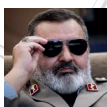
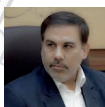


# FACES OF OPPRESSION

Cases to update individuals designated to the EU restrictive measures  
responding to serious human rights violations in Iran





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January 2020

HANDS OFF CAIN - *Spes contra Spem* is an international organisation founded in 1993 by the Nonviolent Radical Party Transnational and Transparty.

It is a body with direct or federative membership which is conducting a worldwide parliamentary campaign for the abolition of the death penalty, the penalty till the death and the death for penalty.

It is worldwide recognised for leading to success, in 2007, the approval by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the Resolution for a Universal Moratorium on capital executions.

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## PREFACE

Elisabetta Zamparutti\*

When Hassan Rouhani was elected as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran in June 2013, and then re-elected in May 2017, many observers, human rights advocates, and members of the International community welcomed what appeared to be a positive turning point for the future of Iran. However, if one focuses on the death penalty alone, it is clear that his government did not turn its back on its use. On the contrary, the number of executions has risen dramatically since the summer of 2013.

More than 3,837 prisoners have been executed since July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 – the first day of Rouhani's presidency. At least 310 individuals, including seven who were children at the time of the offence and five women, have been hanged in 2018. In the past year, there have been at least 289 executions including eight children and seventeen women.

New Year's Day was celebrated with the hanging of eight men at the Rajai-Shahr prison of Karaj, and at least two women have been executed since then. Thus bringing the number of women executed under the government of the supposedly 'moderate' Hassan Rouhani to 106. January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, was also the forty-eighth day in which Iranians took to the streets to protest against the regime despite the government's severe repression, which led to the killing of at least 1,500 people, including women and children, killed by bullets fired point blank by the Pasdaran. During the course of these protests 12,000 people have been arrested. No one knows nor seems to care about the fate of these harmless men, despite the clear threat of a noose hanging around their neck.

Then, on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, an American drone targeted the Iranian general Qassem Suleimani, one of the most ruthless and vicious member of the Ayatollah, head of Iran's elite Quds Force, the special unit of Pasdaran. This man, who was a murderer, became the government's martyr. Although his killing might have turned the spotlight on Iran, that light has not brought solace to the Iranians, for it is not revealing the truth about the regime's blood-stained hands.

The great majority of Iranians despised Suleimani. During the revolts of 2018 and 2019, protesters from various cities tore down posters of his face and set them on fire. Even in Iraq, his death was praised by many – who had been asking since long that he be expelled from their country – as a symbol of the end of the Mullah's control over Iraq.

Suleimani has been depicted as a master strategist in charge of setting the agenda for the expansion of the Iranian sphere of influence in the region. Yet this narrative fails to capture the bloodthirsty nature of his army and actions. Maybe some will recall it for the role played in the seizure of Aleppo in Syria. I would rather remember it for the murder of 141 members of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran, opponents of the Iranian regime, who were repetitively targeted between 2009 and 2016 whilst they were refugees in Iraq.

I particularly recall the Camp Ashraf massacre of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, where 53 refugees were brutally killed by the militia of Suleimani in what seemed to be a Na-

zi-like final solution plan. The choice of words is not accidental, precisely because of the Iranian regime's wish that Israel be deleted from the world map. The successor of Suleimani, his deputy for over twenty years, is Esmail Ghaani, a man known for his vociferous criticism of Israel and whose curriculum has nothing to envy to his predecessor. This is not surprising – we are talking about a regime governed by men such as the current Minister of Justice, Ebrahim Raisi, who used to sit in the 1988 'Death Commission' – responsible for the murder of 30,000 political prisoners.

Faced with this reality, it is not enough to simply appeal to moderation, without distinguishing the differences and responsibilities of those who are perpetrators and their victims, and without placing the respect of fundamental human rights as the sole and only, universally recognised, criterion to evaluate whether a State is or is not a threat to peace and security. The Italian government has argued for moderation, claiming it is necessary to ensure stability and to avoid that terrorism and violent extremism benefit from these ongoing tensions. As if it were not the very same Iranian regime fueling violent extremism and terrorism!

Surely the solution cannot be to orchestrate further drone strikes, because their use occurs outside of the law and against international law, and because drone strikes are also a disguise for the hasty and secretive nature of capital punishment, carried out against American enemies such as Suleimani as well as American citizens suspected of treason. Both American and non-American citizens are killed through the means of drones, so as to avoid the procedural safeguards that even a retentionist country such as the United States of America must have in place.

