



CORI Research Analysis,

Date: 20 June 2010

Country: Iran

Issues: **Treatment of Iranians, who protested in London following June 2009 presidential elections, on return to Iran**

- Query:**
1. Demonstrations in London, including profiles of participants
 2. Any evidence of the Iranian embassy in London videoing demonstrations? If so do they report back to Iranian authorities in Tehran and whether upon return, an individual's details are processed through any centralised system. If an individual has been involved in demonstrations and is identified through any procedure, will it be identified at the point of return?
 3. Any evidence relating to Iranian intelligence gathering and spying on opposition movement and activities in the UK and other countries? Are those who have taken part in London demonstrations considered or perceived to be anti-regime activists due to their political activities in London?
 4. Any information on the network of Iranian intelligence agencies both domestic and international, and intelligence gathering apparatus in the UK and where information might be sent to?
 5. Any evidence that Iranian nationals who have taken part in demonstrations against Iranian government outside Iranian embassy in London will be at risk of persecution and ill-treatment in case of return to Iran. If so, what treatment are such persons likely to receive on return to Tehran Airport/Iran?
 6. Any evidence relating to intimidation and persecution of protestors and human rights activists in Iran

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1. Demonstrations in London, including profiles of participants

On 18 June 2009 the Guardian reported that,

”[s]ince the disputed vote in Iran, an eclectic group of Iranians in London – students, young professionals and elderly people – has gathered in the evening outside the Iranian embassy in Kensington. Numbering in the hundreds, they have been galvanised by the events back home and want to show solidarity with the demonstrators in Tehran.”¹

Anonymous Iran, a web based community forum quotes material from a Facebook Group ‘Where is my vote?’ (London), which was created in the aftermath of June 2009 Presidential elections in Iran.² An extract from the Facebook Group, “Where is my vote? ؟تس اچک نم یار (London)” listed by Anonymous Iran quotes a message which calls for all those who want to peacefully demonstrate against the results of the presidential elections, to gather in front of the Embassy of Iran on 15 and 16 June ³ The message posted on Facebook further informs that organisers have received authorisation from the police to organise the peaceful demonstration. It calls upon the participants and demonstrators to comply with the rules of any demonstration in accordance with the terrorism act in the UK. The note advises potential protestors that under the UK Terrorism act, “technically you are not allowed to cover your face with scarf and similar items.”⁴ The notice encourages the group members to update their status by adding “Where is my vote” and let their friends join the group. The group emphasises that it does not belong to any political parties and that it is purely organic group following the incidents in Iran.⁵

In post-script a message reads “p.s. please upload your London photos and video's to the group.”⁶

On 18 June 2009 UK news website Politics.co.uk, reported that “[e]arlier this week the Metropolitan police said around 200 protestors had gathered for a peaceful protest against the election. Some held placards asking “Where is my vote?” Smaller-scale demonstrations have taken place every night since then and a further protest is expected tonight.”⁷

The Guardian quotes student participants, who asked not to reveal their names,

¹ Guardian, Students in solidarity protests at Iran embassy, 18 June 2009,

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jun/18/students-protests-iran-embassy>, accessed 12 June 2010

² Anonymous Iran, From Facebook Group Where is my vote? | ؟تس اچک نم یار (London), June 16-London-Iranian Embassy, 16 June 2009, <http://iran.whyweprotest.net/planning-archive/72-june-16-london-iranian-embassy.html>, accessed 12 June 2010.

³ Anonymous Iran, From Facebook Group Where is my vote? | ؟تس اچک نم یار (London), June 16-London-Iranian Embassy, 16 June 2009, <http://iran.whyweprotest.net/planning-archive/72-june-16-london-iranian-embassy.html>, accessed 12 June 2010.

⁴ Anonymous Iran, From Facebook Group Where is my vote? | ؟تس اچک نم یار (London), June 16-London-Iranian Embassy, 16 June 2009, <http://iran.whyweprotest.net/planning-archive/72-june-16-london-iranian-embassy.html>, accessed 12 June 2010.

⁵ Anonymous Iran, From Facebook Group Where is my vote? ؟تس اچک نم یار (London), June 16-London-Iranian Embassy, 16 June 2009, <http://iran.whyweprotest.net/planning-archive/72-june-16-london-iranian-embassy.html>, accessed 12 June 2010

⁶ Anonymous Iran, From Facebook Group Where is my vote? ؟تس اچک نم یار (London), June 16-London-Iranian Embassy, 16 June 2009, <http://iran.whyweprotest.net/planning-archive/72-june-16-london-iranian-embassy.html>, accessed 12 June 2010

⁷ Politics.co.uk, Iranian solidarity protest outside London embassy. Protestors angry at Iran election result, 18 June 2009, [http://www.politics.co.uk/news/foreign-policy/iranian-solidarity-protest-outside-london-embassy-\\$1304934.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/news/foreign-policy/iranian-solidarity-protest-outside-london-embassy-$1304934.htm), accessed 13 June 2010

"We're there to show our concern with the irregularities of the election." "Many of us are not affiliated with any political organisations. Many had never voted before this election.

Another Iranian who has attended the protests outside the embassy is Ali (not his real name). A 26-year-old PhD student who has been in Britain for the past 10 years and who voted for Mousavi, is about to go back to Tehran where his parents live.

"I plan to go back in a week. I am filled with trepidation but this is too important for me not to go back," he said. "People have now lost the fear and there is real potential for transformative change. Some of my fellow students, about six or seven, have already gone back to show solidarity with the demonstrators.

"We have people here who are hacking into the government's computers and [those of] state organisations such as Fars and other Revolutionary Guard news outlets. We've got an information loop going as the government tries to fragment communications networks. People send messages to us via Twitter and Facebook and we disseminate the information back into Iran; it's like an endless game.

"Many hundreds of us have been demonstrating every evening at the embassy; sometimes we're over a thousand." "Most of the students here supported Mehdi Karroubi [who came third in the poll], whose vote was so diminutive it was absurd. It stank of foul play. He was the biggest figure for the students because he was strongly in favour of civil liberties, freedom of speech and rule of law. I backed Mousavi, because I thought he was the most pragmatic figure, who could work with the Majlis [parliament]."⁸

Images of demonstrators who protested outside the Iranian embassy in June 2009 following the results of the presidential election in Iran were posted on several websites.⁹ Video footage of demonstrations on 17 June 2009 was posted on Youtube.¹⁰

According to The Telegraph, "the internet has played a key role in allowing some Iranians to communicate since last week's disputed presidential elections and many international media outlets have used services like Twitter and emails in their coverage."¹¹

⁸ Guardian, Students in solidarity protests at Iran embassy, 18 June 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jun/18/students-protests-iran-embassy>, accessed 12 June 2010

⁹ DEMOTIX, Election protests outside embassy, 17 June 2009, <http://www.demotiximages.com/news/election-protests-outside-iranian-embassy>, accessed 13 June 2010; Politics.co.uk, Iranian solidarity protest outside London embassy. Protestors angry at Iran election result, 18 June 2009, [http://www.politics.co.uk/news/foreign-policy/iranian-solidarity-protest-outside-london-embassy-\\$1304934.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/news/foreign-policy/iranian-solidarity-protest-outside-london-embassy-$1304934.htm), accessed 13 June 2010. Newspark, Iran Election Protest Footage, Iranian Embassy (London)-Exclusive to newspark, 18 June 2009, <http://thenewspark.wordpress.com/2009/06/18/iran-election-protest-iranian-embassy-london-exclusive-newspark-footage/>, accessed 13 June 2010. 'Scoop' World, Independent News, Demonstrations Outside Iranian Embassy in London, Press Release: International Trade Union Federation, 29 June 2009, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0906/S00488.htm>, accessed 13 June 2010. Flickr, London Iranian Embassy Demonstration, 14-18 June 2009, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/lewishamdreamer/sets/72157619651352705/>, accessed 16 June 2010. Newspark, Iran election protest footage, Iranian Embassy (London), 18 June 2009, <http://thenewspark.wordpress.com/2009/06/18/iran-election-protest-iranian-embassy-london-exclusive-newspark-footage/>, 16 June 2010

