraq war.
- 1986: Rajavi leaves Paris to Iran-Iraq frontier after French strike deal with Tehran to get their hostages released in Beirut.
- 1987: National Liberation Army of Iran (NLA) is formed.
- 1988: NLA liberates Iranian city of Mehran, takes 1,500 prisoners, \$2 billion worth of war booty.
- 1988: Khomeini "drinks the chalice of poison "of ceasefire with Iraq.
- 1988: Khomeini issues fatwa to massacre 30,000 political prisoners in Iran.
- 1988: NLA launches "Eternal Light "operation, thrusts 170 km to the gates of Kermanshah, largest city in western Iran.









Century of Struggle for Democracy

- 1993: NCRI votes to elect Maryam Rajavi as President for transitional period after the fall of the mullahs. She flies to Paris to being a new political, diplomatic initiative.
- 1996: Maryam Rajavi addresses 25,000 Iranians at Earl's Court in London, calls for an international front against fundamentalism.
- 1997: Mohammad Khatami becomes president in Iran. U.S. State Department designates the PMOI as terrorist as a goodwill gesture to Khatami.
- 1998: A majority in the U.S. House of Representatives denounces blacklisting of PMOI, calls on the State Department to revoke the designation.
- 1999: Nationwide uprisings in July by thousands of students and young people in Tehran and other cities. Dozens are killed or wounded, and thousands arrested by Security Forces.
- 1999: Kowtowing to demands by Tehran, the State Department adds NCRI to its terrorist list as an alias of the PMOI.
- 2002: NCRI reveals secret nuclear weapons sites in Natanz and Arak, central Iran.
- 2003: U.S., British planes bomb PMOI bases in Iraq as part of a *quid* pro quo with Tehran
- 2003: U.S. signs ceasefire, cooperation agreement with PMOI. U.S. 4th Infantry Division Commander, Maj. Gen. Raymond Odierno calls for review of PMOI status by the State Department.
- 2004: U.S. acknowledges that a 16-month investigation of all PMOI personnel found no basis to charge any of its members with the violation of U.S. law or links to terrorism, and recognizes their status as protected persons under fourth Geneva Convention.
- 2004: Maryam Rajavi addresses the European Parliament in Strasbourg, rejects appearement of Tehran, foreign military intervention, and calls for third option to bring about regime change by the Iranian people and their organized resistance.













Keynote Speaker, Maryam Rajavi

Two centuries ago, Thomas Jefferson, the father of American democracy, said:

"When patience has begotten false estimates of its motives, when wrongs are pressed because it is believed they will be borne, resistance becomes morality."

It is in the same spirit that I say the Iranian people's resistance is the reincarnation of morality in my country.

Maryam Rajavi Addressing 2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran



My Fellow Iranians,

It is a great pleasure to greet every one of you intellectuals, experts and representatives of Iranian communities in the United States. I congratulate you for taking the initiative to hold this convention on behalf of a broad spectrum of Iranians living in the United States and I wish you every success.

I am very pleased to join you today to tell the world of the Iranian people's desire for change, the path to democratic change in Iran, and the obstacles facing us along this road.

Iranians have been striving to gain freedom for the past 25 years. 120,000 of the best sons and daughters of the Iranian people have been executed for the cause of freedom. Hundreds of thousands of political prisoners have been subjected to brutal torture for their love of freedom.

The desire for change in Iran erupts at every opportunity. Iranians' cry for freedom reverberates from the Fire Festival to football matches, from Ashraf to Brandenburg Gate in Berlin and other Iranian gatherings in Brussels, Paris, London and Washington, DC.

An unelected, illegitimate clique using the most ferocious suppression without fear of international censure is not allowing social protests to coalesce and bring about change, as happened in the Ukraine and in Georgia.

Indeed Iran is today the "darkest corner of our world." The religious tyranny has remained in power through torture, murder, and the most barbaric repression. But the experience of 25 years of mullahs' rule and 25 years of national resistance against them shows that Western governments policy of appearement has been the greatest help to the mullahs to retain power and block change in Iran.

It is hard, in recent decades, to find a regime as repressive and terrorist as the one in Iran receiving so much support by Western governments.

Western governments are appeasing a regime whose president was directly involved in the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in 1988; a regime which murdered a Canadian photojournalist after torture and rape; a regime which hanged an innocent 16-year-old girl in public; a regime whose supreme leader, president, foreign minister and intelligence minister have been convicted by a German court as masterminds of a campaign of physical elimination of political opponents abroad; a regime whose cabinet minister



stated that the ideology and the explosives for the 1980s bombings in Beirut came from Tehran; a regime whose direct involvement in the Buenos Aires and Khobar bombings and numerous hostage-takings and highjackings has been proven; a regime which concealed its nuclear weapons program for 18 years and is pursuing this ominous project in defiance of the concerns of the international community; a regime whose human rights violations have been condemned in 51 resolutions of the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Commission.

This is the behavior of a regime whose leaders must be tried for crimes against humanity. And yet, the more this regime charges ahead with its suppressive policies and export of terrorism and fundamentalism, the more it is appeased. Goodwill messages continue to be sent to the mullahs, and their president is welcomed by the leaders of the European Union.

But the worst aspect of appeasement, which plays a crucial role in keeping the regime in power, is the terror tag on the Iranian Resistance. This is an illegitimate and unlawful accusation, designed only to mollify the mullahs.

This terror label is not just a measure against an opposition organization; it is caving in to the demands of the most brutal dictatorship of our times. This unjust tag is the biggest obstacle on the Iranian people's path to democratic change.

The mullahs use this label to justify the continuing torture, execution and suppression of freedom-loving Iranians as a campaign against terrorism. Even the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in 1988 is being justified with this label.

It was this terror label that was used to justify the closure of offices of the People's Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance of Iran in Washington. Those offices had exposed the nuclear projects of the clerical regime. So the message of this designation for the mullahs is that they may continue repression, terrorism and nuclear projects, while its message to our people is that the West is on the side of the dictators and is opposed to change.

It was on the basis of this label that the mullahs demanded the bombing of Iran's freedom fighters, their disarmament and their expulsion from Iraq. The mullahs intended to take advantage of the special geopolitics of the region to export Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism to Iraq and embark on widespread meddling in that country.

The mullahs' meddling in Iraq has been criticized repeatedly in recent months by Iraq's president, prime minister and prominent cabinet ministers.

To this day, more than 2.7 million Iraqis have declared in a petition that "fundamentalism and dictatorship in Iran are blocking the path to democracy and stability in Iraq."

