

Iranian lawmakers rap EU Parliament's anti-Tehran resolution

'European countries cannot evade accountability for role in Iran terrorist acts'

International Desk

Iranian lawmakers in a statement on Sunday strongly condemned an anti-Iran resolution adopted by the European Parliament, saying that the European countries cannot evade accountability for their role in recent terrorist acts against the Iranian people.

"The European Parliament and the meddlesome European countries bear direct legal and political responsibility for supporting, facilitating, and paving the way for terrorist acts against the Iranian people and cannot evade accountability to the Iranian nation and world public opinion," the Iranian lawmakers emphasized.

In a resolution adopted on Thursday, members of the European Parliament expressed what they described as "full solidarity" with Iranians during recent protests over economic problems while calling for the designation of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps as a terrorist organization. The Iranian lawmakers said the resolution by the European Parliament was a clear example of interference in Iran's internal affairs.

The statement added that continuing such a "hostile and irresponsible" approach would not weaken the Iranian nation's resolve but would instead further damage the political and moral credibility of European authorities in the eyes of the world. It emphasized that the European Parliament, having failed to resolve the EU's internal problems, now resorts to a policy of projection and interfering in other nations' affairs to cover up its failures and evade accountability to European citizens. The EU Parliament meddled in Iran's internal affairs, claiming to defend human rights in the Islamic Republic, the lawmakers said, adding its resolution amounted to practical support for terrorism and terrorist groups, the statement read.

According to conclusive documents and undeniable evidence, certain foreign intelligence services have had a "direct and organized connection with the leaders of the terrorist groups," and the killing of innocent people on January 8 was carried out with their support, it added.

However, it noted that the Iranians' mass participation in rallies across the country a few days later "clearly demonstrated na-

tional unity and cohesion" and their rejection of riot, chaos, and insecurity.

The Iranian lawmakers emphasized that the mass rallies completely defeated the enemy's plot to disrupt the country's order and security.

They explained that the foreign perpetrators of the riots then resorted to international means of pressure, such as issuing political resolutions and intensifying sanctions, further exposing their hostile nature and goals.

"The European Parliament and the meddlesome European countries bear direct legal and political responsibility for supporting, facilitating, and paving the way for terrorist acts against the Iranian people and cannot evade accountability to the Iranian nation and world public opinion," the lawmakers emphasized.

They said European countries kept silent vis-à-vis Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people and supported a terrorist regime, but now clearly pursue double standards by issuing an anti-Iran resolution and wrongfully accusing the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), which has played a key role in fighting terrorism in



A general view of Iran's Parliament
● IRNA

the region.

Late last month, widespread economic hardship compounded by years of Western sanctions sparked peaceful protests by merchants across Tehran and other cities. Iranian authorities initially acknowledged the legitimacy of some demands, but officials said demonstrations were hijacked

by US- and Israeli-backed rioters aiming to incite violence and disorder.

Iran's Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs later reported that 3,117 people died during the unrest, including 2,427 civilians and security personnel, noting that many innocents were killed by organized terrorist elements.

Second killing in Minneapolis by US ICE officers sparks uproar

The killing of a second US citizen by federal immigration agents in Minneapolis on Saturday has sparked new protests and impassioned demands by local leaders for the Trump administration to end its operation in the city.

Federal agents shot dead Alex Pretti, a 37-year-old ICU nurse, while scuffling with him on an icy roadway, less than three weeks after an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer shot and killed Renee Good, also 37, in her car, AFP reported.

The Trump administration quickly claimed, as it did after Good's death, that Pretti had intended to harm the federal agents, even as video of the incident appeared to contradict their account. The Department of Home-

land Security (DHS) pointed to a pistol and ammunition it said was discovered on Pretti.

"He was there to perpetuate violence," Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem told a briefing, while White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller referred to Pretti as an "assassin," in a post amplified on X by Vice President JD Vance.

However, as with Good's death, cell phone footage of the incident raised serious questions about the federal government's description of the incident. Video aired widely by US media, shows Pretti filming agents in the snow-lined street and directing traffic.

After an agent shoves a woman protester to the ground on the sidewalk,

Pretti steps in between them and is sprayed in the face by a chemical irritant. The agent then pulls Pretti to the ground and several officers struggle to detain him on the icy roadway. Seconds later, as an officer apparently discovers and pulls a gun from Pretti's pants, agents open fire, also shooting his motionless body several times from a distance.

Pretti's parents in a statement circulated by US media called him a "kind-hearted soul" and accused the Trump administration of telling "sickening lies" about their son. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz called the shooting "horrific" and demanded state authorities lead the investigation.

"The federal government cannot be trusted to lead

this investigation. The state will handle it, period," Walz told a news conference.

One Senate Republican on Saturday called for a joint investigation into the shooting.

"The events in Minneapolis are incredibly disturbing. The credibility of ICE and DHS are at stake," Senator Bill Cassidy, a Louisiana Republican, wrote on X.

As the president presses a sweeping campaign to deport undocumented migrants, thousands of ICE agents have been deployed to the Democratic-led city.

