

GEGEN DIE STRÖMUNG



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Lack of solidarity with the democratic and revolutionary struggles in Iran - Why?

Fight against the execution terror and the repression of the murderous regime in Iran!

More than 1,100 executions have been carried out in Iran in the last 18 months. In doing so, the clerical-fascist regime is trying to prevent mass struggles from developing again as they have in the months since September 2022. With its terror of execution, however, the murderous regime has not and cannot prevent the struggles against the oppression of women, nationalities, economic and social misery - and also the resistance in prisons against the threat of executions - from continuing.

The attitude towards the fighters in Iran is a touchstone for the state of every progressive movement in every country in the world, including Germany. The fact that so-called pseudo-left groups in Germany focus entirely on Gaza and the trivialization or even support of Hamas is only one side of the coin. The real mastermind behind the terror of Hezbollah, Hamas and other fascist mercenary troops is the regime in Iran. This is another reason why the fight against the regime in Iran is of such great international importance. And it is no coincidence that the very groups that in fact support Hamas under the guise of solidarity with the Palestinian population in Gaza do nothing, absolutely nothing, to show solidarity with the democratic and revolutionary struggles in Iran! It is precisely this current that must be combated.



Solidarity rally in Brussels in August 2024 for Pakhshan Azizi (on the banner on the left) and Sharifeh Mohammadi (on the banner in the middle) and other democratic and revolutionary fighters who have been sentenced to death in Iran and are at risk of execution.

The current situation in Iran: executions, further repression and fighting

The murder of 22-year-old Kurdish woman Masha Jina Amini in September 2022 triggered a huge wave of protest and resistance in Iran that lasted for months. A gigantic struggle of the various sections of the Iranian population began: above all the doubly and triply oppressed women, the workers in the large companies and in the oil industry, the fighting national minorities and all democratic-revolutionary forces!

All of this was an alarm signal for the clerical-fascist regime. The regime responded with murderous repression, shootings on the streets, mass arrests and torture. More than 500 people have already been murdered during the protests. Human rights organizations have already counted 18,000 political prisoners who were arrested in connection with the "Women, Life, Freedom" movement alone. Thousands more were added later.

Execution terror

Since the beginning of 2023, the clerical-fascist regime has struck back with a brutal terror of execution. In addition to the direct "punishment" of those murdered, this serves above all to spread fear and suppress possible new struggles and uprisings.

Iran has the highest execution rate in the world in relation to the population. And it has continued to rise since 2023. The 823 executions counted in 2023 are 48% more than in the previous year. In the first half of 2024, 266 executions were recorded. More are being added all the time. A considerable number of unreported cases can be assumed, especially as executions often go undetected. For example, Reza (Gholamreza) Rasai, a Kurdish political prisoner and follower of the Yarsan religion who had been arrested during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement, was secretly executed in Dizel Abad Prison in Kermanshah on August 6, 2024.

As a deterrent, however, people are repeatedly hanged in public, most recently on August 26, 2024.

In many cases, the connection with the "Women, Life, Freedom" movement is obvious. However, death sentences are often imposed under all kinds of pretexts. In June, for example, a Kurdish carrier who, like many others, legally transports goods across the Iran-Iraq border was sentenced to death for "spying for Israel".

Mass executions take place time and again. At dawn on August 7, 2024, 22 prisoners were hanged in a mass execution in Ghezel-Hesar prison. On 23.7.24, three female prisoners were executed in Birjand prison. (Women sentenced to death for "adultery" are still stoned to death in Iran).

In 2023, at least five children were also executed who were under the age of 18 when they committed the crimes they were accused of.

of oppressed nationalities are affected by death sentences. For example, Baluchis make up five percent of the Iranian population. However, according to the Amnesty International Report 2022/2023, their share of executions is over 20 percent.

Queer people are also targeted by fascist terror. In mid-September 2022, Zahra Sedighi-Hamadani and Elham Coubdor were sentenced to death for "depravity on earth".