Our motto 'Hands Off Cain' holds true also for Qassem Suleimani. Marco Pannella pronounced it when Saddam Hussein was killed, not to justify his vicious crimes, but to denounce the aberration of a State which in the name of Abel becomes itself Cain.

*\*Treasurer of Hands off Cain-Spes contra spem and former member of the European Committee for the prevention of torture (CPT) in respect of Italy.*

## PROFILES OF OPPRESSION

The below officials of the Iranian regime are responsible for gross violations of human rights. Among them, there are some who played a central role in the 1988 massacre of more than 30,000 political prisoners, recognized by some States as a crime against humanity. Others have responsibilities in the bloody repression of the recent uprising. Accordingly, we call for their inclusion in the list of individuals designated for EU restrictive measures in response to serious human rights violations in Iran with a view to its revision by 13 April 2020. In particular, the act of “naming and shaming” these human rights abusers will be an important expression of solidarity with the Iranian people, oppressed by the regime for 40 years. It will be also a commitment of pursuing justice and accountability for their crimes and ending the culture of impunity. The associated asset freezes, trade prohibitions, and travel bans will safeguard Europe engagement for the human rights and Rule of Law and end any inadvertent complicity in these crimes. These profiles evoke also the fact that Iran could not be considered part of the solution of the Middle East crisis as this theocratic regime, on the contrary, represents the problem in the region and the threat of peace and stability in the world. Peace and security can be affirmed only when human rights are respected and those responsible of serious violations held accountable.

**Ebrahim Raisi**, is the Head of the Judiciary since March 2019. He was selected directly by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khameni to replace Sadegh Amoli Larijani, sanctioned by the US Administration and the EU for committing serious human rights abuses. The same description could apply to Raisi. Raisi has held multiple other positions in Iran's judiciary, including prosecutor (1980-1994), deputy chief justice (2004-2014), and attorney general (2014-2016). In these capacities, he sought or presided over the prosecution, imprisonment, torture, and execution of countless detainees. Under his tenure, the number of executions gradually rose from approximately 100 per year to nearly 1,000. On one occasion, he lauded the amputation of a thief's hand, calling it “divine punishment” and a “source of pride.” In November 2019, Ebrahimi Raisi threatened protest leaders arrested of “severe punishment” including the death penalty. He is also a former Presidential candidate and current custodian of Astan Quds Razavi since March 2016. Astan Quds Razavi is an international conglomerate with a real-estate portfolio worth an estimated \$20 billion, and a central feature of corruption and criminality in Iran. Raisi also served on the Tehran “death commission” tasked with determining the murders of political prisoners during the 1988 massacre, often based on interrogations of several minutes. Ebrahimi Raisi is under US sanctions' regime since March 2019.



**Mohammad-Javad Azari Jahromi**, 38 years old, is Minister of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) since August 2017. He is the youngest Minister in the Rouhani Cabinet. Despite proclamations that he supports broader internet access in Iran, he has been a key player in the Iranian government's campaign of repression and censorship during the uprising started in November 2019 and has advanced the Iranian regime's policy of repressive internet censorship as well as surveillance against opposition activists.. Internet access in Iran was blocked by his Ministry for several days based upon what Iranian authorities describe as national security concerns in the wake of anti-regime protests throughout the country. He also claimed that demonstrations were based on foreign threats to overthrow the regime. Azari Jahromi, is a former employee of Iran's notorious Ministry of Intelligence and the recent internet blocking follows patterns similar to ones that occurred in 2017 and 2018. Jahromi was involved in surveillance operations during the state crackdown on peaceful protests in 2009, which significantly aided the authorities' ability to identify, track, arrest, and imprison protesters. He has been the target of accusations that he personally interrogated multiple activists during this period. He is under US sanctions, since November 22, 2019 for his role in the Iranian regime's wide scale Internet censorship



