

# IRGC: EU's blacklisting of elite force lacks legal, political legitimacy

Iran designates European armies 'terrorist groups' in tit-for-tat move

## International Desk

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) strongly condemned the European Union's decision to designate the Iranian military force as a "terrorist" organization, saying that the move lacks any legal or political legitimacy. The IRGC in a statement on Sunday said such actions not only fail to contribute to regional peace and security but complicate "the path to constructive interaction and co-operation."

It also lashed out at the EU for aligning with US interventionist policies while ignoring the destabilizing role of regional actors, particularly the Israeli regime. The statement added that such measures would not affect the IRGC's resolve but instead strengthen national unity and its determination to protect Iran's interests and security.

On Thursday, the European bloc added the IRGC to its terrorist list in response to the force's role in the Is-

lamic Republic's response to recent riots in the country, which were triggered by protests over economic problems on December 28. According to Iranian officials, more than 3,100 people, including security forces and ordinary people, have been killed in the protests. During an open session of Parliament on Sunday, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said Iran considers European countries' armies as terrorist groups in a counter-measure against the EU. "The IRGC is the world's most unique anti-terrorism institution, which, with the help of the people of the region, brought down the Daesh rule and eliminated the global threat of the terror outfit," he said.

"The enmities of the world's terror supporters will not diminish the IRGC's power. I announce that under Article 7 of the law on reciprocal action against the [US's] declaration of the IRGC as a terrorist organization, the armies of European countries are considered terrorist



*Iranian lawmakers, dressed in military fatigues, chant slogans in support of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps during a parliament session in Tehran on February 1, 2026.*

● ICANA

groups, and the EU bears responsibility for the consequences of this action."

He added that the 27-member bloc's decision, which was taken "in compliance with the orders of the US president and the leaders of the Israeli regime, accelerated Europe's path to becoming irrelevant in the future world order."

Qalibaf said the national security parliamentary commission would deliberate on the expulsion of EU countries' military attaches and follow up on the issue with the foreign ministry.

The IRGC was first proscribed by the US in 2019 during US President Donald Trump's first term, by Canada in 2024, and by Australia in 2025.



## Government releases full list of persons killed in riots



131 who are yet to be identified. Iranian authorities have already announced the death of 3,117 people during the protests which began over economic problems on December 28 but turned violent after the United States supported riots in the country. The statement underlined that all victims of the recent incidents were "children of this land", and no bereaved family should be left helpless. Unlike the enemies and ill-wishers of the country, who treat human lives as mere numbers and seek their political gain, from the perspective of the Islamic Republic, those who lost their lives in the tragic events are not merely statistics, the statement said.

Pezeshkian also on Wednesday instructed Justice Minister Amin-Hossein Rahimi to work with the judiciary to speed up the release of those detained during the unrest, according to a statement on the president's website.

## National Desk

Iran's government released in a statement on Sunday the names of those killed in recent foreign-backed riots across the country, which resulted in the death of more than 3,100 people. President Masoud Pezeshkian on Wednesday ordered the public re-

lease of the names of the victims in a bid to declare the real death toll after some Persian-language media operating outside the country reported a much higher death toll in the protests. The names of the 2986 people, including security forces and ordinary people, were released by the government on Sunday, except for

## Araghchi excoriates US military buildup in Persian Gulf

### International Desk

Iran's foreign minister in a post on X criticized the US military presence in the Persian Gulf, saying Washington is attempting to dictate how Tehran should conduct military activity near its own borders. Abbas Araghchi attached an image to his post, highlighting the geographic distance between the United States and Iran with the Strait of Hormuz marked to underscore Iran's proximity to the strategic waterway. "Operating off our shores, the US military is now attempting to dictate how our Powerful Armed Forces should conduct target practice in their own turf," he said. Araghchi stressed that freedom of navigation and the safe passage of commercial vessels through the strait are of vital importance to Iran and its neighbors, arguing that "the presence of outside forces in our region has always caused the exact opposite of what is



Abbas Araghchi  
● TASNIM

declared: promoting escalation instead of de-escalation."

His remarks came amid the US military buildup in the Persian Gulf region and tensions with Iran. US President Donald Trump has threatened Iran with military attacks over the Islamic Republic's response to recent foreign-backed riots which were triggered by protests over economic woes on December 28. The Strait of Hormuz is a strategic waterway through which around 20% of the world's oil supply passes.

## Ayatollah Khamenei warns ...

The Leader described remarks by the US president as a clear sign of the American and Zionist nature of the recent unrest, saying he openly encouraged what he called rioters by telling them, "Go forward, I am also coming."

Ayatollah Khamenei said the Islamic Republic's new way of thinking and its friction with

the interests of global bullies explained the persistence of hostility, adding that just as the recent sedition was not the first in Tehran, it would not be the last, and similar incidents could recur. Such enmities, he went on, would continue until the Iranian nation, through steadfastness and full control over its affairs, caused the enemy to despair.

## Egypt moves to ...

Naturally, if Egypt's mediation efforts—whether by initiating direct talks or at least dialing down the intensity of the crisis—bear fruit, its role as a prudent, responsible actor with significant regional weight would be brought into sharper relief.

**Given Egypt's track record in mediating issues related to Iran's co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, how do you assess Cairo's chances of helping prevent a further escalation of the current crisis?**

There is no doubt that Egypt's efforts are serious, sincere, and responsible. However, it must be noted that the areas of disagreement between Tehran and Washington are numerous and long-standing. A review of the mutual accusations exchanged between Iran and the US shows just how protracted this file has become and how its complexities have piled up over time. In certain respects, the disputes have

taken on the character of identity-based confrontation. Accordingly, mediation efforts—whether undertaken by Oman, Qatar, Iraq, Turkey, or Egypt—will not pay off simply or quickly. In other words, beyond the sincere and sustained efforts currently being made by the Egyptians, reducing points of contention also requires political will on the part of both sides to the conflict.

**What constraints does Cairo face in its efforts, particularly in light of Egypt's strategic relations with Washington?**

Egypt does face constraints in this regard, primarily because the number of key actors involved in this file is substantial. The complexity of the Iran file is partly due to the multiplicity of stakeholders: China, Russia, Britain, the European Union, and numerous regional countries—and most importantly Israel—each of which acts based on its national interests and its own perception of

the Middle Eastern environment. Therefore, while Egypt seeks to step in and play a role, other actors are simultaneously pursuing extensive efforts either in alignment with or in opposition to Cairo's initiatives, with Israel's negative role arguably the most consequential.

**Can Egypt's diplomatic synergy with Qatar, Turkey, and Oman evolve into a regional consensus capable of deterring US military scenarios?**

No, it cannot. First, the US, Israel, and the European Union do not necessarily share identical assessments of the present situation, nor do they always pursue the same goals with respect to Iran. Moreover, regional countries do not want the existing balance to be disrupted in Israel's favor, while at the same time they do not seek a resurgence of Iranian power. Their efforts will therefore continue only to the extent that they prevent Iran's disintegration or outright defeat.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

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