Protests in Iran against imminent executions

Following protests, the death sentences against Zahra Sedighi-Hamadani and Elham Coubdor were overturned on January 16, 2023.

In protest against the wave of executions, all 61 female political prisoners in Evin Prison in Tehran and 10 male political prisoners in Quezel Hesar Prison went on hunger strike on Tuesday, January 30, 2024. The hunger strike campaign "No to execution days" in several prisons, which goes on hunger strike together every Tuesday, is already entering its 31st week at the end of August 2024.

There is little information about the fight against the threat of executions outside of prisons in Iran. What is known are protest statements by the Tehran Bus Company Union and the surrounding area against the threat of executions. One well-known concrete example: Khashayar Sefidi, a former student at the Faculty of Arts at Tehran University, and Motahare Goonei, a student activist from the Women's Life and Freedom Movement, were each sentenced to one year in prison for protesting against the death sentence against rapper Toomaj Salehi. The protests led to Toomaj Salehi, who had become a kind of symbol of the protests and struggles of 2022, being able to leave prison on bail after more than a year in prison.

Despite execution terror and further repression - the fighting in Iran continues!

We are aware of the problem that due to the scarcity of information and the lack of direct contact with the progressive revolutionary forces in Iran, we are unable to give a reasonably complete account and assessment of the current struggles.

The following picture currently emerges for us: the clerical-fascist regime in Iran has succeeded in bringing the mass struggles of 2022, which were aimed at overthrowing this regime, to a standstill for the time being through execution terror and extreme repression.

Nevertheless, the regime could not and cannot prevent further fighting from developing. Here are just a few recent examples:

- Between March and July 2024 alone, proletarian workers held rallies in at least 14 cities to demand the payment of outstanding wages and wage increases. On the island of Qeshm, workers at the local steel and ironworks went on strike

over unpaid wages. In June/July 2024, project and contract workers in more than 115 oil and gas companies went on strike against precarious working conditions.

- There are repeated protests by farmers, such as a sit-in in Isfahan, to protest against persistent power cuts and artificially induced water shortages, which massively affect their livelihoods in agriculture.
- Despite massive threats, on August 5, 2024 nurses from state hospitals in Shiraz began their strike against miserable working conditions and low wages.
- There are other reports, for example, about nationwide protests by truck drivers and protests by pensioners against their miserable pensions.

The regime in Iran as a long-standing mastermind of fascist anti-Jewish movements and organizations worldwide

The clerical-fascist regime in Iran has been financing and supporting various armed forces in various countries in the region that are more or less closely linked to the regime in Iran for many years, even decades, with money, arms supplies, military training and "advice".

On the one hand, the regime in Iran is seeking to establish itself as a regional power in the region among the reactionary states dependent on imperialism and to offer itself to competing imperialists, for example to cooperate with Russian imperialism.

On the other hand, the reactionary regime in Iran is pursuing the declared goal of destroying the state of Israel with all the means at its disposal. When it comes to this, the differences between the various forces of the "Alliance of Resistance" controlled by the regime in Iran take a back seat. The common denominator is the anti-Jewish hatred of Israel.

Under the guise of anti-Jewish "Palestine solidarity", Iran finances Hamas and fascist mercenaries in **Gaza**, who fraudulently call themselves "Islamic Jihad" (70-100 million euros per year each, merkur.de 17.1.2024). Iran also supplies weapons, ammunition, explosives and training. In addition, there are materials and know-how for Hamas' own weapons factories.

There is a particularly close connection to Hezbollah in **Lebanon**. This was set up in 1982 directly by the fascist so-called "Revolutionary Guards" of Iran and is both a militia and a party. Hezbollah has at least 20,000 trained militiamen and an estimated 150,000 missiles of various types in its arsenal. With the help of the regime in Iran, Hezbollah is now significantly stronger than the official Lebanese army.