¹⁰ Youtube, Protest against Iran's election result:17th June 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANSYnIU3kfw>, accessed 16 June 2010

In addition to Youtube and Twitter, The Telegraph reports Google's principle scientist as stating that "Google Translate is one more tool that Persian speakers can use to communicate directly to the world, and vice versa-increasing everyone's access to information."¹² The Telegraph further reports Facebook engineer Eric Kwan as stating on its blog: "Since the Iranian election last week, people around the world have increasingly been sharing news and information on Facebook about the results and its aftermath."¹³

2. Any evidence of the Iranian embassy in London videoing demonstrations? If so do they report back to Iranian authorities in Tehran and whether upon return, an individual's details are processed through any centralised system. If an individual has been involved in demonstrations and is identified through any procedure, will it be identified at the point of return?

According to The Telegraph and the Evening Standard, staff at the Iranian Embassy in London filmed people taking part in demonstrations.¹⁴

On 20 June 2009 the Telegraph reported that,

"A video camera recorded a protest outside the embassy at Prince's Gate in Kensington, west London. The device was planted above the ledge of a top floor window in the Georgian terrace building."¹⁵

The Free Library and Words, a blog by a former editor of a Tehran daily newspaper, refer to an Evening Standard article "Embassy camera spies on protests" which is no longer available on the latter's website.¹⁶ The Free Library posts the full text of the article,

"Staff at the Iranian Embassy in London are secretly filming protesters outside, raising fears of reprisals the Standard can reveal.

The Standard has obtained pictures of a video camera on the top floor of the embassy in Kensington. It was pointed at the crowd from a small attic window throughout last night's three-hour protest and is barely visible from street level.

¹¹ Telegraph., Iran elections: Google and Facebook launch Farsi services to aid protesters, 19 June 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/google/5580847/Iran-elections-Google-and-Facebook-launch-Farsi-services-to-aid-protesters.html>, accessed 12 June 2010

¹² Telegraph., Iran elections: Google and Facebook launch Farsi services to aid protesters, 19 June 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/google/5580847/Iran-elections-Google-and-Facebook-launch-Farsi-services-to-aid-protesters.html>, accessed 12 June 2010

¹³ Telegraph.co.uk, Iran elections: Google and Facebook launch Farsi services to aid protesters, 19 June 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/google/5580847/Iran-elections-Google-and-Facebook-launch-Farsi-services-to-aid-protesters.html>, accessed 12 June 2010

¹⁴ The Telegraph., Iranian embassy camera watches protesters in London, 20 June 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/5586561/Iranian-embassy-camera-watches-protesters-in-London.html>, accessed 13 June 2010

¹⁵ The Telegraph., Iranian embassy camera watches protesters in London, 20 June 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/5586561/Iranian-embassy-camera-watches-protesters-in-London.html>, accessed 13 June 2010

¹⁶ The Free Library by Farlex, Embassy camera spies on protests, 19 June 2009, <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Embassy+camera+spies+on+protests.%28News%29-a0202067198>, accessed 14 June 2010. Words, Iran embassy staff secretly film British protestors taking to the streets in the wake of election rigging claims, 20 June 2009, <http://www.farshadebrahimi.com/2009/06/iran-embassy-staff-secretly-film.html>, accessed 16 June 2010.

British Iranian protesters have gathered in crowds of up to 400 outside the building in Prince's Gate every day this week to express outrage over the apparent rigging of the country's election. Some are now concealing their faces with scarves and sunglasses because of concerns they or their relatives may be targeted by Iranian authorities.

Mostafa Sanatnama, one of the protest organisers, said: "People think they have to be careful. But even if they are filming us it won't scare people away." Maryam, a 26-year-old student, is due to fly back to Tehran in two weeks. She said: "I'm worried they'll take my passport or won't let me get a flight back." No one was available for comment at the Iranian Embassy last night.

CAPTION(S): Watching: the lens in the Kensington building and the rally outside."¹⁷

Words reports that "several who attended last night's protest have been left fearing reprisals after their actions were secretly filmed by a camera inside the embassy building."¹⁸

Sources report that Iranian authorities have videoed demonstrations in US, Norway, Germany and the UK.¹⁹

A US based activist organisation called 'Mission Free Iran' which aims to "echo outside of Iran the demands of the current democratic revolution" reported in March 2010 that representatives of the Iranian government videotaped their demonstration in the US, protesting the proposed deportation of an Iranian asylum seeker from Japan to Iran.²⁰

In March 2010 the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported that an ex-Iranian Diplomat at the Iranian Embassy in Norway, who has been now been granted asylum in Norway, was asked to inform on Iranian expatriates – including his son who had marched in anti-government protests. According to the WSJ the diplomat was reportedly asked to identify Iranian expatriates who had been filmed protesting outside the Iranian embassy by

¹⁷ The Free Library by Farlex, Embassy camera spies on protests, 19 June 2009, <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Embassy+camera+spies+on+protests.%28News%29-a0202067198>, accessed 14 June 2010

¹⁸ Words, Iran embassy staff secretly film British protestors taking to the streets in the wake of election rigging claims, 20 June 2009, <http://www.farshadebrahimi.com/2009/06/iran-embassy-staff-secretly-film.html>, accessed 16 June 2010.

¹⁹ Wall Street Journal, Ex-Iranian Diplomat Alleges Vote Rigging, Pressure to Spy, 19 March 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704207504575129461549263620.html>, accessed 6 May 2010. UPI, special Reports; Iranian spies active in Germany, 16 October 2009, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2009/10/16/Iranian-spies-active-in-Germany/UPI-42771255712668/, accessed 16 June 2010; The Free Library by Farlex, Embassy camera spies on protests, 19 June 2009, <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Embassy+camera+spies+on+protests.%28News%29-a0202067198>, accessed 14 June 2010. Mission Free Iran, March 28, 2010: Report on Protest at Japanese Embassy in Washington DC in support of Jamal Saberi/Jalal Amanzadeh Nouei, 28 March 2010, <http://missionfreeiran.wordpress.com/take-action/refugee-situation/saberi/japan-no-blood-for-oil-free-jamal-saberi-demonstrations-visits-to-japanese-embassies/march-28-2010-report-on-protest-at-japanese-embassy-in-washington-dc-in-support-of-jamal-saberi-jalal-amanzadeh-nouei/>, accessed 6 May 2010.

