



# The Iranian Parliament: Women's Rights



Chair: Charlie Donovan '24

Co-Chair: Matt Hunt '24

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## I. Message from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the committee on the Iranian Parliament for BCHigh MUN XXI. I am very excited to dive into this complex topic and am interested to see how you approach it. Since this topic is present-day, there is new information coming out daily about the Iranian Parliament's decisions and how they affect the Iranian people. To avoid confusion, everything discussed in committee should have happened as of March 1st, 2023. Also, keep in mind that this background guide was written in January, so there may be events missing because they have not happened at the time of writing.

I started Model UN in 7th grade and have enjoyed attending conferences all around the country since then, notably NAIMUN and BruinMUN. It has been a great experience for me because it pushes me out of my comfort zone and helps with public speaking. One of my favorite MUN experiences was this past November at BruinMUN, UCLA's conference, where we discussed Global Art Trafficking, engaged in spirited debate, and made many friends in the process! This is my second time chairing a committee. Some of my other high school activities include rowing, aviation club, and french culture club. **Lastly, if you have any questions, feel free to email me ([ce.donovan24@students.bchigh.edu](mailto:ce.donovan24@students.bchigh.edu)).**

See you all in March!

Charlie Donovan '24



## II. Message from the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

I'm Matthew Hunt, a junior at BC High, the co-chair of this committee and I would like to welcome you all to BC High MUN XXI. I cannot wait to hear what you have to say about this important matter, and see how you all work together to create resolutions. I hope to see you all work in thoughtful discussion and collaboration together as you engage in this multifaceted topic. It is our hope to see you all work together in discussion with respect and decorum, and to have fun.

Like Charlie, I started MUN in 7th grade at BC High, and have continued into high-school, however this is my first BC High MUN conference. I have enjoyed multiple local conferences at different schools, and I have been fortunate enough to attend NAIMUN in Washington DC as a sophomore, Bruin MUN in California this year, as well as NAIMUN again this February. Bruin MUN this year was a great experience for me where I was fortunate enough to meet great people locally in California and people from all around the country, while engaging in a great conference. Model UN has been an amazing experience for me, as it has allowed me to meet so many new people, further my understanding of issues of the world, and public speaking. **Lastly, if you have any questions, feel free to email me ([mj.hunt24@students.bchigh.edu](mailto:mj.hunt24@students.bchigh.edu)).**

See you all in March!

Matt Hunt '24

### III. Introduction

Ever since 1906, when the first National Consultative Assembly was formed in Iran, the Monarch saw legislature as a way to limit its authority. After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the previous Senate of Iran was abolished and subsequently replaced with the Guardian Council, a 12 appointed member council with the task of supervising the Parliament. The mix of religious supervision and popular sovereignty has often led to serious tensions. The Guardian Council repeatedly vetoed legislation and parliamentary candidates in the name of the constitution or Islam. Parliament's unwillingness to reconstruct legislation to allow for the Guardian Council's requirements has often led to a legislative stalemate.

In 1988, Iranian revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini established a third body to resolve disagreements within the Islamic Republic. Officially known as the Council for the Discernment of Interests of the Islamic Order, it is generally referred to as the Expediency Council. Since its inception, former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has served as its head. The council operates in three tiers, allowing for more deliberate decision-making and intending that all voices are heard before decisions are made, but often only serves to slow down the passing of any new laws.

In 1989, the National Consultative Assembly was replaced with the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the 290 member parliament that is considered weak compared to the Guardian Council and the Supreme Leader's office.



## IV. Background

Iran has had limited women's rights since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Following the revolution, a number of rules were passed that required women to wear headscarves in public. President Hassan Rouhani is relatively moderate, the dress code enforcement was light, and women were defying modesty regulations more and more. Tehran police made the announcement that they would stop detaining women for violating modesty in 2017. However, the morality police resumed enforcing the dress code after President Ebrahim Raisi, a "ultraconservative cleric," was elected last year. The country's headscarf and chastity law was put into effect by President Raisi's order on August 15, 2022, which led to a new set of limitations on how women might dress. In parallel, reports claimed that Iranian authorities were repressing women who they believed were disobeying the hijab law.





## V. Present Day Conflict

In September of this year, a 22-year-old Kurdish woman named Mahsa Amini was detained by the morality police in Iran for allegedly not wearing her headscarf correctly. She was arrested and beaten; she later died from injuries sustained during that arrest. After her death, protests began to erupt all across Iran among women who demand their right to wear whatever clothing they choose without fear of punishment from the authorities. Some have even cut off portions of their hair as a form of protest against societal restrictions on personal expression. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led Iranian lawmakers in voting to execute 15,000 protesters. This vote was not confirmed by the Iranian Parliament but officials had previously advocated for a "no tolerance" policy towards protesting individuals.