In **Syria**, the regime in Iran not only maintains close ties to the Assad regime itself, but also to reactionary militias such as Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, Liwa Fatemiyon and Liwa Zanebiyoun.

In **Yemen**, the Houthi militias are de facto waging a proxy war in the interests of the regime in Iran against Saudi Arabia, which for its part is pursuing its ruling interests there. The regime in Iran is equipping the Houthi militias with precision-guided missiles, speedboats and sea mines. The clerical-fascist regime in Iran is concerned with building up and deploying a further armed arm in its war of annihilation against Israel. This is demonstrated by the repeated rocket attacks by the Houthi rebels directly on Israel.

One of the most important Iranian-backed groups in **Iraq** is the Badr Organization. Similar to Hezbollah in Lebanon, this is both a military formation and a political party that is represented in the Council of Representatives in Iraq. In addition, Asa'ib Ahl a-Haqq and Kata ib Hosbollah are de facto militias of the Iranian regime in Iraq.

With all these troops, the regime in Iran is intervening in the entire region. It is also terrorizing the Kurdish population in Iraq together with the reactionary regime in Turkey. Not only once have Iranian troops attacked Kurdish areas in Iraq with rockets and artillery. All this shows how enormous the threat posed to Israel by the regime in Iran is. And not in the abstract, but with such dangerous attacks aimed at Israel's destruction as the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023 or - as has been the case on a massive scale in recent days - the constant rocket attacks by Hezbollah from Lebanon and, for some months now, the attacks by the Houthi army with long-range rockets targeting Israel.

On April 14, 2024, the regime in Iran attacked Israel militarily with over 200 drones and missiles.

The reactionary regime in Iran has built up an international network for its reactionary and anti-Jewish propaganda. Not only the embassies in the respective countries play an important role in this, but also various other institutions. These are religiously disguised. However, their actual function is to spread and consolidate the clerical-fascist ideology in the interests of the reactionary regime in Iran. An important means of propaganda is the so-called Al Quds Day ("Jerusalem Day"), which has been held every year in Iran since 1979 and in other countries since 1988 on the last Friday of Ramadan. These marches are all about one thing: anti-Jewish incitement with the aim of destroying Israel. In Germany (Berlin), Nazis have marched several times, e.g. the NPD functionaries S. Schmidtke and U. Meenen.

German imperialism supports the clerical-fascist regime in Iran

Throughout all the twists and turns of political development, a continuity of German imperialist interests in Iran can be observed. Iran's oil and gas reserves and its strategic location have always been at the center of these interests.

Relations with Iran were already close during the time of the fascist Shah regime. Even after the fall of the Shah's regime in 1979 and the establishment of the current clerical-fascist regime, nothing has fundamentally changed.

Germany is **one of Iran's most important trading partners** today. Hundreds of German companies do business in Iran. A large proportion of German exports are machinery and other electrical engineering products, followed by chemical products. German companies and their "partners" in Iran are "cleverly" circumventing international sanctions. For example, the regime in Iran receives money and products that are also used for uranium enrichment as part of the Iranian nuclear bomb program (FR 5.2.2024). At the same time, the regime in Iran is also being supported in the massive armament and financing of its mercenaries and allies in various countries in the Middle East, especially in its murderous machinations against Israel.

The "contacts" take place on various levels. German universities maintain close relations with universities of the clerical-fascist regime in Iran. Paderborn University, for example, has a "partner university" in Iran that is de facto run by the counter-revolutionary so-called "Revolutionary Guards" and maintains direct links to the fascist Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Not to forget: On December 31, 2023, the nationwide ban on deportations to Iran was not extended but lifted. This means that **deportations to Iran are officially possible again**. An attempted deportation to Iran at the beginning of April 2024 against an Iranian who had taken part in protests in Iran shows just how acute this danger is. He was only able to save himself by fleeing. (SZ 4.3.2024)

Pseudo-leftists in the camp of the counter-revolution and the "insecure"

It is obvious that the organs of German imperialism, which is closely linked to the regime in Iran, hardly report on executions in Iran any more (which used to be the case at least occasionally).