²⁰ Mission Free Iran, March 28, 2010: Report on Protest at Japanese Embassy in Washington DC in support of Jamal Saberi/Jalal Amanzadeh Nouei, 28 March 2010, <http://missionfreeiran.wordpress.com/take-action/refugee-situation/saberi/japan-no-blood-for-oil-free-jamal-saberi-demonstrations-visits-to-japanese-embassies/march-28-2010-report-on-protest-at-japanese-embassy-in-washington-dc-in-support-of-jamal-saberi-jalal-amanzadeh-nouei/>, accessed 6 May 2010

intelligence agents.²¹ The WSJ reports that some aspects of his account could not be independently confirmed and an Iranian spokesperson has denied that the diplomat was asked to identify protestors.²² According to the WSJ an Iranian embassy spokesperson in denying that protestors were videotaped stated “[t]here is no need to record them. We already know who they are.”²³

The WSJ reports that German intelligence claims that Iran is monitoring critics of the Iranian government, based in Germany, by videotaping them,

“In Germany, a national intelligence report indicates that Iranian intelligence operatives are monitoring about 900 critics of the Iranian regime within Germany. One German intelligence official, Manfred Murch, said last month that his staff has identified "Iranian intelligence agents" trying to intimidate protestors in Germany by videotaping them. A German foreign-ministry official said Germany rejected requests from Iran to restrict anti-Iranian protests there.”²⁴

Human Rights Watch reports that Iranian intelligence agencies have identified protestors in Iran, from pictures posted on websites leading to their arrest,

“Maryam Sabri, 21, who was arrested on July 30 during the commemoration of the 40th day after the killing of Neda Soltan - whose shooting death during a demonstration shocked the world. Sabri was arrested after her photo appeared on a website connected to the Revolutionary Guard that posted pictures of protestors and asked people to identify the people in the photos so that they could be arrested. Before she was released on August 12, Sabri says, she was raped four times by the prison guards.”²⁵

3. Any evidence relating to Iranian intelligence gathering and spying on opposition movement and activities in the UK and other countries? Are those who have taken part in London demonstrations considered or perceived to be anti-regime activists due to their political activities in London?

According to the Wall Street Journal relatives in Iran have been arrested due to the activities of individuals abroad.²⁶

The WSJ further reports that the Iranian authorities are cracking down on Iranians abroad by tracking Facebook, Youtube and Twitter activity and identifying them at protests. The WSJ reports that interviews with 90 Iranians abroad indicate that those who have been

²¹ Wall Street Journal, Ex-Iranian Diplomat Alleges Vote Rigging, Pressure to Spy, 19 March 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704207504575129461549263620.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

²² Wall Street Journal, Ex-Iranian Diplomat Alleges Vote Rigging, Pressure to Spy, 19 March 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704207504575129461549263620.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

²³ Wall Street Journal, Ex-Iranian Diplomat Alleges Vote Rigging, Pressure to Spy, 19 March 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704207504575129461549263620.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

²⁴ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

²⁵ Human Rights Watch, Iran; Stop covering up sexual assaults in prison, 6 November 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/06/09/iran-stop-covering-sexual-assaults-prison>, accessed 16 June 2010

²⁶ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

identified as participating in demonstrations, including in London, have faced threats intended to silence them,

“The regime has been cracking down hard at home. And now, a Wall Street Journal investigation shows, it is extending that crackdown to Iranians abroad as well.

In recent months, Iran has been conducting a campaign of harassing and intimidating members of its diaspora world-wide -- not just prominent dissidents -- who criticize the regime, according to former Iranian lawmakers and former members of Iran's elite security force, the Revolutionary Guard, with knowledge of the program.

Part of the effort involves tracking the Facebook, Twitter and YouTube activity of Iranians around the world, and identifying them at opposition protests abroad, these people say.

Interviews with roughly 90 ordinary Iranians abroad -- college students, housewives, doctors, lawyers, businesspeople -- in New York, London, Dubai, Sweden, Los Angeles and other places indicate that people who criticize Iran's regime online or in public demonstrations are facing threats intended to silence them.”²⁷

The WSJ reports that it hasn't been able to verify these claims but notes the similarities of descriptions of 'harassment techniques.’²⁸

The WSJ states that in response to global protests, “Iran's leadership is striking back across national borders.”²⁹

“Dozens of individuals in the U.S. and Europe who criticized Iran on Facebook or Twitter said their relatives back in Iran were questioned or temporarily detained because of their postings. About three dozen individuals interviewed said that, when traveling this summer back to Iran, they were questioned about whether they hold a foreign passport, whether they possess Facebook accounts and why they were visiting Iran. The questioning, they said, took place at passport control upon their arrival at Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport.

Five interviewees who traveled to Iran in recent months said they were forced by police at Tehran's airport to log in to their Facebook accounts. Several reported having their passports confiscated because of harsh criticism they had posted online about the way the Iranian government had handled its controversial elections earlier this year.

Before this past summer, "If anyone asked me, 'Does the government threaten Iranians abroad or their families at home,' I would say, 'Not at all,'" says Nasrin Sotoudeh, a prominent lawyer inside Iran. "But now the cases are too many to count. Every day I get phone calls and visits from people who are being harassed and threatened" because of relatives' activities abroad.

²⁷ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

²⁸ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

²⁹ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

In November, the deputy commander of Iran's armed forces, Gen. Massoud Jazayeri, wrote an editorial in the conservative newspaper Kayhan that "protesters inside and outside Iran have been identified and will be dealt with at the right time."

The WSJ reports that an Iranian diplomat at Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York stated,

"The allegation that the Islamic Republic of Iran has created limitations and problems for Iranians who are visiting Iran from abroad is false,"³⁰

He is further reported as saying,

"Many Iranians have returned to Iran and visited their family members. Until now we have no reports of any limitations being imposed on them. Representatives of Iran abroad are doing their utmost to facilitate traveling for Iranians to Iran."

The WSJ describes the experience of an Iranian living in Europe who had attended protests there, on travelling to Iran,

"An Iranian engineer in his 30s who lives in a German-speaking area of Europe, and who attended protests there this year, described having his passport, cellphone and laptop confiscated when he later traveled to Tehran. He said he was called in for questioning several times, blindfolded, kicked and physically abused, and asked to hand over his email and Facebook passwords.

Interrogators showed him images of himself participating in protests in Europe, he said, and pressed him to identify other people in the images.

"I was very scared. My knees were trembling the whole time and I kept thinking, 'How did this happen to me?'" he said recently. "I only went to a few demonstrations, and I don't even live in Iran."

He said he was told he was guilty of charges including attending anti regime protests abroad, participating in online activities on Facebook and Twitter that harmed Iran's national security and leaving comments on opposition Web sites. He said he was given a choice: Face trial in Iran, or sign a document promising to act as an informant in Europe.

He says he signed the paper, took his passport and left Iran after a month. He says he has received follow-up emails and phone calls but hasn't responded to them."³¹

According to the WSJ, "the worries are sowing panic in the overseas community. Concerns about the safety of friends and family are so prevalent among younger Iranians that a number have changed their surnames on Facebook to "Irani" (which means simply "from Iran") to be harder to single out."³²

³⁰ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

³¹ Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

³² Wall Street Journal, Iranian Crackdown Goes Global, 3 December 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125978649644673331.html>, accessed 6 May 2010

4. Any information on the network of Iranian intelligence agencies both domestic and international, and intelligence gathering apparatus in the UK and where information might be sent to.

In October 2009 UPI reported that "Iranian agents are spying on opponents of the Islamic regime" in Germany" and that Tehran had called on the German Foreign Ministry to prevent anti-Iranian demonstrations from occurring in Europe.³³

"We know that the Iranian secret service has its people circulating in demonstrations," a TV report on German public broadcaster ARD quoted the deputy head of German intelligence in Hamburg, Manfred Murck, as saying. "We have evidence that people are being filmed, that the services want to identify people."

The TV report also stated the German foreign ministry had said that Tehran had urged the German Foreign Ministry to prevent anti-Iranian demonstrations in Europe. Ali Reza Sheikh Attar, Iran's ambassador to Germany, denied those allegations.³⁴

The Sunday Herald reports that,

"in Britain, France, Holland, Germany and the US, Iranian intelligence has run a relentless covert war against dissident Iranians and exiles from the religious regime for over two decades. After the 1979 theocratic revolution, tens of thousands of Iranians fled their homeland seeking refuge in the West.