A recent letter signed by 227 of the 290 Iranian Parliament members stated, "We, the representatives of this nation, ask all state officials, including the Judiciary, to treat those, who waged war (against the Islamic establishment) and attacked people's life and property like the Daesh (terrorists), in a way that would serve as a good lesson in the shortest possible time," the letter read according to state-run Press TV. Additionally, in November of this year, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei vowed to finish the "evil" women rights protesters and other demonstrators who have taken to the streets to defy his authoritarian regime despite a draconian crackdown that has left hundreds dead.

In December of this year Mahsa Amini, a 22 year old Iranian woman, was detained for protesting against the Islamic regime. In prison, she reportedly suffered sexual assault carried out by agents from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC) intelligence agency. According

to another report, a prisoner stated that fellow detainees had been abused during interrogations regarding their protesting. Amini was transferred to a hospital due to her mental condition, but unfortunately committed suicide upon release.

According to Fatemeh David, a political activist who was once detained in Urmia prison, the jail in question, stated that ever since the commencement of these women's rights protests, at least 8 women, including a 17-year-old girl, were raped by IRGC intelligence forces during interrogations regarding their previous protesting.

The death of Amini after her arrest for improperly wearing a hijab spurred extreme anger against the regime of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran. Consequently, this event also enlivened extreme protesting against the treatment of women called "uprisings" by government opposition. These "uprisings" have spread to over 150 cities across Iran. The government has violently reacted to these protests, causing over 75 deaths and thousands of arrests. These arrests are subsequently arising protests against the Iranian Regime as a whole.





## VI. Positions

- **Principlists:** Conservative supporters of the Supreme Leader of Iran with a goal of maintaining the status quo.
- **Reformists:** Supporters of former president Mohammad Khatami's reform with a focus on Iranian democracy.
- Mehdi Asgari
  - Principlist
- Alireza Abbasi
  - Principlist
- Abbas Jahangirzadeh
  - Reformist
- Mahmoud Abbaszadeh Meshkini
  - Principlist
- Masoud Pezeshkian
  - Reformist
- Gholamreza Nouri Ghezelijeh
  - Reformist
- Fereydoon Abbasi
  - Principlist
- Hamid-Reza Haji Babaei
  - Principlist

- Ahmad Moradi
  - Reformist
- Somayeh Mahmoudi
  - Reformist
- Elham Azad
  - Independent
- Gholamreza Tajgardoon
  - Reformist
- Mohammad Mehdi Mofatteh
  - Principlist
- Hossein-Ali Haji-Deligani
  - Principlist
- Somayeh Mahmoudi
  - Reformist
- Effat Shariati
  - Principlist
- Abdolreza Mesri
  - Principlist
- Ebrahim Matinian
  - Principlist
- Shiva Ghasemipour
  - Principlist

- Yahya Ebrahimi
  - Reformist
- Sina Kamalkhani
  - Independent
- Shamseddin Hosseini
  - Principlist
- Ali Jedi
  - Principlist
- Ahmad Amirabadi
  - Principlist
- Javad Karimi Ghodousi
  - Principlist
- Jalil Rahimi
  - Reformist
- Mohsen Zangeneh
  - Principlist
- Ali Asgar Annabestani
  - Principlist
- Ehsan Ghazizadeh Hashemi
  - Principlist
- Abbas Golro
  - Principlist

- Moeinoddin Saeidi
  - Independent
- Hossein Khosravi Esfarez
  - Principlist
- Morteza Aghatehrani
  - Principlist
- Zohreh Elahian
  - Principlist
- Reza Taghipour
  - Principlist
- Ruhollah Hazratpour
  - Principlist
- Adel Najafzadeh
  - Reformist
- Jalal Mahmoudzadeh
  - Reformist
- Hassan Hemati
  - Independent
- Mehdi Bagheri
  - Principlist



## VII. Questions to Consider

1. What other rights have surfaced in search for freedom?
2. What proper repercussions are necessary for the betterment of the relationship between the Iranian Parliament and the Iranian people?
3. How can tensions be eased and changes be made in order to improve representation?
4. How can members of opposing parties compromise in order to benefit the people and their respective interests?
5. What key changes must be made to Iran's government to maintain peace and order?

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