



# Iranian Expediency Council



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Dear Delegates,

Salamalecom! I would like to cordially welcome you to Brown University Crisis Simulation 2012 and the Iranian Expediency Council. My name is Nasim Azizgolshani. I am a sophomore at Brown most likely concentrating in Development Studies and Chemistry. I am thrilled to be the chair of this committee.

I have been involved in Model United Nations, both running and participating in various ones, since high school. Each conference has been a great learning experience for me, and I hope you will not only enjoy your time here but learn a lot as well. This will be a relatively small committee, and, because of this, you will all be required to participate perhaps a little more than you usually would in order to create a more interactive environment. I encourage you to research your council member and the context and background of the situation as much as possible. I recognize that for some, this may be slightly difficult due to the relative obscurity of a couple of members; however, with a little effort all of them can be found online and in published text. It is important, of course, that you represent the beliefs and interests of your council members and keep them separate from your own. For that, a strong background is a necessity as well as a general awareness of current events. As a crisis committee, the outcome of the proceedings will depend a lot on you, the members.

If you have any questions about the committee, BUCS, or the country, please email me! I can't wait to begin working with you. In the meantime, good luck!

Sincerely,

Nasim Azizgolshani  
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# Background

The Islamic Republic is a relatively new regime that began, in a sense, with Ruhollah Mostafavi Moosavi Khomeini. In the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the monarchy led by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (known as Reza Shah) was overthrown and replaced by Ayatollah (the title for a high ranking Shi'ah cleric) Khomeini. While the Revolution itself was both religious and secular, the government that ousted the pro-West ruler established itself in Sharia law and quickly pursued an "anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist" foreign policy. This has led to a lot of tension in the country's relationship with the United States, which has occasionally burst into crises, such as the Iranian Hostage Crisis in 1979, the 1988 shooting of an Iranian civilian plane by the USS Vincennes. When Khomeini passed away in 1989, Ayatollah Khamenei replaced him as Supreme Leader. The reformists began to gain power and, with the election of President Khatami in 1997, gained minor ground. However, no significant progress was made during that particular presidency.

The three greatest issues facing the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran at this point are student uprisings, rifts between the reformists and conservatives, and the issue of the nation's "ambiguous" nuclear policy.

## Topic One: Student Uprisings

In the 2009 election, there were four candidates vying for the presidency. The incumbent president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, had already gained the reputation of a conservative who favored the internationally controversial nuclear program and was a supporter of (Shiite) Islamic traditionalism during his time in office. Mohsen Rezai, another conservative candidate, differed only slightly on his proposed relations with the United States. Mehdi Karroubi was a former leader of the Majlis and ran as a reformist. He attacked the president's fiscal policy and accused him of lying about unemployment statistics in order to hide the dire economic conditions of the country. The main opposition came from Mir Hossein Mousavi, who ran independently of any political parties. He championed greater women's rights and accused Ahmadinejad of many injustices towards the Iranian people. However, many questioned whether any of the candidates' policies would in practice differ so greatly from Ahmadinejad's. All, ultimately, agreed upon the right to have nuclear energy and the power of the clerical regime.

There were no demonstrations until the government declared the incumbent the winner after only two-thirds of the votes had been counted. Supporters of both Karroubi and Mousavi alleged fraud and pointed out irregularities in regions that had shown support for the reformists during pre-election canvassing. Many people began to protest, and riots broke out in Tehran. Due to Iran's disproportionately large youth population (over 60% of Iran's 73 million residents are under the age of 30), frustrated by high unemployment rates and a lack of socio-political liberty, most of the protesters were students. The government responded brutally, repressing protesters. Khamenei backed Ahmadinejad, and while there was a partial recount, no discrepancies were found. Inspired by the Arab Spring, the opposition regained some drive in 2011, and there were demonstrations again. This was short lived, as both Mousavi and Karroubi were placed under house arrest and government forces (including the Basiji) cracked down aggressively on dissidents. However, the ongoing civil movements in neighboring countries may inspire the Iranian people yet again. Thus the threat of uprisings is always a possibility the council must be prepared for.

**Topic Two: Power Rifts**

Ahmadinejad accused the old clerical elite of corruption, specifically targeting Rafsanjani and Larijani – two particularly powerful and wealthy members of the old clergy that came to power at the advent of the 1979 revolution. However, the power shifts have now cut between the Supreme Leader and Ahmadinejad. While the Ayatollah is much more powerful, with control of the Revolutionary Guard, the judiciary, and state media, the current president is fighting to gain more power.

In what turned into a public show of wills, the president attempted to dismiss the head of the intelligence ministry in April 2011, but Khamenei rejected the resignation. Only a few weeks later, Ahmadinejad's plans to seize the position of oil minister, thus presiding over OPEC, was foiled once again by the Supreme Leader. The rift seems only to be deepening as allies of the president have recently been arrested, such as Mohammad Sharif Malekzadeh.