Tehran's revolutionary government infiltrated spies within this throng of exiles. These "sleepers" had two purposes: one, to spy on dissident organisations; and, two, to get into positions of power in the West - in areas such as academia, the media and industry - which could be exploited by Iran to extract secrets from Western nations and influence the policy-making of governments in Europe and America.

A number of documents from the German and Dutch security agencies, which have been seen by the Sunday Herald, reveal the extent of Iranian espionage in Western Europe. One 2005 report by Germany's Office for the Protection of the Constitution roughly equivalent to Britain's MI5 stated: "Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) has several groups under surveillance in Europe ... for collecting information and spying activities, Iran's intelligence service uses a network of agents who have defected from dissident organisations. The agents are invited to travel to Iran for briefings. In the process of the talks these people are put under pressure.

"For agent recruitment, the MOIS ... brings psychological pressure to bear on the targeted person, eg by threatening them with reprisals on their relatives living in

³³ UPI, special Reports; Iranian spies active in Germany, 16 October 2009, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2009/10/16/Iranian-spies-active-in-Germany/UPI-42771255712668/, accessed 16 June 2010

³⁴ UPI, special Reports; Iranian spies active in Germany, 16 October 2009, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2009/10/16/Iranian-spies-active-in-Germany/UPI-42771255712668/, accessed 16 June 2010

Iran. Those who do not travel to Iran are contacted and directed from Iran by phone."³⁵

According to Sunday Herald,

"Holland's Interior Security Service says that Iranian intelligence "distributes negative information" on dissidents and "strives to portray a Satanic view" of anti-Tehran refugees in order to weaken the opposition in exile. Ex-members of dissident groups who have been turned by Iranian intelligence are encouraged to write diatribes against exile groups. As well as using threats and intimidation to turn espionage targets, bribes are also employed.

Another German security report said that Iranian intelligence used the embassy in Berlin as the centre for its spying activities. Intelligence chiefs in Iran direct the European operations. The report states that when it comes to recruiting spies from exiles, "Tehran will make the final decision."

The German intelligence report also notes that an Iranian living in Germany was arrested for "working as an agent of the Iranian secret service". He had been spying on "Iranian dissidents living in Frankfurt under instructions of MOIS."³⁶

The Sunday Herald further reports,

"One MOIS spy revealed details of his espionage operations against dissidents and exiles in an affidavit he submitted to the US courts. Jamshid Tafrishi said: "I pretended that I was an opponent of the Iranian regime, while I was in fact advancing the assignments given by the Iranian Intelligence Ministry." He says he "actively participated in the Iranian regime conspiracy" to blacken the names of exiles. This included relaying false information to foreign governments, including claims that dissidents had the support of Saddam Hussein.

Between 1995 and 1999, he received some £35,000 from Iranian intelligence chiefs as payment for work on their behalf. Tafrishi said one of the senior spies he reported to had orchestrated the murder of at least 100 dissidents in Iran. He was told by his handlers that if dissidents could be discredited, then Tehran believed "the United Nations would no longer condemn the Iranian regime".

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International were targeted, Tafrishi claimed, as recipients of disinformation and black propaganda about exiles and dissidents by Iranian intelligence, as was the US State Department and UN Human Rights Commission."³⁷

The Sunday Herald quotes Clare Lopez, a CIA officer and senior adviser to the Iran Policy Committee, a Washington-based think-tank which advocates democracy in Iran, as stating,

³⁵ Sunday Herald. Iran's Spies, 23 December 2006, <http://www.heraldscotland.com/iran-s-spies-1.834461>, accessed 9 June 2010

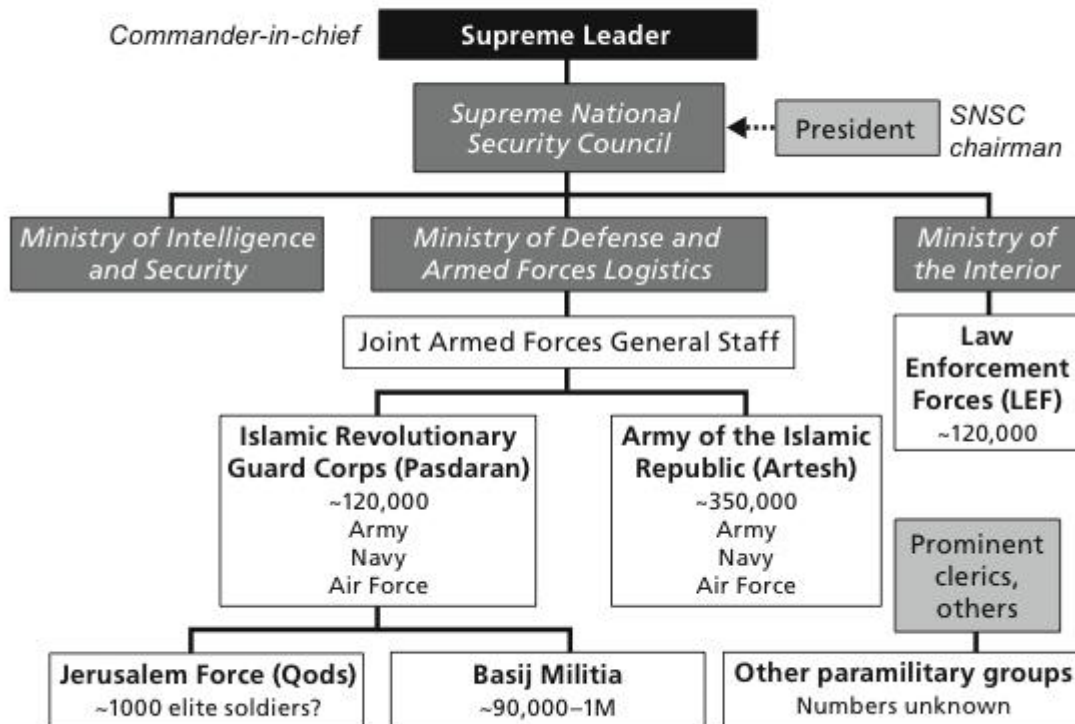
³⁶ Sunday Herald. Iran's Spies, 23 December 2006, <http://www.heraldscotland.com/iran-s-spies-1.834461>, accessed 9 June 2010

³⁷ Sunday Herald. Iran's Spies, 23 December 2006, <http://www.heraldscotland.com/iran-s-spies-1.834461>, accessed 9 June 2010

“The Iranian regime deploys its intelligence agents and assets in a very sophisticated campaign to infiltrate and influence Western academia, media, non-governmental organisations and policy-making structures.”³⁸

In 2009 the RAND corporation published a report which was prepared for the US Office of the Secretary of Defense, providing a diagram detailing the structure of “Iran’s National Security Establishment,”³⁹

Figure 2.1
Iran’s National Security Establishment



RAND MG821-2.1

According to several media reports, the internet and social communication means have also been under close surveillance in Iran.⁴⁰

The AFP quotes the Deputy Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists as stating that,

³⁸ Sunday Herald. Iran’s Spies, 23 December 2006, <http://www.heraldscotland.com/iran-s-spies-1.834461>, accessed 9 June 2010

³⁹ RAND Corporation, The Rise of the Pasdaran, 2009, page 9, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf, accessed 12 June 2010

