

The US Has Delisted Anti-Iranian MEK Terrorists Still Openly Committed to Violence

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In 2012, the US State Department would delist anti-Iranian terrorist group – Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK) – from its Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) list. Yet years later, MEK has demonstrated an eager desire to carry out political violence on a scale that eclipses the previous atrocities that had it designated a terrorist organization in the first place.

In [the US State Department’s official statement](#) published in September 2012, the rationale for delisting MEK would be as follows (emphasis added):

With today’s actions, the Department does not overlook or forget the MEK’s past acts of terrorism, including its involvement in the killing of U.S. citizens in Iran in the 1970s and an attack on U.S. soil in 1992. The Department also has serious concerns about the MEK as an organization, particularly with regard to allegations of abuse committed against its own members.

The Secretary’s decision today took into account the MEK’s public renunciation of violence, the absence of confirmed acts of terrorism by the MEK for more than a decade, and their cooperation in the peaceful closure of Camp Ashraf, their historic paramilitary base.

Yet US policy before the State Department’s delisting, and events ever since, have proven this rationale for removing MEK as an FTO to be an intentional fabrication – that MEK was and still is committed to political violence against the Iranian people, and envisions a Libya-Syrian-style conflict to likewise divide and destroy the Iranian nation.

However, facts regarding the true nature of MEK is not derived from Iranian state media, or accusations made by MEK’s opponents in Tehran, but by MEK’s own US sponsors and even MEK’s senior leadership itself.

“Undeniably” MEK “Conducted Terrorist Attacks”

By the admissions of the United States and the United Kingdom, MEK is undeniably a terrorist organization guilty of self-admitted acts of terrorism. The UK House of Commons in a briefing paper titled, [“The People’s Mujahiddeen of Iran \(PMOI\),”](#) it cites the UK Foreign Office which states explicitly that:

The Mojahedin-e Khalq (MeK) is proscribed in the UK under the Terrorism Act 2000. It has a long history of involvement in terrorism in Iran and elsewhere and is, by its own admission, responsible for violent attacks that have resulted in many deaths.

The briefing paper makes mention of “*assiduous*” lobbying efforts by MEK to have itself removed from terrorist lists around the globe.

A 2012 Guardian article titled, “[MEK decision: multimillion-dollar campaign led to removal from terror list](#),” would extensively detail the large number of prominent US politicians approached and paid by MEK as part of this lobbying effort.

Yet there is more behind MEK’s delisting than mere lobbying. As early as 2009, US policymakers saw MEK as one of many minority opposition and ethnic groups that could be used by the US as part of a wider agenda toward regime change in Iran.

The Brookings Institution in a 2009 policy paper titled, “[Which Path to Persia? Options for a New American Strategy Toward Iran](#)” (PDF), under a chapter titled, “Inspiring an Insurgency: Supporting Iranian Minority And Opposition Groups,” would openly admit (emphasis added):

Perhaps the most prominent (and certainly the most controversial) opposition group that has attracted attention as a potential U.S. proxy is the **NCRI (National Council of Resistance of Iran), the political movement established by the MeK (Mujahedin-e Khalq)**. Critics believe the group to be **undemocratic and unpopular, and indeed anti-American**.

Brookings would concede to MEK’s terrorist background, admitting (emphasis added):

Undeniably, the group has conducted terrorist attacks—often excused by the MeK’s advocates because they are directed against the Iranian government. For example, in 1981, the group bombed the headquarters of the Islamic Republic Party, which was then the clerical leadership’s main political organization, killing an estimated 70 senior officials. **More recently, the group has claimed credit for over a dozen mortar attacks, assassinations, and other assaults on Iranian civilian and military targets between 1998 and 2001.**

Brookings makes mention of MEK’s attacks on US servicemen and American civilian contractors which earned it its place on the US FTO, noting:

In the 1970s, the group killed three U.S. officers and three civilian contractors in Iran.

And despite MEK’s current depiction as a popular resistance movement in Iran, Brookings would also admit (emphasis added):

The group itself also appears to be **undemocratic and enjoys little popularity in Iran itself**. It has no political base in the country, although it appears to have an operational presence. In particular, its active participation on Saddam Husayn’s side during the bitter Iran-Iraq War made the group widely loathed. In addition, many aspects of the group are cultish, and its leaders, Massoud and Maryam Rajavi, are revered to the point of obsession.

Brookings would note that despite the obvious reality of MEK, the US could indeed use the terrorist organization as a proxy against Iran, but notes that:

...at the very least, to work more closely with the group (at least in an overt manner), Washington would need to remove it from the list of foreign terrorist organizations.

