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DECEMBER 27 NATIONWIDE UPRISING A TURNING POINT



Uprising in Tehran, December 27, 2009

Maryam Rajavi:

- Chants of ‘Down with Khamenei’ and ‘Death to the principle of Velayat-e Faqih,’ signals the inevitability and immediacy of the clerical regime’s downfall
- Clerical regime is on its way out and the future belongs to the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance. Negotiations, deals, and appeasement of the regime are futile and will only encourage the ruling mullahs in their suppression and killing of the Iranian people

Fars state-run news agency

“The very same slogan heard from Massoud Rajavi [Leader of Iranian Resistance], is also heard in streets of Tehran”

The Washington Post, Editorial

“Ashura holiday in Iran probably will be a **turning point** in the struggle between an extremist regime and an increasingly radical opposition”

A teargas canister, fired by State Security Forces towards protesters is thrown back during protests in Tehran



Mullahs' riot force trapped by protesters as their motorcycles are burning



Protestors take over a police station in Tehran, December 27, 2009

Uprising in Iran; reach turning point



Regime's forces fire teargas to quell the most serious challenge to the regime since the 1979 anti-shah revolution



Protesters chant anti-regime slogans including "Khamenei is a murderer – his rule is illegitimate,"



A woman protester facing Forces blocking the road



Iranian regime's suppressive forces on their bikes during anti-regime protest in Tehran

The Iranian people's nationwide uprising reached its pick on December 27, the Shiite holy day of Ashura, marking a turning point in the six-month-old revolt sparked by fraudulent presidential election last June.

Masses of people poured into streets of Tehran and cities across the country despite strict security measures and advance warnings by authorities. Gatherings and demonstrations were banned and the regime had to mobilize all its forces including the reservists to ensure the ban holds.

Eye witness accounts and video clips clearly indicated that the mood was different and tide has changed. While chanting "Down with Khamenei," "Khamenei is a murderer – his rule is illegitimate," "Down with dictator" and "this month is the month of blood, Seyyed-Ali [Khamenei] will be overthrown" people brought down Khamenei's portraits, tore them up and set fire to them. With empty hands, they courageously confronted brutal attacks by aggressive forces and defied their threats by chanting "Torture, rape, Basij forces are no longer effective – We will never surrender to humiliation."

Brutal attacks; 11 killed in Tehran alone, at least 500 arrested

Fearing the determined swelling crowd in streets, the suppressive forces used live rounds to fire into demonstrators in addition to firing tear and pepper gas and attacking defenseless people with knives, daggers, batons and truncheons. At least two - a young woman and a man - were killed by suppressive forces running over them with their vehicles.

Eight people have been identified killed in Tehran on Sunday. There are three more corpses to be identified. Authorities refuse to hand over the body of Amir-Arsalan Tajmir, a young man who was run over by suppressive forces' vehicle, to his mother.

Many people who were wounded did not go hospitals for treatment in fear of getting arrested. Some of the wounded have been taken away from hospitals by security forces or their details taken down by government agents.

State-run Fars News Agency quoted Ahmadi-Moghaddam, Mullahs' police chief, on December 30 saying that 500 protestors have been arrested.

People resist; government buildings, motorcycles and vehicles set on fire

Reports from Iran indicated that people stood by their slogans – "You fight us, we will fight you back" – and confronted the suppressive forces in many places. According to reports from Tehran and video clips shown on televisions across the world; some government buildings including a bank a police station were set on fire, dozens of motorcycles use by suppressive forces in their attacks and a number of police cars and vans were burnt by angry people.

Protesters who had organized themselves in some areas managed to overpower the suppressive forces, smash their motorcycles, take away their batons, remove their helmets and pull down their anti riot gears. Protests continued through till late evening ending up with people on their rooftops chanting "Allahu Akbar" and "down with Khamenei."

Mullahs' futile attempt to save regime, raise morale of its forces

Brutal suppression continued on the following days with intense; widespread arrest of activists even including members of the regime's rival factions, random attacks on people in streets and storm of propaganda against protesters in state-run media.