⁴⁰ AFP, Over 65 reporters face spying charges in Iran: rights group, 16 February 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19748:over-65-reporters-face-spying-charges-in-iran-rights-group&catid=4:iran-general&Itemid=26, accessed 12 June 2010. Guardian, Iran election anniversary protests face severe crackdown, 9 June 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/09/iran-election-demonstration-green-repression>. BBC, Iran MEPs condemn Nokia Siemens 'surveillance tech' in Iran, 11 February 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8511035.stm>, accessed 12 June 2010

"The Iranian government is now using (Facebook) to go after and find dissidents and journalists, mining their data, seeing who their friends are,' he added. "They are turning the technology that should liberate the press against the press. This is a worrying trend."⁴¹

The BBC reports that in February 2010,

"Euro MPs have "strongly" criticised telecoms firm Nokia Siemens Networks for providing "surveillance technology" to the Iranian authorities. In a resolution adopted [], the MEPs said the hardware was instrumental in the "persecution and arrests of Iranian dissidents."⁴²

However according to the BBC,

"Nokia Siemens said that the implication that it had provided censorship technology was "wrong"

It has previously said that it had installed "lawful" technology in 2008. "We will be clarifying any inaccuracy in their understanding of our business in Iran with the European Parliament," Ben Roome of the firm told BBC News."⁴³

Further Nokia told the BBC,

"that it had provided "very basic surveillance" capabilities to Iran Telecom in 2008. The product is called Monitoring Centre and can be used to monitor local telephone calls."⁴⁴

According to the AFP reporting in February 2010,

"the United States also accused Iran of trying "a near total information blockade" to deal with anti-government protesters, calling the move unprecedented. Based on US monitoring of networks and other information, State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said it appeared that "Iran has attempted a near total information blockade. "He added that his statement was based on US monitoring that showed the phone network was taken down, text messages blocked, satellite television jammed and the Internet "throttled."⁴⁵

⁴¹ AFP, Over 65 reporters face spying charges in Iran: rights group, 16 February 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19748:over-65-reporters-face-spying-charges-in-iran-rights-group&catid=4:iran-general&Itemid=26, accessed 12 June 2010

⁴² BBC, Iran MEPs condemn Nokia Siemens 'surveillance tech' in Iran, 11 February 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/8511035.stm>, accessed 12 June 2010

⁴³ BBC, Iran MEPs condemn Nokia Siemens 'surveillance tech' in Iran, 11 February 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/8511035.stm>, accessed 12 June 2010

⁴⁴ BBC, Iran MEPs condemn Nokia Siemens 'surveillance tech' in Iran, 11 February 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/8511035.stm>, accessed 12 June 2010

⁴⁵ AFP, Over 65 reporters face spying charges in Iran: rights group, 16 February 2010, http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19748:over-65-reporters-face-spying-charges-in-iran-rights-group&catid=4:iran-general&Itemid=26, accessed 12 June 2010

The Telegraph reports that Iran says pro-opposition demonstrators have been backed by the West, the United States and Britain in particular and that London and Washington have rejected the accusations.⁴⁶

According to The Times, Iran's police chief has accused the BBC of being an arm of MI6 and warned of severe punishment for any Iranians in contact with the organisation,

"The BBC is the arm of MI6, and VOA belongs to the CIA," he said. "Those who cooperate with foreign services through transmitting photos, reports, news and anti-revolutionary actions . . . should know that all their actions are monitored. We will settle accounts with them when the time comes."⁴⁷

Official news agency, Islamic Republic News Agency reports pro-Iran protest movements within Iran and other Muslim countries have condemned the "brazen interference of the Western powers and distorted picture their media was presenting to the world"⁴⁸ and "London's provoking and hostile policies."⁴⁹

The Times reports that "[m]ore than 60 journalists are now among the several hundred people who have been rounded up and detained pending their "show trials". As a result, much of the information and images about the protest movement in Iran is coming from Iranian citizen journalists."⁵⁰

5. Any evidence that Iranian nationals who have taken part in demonstrations against Iranian government outside Iranian embassy in London will be at risk of persecution and ill-treatment in case of return to Iran. If so, what treatment are such persons likely to receive on return to Tehran Airport/Iran?

Several sources report that Iranian dissidents have been targeted by authorities due to their activities of criticising the Iranian government.⁵¹

Radio Free Europe reports that on 3 April 2010 the Iranian Justice Minister announced that a special court will be established for Iranians abroad.⁵²

⁴⁶ Telegraph, Iran 'to downgrade ties with UK' after accusing London of interference in election, 24 June 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/5623094/Iran-to-downgrade-ties-with-UK-after-accusing-London-of-interference-in-election.html>, accessed 13 June 2010

⁴⁷ The Times, BBC an arm of MI6, says police chief of Iran , 22 February 2010, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article7035616.ece, accessed 10 June 2010

⁴⁸ Islamic Republic News Agency, Kashmiris hold pro-Iran protests, 24 June 2009, <http://www.irna.ir/En/View/FullStory/?NewsId=560456&idLanguage=3>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁴⁹ Islamic Republic News Agency, Students sit in protest outside UK embassy cancelled, 23 June 2009, <http://www.irna.ir/En/View/FullStory/?NewsId=559639&idLanguage=3>, 16 June 2010

⁵⁰ The Times, BBC an arm of MI6, says police chief of Iran , 22 February 2010, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article7035616.ece, accessed 10 June 2010

⁵¹ Wall Street Journal, Ex-Iranian Diplomat Alleges Vote Rigging, Pressure to Spy, 19 March 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704207504575129461549263620.html>, accessed 6 May 2010. Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Letter by Saeed Malekpour: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010. AP, Iranian says he was kidnapped, 11 June 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20683:ap-exclusive-iranian-says-he-was-kidnapped&catid=9:terrorism&Itemid=31, accessed 12 June 2010

⁵² Radio Free Europe, Special Court to be Established for Iranians Abroad, 5 April 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/Special_Court_To_Be_Established_for_Iranians_Abroad_/2003235.html, accessed 6 May 2010

“The timing of the move has led to speculation that it could be a reaction to the huge show of support and solidarity by Iranians living abroad for members of the opposition movement that took to the streets last summer to protest against the reelection of President Mahmud Ahmadinejad.

By setting up the court, the Iranian government seems to be trying to send a warning to some of the Iranians based outside Iran who are actively campaigning and supporting the green movement.

Radio Farda reports that some Iranian officials have threatened to take judicial actions against Iranian expats for their show of solidarity with the opposition street protests in Tehran.”⁵³

The AP reports that an Iranian dissident who went missing for almost two weeks in Germany was kidnapped by four Arabic-speaking men who threatened to kill him because he had made a film which was critical of the Iranian regime,⁵⁴

“Shokof disappeared May 24 in Cologne, the day he planned to board a train to Paris to promote his new film "Iran Zendan," or "Iran Prison." The small independent movie is highly critical of the Iranian regime and shows scenes of torture and rape in an Iranian prison. It was shown once last month to a closed audience of friends at a Berlin theater and then posted on YouTube, but has since been removed. On June 5 [2009], almost two weeks after he went missing, Shokof was found by a group of teenagers-drenched, exhausted and confused-near the Rhine river in Cologne, and taken to a hospital, police said.”⁵⁵

The AP further reports that,

“Shokof, a 55-year-old Berlin resident, said one of his captors accused him of blasphemy." "You have insulted Islam, you have insulted the regime, we're going to kill you, you have to stop the release of your film,'- that's what he said to me," Shokof said. [] He said he told his kidnapper he was not trying to hurt Islam, but criticizing only the Iranian government." I told him what happens in Iran has nothing to do with Islam," he said.”⁵⁶

