

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 627

Condemning the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the massacre of political prisoners in 1988 and the uprisings of recent years, including the 2018, 2019, and 2022 uprisings, and calling for justice for its victims.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 27, 2023

Mr. GOODEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BACON, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. MACE, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. CROCKETT, Mrs. CHAVEZ-DE REMER, Mr. CARSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. ELLZEY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. DUARTE, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. MOONEY, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. BABIN, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GIMENEZ, Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California, Mr. SANTOS, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Ms. SPANBERGER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Condemning the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the massacre of political prisoners in 1988 and the uprisings of recent years, including the 2018, 2019, and 2022 uprisings, and calling for justice for its victims.

Whereas, in the 115th Congress, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4744 calling on the United States to “condemn Iranian human rights abuses against dis-

sidents, including the massacre in 1988 and the suppression of political demonstrations in 1999, 2009, and 2017, and pressure the Government of Iran to provide family members detailed information that they were denied about the final resting places of any missing victims of such abuses”;

Whereas H. Res. 188, “Condemning the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the 1988 massacre of political prisoners and calling for justice for the victims”, was first introduced in the 115th Congress, cosponsored by four former and current chairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

Whereas the massacre was carried out pursuant to a fatwa, or religious decree, issued by then-Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, that targeted the People’s Mojahedin of Iran (PMOI), also known as the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK);

Whereas the killings of as many as 30,000 political prisoners in 1988 were carried out based on the fatwa to execute all political prisoners who remained loyal to the Iranian Resistance, and subsequent death commissions were formed on July 19, 1988, whose members included the current Iranian regime’s President, Ebrahim Raisi, an official from the Ministry of Intelligence, and a state prosecutor, to implement the fatwa;

Whereas prisoners were reportedly brought before the commissions and briefly questioned about their political affiliation, and any prisoner who refused to renounce his or her affiliation with groups perceived as enemies by the regime was then taken away for execution;

Whereas, according to Amnesty International, “the majority of those killed were supporters of the MEK/PMOI”;

Whereas the 1988 massacre victims, many of them women, had been imprisoned merely for participating in peaceful street protests and for possessing political reading material, many of whom had already served or were currently serving prison sentences;

Whereas, according to Amnesty International, “hundreds of members and supporters of other political groups . . . were also among the execution victims”;

Whereas later waves of executions targeted religious minorities, such as members of the Baha’i faith, many of whom were often subjected to brutal torture before they were killed;

Whereas, in a disclosed audiotape, the late Hussein Ali Montazeri, a grand ayatollah who served as Khomeini’s chief deputy, noted the regime’s efforts to target the MEK and said that the 1988 mass killings were “the greatest crime committed during the Islamic Republic, for which history will condemn us”;

Whereas the families of the executed were denied information about their loved ones and were prohibited from mourning them in public;

Whereas the November 2, 2007, report from Amnesty International concluded that “there should be no impunity for human rights violations, no matter where or when they took place. The 1988 executions should be subject to an independent, impartial investigation, and all those responsible should be brought to justice and receive appropriate penalties”;

Whereas, beginning in 2017 and continuing for several months after protests erupted in more than 100 cities, the Iranian regime suppressed such protests with repressive forces that resulted in at least 25 deaths and 4,000 arrests, including decorated wrestling champion Navid Afkari, who was later executed in September 2020 amidst international outrage;

Whereas, on November 15, 2019, popular protests against the Iranian regime began and rapidly spread to at least 100 cities throughout the country, and reports indicate that Iranian security forces used lethal force and about 1,500 people were killed during less than 2 weeks of unrest, and thousands more were detained during these protests;

Whereas, beginning in September 2022, antigovernment protests ignited in response to the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian woman who was arrested by the morality police that enforces Iran's mandatory dress code laws;

Whereas, in several months of continuing protests in hundreds of cities throughout Iran, the regime's security forces have killed hundreds and arrested tens of thousands of protesters;

