

In Search of Justice

A new initiative by thousands of parliamentarians across the world in "Search of Justice" for the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran

On September 16, 2008, the President-elect of the Iranian Resistance, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, visited the European Parliament in Brussels. She was warmly greeted at the scene by Iranians and Resistance sympathizers residing in Belgium.

Upon her arrival, Mrs. Rajavi was welcomed by Dr. Alejo Vidal Quadras, Vice President of the European Parliament, as well as a number of MEPs and members of various European national parliaments, jurists, and political figures. She later attended the parliamentary-legal conference chaired by Dr. Quadras.

At the conference, Dr. Quadras welcomed Mrs. Rajavi and announced the formation of the European parliamentary committee "In Search of Justice," comprised of parliamentarians and pre-eminent jurists and political figures from across Europe. He said, "After years of challenging the policy of appeasement vis-à-vis the mullahs' regime and ending the injustice against the Iranian people and Resistance, we are to launch an extensive campaign in Brussels and most member states. Our goal is to defend the values upon which Europe has been founded, such as the rule of law, respect for and compliance with ruling of the courts, social freedoms, and accountability. Regrettably, it appears that in the choice between preserving the rule of law on the one hand and the dishonour of submitting to the Iranian regime on the other, the European Union has chosen the latter. The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) must not be maintained on the list. Legal challenges will continue, but as a friend and admirer of France, I thus call on the rotating presidency of the EU to intervene and end this injustice."

Struan Stevenson, Deputy Chairman of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats, and co-chair of the Friends of a Free Iran inter-group, pointed to the impasse of the policy of appeasement and the potential for war and catastrophe, and added, "Mrs. Rajavi said that there is a third option as opposed to both appeasement and war. The third option relies on the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance. But, instead of recognizing this Resistance, the West treats it like the enemy. The listing of the PMOI was the first and top demand of the mullahs in negotiations with [EU Foreign Policy Chief, Javier] Solana and every other negotiation with the West. Instead of complying with the rule of law, European governments are complying with the mullahs' demands. Giving concessions to the mullahs and refusing to abide by the law and decisions of the courts constitutes betrayal. In a new initiative, two thousand parliamentarians have been brought together to form the "In Search for Justice" parliamentary committee. We support the PMOI's ideals and its platform, and my message to the French government is this: Perhaps you should place all these parliamentarians and I on the list as well!"

Mr. Stevenson then turned to the situation in Ashraf City, northern Iraq, where PMOI members are currently residing, and said, "The other issue is the safety and protection of 3500 members of PMOI in Ashraf City. The Iranian regime is plotting to take away their protection. Allowing this to happen would bring a humanitarian catastrophe. The U.S. must continue to protect Ashraf."

Mr. Stevenson then invited Mrs. Rajavi to speak, stressing that she is bravely providing leadership on the matter, and it is an honour to be standing by her side.

In her remarks at the conference at the European Parliament, Mrs. Rajavi first congratulated Dr. Vidal Quadras on the creation of the European parliamentary committee "In Search of Justice," as the Chairman of the conference and the mentioned parliamentary committee, and added, "I have come here today to warn EU leaders about the consequences of the illegal decision on July 15 regarding the maintaining of the PMOI on the terrorist list, and to demand an end to this shameful policy which has hurt Europe's credibility. The mullahs' regime is exploiting the terror label to justify executions in Iran and pressuring the Iraqi government to impose more restrictions on the 3500 PMOI members residing in Ashraf, Iraq. This will lead to a catastrophe, the responsibility for which lies on the European Union."

The President-elect of the Iranian Resistance described the new report from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a warning to the international community, and stressed that the mullahs' regime is not capable of changing its behaviour. This is because any sort of reform would result in the demise of the religious fascism ruling Iran, she said. "There is only one option: Democratic change by the Iranian people and their Resistance. The European Union and its president, France, are at a crossroads. It is a choice between kneeling down before the religious fascism and thus trampling upon all European values for the sake of shallow economic interests, or respecting the rule of law by removing the PMOI from the terrorist list and thus standing with the Iranian people and their demand for change. The French presidency will be judged on this basis."

Alain Vivien, Former French Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Chairman of the French Committee for a Democratic Iran, said in his remarks, "As soon as France took over the EU presidency, the French Committee for a Democratic Iran pursued the issue of removing the PMOI from the list. We sent letters to government officials and the President of France. After the removal of the PMOI from the proscribed organizations list in the UK, and the decision by the courts and the Parliament of that country, we were anticipating the removal of the PMOI from the EU's list. We should not allow governments to continue doing what they have been doing thus far, and we have a greater responsibility in the next six months."

