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European and North American Lawmakers Urge Terror Listing for Iranian Revolutionary Guards

by *Andrew Bernard* ✉

European Union flags flutter outside the EU Commission headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, on June 17, 2022. Photo: Reuters/Yves Herman

220 politicians from Europe, Canada, and the United States on Thursday released a statement calling on the European Union and Canada to designate the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its proxies as terrorist organizations.

“We, lawmakers from opposite sides of the Atlantic and with diverse political views, are united in our grave concern about the growing threat to regional and global peace posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the world’s leading state sponsor of terror,” the statement reads. “Since its inception in 1979, the IRGC has created and funded a multitude of terror groups in the region, including Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. The regime has used these terror proxies to spread death, terror, and instability in the Middle East and beyond. The transatlantic community should therefore impose sanctions and designate the IRGC, and all of Iran’s terror proxies, as the terrorists they are.”

The statement was delivered Thursday to the European Commission, the European External Action Service, the European Council, and the governments of all 27 EU member states. The initiative was led by the American Jewish Committee’s Transatlantic Friends of Israel project.

Signatories included 27 US Senators and Congressional Representatives from both the Democratic and Republican parties, including statement co-initiators Reps. Brad Schneider (D-IL) and Andrew Garbarino (R-NY), as well as Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Reps. Kathy Manning (D-NC) and Dan Crenshaw (R-TX).

The statement calls for the EU and Canada to designate the IRGC, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah in their entirety as terrorist organizations, something that currently only the United States does. Canada on Friday imposed sanctions on the IRGC for human rights violations and for supporting Russia, while the EU has only imposed sanctions on the IRGC's Aerospace Force.

"The Iranian regime is a threat to its own people, its neighbors and, as we see now in the alignment with Putin-Russia, also to Europe," said MEP Lukas Mendl from Austria's governing center-right Austrian People's Party, one of the European co-initiators of the statement. "It is high time for the EU to follow in the footsteps of the United States and put the IRGC on its terror list."

Since the IRGC was designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the Trump administration in 2019, the Biden administration has continued to sanction IRGC members and associates. On Thursday, the US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on the leader of a sanctions evasion network that helped the IRGC sell hundreds of millions of dollars in oil. According to the Treasury, Sitki Ayan, a Turkish businessman, used his companies to transport and sell the oil and help launder the proceeds for the IRGC. Politico Europe [reports](#) that Sitki's personal friendship with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan underlay the reluctance of the US government to act after it had sanctioned the IRGC and Hezbollah-connected elements of the conspiracy in May.

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