However, it is also a fact that there is virtually no solidarity in Germany with those threatened with execution in Iran, not even from groups that see or describe themselves as left-wing. What are the reasons for this?

One factor that should not be underestimated is the influence of declared pro-Hamas and pro-Iran forces who, under the guise of focusing on "Palestine solidarity", want to prevent support for the struggles in Iran and thus also solidarity with the people threatened with execution in Iran (see box opposite).

This category of supporters of the counter-revolutionary regime in Iran ultimately also includes the groups that openly support or in fact justify the Hamas massacre on October 7, 2023, even if they do not address the role of the regime in Iran. They deliberately conceal the role of the reactionary regime in Iran. Because a halfway realistic exposure of this regime would make it clear that supporting Hamas or justifying its massacre on October 7, 2023 also means supporting the clerical-fascist regime in Iran, which has enabled and continues to enable the Hamas massacre of October 7, 2023 and many other Hamas crimes to a large extent.

We believe that all those who more or less clearly distance themselves from Hamas, but are not aware of the role of the regime in Iran as the central mastermind of Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthi etc., or are so unsettled by the omnipresent agitation along the lines of "Israel is to blame for everything, everything else is not so important" that they prefer to remain silent, should reconsider their position. The actions of the counter-revolutionary and anti-Jewish forces of Hamas, Hezbollah and Houthi cannot be properly understood and exposed without understanding the central role played by Iran.

In any case, ignoring the role of the clerical-fascist regime in Iran must not be tolerated under any circumstances. Because that is a form of support for the counter-revolution.

Solidarity with Sharifeh Mohammadi, Pakhshan Azizi and all others threatened by execution terror in Iran!

Sharifeh Mohammadi, an activist of the women's and proletarian movement in Iran, was arrested in December 2023. She spent several months in solitary confinement without any kind of contact with the outside world and was severely tortured during her isolation. On April 4, 2024, she was sentenced to death for "rebellion". Immediately afterwards, protests were raised both inside and outside prisons in Iran and internationally.

Sixteen female political prisoners from Evin Prison wrote in a letter on July 9, 2024 that they "stand with Sharifeh Mohammadi and all those facing the death penalty". Reza Shahabi, Davood Razavi and Hassan Saeedi, three imprisoned members of the Tehran and Surrounding Areas Bus Drivers' Union, have issued a statement calling for the overturning of the sentence and the immediate and unconditional release of Sharifeh Mohammadi. The Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Surroundings Bus Company called for solidarity with Sharifeh Mohammadi, demanded the immediate annulment of the death sentence against her and her unconditional release as well as the freedom of all other prisoners of the proletarian and democratic movement in Iran. Reyhane Ansari-Nejad, a worker imprisoned in Evin Prison, wrote on 06.07.24 about the "verdict": "This verdict is directed against the workers, women, social activists and all people in Iran ... It doesn't matter which name they pull out of the ballot box [referring to the presidential "election" in July 2024], the methods remain the same as in the last 46 years of the Islamic Republic's rule."

Protests and solidarity campaigns have also taken place internationally. For example, the women's organization Femena condemned the death sentence against Sharifeh Mohammadi and demanded her unconditional release. Trade union protests are known from the Italian trade union CGIL, which called for an "international mobilization". In France, the trade unions CFDT, CGT, UNSA, Solidaires and FSU have issued a joint call for the immediate release of Sharifeh Mohammadi and an end to torture. Further trade union declarations of solidarity have been received from Denmark and Canada. In Germany, the DGB university group in Berlin has initiated a solidarity campaign with Sharifeh Mohammadi. We are not aware of any other solidarity actions by trade unions in Germany.

