



Iran Data Portal

Sazman-e Mojahedin-e Enghelab-e Eslami-ye Iran
Organization of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution of Iran

The Organization of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution was founded in 1979 when seven (armed and civil) underground groups unified and established a new organization. These groups belonged to the non-cleric religious followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Before the revolution, they had managed a number of armed operations against American military advisers. During the revolution, they were in charge of the protection of Ayatollah Khomeini when he returned to Iran from exile on February 1. They were also active in the armed clashes of the final days of the Iranian revolution.

At its founding, the affiliated members of the Organization were less than 1000 people. In the first months after the revolution, they had two priorities: preventing the restoration of the previous regime, and combating other revolutionary groups who opposed the Islamic Republic regime. As a result, many of the members of the Organization were also active members of the Revolutionary Committees. Moreover, the founders of the Organization and the Corps of the Revolutionary Guards were more or less the same. They also established the Intelligence Unit of the Corps of the Revolutionary Guards, and later many of the members of the Organization became the main staff of the Ministry of Intelligence.

In the political developments of the early years after the revolution, the Organization took an active role in opposing Abolhasan Banisadr's nomination¹ for the presidency and in forming a broad coalition of supporters of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the first parliamentary elections. In the first parliament, they had a small active faction of about

¹ Bani-sadr was the first president of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1980-1981). He was impeached on 21 June 1981 and immediately left the country into exile. The main reason for the impeachment was the conflict between the liberal-minded Banisadr and the more conservative Party of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

thirty members. Mohammad Ali Rajaei, prime minister (1980-1) and president (1981), although not a member, had a close relationship with the Organization and organized his cabinet with their consultation.

From the very beginning, tensions existed between the left and right wings of the Organization about the role of the state in policymaking on labor rights, land reform, and commodity distribution. These tensions escalated when the representative of the Ayatollah Khomeini in the Organization, Ayatollah Rasti Kashani, who favored the right wing, claimed that his supervision over the Organization meant that he could interfere in all areas including the appointment and dismissal of members. Protesting this position, many left-wing and moderate members resigned in 1982. From 1982 until 1986, the Organization was led by rightist members, and in 1986 the Organization notified Ayatollah Khomeini of its dissolution.

In 1991, left-wing members gathered together again and decided to resume the Organization's activities under a new title, adding the word of "Iran" to the name. The Organization began to publish a biweekly magazine called "Asr-e Ma" to publicize their positions on political, social, and economic issues. In foreign policy, their priority was to prevent U.S. influence in the region through interaction with the Soviet Union, European powers, and other countries. Also, the organization advocated social equality and state intervention in economy. However, like other left-wing groups, it gradually revised its main values and put more emphasis on the restriction of the Guardian Jurist's power within the boundaries of the Constitution, equal weight for the republican and Islamic aspects of the regime, expanded participation of the public in the decision-making, political rights, and a modern reading of Islam. In foreign policy, they now emphasize normalizing the U.S.-Iran relationship. And economically, their goals are, in turn, independence, justice, and development, under the label of "justice-centered development."

In 1997, they were among the active strategists and campaigners for Mohammad Khatami. With Khatami's landslide victory, the group's members entered the executive with high-ranking positions. In the sixth parliament, while they had only two representatives, both were deputy speakers of the parliament. Prominent members of the Organization include Behzad Nabavi, the deputy speaker of the sixth parliament and

former Minister of Heavy Industry in Mousavi's cabinet; Mohsen Armin, the deputy speaker of the sixth parliament and the spokesman of the Organization; Mohammad Salamati, the secretary-general of the Organization; and Hashem Aghajari, a history professor and prominent intellectual.

In 2002, Hashem Aghajari was accused for apostasy and sentenced to death because of a lecture he had given about the Islamic Protestantism. This led to broad protests in Iran's universities. As a result of the internal protests and international pressure, the court of appeals changed the death sentence to five years in prison.

In the elections of the seventh parliament, almost all of the Organization's candidates were disqualified by the Guardian Council and so they announced that they would not participate. In 2005 presidential election, they nominated Mostafa Mo'een, the former Minister of Higher Education. However, in a controversially administered election, Mo'een ranked fifth among seven rival candidates, and the Organization lost the executive as the last branch of the government they had influence.

In the 2009 presidential election, they first invited former president Khatami to run, but after Khatami withdrew his name, they supported Mir-Hossein Mousavi. During the severe crackdown after the election, a number of Organization members were arrested, including Behzad Nabavi, Feizollah Arabsorkhi, Mostafa Tajzadeh, Parviz Qadiani, and Javad Emam.

The Organization has had great emphasis on internal unity and coherence. As a result, in the period between 1991 and 1999, they did not recruit any new members. However, in following years they recruited 200 new members. They have branches in 28 provinces in the country. The Organization is composed of the Congress, Central Committee, Arbitration Council, Political Council, Board Executive, Commission, Organ, Committee, Branch, and Unit. The Congress is the highest authority within the Organization, and is held each year in July. There the members elect the fifteen main members and three substitute members of the Central Committee.

Official Website: www.mojahedin-enghelab.net

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