

**Debate Pack**

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CDP-0019 (2024)

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# Freedom and democracy in Iran

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# 1

## Summary

On Thursday 1 February 2024, there will be a debate in the House of Commons Chamber on a motion on freedom and democracy in Iran. The [motion reads](#):

That this House condemns unreservedly the actions of the government of Iran and the violent conduct of the police in suppressing protests in that country; is deeply concerned over Tehran’s growing use of terrorism, espionage, cyber attacks and hostage-taking diplomacy to restrict and eliminate the Iranian democratic opposition, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), targeting in particular members of the organised opposition, PMOI (MEK), in Ashraf 3, Albania and NCRI gatherings since 2018; notes that the resistance is struggling for the establishment of a secular democratic republic; calls on European governments, especially the government of Albania, to counter Tehran’s illegal activities and uphold the rights of members of the Iranian opposition PMOI (MEK) at Ashraf-3 in accordance with the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, the European Convention of Human Rights and international law; is further concerned by reports of threats made to Iranian dissidents in the UK; urges the Government to include Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on the list of proscribed terrorist organisations; and further calls upon the Government to work with international counterparts to ensure that further sanctions are placed on Iran without delay and Iran is held to account for its illegal activities at home and abroad.

The debate will be led by Bob Blackman MP and the topic was chosen by the Backbench Business Committee. This briefing provides background on Iran’s 2024 elections, Iran’s actions in Albania, and debate in the UK on proscribing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist group.

# 2

## Background

### 2.1

### Iran’s elections in 2024

The Islamic Revolution of 1979, which saw the Shah overthrown, introduced a new constitution for Iran. While this includes several elected elements, the concept of “wilayat al-faqih” (“Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist”), provides for clerical supremacy over the Republic through the country’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

As set out in a Council on Foreign Relations article, [The Islamic Republic’s power centers](#), the Iranian state has several layers of governance. Appointed clerics wield significant power through assessing candidates for elected office and examining legislation passed by the Iranian parliament.

## March 2024 elections

Elections to Iran's Majlis-e Shura-e Islami (Parliament) and Majlis-e Khobregan (Assembly of Experts) will be held on 1 March 2024.

The 12-strong [Guardian Council](#), constituted of six Muslim jurists appointed by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, and six lay Muslim lawyers, appointed by the Parliament, approve candidates for these two bodies:

- The [Assembly of Experts](#) is the only body with the power to appoint, supervise, and dismiss the Supreme Leader. It comprises 88 clerics and is elected every eight years. Current Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, is 84, and, as noted by the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, the new body may play a significant role in choosing his successor.<sup>1</sup>
- The [Parliament](#) is a single-chamber body with 290 members. Its powers are limited and both laws and candidates can be vetoed by the Guardian Council.

In January 2024, the Guardian Council banned former President Hassan Rouhani from standing again in the elections to the Assembly of Experts. Rouhani was Iranian president from 2013 to 2021 and signed the 2015 Nuclear Agreement with China, Russia, Germany, France, UK, and United States.<sup>2</sup>

The elections will be the first in Iran since the protests that followed the death of Mahsa Amini in September 2022.<sup>3</sup> On 24 January, Iran executed a ninth person for their involvement in the protests. The BBC reports 19 others are under sentence of death or at risk of being handed the death penalty.<sup>4</sup>

As in previous elections, the Guardian Council are expected to bar many moderates and reformers from standing (some opponents have also called for a boycott of the election).<sup>5</sup> Low turnout will be interpreted as a sign of challenge to the regime's legitimacy, as argued by the Washington Institute, though opposition to the regime in Iran remains disunited.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, [Khamenei's succession dilemma](#), 7 December 2023

<sup>2</sup> [Iran bans ex-president Rouhani from running for elite assembly](#), Reuters, 24 January 2024

<sup>3</sup> For more, see the Commons Library research briefing, [2022 Iran protests: Human rights and international response](#), 26 May 2023

<sup>4</sup> [Mohammed Ghobadlou: Iran executes protester with mental health condition](#), BBC News, 24 January 2024

<sup>5</sup> Iran International, [Many incumbent and ex-lawmakers barred from running in Iran election](#), 7 January 2024; IranWire, [Jailed activist Hashemi urges Iranian to boycott 'symbolic' elections](#), 3 July 2023

<sup>6</sup> Washington Institute, [The 2024 election cycle starts in Iran](#), 18 August 2023 Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, [The Iranian opposition abroad](#), 9 March 2023

As noted by the US Institute for Peace, Iran's economy continues to experience substantial challenges with rises in the cost of fuel and water.<sup>7</sup> The enforcement of the Islamic dress code also remains a point of tension.<sup>8</sup>

In January 2024, the US State Department spokesperson, Vedant Patel, said the United States has “no expectations” that Iran's elections will be free and fair and that many candidates have already been disqualified “through what we believe to be an opaque process”.<sup>9</sup>

The UK Government says it supports “Iranians standing up for their fundamental freedoms by ensuring the regime is held to account for its violent repression of protests”, including through the [UK sanctions regime](#).<sup>10</sup> The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office also publishes [an annual assessment on human rights in Iran](#).

## 2.2 Iranian actions in Albania

The motion for debate refers to the targeting of opposition groups, including the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), in Albania since 2018.

The [NCRI](#) is an Iranian political organisation based in France and Albania and was founded in 1981 to oppose the Islamic regime put in place since 1979. Its ten point plan for Iran's future includes rejection of clerical rule, establishing freedom of speech and assembly, and establishing a democratic Iran.<sup>11</sup>

The [PMOI/MEK](#) is one of the five organisations represented in the NCRI.

As set out in the [Commons Library research briefing on the PMOI/MEK](#), 2016, the PMOI/MEK was a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK from 2001 to 2008 (and also designated by the European Union and United States). In the UK, its proscription was removed following a high court judgement. The Council on Foreign Relations [article on the Mojahedin Organization of Iran \(MEK\)](#), 2014, provides more information on the group and its history.