To make up for the lost morale of the suppressive forces, the regime called for a demonstration on the following Wednesday. It had to close government departments and schools to force people to take part in the gathering.

Since Ashura, the regime's leaders and officials at every level have been calling for even harsher measures to deal with protests. But, despite all that, widespread discontent continues and people are organizing themselves for the next round of protests.

Police van ran over protester during Ashura day protest in Tehran



A protester knocked down by a police van was ran over by second police van despite people trying to stop it (Frame grabs of amateur video)

Outburst of millions of Iranians signal inevitability and immediacy of mullahs' downfall

“All those who do not wish to be part of the crimes being committed by the faction of [mullahs' Supreme Leader Ali] Khamenei and refuse to embrace the gloomy fate of the regime, must distance themselves from the regime and its suppression of people” - Maryam Rajavi

Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, President-elect of the Iranian Resistance, lauded the Iranian people's courageous uprising on Ashura and said that the outburst of millions of Iranians on the religious day of Ashura on streets across the country, which were characterized by the chants of “Down with Khamenei” and “Death to the principle of Velayat-e Faqih,” signals the inevitability and immediacy of the clerical regime's downfall. These are the slogans and the path for which 120,000 members and supporters of the Iranian Resistance have lost their lives at the hands of the Iranian regime, and thousands of members of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) residing in Camp Ashraf are currently upholding.

Mrs. Rajavi strongly warned agents of the regime's State Security Forces to refrain from any aggression, arrest or insult against people who have revolted to gain their freedom. She said: All those who do not wish to be part of the crimes being committed by the faction of [mullahs' Supreme Leader Ali] Khamenei and refuse to embrace the gloomy fate of the regime, must distance

themselves from the regime and its suppression of people. The President-elect of the Iranian Resistance added: There is only one option for confronting the immediate threat of the prospect of the regime acquiring a nuclear weapon and its export of terrorism, and that option is regime change by the Iranian people and their Resistance, the signs of which are clear today for the world. The real advocates of peace and stability in the region and the wider world must stand on the side of the Iranian people, and put an end to the shameful concessions to the religious fascism ruling Iran, such as the fabrication of false legal cases and affixing the terror label against the Iranian Resistance.

Mrs. Rajavi reminded the international community, particularly the United States and the European Union, that the clerical regime is on its way out and that the future belongs to the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance. Negotiations, deals, and appeasement of the medieval regime are futile and will only encourage the ruling mullahs in their suppression and killing of the Iranian people.



People carrying away an injured protester hit by suppressive forces



Protestors overpowered suppressive forces



Police car set on fire by angry protesters in Tehran during Ashura day



People capture a member of the anti-riot force

Worldwide condemnation of crackdown in Iran (Excerpts)



United Nations

“Shocked by violence in Iran”

OHCHR, December 30, 2009 - The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said Wednesday she was shocked by the recent violence leading to deaths and injuries in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and called on the Government to curb excesses by security forces.

“I am shocked by the upsurge in deaths, injuries and arrests,” Pillay said. She added that, while the exact circumstances that led to at least seven dead, and many more injured, during and after the Ashoura religious commemoration last Sunday are still unclear, “the information available once again suggests excessive acts of violence by security forces and the paramilitary Basij militia.” “The Government has a duty to ensure that the violence does not escalate,” she said.

“People have a right to express their feelings, and to hold peaceful protests, without being beaten, clubbed and thrown into jail,” she said. “Those who have been arrested, for whatever reason, must be accorded due process that is fully in line with international human rights standards and norms, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.”



EU

“A gross violation of basic human rights”

DPA, December 28, 2009 - The European Union on Monday (December 28, 2009) condemned the Iranian regime’s “use of violence against demonstrators ... seeking to exercise their freedom of expression and right to peaceful assembly.” In a statement issued on behalf of the 27-member bloc, the EU’s Swedish presidency also described the “arbitrary detentions of demonstrators” as a gross violation of basic human rights.