**Abbas Salehi** is Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance (MCIG) since August 2017. Salehi oversees a system of censorship and propaganda which vets all forms of entertainment and culture and only grants a license to those who promote the narrow agenda of the regime. Salehi helps monitor those in the arts and cultural industries – facilitating the arrests of those licence-holders who do not follow regime strictures – and the imprisonment and torture of those who publish without a license. Since the 1980s, the MCIG has played a leading role in suppressing political and cultural speech being its mission the protection of “society from the influence of alien cultures” and the promotion of the “values of the Islamic Revolution based on the school of thought and political outlook” of Iran's first supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The Obama administration sanctioned the ministry in 2012 for engaging in this censorship. However, the leadership needs attention too. The ministry's leader also serves on the Supreme Council of Cyberspace, the regime's highest authority on internet policy, which routinely issues directives to monitor dissidents and ban objectionable websites. Salehi has made it clear that he remains loyal to the regime's brutal ideology. As documented by Reporters without borders, in 2019, Iran, already one of the world's five biggest jailers of journalists, is now holding more women for their journalistic activities than any other country in the world.



**Mahmoud Alavi**, is Minister of Intelligence (MOIS ) since 2013 and a fervent defender of the Islamic Republic in which name he combats “the global hegemony led by the U.S., which is seeking domination over the world, the criminal Zionism, and the infant-killing Al Saud regime”. He is the former head of the political and ideological body of the Iranian Army to which he was appointed by the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei (from 2000 to August 2009). He also assumed the post of deputy defense minister. He sees his Ministry as the vanguard of a multi-front. Under Alavi’s leadership, the MOIS’ malign behavior shows no sign of receding and its work often overlaps with the efforts of the more well-known IRGC – including the IRGC’s Quds Force. Its global networks remain operational. It continues to provide material support to Iranian proxies. Its human-rights abuses proceed unabated and, in conjunction with other Iranian paramilitary organizations, journalists, human-rights activists, political opponents, and ethnic and religious minorities are frequently arrested and tortured. It helped promote pro-regime propaganda on state-run media, including the coerced confessions of political prisoners. On September 3, 2019, Mahmoud Alavi, in a discussion in the regime’s Majlis (Parliament), acknowledged the fact that the mullahs’ regime resorts to torture and measures aimed at obtaining coerced confessions. He was actively engaged in the repression of anti-regime protests in November 2019 and called upon arrest of protesters and their death sentences.



**Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli**, is currently Minister of the Interior since August 2013. Fazli has overseen the banning of peaceful public gatherings and civil society organizations, and the promotion of radical regime ideology. He has encouraged the harassment of human rights activists and repression of labour union organizers, and curtailed women’s access to the workplace. Fazli also helps manage the brutal Law Enforcement Force (LEF) of Iran working closely with other paramilitary organizations, particularly the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its subsidiary, the Basij, and the Intelligence Ministry. Since nationwide protests began in late 2017, the police have arrested and attacked thousands of Iranian protesters. The police operates unofficial detention centers, where his officers routinely abuse detainees physically and psychologically. When uprising started in November 2019, the Minister of Interior issued threats, saying that “if protests continue, despite the restraint by the law enforcement and security forces, naturally, they have to carry out their duties.” The Interior Minister’s tolerance claims came at a time when nearly 20 protesters had already reportedly been killed by security forces. Fazli continued to withhold information on who authorized the use of lethal force against protesters and exactly how many were killed, injured and arrested. In what was a disturbing statement, he insisted that those arrested should confess on TV to what they have



done during the protests. Iranian TV is known for airing forced confessions under duress. Facing these anti-regime protests, Rahmani Fazli said that the Interior Ministry initially restricted, and then totally denied people's access to the internet. He also admitted in another interview that protesters were shot in the head and "some were shot in the leg too" during the November uprising.

**Hossein Ashtari**, is currently Chief of the police (LEF), directly appointed by the Supreme Leader Khamenei in 2015. The Law Enforcement Force (LEF) of the Islamic Republic of Iran, or NAJA, its Persian acronym, is involved not only in the establishment of physical but also of "moral and social" security. This means that the police aims to preserve the regime's rule and enforce the Islamist ideology that drives it. In this sense, the LEF's duties often overlap with the work of the Basij, the official religious police. He is among those officials who played the most crucial role in the preservation of Khamenei's grip on power, systematically suppressing dissent through violence and intimidation. Under Ashtari's leadership, since late 2017, the LEF has killed dozens of people and arrested thousands more, firing live ammunition into crowds and beating demonstrators. Forces were deployed on the streets simply to intimidate citizens and deter unrest. Arrests and torture often follow. The LEF also operates unofficial detention centers, where officers routinely abuse detainees physically and psychologically. When uprising started in November 2019, Ashtari, was among those with a political responsibility for what happened as he has specifically taken on the protests and knew the direct impact that his stances has on the suppression and killing of protesters. He delivered a stern warning saying those who attempt to disrupt order or violate people's rights would be dealt with in accordance with law. "We will not allow peace and security — which are well prevailing in the country — to be disrupted," he added. "We have identified them and will carry out the punishment in due course." Ashtari claimed that the police "had accomplished its mission with patience during the days of protests." He also accused the protesters of obeying counter-revolutionary organizations. In January 2019, Ashtari declared that the police forces under his command were willing to train terrorist organizations fighting against the West.