They declared: "With its genuine interpretation of Islam and deep roots within Iranian society, the PMOI is the anti-thesis of Islamic fundamentalism, an important political and cultural bulwark against infiltration into Iraq of mullahs' ideology, and a most effective counterweight against the expansionist goals of the Iranian regime. The people and democratic forces of Iraq find in the PMOI a natural ally and partner in this region."

Leaders of the United States have rightly been saying in recent months that the mullahs have no support or legitimacy in Iran, that they are the source of terrorism in the world today, and that they seek to acquire nuclear weapons. They acknowledge that the Iranian people are longing for freedom. On behalf of the Iranian people, we declare that the terror label is the most important hurdle facing the freedom movement of Iran's people.

President George Bush rightly said last month, "Decades of excusing and accommodating tyranny in the pursuit of stability have only led to injustice and instability and tragedy."

In my view, the most flagrant example has been the accommodation of Iran's theocratic despots and injustice toward the Iranian Resistance. Let us remember that one day after the designation of the PMOI as a terrorist organization by the Clinton administration in October 1997, a senior U.S. official said that the aim was to send a good-will gesture to the mullahs' president Khatami.

This was a legacy of the kind of misguided policy that led to the coup against Dr. Mossadeq's nationalist government in 1953. Surprisingly, the previous U.S. administration apologized for the U.S. role in that coup to the very mullahs who were among Mossadeq's sworn enemies.

Just as the time has come to abandon the appearement of tyrants, so the time has come to remove the malevolent legacy of that policy, namely the terror label against the Iranian Resistance.

Two centuries ago, Thomas Jefferson, the father of American democracy, said: "When patience has begotten false estimates of its motives, when wrongs are pressed because it is believed they will be borne, resistance becomes morality."

It is in the same spirit that I say the Iranian people's resistance is the reincarnation of morality in my country. Resistance against the ruling religious fascism is tantamount to the existence of the Iranian people. No wonder, then, that honorable

defenders of human rights and representatives of the peoples of Europe and the United States have repeatedly endorsed the legitimacy of this resistance movement.

Is it not true that after 16 months of investigation of members of the PMOI by several U.S. agencies, senior U.S. officials acknowledged that there were no grounds to bring charges against any member of the movement?

Is it not the case that the most distinguished international law professors presented unequivocal legal opinions declaring that accusing the Mojahedin of terrorism lacks any legal basis and is politically motivated?

Despite all the weapons it had in its arsenal, this resistance did not fire a single bullet during the war in Iraq. How could a resistance movement be accused of terrorism, when it kept its focus solely on the mullahs' regime and the struggle for freedom in Iran, even as it was being bombed during the war?

This resistance movement, as the U.S. Central Command has declared, voluntarily agreed to have all its weapons consolidated in order to contribute to a safe and secure environment in Iraq.

This resistance called for a referendum for peaceful regime change in Iran and rejected any terrorism, violence and illegal and unjustified taking up of arms.

This resistance and the people on whose support it thrives have the capacity and the competence to bring about change in Iran.

Democratic change in Iran will not be achieved by appeasement or foreign military intervention. Democratic change will be achieved by the people of Iran and their organized resistance. This is the way for lasting democracy and freedom to take root in Iran.

The experience of the past quarter-century proves that without the establishment of democracy in Iran there will be no peace, stability or tranquility in the region. Democracy in Iran opens the way for development and prosperity and is the key to peace and security in this sensitive part of the world.

Iranian Resistance Leader Massoud Rajavi repeatedly stated from the first day of the mullahs' rule in Iran in February 1979 that the number one issue for Iran is the question of democracy, freedom and respect for popular sovereignty. The enemies of the Iranian people are the forces of Islamic fundamentalism and religious fanaticism, who are brutally violating the sanctity of freedom.

The Founding Fathers of America wrote in the Declaration of Independence 230 years ago, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

The NCRI platform stipulates that there will be free elections within six months after regime change in Iran to elect a constitutional assembly to form a new government and formulate a constitution for the new republic.

This resistance fully respects the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international covenants and calls for separation of church and state.

In its platform, this resistance movement guarantees free market economy, private investment and ownership and investment for national economic development.

We call for full gender equality in all political, social and economic rights and call for equal and active participation of women in political leadership and the country's management.



We welcome mutual ties with all countries and spread of peace and tranquility in the region and want an Iran free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Political forces seeking the establishment of a secular republic based on democracy and representative government within the National Solidarity Front are aligned with these positions.

The majority of Iranian people speak with one voice on the need for democratic change in Iran.

Within this framework, I once again call on all fellow Iranians from all religions, beliefs and political tendencies to come together in a broader unity and solidarity for democratic change in Iran.

The path for democratic change in Iran will be paved by ending the ominous policy of appeasement and removing the PMOI from the terrorism list.

The people of Iran have risen to free Iran and will undoubtedly achieve their goal.

In the name of freedom, justice and peace, I call on everyone to help the Iranian people.

Congressman Bob Filner (D-CA):

For its part, the Iranian diaspora has rejected both the European policy of engagement and foreign military intervention. Many Iranians believe, I think you all agree, that there is a third option which has been offered by Mrs. Rajavi in her speech at the European Parliament, where she said the only solution for democratic change is relying on the people in Iran and their resistance.

The democracy movement in Iran does not wish to see its long-term struggle for regime change impeded by the European Union's policy of appeasement. Nor does it want to see any form of military intervention from foreigners. I say to the President of the United States, I say to the European Union: The solution is the third option; get out of the way and let Iranians make the change themselves.

The democracy movement in Iran does not wish to see its long-term struggle for regime change impeded by the European Union's policy of appearement. Nor does it want to see any form of military intervention from foreigners.

Congressman Bob Filner (D-CA)





Our fellow delegates and Iranian-Americans from other states, it is a great privilege for us to represent the state of California here. We are indeed in support of the call of this convention and believe the solution to Tehran's danger is to endorse the third option offered by Mrs. Rajavi. We believe no foreign war, and no more talks will bring real change for the people of Iran. Therefore, in solidarity with the people of Iran, we are declaring our support for change by the Iranian people... It is indeed an honor to have Congressman Bob Filner, the great advocate of democracy and human rights in Iran from the state of California, with us today.