Paolo Casaca, MEP from Portugal and co-chair of the Friends of a Free Iran European parliamentary committee, said, "First and foremost, I have to thank Mrs. Rajavi for being here. It is an honour that parliamentarians from across Europe and my colleagues at the European Parliament are here. The subject matter is waging a struggle in favour of the implementation of justice. The PMOI's just message must be heard. The Iranian regime uses all its might and capacity to wage a disinformation campaign against the PMOI and the Iranian Resistance. The mullahs' Ministry of Intelligence and Security agents come here to the European Parliament, and we oppose this. The European Parliament must not be a place for the mullah regime's agents so that they could spread the regime's lies against the Resistance and promote the regime in a better light. We should inform public opinion with regards to the plots of the mullahs' regime. With Mrs. Rajavi, we will continue the struggle for the delisting of the PMOI. Mrs. Rajavi's struggle is our struggle. It is a struggle for the establishment of the rule of law, and we will never abandon this fight."

Lord Tony Clark, member of the British House of Lords and Deputy Chairman of the British parliamentary committee Iran Freedom, stated, "First of all, I will read a letter from Lord Corbett,

leader of the Labour party group at the House of Lords. Lord Corbett is now in Washington, at the House of Representatives and the Senate and other American political circles, to describe the positions of the British Parliament in support of the Iranian Resistance and the need for removing the PMOI from the terrorist list. He writes, 'The former United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, admitted that the PMOI was banned in order to appease the mullahs' regime. Following the rulings of the courts and after the British Parliament forced the government to remove the PMOI from the terrorist list, it was anticipated that the EU would do the same. The British parliamentary committee of Iran Freedom will continue this struggle and will convince the EU to delist the PMOI.'" Lord Clark then added, "Indeed, our goal is to be the voice of justice for the PMOI, and we will continue to fight."

Carlo Ciccio, Member of the Italian Parliament and Deputy Chairman of the Social Affairs commission from the National Coalition party (ruling party), said in his remarks at the conference, "I want the government to remove the PMOI from the EU list. Many government officials agree that maintaining the PMOI on the list is not legal. The pressure by parliaments on government officials must be sustained until all restrictions against the Resistance are lifted. It is a lie to say that the Iranian regime has succeeded in suppressing the Resistance. There exists a lively and active resistance movement and so we must adopt a firm position vis-à-vis the mullahs' regime."

Dr. Henk de Haan, Former Chairman of the Dutch Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and Chairman of the Dutch Group of Friends of a Free Iran, stated, "Regrettably, there are some who prefer economic interests and negotiations with the regime. At the Dutch Parliament, there are members from various political leanings who fight for justice, and now it is a very positive development that an initiative has started at the European level."

Professor Antonio Cassese, a pre-eminent Italian jurist and President of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, said at the conference, "Levying an unjust accusation of terrorism against a political organization is a serious and crippling charge. Those who believe in democracy and human rights must loudly protest against such an outrageous allegation and just as loudly expose violations of the law." Prof. Cassese added, "The Ashraf issue is also not separate from this listing, because the reason why residents of Ashraf are in danger is the terror listing. If the US does not continue protecting them, the mullahs will have a free hand and this can lead to a catastrophe. Therefore, we must work to prevent such a catastrophe."

Other personalities also briefly addressed the conference and expressed support for the goals of the European parliamentary committee "In Search of Justice." They included: Mr. David Kilgour, Former Canadian Deputy Minister, a pre-eminent human rights figure in Canada, and co-chair of the Canadian parliamentary committee For a Free Iran; Mr. Mario Stasi, French jurist and Former Chairman of the Paris Bar Association; Ms. Elizabetta Zamparutti, Member of the Italian Parliament from the Radical party; And, Mr. Jean Pierre Audy, MEP from France.

In her closing remarks, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, President-elect of the Iranian Resistance, said, "When we first began the legal battle against the terror label, many thought that these efforts would ultimately prove fruitless. They pointed to the enormous obstacles on the Resistance's path. But, in the end, this battle proved successful. Now, the expansion of these efforts for the removal of the label, comes at a crucial and urgent time, which has seen the plots of the mullahs against Ashraf City

and the lives of thousands of PMOI members. The terrorist label has provided a pretext to the mullahs to target Ashraf City."