Since 1997 the NCRI's leader, Maryam Rajavi, has been refused a visa to enter the UK. This is on the grounds of being judged by the Home Office as “not be[ing] conducive to the public good for reasons of foreign policy and in light of the need to take a firm stance against terrorism”.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> US Institute for Peace, [Iran 2024: Political challenges](#), 17 November 2023

<sup>8</sup> US Institute for Peace, [Amnesty International: Iran's hijab enforcement](#), 27 July 2023

<sup>9</sup> US State Department, [Department press briefing](#), 24 January 2023

<sup>10</sup> PQ 185403 [[Iran: Human rights](#)], 24 May 2023

<sup>11</sup> NCRI, [Maryam Rajavi's ten point plan for the future of Iran](#)

<sup>12</sup> UK Supreme Court, [R \(on the application of Lord Carlile \[...\] and others\) \(appellants\) v Secretary of State for the Home department \(respondent\)](#) (PDF), 2013

The Ashraf-3 camp, referred to in the motion, houses several thousand members of the PMOI/MEK. The group was previously based in Iraq, where it backed Saddam Hussein.<sup>13</sup> They were relocated to Albania with US support.<sup>14</sup>

As set out in analysis by the Middle East Institute, [Iran's Balkan front](#), 2022, Iran has been accused of carrying out operations and planning terrorist activity against the PMOI/MEK and other opponents in Albania. Alleged Iranian actions included a cyberattack against Albania in 2022, causing Albania to sever ties with Iran (Iran denies these allegations).<sup>15</sup>

In June 2023, Albanian police conducted a raid in Ashraf-3, following reports that some residents had been engaged in political and other activity that is against Albania's agreement to shelter the PMOI/MEK.<sup>16</sup> The US State Department said the Albanian police had assured them that their actions were in accordance with the country's laws and the US "support the Government of Albania's right to investigate any potential illegal activities".<sup>17</sup>

## 2.3

## The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

The motion for debate also "urges the Government to include Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on the list of proscribed terrorist organisations".

### What is the IRGC?

The IRGC is an Iranian state military and intelligence service, introduced following the 1979 revolution as a counterweight to Iran's regular armed forces. The IRGC has ground forces in Iran totalling more than 100,000 personnel, as well as naval and air forces.<sup>18</sup> It also controls the [paramilitary Basij force](#), which can mobilise up to 600,000 volunteers, and supported the suppression of the protests that followed the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022.<sup>19</sup>

As set out in the US State Department on country report on terrorism by Iran, the IRGC's Qod's Force ([its external arm](#)), designated a foreign terrorist organisation by the United States in 2019, is Iran's "primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorist activity abroad", including in Syria and

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<sup>13</sup> RAND, [The Mujahedin-e Khalq in Iraq: A policy conundrum](#), 2009

<sup>14</sup> [Albania's sanctuary offer to Iranians raises eyebrows](#), Balkan Insight, 18 March 2013

<sup>15</sup> US Institute for Peace, [Albania cuts ties with Iran over cyberattack](#), 12 September 2022

<sup>16</sup> [Police raid Iranian opposition camp in Albania, seize computers](#), AP, 20 June 2023

<sup>17</sup> [US voices support for Albanian raid on camp for Iranian dissidents](#), Radio Free Europe, 21 June 2023

<sup>18</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, [Iran's revolutionary guards](#), 8 January 2024

<sup>19</sup> IPSI, [The IRGC and Iran's 2022 uprisings](#), 4 January 2023

Iraq.<sup>20</sup> In December 2023, the UK and US also announced new sanctions in response to the IRGC Qod Force's support for Hamas in Gaza.<sup>21</sup>

As set out in section 2 of the Commons Library research briefing on [Houthi attacks on shipping in the Red Sea since November 2023](#), both the US and UK Governments judge that the Houthi attacks have been supported by Iran. Media reports state IRGC support has included training and providing intelligence to the Houthis to help them identify and target shipping.<sup>22</sup>

## Iranian actions in the UK

In the United Kingdom, the IRGC have also been linked to kidnap and assassination plots. In February 2023, UK counter-terrorism police said there had been 15 such plots by Iran since 2020.<sup>23</sup> These included threats to journalists and attempts to collect intelligence on UK-based individuals linked to Iran or Israel.<sup>24</sup> In January 2024, the Charity Commission also launched an investigation of antisemitic speeches by members of the IRGC, given to students in the UK.<sup>25</sup>

## UK sanctions against the IRGC

The IRGC is currently sanctioned in its entirety by the UK Government.<sup>26</sup> These sanctions apply asset freezes and other financial measures against the IRGC and individual members. In December 2023, a new UK sanctions regime against Iran came into force.<sup>27</sup> The legislation expands the criteria under which entities and individuals can be sanctioned, including undermining democracy and hostile activity towards the UK.<sup>28</sup> The first designations were made in December, and whose targets included IRGC members.

## UK debate on proscribing the IRGC

As set out in the Commons Library on [Proscribed Terrorist Organisations](#), proscription is a separate process to sanctioning and is a decision made by the Home Secretary under the Terrorism Act 2000. Proscribing would, among other impacts, make membership of the group illegal.

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<sup>20</sup> US State Department, [Country reports on terrorism 2021: Iran](#), 2022

<sup>21</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), [New Iranian sanction regime comes into force](#), 14 December 2023; US Treasury Department, [US and UK target IRGC-QF support to Hamas and other proxy groups](#), 14 December 2023

<sup>22</sup> [Houthi rebels who attacked British ship trained at elite Iran academy](#), The Telegraph, 10 January 2024; [Iranian and Hezbollah commanders help direct Houthi attacks in Yemen](#), Reuters, 21 January 2024

<sup>23</sup> [Hostile-state threat probes grown fourfold—police](#), BBC News, 16 February 2023

<sup>24</sup> HC Deb, [20 February 2023](#), c50

<sup>25</sup> [UK officials probe Iran generals' antisemitic talks to students](#), BBC News, 23 January 2024

<sup>26</sup> HM Treasury, [Financial sanctions, Iran relating to nuclear weapons](#), updated 14 December 2023

<sup>27</sup> FCDO, [New Iranian sanction regime comes into force](#), 14 December 2023