> Statement by Iranian-American delegates from California



Congressman Tom Tancredo (R-CO):

It's not everyone who can get Maryam Rajavi to warm up the crowd like this and it is very difficult to follow her because she is quite an extraordinary individual, as you all know, of course. I think it is absolutely appropriate that you be holding this event here in the hall we call Daughters of the American Republic because of course those of you in this room can be thought of as the sons and daughters of the Iranian Republic. Because it is a republic, it is freedom that you hope to bring to that troubled land. It is the ability of the people in Iran to make their own decisions about who will be governing them. It is for you to be the spirit and the voice for the people who cannot be heard today, the people in Iran who are being persecuted, you are their spokespersons!





We declare our support for the convention platform on this day of April 14, 2005. We support our fellow Iranians inside and outside of Iran who ask for a democratic change by the Iranian resistance and people of Iran. For 26 years, we have seen a mix of carrots and very little stick with regards to Tehran's regime. The purpose of this convention is to declare once and for all that Tehran's regime cannot be changed through a US military operation or constant dialogue. Tehran's regime must change by the people of Iran and all we ask is for Washington to lead the way in recognizing the voice of the Iranian resistance movement. We hereby declare our support for this convention and support our people in Iran.

Iranian-American Delegates from Texas

Congressman Ted Poe (R-TX):

The building that you are in today is a building and a monument to the women of America, the Daughters of the American Revolution, who did their part and continue to do their part in this great country to make sure that we are free and remain free. And I call upon the daughters of Iran to be determined, to make your country free like the United States. So I just want you to know, as one member of congress from Texas, that we are on your side and we are all in this together.





Our fellow Iranian-Americans, communities and organizations who have made this convention possible, support of the call for change in Iran and the convention's platform. We believe it is time to get tough on Iran and time for the Iranian people to change the regime.

As for option one: We reject foreign war in

As for option one: We reject foreign war in dealing with Tehran's regime.

As for option two: We reject appeasing Tehran's regime.

As for option three and in solidarity with the people of Iran: we hereby declare our support for change by the Iranian resistance and people of Iran.

We are very pleased to have our member of Congress, Congressman Dennis Moore, with us today.

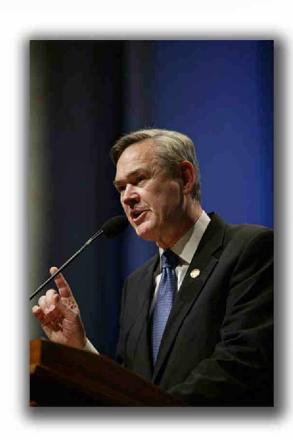
Statement by Iranian-American delegates from Kansas

Congressman Dennis Moore (D-KS):

The ruling regime in Iran has acted as an active state sponsor of terrorism over the past 25 years. Appeasement policies have failed, and reform within the regime will not happen.

The military approach remains unwise. But the fundamental need for change, however, is acute and is becoming America's top national security priority for the United States of America. There is a third option: no war, no appeasement, but support for the Iranian people and their organized resistance. That is what will bring about a legitimate and lasting democratic change in Iran.







Message from Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX): Today, hundreds of thousands of Iranians desire an end to the corrupt and oppressive government of Iran whose iron grip suppresses a long tradition of intellectual and cultural diversity.

The 2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran will help Iranians of all persuasions achieve their vision of a free and democratic Iran.

I have long been a supporter of those who seek freedom for Iran... I do want attendees at this convention to know freedom-loving Iranians have a friend in Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison.

In recognizing the goals of this convention, we declare our support for the call for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran . It is out great pleasure to have the support of our Senator at this convention. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison's staff is here to deliver the message of our senator at this historic Convention.

Iranian-American Delegates from Texas





Message from Congressman Ed Towns (D-NY):

The people of Iran deserve democracy. We must support their desire for freedom and liberty. While we promote democracy in the world, Iran's main opposition group, the People's Mojahedin of Iran, remains on the State Department's blacklist as a result of an appearement policy. This confusion and ambiguity in our policy towards Iran has provided the mullahs with the opportunity to start building their own nuclear bomb behind our back. To send a clear message to the regime in Iran, our policy should be unambiguous and firm. We cannot talk about democracy in Iran when we undermine the struggle of the Iranian people for a free, democratic and secular government by blacklisting their resistance movement, who has been fighting for exactly the same values. The first step in our policy towards Iran, should involve removing the Iranian resistance movement, the People's Mojahedin of Iran, from the State Department's blacklist.



Message from Senator James Talent (R-MO):

The United States should continue in its efforts to halt proliferation of nuclear weapons in Iran, promote human rights and religious freedoms inside Iran, and to disclose Irans' support for terrorist organizations.

My hope and prayer is that in the not-too-distant future, Iran will be free, that your loved ones inside Iran will live free of a regime that enjoys no legitimacy and continues in power only by virtue of its willingness to suppress the very people it claims to lead.



The state of Missouri joins this convention because it stands for a democratic, secular republic in Iran. We are here to announce our support for the call of this convention, and that is to let the Iranian people deal with the terrorist regime of Tehran. September 11th terrorist attacks impacted our state greatly. We can no longer tolerate regimes who stand on the side of terror and violence. Let us in solidarity with the people of Iran call for change by the Iranian people. Let us in solidarity with the people of Iran end the appeasement policy towards the mullahs.

Iranian-American Delegates from Missouri



Message from Congressman William Lacy Clay Jr. (D-MO):

Iran's growing threat can be defused only if we support the Iranian resistance movement. As Maryam Rajavi, the leader of the resistance, has said: "This time, unlike in 1953, the United States must identify itself with the Iranian people and their aspiration for freedom, democracy, and a secular state. Only such an approach can guarantee lasting peace and stability in the Middle East".

U.S. Policy



I simply wonder if we have a terrorist group in Ashraf, where are the terrorists? And so, I wish my best for those who have been determined to have refugee status in Ashraf and I pray that their situation will soon be clarified and they will have the freedom that they deserve. I would also encourage you in your pursuit of true democracy in Iran. All the people deserve their right to be free. Again, as Mrs. Rajavi talked about the freedom consociated in the U.S. constitution. And what the American experiment stands for is that as much as anything else, not just in America, but around the world. And I think that the president has said this personally, and he is exactly for that. Freedom is the safest; it is the safest guarantee for freedom and security around the world. And so I encourage you in your pursuit.

Lt. Colonel Thomas Cantwell Former Commander of 324th MP Battalion based at Camp Ashraf, Iraq



My impression, and perhaps more importantly the impression of the Special Forces soldiers that dealt primarily with the MEK, was very positive. The Special Forces soldiers spoke very highly of their potential and their willingness to work with us. They could have been very helpful to us in the role of stabilization, especially along the border areas because they were very familiar with that area.... Women are deemed equally capable and permitted to hold positions of authority in the MEK and would serve us a great example of equality for woman. I recall this is one of our objectives in the region.

