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The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
King Charles Street
London
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3 August 2023

Dear James,

RE: Iran's Judiciary Indicts 104 Members of Pro-Democracy Opposition, PMOI/MEK

We note with serious concerns the announcement by Iran's judiciary on July 29, 2023, revealing indictments against 104 members of the pro-democracy opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI/MEK). The Tehran General and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office referred them to a Criminal Court in Tehran.

The Iranian regime, unable to prevent the growing popular discontent and in fear of a more severe uprising, pursues a two-prong strategy through this sham move to strike at the principle democratic opposition.

On one hand, it intends to further intensify executions and suppression at home. On the other hand, the regime's state media and official documents of Iran's Foreign Ministry, revealed by Iranian activists in Iran, show that the goal is to produce bogus convictions in Iranian courts against PMOI/MEK members and use these to invoke Interpol and intimidate and harass members of opposition in Europe.

The regime is known for providing false evidence to European Governments and threatening them with terrorism and hostage-taking diplomacy to strong-arm them into restricting and stopping the activities of the Iranian pro-democracy opposition in Europe and abroad. One recent example is the false information recently provided to the Albanian Government, which led to a massive attack by 1200 police on Iranian refugees outside Tirana, resulting in the death of one of them. We believe it is vital that the fundamental rights of Iranian dissidents in all European countries, including Albania, are respected.

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The regime spends billions of dollars on its propaganda and influence campaign to tarnish the Iranian opposition and resistance movement, complementing its efforts to eliminate pro-democracy opposition with terrorism and domestic repression.

This announcement coincides with the anniversary of the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners across Iran in 1988, the majority being PMOI/MEK members and supporters. This massacre began with a religious decree from the founder of the Islamic Republic, Khomeini, to eliminate PMOI/MEK members who do not denounce the pro-democracy opposition.

Ample evidence and UN reports prove that the judiciary in Iran plays an integral part in the state repression and violent crackdowns on popular protests. It is also an established fact that the regime is using executions as a tool to suppress and stifle political dissent and legitimate opposition. UN Human Rights experts expressed serious concerns publicly over the increasing number of executions in Iran in recent months. The regime is now carrying out record number of executions as the authorities are unable to stop popular protests.

You may also be aware that an Iranian diplomat was sentenced to 20 years in prison in Belgium in 2021 for trying to bomb the annual gathering of the broader Iranian opposition coalition, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), in Paris in late June 2018. The foiled bomb plot targeted the Iranian opposition leader, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, and her Iranian and international supporters, including many members of our committee and parliamentarians from Europe and around the world who had gathered in Paris.

Today, the NCRI and its democratic platform for the future of Iran are gaining international recognition and endorsement from a growing number of parliamentarians worldwide, especially following its successful annual gathering in support of a free Iran in July and amid continued popular protests in Iran.

We warn that allowing the regime in Tehran to succeed in its plots against the PMOI/MEK and the NCRI will lead to another massacre in Iranian prisons. We urge you to make it clear to Tehran, both publicly and privately, that the UK condemns and rejects every effort by the Iranian authorities to abuse Interpol and international mechanisms and laws to export their persecution of dissidents to Europe, like its terrorism, and facilitate the crackdown on legitimate opposition.

We also take this opportunity to ask you to intensify your efforts at the international level and the UN to hold the regime and its leaders accountable for decades of serious and systematic human rights abuses and terrorism.



If anything, it is the Iranian regime that ought to appear before the international tribunal to answer for its many crimes against humanity and for arbitrary killing of tens of thousands of protesters and dissidents since 1979, both within Iran and outside Iran.

We are looking forward to your response and thank you for considering our concerns.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Blackman', written in a cursive style.

Bob Blackman CBE MP

Member of Parliament for Harrow East

CC:

Minister of State (Minister for Security), Rt Hon Tom Tugendhat MP
Interpol Secretary General, Mr Jürgen Stock