In his first interview since his ordeal, Daryush Shokof said he thought the kidnapping was orchestrated by the regime in Tehran.⁵⁷

⁵³ Radio Free Europe, Special Court to be Established for Iranians Abroad, 5 April 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/Special_Court_To_Be_Established_for_Iranians_Abroad_/2003235.html, accessed 6 May 2010

⁵⁴ AP, Iranian says he was kidnapped, 11 June 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20683:ap-exclusive-iranian-says-he-was-kidnapped&catid=9:terrorism&Itemid=31, accessed 12 June 2010

⁵⁵ AP, Iranian says he was kidnapped, 11 June 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20683:ap-exclusive-iranian-says-he-was-kidnapped&catid=9:terrorism&Itemid=31, accessed 12 June 2010

⁵⁶ AP, Iranian says he was kidnapped, 11 June 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20683:ap-exclusive-iranian-says-he-was-kidnapped&catid=9:terrorism&Itemid=31, accessed 12 June 2010

⁵⁷ AP, Iranian says he was kidnapped, 11 June 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20683:ap-exclusive-iranian-says-he-was-kidnapped&catid=9:terrorism&Itemid=31, accessed 12 June 2010

"I am convinced that there is a connection between my kidnapping and the Iranian regime," Shokof said in a phone interview from Cologne, where he [sic] under police protection. "This was the act of this horrendous regime."⁵⁸

Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran published a letter written by a prisoner who was arrested on return to Iran for internet related offences committed whilst in Canada. He details being tortured including beatings and use of electric shocks, he states that he was denied access to a lawyer, forced to give false written and televised confessions and spent 320 days in solitary confinement,⁵⁹

"So far, 12 months of the total 17 months of my detention have been spent in solitary confinement, and not once was I allowed to visit my lawyer. During this time, and particularly in the first months, I was subject to various forms of physical and psychological torture by the "Revolutionary Guards Cyber Counterattack" team. Some of the torture procedures were performed in the presence of Mr. Moussavi, the magistrate of the case. A large portion of my confession was extracted under pressure, physical and psychological torture, threats to myself and my family, and false promises of immediate release upon giving a false confession to whatever the interrogators dictated."⁶⁰

The letter describes interrogation techniques which the detainee was subject to during this period,⁶¹

"Most of the time the tortures were performed by a group. While I remained blindfolded and handcuffed, several individuals armed with cables, batons, and their fists struck and punched me. At times, they would flog my head and neck. Such mistreatment was aimed at forcing me to write what the interrogators were dictating, and to compel me to play a role in front of the camera based on their scenarios. Sometimes, they used extremely painful electrical shock that would paralyze me temporarily. Once in October 2008, the interrogators stripped me while I was blindfolded and threatened to rape me with a bottle of water."⁶²

Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran states that,

"This political prisoner was arrested in relation to a case of Internet offences. The case was titled "Mozzelin 2" (The Strayed 2). In winter 2009, a report was published by a group that introduced itself as part of the IRGC. In this report, it was

⁵⁸ AP, Iranian says he was kidnapped, 11 June 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20683:ap-exclusive-iranian-says-he-was-kidnapped&catid=9:terrorism&Itemid=31, accessed 12 June 2010

⁵⁹ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Evidence of someone living abroad being arrested for 'crimes' committed whilst in another country: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010

⁶⁰ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Evidence of someone living abroad being arrested for 'crimes' committed whilst in another country: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010

⁶¹ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Evidence of someone living abroad being arrested for 'crimes' committed whilst in another country: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010

⁶² Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Evidence of someone living abroad being arrested for 'crimes' committed whilst in another country: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010

alleged that certain individuals were responsible for being part of a “network of decadence on the Internet.”⁶³

According to the Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, “[a] similar scenario was repeated in winter 2010 during the time widespread arrests of human rights activists across Iran were taking place. This time, two reports were published with the titles “Cyber Fights of the Revolutionary Guards against Destabilizing Groups,” and “The Arrest of American Cyber War Network Members.” The state media also aired reports regarding these reports.”⁶⁴

UPI reports claims by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, which according to UPI lead the protests in Europe, that “expatriates who have taken part in anti-regime demonstrations in Europe have received threatening phone calls, that people are arrested when they visit relatives back in Iran, and that those relatives are hassled by Iranian authorities.”⁶⁵

Amnesty International further states that family members of former prisoners have been subject to arbitrary arrest,

“Hundreds of people remain detained for their part in the protests of June 2009 or for otherwise expressing dissenting views and the imprisonment of ordinary citizens has become an every day phenomenon in an expanding ‘revolving door system’ of arbitrary arrest and detention. Those with only tentative links to banned groups as well as family members of former prisoners have been subjected to arbitrary arrest in the past year.

The Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran reports on cases of arbitrary detention of those returning to Iran from abroad whose parents or relatives were carrying anti-regime activities in Iran.⁶⁶ According to the Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, the son of Tehran Stock Exchange’s Former Secretary-General, a PhD student of Political Sciences at Durham University, England was detained for 3 months when he returned to Iran to visit his family. His passport was confiscated upon his arrival at Tehran’s Airport and he was arrested a few days later. He made only two phone calls to his family but was not allowed any prison visits during these 3 months. The source adds that his father was the director of banned newspaper “Sarmayeh” and a critic of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s political policies.⁶⁷

6. Any evidence of intimidation and persecution of protestors and human rights activists in Iran

⁶³ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Evidence of someone living abroad being arrested for ‘crimes’ committed whilst in another country: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010

⁶⁴ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Evidence of someone living abroad being arrested for ‘crimes’ committed whilst in another country: A shocking account of torture, interrogation and forced confession, 27 March 2010, <http://www.rhairan.biz/en/?p=1965>, accessed on 14 June 2010

⁶⁵ “The NCRI is an umbrella organization representing the People’s Mujahedin of Iran, which Tehran and the United States list as a terror organization” UPI, special Reports; Iranian spies active in Germany, 16 October 2009, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2009/10/16/Iranian-spies-active-in-Germany/UPI-42771255712668/, accessed 16 June 2010

⁶⁶ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Son of Tehran Stock Exchange’s Former Secretary-General, 1 April 2010, <http://www.rhairan.info/en/?p=2104>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁶⁷ Reporters and Human Rights Activists of Iran, Rahana, Son of Tehran Stock Exchange’s Former Secretary-General, 1 April 2010, <http://www.rhairan.info/en/?p=2104>, accessed 14 June 2010

Several sources have reported the intimidation and persecution of protestors and human rights activists in Iran.⁶⁸

On 10 June 2010 Human Rights Watch reported,

“Iran's government is tightening its grip, harassing, imprisoning, and using violence against its own people one year after the disputed 2009 presidential election and the start of its brutal crackdown”⁶⁹

In June 2009 Amnesty International's UK Director Kate Allen stated,

“The rights to free speech and assembly are under wholesale assault by the authorities in Iran right now. Human rights activists, political opponents and ordinary demonstrators are being beaten and arrested by police and militia.”⁷⁰

The United States (USDOS) 2009 report on human rights practices in Iran states that,

“Security forces were implicated in custodial deaths and the killings of election protesters and committed other acts of politically motivated violence, including torture, beatings, and rape...[...] During the June election protests, scores of protesters and nonprotesting bystanders were killed, especially during antigovernment rallies; government sources reported the death toll at 37, opposition groups reported approximately 70 individuals died, and human rights organizations suggested as many as 200.”⁷¹

The USDOS further reports that human rights organizations have documented “numerous” disappearances relating to protests during the year (2009),