And from 2009 onward, that is precisely what was done. It is unlikely that the MEK alone facilitated the rehabilitation of its image or exclusively sought its removal from US-European terrorist organization lists – considering the central role MEK terrorists played in US regime change plans versus Iran.

While [MEK propaganda](#) insists that its inclusion on terrorist organization lists around the globe was the result of a global effort to “*curry favor with Iran’s clerical regime,*” it is clear that the terrorist organization earned its way onto these lists, and then lobbied and cheated its way off of them.

The MEK is Still Committed to Violence Today

While Iranians mourned in the wake of the Ahvaz attack, MEK [was holding a rally in New York City](#) attended by prominent US politicians including US President Donald Trump’s lawyer Rudolph Giuliani and former US National Security Adviser under the Obama administration, James Jones.

During the “2018 Iran Uprising Summit” Giuliani would vow the overthrow of the Iranian government.

MEK leader **Maryam Rajavi** would broadcast a message [now posted on MEK websites](#). In her message she would discuss MEK’s role in fomenting ongoing violence inside of Iran. She would admit:

Today, the ruling mullahs’ fear is amplified by the role of the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK) and resistance units in leading and continuing the uprisings. Regime analysts say: “The definitive element in relation to the December 2017 riots is the organization of rioters. So-called Units of Rebellion have been created, which have both the ability to increase their forces and the potential to replace leaders on the spot.”

The roadmap for freedom reveals itself in these very uprisings, in ceaseless protests, and in the struggle of the Resistance Units.

Riots by definition entail violence. The riots taking place across Iran beginning in late 2017 and continuing sporadically since – of which Rajavi and her MEK take credit for organizing – have left dozens dead including police.

One police officer [was shot dead](#) just before New Year’s, and [another three were killed](#) in late February 2018 during such riots.

In the region of Ahvaz specifically, MEK social media accounts have been taking credit for and promoting ongoing unrest there. Ahvaz was more recently the scene of a terrorist attack in which gunmen targeted a parade leaving dozens dead and scores more injured.

Rajavi and MEK’s ultimate goal is the overthrow of the Iranian government. As Brookings admits in its 2009 paper, the Iranian government will not cede power to US-orchestrated regime change without a fight – and MEK was recruited as a US proxy specifically because of its capacity for violence. Brookings would note:

Despite its limited popularity (but perhaps because of its successful use of terrorism), the Iranian regime is exceptionally sensitive to the MEK and is vigilant in guarding against it.

It was for this reason that Brookings singled them out as a potential proxy in 2009 and recommended their delisting by the US State Department so the US could provide more open support for the terrorist organization.

It is clear that Rajavi's recent admissions to being behind political violence inside Iran contravenes the US State Department's rationale for deslisting MEK on grounds that the group had made a "*public renunciation of violence.*"

MEK is not only refusing to renounce violence, MEK's most senior leader has just publicly and unambiguously declared MEK's policy is to openly wield violence inside Iran toward destabilizing and overthrowing the government. From the United States' ignoring of its own anti-terrorism laws - aiding and abetting MEK while still on the US State Department's Foreign Terrorist Organizations list - to the US now portraying MEK as a "reformed" "resistance" organization even as its leader takes credit for ongoing political violence inside Iran, it is clear that once again the US finds itself a willing state sponsor of terrorism. It was as early as 2007 that Seymour Hersh in his New Yorker article, "[The Redirection Is the Administration's new policy benefitting our enemies in the war on terrorism?](#)" would warn:

To undermine Iran, which is predominantly Shiite, the Bush Administration has decided, in effect, to reconfigure its priorities in the Middle East. In Lebanon, the Administration has cooperated with Saudi Arabia's government, which is Sunni, in clandestine operations that are intended to weaken Hezbollah, the Shiite organization that is backed by Iran. The U.S. has also taken part in clandestine operations aimed at Iran and its ally Syria. A by-product of these activities has been the bolstering of Sunni extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam and are hostile to America and sympathetic to Al Qaeda.

It is clear in retrospect that the rise of the self-proclaimed "Islamic State" (ISIS), Al Qaeda, Al Nusra, and other extremist fronts in Syria were a result of this US policy. It is also clear that there are many other extremist groups the US has knowingly whitewashed politically and is covertly supporting in terrorism aimed directly at Iran itself. It is just a matter of time before the same denials and cover-ups used to depict Syrian and Libyan terrorists as "freedom fighting rebels" are reused in regards to US-backed violence aimed at Iran. Hopefully, it will not take nearly as long for the rest of the world to see through this game and condemn groups like MEK as the terrorists they always have been, and continue to be today. Also in retrospect, it is clear how US-engineered conflict and regime change has impacted the Middle Eastern region and the world as a whole - one can only imagine the further impact a successful repeat of this violence will have if visited upon Iran directly.

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