



Sarah Havdala
Policy Analyst

Iran Protests Update: January 15, 2026

Jonah Brody
Policy Analyst

Since December 28, 2025, protests against the Iranian regime have erupted across Iran in response to the country's economic collapse. JINSA will release daily updates covering the demonstrations as long as they continue. The update below reflects information as of January 15, 2026, at 10:30 am ET.

Overview

The Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) has confirmed the deaths of at least [2,615](#) individuals during the ongoing protests. However, *Iran International* has reported that at least [12,000](#) have been killed, with many of those deaths reported as the country plunged into a nationwide internet outage on January 8 and 9. HRANA also reported that over [18,470](#) others have been detained as of January 15.

Protests

- On January 15, Reuters [reported](#), citing conversations with people in Iran, that protests have largely subsided since Monday, though communication remains limited due to a week-long, regime-imposed internet blackout.
- HRANA [reported](#) that as of January 15, 617 protests have occurred across 187 cities.
- On January 15, a member of the Kurdistan National Army (SMK), the armed wing of the Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK), [reported](#) that the group is clashing with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in Iran's Bakhtiari, Kermashan, Kurdistan and Ilam provinces.

Regime Retaliation

- On January 15, the family of 26-year-old protester Erfan Soltani [stated](#) that the regime postponed his execution.
- On January 14, *Iran International* [reported](#) that cities throughout Iran are currently seeing an extreme uptick in security presence, including police patrols and checkpoints. A source in Tehran likened it to a “de facto curfew.”

Regime Responses

- On January 14, Iran [closed](#) its airspace for several hours following threats of an “imminent” U.S. strike.
 - » On January 15, Iran [reopened](#) its airspace in the morning local time.

- On January 14, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [stated](#) that the regime has regained “full control” of the country following nationwide protests.
- On January 14, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Commander Mohammad Pakpour [blamed](#) the United States and Israel for inciting violence in Iran and stated that regime forces are at “the height of readiness to respond decisively to the miscalculation of the enemy.”

U.S. Responses

- On January 15, President Donald Trump reportedly [told](#) Iranian officials that the United States does not intend to strike Iran following threats of military action against the country.
- On January 15, Reuters [reported](#) that the security level at the U.S. Al Udeid air base in Qatar was lowered following yesterday’s heightened alert.
 - » The same report [stated](#) that U.S. aircraft that had moved away from the base are reportedly returning, and select personnel previously advised to leave the base are allowed to return.
- On January 15, the United Nations Security Council, at the request of the United States, [will hold](#) a special session to address Iran at 3:00 pm ET.
- On January 14, it was [reported](#) that the Pentagon is moving the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group to the Middle East.
- On January 14, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command [reported](#) that the *Arleigh Burke*-class guided-missile destroyer USS *Roosevelt* is operating in the Arabian Gulf.
- On January 14, Trump told reporters that Iran’s government claimed that it had [stopped](#) killing protesters and would halt the planned executions of individuals on death row.
- On January 14, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [claimed](#) that regime leaders are wiring large amounts of money out of Iran, fearing their government will collapse.

International Responses

- On January 15, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan [stated](#) Turkey is “against a military intervention against Iran” and that Iran “needs to solve its authentic internal problems on its own.”
- On January 15, the foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, along with the European Union’s chief diplomat, [issued](#) a joint statement expressing “grave concern” over the situation in Iran.
- On January 15, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi [urged](#) dialogue and restraint in resolving disputes during a call with his Iranian counterpart, expressing opposition to foreign nations “imposing [their] will on other countries” and “a return to the ‘law of the jungle’.”
- On January 14–15, the [United Kingdom](#) and [Portugal](#) announced the temporary closure of their respective embassies in Tehran.
- On January 14, [Italy](#), [Poland](#), and [Spain](#) called for their citizens to leave Iran amidst U.S. threats of military action against the country.