Captain Vivian Gembara
Ex-JAG officer, Lawyer to the 4th Infantry Division



People to People Network

Message by a delegation of American Students from Colorado

We have come here today to support the Iranian Resistance and their fight for human rights, because the struggle for human rights transcends state lines and international borders. We have come together to fight for a common goal, to ensure that the rights all people are entitled to are not taken away, regardless of that person's age, gender, race, religion or nation. For this performance a monologue was written in memory of an amazing warrior, mother Zakeri. She supported other imprisoned women in Iran through her courage and dedication. This piece was performed for hundreds of people in hope that it would educate others on the challenges that people everywhere face. By telling the stories of the past we can make a future where everyone is safe. The struggle for human rights is a battle we all face, and we are all facing it together. Here is an excerpt from that monologue.



"After years of supporting the Iranian Mujahedeen and combating the abuse of women in Iran, Mother Zakeri was jailed at seventy years of age. Prison guards ordered to torture her quickly learned that, even at 70, Mother Zakeri was a force to be reckoned with. When they came near her or her cellmates, she would often slap them and box their ears.

"Her high spirited nature was maintained throughout all of her tortures. When the mullahs imprisoned her granddaughters and sons, Mother Zakeri refused to break. She sang to the jail every night.

"Mother Zakeri led support circles, in which women would sit and discuss politics and education. When women returned from being tortured, Mother Zakeri would massage and hold them. She arranged for secret escape plans that managed to get two women out of jail and in to Turkey.

"Even when she was sentenced to public execution, Mother Zakeri would not give in. She started a chant within the cells for the exiled female president of the Iranian Resistance. 'Long live Rajavi!'The guards grew increasingly angry, and Mother Zakeri took her last steps from the prison dancing.

"Her last words were spoken with a smile to the guards escorting her away. I am happy I achieved my goal. You must understand that however many of us women you execute, more of us will arise, roaring like lionesses!"



Moslem Eskandar Filabi,

Three-time Iranian Olympic Wrestling Champion, Iranian national hero:

The mullahs are a bunch of criminals, demagogues and opportunists who have violated the lives and liberties of the Iranian people. Only the National Liberation Army of Iran and the Iranian people can overthrow this evil regime.

I ask the civilized nations of the world to refrain from policies that would bring shame to them. This resistance movement is not terrorist. It was forced into defending itself by the mullahs. Remove this resistance from such discredited lists. We will not rest until the Mojahedin is removed from the terror list. We will continue our fight until the overthrow of the clerical regime in its entirety and the establishment of democratic, secular government in Iran.

I ask President Bush to translate his words into action. You cannot have democracy in Iran while the Iranian Resistance remains on the terror list and is not allowed to engage in activity in a free country. How could one speak of democracy in Iran without the participation of the Mojahedin?

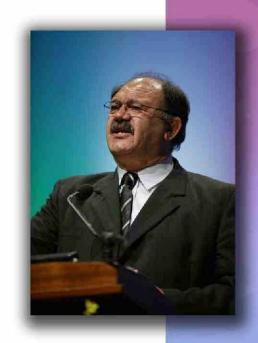
Consistent with all international conventions, this Resistance has the right to lead the struggle of the Iranian people who have been denied their right to voice their demands.

In July of 1988, Khomeini ordered his followers to have a free hand in killing all the political prisoners who were opposing the religious dictatorship. My father was hanged in Evin prison in Tehran on August 28, 1988. On the same day, my uncle was also executed by a firing squad in the same place.

The government of Iran has vowed to make the lives of anyone who opposes this regime a living hell. There are many untold stories about those who struggle for freedom. My father and uncle were among those freedom fighters. There are many unheard sorrows of the families who lost loved ones under this regime.

Yet the people of Iran will not give up. They will persevere and I stand by them. I am here with you to celebrate what my father stood for, not to mourn the sorrow of his death. I am proud of my father and what he stood for.

Testimony by Afagh Namvar







Dr. Carol R. Fontaine,

Taylor Professor of Theology and History at Newton Andove College:

It is a great honor to add my voice to others in calling for an end to appearement of the Fundamentalist Islamic Republic of Iran, and to speak in support of the Third Option proposed by Mrs. Rajavi.

The suffering of the people under the regime of the mullahs is great, and cannot be ignored in favor of favorable economic deals for oil. Neither can we permit another pre-emptive war by the United States and its few allies to stand as the only possible response to the situation. This is where Mrs. Rajavi's "third option" comes in....

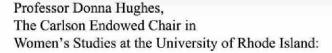
In the Iran of the future---for there must not be a nuclear weapons program in the hands of those who have shown themselves so brutal to their own people—in the Iran of the future, thanks to the NCRI and PMOI, led by Mrs. Rajavi, I believe we have an opportunity to reverse this trend of disregard for women's rights in post-conflict situations. With Mrs. Rajavi as the democratically elected leader of the government in exile, and the fine tradition of female leadership and responsibility displayed by the women and girls of Camp Ashraf, we have something very different indeed from the typical situation.



Your suffering and your courage, women of Ashraf and within Iran, touch our hearts.

We mourn for what you and your families have endured, and we celebrate your spirited refusal to accept a form of false religion.

Dr. Carol R. Fontaine



Twenty-six years ago in Iran, Islamic fundamentalists captured their first state. They turned it into a theocratic dictatorship and used its resources to fund terror abroad and pursue weapons of mass destruction. Since then, violence, expansionism, and terror against civilians have become hallmarks of Islamic fundamentalism.

To defeat the world's leading state sponsor of terror, one must understand what keeps them in power.

In Iran, terror begins at home. The clerics put their ideology into practice in the most oppressive and barbaric ways the world has seen in recent times. The first victims were women and girls...The misogyny of Islamic fundamentalism is not ancillary to the Iranian regime's grip on power or their global sponsorship of terror. Misogyny is at the heart of their ideology and is the framework of their state structure and authority...The Iranian regime holds the upper hand in the power struggle with the west as long as the U.S. and Europe constrain their opponents. Removing these pro-woman, pro-democracy resistance groups from the terrorist lists and supporting their efforts to overthrow the Iranian regime provide an alternative approach to appeasement and attempts to normalize relations with terrorists or military action.