<sup>28</sup> [The Iran \(Sanctions\) Regulations 2023](#)

Members from across the House of Commons have called for the proscription of the IRGC:

- The Shadow Foreign Secretary, David Lammy, has said Labour would support proscription, “either by using existing terrorism legislation or by creating a new process of proscription for hostile state actors”.<sup>29</sup>
- The Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Alicia Kearns, has said the group should be proscribed. In January 2024 she warned “Iran will see it as an act of war [...] [and] we will likely have to close our embassy”.<sup>30</sup> Iran’s Foreign Minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, has previously said labelling the IRGC as a terrorist organisation would be interpreted by Iran as a “serious escalation.”<sup>31</sup>
- The former Defence Secretary, Dr Liam Fox and former Home Office Minister, Robert Jenrick, have argued the IRGC should be proscribed.<sup>32</sup>
- The SNP Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, Brendon O’Hara and the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Sir Ed Davey, have also backed proscription.<sup>33</sup>

Previously, in 2020, the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee had argued proscribing the IRGC was “a logical extension of the existing restrictions placed” on IRGC members.<sup>34</sup> In January 2023, the Commons also debated, and agreed to, a motion on Iran which included a request for the Government to proscribe the IRGC.<sup>35</sup> In April 2023 and November 2023 a cross-party groups of MPs and Peers also wrote to the Government urging proscription.<sup>36</sup>

Analysis for the Washington Institute notes the practical effects of the US decision to designate the IRGC a foreign terrorist group in 2019 were limited in the context of wider sanctions already been applied, but also argued it sent, and continues to send, an important message to Iran about its actions both abroad and at home.<sup>37</sup> Research for the Tony Blair Institute in 2023 argues that the group meets the [criteria for proscription](#) under the Terrorism Act

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<sup>29</sup> HC Deb, [31 January 2023](#), c186

<sup>30</sup> HC Deb, [24 January 2024](#), c361

<sup>31</sup> [‘Terrorist’ designation for Iran’s IRGC would harm EU security](#), Al-Jazeera, 23 January 2023

<sup>32</sup> HC Deb, [16 October 2023](#), c37, [Britain must proscribe Iran’s IRGC \[...\]](#), The Telegraph, 20 January 2024

<sup>33</sup> HC Deb, [6 July 2023](#), c1001; HC Deb, [16 October 2023](#), c28

<sup>34</sup> Foreign Affairs Committee, [No prosperity without justice: The UK’s relationship with Iran](#), 2020, para 50

<sup>35</sup> HC Deb, [12 January 2023](#), c772

<sup>36</sup> [More than 100 MPs sign letter to Rishi Sunak backing Iranian activist’s hunger strike \[...\]](#), The Standard, 19 April 2023; [Pressure mounts on Sunak to proscribe Iran’s revolutionary guard as terrorists](#), The Telegraph, 11 November 2023

<sup>37</sup> Washington Institute, [What will IRGC designation actually do?](#), 8 April 2019 and [Don’t drop Iran’s revolutionary guards from FTO list](#), 21 March 2022

2000 and that proscribing the IRGC would “send a clear message” that Iranian activity in the UK “will not be tolerated”.<sup>38</sup>

In January 2023, the Independent newspaper cited an assessment by the UK’s Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, Jonathan Hall, that advised proscribing the IRGC, as a state entity of Iran, under the Terrorism Act would be “at the risk of upsetting the settled meaning of terrorism in domestic law” which had, to date, excluded the armed forces of nation-states.<sup>39</sup> He reiterated this position in September, arguing that “proscription is saying that these groups shouldn’t exist at all [...] no one is saying that Iran should not have a security department, we just need to change its behaviour”.<sup>40</sup>

In September 2023, the UK’s Commissioner for Countering Extremism, Robin Simcox, said it was in the “national interest” to proscribe the IRGC as it supports proscribed groups around the world and remains legal to be hosted in UK institutions.<sup>41</sup>

## UK Government position and statements

In January 2023, both the Telegraph and the BBC reported that the UK Government was preparing to designate the IRGC a terrorist organisation, following the decision made by the United States in 2019.<sup>42</sup> However, no change in policy was announced.

In February 2023, the Minister for Security, Tom Tugendhat, cited the potential for an international agreement on proscribing the group:

It is interesting to note that, of the so-called E3+3 [UK, US, China, France, Germany and Russia], Germany and France appear to be looking at proscribing the IRGC, as the United States has already done. It seems that not only is there international agreement on the point the hon. Member [Virendra Sharma] raises, but that action is absolutely ready to go.<sup>43</sup>

However, neither France, Germany, nor the European Union have since announced plans to proscribe the IRGC.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, [Making the case for the UK to proscribe Iran’s IRGC](#), 17 January 2023

<sup>39</sup> [Declaring Iran’s IRGC a terrorist group would destabilise UK’s definition of terrorism \[...\]](#), The Independent, 11 January 2024; Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, [IRGC](#), 11 January 2023

<sup>40</sup> [Iran guards ‘shouldn’t be treated as a terror group’](#), The Times, 20 September 2023

<sup>41</sup> RUSI, [Countering extremist threats in the UK: An address by Robin Simcox](#), 19 October 2023

<sup>42</sup> [Iran’s Islamic revolutionary guards set to be proscribed as terror group](#), The Telegraph, 2 January 2023; [Iran’s revolutionary guards set to be labelled as terrorist group by UK](#), BBC News, 3 January 2023; White House, [Statement from the President of the designation of the IRGC as foreign terrorist organisation](#), 8 April 2019

<sup>43</sup> HC Deb, [6 February 2023](#), c638

<sup>44</sup> Verfassungsblog, [Why declaring the IRGC a terrorist group is trickier business than one may think](#), 2 February 2023



In July 2023, when announcing the new sanctions regime against Iran, the former Foreign Secretary James Cleverly also expressed caution on proscription. He said he recognises some see this as the “desired outcome”:

without necessarily understanding that much of what they suspect they want to see [as] [...] the outcome of proscription is actually already in place, such as asset freezes and travel bans [under the sanctions regime].<sup>45</sup>

In November, the Government also emphasised powers under the [National Security Act](#) and the existing sanctions regime to address Iranian actions:

The National Security Act will provide another significant toolkit in the fight against individuals working for state entities such as the IRGC; it criminalises a wide range of hostile activities conducted by, for or on behalf of foreign powers. Materially assisting a foreign intelligence service in any activity in or related to the UK will be a crime.