In an attempt to reconcile their problems, Ahmadinejad likened his relationship with the Supreme Leader to that of father with his son. Conservative clerics were not pleased with this comparison believing that the overzealous president is elevating his position.

**Topic Three: The Nuclear Program**

While Tehran claims that its goal in developing a nuclear program is completely peaceful, the international community suspects otherwise. The Iranian leadership claims that its objective is to produce power without using its oil supply, which it prefers to export. The program that began in the sixties with the Shah was abandoned after the 1979 Revolution and was not resumed until the mid-1990s. Around the same time, Washington began to suspect a clandestine nuclear project in the Middle Eastern nation. While the moderate President Khatami, was more willing to oblige with inspections by the International Atomic Energy Association, his successor, Ahmadinejad was not.

American President George W. Bush, took a far harsher approach to stopping Tehran from proceeding with its nuclear plans, threatening air strikes. President Obama tried to resolve the issue more diplomatically, but his compromise to enrich uranium outside of the country was rejected by Ahmadinejad.

The program's greatest effects can be seen on the economy as both American Presidents' main weapon against Iran has been an array of economic sanctions. While weakened by Russia and China's nonconformity with UN Sanctions, it has still created a major dent in the economy.

The United States, in collaboration with Israel, who perceives the program as one of its greatest threats, has even used cyberweapons, such as the Stuxnet worm, which is said to have destroyed a significant number of Iran's nuclear centrifuges, to delay Iran from succeeding and creating a nuclear weapon. In May 2011, the International Atomic Energy Agency, a global nuclear watchdog, suspicious of Iran's refusal to reveal any information regarding its nuclear technology, told the general public that it had evidence of Iran's intentions to build a nuclear weapon. The release of diplomatic documents by Wikileaks showed that Iran's Arab neighbors are also concerned, and that North Korea has been providing it with weapons.

Even more recently, Israel has implied rather directly that it would be willing to use more direct and extreme force to end Iran's program. The European Union has stopped all imports of oil from Iran. The world has become more united against Iran, and war seems increasingly imminent.

# The Committee

Iran's system of government is rather complex and convoluted. It can be split into two different types of institutions: elected and unelected. The Parliament, Assembly of Experts and the President's position fall into the former category and The Cabinet, Expediency Council, Guardian Council, Head of Judiciary and Supreme Leader are all appointed. Keep in mind that even the elections are often not direct and candidates must be approved by the Guardian Council and the Supreme Leader. The electorate votes for the members of the Parliament, or Majlis, every four years. As the unicameral legislative body, they create laws as well as have the power to impeach the president. Their power is limited by the Guardian Council, who approves all bills. The Assembly of Experts is elected and appoints the Supreme Leader who in turn appoints the members of the Guardian Council. They have the power to veto laws and filter candidates for the presidency, cabinet, parliament, and Assembly of Experts positions. Members of the Expediency Council are appointed by the Supreme Leader.

The two most powerful individuals in Iran are the president and supreme leader. However, while the latter is the divine leader and is appointed for a lifelong term, the presidency is democratic and only lasts for four years. There is a current power struggle between the incumbent president and Khamenei. This has led to a shuffling of appointments and public denunciations. In fact, it has gone so far that the Parliament has voted to investigate the legitimacy of the Ahmadinejad's 2009 election.

This committee is a slight variation of the actual Expediency Discernment Council in that some of the members are not represented and the President is present. Your primary goal is to advise the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei in responding to the crisis facing the nation.

As a crisis committee, there will be no speakers' list and we will proceed in moderated caucus for the duration of the conference. A member can motion for speaking time at the start of the session and, due to the small nature of the council, we can always be flexible.

As a member of the Expediency Council, you should not worry about drafting a working paper of resolution. Instead there will be press releases, directives, and secret note passing between various members. Directives are the council's main way of officially advising the Supreme Leader, and only need a majority to pass. Keep in mind that note passing is *heavily* encouraged.

# Committee Members

- Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamene'i  
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Mahmoud Ahmadinejad  
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani  
Chairman of the Expediency Council
- Mohsen Rezaee  
Secretary of the Expediency Council
- Seyed Hassan Firuzabadi  
Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces
- Ali Larijani  
Speaker of the Parliament of Iran, Former Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council
- Ali-Akbar Nategh-Nouri  
Member of Parliament of Iran
- Mir Hossein Mousavi
- Ahmad Jannati  
Chairman of the Guardian Council, Member of Assembly of Experts
- Gholam Haddad-Adel  
Member of Parliament of Iran
- Ayatollah Ghorbanali Dorri Najafabadi  
Head of the Supreme Administrative Court of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Hassan Rowhani
- Habibollah Asgari  
Member of Parliament of Iran

- Mohammad Reza Bohanar  
Deputy Speaker of Parliament of Iran
- Gholam Reza Aghazadeh

-The Chair and Director will act as the Supreme Leader and President

# Sources

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