“Freedom of expression and right to peaceful assembly are universal human rights that must be respected. Iran has committed itself to respect these rights as a State Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,” the EU said.



Canada

“Intimidation and violence against citizens”

DFAIT, December 27, 2009 - Statement by Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs said: “Iranian security forces once again used intimidation and violence against citizens of Iran. The Iranian regime’s continued effort to restrict freedom of expression and assembly, thereby depriving its citizens of their rights, is deplorable, especially on the holy day of Ashura, a national holiday that marks an important Shiites religious event. The people of Iran deserve to have their voices heard and to enjoy the rights to which they are entitled without fear of violence and intimidation.

“The Government of Canada condemns the use of brutal violence by the Iranian security forces and once again calls upon Iran to meet its human rights obligations.”



Italy

“Silencing the voice of a society through violence”

MAE, December 28, 2009 - Minister Frattini appealed to the Iranian authorities to end the spiraling violence and foster a climate of respect for the Iranian people’s human and political rights. “Silencing the voice of a society through violence, in addition to being an abuse of fundamental rights and universal values”, Frattini continued, “runs counter to the positive stability and sustainability Iran needs and that we are all hoping it will gain. Stability presupposes and is nurtured by open, civil and democratic encounter, and not conflict, with a society”.



United States

“Unjust suppression of civilians”

AP, December 28, 2009- The Obama administration strongly condemned the Iranian regime’s crackdown on protesters, offering its support to civilians “seeking to exercise their universal rights.”

National Security Council spokesman Mike Hammer denounced Tehran’s “unjust suppression of civilians.” “Governing through fear and violence is never just,” Hammer said.

Hammer quoted President Barack Obama’s Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, saying, “it is telling when governments fear the aspirations of their own people more than the power of any other nation.”



Norway

“Halt use of violence and political arrests”

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 28, 2009 - Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre: “Norway is concerned about the situation in Iran.”

“Norway condemns the use of violence against the demonstrators, and is concerned about the reported arrests of members of the opposition, human rights activists and journalists,” Mr Støre said.

“We urge the Iranian authorities to halt the use of violence and political arrests immediately. All those who are being unlawfully detained must be released,” Mr Støre said.



France

“Bloody crackdown”

AFP- December 29, 2009, Paris - French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Tuesday condemned what he called the “bloody crackdown” on opposition demonstrators in Iran and called for the release of those arrested by the security forces.

France urged “a halt to the violence, the freeing of all imprisoned opposition members and the respect of human rights,” said a statement released on the presidential website.



Germany

“Categorically condemn the brutal tactics”

Auswärtiges Amt, December 28, 2009 - Federal Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle: “I categorically condemn the brutal tactics used by the security forces against protesters in Iran. Once again lives have been lost and many people injured.

I call upon Tehran’s leaders to do everything possible to prevent any further escalation of the situation and put a stop to the violence. Iran must live up to its obligations to protect its citizens’ civil and political rights. The international community is not going to look away, it is keeping a close watch on developments.”



Mexico

“regrets the outbreaks of violence”

Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 28, 2009 - The Mexican government, through the Foreign Ministry, deeply regrets the outbreaks of violence in the Islamic Republic of Iran over the last few days in which, according to various reports, several people died.

The government of Mexico also laments the restrictions placed by the Iranian government on freedom of expression and civil rights in its country, as they are basic values of all democratic societies.

Iran: End slide to more bloodshed

Date 28 December 2009

Amnesty International today condemned the further and wholly avoidable loss of up to 8-15 lives in Iran during the 'Ashoura religious commemorations.

The organization called on the authorities to ensure that those attending funerals and commemorations in the coming days and weeks are guaranteed the right to assemble peacefully and to express their opposition to the current government.

"The spiral of violence is growing in Iran and the excessive force by the security forces appears to be meeting unprecedented resistance from protestors," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty International Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"The loss of life during 'Ashoura was wholly avoidable and this slide to more bloodshed must end now," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui.