We continue to make use of any and every opportunity to call out Iran’s malign activity [...] More than 350 Iranian individuals and entities have been sanctioned for activities, including human rights violations. Since January 2023, we have sanctioned more than 140 Iranian individuals and entities in response to the regime’s human rights violations. That is being strengthened.<sup>46</sup>

In December 2023, Foreign Secretary Lord Cameron reiterated the Government’s position, saying proscribing the IRGC was “not something that either the intelligence agencies or the police are calling for”.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> HC Deb, [6 July 2023](#), c1001

<sup>46</sup> HL Deb, [29 November 2023](#), cc1082-3

<sup>47</sup> David Cameron: [When Rishi asked me to do this job, my instant reaction was to say yes](#), The Telegraph, 23 December 2023

### 3

## Press and media articles

### [Iranian women allowed into football stadiums but journey is far from over](#)

The Guardian  
John Duerden  
25 January 2024

### [Iran's regime executes political prisoner Mohammad Ghobadlou in relation to 2022 nationwide uprising](#)

People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran  
Mahin Horri  
23 January 2024

### [What Iranians Want by Arash Azizi review – the quest for a normal life](#)

The Guardian  
Mythili Rao  
17 January 2024

### [Iranian Cleric Says Democracy Breeds Too Much Freedom](#)

Iran International  
14 January 2024

### [Report: Iran's Torture, Sexual Assaults & Killings](#)

United States Institute for Peace – The Iran Primer  
12 January 2024

### [Celebrity chef is arrested in Iran for posting a recipe for roast cutlets on the third anniversary of General Suleimani's death - seen as a reference to the regime tyrant being blown up by US drone](#)

Mail Online  
Christian Oliver  
6 January 2024

### [The West may now have no option but to attack Iran](#)

Daily Telegraph (subscription required)  
John Bolton  
28 December 2023

### [European Parliament Sakharov Prize honours Jina Amini, Jin Jiyan Azadi movement](#)

Medya News  
12 December 2023

### [Iran president advocates for transparent elections](#)

Tehran Times  
29 November 2023

**Iran approves stricter hijab bill targeting those who ‘mock’ dress code**

The Guardian

Deepa Parent

20 September 2023

**‘Woman, life, freedom’: Iran one year after Mahsa Amini’s death**

Al Jazeera

15 September 2023

**The protests in Iran are not a revolution—yet. These events must occur first.**

Atlantic Council

Jack A. Goldstone

7 September 2023

**Iran’s ‘Woman, Life, Freedom’ Movement Highlights Global Issues**

Shabnam Holliday

LSE Blogs

7 February 2023

## 4

# Government statements on Gov.UK

### [New Iranian sanction regime comes in to force](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

14 December 2023

The UK's new Iran sanctions regime comes into force today, giving the UK extensive new powers to hold Iran and its decision makers to account.

### [UK and allies sanction human rights abusers](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

8 December 2023

UK and allies have sanctioned human rights abusers 75 years after Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### [Persecution of the Baha'i faith in Iran: FCDO statement](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

5 October 2023

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has released a statement calling on Iran to cease the persecution of the Baha'i faith in Iran.

### [UN HRC53: Joint Statement on human rights situation in Iran](#)

UK Mission to the WTO, UN and Other International Organisations  
(Geneva)

Last updated 11 July 2023

Joint statement on oral update by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran. Delivered by Ambassador Shara Duncan Villalobos of Costa Rica.

### [UK steps up action to tackle rising threat posed by Iran](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

6 July 2023

The Foreign Secretary has announced plans for a new sanctions regime to hold Iran to account for its hostile and destabilising behaviour around the world.

### [The regime cannot ignore calls for change: UK and partners call out Iran over executions](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

5 July 2023

The UK's Minister of State for the Middle East has urged the Iranian regime to end the surge in executions, following a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council.

[UN HRC53: Statement on Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Iran](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

5 July 2023

Interactive Dialogue with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Islamic Republic of Iran. Delivered by UK Human Rights Ambassador Rita French.

[HRC 52: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Iran](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

20 March 2023

UK Human Rights Ambassador Rita French delivered her statement on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[UK sanctions top Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps financiers](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

20 March 2023

The UK sanctioned 5 members of the Board of Directors of the IRGC Co-operative Foundation. This organisation funnels money into the Iranian regime's repression.

[UK announces sanctions against global violators of women's rights](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

8 March 2023

The Foreign Secretary announces sanctions on International Women's Day targeting gender-based violence in Iran, Syria, South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

[HRC52: Joint Statement on the death penalty in Iran](#)

British Embassy Tirana and UK Mission to the WTO, UN and Other International Organisations (Geneva)

28 February 2023

During the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, the UK co-sponsored a Joint Statement relating to the use of the death penalty in Iran. This statement was delivered by H.E. Christian Guillermet, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs to Costa Rica on 28 February 2023.

[Foreign Secretary summons Iranian diplomat over continued threat to UK-based journalists](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

20 February 2023

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly instructed FCDO officials to summon Iran's most senior diplomat, due to serious threats against journalists living in the UK, and sanctions further Iranian officials.

[UK imposes further coordinated sanctions on Iranian regime officials](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

23 January 2023

The Foreign Secretary announced more sanctions on Iranian officials at the heart of the regime's repression, including on Deputy Prosecutor General Ahmad Fazelian.

[UK sanctions Iranian Prosecutor General following execution of Alireza Akbari](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

14 January 2023

The UK has sanctioned with immediate effect Iran's Prosecutor General, following the execution of British-Iranian dual national Alireza Akbari.

[Execution of Alireza Akbari in Iran: Foreign Secretary's statement](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

14 January 2023

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly has issued a statement following the execution of British-Iranian Alireza Akbari.

