
HAMBASTEGI

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF IRANIAN REFUGEES



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October 22, 2001

On the US-led Bombing of Afghanistan

The USA and UK have begun bombing Afghanistan. Contrary to official and media propaganda this new wave of military action is not a war against terrorism but a war of terrorists. Both sides of this conflict from the USA and NATO to reactionary Islamic states and organisations like Pakistan, Taliban, Bin Laden and the Islamic Republic of Iran are the cause and perpetrators of terrorism. They are all implicated in mass killings, suppression and violations of individual and civil rights. This is not a war to eliminate terrorism. It is a war between the USA and NATO on one side and the Taliban, Bin Laden and other US and Western founded and sponsored Islamic groups

whose survival is because of support from the West and other reactionary states like Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. This is a war between two camps of terrorism. This war has got nothing to do with the ideals of freedom, secularism and civil society. The US objective through this military exercise is to reinforce its hegemony and establish its might as the only world power. Political Islam's objective is to reinforce its diminishing power.

We, along with millions of freedom loving people are opposed to both sides of this conflict and the war of the terrorists. We who have suffered both at the hands of

reactionary and murderous political Islam and US militarism and aggression cannot take sides with either camp. We as a force directly engaged in a war against Islamic gangs and thugs like Taliban cannot possibly condone their crimes. We cannot possibly have any inclination towards defending the "sovereign rights of the Taliban" over Afghanistan. We will not shed tears over the demise of Taliban. Equally our opposition to the Taliban does not imply that we are toeing the reactionary policies of the US government. We accept neither political Islam nor US militarism.

We resolutely condemn the bombings and attacks on non-

military targets and civilians. Such attacks amount to war crimes and we oppose them. We also condemn any restrictions on the movement of refugees and victims of the war of terrorists and demand the opening of borders to those fleeing. We welcome the downfall of the Taliban and the weakening of the Islamist movement and oppose any collusion between the US and regional states to install another reactionary government in Afghanistan. Our stance is not to take sides with either camp of this terrorist war but to fight against terrorism and defend freedom and civil rights and endeavour to promote and escalate the movement for secularism and freedom.

Send a Solidarity Message to IFIR's 9th Conference

IFIR has spent 12 years unrelentingly defending refugee rights, organising the protests of Iranian refugees and asylum

seekers and placing them alongside progressive forces in their countries of residence, fighting racism and cultural relativism and

exposing the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In support of IFIR and its work, send messages of

solidarity and support to the IFIR 9th bi-annual conference at ifir9conference@yahoo.co.uk.

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Editorial

By Maryam Namazie

Yet Still, the Borders Remain Closed

By now we are all familiar with heart-wrenching images of Afghan refugees trying to seek safety from the reactionary and criminal Taliban, other Islamic gangs like the Northern Alliance, US-led bombings, civil war, repression, starvation, drought and misery. Hundreds of thousands to over a million Afghans are expected to cross borders joining the 3.5 million already in camps and detention centres around the world. Over two million are expected to be internally displaced. Around 400,000 are thought to have run out of food altogether, while 7.5 million are at risk of starving to death. Yet still, the borders remain closed.

Thousands are trapped inside Afghanistan or languishing along the Pakistani or Iranian borders. Pakistan has forced refugees to wait in a 200-metre strip of no-man's-land between the two countries. Up to 15,000 Afghan refugees are camped out at the Chaman border crossing. At least 50,000 people are believed to have gathered in Afghanistan's eastern Paktia province hoping to cross into Pakistan. The Pakistani government has set up barbed wire fences and begun shooting at refugees. Today, Pakistani border guards shot dead a 23-year-old Afghan refugee and wounded a 13-year-old boy

when they opened fire on thousands pushing towards the border with Pakistan pleading to get in. The Islamic Republic of Iran has also kept its 900-kilometer border with Afghanistan closed. The regime has put up barbed wire fences, amassed troops and dug trenches to stop Afghans from entering. They have not even ceased their program of hunting and deporting Afghans; three busloads of Afghans were taken to the border and sent back to Afghanistan recently. Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have also effectively sealed their borders with Afghanistan.

We mustn't allow this human tragedy to go any further. We have to keep pressuring bordering governments until Afghan refugees are allowed entry, until their right to asylum is recognised, and until they are given proper shelter, food, security and medical attention.

The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) calls on all groups and individuals to join our campaign in defence of Afghan refugees and in condemnation of reactionary governments that have and continue to play with their lives.

Resolution on Afghan Refugees

Iran

Mohammad Khatami
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 Email: khatami@president.ir

Pakistan

[General Pervez Musharraf](#)
 Fax: +92 51 9207217
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Tajikistan

Miasmal Sharipovich Rakhmonov
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Uzbekistan

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 E-mail: presidents_office@press-service.uz

I / My Organisation condemn(s) the Islamic Republic of Iran and the governments of Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan for closing their borders to Afghans fleeing Afghanistan. I / My Organisation demand(s) that Afghan refugees and asylum seekers be given entry and protection, their right to asylum be recognised, and that they be given proper shelter, food, security and medical attention.

Signed, Name, Address, E-mail

Ninth International Conference

Asylum After September 11

With well-known Personalities and Governmental and Non-governmental Organisations

Fri. – Sun., November 16-18, 2001

Friday (Swedish/English); Sat. – Sun. (Persian)

9:00am - night

Arstatorg Plan 5, Arstafolkethus, Arsta

Stockholm, Sweden

Daily Entrance Fee: 30 Kr.

Weekend Pass: 60 Kr.

Saturday Fundraiser with Live Music: 60 Kr.

(free for clandestine asylum seekers)

For Further information: Tel: +46 73 980 2311 or +44 7730 107337, E-mail: ifir9conference@yahoo.co.uk

There will be bookstalls, a photo exhibition and prizes.

Friday 16 November

In English / Swedish

9:00-9:30am Opening Session

9:30-10:00am Messages of Solidarity

10:00-1:00pm Panel Discussion: Asylum after
September 11

2:30-5:30pm Panel Discussion: Political Islam, the
Islamic Republic of Iran and the
Refugee Phenomenon

6:00-9:00pm Meeting of IFIR Secretariat and
Country and City Representatives

Saturday 17 November

In Persian

9:00-9:30am Opening Session

9:30-9:45am In Solidarity with Afghan Refugees

9:45-10:00am Messages of Solidarity

10:00-1:00pm Country and international Reports

2:30-5:30pm Speech and Discussion: Asylum after
September 11

6:00-8:00pm Open Discussion between Refugees
and Asylum Seekers and IFIR
Directors

8:00-12:00am Fundraiser with Live Music

Sunday 18 November

In Persian

9:00-11:00am Speech and Discussion: Political
Islam, the Islamic Republic of Iran
and the Refugee Phenomenon

11:00-1:00pm The Federation: An Effective Force
for Positive Change

2:30-5:30pm Our Priorities

5:30-6:00pm Election of International Executive
Director

6:00-7:00pm Workshop 1: Women Fleeing
Islamist Societies

Workshop 2: Rising Racism and
Methods of Resistance

7:00-7:30pm Closing Ceremony

Registration Form:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Needs: Lodging Vegetarian
 Child Care Stall

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