

Iran's Presidential Elections

Statement by a Group of Iranian Anti-war Activists

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We are a group of Iranian academic and antiwar activists in Europe and the United States who, in the past few years, have consistently defended Iran's national interests in all areas including its right to develop peaceful nuclear technology. Our varied activities in the face of anti-Iran propaganda by the neoconservatives in the West have included organizing press conferences, taking part in radio and TV debates, creating antiwar websites, publishing bulletins and newsletters, writing opinion pieces and letters to editors, attending national and international antiwar conferences and petitioning and lobbying western politicians and parliamentarians.

We have campaigned against the policies of the United States and its Western allies which have unjustifiably targeted Iran – including sending Iran's nuclear dossier to the United Nations Security Council, issuing UNSC resolutions against Iran, secret and public efforts to provoke strife in Iran and destabilize the country, and threats by the United States and Israel for military intervention and bombing of Iran's nuclear facilities.

As we approach Iran's presidential elections, we are duty bound to share the lessons of our antiwar activities and highlight what national policies can defend Iran's interests effectively in the international arena without isolating it or enduring U.N. sanctions.

In order to safeguard Iran's national rights successfully, we think Iran's president elect must give priority to the following policies in his programs and plans:

- (1) Questioning the Holocaust, which has greatly aided the hawks in the West, must be discarded and replaced with a constructive foreign policy devoid of any provocative rhetoric.
- (2) Release of all political prisoners, freedom of press, organization and political parties, as well as peaceful meetings and gatherings. Recognizing the right of all citizens to run for election without any political vetting.
- (3) Abolishing medieval punishments, such as stoning and cutting limbs, public executions and execution of minors.

(4) Recognizing full and unconditional equality in all areas for women and ethnic minorities. Recognizing the full citizenship and civic rights of official and unofficial religious minorities.

Disregarding these tasks will seriously hinder the social and political development of the country, and will divide the Iranian people in their resistance against the unwarranted neo-colonial pressure and double standards of the Western powers. It will also provide powerful propaganda tools to hawks and their allies in mainstream media for isolating Iran and denying its fundamental rights in international organizations.

Taking steps to carry out these measures, on the other hand, will put our country on a fast track to progress, will unite Iranians of all walks of life, and disarm the neoconservatives in their aggressive propaganda against Iran.

Signed

Professor Ervand Abrahamian, City University of New York

Dr Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, School of Oriental and African Studies

Professor Haleh Afshar, University of York

Professor Mohammad Ala, Persian Gulf Task Force

Professor Hamid Dabashi, Columbia University

Professor Abbas Edalat, Imperial College London

Ali Fathollah-Nejad, University of Muenster and School of Oriental and African Studies

Dr Mehri Honarbin, Canterbury Christ Church University

Dr Farhang Jahanpour, University of Oxford

Mohammad Kamaali, Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran

Professor Mahmoud Karimi-Hakkak, Siena College, New York

Professor Fatemeh Keshavarz, Washington University in St. Louis.

Dr Ziba Mir-Hosseini, School of Oriental and African Studies

Professor Pirouz Mojtahedzadeh, Tarbiyat Modarres University

Professor Davood Nabi-Rahni, Pace University in New York

Professor Azam Niroomand-Rad, Georgetown University

Dr Ali Rastbeen, International Institute of Strategic Studies Paris

Dr Elaheh Rostami, School of Oriental and African Studies

Professor Nader Sadeghi, George Washington University Hospital

Shirin Saeidi, University of Cambridge

Professor Muhammad Sahimi, University of Southern California

Leila Zand, Fellowship of Reconciliation

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