[Foreign Secretary summons Iranian diplomat following executions](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

9 January 2023

The Foreign Secretary has summoned the Iranian Chargé d'Affaires after the regime executed two more protestors.

## 5

## PQs

Iran

12 Dec 2023 | 742 c733

**Asked by: Sir Chris Bryant**

I agree with the comments made by the right hon. Member for Chipping Barnet (Theresa Villiers), but should we not also be wondering about what Iran is doing within its own borders? Four hundred and nineteen people were executed in Iran between January and July, and 127 have been executed since 7 October. Iran has been using what is happening in Israel as a cover for much faster executions, including those of 17-year-old Hamidreza Azari—a child—and Milad Zohrevand, who is the eighth “Woman, Life, Freedom” protester to have been executed by this horrible regime. Is it not time that we really took the case to Iran about its own human rights record?

**Answered by: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The hon. Member makes a very important point. We call out the brutal repression of the protests that have taken place, and we continue to hold Iran to account for its human rights record, including the repression of women, girls and children, as he highlights. We will, as I said, bring to bear a new sanctions regime to assist in those efforts.

British Committee for Iran Freedom

06 Dec 2023 | HL508

**Asked by: Lord Empey**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the work in the UK of the British Committee for Iran Freedom.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We are aware of the British Committee for Iran Freedom's work as well as its political affiliations. The FCDO believe that it is for all Iranians to ultimately determine the future of Iran.

Elaheh Mohammadi and Niloufar Hamed

20 Nov 2023 | 809

**Asked by: Jim Shannon**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the sentencing of (a) Niloufar Hamed and (b) Elaheh Mohammadi in Iran.

**Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Iran remains an FCDO Human Rights Priority Country and we raise human rights issues with Iran at all appropriate opportunities. The sentencing of Niloufar Hamedei and Elaheh Mohammadi demonstrates the brutal reality of life in Iran for journalists. As a Media Freedom Coalition member, we continue to stress the protection of journalists as a key pillar of human rights infrastructure, and to call for the immediate release of arbitrarily detained journalists. We continue to hold the Iranian authorities to account for their treatment of women. In September, we imposed sanctions on decision-makers responsible for drafting and implementing Iran's mandatory hijab law.

**[Iran: Christianity](#)**

**26 Oct 2023 | 203471**

**Asked by: Andrew Rosindell**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to support persecuted Christians in Iran.

**Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is an active member of the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance, which is currently chaired by the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Fiona Bruce MP. In July 2022, we hosted the last International Ministerial Conference on FoRB in London, during which the situation of religious minorities in Iran was discussed as a priority. Iran has a record of discrimination, harassment and targeting of minority religious and ethnic communities. We raise these issues at all appropriate opportunities with Iran and in international fora, and we continue to work with the international community to press Iran to improve its dire human rights record.

**[Iran: Human Rights](#)**

**25 Sep 2023 | 199291**

**Asked by: Hywel Williams**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the Government's policy is on the inclusion of a separate operative paragraph on the persecution of Baha'is in any potential resolution on human rights in Iran that is tabled at the 78th session of UN General Assembly; and if he will make a statement.



**Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We are committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all and we have repeatedly expressed concern at Iran's ongoing discrimination against Baha'i leaders and members of the Baha'i faith. The UK highlighted Iran's treatment of Baha'is at the United Nations Third Committee in November and co-sponsored the UN General Assembly Resolution on Iran Human Rights, which calls on Iran to protect members of religious minorities including the Baha'i, and we will continue to support language on this issue. We will continue to work closely with international partners at the UN and in other fora to hold Iran to account for its dire human rights record.

**Iran: Detainees**

**19 Sep 2023 | 199434**

**Asked by: Nadia Whittome**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has held with his counterparts in Iran on the (a) incarceration of (i) Mahvash Sabet, (ii) Fariba Kamalabadi and (iii) Afif Naeimi and (b) medical reports about the health of (A) Mahvash Sabet and (B) Afif Naeimi; and if he will make a statement.

**Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The continued restrictions on freedoms of religion and belief in Iran are deeply worrying, as is Iran's discrimination against religious minorities. In June, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) publicly condemned the sentencing of Baha'i leaders in Iran, in particular the continuing imprisonment of Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will continue to monitor the cases of Mahvash Sabet, Fariba Kamalabadi and Afif Naeimi and to challenge Iran on its human rights record.

**Business of the House**

**14 Sep 2023 | 737 c1034**

**Asked by: Jim Shannon**

This week marks the one-year anniversary of the death of Mahsa Amini in Iranian custody. As many hon. Members will clearly recall, she was murdered by the Iranian security authorities because she dared to speak up against Government brutality. In that time there has been no accountability for her death or for the deaths of more than 500 protesters across the country. All that the people in Iran want is freedom, liberty, a democratic society, a people-led Government and the rights of freedom of religious belief to be secured for all. Will the Leader of the House join me and others in this House in calling for justice for Mahsa Amini and all the others who have been murdered?

**Answered by: Penny Mordaunt | Leader of the House**

I thank the hon. Gentleman for again shining a spotlight on those important matters, as he does every single week. I think that particular case struck such a chord with many people around the world, and we very much salute the courage that Mahsa Amini and her peers showed in the protests. Many people who protest against the regime, not just from Iran but from the UK and elsewhere, are subject to intimidation and death threats for calling out its barbarity. Everyone deserves human rights; the women of Iran deserve human rights and the ability to live their life as they wish. I know that there will be many events inside and outside Parliament to mark this anniversary, and that they will be well attended by Members of this place. I thank the hon. Gentleman again.

**Iran: Religious Freedom**

**04 Jul 2023 | 191166**

**Asked by: Alexander Stafford**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on freedom of religion and belief in Iran.

**Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is a proud member of the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance, which is currently chaired by the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Fiona Bruce MP. In July 2022, we hosted the International Ministerial Conference on FoRB in London, during which a number of priority issues were discussed including the situation of religious minorities in Iran. Iran has a record of discrimination, harassment and targeting of minority religious and ethnic communities. We raise these issues at all appropriate opportunities with Iran and we continue to take action with the international community to press Iran to improve its dire human rights record.

