

Iran's spiritual leader backs Ahmadinejad election victory

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, June 19, 2009

[RIA Novosti](#) 19 June 2009

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Friday rejected the possibility that vote rigging affected the result of the country's presidential election.

In his sermon for Friday prayers, he dismissed the possibility of electoral fraud by the state, and said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's margin of victory, at more than 11 million votes, was too great for the election to have been stolen.

Tehran has been swept by mass demonstrations over alleged ballot fraud in the landslide reelection of the hardline president on June 12. Official results gave the incumbent 63% of the vote, with reformist challenger Mir Hossein Mousavi getting 34%.

Calling on the country to unite after days of protests against the results of the presidential elections, he said that allegations of fraud should be dealt with through legal channels, and said that people's opinions should be expressed in elections, not on the street.

He stressed that everyone involved, both candidates and voters, supported the state and the revolution, but he declared his support for the policies of Ahmadinejad.

Khamenei initially congratulated Ahmadinejad on his victory, but later met with former prime minister Mousavi and asked for the runner-up's allegations of vote fraud to be examined.

The Guardian Council, Iran's top legislative body, is looking at accusations of fraud in the vote, but its response has so far not satisfied the opposition.

Mousavi has said he is ready for fresh elections. Tens of thousands of his supporters have been protesting daily in Tehran in defiance of a government ban. Eight people were shot dead on Monday during street protests.

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