**Gholamreza Soleimani**, is currently the Commander of the Basij Resistance Force, a paramilitary force subordinate to IRGC. He was appointed by the Supreme Leader in July 2019. Among other malign activities, the IRGC's Basij militia recruits, trains, and deploys child soldiers to fight in IRGC-fueled conflicts across the region. The Basij is one of the five forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Basij is enforcing the hijab, arresting women for violat-



ing the dress code, and arresting youths for attending mixed gender parties or being in public with unrelated members of the opposite sex, the Basij are used to spread the state's ideology, serve as propaganda machine in political campaigns, justify clerical rule, protect politicians, and enforce Islamic morality and rules. They are part of the Islamic Republic's of Iran's overall avowed plan to have millions of informers. The Basiji also undermine dissent; for instance, they play a key role in suppressing uprisings and demonstrations. Basij's chief said Iran's democracy with executions and lashing is a model for the world. Gholamreza Soleimani, as Brigadier General of the IRGC in Isphahan - also known as Saheb al-Zaman Corps - has been responsible for suppression of protests in the province and wounding and killings of dozens in towns of Qahdarijan, Shahin-Shahr, Homayoun-Shahr and Jouy-Shahr during the 2018 uprising. He is under US sanctions since 10 January 2020

**Ali Shamkhani**, is currently Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), appointed by the Supreme Leader in September 2013. Ali Shamkhani, an IRGC admiral, determines the country's security and defence policies and coordinates political, intelligence, social, and economic activities in accordance with the Supreme Leader's guidelines. As the head of the SNSC, Ali Shamkhani plays a key role in the implementation of the Supreme Leader's domestic and foreign policies. On December 12, 2019, he admitted to the brutal massacre of protesters in the course of the recent uprising. According to the official IRNA news agency, in a meeting with families of those killed in the protests, he said: "More than 85 percent of those who died in the recent events in Tehran did not take part in the protests." He ludicrously claimed that these individuals "were killed in a suspicious manner with unofficial cold weapons or firearms." This is while everyone knows that the suppressive forces were the only party that was armed, and social media is awash with footage of the regime's suppressive forces and plainclothes agents firing directly at defenseless protesters. With regard foreign policy, he has recently said: "If the US troops do not leave our region voluntarily and upright, we will do something to carry their bodies out horizontally." On January 10, 2020 the US Department announced sanctions on him.



**Abolhassan Firouzbadi** is currently a Senior Military Advisor to the Supreme Leader and former Chief of the Iranian Armed Forces from 1989 to 2016. Firouzbadi has been involved in massive human rights violations, including overseeing the murder of peaceful protesters and the mass arrest and torture of civilians. He also issued an order to all military and security forces for the identification and monitoring of members of the peaceful Bahai minority, which has featured prominently in their persecution. Firouzbadi publicly encouraged the persecution and prosecution of environmentalists, including in particular Canadian citizen Kavous Seyed-Emami, who later died



under suspicious circumstances while in detention. Since May 30, 2018, he is under US sanctions for having engaged in censorship or other activities to prohibit, limit, or penalize the exercise of freedom of expression or peaceful assembly by citizens of Iran, or that limit access to print or broadcast media. He has been considered responsible for the Iranian government's efforts to block social media applications like Telegram and to force Iranians to use state-run applications that are monitored by the regime. As the Secretary of Iran's Supreme Council of Cyberspace, Abolhassan Firouzabadi heads the country's top Internet policymaking body and oversees the regime's attempts to censor speech and media. He is included on the European Union Consolidated Financial Sanctions List but not yet on the list of those under restrictive measures responding to serious human rights violations in Iran.

