



Conference of Parliamentary Group for Friends of a Free Iran in Norwegian Parliament

The parliamentary group of Friends of a Free Iran in the Norwegian Parliament discussed the current situation in Iran and how the ongoing uprising would shape the future of the country at a meeting in Stortinget today with representatives of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and members of the Iranian community in Norway.

The NCRI President-elect, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, took part in the meeting online and said the era of religious despotism in Iran has ended. Iranian society is on the verge of an explosion.

The Iranian people and the ruling regime and its suppressive forces, including the IRGC, are arrayed against one another.

Regardless of any ebbs and flows during the uprising, the situation will not return to the pre-uprising era. The NCRI seeks to establish a democratic republic based on free elections, the separation of religion and state, gender equality, rejection of any discrimination against followers of other religions, and the recognition of autonomy for the suppressed ethnicities in the framework of Iran's territorial integrity.

Members of Parliament as well as former ministers of several Nordic countries representing different political parties attended and addressed the meeting putting forward a series of policy recommendations to the Norwegian Government. Ms. Sarvnaz Chitsaz, chair of the Women's Committee of the NCRI and Mr. Parviz Khazaei, NCRI representative of Nordic countries also gave speeches in this conference.

Mr. Ola Elvestuen, Member of Parliament from the Liberal Party (Venstre) and former Minister of Climate and the Environment, who moderated the meeting, said, "The religious dictatorship has been there 44 years too long. With this uprising, there is a before and after. and an understanding that this is the beginning of a revolution."

Mr. Elvestuen emphasized that there must be a change in the past policies and thinking's and said, "the only goal is to have a free and democratic Iran. And we must act and support the opposition, the same way and with the same wording that we do with the very brave Ukrainians fighting against Russian attacks. That we will support the opposition until they succeed, and we have free and democratic Iran. As we listen to Mrs. Rajavi's words, there is a clear goal of a free and democratic Iran, there is a plan for it that will uphold human rights and also uphold the autonomy of the suppressed people."

Mr. Christian Tybring-Gjedde, Member of Parliament from the Progress Party (FrP) supported the 10-point democratic platform of Mrs. Rajavi as a way forward for a free and democratic Iran.

Mr. Lars Rise, former Member of Parliament, said: "There is now a civil society, and now we have a very organized opposition in the NCRI, they are our best ally. So, we have to think about this fantastic asset, who wants to see democracy in Iran. And the end results are the 10-point plan that is actually the same values of the European convention of human rights. It is what we all can embrace."

Mr. Morten Wold, Member of Parliament from the Progress Party (FrP) and third Vice-President of Parliament, reiterated his long-time support for the Iranian Resistance and the Iranian people's struggle to realize their democratic aspirations.

Mr. Geir H. Haarde, former Prime Minister of Iceland, said: "We need to take the uprising that is going on in Iran



very seriously. It is the beginning of something bigger, it is the beginning of the end of the religious dictatorship, which has now been in power for 44 years.”

Mr. Haarde supported the call to end impunity in Iran by referring regime’s appalling human rights dossier to the UN Security Council for prosecution and said, “We need to understand that the Iranian people have the same right to enjoy same principles that are enshrined in every modern constitution in the world.”

In the meeting, the book, “From Dictatorship to Democracy” written by Mr. Struan Stevenson, former MEP from the UK, and current Coordinator of the Campaign for Iran Change, was rolled out.

Mr. Stevenson said that the Iranian regime is trying to use the remnants of the deposed dictatorship of the Shah to imply that the current uprising seeks to return to the Shah’s era. But with their chants of “Death to the Oppressor, be it the Shah or the Leader,” the Iranian people have strongly rejected this idea.

Friends of a Free Iran & Against Fundamentalism **13 February 2023**

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