



## **Conference at the Municipality of the 5th District of Paris: Solidarity with the Iranian Resistance**

Maryam Rajavi: From prisons to the streets, our life is an ongoing Resistance

30 April 2024

Madam Mayor,

Elected representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

I would like to extend my gratitude to Mayor Florence Berthout for hosting this exhibition in solidarity with the Iranian Resistance. Given that tomorrow is International Workers' Day, first, I would like to salute the workers and laborers in Iran who struggle against the religious dictatorship in Iran despite their living conditions under the "death-line." Here, at the 5th District Municipality of Paris, the freedom-loving French have not forgotten them. They support them with the historical motto of their nation: Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. I also want to express my appreciation to all those who have gathered here to show their support for our shared values of republicanism and democracy, especially the principles of equality and the separation of religion and state.

This is particularly important as the religious dictatorship in Iran has escalated repression and executions, with numerous prisoners currently on death row.

### **Call to Abolish the Death Penalty**

Three days ago, I issued an appeal to international organizations urging them to intervene to save the lives of political prisoners Reza Rasaei and Habib Deris, and to overturn the unjust death sentence handed to Toomaj Salehi, a popular singer. In just 11 days, the regime has executed 49 prisoners. These verdicts represent the flip side of the brutal suppression of women, as efforts to contain the crises engulfing the regime. For over four decades, this misogynistic regime has waged war against the people of Iran.

Sexual assaults, torture, and executions have become daily realities for Iranians. Tens of thousands of women have endured torture and execution over the years, with 30,000 political prisoners massacred in 1988 alone. In November 2019, 1,500 young protesters, and in the 2022 uprising, 750 demonstrators were killed by the Iranian religious dictatorship. Despite these atrocities, the regime has failed to crush the unwavering spirit of the Iranian people.

Here, we stand just a stone's throw away from the resistance fighters of the Panthéon: from Jean Moulin to Missak Manouchian and his companions. As President Macron said, "They dreamed of freedom with weapons in hand."

While this courageous Resistance is a part of France's history, for us, it is an ongoing reality. From prisons to the streets, the Iranian people continue to resist against the mullahs' regime.

### **Nationwide Resistance Against the Mullahs**

I would like to highlight the bravery of the young girls and boys, members of the Resistance Units, who persistently combat the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) under the rallying cry, "Woman-Resistance-Freedom!"

The clerical regime systematically oppresses women to subjugate the entire Iranian society. However, the Iranian people and their Resistance have steadfastly responded with the resounding rejection expressed in their motto: "No to the compulsory veil, No to compulsory religion, and No to compulsory government."

After four decades of enduring tests and tribulations, women have emerged as the driving force of the Resistance. The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), the pivotal organization of the Resistance, is led by a Central Council composed entirely of women.

Today, the regime is no longer confronted merely with sporadic acts of protest, but with an entire nation in resistance. This reality has prompted the regime to launch a disinformation campaign against our movement, including orchestrating a trial in absentia against one hundred members of the Resistance.

Through these tactics, the regime is laying the groundwork for the physical elimination of our members, particularly those residing in Europe, notably at Ashraf 3 in Albania. This recalls the heroic resistance fighters of L'Affiche rouge in France whom the "executioners sought to condemn once again through the slander of propaganda."

The propaganda that aims to convince foreign parties that there is no alternative against this regime and that the Iranian people are left with a false dichotomy: either the mullahs or reverting to the era of the Shah. This narrative provides a pretext for those who advocate appeasing the regime, a policy that jeopardizes peace and security in the Middle East and beyond.

### **International Community's Responsibility**

To prevent its overthrow, the regime stokes the flames of war in the region, causing death and suffering among innocent people. As long as the head of the snake remains in Tehran, the world will never break free from the deadlock of war. The solution lies in the overthrow of the regime in Tehran by the Iranian people and their organized resistance.

The alternative presented by the National Council of Resistance of Iran advocates for a democratic republic founded on principles of free elections, the separation of religion and state, gender equality, the abolition of the death penalty, and peaceful coexistence with all nations.

The question is: how can states and the international community effectively support this fight? It is in everyone's interest to recognize the struggle of the Iranian people and their resistance against tyranny, and to designate the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization.

Last week, the European Parliament called for this designation in a new resolution.

It is time for Western governments to decide whether they stand with the Iranian people and their fight for freedom, or with the clerical regime that relies on war, massacre, and terrorism. They will be held accountable by history.

Thank you very much.