**Iran: Democracy and Peace**

**24 May 2023 | 185404**

**Asked by: Stephen Morgan**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking with his international counterparts to promote peace and democracy in Iran.

**Answering member: David Rutley | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK supports Iranians standing up for their fundamental freedoms by ensuring the regime is held to account for its violent repression of protests. Since October 2022, the UK has designated more than 70 Iranian officials and

entities involved in serious human rights violations. This includes Iran's prosecutor general, deputy prosecutor general, and others responsible for egregious prison sentences and use of the death penalty. We work closely with our international partners to ensure accountability on the world stage, including through the establishment of a UN Fact Finding Mission. We continue to raise Iran's dire human rights record at all appropriate opportunities, and call on the regime to listen to the people's clear desire for meaningful change.

### **Soft Power**

**09 Feb 2023 | 827 c1328**

#### **Asked by: Baroness D'Souza**

My Lords, yesterday some of us from this House attended a meeting on the BBC World Service in Iran. That programme is now severely threatened due to various expenditure cuts and the flat licence fee, yet the BBC World Service is the only voice of democracy and values that Iranians have access to at the moment. Can the Minister guarantee that this programme has special consideration by the FCDO to preserve it and allow it to have sufficient funding?

#### **Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

My Lords, I pay tribute to the noble Baroness's work in this area. I assure her that we are very much—again—seized of the evolving and changing situation in Iran. We have seen the most appalling and abhorrent suppression of human rights by Iran on its own communities, particularly women and girls. As I understand it, under the current BBC proposals no services will be closed. The issue is one of broadcast services and radio. According to the figures I have, about 1% of the BBC's total weekly audience of 13.8 million in Iran get BBC news solely by radio. The other 99% use BBC Persian on TV and online. However, I hear what the noble Baroness says. Although the BBC has an independent mandate to work in this respect, the importance of BBC Persian services in Iran is very much a key priority for us as well.

## 6 Other Parliamentary material

### 6.1 Debates

#### [Iran \(Sanctions\) Regulations 2023](#)

**23 Jan 2024 | House of Lords Grand Committee | 835 cc177-185GC**

Lords motion to consider. Agreed to on question.

#### [Freedom of Religion and Belief](#)

**19 Sep 2023 | House of Commons | 737 cc453-476WH**

Motion that this House has considered freedom of religion and belief. Agreed to on question.

#### [British Nationals Detained Overseas](#)

**05 Sep 2023 | House of Commons | 737 cc108-124WH**

Motion that this House has considered British nationals detained overseas. Agreed to on question.

#### [Iran](#)

**07 Jun 2023 | House of Commons | 733 cc327-351WH**

Motion that this House has considered Government policy on Iran. Agreed to on question.

#### [International Women's Day](#)

**09 Mar 2023 | House of Commons | 729 cc430-480**

Motion that this House has considered International Women's Day. Agreed to on question.

#### [British-Iranian Relations](#)

**23 Feb 2023 | House of Lords | 827 cc510-525GC**

Lords question for short debate on what their priorities are in respect of the conduct of British-Iranian relations.

#### [Iran](#)

**12 Jan 2023 | House of Commons | 725 cc726-772**

Motion that this House condemns unreservedly the actions of the Government of Iran in suppressing protests in that country; deplores the violent behaviour of Iranian police in regard to those protests; is deeply concerned by reports of threats made to organisations in the UK which support the rights of protesters in Iran; urges His Majesty's Government to include Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on the list of proscribed terrorist organisations; and calls upon His Majesty's Government to work with international counterparts to ensure that further sanctions are placed on Iran without delay. Agreed to on question.

## 6.2

# Statements and Urgent Questions

### Iran

**06 Jul 2023 | House of Lords | 831 cc1403-1413**

Lords statement on the threat that Iran poses to the United Kingdom and the actions that the Government are taking to counter it.

### Iran

**06 Jul 2023 | House of Commons | 735 cc995-1005**

Statement on the threat that Iran poses to the United Kingdom and the actions that the Government are taking to counter it.

### Sanctions Designations

**08 Mar 2023 | House of Commons | HCWS618**

On the 8 March, to mark International Women’s Day, the UK announced a package of sanctions demonstrating the UK’s resolve to take action against those that seek to suppress women or use sexual violence as a weapon of war. These five sanctions over four countries follow previous designations announced on 9 December 2022. Travel bans and/or asset freezes have been imposed on designated individuals and entities.

The package includes further sanctions on the Iranian regime, including two designations relating to the forceful imposition of ‘morality’ rules against women. We will continue to hold this regime to account, ensuring there are no hiding places for those who violate women’s fundamental human rights.

Today’s sanctions include designations that target abhorrent crimes of sexual and gender-based violence using Central African Republic (CAR), Syria, and South Sudan sanctions regimes. This sends a strong signal about respect for human rights, accountability, and the UK’s preparedness to take action.

The specific designations are:

[...]

Iran

3. The Headquarters of Enjoining Right and Forbidding Evil – an Iranian government institution, responsible for determining and enforcing mandatory dress codes for women, including the use of unreasonable force against individuals they deem to be non-compliant
4. Seyyed Mohammed Saleh Hashemi Golpayegani – Head of the Headquarters of Enjoining Right and Forbidding Evil

[...]

### [Security Threat to UK-based Journalists](#)

21 Feb 2023 | House of Lords | 827 cc1608-1618

Lords statement on steps taken to address the concerning activities of the Iranian regime and its operatives in the United Kingdom.

### [Security Threat to UK-Based Journalists](#)

20 Feb 2023 | House of Commons | 728 cc49-57

Statement on steps taken to address the concerning activities of the Iranian regime and its operatives in the United Kingdom.

### [Execution of Alireza Akbari](#)

18 Jan 2023 | House of Lords | 826 cc1825-1836

Lords statement on the execution of a British national in Iran.

### [The Execution of Alireza Akbari](#)

16 Jan 2023 | House of Commons | 726 cc25-34

Statement on the execution of British national, Alireza Akbari in Iran.