The Kurdish activist **Pakhshan Azizi** has been sentenced to death for "armed insurrection" in connection with her alleged membership of the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK). She was also severely tortured after her arrest. According to the Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN), female political prisoners in Tehran's notorious Evin prison staged a sit-in protest in the prison yard for several hours after the verdict.

In Belgium (Brussels), Kurdish organizations held a protest rally in front of the Iranian embassy. Representatives of the Kurdish Women's Movement in Europe (TJK-E) and the Community of Free Women of Eastern Kurdistan (KJAR) issued a joint statement calling for a united struggle to prevent the execution of the death sentences against Sharifeh Mohammadi and the journalist Pakhshan Azizi, who was also sentenced to death for "rebellion". It states: "The Iranian regime is systematically targeting women because it fears women's strength the most. Women are oppressed at home by their husbands and outside by the male state". Protest rallies for the revocation of the death sentences against Pakhshan Azizi and Sharifeh Mohammadi also took place in Greece (Athens), Italy and Macedonia. In Germany, a rally organized by the Asya Yüksel Women's Council and the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK) took place in Duisburg on 1 August 2024. One speaker declared: "Let's stop the executions and make the call Jin-Jiyan-Azadi louder." (Information from: anfddeutsch.com)

**So-called "revolutionary
May 1 demonstration" 2024 in Frankfurt: Tolerated pro-Iran and pro-Hamas propaganda!**

This demonstration also took place in Frankfurt/M. this year. The desolate state of affairs within the movement, which sees itself as left-wing or even revolutionary, became abundantly clear.

In the last block of the demonstration, Hamas and pro-Iran supporters repeatedly shouted the slogan "What's the solution? Islamic Revolution" was shouted repeatedly.

The partisanship for the clerical-fascist regime in Iran also manifested itself aggressively in the verbal attacks from the same block against the speech by exiled Iranian comrades.

There can therefore be no doubt about this partisanship for the counter-revolutionary and anti-Jewish regime in Iran and for Hamas. It is also known that one of the main organizers of the last block is a well-known supporter of Hamas. She even proudly presented her participation in the fake elections at the Iranian consulate in Frankfurt.

But what happened? Nothing. Interventions by the demonstration leaders demanding the exclusion of these counter-revolutionary forces were simply ignored - and this at a "revolutionary May Day demonstration! - were simply ignored.

(See also: Questions from Kritik & Praxis [ffm] to the alliance "Revolutionärer Erster Mai Frankfurt", 26.7.24)

The need for practical solidarity with those fighting and those threatened with those threatened with execution in Iran

The last three years have shown: After the great mass movement of 2022/23 subsided, the regime in Iran has also used the declining international attention for Iran to massively intensify its repression against opposition members, women, minorities such as Kurds and Baluchis, Baha'is and queer people - up to and including the terror of execution for more than 18 months.

It is important to support the progressive forces from Iran, who are protesting and active here in Germany against the executions and the oppression in Iran as a whole, in exposing the clerical-fascist regime and supporting the struggles in Iran to the best of our ability.

German imperialism's support for the clerical-fascist regime in Iran must be uncovered and combated!

In view of the currently enforced restrictions on the right to asylum, it is clear how important it is to step up the fight against deportations, especially to Iran.

As far as possible, it is also important to **directly** support the de-democratic and revolutionary forces fighting under the most difficult conditions in Iran. To this end, contacts must be established.

This is currently difficult and will probably remain so in the near future, but we must not lose sight of it. In Iran - as in 2014 and 2022 - a broad mass movement will certainly develop again with the aim of overthrowing the clerical-fascist regime. And revolutionary and communist forces will emerge that will consistently fight to prevent other reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces from gaining control of the levers of political power after the fall of the current regime.

We are firmly on the side of the democratic-revolutionary forces in Iran, will inform about the democratic and revolutionary struggles in Iran and support them as much as we can!

The text has been machine translated.