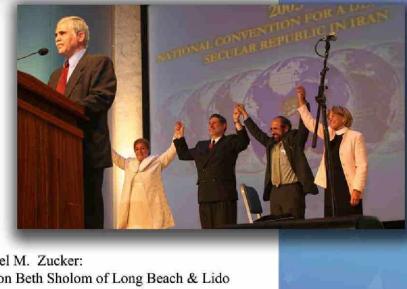




As an ambassador of Christ, I call upon all Christians around the world to back up the Iranian people and the National Council of Resistance of Iran and the People's Mojahedin, in order to overthrow the terrorist dictatorship ruling Iran.

We have gathered here today to ask President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to remove the People's Mojahedin from the terrorist list as expeditiously as possible. This is the only way that we can all together bring democratic change, peace, and respect for human rights in Iran and the region.

Maryam Jam





Rabbi Daniel M. Zucker: Congregation Beth Sholom of Long Beach & Lido

President Bush, members of Congress, and leaders of governments around the globe, I say to you on behalf of the thousands assembled here today at Constitution Hall and on behalf of the millions of Iranians who yearn for freedom, we reject appeasement of the Tehran regime. The policy of appeasement that has been attempted, and is still attempted by the Europeans, is a failure; we further reject the idea that America should go to war with Iran. Instead, we support the third option: democratic change--democratic change brought by the Iranian people and the Iranian resistance movement.

Stand up against oppression and refrain from sowing the seeds of rage and hatred. This was the message of Zoroaster, some 3,700 years ago.

The message of humanity has been pursued relentlessly by the People's Mojahedin for the past 26 years.

Let me then hail Ashraf City, this bastion of resistance and all those guardians of Iran's pride and dignity. The Society in Defense of the Rights of Religious Minorities is proud to declare its support for Mrs. Rajavi's third option.

We call on President Bush to stand by his message of standing by the Iranian people as they stand for their freedom. And Mr. President, if you are true to your words, remove the Iranian people's resistance movement from the list of terrorist organizations. It is time for action.

Mr. Mansour Lavaii President of Defense for Rights of Religious Minorities Member of the Zoroastrian faith





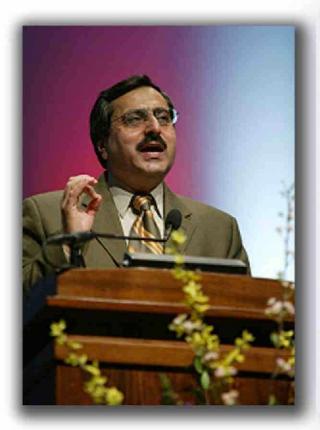
We should adhere to the beautiful Islam that we know, the Islam that believes in co-existence with other people, and with other traditions. An Islam that endorses and goes forward with dialogue with other traditions and other ways of life and other friends. That is the Islam that we are really proud of.

Dr. Ahmad El-Sharif Prominent Muslim leader





Nuclear Threat



The world is now realizing how close the Ayatollahs in Iran are in getting the bomb. And make no mistake, the Iran of the Ayatollahs armed with nuclear weapons is absolutely unacceptable. It is the most unpatriotic, anti-Iranian endeavor pursued by the Iranian regime. It is contrary to the national interest of the Iranian people, and to the interest of the international community. The Iranian mullahs have absolutely no intention of abandoning their nuclear weapons program. This regime has been violating the nonproliferation treaty, and they continue to violate it. This regime has been deceiving the international community and it continues to do so. Just look at the past five months; there has been revelation after revelation by Iran's main opposition, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, on various aspects of Iran's nuclear weapons program, further proving that Iran does have a nuclear weapons program.

No diplomatic effort and no military solution can stop the Iranian regime's nuclear weapons program. To end the Iranian regime's nuclear weapons program, to its support for international terrorism, to its opposition to peace in the Middle East, to its destructive role in Iraq, and to the extensive violations of human rights in Iran, this regime must be brought down with all its factions.

Alireza Jafarzadeh, President of Strategic Policy Consulting



Look at us now, today, at this moment, taking the steps through legislation, through gathering together--not being a scattered people but a gathered people. Speaking out against injustice, the horrible cruelty of violence: All has been done for power's sake; we are told what we ought to do for love's sake. It is time for weapons of mass construction and this is what you can do to revitalize a free Iran. The time is now for justice, mercy, compassion and love to be the bridge upon which the new Iran stands.

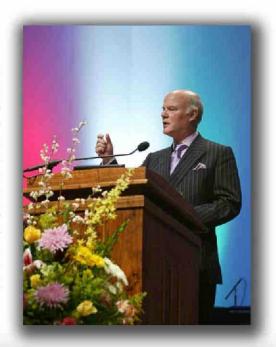
Rev. Helen Moore Trinity Episcopal Church, Southport

Terrorism

Dr. Neil Livingstone,

CEO Global Options; co-chair, Iran Policy Committee:

The mullahs are leading Iran to ruin with their support of terrorism, the insurgency in Iraq, and the nation's program to develop nuclear weapons. The United States must also play a role; we need to step up the pressure on Iran today, both in counsels with our allies around the world, and our own efforts to destabilize the Iranian government. We also must recognize an Iranian government in exile. That government should be open to all who support a free, democratic, and secular government in Iran; and that includes the MEK and NCRI and all the lovers of freedom in Iran. Therefore, it is time to remove the MEK and the NCRI from the State Department's list of terrorist sponsoring groups and we should embrace them. Let me say that, we are all members of the Iranian Resistance.



Today Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, and has been for a quarter of a century. The CIA has long held this position and President Bush, in his most recent State of the Union address, declared, "Iran remains the world's primary sponsor of terrorism."

Dr. Neil Livingstone



Mr. Paul Enzinna Baker Botts, LLP, Counsel for the NCRI:

The decision to designate the NCRI as a terrorist organization was a political decision. A senior Clinton administration official at the time was quoted as saying this was a goodwill gesture to Tehran and its newly elected moderate president Mohammad Khatami.

In 2002, former assistant secretary of State Martin Indyk echoed that, saying that it was the result of an interest in opening up dialogue with the Iranian government. Six years later it is an open question whether that strategy was successful, particularly in light of Iran's renegade nuclear weapons program which, ironically, the NCRI has played a lead role in exposing.

Messages from Delegates and Groups

This struggle against the fundamentalist regime has also become of lives of those of us who are living abroad. Women abroad are carrying on the struggle of their sisters in Iran in their communities, political gatherings, human rights groups and doing all that can be done to reveal the regime's brutal policies and violence against women...We have found that the way to end this brutal regime is to support the Iranian people and the resistance movement.

