



A Who's Who of Iran

The 20 most important government (political and military) leaders and opposition leaders in Iran

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Government leaders



Ali Khamenei: The supreme leader, the highest political and religious authority in the Islamic Republic of Iran. He succeeded Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 and has steadily worked since then to increase his office's power and marginalize all internal opposition.

Mojtaba Khamenei: The second son of the supreme leader. Mojtaba in 2009 took control of the Basij militia—a volunteer paramilitary wing of the Revolutionary Guards—and oversaw its crackdown on green movement protesters. Many believe he is being groomed to succeed his father as supreme leader.



Mahmoud Ahmadinejad: The current president of Iran, first elected to the position in 2005. His controversial re-election in 2009, which many believe was fraudulent, led to massive street protests. His subsequent efforts

to expand his own power resulted in a backlash from Khamenei and his supporters and a severe curtailment of his influence.

Mohammed-Taghi Mesbah Yazdi: A hardline cleric and former spiritual advisor to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Yazdi is leader of the ultraconservative faction in the parliament.

Mohammed-Javad Larijani: A top advisor and spokesman for the supreme leader. Larijani is often a spokesman for the regime to Western media.



Ali Larijani: Current chairman of the Iranian Parliament. The younger brother of Mohammed Javad, he is also the former secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf: The current mayor of Tehran. Ghalibaf is seen as a frontrunner to succeed Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of Iran.



Saeed Jalili: Currently the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, the equivalent of the U.S. national security council, as well as Iran's lead nuclear negotiator. Previously he served as Iran's deputy foreign minister for European and American Affairs.

Major General Mohammed Ali Jaafari: Commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps. Jaafari was appointed to the position by the supreme leader in September 2007.

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Major General Qassem Soleimani: Commander of the Quds Force, a unit of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps tasked with managing Iran's relationships with extremist groups outside Iran. He has held the position since 2000 and is seen as a possible future commander of the Revolutionary Guards.



Mohsen Rezaei: Currently the secretary of the Expediency Council, which manages disputes between the Majlis and the Guardian Council. Rezaei was formerly the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps commander. A 2009

presidential candidate, Rezaei initially complained about voting irregularities but later withdrew his complaint. He has been critical of the treatment of protesters detained during the 2009 demonstrations.



Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani: Served as president of Iran from 1989 to 1997. He was recently reappointed by Khamenei as chairman of the Expediency Council.



Ahmad Jannati: A hardline cleric and chairman of the Guardian Council, which approves all legislation and vets political candidates. Jannati has promoted loyalty to the supreme leader as a central qualification for running for office.



Ali Akbar Salehi: Iran's foreign minister since January 2011 and previously the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran. From 1997 to 2005 Salehi was the Iranian representative to the International

Atomic Energy Agency.



Fereydoon Abbasi: The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, the government body that oversees Iran's nuclear industry. Abbasi is also serving as one of President Ahmadinejad's vice presidents.

Opposition



Mohammed Khatami: President of Iran from 1997 to 2005. One of Iran's most prominent reformers, Khatami is a persistent critic of President Ahmadinejad.



Mir Hossein Mousavi: Prime Minister of Iran from 1981 to 1989. In 2009 he was the reform candidate for president around whom the green movement coalesced. Considered one of the green movement's

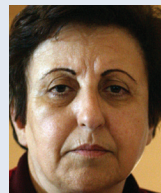
leading figures, he has been under house arrest since February 2011.



Mehdi Karroubi: Former chairman of the Association of Combatant Clerics, a political party, and a member of the Expediency Council. Karroubi ran for president in 2009.

Similar to Mousavi he is considered a leading green movement figure and has been under house arrest since February 2011.

Nasrin Soutoudeh: Prominent lawyer who represented activists arrested during the 2009 election protests. Arrested in September 2010 she was sentenced in January 2011 to 11 years in prison. Numerous human rights organizations have continued to call for her release.



Shirin Ebadi: Lawyer and Nobel Peace Prize-winning human rights activist. Ebadi has lived in exile since traveling abroad during Iran's 2009 elections.

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