**Mohammad Reza Ashtiani**, is currently the Deputy Chief of Staff of Iranian armed forces, appointed by the Supreme Leader in July 2019. As a conservative politician he represented Qom in the Iranian Parliament from 2004 to 2016. Ashtiani is an army commander who previously served as the deputy commander of the Iranian army and deputy of the armed forces' support administration. Ashtiani was appointed in 2013 as the deputy administrator of the armed forces staff inspection. In his order, Khamenei mentioned that the appointing of Ashtiani was due the recommendation of Mohammad Bagheri, the armed forces chief of staff. In his order, Khamenei demanded Ashtiani to endeavor for "improvement of defensive and security abilities of the armed forces." He is under US sanctions since January 10, 2020.



**Hossein Salami**, is currently Chief of the Revolutionary Guards Corps, appointed by the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in April 2019. The IRGC is Iran's most powerful military and security organization as well as a key economic player. Major General Salami, a veteran of the 1980-1988 war with Iraq, was the deputy IRGC commander and had previously served as head of the IRGC Air Force, which is responsible for Iran's missile program. Salami had previously made public threats against the United States, Israel, and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf. In November 2019, he threatened to destroy the United States and its Middle Eastern allies, accusing them during a televised speech of instigating the violent protests that erupted earlier this month after the announcement of massive fuel price hikes. Speaking to tens of thousands of people holding signs with anti-U.S. slogans in Tehran's Revolution Square, Gen. Hossein Salami accused the U.S., Britain, Saudi Arabia and Israel of fueling the deadly unrest. "We have shown restraint. ... We have shown patience toward the hostile moves of America, the Zionist regime (Israel) and Saudi Arabia against the



Islamic Republic of Iran,” he said. “If you cross our red line, we will destroy you. We will not leave any move unanswered.” Salami previously said that Iran has “managed to obtain the capacity to destroy the imposter Zionist regime,” four decades after the Iranian Revolution. “The second step of the revolution is the step that rearranges the constellation of power in favor of the revolution. Iran’s Islamic evolution will be on top of this constellation,” Salami said, adding, “In the second step, we will be thinking of the global mobilization of Islam.” He is under US sanctions since April 2019 and on the Consolidated List of persons, groups and entities subject to EU Financial Sanctions but not yet on the list of those under restrictive measures responding to serious human rights violations in Iran.

**Ali Fadavi**, is Deputy Chief of IRGC since August 23, 2018, replacing Jamaladin Abromand. He was commander of the Navy of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from May 2010 to 23 August 2018. Alongside Iran’s official navy, which has an impressive number [of vessels], even if some are outdated; there is the Iranian Revolutionary Guards’ naval forces, a secret force that maintains a large, unknown number of small vessels and submarines designed to carry out actions that could be considered ‘extra-governmental,’ or actually terrorism. Indeed, the IRGC’s naval forces are believed to be behind most of Iran’s maritime terrorist actions this past year. It also frequently serves to send Iranian threats to the US. In 2015, the IRGC conducted a military drill that simulated the attack and seizure of an American aircraft carrier, an unequivocal threat to one of the US’ most valuable military assets. Then-commander of the IRGC’s naval forces, Admiral Ali Fadavi, bragged at the time that “American aircraft carriers are easy to sink ... They are full of missiles, ammunition, jet fuel, and torpedoes. One strike is enough to set off a wave of secondary explosions,” he said. Since then, Iran has repeated its threat against US aircraft carriers multiple times. In February 2016, Fadavi along with other commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps received Fath medal for arresting United States Navy sailors on January 12, 2016, in the Persian Gulf. He is on the Consolidated List of persons, groups and entities subject to EU Financial Sanctions but not yet on the list of those under restrictive measures responding to serious human rights violations in Iran.



**Hassan Shahvarpour**, is currently a brigadier general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), appointed in ... He has been involved in gross violations of human rights against protestors during the November 2019 protests in Mahshahr, Iran. According to multiple media reports and information submitted by the Iranian people through the US Department of State’s Rewards for Justice tip-line, IRGC units under Shahvarpour’s command killed as many as 148 Iranians when they encircled fleeing protestors in armored vehicles, firing machine guns into the crowd and lighting fire to the marsh in



which the protestors took cover. This is the main reason why he is under US sanctions since January 17, 2020, and on the Consolidated List of persons, groups and entities subject to EU Financial Sanctions but not yet on the list of those under restrictive measures responding to serious human rights violations in Iran.