“Plainclothes officers or security officials often seized journalists and activists without warning and detained them incommunicado for several days or longer before permitting them to contact family members.”⁷²

Iran Solidarity posts an article from the International Committee Against Executions entitled, ‘Detained Protestors threatened with execution’ which states that,

⁶⁸ Amnesty International, From Protest to Prison; Iran one year after the election, June 2010, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/062/2010/en/a009a855-788b-4ed4-8aa9-3e535ea9606a/mde130622010en.pdf>, accessed 16 June 2010. Human Rights Watch, Iran: Crisis deepening one year after disputed elections, 10 June 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/06/10/iran-crisis-deepening-one-year-after-disputed-elections>, accessed 16 June 2010. Reporters Without Borders, Using skillfully devised strategy, regime's repressive policies succeed, 8 June 2010, <http://en.rsf.org/iran-using-skillfully-devised-strategy-08-06-2010,37693.html>, accessed 16 June 2010. Freedom House, Freedom in the World Country Report 2010, Iran, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2010&country=7842>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁶⁹ Human Rights Watch, Iran: Crisis deepening one year after disputed elections, 10 June 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/06/10/iran-crisis-deepening-one-year-after-disputed-elections>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁷⁰ Amnesty International, London protest calls for justice for imprisoned Iranian trade unionists, 26 June 2009 http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=18285, accessed 10 June 2010

⁷¹ United states Department of State, Country Report on Human Rights Practices, Iran 2009, 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136068.htm>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁷² United states Department of State, Country Report on Human Rights Practices, Iran 2009, 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136068.htm>, accessed 16 June 2010

“Ayatollah Alamohoda, a member of the Assembly of Experts, warned citizens who had demonstrated their opposition to the government's restrictions on civil rights that they would be considered Mohareb, or enemies of God, if they did not give up their opposition. Mohareb is a crime punishable by death in the Islamic Republic. Alamohoda implored the demonstrators to "come back to the side of the Supreme Leader," otherwise they would "regret the punishments" waiting for them.”⁷³

Iran Focus further reports that “[t]he authorities arrested an estimated 4,000 people including journalists and reformist politicians in a massive crackdown in the weeks after the election. Stiff jail terms have been handed down to several people convicted of taking part in the unrest, although some have been released on bail pending possible appeals.”⁷⁴

AFP reports that “more than 65 journalists, bloggers and writers have been detained in Iran since last June's disputed presidential polls and could be tried on charges of "spying" for the foreign media.”⁷⁵ One year on from the disputed June 2009 presidential election Amnesty International has documented “a widening crackdown on dissent that has left journalists, students, political and rights activists as well as clerics languishing in prisons.”⁷⁶

Freedom House reports that “Iran leads the world in the number of jailed journalists, with 39 behind bars at the close of 2009.”⁷⁷

According to the Amnesty International, there have been many reports of torture and other ill-treatment of detainees since the disputed presidential elections on 12 June 2009. Amnesty International reports that “[m]ethods reported include severe beatings, confinement in extremely small spaces, deprivation of light, food and water, denial of medical treatment, and sexual assault, including rape.”⁷⁸ The USDOS reports that, “[m]ajor human rights and news organizations reported "systematic" torture of individuals after the election.”⁷⁹

⁷³ International Committee Against Executions, Iran: Detained Protestors threatened with Execution, Bulletin January 2010, available from <http://iransolidarity.blogspot.com/2010/01/bulletin-of-international-committee.html>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁷⁴ AFP, Iran confirms death sentence for opposition activists, 15 May 2010, http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20408:iran-confirms-death-sentence-for-opposition-activists&catid=5:human-rights&Itemid=27, accessed 10 June 2010

⁷⁵ AFP, Over 65 reporters face spying charges in Iran: rights group, 16 February 2010, available from http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19748:over-65-reporters-face-spying-charges-in-iran-rights-group&catid=4:iran-general&Itemid=26, accessed 12 June 2010

⁷⁶ Amnesty International, Iran's crackdown on dissent widens with hundreds unjustly imprisoned, 9 June 2010, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/irans-crackdown-dissent-widens-hundreds-unjustly-imprisoned-2010-06-09>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁷⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World Country Report 2010, Iran, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2010&country=7842>, accessed 16 June 2010

⁷⁸ Amnesty International, Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review for Iran, 7th session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council, February 2010 http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session7/IR/AI_UPR_IRN_S07_2010_AmnestyInternational.pdf, accessed 10 June 2010

⁷⁹ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human Rights Practices, Iran 2009, 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136068.htm>, accessed 16 June 2010

According to several sources, authorities in Iran routinely execute dissidents on charges of acting against state security.⁸⁰ Iran Focus alleges states that "Authorities routinely execute dissidents on bogus charges such as armed robbery and drug trafficking."⁸¹

On 11 June the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran reports that an Iranian state television program defamed human rights lawyer and Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi in a heavily edited program on 10 June, and that an associate and spokesperson for Ebadi's organisation, Defenders of Human Rights Centre, was detained.⁸² According to the BBC Ms Ebadi has been outside Iran since travelling to Spain for a conference the day before the 12 June election.⁸³

The BBC reports that Nobel Prize recipient Ms Shirin Ebadi, who has criticised Iran's recent disputed election and the subsequent treatment of protesters, has "received many threatening messages" since leaving Iran.⁸⁴

According to the BBC Ms Ebadi stated,

"They said they would detain me if I returned, or that they would make the environment unsafe for me wherever I am," she said, adding that her colleagues still in the country had also been "detained or banned from travelling abroad."⁸⁵

The BBC further reported that Ms Ebadi's Nobel Peace Prize medal, which she won in 2003, has been confiscated on the orders of Iran's Revolutionary Court and that her bank account has been frozen. According to the BBC, Iranian authorities have not made any official comment on the issue.⁸⁶

According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran,

"Ebadi's husband, Javad Tavasolian, was arrested in July 2009, and subjected to physical and psychological abuse. He was videotaped while in detention and coerced to make defamatory statements about her. He informed Ebadi about his ill-

⁸⁰ Amnesty International, Iran executions send chilling message, 30 March 2010, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/iran-executions-send-chilling-message-2010-03-30>, accessed 10 June 2010. The Times, Iran hangs alleged dissidents to warn opposition, 29 January 2010, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article7007003.ece, accessed 10 June 2010. Iran Focus, News & Analyses, Two hanged in central Iran prison, 19 May 2010, http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20446:two-hanged-in-central-iran-prison&catid=5:human-rights&Itemid=27, accessed 10 June 2010. Iran Focus, News & Analyses, Mother thanks Iranians for trying to save son's life, 21 May 2010, http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20475:mother-thanks-iranians-for-trying-to-save-sons-life&catid=4:iran-general&Itemid=26, accessed 10 June 2010

⁸¹ Iran Focus, News & Analyses, Two hanged in central Iran prison, 19 May 2010, http://www.iranfocus.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20446:two-hanged-in-central-iran-prison&catid=5:human-rights&Itemid=27, accessed 10 June 2010.

