



Iranian activist Masih Alinejad (5th left) in Berlin in November 2023

German Government Silences Iranian Dissidents, Says Masih Alinejad

Thursday, 11/30/2023

Benjamin Weinthal

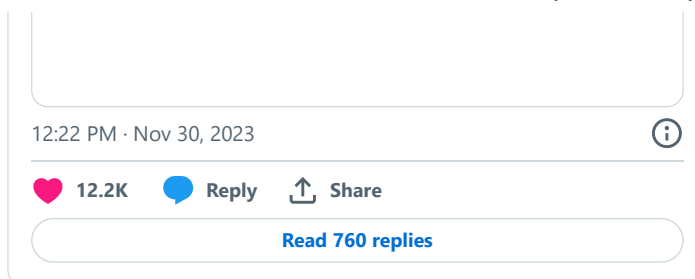
Benjamin Weinthal is a writing fellow at the Middle East Forum.

World Iran Protests

The prominent Iranian-American dissident Masih Alinejad on Thursday blasted the German government for seeking to impose a gag order on her meeting to discuss the repression of women in the Islamic Republic.

Alinejad took to X to slam the crackdown on the dissidents' free speech, stating, "Today I walked out of a meeting with the German government because they tried to censor me. I had a meeting with officials in the German Foreign Ministry. But I was told the meeting had to be kept secret and I couldn't mention it in the media or write about it on my social media. I tried to convince the officials to publicly meet with Iranian delegation that included @simamoradb51053 young woman who had been shot during the Woman, Life, Freedom revolution last year."





She added, “ When the ministry officials insisted on keeping the meeting a secret, I walked out. I am a women’s rights activist and I stand for transparency. How ironic that German government, with its feminist foreign policy, wants to meet with other feminists but only in secret. The German government is practicing victim blaming. I’ve heard some German officials say I’m too radical and meeting me publicly would be fatal to their Iran policy.”

According to Alinejad, “If standing up for women’s rights and wanting an end for gender apartheid regime in Iran is being radical, then I’m proud to be labeled as such. The German government is helping the Islamic Republic to silence dissidents. I refuse to play their game.



Earlier this week I had many constructive meetings with parliamentarians and ministers from different parties. I have high hope that they can be allies of Iranian women.”

The German **MP Norbert Röttgen**, who has been spearheading a campaign to sanction Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and secure the release of German hostages held in Iran, wrote on X about Alinejad. “While this woman is brave enough to take on the Islamic regime of Iran, the Foreign Office is too cowardly to publicly stand with her. Unbelievable and shameful!”

Norbert Röttgen · Nov 30, 2023 

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Die Menschen im [#Iran](#) wollen Freiheit. Sie möchten das Regime loswerden. Das Mindeste, was wir tun müssen, ist, ihnen zuzuhören und den Mullahs das Leben so schwer wie möglich zu machen. Ich danke Sima Moradbeigi & [@AlinejadMasih](#) von Herzen für ihren Besuch.



Norbert Röttgen
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Sima Moradbeigi ist im Iran auf die Straße gegangen & hat für die Freiheit ihres Landes ihr eigenes Leben riskiert. Eine Außenpolitik, die aus Angst vor den Konsequenzen der Mullahs sich nicht traut, diese Frauen zu treffen, hat versagt. Das ist nicht feministisch, das ist feige!



5:22 PM · Nov 30, 2023 

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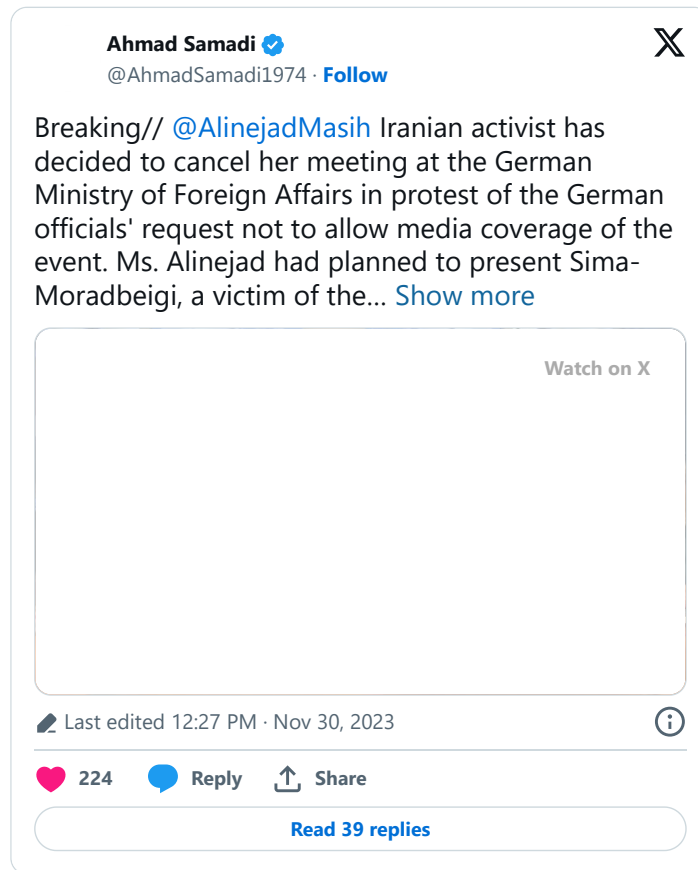
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When asked about Alinejad's criticism of the German government, a spokesperson for Germany's foreign ministry sent Iran International a statement from Luise Amtsberg, the Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Assistance.

The Green party politician Amtsberg, said "I was looking forward to an open and honest exchange with Masih Alinejad today. I invited her to the Foreign Office. Confidentiality was agreed upon in advance. Both sides have agreed to this framework.

In my experience, conversations that take place confidentially are more substantive - especially when it comes to individual fates. This also encourages people to contact me confidentially."

Amtsberg added "I very much regret that Ms. Alinejad linked a conversation to the publication of the content of the conversation and broke off the discussion at the beginning. I'm sure we would have had a good conversation."



The commissioner continued that "My door is always open to activists and civil society. I would have loved to know more about Sima Moradbeigi's story, who accompanied Ms. Alinejad. I will continue to call out the Iranian regime's serious human rights violations and support Iranian civil society."

Iranian dissidents have accused Germany's government of a soggy **appeasement policy toward the Islamic Republic** of Iran.

Germany refuses to sanction the IRGC as a terrorist movement. The Wall Street Journal famously wrote a series of editorials in 2008 titled "**Germany loves Iran**" about Berlin's efforts to enable trade with Iran. Germany continues to retain a flourishing trade relationship with Iran, permitting its banks to make vital transactions to Iran. In 2022, German companies earned over \$1billion in trade from Iran.

Iran International reported in August that the giant German engineering multinational Bosch **sold 8,000 surveillance cameras to Iran.**

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