**Mohammad Pakpour**, Ground Forces Commander of IRGC Mohammad Pakpour is a Brigadier-General and Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Ground Forces since 2009. Mohammad Pakpour was involved with the IRGC at the beginning of the Islamic Revolution in Kurdistan and was a veteran of the 8-year long Iran–Iraq War. Khamenei awarded him a Victory medal. Under Pakpour's command, the IRGC Ground Forces have deployed to fight in Syria in support of the IRGC-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and the brutal Assad regime. In 2017, Pakpour said that the IRGC Ground Forces were in Syria to help the IRGC-QF. He was subjected to U.S. sanctions before the JCPOA, but sanctions on him were lifted after the 2015 deal. On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 he was again under US sanctions.



**Gholamhossein Gheibparvar**, is deputy at the revolutionary guards Central Security Headquarters since September 2019. Iran's Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) commander Hossein Salami has appointed him in a possible bid to tighten security measures against possible protests. Gheibparvar (Gheybparvar) was the commander of the IRGC-linked militia Bassij, since December 2016 appointed by Supreme Leader Khamenei. Bassij is mainly tasked to suppress dissent. As Commander of the Basij Gheibparvar has overseen military support to the Syrian Regime and its mass atrocities, and, within Iran, has murdered and maimed peaceful protesters, and targeted dissidents and ethnic and religious minorities. His forces also promoted and perpetrated violence against women and carry out the brutal enforcement of discriminatory laws and practices. Naming Gheybparvar as his deputy, Salami said Khamenei has expressed appreciation for Gheybparvar's performance. In his new post, Gheybparvar will be the commander of Imam Ali Central Security Headquarters, a unit tasked in 2011 with confronting public protests and riots. The HQ was set up in the aftermath of massive unrests in Iran after the disputed 2009 Presidential elections that were challenged by opposition and millions of people as rigged to re-elect ultraconservative President Mahmud Ahmadinejad for a second term.



**Mostafa Pourmohammadi**, is currently advisor to Iranian Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raisi. As former Minister of Justice and recent Minister of the Interior, Pourmohammadi has overseen egregious human rights violations in Iran in general, and the targeting of political prisoners in particular. During the 1988 Massacre, Pourmohammadi was a member of the Tehran “death commission” determining the execution of prisoners based on their religious or political beliefs. As Director of Foreign Operations of the Intelligence Ministry, he oversaw the program of assassinations of dissidents and diaspora leaders, including political leaders and notable writers and journalists living abroad. Pourmohammadi used his Ministerial positions to perpetrate and promote human rights violations, and his tenure was marked by criminality and impunity. In an interview released on the 31st anniversary of the mass extrajudicial execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988, Pourmohammadi said to Mosalas magazine that the killings were justified by categorizing those prisoners, who were already serving their prison sentences, as wartime “enemies of the state.” In his interview, Pourmohammadi also states that “we still haven’t settled scores,” strongly suggesting that the Iranian government views the 1988 carnage as an unfinished project. Now that the Iranian government claims the country to be once again in a state of war with “regime change led by the CIA, Israel, and Saudi Arabia,” one can only wonder if they are willing to repeat their actions from 1988.



**Asghar Jahangir**, is currently Head of the Prison’s Administration since April 2014. Under Jahangir’s authority, prisoners are regularly subjected to physical and psychological torture, including rape and electric shock, and denied Realizing Rights over Repression in Iran: Many die in detention as a result of this abuse. Prior to his appointment to Head of the Prison’s Organization, Jahangir served as a close advisor to the head of Iran’s judiciary, who presided over the executions and torture of prisoners. In a March 2018 report, the office of the UN special rapporteur for human rights in Iran described Iran’s penitentiaries as “inhuman and degrading.” Under his mandate Iran reached the record number of 800 executions in 2014, at least 970 in 2015, 530 in 2016, 544 in 2017, 309 in 2018 and 285 in 2019. In early 2019, Jahangir said in an interview that Iranian prisons are filled twice their capacity. Jahangir retains ties to other individuals and institutions under U.S. and EU sanctions for human rights abuses.



