

Historic Summit of Iranian Opposition

Washington, DC -- On Friday June 11th, one week before the “elections” of the Islamic Republic in Iran, the regime’s notoriously fractured opposition gathered for a historic unity summit as a part of the nationwide “No to the Islamic Republic” campaign, started by activists inside Iran. The summit brought together monarchists and republicans, liberals and conservatives and others across Iran’s ideological spectrum for the first time in public. It featured speakers both from inside the country and in exile.

The summit, fully titled: “No to the Islamic Republic, Yes to National Solidarity, Vote by Boycotting!” was streamed live into the homes of tens of millions of Iranians by Iran International, BBC Persian, and dozens of radio and TV stations. The summit was hosted by former CNN anchor Rudi Bakhtiar and featured prominent opposition leaders including Prince Reza Pahlavi. Speakers engaged dozens of members of the media in a press conference moderated by Nazenin Ansari of Kayhan London.

Below are selected quotes from each of the speakers. [Here](#) is a link to the full event.

Host Rudi Bakhtiar: *“For the first time in the 42 years of the Islamic Republic’s occupation of Iran, the officials of this illegal regime have never been so divided and the Iranian people, despite the pressure imposed by the regime, have never been so courageous and so united, as they are around the ‘No to the Islamic Republic campaign.’”*

Mahboubeh Ramezani: *“I am recording this video beside my son's gravesite... he became an angel when he was shot with five bullets... he was my whole life, they took him. We all died when he died. I am seeking justice... We need unity! Enough! Put your petty fighting aside. Enough! My vote is the overthrow [of this regime.]”*

Mother of Pejamn Gholipour murdered by the Islamic Republic (inside Iran)

Fatemeh Sepehri: *“With all of my being, I stand by this and say the Islamic Republic must go. As long as the Islamic Republic is in power, 85 million Iranians will live in poverty, insecurity, and misery. We the people of Iran have been taken hostage for 42 years... Iranian nation! If you want to be saved, work together, unite, we must rebuild the Iran the Islamic Republic has destroyed...”*

Signatory of the 14 Person Declaration (inside Iran)

Narges Mansouri: *“We must all come together. Instead of fighting amongst one another, we must know our enemy is the Islamic Republic. The alternative will come from this movement.”*

Signatory of the 14 Person Declaration (inside Iran)

Pedram: *“I am here to represent a significant portion of Iranian society, the youth... One of our main problems has been the lack of solidarity within the opposition... and what Prince Reza Pahlavi has rightly called ‘middle management.’”* **Youth dissident (inside Iran)**

Hassan Shariatmadari: *“The Iranian people are turning the Islamic Republic’s elections into a national referendum by choosing to cast their ballots by boycotting.... The diversity you see here today is but a reflection of the great diversity of Iran. We must have open arms to those who will soon join us in this movement.”*

Head of Iran Transition Council

Karim Shambayati: *“On the political scene, we have a government more isolated than ever, a people with the “No to Islamic Republic” campaign more united than ever. We have a government divided and an opposition showing unprecedented solidarity, from left to right, irrespective of the future form of government.”*

Unity for a New Start

Masih Alinejad: *“This conference is showing the national solidarity of the democratic opposition to the Islamic Republic. This is the main goal of each of us gathering, irrespective of our varying political views who are not seen together as frequently, but are united under the flag of ‘No to the Islamic Republic...’”*

Human rights activist and journalist

Massoud Noghrekar: *“This is a gathering which, without a doubt, can be an inspiration for collaboration, convergence, and a coalition, which is the Achilles Heel of the Islamic Republic. This solidarity comes in the form of ‘No to the Islamic Republic’... and in return, ‘yes’ to freedom, democracy, human rights, social justice, and national unity.”*

Society of Social Democracy for Iran

Esmail Nouri’Ala: *“I am pleased to be gathered under the slogan “Yes to national solidarity’ today. I hope the commitment we are making in front of the cameras today will remain after we leave this conference.”*

Head of Secular Democrat Party

Mehran Shahrkhani: *“Today “No to the Elections” is part of the “No to the Islamic Republic” movement because from its first day, the Islamic Republic said “no” to the Iranian nation... Every few years, the regime calls the people to its fake elections... to show legitimacy on the international stage. The people no longer fall for this.”*

Pan-Iranist Party (inside Iran)

Shahin Najafi: *“I am not a politician. My work is art, and I am alive with art... But if we are talking about citizenship... Then I ask... can one be a citizen and not be political and not be active?”*

Rapper and activist

AmirHossein Etemadi: *“Our presence here today is a result of the sacrifice in the 2009, 2017-2018, 2019 protests... If we want to help the people of Iran, we have no choice but to put aside our smaller differences aside for our larger goal, for our mutual goal, to save Iran, to aid the people of Iran... in our speeches, there was one common word: Iran.”*

Farashgard

Nahid Bahmani: *“I express my solidarity in saying “No to the Islamic Republic.” The elections are, as always, unfair and unfree. They are also a tool for the regime to use the people to scrape together legitimacy for itself and its repressive apparatus....”*

Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan

Foad Pashai: *“The ‘No to the Islamic Republic’ has become a movement and an ideology. It has no owner. All the people of Iran say no to this regime in their own language and in their own way.... We agree on 95% of issues, the remaining 5% should not keep us from collaborating. Today we are showing we can work together. We are taking this excuse away from the regime”*

Head of the Constitutionalist Party (Monarchist, Liberal-Democrat)

Aria: *“The protest movement in Iran has reached its highest level in history. We are against both reformists and hardliners and we will boycott this regime’s elections. We no longer hear people say, ‘I am not political.’ We are working for the total overthrow of this regime. We have members of the armed forces who are with us, they are against the regime.”*

Youth dissident (inside Iran)

Mohammad Nourizad: *“If you want to vote in this election, roll up your sleeves and plunge your hand into the blood and honor of the Iranian people which has been spilled and destroyed by the ISIS-like Islamic Republic... consider yourself an accomplice in all the murders of this regime.”*

Imprisoned journalist, activist (in Iran)

Prince Reza Pahlavi: *“For the past forty years I predicted this day would come-- when the critical state of our nation would show the necessity of cooperation for the liberation from this criminal regime and the establishment of a pluralistic political future in which every Iranian will have his rights respected. This session is only one example of the collaboration in this national campaign and effort... The primary enemy of totalitarian regimes is national solidarity. We must continue this service to our nation.”*