

International Lawmakers Sign Historic Declaration Condemning Iran's Human Rights Abuses

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Summary: Find an important declaration issued by members from the US Congress, the European Parliament and the Canadian Federal Parliament condemning the Iranian regime for abusing the human rights of its people. The Declaration was issued by the newly formed "Transatlantic Parliamentary Group on Counter Terrorism" (TAG) which includes lawmakers from both sides of the Atlantic. TAG is co-chaired by US Rep. Sue Myrick and MEP Jaime Mayor-Oreja. The Iran declaration will be sent to all members of legislatures in the West and to the United Nations. Dr. Walid Phares, who serves as an advisor to the US House Caucus on Counter Terrorism and Guillermo Martinez Casan, former European legislator, were selected as TAG co-secretary general.

Trans-Atlantic Parliamentary Group on Counter Terrorism Issues a Declaration Condemning Human Rights Abuse in Iran and Calls for an International Investigation

WASHINGTON, DC) — On Tuesday, September 22, 2009, Members of the US Congress, Members of European Parliament and a Member of the Canadian Parliament signed an historic document condemning Iran's continued human rights abuses. This document was signed at the second Trans-Atlantic Group on Counter Terrorism, or TAG, summit hosted by TAG co-chairs US Representative Sue Myrick (NC-09) and Member of European Parliament Jaime Mayor Oreja (EU-Spain).

"This is historic because it is the first document signed by a group of international lawmakers addressing the Iranian regime's human rights atrocities against the Iranian people," said US Representative Sue Myrick (NC-09), who is also the Co-Chair of the US Bipartisan House Caucus on Counter Terrorism. "We are keeping a close watch on the Iran nuclear weapons situation, but this will not cause us to forget the human rights atrocities committed by the Iranian regime. We say to the Iranian people who continue their fight for freedom, 'We have not forgotten you. We stand with you'." At the signing session which took place inside the US Congress, MEP Jaime Mayor Oreja, who serves as the Vice President for the EPP at the European Parliament, said "it is the first time that legislators from both sides of the Atlantic are coming together to address the threats of Jihadi terror. We are pleased to have accomplished this first step and other important steps will follow." Oreja oversees the European Ideas Network (EIN), the Policy Think Tank of the EPP.

Members of Congress who signed this declaration include: Sue Myrick (NC), Kay Granger (TX), Paul Broun (GA), Bill Shuster (PA), Ed Royce (CA), and former Congressman Bud Cramer (AL).

Members of the European Parliament who signed this declaration include: Mr. Jaime Mayor Oreja (Spain), a former Minister of Interior, Mrs. Corien Worthmann-Kool (Netherlands), Mr. Timothy Kirkhope MEP (UK), Mr. Othmar Karas (Austria), Mr. Marian Jean Marinescu (Romania), and Mr. Ioannis Kasoulides (Cyprus), a former Foreign Minister.

Canadian MP Irwin Cotler, a former Minister of Justice, also joined the delegations and signed the declaration.

In addition, a number of former legislators and experts have participated in the meetings leading to the declaration.

The declaration calls on:

- 1) The government of Iran to put an immediate end to the abuses of its citizens' human rights;
- 2) The U.N. Secretary General to dispatch a team of investigators to Iran to inquire about the human rights abuses and report back their findings to the international community. We urge this team to visit political detainees in prisons, meet with the leaders of the opposition and with the demonstrators to present a full picture of abuse taking place;
- 3) Our respective governments of the United States, the European Union and Canada, and on the United Nations, to investigate the so-called "Basij militia" for alleged abuse of human rights;
- 4) The United Nations Human Rights Council to freeze the membership of Iran until a full investigation by the Council and the U.N. Secretary General on the mass scale abuse of human rights in Iran is completed; including the identification of those inside the Iranian regime responsible for issuing the orders to commit the atrocities. Iran should not be allowed to remain on the Human Rights Council when it does not defend human rights within its own border.

The goal of TAG is to create a working relationship between legislators from Europe and North America to address terrorism and the threat it poses to democracies. The first TAG summit was held April 30, 2008, in Washington, DC. The second TAG summit helped solidify the strong counter-terrorism trans-Atlantic partnership among lawmakers.

At the summit, lawmakers discussed how democracies can address terror threats, not as individual countries, but as an international community. TAG Members also selected Dr. Walid Phares, from the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, and Guillermo Martinez-Casan, from the European Ideas Network, as the TAG co-secretary general.

In the US, the declaration was issued by Rep Myrick's office. For more information please contact Taylor Stanford at (202) 225-1976

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