⁸² International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Nobel Laureate Defamed on Iranian TV, Colleague Arrested Fresh Wave of Attacks against Human Rights Defenders, 11 June 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/06/ebadi-defamed/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁸³ BBC News, Shirin Ebadi Nobel Peace Prize medal 'seized by Iran', 27 November, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8382008.stm>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁸⁴ BBC News, Shirin Ebadi Nobel Peace Prize medal 'seized by Iran', 27 November, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8382008.stm>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁸⁵ BBC News, Shirin Ebadi Nobel Peace Prize medal 'seized by Iran', 27 November, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8382008.stm>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁸⁶ BBC News, Shirin Ebadi Nobel Peace Prize medal 'seized by Iran', 27 November, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8382008.stm>, accessed 14 June 2010.

treatment after his release. At the time of her husband's arrest, Ebadi announced members of her family, if arrested, should not to hesitate to make false "confessions" against her since the only reason for their harassment and detention would be to pressure her to stop her human rights advocacy."⁸⁷

According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, "Iranian authorities have put Ebadi under intense pressure over several years. The Defenders of Human Rights Center (DHRC) was raided and shut down in December 2008. Mohammad Ali Dadkhah and Abdol Fattah Soltani, both founders of the organization, were arrested after the June 2009 election. In December 2009, Dr. Nooshin Ebadi, Shirin Ebadi's sister and a professor and medical researcher, was arrested and held without charge for 17 days. She was threatened with the loss of her university position in an apparent attempt to pressure Shirin Ebadi to cease her advocacy for human rights. In addition, the government has frozen all of Shirin Ebadi and her husband's assets, bank accounts, and pensions."⁸⁸

According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran,

"For decades, security forces in the Islamic Republic of Iran have used forced confessions, broadcast over state television, to justify the arbitrary detention of political, civil society, and human rights activists. Often, those under pressure or in detention not only confess to their "crimes," but also launch charges against others, paving the way for further crackdowns carried out by security forces against their colleagues."⁸⁹

Amnesty International reports trials before General, Revolutionary or other Special Courts do not meet international standards for fair trials. According to Amnesty International torture has been used to extract "confessions", which are then admissible in court,

"The independence of the judiciary is compromised, the independence and security of lawyers are undermined and, in many cases, particularly those relating to national security, detainees are not afforded access to legal counsel until investigations are deemed complete, on the basis of a note following Article 128 of the Code of Criminal Procedures. This leads to prolonged periods of incommunicado detention, sometimes in parallel or informal detention centres to which the judiciary has no access, a process which facilitates the use of torture or other ill-treatment to obtain "confessions". Such "confessions" are admissible as evidence in court."⁹⁰

⁸⁷ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Nobel Laureate Defamed on Iranian TV, Colleague Arrested Fresh Wave of Attacks against Human Rights Defenders, 11 June 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/06/ebadi-defamed/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁸⁸ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Nobel Laureate Defamed on Iranian TV, Colleague Arrested Fresh Wave of Attacks against Human Rights Defenders, 11 June 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/06/ebadi-defamed/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁸⁹ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Nobel Laureate Defamed on Iranian TV, Colleague Arrested Fresh Wave of Attacks against Human Rights Defenders, 11 June 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/06/ebadi-defamed/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁹⁰ Amnesty International, Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review for Iran, 7th session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council, February 2010, pages 3-4, http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session7/IR/AI_UPR_IRN_S07_2010_AmnestyInternational.pdf, accessed 10 June 2010

Amnesty further states that detainees held in facilities run by intelligence agencies are often subject to torture,

“Prisoners in Iran’s prisons particularly those held in locations controlled by the numerous intelligence agencies are often subjected to torture and other ill treatment, including denial of necessary medical treatment. Such treatment may be intended to force them to make “confessions” which are then used as evidence against them in court, or as further punishment.”⁹¹

The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran states that,

“The Iranian Intelligence Ministry is manipulating the judicial process by forcing the issuance of harsh and long sentences for activists regardless of the lack of credible evidence against them.”⁹²

The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran cites the example of political activist Heshmatollah Tabarzadi who was arrested for allegedly participating in Ashura protests and rallies. According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Tabarzadi faces four charges: propaganda against the state, gathering and colluding against national security, insulting the Supreme Leader and President, and insulting Islam. While Tabarzadi had denied such participation, clarifying that he was merely driving his car, his lawyer noted that even if he had been participating in a peaceful protest, it would not have been a legitimate basis for his arrest.⁹³

The attorney for jailed political activist Heshmatollah Tabarzadi has told the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran “that intelligence agents pressuring court officials have demanded excessive punishments, while the entire case deserves to be dismissed because of procedural violations.”⁹⁴

A spokesperson for the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran stated that,

“The case of Heshmatollah Tabarzadi and those of numerous others show that one cannot speak of a fair trial conforming to international standards of due process when the Judiciary is merely a tool of security agencies and executive powers”⁹⁵

The article by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran further reports that,

⁹¹ Amnesty International, Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review for Iran, 7th session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council, February 2010, page 5, http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session7/IR/AI_UPR_IRN_S07_2010_AmnestyInternational.pdf, accessed 10 June 2010

⁹² International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁹³ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁹⁴ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁹⁵ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

“Tabarzadi, who has been kept in solitary confinement in Evin prison's notorious Ward 209 and harshly interrogated since his arrest on 28 December 2009, ostensibly for participating in Ashura protests, claims he was simply driving near the protests in his automobile. Tabarzadi previously spent nine years in Evin prison on account of his political activism.”⁹⁶

In an interview with the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran Tabarzadi's lawyer, said her client was arrested using a warrant not showing his name, as required by law, “[a]s a political prisoner, the procedures in his case must conform to the demands of Article 168 of the Iranian Constitution, which stipulates that a political prisoner should be tried in a public and open court. Tabarzadi has been in detention for four months, and, according to Sotoudeh, under severe pressure and beatings during interrogation.”⁹⁷

Tabarzadi's lawyer told the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran that intelligence agents have demanded that the judge in Tabarzadi's case sentence him to the harshest possible punishment, including exile and a permanent ban on any social and political engagement.⁹⁸ The lawyer further stated that ““We can assume that the intelligence agents lacked knowledge of the law, as this action [pressuring a judge] is, according to the law, a crime....In many cases we have seen that unfortunately, some judges have not only applied such recommendations, but have gone further. The principle of the independence of the judiciary system obliges the judge to refuse such a recommendation by an intelligence agent. The procedure that was applied in Tabarzadi's case is completely illegal.””⁹⁹

The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran reports that,

“the infiltration and manipulation of the Iranian Judiciary and court system, while a chronic problem, has become more widespread since the current period of intensified repression of civil liberties began after the June 2009 presidential elections. “Court officers” representing the police units, the Intelligence Ministry, and other intelligence and security formations influence decisions about sentences, as well as those affecting interrogation methods, visitation rights, bail, and other issues.”¹⁰⁰

According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, “[i]n the past year, following the unrest after the presidential elections, video confessions have become

⁹⁶ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010,

<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

⁹⁷ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010,

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⁹⁸ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010,

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⁹⁹ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010,

<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

¹⁰⁰ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran: Intelligence Agents Pressure Judiciary for Harsh Sentences. Lawyer Cites Illegal Procedures, 9 April 2010,

<http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/04/tabarzadi/>, accessed 14 June 2010

regular events in Iranian society. Mass trials of arbitrarily detained political and social activists, who are denied access to their lawyers, have been televised.”¹⁰¹

In January 2010 the Guardian published a list of 1259 names of those killed or detained following June 2009 protests, detailing occupations, affiliations and notes on the circumstances of their death/detention.¹⁰²

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¹⁰¹ International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Nobel Laureate Defamed on Iranian TV, Colleague Arrested Fresh Wave of Attacks against Human Rights Defenders, 11 June 2010, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2010/06/ebadi-defamed/>, accessed 14 June 2010

¹⁰² Guardian, Iran's dead and detained, Updated, 28 January 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/jan/28/iran-dead-detained-protests-elections-spreadsheet>, accessed 16 June 2010