President Bush, in your 2005 State of the Union address you said, "and to the Iranian people I say tonight, as you stand for your own liberty, America will stand with you".

Now we would like to say, we are delegates of Iranian women's activists and representatives of Iranians in Iran who are against the regime and demanding the policy of regime change. We neither want foreign military intervention in Iran nor believe in an appeasement policy. We support the third option policy as our president elect Mrs. Maryam Rajavi stated in December 2004 in the European Parliament. Support the only opposition group the PMOI. Take their name off of the list and enable them to liberate their people

Shirin Nariman, Representative of the delegation of Iranian women activists



As a representative of the Iranian youth delegation here in the United States, I would like to first send greetings to the freedom fighters in Ashraf city. When talking about democratic change in Iran, one cannot overlook the student movement in that country.

Nearly three quarters of Iran's population is under the age of 30 and ready for change. We need only to go back a couple of years to see the potential role the student movement can play in toppling Tehran's dictators.

The summer of 2003, was marked with widespread protests and clashes between students in Iran and state's suppressive forces. The students demanded the overthrow of the Iranian regime in its entirety, thus shaking the foundation of the fundamentalist establishment. This past year we were witness to over 330 strikes, protests and political gatherings by students demanding freedom and democracy. Iran is a country ready for change. The evidence of that is clear.

Our message is simple: no to appeasement, no to foreign war. We say to policy makers, there is a third option as stated by Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the president elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran: change brought by the Iranian people and their resistance.

Shahab Sariri,

Representative of the delegation of Iranian-American youths and students



Messages from Delegates and Groups



One of the hallmarks of fundamentalism is its inability to tolerate positive intellectual development. For over a quarter of a century, the mullahs in Iran have systematically eliminated, executed and/or expelled intellectual, academic and scientific minds. A mass exodus of those intellectuals has resulted in a "brain drain" phenomenon in Iran....

Dr. Rahileh Sadeghpour



We, the representatives and members of the Society of Iranian Scholars and Professionals, are expressing our serious concern regarding the severe violation of human rights, including the students' rights to protest and freedom of speech, that has been brutally suppresed by the mullahs. Several thousand students have been imprisoned and tortured for their beliefs. Also, we are here to express our concern regarding the vast majority of the nationally and internationally recognized Iranian professors and professionals who have been executed, eliminated or forced out of the country due to the abysmal state and suppression of students and faculties in universities, created by the fundamentalist mullahs. As a result, Iranian youths are suffering from substandard quality of education, while their talents and minds are underutilized.

The Iranian theocratic regime must be changed. Therefore, we unconditionally support the third option suggested by Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the leader of Iranian Resistance, who said "change must be brought about by the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance".

We condemn the appeasement policy of the European countries. We are also not in favor of military intervention by any foreign country. The Society of Iranian Scholars and Professionals is determined to support Mrs. Rajavi and her movement towards freedom and democracy in Iran. We support Iran and Iranians in their endeavors to establish a free country and to determine their own future.

Professor Reza Sami, delegation of Iranian-American Scholars and Professionals





On behalf of families who have lost their loved ones under this brutal regime of mullahs, we declare our support for Mrs. Rajavi's third option, which is to let the people of Iran, who have paid dearly for the price of democracy, take care of the regime in Iran. We can bring freedom and democracy to our country. We know the price for freedom. We will never forget our loved ones who have died for a democratic Iran.

Delegation of families of martyrs

Messages from International Delegations



Messages from the French Delegation:

We came here as a delegation, to tell you that we have known the NCRI and its President-elect Maryam Radjavi since the 1980s in our town. We are their neighbors and friends and we want to express our solidarity with their struggle.

Today, we would like to express our support for those who fight against the religious dictatorship in Iran. The NCRI under the leadership of Maryam Radjavi has fought for 25 years against the Iranian regime, which has during all these years violated the most basic human rights of the Iranian people, by imprisoning and torturing thousands of political opponents and their families...

The NCRI has been used as a bargaining chip in the hands of our leaders. Once again, we call on the European Union and the United States to remove the NCRI and the People's Mojahedin off the terror list. We share their desire to bring regime change in Iran, without weapons and with no bloodshed. We look forward to the restoration of freedom and popular will in Iran. Let us remove this unjust "terrorist "label, which has no legal basis.



A performance depicting the state of human rights in Iran. The artist told the story of Shirin, a political prisoner, while highlighting the violence against women in Iran

Joana Margaretha Artist from Italy



International Dignitaries



Paul Forseth, Member of Canadian Parliament:

I am here to state to you that I agree with what has been said supporting Madam Rajavi's third option, about the peaceful secular democratic state, perhaps one of the ways of getting there is a referendum. Certainly, that is the way to go...And our foreign affairs minister will be seeking a report from me today of how things went here. Because he does agree with the concept that Canada and other nations can lead a circle of nations to apply diplomatic pressure in the appropriate pressure to the Iranian regime. We want the people inside Iran to know that they are not forgotten. The people outside the country are watching, and we support them. And at some point they will stop cooperating at every level with the mullahs' regime. They will have no power because no one will listen to what they say. The Kazemi case from the Canadian angle is just one case of hundreds of thousands, but it is a real, modern, documented case of torture and murder and that symbolically is what the mullah regime means to the world.

...I delivered 87 signatures from the Norwegian parliament in favor of removing the Mojahedin from the terror list. And it was a great honor for me to deliver this to President Maryam Rajavi in Paris. We know that this is more than half of the members in the National Assembly of Norway. And we know that in many national assemblies in Europe the same thing is taking place. So I am here to assure you about our continuous support. I will be with you. I am going to continue the fight for democracy and human rights in Iran. Yes, I am an Iranian. And we have a dream; we have a dream together that one day we will be together in Tehran. And we will celebrate, we will celebrate together like we are celebrating our national day in Norway. Everybody is on their feet, waving the flags. So

Let me say it in Farsi: AZADI DAR IRAN, AZADI...

Mr. Lars Rise, a member of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Norwegian Parliament

we will celebrate democracy, respect for human rights and our freedom.





Messages from International Dignitaries

As the leader of Iraq's Liberal Party, I offer my solidarity and that of Iraq's Liberal Party with the participants in the Washington, DC convention that rejects the unfounded nature of the terrorist label against the People's Mojahedin of Iran. We also declare our solidarity with the Mojahedin as a legitimate organization that has been employing all democratic means in waging a struggle for change in Iran and the fight against religious fundamentalism, sectarianism and terrorism.