Public outrage was also rekindled earlier this week by the detention of a five-year-old boy as federal agents sought to arrest his father.

Iraqi Shia alliance picks Nouri al-Maliki as PM nominee

International Desk

Iraqi former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki is on the verge of a return to power after being nominated as the country's next premier by an alliance of Shia political blocs that hold a majority in parliament.

The Shia Coordination Framework said on Saturday that it had picked al-Maliki, leader of the Islamic Dawa Party, as its nominee for the post based on his "political and administrative experience and his role in managing the state." The bloc said the nomination had been made by majority vote after an in-depth and extensive discussion, naming al-Maliki as the candidate of the framework.

The Coordination Framework reaffirmed its full commitment to the constitutional path, stressing its readiness to work with all national political forces to form a strong and effective government capable of confronting challenges,

delivering services, and safeguarding Iraq's security and unity.

A central figure in Iraq's politics, the 75-year-old first became prime minister in 2006, as the country appeared to be unravelling amid a wave of violence unleashed by the United States-led invasion of 2003.

He stepped down after the Daesh terrorist group seized large parts of the country in 2014, but has remained an influential political player, leading the State of Law coalition.

The politician spent nearly a quarter of a century in exile after campaigning against the governance of former dictator Saddam Hussein, but returned to Iraq in the wake of the 2003 invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein.

The nomination of al-Maliki came amid reports that the United States has threatened Iraqi officials that it could impose financial sanctions targeting the Iraqi state, including



Nouri al-Maliki
● AFP

potentially restricting its access to vital oil revenues, if certain political factions were included in the next government, four sources familiar with the matter told Reuters recently.

Sources said the US has warned that the inclusion of a group of 58 MPs targeted by Washington would lead to a suspension of diplomatic engagement and halting of dollar transfers.

Iraq, one of the top oil producers in the West Asia region, maintains its oil revenues in a Central Bank account held at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Nouri al-Maliki, fit ...

He will undoubtedly face significant challenges. Perhaps the most pressing is the concurrent presence of

Donald Trump as president, who has made numerous threats against Iraq, including sanctions against Iraqi political figures. Undoubtedly, a portion of his ability to build domestic unity will be linked to his foreign policy. Maintaining a balance in Iraq's relations between Iran and the United States will be crucial in his foreign policy. One key domestic file he will address is the relationship between Baghdad and Erbil. His ties with the Sadrist movement, a powerful opposition force that doesn't view Al-Maliki favorably, will also be a challenge. The economy is also a serious challenge for Iraq, facing numerous difficulties. Finally, his relations with Arab countries, particularly those in the Persian Gulf, who have not held a positive view of Al-Maliki in his previous two terms as prime minister, are also a sensitive issue. How Al-Maliki can win over their trust will be vital.

Given his well-established ties to Iran, what implications will Al-Maliki's selection have for Iraq-Iran relations?

Al-Maliki is considered a friend of Iran and a Shia political figure closely aligned with the Islamic Republic. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that he is a politi-

cian who prioritizes Iraq's national interests. Both he and his political party, the Dawa Party, have historically supported the principles of resistance and the Islamic Republic in broader strategic matters. Nevertheless, one thing Al-Maliki will undoubtedly consider during this exceptionally tense and difficult period is creating a balance between the key players and power centers present in Iraq – namely, Tehran and Washington. I don't believe he will seek to disrupt this balance, although there are suspicions about him from his opponents, both in Iraq and abroad. Given the current situation and the Shia Coordination Framework's understanding, Al-Maliki's approach will likely be to create a balance in foreign policy to allow Iraq to navigate this sensitive and tense situation.

How do you think Nouri al-Maliki's premiership will impact relations between Baghdad and Washington? Can Al-Maliki stand firm against pressure to disarm resistance groups and defend Iraq's sovereignty and independence?

I believe that Al-Maliki and the Shia Coordination Framework have reached a general conclusion on this matter – a desire to de-escalate tensions with the United States. The Iraqi government and

political structure have no desire whatsoever to create tensions with Americans. My assessment is that a decision has already been made to lower the level of armament possession by some of these resistance groups and to integrate them into the Iraqi armed forces. This may not happen completely, but I believe that the Iraqis and Al-Maliki's government will take a series of gradual and minimal steps in this regard to appease the Americans and reduce tensions.

Generally, there's a demand among various political factions in Iraq, some social groups, and even religious leaders for weapons to be the exclusive domain of the government. Therefore, I believe that Al-Maliki's government will also consider this matter. The resistance groups in Iraq generally trust Al-Maliki as a figure who has supported them, and this trust can gradually help achieve this goal and reduce the pressure exerted by the Americans. However, Al-Maliki is also a nationalist and powerful Iraqi figure who has always criticized foreign interference in Iraq. He will strive to maintain a balance so that neither the framework of Iraqi sovereignty is compromised nor the country is threatened by the Americans. Still, it is a difficult situation and it remains to be seen how much Al-Maliki will be able to succeed in this case.



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