Bloodbath feared in Iran

December, 28, 2009

FIDH and LDDHI strongly condemn the violent crackdown by Iranian security forces on demonstrators on Sunday when around 10 people were killed and around 1000 people were arrested.

FIDH and LDDHI urge the Iranian authorities to immediately release all those who are arbitrarily detained and to guarantee their physical and psychological integrity and highlight the Iranian authorities' accountability in this respect.

FIDH and LDDHI call on the Iranian authorities to respect freedoms of expression and assembly, and call on the International Community – and in particular States in a position to influence the Iranian regime, to bring its concerns to the attention of the Iranian government.

Lastly, FIDH and LDDHI reiterate their call on the UN Secretary General to appoint a Special Envoy on Iran, with the mandate to investigate on the post-election violence in the Iran.



Political prisoner, Ali Saremi, sentenced to death, warns about a repeat of massacre

Ali Saremi, a 62-year-old political prisoner, sent out a message from prison warning about the intentions of the clerical regime's leaders to carry out a massacre of political prisoners and the uprising's detainees.

Mr. Saremi, who has spent a total of 23 years in the prisons of the Shah and the current regime, was last arrested in the summer of 2007 for attending a ceremony marking the 19th anniversary of the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners by the Iranian regime in 1988.

On December 29, 2009, the clerical regime's henchmen sentenced Mr. Saremi to death without adhering to due legal process.

Excerpts of Mr. Saremi's message:

*The dawn of hope, once ensnared
No matter if the hidden veil comes out
For the dark night nears its end*



Ali Saremi

Simultaneous with the growing tide of the Iranian people's just uprising for freedom and for saving our land from the clutches of tyranny, the regime seeks to arrest and even execute a number of innocent people in order to cultivate fear and terror in the hearts of the people and youths, hoping to deflect their anger and protests. That is why, perhaps with the death sentence issued to myself yesterday, there may be signs that the regime has instigated another plan for a massacre. This is while, even in the context of this regime's laws, I have not committed any crimes, except for paying my respects and praying for the massacred political prisoners who are buried in the mass graves of Khavaran, more than two years ago.

My blood is not any different than the blood of Neda [Agha Soltan] and other young people whose blood is shed daily on the streets. This will only add to the righteousness of this path, and our fearlessness and pride, especially in the days of Muharram and especially because it is at the hands of the most cruel human beings.

*In your existence, you must live a pure life
How tainted I would be if I fail to build my faith as sturdy as a mountain
A higher legacy towering over the lifeless dirt*

Beginning of the end?

The Washington Times

The Washington Times, December 30, 2009, Excerpts

As violence erupted in Tehran and other cities in Iran over the past weekend tens of thousands of protesters clashed with government forces, raising once more the possibility of change in Iran.

"This is a clear sign of the inevitable and imminent downfall of the despicable clerical regime," said Maryam Rajavi, leader of the position group Mujahideen e-Khalq, or the people's mujahideen. "All indications bespeak of the countdown of the regime's downfall," added Mrs. Rajavi.

Iranian resistance forces speak of antigovernment demonstrations in the cities of Shiraz, Esfahan, Ahwaz and several other locations in Iran; and police sources report five have been killed in the latest clashes. Ali Moussavi, the nephew of one of the principal opposition leaders, Mir-Hossein Moussavi, was reported to have been among the fatalities of the weekend clashes. Opposition sources say he was shot in the head.

Defying government orders to stay off the streets demonstrators



Protesters trample and kick Khamenei's portrait in streets

chanted "Khamenei is a murderer - his rule is illegitimate," and set fire to a number of government construction projects. Videos of demonstrators setting fire to government vehicles were posted on a number of Web sites. "The great day of liberation for the Iranian people is getting closer," said Mrs. Rajavi.

This latest round of unrest has some observers asking the following questions: Are we witnessing the beginning of a new era in post-revolutionary Iran? Are these demonstrations powerful enough to bring about the end of the Islamic Republic as we know it today?

