# UK MPs intensify calls to ban Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps amid espionage fears



Ministers in the UK are under increasing pressure to ban the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Iran’s main military and religious body, amidst alarming tensions between London and Tehran. The demand to classify the IRGC as a terrorist organisation has gained widespread support, with over 550 MPs and peers endorsing a letter advocating for this designation. This call to action is particularly urgent in light of Iran's persistent crackdown on dissent and the repressive 'hijab and chastity law' that has ignited protests led primarily by courageous women.

Leading voices among the signatories include prominent figures from the Conservative Party, such as Sir Iain Duncan Smith and Suella Braverman, alongside Labour's Lord Kinnock. These MPs assert that the mandatory hijab stifles activism, restricting those fighting back against the Iranian regime. Their letter warns that any appeasement towards Tehran undermines democratic values and global safety as Iran relentlessly pursues its nuclear ambitions and continues its role as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Recent disturbing incidents, including the arrest of three alleged Iranian spies in London targeting journalists linked to the Persian language television network, Iran International, further highlight the urgent need for decisive action against the IRGC. These individuals had reportedly gained asylum in the UK, allegedly collaborating with Iran’s intelligence services, raising significant fears about espionage and Iran’s activities within British borders.

The call to proscribe the IRGC is not a fresh issue; similar demands have surfaced repeatedly as UK politicians stress the group's involvement in various regional conflicts. In April 2024, Shadow Defence Secretary John Healey urged the government to take decisive action against the IRGC’s continued support for armed militias and its destabilising actions across the Middle East. This sentiment aligns with a broader international consensus—the United States and other nations like Bahrain have already classified the IRGC as a terrorist entity.

Historically, the IRGC's record of involvement in violence raises grave concerns over its role in promoting terrorism and obstructing peace efforts. The collective call from over 100 parliamentarians in February 2024 for a robust UK strategy to counter the IRGC's influence underlines the growing impatience with the government’s tepid response. Moreover, the US State Department has long emphasized the IRGC’s significant financing of global terrorism, linking it to Tehran's involvement in recent violent episodes associated with Hamas.

Despite the mounting calls for action, the UK government has ambivalently refrained from designating the IRGC as a terrorist organisation, worried that it might interfere with crucial diplomatic efforts. This hesitation reveals a troubling complexity in the UK’s relations with Tehran, especially as the IRGC remains a critical supporter of the Iranian regime, executing numerous covert operations and disrupting peace globally.

As unrest against conservative ideologies festers within Iran, the imperative for a resolute response becomes clearer. Many politicians argue that recognizing the Iranian people's right to regime change is essential; banning the IRGC could empower the movement advocating for change. The evolving geopolitical landscape leaves the UK at a crossroads: to decisively confront the IRGC, aligning with the growing international consensus, or to cling to a cautious stance that risks appearing weak on the global stage, especially as a recent political shift has left the nation grappling with a new Labour government that many view as incapable of safeguarding national interests.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14724203/Ministers-proscribe-Irans-Islamic-Revolutionary-Guard-Corp-terrorist-group.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/apr/15/rishi-sunak-faces-calls-proscribe-iran-revolutionary-guards-irgc> - In April 2024, UK politicians, including Shadow Defence Secretary John Healey and former Conservative leader Iain Duncan Smith, urged Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to proscribe Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization. They cited the IRGC's involvement in regional conflicts and its support for violent militias as justification for the ban. The call was part of a broader international effort, with countries like the US and Bahrain already designating the IRGC as a terrorist entity.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/02/03/100-mps-and-peers-join-call-ban-iranian-group/> - In February 2024, over 100 UK parliamentarians, including about 40 Conservative MPs and peers, signed a statement urging the government to proscribe Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization. They highlighted the IRGC's role in spreading terrorism and hindering peace efforts in the Middle East, emphasizing the need for a new strategy to address Iran's actions.
4. <https://www.thejc.com/news/mps-call-for-uk-government-to-proscribe-irans-islamic-revolutionary-guards-corps-as-a-terrorist-group-bglwsxlx> - In December 2020, UK MPs called for the government to proscribe Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization. They cited the IRGC's 'destructive philosophy and violence' within Iran and across the region as compelling reasons for the designation. The US had already designated the IRGC as a foreign terrorist organization in April 2019, and the European Union had imposed sanctions on its members.
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/21/us-rishi-sunak-ban-iran-islamic-revolutionary-guard-terror/> - In October 2023, the US urged the UK to designate Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization, following Tehran's alleged complicity in Hamas's massacre in Israel. The US State Department emphasized the IRGC's global financing of terrorist activities and called for international allies to take similar actions. The IRGC had been banned in the US since 2019.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/11/11/pressure-rishi-sunak-iran-revolutionary-guard-terrorists/> - In November 2023, UK parliamentarians intensified pressure on Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to proscribe Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization. They highlighted the IRGC's role in providing weapons, training, and financial support to terrorists, as well as fomenting violence and conflict in the region. The MPs argued that such a designation was crucial for global security and national interests.
7. <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2243631/world> - In May 2024, the UK government paused plans to ban Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization. The decision was influenced by concerns that such a move could harm diplomatic communication channels between London and Tehran. The IRGC, established in 1979, has been accused of orchestrating global insurgencies and attacks, leading to calls for its proscription in the UK.