### [Iran](#)

16 Nov 2022 | House of Commons | 722 cc675-685

Urgent question on the current situation in Iran and the treatment of protesters.

### [Crisis in Iran](#)

25 Oct 2022 | House of Commons | 721 cc148-159

Urgent question on the current crisis in Iran.

### [Mahsa Amini](#)

11 Oct 2022 | House of Commons | 720 cc36-47

Urgent question on what representations the Government has made to the Iranian authorities about ongoing protests regarding the death of Mahsa Amini.

## 6.3

## Early Day Motions

### [Iran's influence in the Middle East](#)

EDM: 48 (session 2023-24)

Bob Blackman

13 November 2023

That this House is deeply concerned by the role of the Iranian regime in the deadly conflicts in the Middle East; notes that for over four decades Iran's regime has adopted a dual strategy of domestic suppression, such as the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners, mostly supporters of the PMOI/MEK, and creating external crises by warmongering and use of terrorism to assure its own survival; recalls that for years Khomeini rejected a

ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war, vowing to liberate Qods, Jerusalem, via Karbala despite the huge death toll inflicted; further recalls that Iran's regime uses proxy terror groups to carry out terrorist attacks in the region; is deeply concerned by the regime's use of hostage diplomacy to extract concessions from the West, examples of which include the release of its diplomat-terrorist, sentenced to 20 years in prison for trying to bomb an NCRI rally, by Belgium in return for hostages illegally held by Iran; reiterates that there can never be peace in the Middle East while Iran's regime remains in power; and urges the Government to target warmongering in Tehran by proscribing the IRGC and supporting the Iranian people's desire for regime change.

### Calling for a free and democratic Iran

**EDM: 1608 (session 2022-23)**

**Bob Blackman**

**12 September 2023**

That this House is deeply concerned by the ongoing crackdown on peaceful protesters by the regime of Iran, which continues to execute dissidents with total impunity and which is also trying to export its reign of terror abroad, including by targeting dissidents living in Europe with terrorist attacks; condemns illegal efforts by Iran to compel European countries to restrict the human rights of its opponents; calls on the government of Albania in particular to uphold the rights of members of the Iranian opposition PMOI (MEK) at Ashraf-3, under the European Convention on Human Rights, the 1951 Refugee Convention and international law as stipulated in the Albanian Prime Minister's 2016 letter to the Vice-President European Parliament; reiterates that MEK members at Ashraf-3 have the right to political activity and that this right is guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of which Albania is a state party; and calls on His Majesty's Government to declare its solidarity with Iran's democratic opposition and to support international accountability efforts for the perpetrators of human rights violations in Iran, including for the 1988 massacre of some 30,000 political prisoners and the deadly crackdown on current-day protesters.

### One-year anniversary of the death of Mahsa Amini

**EDM: 1605 (session 2022-23)**

**Layla Moran**

**12 September 2023**

That this House marks the one-year anniversary of the horrific death of Mahsa Amini at the hands of Iranian authorities; remembers the hundreds of protesters who have been killed or executed in the protests following Mahsa's death; recognises the ongoing struggle of Iranian protesters and condemns the use of excessive force, violence, arbitrary arrests and execution by Iranian authorities to curtail protests and freedom of expression; expresses further concern at the reports of increasing arrests of activists in the weeks leading up to the anniversary of Mahsa's death; supports the case for proscription of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation; and calls for the street the Iranian Embassy sits on to be re-named 'Mahsa Amini

Avenue' in tribute to the young woman who inspired so many and as a symbol of the UK's solidarity with the Iranian people.

### Launch of the Our Story Is One campaign

**EDM: 1458 (session 2022-23)**

**Daisy Cooper**

**11 July 2023**

That this House notes the launch of the Our Story Is One campaign; recalls that in 1983 10 Baha'i women were executed for their religious beliefs; observes that this campaign links the 40th anniversary of this infamous event with the increasing loss of life of women and girls in Iran since the killing of Mahsa Amini in September 2022; and affirms the goals of the campaign to support gender equality, ending violence against women and freedom of religion or belief in Iran.

### Extrajudicial executions in Iran (No. 5)

**EDM: 1337 (session 2022-23)**

**John McDonnell**

**19 June 2023**

That this House expresses deep concern at the extrajudicial executions of Arnika GhaemMaghami, Negin Salehi, Amir Mohamad Rahmanipour, Soroush Pourahmadi, Mehran Abaspour Aghdam, Mohsen Mansouri, Sadaf Movahedi, Marzieh Doshman Ziary, Nasrin Ghaderi, Samaneh Nicknam, Parmis Hamnava, Sina Malayeri, Hosein Akbarzadeh, Ali Akbar Jafari, Mohamad Reza Mashhadi Farahani and Maryam Sulaimanian by the Iranian State; sends condolences the family and friends of the victims; condemns the actions of the Iranian Regime in perpetrating these crimes; and urges the Government to call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to stop executing protestors and to stop violating women's and citizens' rights and freedoms.

### Extrajudicial executions in Iran (No. 4)

**EDM: 1287 (session 2022-23)**

**John McDonnell**

**12 June 2023**

That this House expresses its deep concern at the extrajudicial executions of Mostafa Mobasher, Donya Farhadi, Behzad Amadpour Samani, Neda Bayat, Mohamad Haji Rasoulpour, Bahman Maroufi, Arash Seyedmansouri, Sepideh Ghalandari, Heidar Azidm gheih Bashi, Zohreh Shamasi, Mehdi Karami Ashtiani, Setayesh Sharifinia, Sina Alishahi, Majidreza Tosparvar, Asra Panahi, Zahra Jalilian, Ghazal Amiri, Bahar khorshidi and Syed Mohamad Hosseini by the Iranian State; sends condolences to the family and friends of the victims; condemns the actions of the Iranian Regime in perpetrating these crimes; and urges the Government to call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to stop executing protestors and to stop violating women's and citizens' rights and freedoms.