Mullahs' regime expresses fear of PMOI's activities

Authorities acknowledge popular support for Iranian Resistance

The following are quotations from remarks by Iranian regime's officials or state-run media reports unveiling the fear of the regime about the PMOI's activities inside Iran and mullahs' suppressive ploys to save the faltering regime.

The regime uses a derogatory term 'Monafeqin' to refer to the main Iranian opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), which literally translates to 'hypocrites.'

Monafeqin elements arrested in riots

Fars state-run news agency, December 27, 2009 - A number of elements from the terrorist grouplet Monafeqin have been arrested during riots in Tehran, an informed source at the Ministry of Intelligence has revealed.

Slogan by Massoud Rajavi is heard on streets

Fars news agency, December 29, 2009 - See how the very same slogan heard from Massoud Rajavi [Leader of the Iranian Resistance], is also heard on the streets of Tehran. Can you not see that today they (opponents of the regime) want to masquerade those people (Iranian Resistance) as right and rational that were silenced once by the Islamic Republic?

Monafeqin commanded the Ashura day operation

TV News Network, December 30, 2009 - Ahmad Alamolhoda, Friday Prayer Leader of holy city of Mashhad said: The Ashura day act was an act that can precisely be labeled as an act of Moharebeh [waging war against God]. The Ashura day act was commanded by the Monafeqin, because the slogans posted on the Monafeqin website since December 7 were chanted by rioters on Ashura day. So, these people [rioters] were helping the Monafeqin. The commander of the action carried out on Ashura day was the Monafeqin. The esteemed Imam [Ruhollah Khomeini] said that the Monafeqin are Moharebs, and anyone inside the country who announced cooperation with the Monafeqin and helps them, they would also be Mohareb as a result and deserve to be killed under Sharia law. They [protestors] not only cooperated with them [PMOI] but actually served as the foot soldiers of Monafeqin.

Monafeqin had a presence in incidents of Ashura

TV News Network, December 31, 2009 - The Minister of Intelligence confirmed yesterday on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting reports about the arrest of several Monafeqin grouplet members during Ashura day riots, and said that after questioning the detained elements we have come across good clues.

Vahidi said: There were Marxist and Monafeqin groups and various parties who had a presence in this move. We have a very good understanding and considerable information about these. The leaders of these parties have been identified and some have also been arrested.

Monafeqin a rational force organizing the scene on Ashura

Fars news agency, January 1 - "Kazem Jalali," a member of the Majlis [Parliament] National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said: The presence and role of the Monafeqin during the recent incidents, especially on the day of Ashura, showed that there was a rational and calculating

force orchestrating the incidents and intends to exploit some of the dissatisfactions for its own ends.

He said: "...they have organizational capabilities and experience, they were able to attract people to their scenario without being recognized.

Unprecedented move: Maryam Rajavi hit the headline

Tabnak Website, January 2 - In an unprecedented move, the main headline of a pro-government daily was dedicated to Maryam Rajavi. In a completely extraordinary move, the Vatan-e Emrooz pro-government daily dedicated its front-page headline to Maryam Rajavi's remarks.

Protests organized by social and civil networks, there was no call by Mousavi or Karoubi

Moussavi explicitly emphasized in a statement released on January 1, 2010 regarding the December 27, 2009 (Ashura) uprising, that, "Neither I nor my friends nor Mr. Karoubi or Mr. Khatami issued any statements inviting people for the Ashura [mourning ceremony] despite numerous requests. Nevertheless, God seeking people once again came to the scene and showed that the extensive social and civil networks that were formed spontaneously during and after the elections, would not wait for statements and announcements."

