



Maryam Rajavi at US Senate Briefing: Iran Peace and Freedom

16 April 2026

Maryam Rajavi: The solution to the crisis in Iran lies in its people, in their courage, and in their organized resistance

Today, more than ever, a fundamental question is before us:

What is the real solution to Iran's crisis?

Over the past 47 years, nearly every approach has been tested. These have included policies of appeasement, Europe's so-called "critical dialogue, negotiations, and even war. Yet all have failed because the regime would lose its power if it were to accept any reform.

The regime is weaker than ever before, but its nature remains unchanged. It will neither revise its policy of repression nor abandon its efforts to obtain a nuclear weapon, support terrorist proxies, and interfere in the affairs of the countries in the region.

Since March 19, at least 13 political executions have taken place in Iran, including six PMOI members and seven defiant protesters. They were all accused of working to overthrow the regime.

Through these executions, the regime is intensifying an atmosphere of terror in an effort to prevent another uprising.

Despite decades of repression, there is a determined, selfless, and organized resistance inside Iran. This movement is prepared to pay the highest price for freedom and has risen through multiple massacres.

This movement has four decades of experience confronting the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

Its strategy based on organized resistance against the IRGC and relying on popular uprisings has attracted the highest level of support among Iran's youth over the past year.

I must emphasize that the people of Iran do not want to return to the dictatorship of the Shah.

We believe the ceasefire was the most appropriate decision at a highly sensitive moment by the United States.

We hope this step will lead to an end to the war and open a path toward peace and freedom.

However, real and lasting peace can only be achieved through the overthrow of the ruling religious dictatorship by the people of Iran and their organized resistance.

In recent days, Khamenei's son claimed that more than 17 million people are ready to sacrifice their lives for the regime. If this claim is true, he should accept a free election under United Nations supervision and based on the principle of popular sovereignty, not clerical rule.

However, the ruling theocracy does not have the courage to accept such a test.

Missing Element in Western Policy

This is a critical moment, not only in our history, but also in the history of the Middle East and the world.

It is also a moment to take responsibility and adopt the right policy.

Over the years, the most important missing element in Western policy has been a failure to recognize the role of the Iranian people and their organized resistance in bringing about change. While the focus has been on engagement with the regime or on containing it, the Iranian people and Resistance have been overlooked.

I urge lawmakers to focus their attention on supporting the Iranian people and the organized resistance inside the country, including the resistance units that stand on the front lines of the struggle for freedom.

On the political ground, the National Council of Resistance of Iran offers a credible framework for a peaceful transition, by holding a free election within six months after the fall of the regime. Then, it will hand over the power to the elected representatives of the people.

At the heart of this vision is its Ten-Point Plan.

It outlines a future for Iran based on free elections, gender equality with participation of women in political leadership, the separation of religion and state, recognition of the rights of oppressed ethnic groups, a non-nuclear policy, and peaceful coexistence.

This is a plan for stability, democracy, and peace.

The solution to the crisis in Iran lies in its people, in their courage, and in their organized resistance.

The question is no longer whether change is possible.

The question is whether the world is prepared to recognize the Iranian people's Resistance and stand on the right side of history.

I call on all of you to support the Iranian people and Resistance, and their effort to bring about regime change.