Whereas, according to a December 9, 2022, Amnesty International report, "Iran's security forces have killed with absolute impunity more than 40 children and injured many more in a bid to crush the spirit of resistance among the country's youth and retain their iron grip on power at any cost";

Whereas these protests are rooted in the more than four decades of organized resistance against the Iranian dictator-

ship, which have been led by women who have endured torture, sexual and gender-based violence, and death;

Whereas the Iranian people have been deprived of their fundamental freedoms for which reason they are rejecting monarchic dictatorship and religious tyranny, as evident in their protest slogans;

Whereas, on November 24, 2022, the United Nations Human Rights Council established a fact-finding commission to conduct an independent investigation into the ongoing deadly violence related to the protests in Iran;

Whereas the Iranian regime has arbitrarily and brutally suppressed ethnic and religious minorities, including Iranian Kurds, Baluchis, Arabs, Christians, Jews, Baha'is, Zoroastrians, and even Sunni Muslims, and deprived them of their basic human rights, and has in many cases executed them;

Whereas senior Iranian Government, military, judicial, and security officials have for decades ordered or committed egregious human rights violations and acts of terror;

Whereas the United States should be involved in any establishment of an international investigation into the 1988 extrajudicial killings of Iranian dissidents as well as the murder of protesters;

Whereas over 900 women and men of Ashraf 3 are former political prisoners who witnessed prison crimes of the Iranian regime, and many of them are witnesses of the 1988 massacre and other political killings in Iran, among them eyewitnesses of crimes committed by Ebrahim Raisi, who must be fully protected for potential testimonies before any international courts investigating the killings in Iran;

Whereas, in November 2021, the Swedish Judiciary moved the whole court in Stockholm to Albania for two weeks to facilitate hearing testimonies of seven former Iranian political prisoners now residing in Ashraf 3, who were considered key witnesses for a trial related to the 1988 massacre;

Whereas, in an April 19, 2016, letter to a European Parliament Vice-President, the Prime Minister of Albania wrote, “Albania is fully engaged and committed to ensure for the Iranian refugees all rights stipulated in the Geneva Convention 1951, in the European Human Rights Convention and in the whole international legislation”; and

Whereas, according to the statement issued by Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken on April 24, 2023, “The United States condemns Iran’s continued human rights abuses and remains committed to supporting the people of Iran as they face the brutality of the Iranian regime”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns the Government of the Islamic
3 Republic of Iran for the 1988 massacre and for de-
4 nying the evidence of this manifest set of crimes
5 against humanity;

6 (2) urges the Administration and the United
7 States allies to publicly condemn the massacre and
8 pressure the Government of Iran to provide detailed
9 information to the families of the victims about their
10 loved ones and their final resting places;

1 (3) urges the Administration and the United
2 States and its allies to put on their agenda to help
3 the families of the victims of the Iranian regime to
4 identify and prosecute the perpetrators of the 1988
5 massacres and the massacres of protesters against
6 this regime in the recent uprisings;

7 (4) stands with the people of Iran, who are le-
8 gitimately defending their rights for freedom against
9 repression and condemns the brutal killing of Ira-
10 nian protesters by the Iranian regime;

11 (5) calls on the United States Government, in
12 cooperation with our ally Albania, to ensure the full
13 protection of the Iranian political refugees in Ashraf
14 3 in Albania and for them to benefit from all rights
15 stipulated in the Geneva Convention 1951 and the
16 European Convention on Human Rights, including
17 the right to life, liberty, and security, and protection
18 of property, as well as freedom of expression and as-
19 sembly;

20 (6) calls on the United Nations Human Rights
21 Council to include the massacre of thousands of po-
22 litical prisoners in 1988 in the agenda of the fact-
23 finding commission for an independent investigation
24 launched on November 24, 2022, to investigate the
25 ongoing deadly violence against protesters; and

1 (7) recognizes the rights of the Iranian people
2 and their struggle to establish a democratic, secular,
3 and nonnuclear Republic of Iran.

○