

Calling for an Action-Plan from ICC Regarding Sanctions against Iran

We the undersigned hereby request the Iranian Canadian Congress to put into motion an action plan demanding the Canadian government reevaluate its unilateral sanctions against Iran and to restore its diplomatic ties with that country as promised by the Liberal government during the 2015 federal election period. The Special Economic Measures (Iran) Regulations was amended in 2010 on the advice of the foreign minister of the time to include a whole host of unilateral sanctions by Canada against Iran. The burden of these sanctions has mostly fallen on the Iranian-Canadian business community as well as ordinary citizens who hold both nationalities (i.e. Iranian Canadians). Furthermore, these sanctions have contributed to the harming of businesses and in disruptions to the Iranian-Canadian community's entrepreneurial activities, as time and again Iranian-Canadian entrepreneurs' bank accounts have been targeted by sanctions.

The objectives of the Special Economic Measures Act on Iran were originally intended to impose sanctions due to the situation in Iran which in the eyes of the Governor in Council "constituted a grave breach of international peace and security resulting in a serious international crisis". The signatories of this petition believe that the purpose for these sanctions has run its course and no longer meets the realities of the Iranian situation after the country reached an agreement with P5+1 countries in July of 2015. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action which was concluded between Iran and the P5+1 put an end to a long disputed nuclear crisis that served as the rationale for many of the international sanctions imposed on Iran since 2006, including the Canadian "Special Economic Measures (Iran) Regulation". Through JCPA, the United Nation's punitive measures along with the European countries as well as the U.S. unilateral sanctions pertinent to the nuclear issue against Iran have all been, or are in the process of being, lifted. In addition to this, the normalization of diplomatic relations has also been reinitiated as a result of this agreement by many European countries. While these developments have opened a new chapter in forging a fresh era with respect to Iran, Canada remains the only western country that has continued its diplomatic moratorium with Iran and at the same time persists on keeping its outdated sanction laws in place.

For almost 4 years Iranian Canadians have been unable to take advantage of consular services that used to be provided by their country of origin in Ottawa. This, coupled with the existing prohibitions on economic activity and ties with Iran have put further pressures on many Iranian Canadians whose financial means rely on frequent transactions with sources in Iran. At the same time by depriving them of consular services, the Iranian Canadian community has also encountered obstacles with respect to obtaining new passports and other identification documents required for traveling. Given the Liberal government's campaign promises, we ask the Iranian Canadian Congress to engage in the necessary actions to persuade the Canadian government to take measures in accordance with the rest of the international community with respect to existing Canadian sanctions on Iran and resume diplomatic relations with the country's representatives. We believe that any new decision by the Canadian government in this matter should reflect the realities of post-JCPA Iran in accordance with the United Nations Security Council's resolution 2231. For this we demand the ICC to provide us with a solid plan of action in meeting the objectives of the above petition before January 31, 2016.

Organizers of this Petition are:

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