

Congressional Briefing, November 16, 2010

In a bipartisan resolution, 110 US lawmakers in 37 states invite Secretary of State Hillary Clinton:

De-list Iran's main democratic opposition People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK)

H. Res. 1431 cosponsors include members of leadership in both parties, chairs and ranking members of 12 committees and a dozen Foreign Affairs Committee members



Rep. Bob Filner (D-CA), Chair, Veterans Affairs Committee; Co-Chair, Iran Human Rights & Democracy Caucus

H. Res. 1431 seeks to have the MEK removed from the terrorist list which has served as the pretext for the Iranian regimes agents in Iraq to act against the residents of Ashraf. Like other parliaments around the world, we in the United States Congress believe that this organization does not qualify to be on the FTO list both on legal and political grounds.

Rep. Joe Wilson (R-CA), Foreign Affairs & Armed Services Committees

We are all hopeful of positive change of the country of Iran, however we can help promote that. My acquaintance of people of Iran really developed from Iranian Americans who live in my home state of South Carolina. They are leaders in medicine and they are leaders in business and they have told me and educated me of the great culture, of the great civilization of Persia.

Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ), Armed Services Committee

The Iranian dissidents, those fighting the immoral government of Ahmedinejad, may be one of the greatest hopes in the world of keeping the human family from stepping into the shadow of nuclear terrorism. I hope that this administration takes away the Iranian government's ability to label as terrorist those who are truly fighting for freedom of the whole world.

Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA), Education & Labor Committee

What's particularly ranking for us to watch what Abraham Lincoln called the last group of mankind, the American republic, listed as a terrorist the MEK, which is one of the great agencies for freedom that exists in the world today. That is an injustice that we will not rest until right. To the people of Iran I simply wish to convey the broad bipartisan sentiment throughout the U.S.



Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), Foreign Affairs Committee, Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade Subcommittee
I've done everything possible to try to protect the residents of camp Ashraf, but now our focus is on should the MEK be on the foreign terrorist list. The European union says no, the US court of appeals says that the State Department failed to do its job. The MEK has done for nonproliferation more than any group I know.



Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), Foreign Affairs Committee, Co-Chair, Iran Human Rights & Democracy Caucus
Whoever is fighting the mullah regime is a friend of the U.S. and to put anybody who is fighting the mullah regime on a list of terrorists is a travesty. We must make sure that America stands firm right now against the mullahs. Whether it's at Camp Ashraf or the streets of Tehran, those people who are struggling against the regime are heroes.



Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX), Foreign Affairs Committee
We want to make sure that the Iranian government and other governments understand that there are 110 members of the U.S. Congress from both parties that are saying that, through legislation that we have filed as co-sponsors - H. Res. 1431, that MEK needs to be taken immediately off the terrorist list here in the U.S. It's long overdue; it has not been done.



Rep. Mark E. Swift (R-FL), Budget Committee
It is up to us here, you and those who support you, to do whatever we can to support our solidarity with the people in Iran. To show them that we care and support the opposition, the internal opposition in every way we can in their heroic efforts for freedom, it will not take very long but, as long as it takes you know you can count on me in supporting the brave freedom fighters.



Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Foreign Affairs, Homeland & Judiciary Committees
Today, we are here to encourage the pro-democracy movement in Iran, and to help that flourish from within. The Iranian democratic movement is vibrant, secular, and a strong-willed. It is one that requires international support, so that all Iranians can benefit from a democratic government. I have been an advocate of a free, independent, and democratic Iran.

Declaration by European Union's 27-nation Parliament urges:

US State Department to remove Iran's Democratic Opposition PMOI from State Department's terror list

US and UN to protect residents of Ashraf, Iraq

Declaration notes:

- In July 2010 the US Appeals Court urged the State Department to review its decision to maintain PMOI on the US terrorist list,
- US and UN forces have withdrawn from Ashraf, home to 3400 Iranian dissidents in Iraq, including 1000 women, all of whom are 'Protected Persons' under the 4th Geneva Convention, and they are now vulnerable to attacks

Urges:

- The US to follow the example of the EU by removing the PMOI from its blacklist and to call on the UN to provide urgent protection for Ashraf



WRITTEN DECLARATION

0075/2010

Written declaration on Camp Ashraf

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on human rights in Iran,
- having regard to its resolution of 24 April 2009 on Camp Ashraf, home to 3400 Iranian dissidents in Iraq, including 1000 women, all of whom are 'Protected Persons' under the 4th Geneva Convention,
- having regard to the removal of the opposition PMOI from the EU's blacklist in 2009,
- having regard to Rule 123 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas several relatives of Ashraf residents have been sentenced to death by the Iranian regime after returning from visits to their families in Ashraf,
- B. whereas the Iraqi Government has failed to respect the EP resolution and is continuing a merciless siege of the Camp,
- C. whereas the residents are still being subjected to external pressures under the pretext that the PMOI remains on the US blacklist,
- D. whereas in July 2010 the US Appeals Court in Washington ruled in favour of the PMOI and urged the State Department to review its decision to maintain them on the US terrorist blacklist,
- E. whereas US and UN forces have withdrawn from Ashraf and residents are now vulnerable to attacks.

1. Calls on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to urge the USA to follow the example of the EU by removing the PMOI from its blacklist and to urge the UN to provide urgent protection for Ashraf;
2. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.