Mullahs' desperate reaction: intensified crackdown

First Deputy of Judiciary: Anyone helping PMOI to be executed

Channel 2 TV, December 30, 2009 - Moharebeh is the description used for anyone who stands against God, God's Prophet, and the commands of God or the Prophet. In reality, it means waging war against God and God's Prophet, waging war against the Islamic ruling system, which is based on religious commands. In other words, it concerns those who stand in opposition to the Islamic system, or anyone who disturbs or disrupts public security. In both religious jurisprudence and civil law, a weapon is not only a sword or a fatal weapon. It can also be things like knives, daggers, sticks or stones; The things that happened on the day of Ashura can be deemed as examples of Moharebeh. But, Moharebeh is also sometimes referred to an organization. An organization can become a Mohareb organization, like the Monafeqin Organization. Anyone who helps Monafeqin in any way or under any circumstances, in light of the fact that the movements is an organized movement, would deserve the title of Mohareb.



Teargas is fired towards anti-regime protesters in Tehran



Police running after protesters in Tehran

Mullahs' regime expresses fear of PMOI's activities

“Moharebeh,” Mullahs' perverse interpretation of Islamic rules to justify suppression



Iranian regime's state security forces on motorcycles surround protesters during anti-regime protests in Tehran

No to Velayat-e Faqih means yes to Maryam Rajavi

Fars news agency, January 1 - Ayatollah Seyyed Yousef Tabatabaiejad, the Leader of Isfahan's Friday Prayers, said: The disorder camp poured into the streets and set fire to the people's property, thus waging war against God. They are the corrupt on earth, and the Judiciary must realize that these actions were an example of corruption and in accordance with the orders of God and the Quran, this carries the death sentence. If you have said 'no' to the velayat-e faqih [absolute clerical rule], then you have instead accepted the rule of Maryam Rajavi.

Deal harshly with those attacking structure of the regime

Rajanews Website, January 1 - Abbas Jaafari Dowlatnabi Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor of Tehran: "The Prosecutor's office will deal decisively with no hesitation with those who insult the aspirations of the Islamic Revolution particularly those who targeted the structure of the system in incidents of Ashura."

Moharebeh (waging war on God) and execution

Fars news agency, January 4 - The Chief Prosecutor, Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Ejei said: "Those who instigate insurgency and revolt against the system and the guardian of justice [Khamenei] will be considered as outlaws and their sentence according to Sharia and the [civil] law is death. Those who create fear by lethal and non-lethal weapons in the society are also considered as mohareb according to Sharia and law and their sentence is also death."

Expediting the process of executing protesters

Parlemannews website (representing the views of a rival faction in mullahs' Parliament), January 4 - In view of the imperative to urgently investigate the charges of agitators and punish the offenders... Regarding the charges that relate to causing public disorder, if the defendant is found to be Mohareb [person waging war on God], [it is recommended that] the period of investigation be reduced from 20 days to 5 days.

There will be no tolerance in dealing with agitators

IRNA official news agency, January 4 - Revolutionary Guard Brigadier General Ahmad-Reza Radan, Deputy Commander of the State Security Forces (SSF), said: "The time is up for those who hold unlawful gatherings. They have been given ample opportunity [to mend their ways], and therefore, from now on the policy of SSF in dealing with them will be force and lack of tolerance."

Misinformation Campaign

The Iranian regime's false allegations and lies against the Iranian people's Resistance and the PMOI as its main force, aimed to tarnish their image and pave the way for further suppression and killings of the political opponents

Killing of Mir-Hossein Moussavi's nephew during Sunday riots

Jahan Website, December 27, 2009 - An individual identified as Seyyed-Ali Moussavi, who is said to be the nephew of Moussavi, has been shot dead on the sidelines of one of the centers where rioters had gathered. The identity of his killer is not yet available but it is said that more than 10 members of the PMOI organization have been detained in today's riots.

What will be the ultimate outcome of the clashes?

Asr Iran Website, January 2 - The country's current state of affairs are not normal, ...The security situation of the country is quite clear for everyone. Following the post-election events, thousands were jailed and in clear daylight, we witness murders in streets which the security officials claim are carried out by the same terrorists and the PMOI that we persistently hear have either been shattered or else completely under control.

