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## **Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security Review of the Listing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)**

### **Purpose of Submission**

This submission is provided to assist the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security in its consideration of the continued designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a state sponsor of terrorism. It draws on recent developments during the ongoing nationwide uprising in Iran and on documented patterns of behaviour by the IRGC both inside Iran and internationally, including activities relevant to Australia's national security interests.

Our central argument is clear:

The IRGC continues to meet and increasingly exceeds the threshold for designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and should remain on Australia's designation list.

### **The IRGC's Central Role in Domestic Repression**

The IRGC is not a conventional military force. It is the primary instrument of political repression of the Iranian state.

Since the outbreak of the current nationwide uprising in January 2026:

- The IRGC, alongside its subordinate forces including the Basij militia and intelligence units, has led the violent suppression of civilian protests.
- According to credible reports from the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) by 12 January 2026, more than 3,000 protesters have been killed and over 10,000 arbitrarily detained in just one week.
- The IRGC has overseen internet shutdowns, mass surveillance, enforced disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial killings.

These actions constitute systematic state terror against civilians, rather than legitimate law enforcement or military activity.

### **IRGC Activities Beyond Iran: Foreign Interference and Psychological Warfare**

Of direct relevance to the Committee's mandate is the IRGC's well-documented use of hybrid tactics abroad, including:

- Disinformation and influence operations
- Infiltration of diaspora communities
- Provocation, intimidation, and psychological warfare
- Smear campaigns against genuine democratic opposition movements

Recent events demonstrate that the IRGC is actively exploiting divisions among Iranians overseas to:

- Discredit the popular uprising
- Undermine credible democratic alternatives
- Create confusion for foreign governments and media

The manipulation of extremist, aggressive, and anti-democratic elements within the pro-Reza Pahlavi network aligns with the IRGC's long-standing strategy of controlled opposition and narrative distortion. By amplifying chaos, intimidation, and false allegations, the IRGC seeks to portray the Iranian opposition as fragmented, violent, or illegitimate—thereby weakening international support for democratic change.

### **Implications for Australia's National Security**

The IRGC's activities raise serious concerns for Australia, including:

- Foreign interference risks within Australian civil society
- Intimidation and harassment of Australian residents of Iranian background
- The potential for covert intelligence, influence, or proxy operations on Australian soil, such as the 2024-25 firebombings and graffiti attacks on Jewish targets in Sydney and Melbourne
- The misuse of media and digital platforms to manipulate public discourse.

Reports of coordinated harassment, intimidation, and disinformation targeting Iranian-Australian activists mirror patterns observed in other democratic countries and should be treated as early warning indicators, not isolated incidents.

### **The Strategic Importance of Maintaining the IRGC Listing**

Maintaining the IRGC's designation serves several critical functions:

- It disrupts the IRGC's ability to operate internationally, including fundraising, logistics, and influence activities
- It sends a clear deterrent signal regarding foreign interference and political violence
- It aligns Australia with key international partners responding to IRGC-linked threats
- It reassures affected communities that Australia takes state-sponsored intimidation and repression seriously.

Removing or weakening the designation at this juncture would risk:

- Emboldening IRGC operations abroad
- Undermining Australia's counter-terrorism and foreign interference framework
- Sending an unintended signal of tolerance toward systematic human rights abuses and political violence.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The IRGC remains:

- The **primary enforcer of mass violence against civilians in Iran**
- A **driver of foreign interference, disinformation, intimidation and terrorism abroad**
- An **organisation whose conduct is incompatible with international norms and Australia's national security interests.**

**We respectfully urge the Committee to recommend that the IRGC remain on Australia's designation list,** and to consider strengthened scrutiny of its activities and affiliated networks operating beyond Iran's borders specially in Australia.

The Iranian people are currently engaged in a decisive struggle for freedom and democratic governance. Australia's principled stance grounded in security, rule of law, and human rights matters profoundly at this critical moment.

Kind regards

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