**Mansour Gholami**, is Minister of Science, Research, and Technology since October 2017. Gholami presides over Iran's higher education system and his ministry screens university applicants for their loyalty to the regime and perpetuates a discriminatory system founded on religious and ethnic exclusion. In the regime's view, Iranian universities aim not merely to prepare citizens for careers or to transmit knowledge for its own sake. Rather, higher education is designed to inculcate students with the values of the Islamic Revolution, thereby ensuring their perpetuation. As Supreme Leader Khamenei declared in 2015, universities retain "the purpose of creating the new Islamic civilization." University administrators, he added, "should plan all tasks on the basis of this." In this apartheid-like system, members of the peaceful Bahai faith are barred from attending university altogether. Gholami has coordinated with the Intelligence Ministry to help oversee the monitoring and arrests of students and professors on campus. This includes facilitating violent attacks against peaceful student demonstrators, leading to serious injuries and deaths. Gholami has overseen the suppression of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and is in gross violation of these human rights.



**Mohsen Reza'i** is a longtime member of Iran's Expediency Council and was appointed by the Supreme Leader. The Expediency Council provides guidance to the Supreme Leader on all manner of policy. Reza'i is a former IRGC commander and suspected of involvement in the 1994 terrorist attack against the AMIA Jewish community in Argentina, resulting in the deaths of 85 people. Reza'i remains wanted by Argentina and has an active international arrest warrant through Interpol since March 2007. He is a hardliner politician who, speaking on state television on June 8 2019, said that in reaction to a U.S. military move, "nothing will remain" for U.S. allies in the region, including Israel. He is under US sanctions since January 10, 2020.



**Mohammad Ali Abdollahi** is currently coordinator deputy of General Staff of Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran (AFGS), appointed by the Supreme Leader in July 2016. He is a senior military officer and a politician who served as governor and vice minister during presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He has been member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards since the beginning and a former Deputy Commander of Iran's Law Enforcement Forces. He is under US sanctions since January 10, 2020.



**Ali Asghar Hejazi** is a senior official within the Supreme Leader's Office in charge of security. Hejazi also maintains close links to the IRGC's Qods Force. Hejazi was under US sanctions since May 2013 supporting the commission of serious human rights abuses in Iran on or after June 12, 2009, as well as for providing material support to the IRGC and Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS). He is under new US sanctions since January 10, 2020.