PMOI to be blamed for Neda's murder

Previously, the Iranian regime had blamed the killing of Neda Agha Soltan on the PMOI and foreign forces. **Amnesty International's** statement on September 4, 2009, said: "Currently held in Evin Prison in Tehran, Caspian Makan (Neda's fiancé) is reported to have told his family that if he signs a 'confession' saying that the People's Mojahedeen Organization of Iran (PMOI) killed her (Neda), then he may be released."

US, UK linked to riots and PMOI

December 29, 2009, **Channel One** of the Iranian regime's state-run TV: "American officials, particularly Barak Obama, hastily described the arrest of some detained elements affiliated with the terrorist grouplet PMOI as unjust... Moreover, the British government supported the bravery of the rioters and David Miliband, the Foreign Minister, welcomed the incredible bravery of those he called the opposition to the Iranian government. The British government called on the Iranian government to respect human rights in dealing with rioters and opportunist saboteurs."

Exiled Iranian group urges sanctions for Tehran

PARIS (Reuters), December 28, 2009 -

The head of an exiled Iranian opposition group called on Monday for international sanctions against the government in Tehran after protesters clashed with security forces in demonstrations across the country.

Maryam Rajavi, president of the Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) said the latest wave of protests should be backed by economic measures by Western governments.

"It's time to adopt very firm, global sanctions," she told Reuters in a telephone interview.

"There needs to be a firm policy to cut economic and political relations because the Iranian people have taken to the streets. They have to be helped. The United States and Europe must act," she said.

Rajavi said the protest movement was now calling for the same things that her group was aiming for: a complete removal of the government under Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"What the Iranian people want is a total change in the regime of the Supreme Leader. They don't want reform or a more moderate approach from the regime," she said.

"They want to overthrow the regime of the mullahs, they want a secular republic to replace religious dictatorship."

Maryam Rajavi calls for a more firm international response to the Iranian regime



Norwegian daily Verdens Gang, January 4, 2010

In a telephone interview with Verdens Gang, Rajavi voices optimism that the uprising will continue. The uprising will become more organized and will include students, workers and women, and the regime will be overthrown in the next year, she adds.

It will not be possible for the regime to reverse the situation. This regime has used every tool in its arsenal. They may resort to a massacre. But this will only make the situation more radical. Rajavi says that the circumstances are incredibly precarious.

She believes that the international community must confront the regime with firmness and impose more serious sanctions against it. The regime must be warned about the consequences of its behavior. That is how we can prevent a bloodbath in Iran. Rajavi says that Western governments can play an effective role.

In her view, any measure can lighten the load of pressure on the Iranian people and adds that people need help.

Rajavi says: I hope Norway can take on a leadership role. It is not enough for Western governments to merely declare their support. The Iranian people need this regime to be placed under serious sanctions.

Exile Leader: Khamenei has lost religious base



Danish daily Politiken, January 4, 2010

Iran's oldest opposition group is prepared to support "any leader who rejects religious dictatorship." Maryam Rajavi, head of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, NCRI, the oldest opposition group in exile, calls for unity in opposition and to have people from the security forces joining the protests.

"I do not think it will hesitate to launch a new wave of mass executions," said Rajavi and refers to the mass executions of political prisoners in 1988. "But the power struggle has intensified even on it."

Furthermore Rajavi said: "wings of power are now together in fear that people have turned against the regime, so they are all smoking in decline. But many clergies say Khamenei has lost its religious base in the holy city of Qom."



London (AP) - PMOI supporters protest outside the Iranian regime's embassy in London, Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2009



Paris (AP) - Protesters holding photos of Khamenei and Ahmadinejad crossed out gather near the Iranian embassy in Paris, Tuesday Dec. 29, 2009



Rome (AP) - A picture of Ahmadinejad is crossed in red, as demonstrators protest against the current Iranian government in front of the Iranian embassy in Rome, Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2009



Berlin - (Getty Images) : People waving Iranian flags protest against the recent government crackdown against anti-government demonstrators in Iran outside the Iranian embassy on December 28, 2009

Correction: In IL293 page 3, first column, line 8, the figure 131 must be 120. We apologize for the mistype.