Ma'n Taha Ali Al-Jabouri



I congratulate you on your convention for a free Iran. I would like to offer our gratitude to American personalities who have declared support for the National Council of Resistance of Iran and the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran.

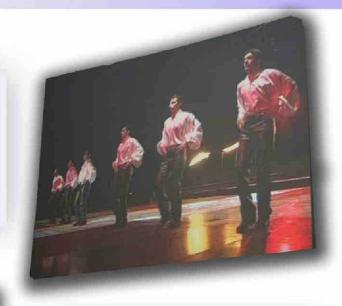
In their efforts to rid themselves of the oppression of the ruling mullahs and religious prejudice and fundamentalism that breeds terrorism in our region, the Iranian people are looking to you. They get inspiration from the movements in Ukraine and Georgia.

Sofian Abbas, Lawyer, Advisor to Iraq's National Movement Advisor to Amnesty International



Artists and Performers

Azadi (freedom), a dance performed in support of the convention of Iranian Americans in the U.S. for a democratic, secular republic in Iran.





As we perform here today in solidarity with the people of our homeland Iran, we declare our support for this convention.

Delegation of Iranian Artitsts

I come to you as a 12-year-old Iranian-American from California. Today, I would like to perform a poem that I wrote in the form of a song. I hope that with this performance Washington will hear our call for the third option inIran...

My song is called: "Let us free".

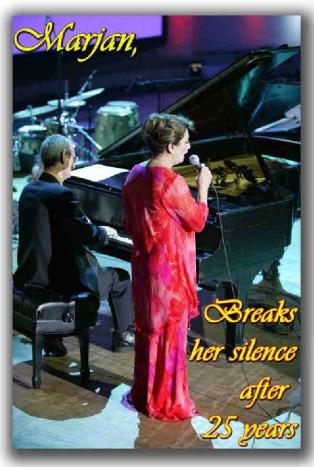
Delaram





Artists and Performers





Marjan is a well known figure among Iranians, both as a singer and actress, and also for her fight against the Iranian regime.

Marjan entered the world of entertainment as a reporter for Ettela'at Weekly at the age of 12, and soon became an anchor for the children's program of Iranian State Television.

In 1970 she played her first role in the film, Donya-ye-Por Omid (A World Full of Hope). By the Islamic Revolution in 1979, she had played the leading role in 39 movies.

After her marriage in 1974 to Mehdi Jourak, a prominent Iranian producer, she began her singing career, launching two hit albums with 17 songs.

After the 1979 revolution, Marjan was banned from singing, performing and acting. Later she was arrested for singing a song entitled Vatan (country) and was released three weeks later.

In 1981, she became politically active, supporting the Iranian Resistance and was arrested for the second time in the same year. Her husband had also been arrested for his political activities three months earlier. She spent 14 days blindfolded in the so-called prayer room with other newly arrested inmates and was then held in solitary confinement for eight months. After eight months, she appeared in a mock trial, where she was not allowed to have a lawyer. She was given a double sentence for being both an actor and a supporter of the Iranian opposition. She was given an 18 month prison term. She was released after two years and her husband was released two years later.

Banned from performing and even holding a job, Marjan stayed home raising her four children. Two of her sons, in their twenites were killed by the Iranian regime for their political activities.

Marjan was able to escape Iran three years ago and broke her silence with her first performance during the 2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran.



Artists and Performers





We have gathered here from all over today to send the message of our oppressed people to the world and to defend their struggle for freedom.

On behalf of Iranian musicians and artists, we would like to perform a special song by Mohammad Shams. We dedicate this song to those who have dedicated their lives for over two decades to their dream of a free Iran; the residents of Ashraf City, the pride of all Iranians, and to the leaders of the Iranian Resistance, the hope of all freedom loving Iranians.

Our performance tonight is for the people of Iran. Duendo Cameron of Washington D.C.





Convention in the Press

Iranians inspired

The Washington Times, April 13, 2005

Iranian exiles plan to hold a constitutional convention in Washington tomorrow, inspired by the stirring words of President Bush from his State of the Union speech and from America's own such convention more than 200 years ago. Zari Sariri, the convention director, said the meeting at DAR Constitution Hall was conceived "mainly because of President Bush's speech." In his February address to Congress, Mr. Bush sent a message to the Iranian people. "As you stand for your own liberty, America stands with you," Mr. Bush said.

The organizers expect members of Congress and members of the Canadian and European parliaments to address Iranian exiles in America from more than 30 states.

Mrs. Sariri hopes a demonstration of a massive support for democracy will persuade Washington to remove the Iranian resistance from a list of terrorist organizations. The Clinton administration placed the National Council of Resistance of Iran and its armed wing, the People's Mojahedin, on the black list when it was trying to improve relations with the Iranian government. "The important thing is to give the resistance legitimacy," she said. The message to Europe is to stop "appeasing the mullahs" with "vain attempts" to get the Iranian government to give up its nuclear program, Mrs. Sariri added. "The Iranian people and the resistance can do the rest," she said. In December, Maryam Rajavi, president of the Iranian resistance, delivered a similar message to Europe when she addressed supporters in the European Parliament. "Appeasement is not the way to contain or change the regime," Mrs. Rajavi said, calling the Iranian government a 'medieval theocracy'. "Appeasement only emboldens the mullahs. The answer to fundamentalism is democracy."



Iranian Americans cheer during the first National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Iran in Washington April 14, 2005. State delegations of Iranian Americans across the U.S. converged on Washington to build a consensus to support democratic change by the Iranian people in their country. REUTERS/Jason Reed

Iranian opposition challenges Bush to keep his word, drop terror label Agence France Presse, April 14, 2005

The National Convention for a Democratic Secular Republic in Iran gathered Iranian-Americans to push for official US support for their efforts. Iranian opposition leader Maryam Rajavi, addressing the convention in a video link from France, called on the United States and the European Union to end its appearement of the Tehran regime and recognize her National Council of Resistance of Iran as an Iranian government-in-exile. "Just as the time has come to abandon the appearement of tyrants, so the time has come to remove the ominous legacy of that policy, namely the terror label against the Iranian resistance," Rajavi said, according to a printed translation of her remarks in Farsi.

Iranians Rally to Support Resistance Group The Washington Post, April 15, 2005

Waving flags amid red, white and green balloons, Iranian exiles staged a campaign-style convention yesterday at DAR Constitution Hall. Their primary call was for the United States to drop an Iranian resistance group from its list of terrorist organizations.