**Extrajudicial executions in Iran (No. 3)**

**EDM: 1266 (session 2022-23)**

**John McDonnell**

**6 June 2023**

That this House expresses deep concern at the extrajudicial executions of Ramin Fatehi, Ramin Karami, Mohamad Abdolahi, Omid Hoseini, Farid Koravand, Mansour Ghorbani, Mohamad Javad Asadzadeh, Himan Aman, Yazdan Aghajani, Hamed Salahshor, Reza Dehboyed, Hamid Reza Nokhbeh Zaiem, and Shahriar Aadel, by the Iranian State; sends condolences to the family and friends of the victims; condemns the actions of the Iranian Regime in perpetrating these crimes and urges the Government to call on the Islamic Republic of Iran, to stop executing protestors and to stop violating women's and citizens' rights and freedoms.

**Extrajudicial executions in Iran (No. 2)**

**EDM: 1181 (session 2022-23)**

**John McDonnell**

**17 May 2023**

This House is deeply concerned by the extrajudicial executions of Shademan Ahmadi, Atefeh Naami, Emad Heidari Nokish, Esmail Dezvar, Saman Ghaderpor, Matin Nasri, Samira Ebrahimi, Sarina Shiri, Mohamad Abdullahi, Esmail Dazvar, Mohamad Abdullahi, Ali Bani Asad by the Iranian state; sends condolences to the family and friends of the victims; condemns the actions of the Iranian regime in perpetrating these crimes; and urges the Government to call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to stop executing protestors and to stop violating women's and other citizen's rights and freedoms.

**Extrajudicial executions in Iran**

**EDM: 1127 (session 2022-23)**

**John McDonnell**

**3 May 2023**

That this House wishes to express its deep concern at the extrajudicial executions of Mohamad Reza Mashhadi Farahani, Hossein Jazy, Hamid Saied Mozafari, Sayed Farhad Hoseini, Ali Basaki, Ezatolah Shahbazi, Nika Shakarami, Shirzad Ahmadinejad, Ebrahim Rigi, Masoumeh and Aida Rostami by the Iranian State; sends condolences to the family and friends of the victims; condemns the actions of the Iranian Regime in perpetrating these crimes; and urges the Government to call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to stop executing protestors and to stop violating women's and citizens' rights and freedoms.

**Government action on Iran**

**EDM: 1010 (session 2022-23)**

**Ed Davey**

**27 March 2023**

That this House condemns the continued excessive use of force and violence by the Iranian authorities against Iranian women and all others protesting

against the Iranian regime; notes with appreciation the work of many British-Iranians to highlight the abuses being perpetrated by the Iranian regime; welcomes the most recent sanctions issued by the Government against the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps and urges further action; supports the case for proscription of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps; calls on the Government to follow the call of Anoosheh Ashoori and ensure that the relatives of sanctioned Iranian officials are not living prosperously in the UK off the back of stolen wealth which has been funnelled out of Iran; urges the Government to provide emergency funding for BBC Persian radio; and further calls on the Government to work with international partners to set up safe and legal routes for Iranian women.

### **Freedom of religion or belief in Iran**

**EDM: 914 (session 2022-23)**

**Alexander Stafford**

**28 February 2023**

That this House deplores the ongoing human rights violations being perpetrated by the Islamic Republic of Iran; notes that these violations come in a context of more general restrictions on the right to freedom of religion or belief for many religious minorities in Iran, including Christians and the Baha'i, and also Sufi and Sunni Muslims; mourns the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini after her arrest for wearing the hijab "improperly" and her reported beating by members of the so-called morality police; considers the enforcement of religious dress codes for all Iranian women, regardless of their beliefs, to be a violation of the freedom of religion or belief of women from religious minorities in Iran, and also of Muslim women who do not wish to conform to mandatory hijab; highlights that these restrictions are in violation of Iran's obligations as a signatory of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); urges the Government of Iran to amend its constitution and relevant legislation to protect the right to freedom of religion or belief for all Iranians, as envisaged by Article 18 of the ICCPR; and calls on the UK Government to continue to defend freedom of religion or belief, in its fullest meaning, and to support the mandate of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran and of the UN's Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Human Rights in Iran.

### **Re-imprisonment of Fariba Kamalbadi and Mahvash Sabet in Iran**

**EDM: 754 (session 2022-23)**

**Bob Blackman**

**16 January 2023**

That this House notes with concern the re-imprisonment in December 2022 of Fariba Kamalbadi and Mahvash Sabet, two Baha'is in Iran; further notes that both of these women served 10 years in harsh conditions from 2008 to 2018 and were the subject of widespread international outcry; acknowledges that these two women are widely regarded as prisoners of conscience; observes with concern that both women are over 60 years of age and poor health; and urges the Government to use all bilateral and multilateral means of influence

to call on the Iranian Government to release Fariba and Mahvash immediately.

## 7

# Commons Library briefings

[UK and international response to Houthis in the Red Sea 2024](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 9930, 23 January 2024

[UK response to international human rights abuses](#), Commons Library debate pack, CDP- 2024-0011, 19 January 2024

[2023/24 Israel-Hamas conflict: UK and international response](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 9874, 5 January 2024

[Expulsion of Afghans from Pakistan and Iran](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 9905, 8 December 2023

[Yemen in 2023: Conflict and status of peace talks](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 9327, 27 November 2023

[What is the status of the Iran nuclear deal?](#) Commons Library research briefing, CBP-9870, 13 October 2023

[One-year anniversary of the Mahsa Amini protests in Iran](#), Commons Library 'Insight', 14 September 2023

[Dual nationals imprisoned in Iran](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP-8147, 1 September 2023

[UK Government policy on Iran](#), Commons Library debate pack, CDP-2023-0117, 1 June 2023

[2022 Iran protests: Human rights and international response](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 9679, 26 May 2023

[Iran's influence in the Middle East](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 9504, 14 April 2023

[Mahsa Amini protests in Iran 2022](#), Commons Library 'Insight', 7 October 2022

[Iran: One year into Ebrahim Raisi's presidency](#), Commons Library 'Insight', 17 August 2022

[Iran's nuclear programme](#), Commons Library research briefing, CBP 0123, 28 June 2022

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