



Maryam Rajavi at EU: A Vision for a Democratic, Free Iran

18 June 2025

Maryam Rajavi: Building a genuine, modern Democracy

Honorable Members of the European Parliament, esteemed dignitaries,

It is a great pleasure to be with you at the home of the peoples of Europe. I sincerely thank you for being here today, united in your commitment to human rights, resistance, and the freedom of Iran.

The war that began at dawn on Friday, June 13, marks the onset of a critical phase in the situation in Iran and the broader regional developments.

I must emphasize that the primary war, which has been ongoing for 44 years—precisely since June 20, 1981—is the struggle of the Iranian people and their resistance against the theocratic fascist regime. The only solution to this conflict is the overthrow of this regime by the people of Iran and the Iranian Resistance.

As far as the nuclear issue is concerned, we have repeatedly urged Khamenei—and we reiterate once again—to go ahead, engage in negotiations and abandon the pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Yet Khamenei, as he reaffirmed in his televised address today, refuses to do so. He views the atomic bomb as a guarantor of his regime's survival and a means of asserting regional hegemony, while perceiving any retreat from this path as the shortest route to his downfall. He exacts the full cost from a defenseless population, plunging them into war, terror, insecurity, and displacement, to preserve his rule. But the people of Iran will no longer grant this regime any opportunity.

In two days, we will reach the anniversary of the beginning of the nationwide resistance against religious fascism. This day is also dedicated to honoring the Martyrs and Political Prisoners of Iran.

The words “martyrs” and “political prisoners” tell the painful story of losing the brightest blossoms of Iranian society, yet they also embody the resilient spirit of a people who refuse to bow to religious fascism. They bear this cost with heads held high, steadfast in their conviction that victory and freedom will ultimately be theirs.

In the past four decades, few moments have posed as grave a threat to the survival of the clerical regime as the present day. This is why they have escalated their campaign against the Iranian people through a wave of mass executions.

Since Pezeshkian assumed office, 1,350 prisoners have been executed. The number of executions carried out in Iran since the beginning of 2025 has reached 650, a figure that is 2.5 times greater than the number of executions during the same period last year.

Some 60 political prisoners currently face death sentences, many of whom are accused of membership in the PMOI. Their primary “crime” is demanding a free, democratic, just, and orderly society.

In protest against the executions, the voices of our people grow louder day by day, a courageous chorus that has echoed within Iran and across the world for over a year.

In response, Khamenei’s agents have intensified their inhumane abuses against prisoners under various pretexts.

Maryam Akbari Monfared has been imprisoned for 15 years—her sole “crime” being that she is a family member of martyred PMOI members. Her true offense is seeking justice for those who were massacred.

The clerical regime has not limited itself to executions within Iran and assassinations abroad.

Simultaneously, it is conducting a trial in absentia against the PMOI and 104 of its members and leaders.

The aim is twofold: on one hand, to intimidate the younger generation rising up against the regime and turning to the Resistance Units; on the other, to pave the way for terrorist actions against resistance members abroad and to exert pressure on their host countries.

Neither the torture of prisoners nor the noose of the gallows can halt the Iranian people’s movement toward establishing a democratic revolution.

As Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the Iranian Resistance, recently affirmed: “The Iranian people, led by their brave sons and daughters, are preparing for the ultimate battle—an uprising to bring down the regime.”

The Third Option

For more than two decades, our movement has championed the Third Option regarding Iran's future—a solution that rejects both appeasement of the clerical regime and war or military intervention, instead embracing democratic change led by the people of Iran and the Iranian Resistance.

For more than four decades, the National Council of Resistance has adopted comprehensive programs and plans for the free Iran of tomorrow. I had the honor of presenting a condensed version of this vision in a ten-point plan for the first time at the Council of Europe in 2006.

The key points of this program are the establishment of a republic based on the separation of religion and state; gender equality; autonomy for ethnic minorities; the abolition of the death penalty; an independent judiciary; and a non-nuclear Iran that consistently advocates for peace in the Middle East.

Allow me to take this opportunity to outline the main principles of this vision:

First, this program envisions the establishment of a genuine and modern democracy—one guaranteed by the direct participation of all citizens in shaping their own destiny.

The National Council of Resistance has reaffirmed its commitment to these principles by formally recognizing the people's right to self-determination and decision-making.

We hold that the government must be fully accountable to the people, with unrestricted freedom of criticism guaranteed—ensuring that no one can exploit their power to coerce or intimidate the people.

While the exact structure of governance—spanning national, provincial, and municipal levels—will be established by a Constituent Assembly, our fundamental principle remains clear: a democratic system where no single authority holds a monopoly, and political power is broadly and fairly shared among the people.

Second, one of the greatest challenges democracies face is managing the differences among various political tendencies.

We advocate for a pluralistic system, but how can democracy foster harmony amid such diversity?

The National Council of Resistance of Iran offers a clear solution in its platform: All officials must “acknowledge that their political legitimacy is confirmed through democratic processes—subject to the scrutiny of public opinion and free elections.”

Moreover, the NCRI underscores the vital importance of nurturing a political culture grounded “in free and public dialogue and persuasion.”

Our guiding principle is that the rights of minorities must never be compromised. On the contrary, political, ethnic, religious, and cultural identities must be granted full citizenship rights and meaningful opportunities for political participation. They must also be empowered to preserve, express, and promote their values, beliefs, cultures, languages, and historic aspirations.

This is not only essential for building a sustainable democracy but also vital for ensuring the unity and integrity of a free and inclusive Iran.

Third, what process do we envision for transferring power after the fall of the regime that ensures democracy?

The guiding principle behind this process, upheld by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, is democracy itself.

The transitional government—formed by the Resistance movement—will be temporary, limited to a maximum of six months. Its primary mandate will be to organize free and fair elections for a Constituent Assembly.

The Constituent Assembly will carry two critical responsibilities: drafting a democratic constitution for the new republic and appointing a new government to manage the country’s affairs.

Consequently, the new government will be formed based on the decisions of the people’s elected representatives and will be fully accountable to the Constituent Assembly while overseeing all executive institutions.

Fourth, what are the foundations and capabilities of this Resistance movement to implement its agenda?

This Resistance has demonstrated its capabilities over several decades: it is a well-organized movement with a nationwide network of thousands of Resistance Units across Iranian cities; it enjoys financial independence and self-sufficiency; and it is supported by a broad base of qualified and professional individuals who will serve as the future cadres for building a free Iran.

Ashraf 3 in Albania is home to the PMOI freedom fighters and 1,000 heroic women. These women have held key positions in the movement for more than 40 years. Their struggle has inspired Iranian women in their broader struggle for freedom.

Our strength lies in a principled strategy that has exposed the false myth of so-called “reform” within the regime. At the same time, it has drawn a clear line of demarcation with the previous dictatorship, firmly rejecting any return to monarchy.

By advocating the slogan, “No to the Shah, No to the Mullahs,” the Resistance has elevated the Iranian people’s struggle into a movement for genuine democratic change.

This process is the essence of the suffering of a nation that has struggled for freedom and democracy for over 120 years, from the Constitutional Revolution to the present day.

Our goal is not to seize power at any cost. Our goal is to guarantee freedom, democracy, and the Iranian people’s free choice—no matter the cost.

This resistance is dedicated to the revival of human and moral principles.

As Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the Iranian Resistance, has said: “Our mission is to unite politics with integrity.”

At this critical moment, we call on the European Parliament to take the lead in initiatives and urge the European Union to recognize the Iranian people’s struggle for regime change, as well as the legitimacy of the courageous battle waged by Iran’s youth against the IRGC.