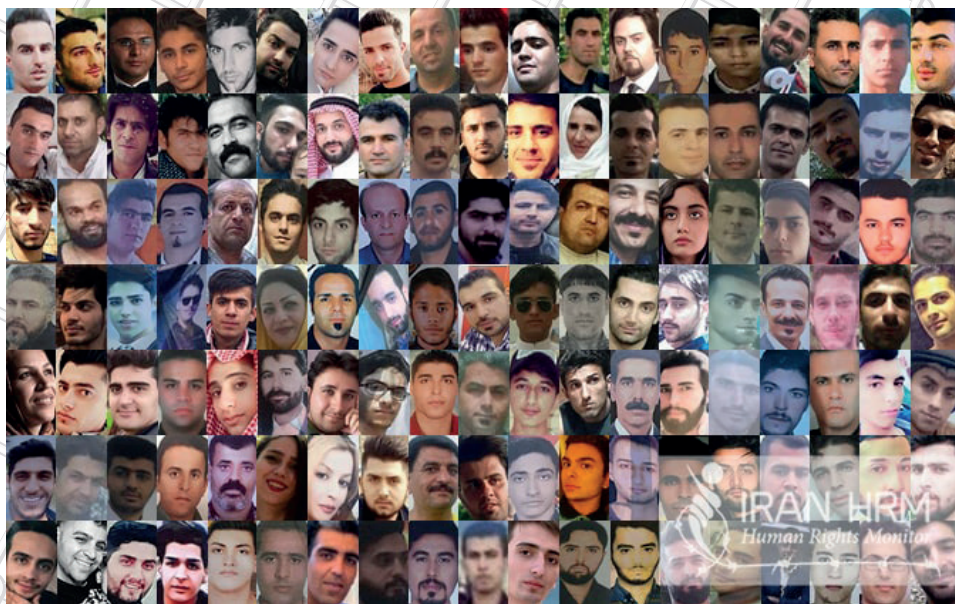


**Mohsen Qomi**, a Deputy Advisor for International Affairs in the Supreme Leader's Office and an advisor to the Supreme Leader on International Communications, has represented the Supreme Leader on official international visits. Qomi has spent most of his life as Khamenei's appointee, including as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Propaganda Office of the Qom Seminary. Since 1998, Qomi has been a member of the Assembly of Experts, whose members he has said "are not accountable in their decisions to anyone except God." In the Assembly, Qomi is a member of Commission 111, which – at least theoretically – monitors the supreme leader to ensure he rules according to the principles of the Islamic revolution. In this commission, he works with radical clerics such as Jannati, Ibrahim Raisi, and Ahmad Khatami. Following the recommendation of Ahmad Jannati – chair of both the Assembly of Experts and Guardian Council – Khamenei appointed Qomi in 1999 as president of the supreme leader's representative office for universities, a position he held until 2005. During that time, universities in Iran were crucial battlegrounds between the regime and the pro-democracy student movement. The OSL played a lead government role in that conflict, alongside the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, its Basij paramilitary, the police, and Ministry of Intelligence. It was during those years that Qomi gained first-hand experience in quelling dissent. Like Khamenei, Qomi is deeply interested in the cultural war that he believes pits Iran against the West. From 1996 to 1998, he was director of the "Encyclopedia of Islamic Rational Science," published by the Educational Institute of Imam Khomeini – headed by Mohammad Taghi Mesbah Yazdi, one of the most radical clerics in Qom; Qomi has the mild manner of a diplomat and has a good relationship with President Hassan Rouhani, who considered him to head the Ministries of Intelligence and of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Both positions require a green light from Khamenei, who preferred to keep Qomi in his own office, describing his role as "very important." Qomi is a "hardliner's hardliner." He has called Israel "a cancerous tumor" that "should be eliminated," and has defended Iran's intervention in Syria. His position as foreign-affairs aide means he travels as Khamenei's representative to such key countries as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Russia. He is under US sanctions since January 10, 2020.



**Esmail Ghaani**, following the Hajj Qasem Soleimani's death, the Supreme Leader Khamenei—the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces—issued a decree appointing him as the new commander of Iran's elite Quds Force. The Quds Force is part of the 125,000-strong Revolutionary Guard, a paramilitary organization that answers only to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The Guard oversees Iran's ballistic missile program, has its naval forces shadow the US Navy in the Persian Gulf and includes an all-volunteer Basij force. Like his predecessor, a young Esmail Ghaani faced the carnage of Iran's eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s and later joined the newly founded Quds, or Jerusalem, Force. A key driver of that influence comes from the elite Quds Force, which works across the region with allied groups to offer an asymmetrical threat to counter the advanced weaponry wielded by the US and its regional allies. Those partners include Iraqi militiamen, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels. "We are children of war," Ghaani once said of his relationship with Soleimani, according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency. "We are comrades on the battlefield and we have become friends in battle." Ghaani has remained much more in the shadows of the organization. He has only occasionally come up in the Western or even Iranian media. But his personal story broadly mirrors that of Soleimani. Like Soleimani, he first deployed to put down the Kurdish uprising in Iran that followed the shah's downfall. He was involved in the Iraqi war too. Then, he joined the Quds Force shortly after its creation. He worked with Soleimani, as well as led counterintelligence efforts at the Guard. Western analysts believe while Soleimani focused on nations to Iran's west, Ghaani's remit was those to the east like Afghanistan and Pakistan. In 2012, the US Treasury sanctioned Ghaani, describing him as having authority over "financial disbursements" to proxies affiliated to the Quds Force. The sanctions particularly tied Ghaani to an intercepted shipment of weapons seized at a port in 2010 in Nigeria's most-populous city, Lagos. Also in 2012, Ghaani drew criticism from the US State Department after reportedly saying that "if the Islamic Republic was not present in Syria, the massacre of people would have happened on a much larger scale." That comment came just after gunmen backing Syrian President Bashar Assad killed over 100 people in Houla in the country's Homs province. In January 2015, Ghaani indirectly said that Iran sends missiles and weapons to Palestinians to fight Israel. "The US and Israel are too small to consider themselves in line with Iran's military power," Ghaani said at the time. "This power has now appeared alongside the oppressed people of Palestine and Gaza in the form of missiles and weapons." Now, Ghaani is firmly in control of the Quds Force.





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