

Remarks by Former Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee,

Congressman Elliot Engel (D-NY)

Free Iran Summit, July 10, 2021

The people of Iran are wonderful people, and that's why it pains me so much to witness some of the things that have transpired. The Iranian regime is the leading state sponsor of terrorism in the world. That is an absolute disgrace. So I join you today at the 2020-21 Free Iran Human Rights Conference and I think it's important for us to view and treat the regime in Iran according to their deeds. So it's important to highlight their behavior and hold them accountable for their behavior.

Now the mullahs ruling Iran just selected a president who is a hardliner, who was a member of the 1988 death commission. So you see nothing really has changed. In fact, it's been getting worse. A few years ago in 2018, many of you were among the tens of thousands at another Free Iran event and were unwillingly targeted by the regime's terrorists. The Iranian regime, using its diplomat, trying to bomb this event is an example of another aspect of the threat to humanity and as I mentioned before, terrorism. Again, Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism in the world. That should not be allowed to stand. Through your efforts and the efforts of those in Europe and America, the main perpetrator, Assadollah Assadi, who happens to be a high ranking IRGC member with diplomatic credentials, was arrested, tried and convicted and is now in jail in Belgium. So again we have to genuinely and affirmatively confront Iranian regime terrorism in the Middle East and beyond.

Again, I want to say a few words about accountability here as well. As many of you know, I have always supported a secular, democratic and nonnuclear Republic of Iran. In addition to recognizing your struggle as it is embodied in Mrs. Rajavi's 10 Point Plan for the future of Iran, 242 of my colleagues in the House of Representatives signed onto this and the House Resolution is 118, and it documents instances of crimes against humanity in Iran and urges accountability.

So I want you to have a wonderful conference. We are going to continue to put the pressure on the world to try to help stomp out terrorism which emanates from Iran and any other country, and I look forward to the day when Iran is again a free nation. Now there are many Iranians in the United States, and so I and others have gotten to know the Iranian people. The Iranian people are good people and again, it pains me to see them being robbed of their democratic state by people who are running the government with an iron fist and supporting terrorism. So have a great conference. You have my support and we're going to win because I believe that righteousness always wins out at the end if good people stand up and take action and are not afraid to speak.

Thank you.