Members of Congress, legal scholars and the president-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, Maryam Rajavi, outlined support for a peaceful revolution to create a democratic, secular republic in Iran. Rep. Bob Filner (D-CA) told the crowd that a peaceful revolution spurred by the people of Iran is one of the ways to create lasting peace in the Middle East. "Unless we deal with Iran, there will never be a solution in Iraq," he said.



Convention in the Press

Iranian Group Asks State to Lift Terror Designation The New York Sun, April 15, 2005

Supporters of the Mujahedin e-Khalq, or MEK, gathered just four blocks from the White House at Constitution Hall, where a handful of congressmen and two former military officers praised the group as the vanguard of a democratic opposition to the reigning mullahs in Iran.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Cantwell, the former military police commandant of Camp Ashraf, a facility in northern Iraq where some 4,000 fighters associated with the MEK are under military supervision, expressed solidarity with fighters he used to guard. To cheers of support, he told the audience, "If there is a terrorist group in Ashraf, where are the terrorists?"

According to reserve Army Captain Vivian Gembara, the military lawyer who negotiated the deal for the MEK fighters to hand over their arms in 2003, the MEK was highly disciplined and knowledgeable about military affairs.

A message from Maryam Rajavi, was beamed to an audience that shrieked and applauded with rapturous fervor.

"Just as the time has come to abandon the appearement of tyrants, so the time has come to remove the ominous legacy of that policy, namely the terror label against the Iranian resistance," Ms. Rajavi said to thunderous cheers.

Some congressmen shared Ms. Rajavi's position on the terrorist designation. Rep. Tom Tancredo, a Republican of Colorado, compared those gathered yesterday to America's Founding Fathers.



State delegations of Iranian Americans converged on Washington to build a consensus to support democratic change by the Iranian people. REUTERS/Jason Reed

Saudi daily, Al-Hayat, April 16- Informed sources in Washington have said that the U.S. government is studying the removal of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran from the list of terrorist organizations, particularly after the group's exhilarating congress in Washington attended by distinguished members of the U.S. Congress. The daily added: "Following their revelations on Iran's nuclear arsenal, the Pentagon is moving toward removal of the People's Mojahedin of Iran from the terrorism list." "Participants called on the U.S. and the EU to listen to their demands and end appearement of the Iranian regime and recognize the NCRI as the official Iranian government in exile" Al-Hayat wrote.

Kuwaiti daily, Al-Qabas, April 16- "Maryam Rajavi, leader of the biggest opposition movement to the Iranian regime addressed the Washington gathering from Paris, calling on the U.S. and EU to end their policy of appearement of the Iranian regime". "Time to remove terror tag from the Iranian Resistance has come".

Aljazeera Television, April 15-" The Iranian National Convention, which enjoys extensive support among members of the U.S. Congress and a number of effective political think tanks within decision making circles of the United States, called for removal of the Mojahedin Organization from the terrorist list".

US Congressmen Meet Leaders of Group Labeled "Terrorist" by State Department Global Politician, April 19, 2005

Several members of Congress addressed a gathering today of hundreds of Iranian exiles. Reps. Bob Filner, D-Calif., Tom Tancredo, R-Col., Ted Poe, R-Texas, Dennis Moore, R-Kan., and staffers for Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchinson, R-Texas, and James Talent, R-Mo., spoke to MEK supporters at a convention hall just four blocks from the White House. MEK has been listed as a terrorist organization by the State Department since 1997, but some in Congress and close to the Administration want the group to be removed from the terrorist list. Rep. Tancredo called Maryam Rajavi, the MEK's leader, "quite an extraordinary lady." Even President Bush has called the MEK a "dissident group."

The only way to a free Iran is "the third option," Rep. Moore said. Rajavi herself spoke to the group by live video feed, urging removal of the MEK from the list of terrorist groups.

"The worst aspect of appeasement, which plays a crucial role in keeping the regime in power, is the terror tag on the Iranian Resistance," Rajavi said. "The message of this terrorist designation ... to our people is that the West is on the side of the dictators and is opposed to change."

Rajavi also praised a petition she said was signed by 2.7 million Iraqis in support of the People's Mujahideen of Iraq, which is another name for the MEK.

She characterized the MEK as democratic, inclusive, heavily supported by Iranians and only on the terrorist list because of a policy of appearement by the Clinton Administration.



Concluding Statement of the Convention

Statement by the National Convention of Iranian-Americans Washington DC April 14, 2005

A Resolution adopted by the delegates at the end of the convention read in part: Be it resolved:

- 1. That in unison with the majority of the people of Iran we entirely support the third option proposed by the Iranian Resistance's President-elect, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, and believe that democratic change in Iran is not possible through appearament of the mullahs, nor a foreign war, but rather can only come about through the Iranian people and their Resistance.
- 2. That the National Council of Resistance and the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, through its widespread social support and four decades of continuous struggle for freedom, have the biggest capacity and capability to bring about democratic change in Iran.
- 3. That the National Convention of Iranian-Americans, while supporting President Bush's statement that America stands on the side of the Iranian people, calls on the U.S. government to remove the obstacles which through two decades of appearement have hampered the Iranian people's struggle for change.
- 4. That continuation of appeasement and deals with the Iranian regime, under any pretext and in any form, must be halted. This policy acts against the Iranian people, against peace and stability in the region, and only encourages the regime to develop nuclear weapons and meddle in Iraq.
- 5. That the terror-tag on the PMOI is the worst consequence of appeasement, the continuation of which means ongoing appeasement. This label and all the pressures and restrictions flowing from it must be immediately removed. This is the wish of the Iranian people. This label is the most important impediment to change in Iran, and denies the right of the Iranian people to resist against the religious dictatorship ruling Iran.
- 6. That the PMOI and the residents of Ashraf are held in great esteem by the Iranian people. Their rights as a legitimate resistance movement must be recognized, their status as political refugees approved and obstacles blocking their path, such as the terror label, be removed.
- 7. That the closure of PMOI and NCRI offices in Washington, which have revealed the Iranian regime's clandestine nuclear projects, is one of the consequences of this policy and violated the freedom of expression and other rights of thousands of Iranian-Americans across the U.S., who support this resistance. The National Convention of Iranian-Americans calls for the immediate re-opening of these offices.
- 8. That the Iranian regime has lied and misled the international community for the past 18 years regarding its nuclear activities. The National Convention of Iranian-Americans calls for the mullahs' nuclear file to be referred immediately to the UN Security Council.



2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran

2005 National Convention for a Democratic, Secular Republic in Iran

DAR Constitution Hall Washington, DC