



**Sarah Havdala**  
Policy Analyst

# Iran Protests Update

## January 28 - February 2, 2026

**Jonah Brody**  
Policy Analyst

*On December 28, 2025, protests against the Iranian regime erupted across Iran in response to the country's economic collapse. JINSA will release weekly updates covering the demonstrations as long as they continue. The update below reflects information as of February 2, 2026, at 10:30 am ET.*

### Overview

The Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) has confirmed the deaths of at least [6,842](#) individuals during the protests, while [11,280](#) other alleged killings are under review. However, *Iran International* has reported that at least [36,500](#) have been killed, with many of those deaths reported as the country plunged into a nationwide internet outage on January 8 and 9.

### Protests

- HRANA [reported](#) that, as of February 2, 664 protests have occurred across 207 cities, an increase of 13 incidents and 7 cities since the last update on January 27
- Over the past several days, medical students across Iran have [boycotted](#) their exams, calling for their peers' release after several of them were detained during the nationwide protests.
  - » On February 1, students at the Shiraz University of Medical Sciences [demanded](#) the government release their peers while [chanting](#) "a student may die, but will never accept humiliation."
  - » On January 31, students at Ferdowsi University in Mashhad [gathered](#) to protest the suspicious deaths of two fellow students who were potentially killed for protesting a third student's death.
  - » On January 31, pharmacy students in Tabriz [called](#) for the release of Mahdi Kuhsari, an imprisoned fourth-year medical student.
  - » Iranian dissidents also [reported](#) the boycotts expanding to Tehran's Nursing and Midwifery School of Shahid Beheshti University, University of Medical Sciences in Zahedan and Khuzestan's Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences.
- On January 29, Iranians [chanted](#) "death to [Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali] Khamenei," and "death to the IRGC terrorists," from their balconies in Tehran.
- On January 28, teenagers in Tehran [waved](#) Iran's historic lion and sun flag out of their high school's window.
- On January 28, people in Tehran [chanted](#) "Reza, Reza Pahlavi! This is the national slogan," and "death to Khamenei."

## Regime Retaliation

- On February 1, *Iran International*, citing several eyewitnesses and human rights monitors, [reported](#) that authorities are allegedly injecting detained protesters with a suspicious substance.
  - » In one instance, initial medical tests for a 16-year-old girl, who fell into a coma after receiving an injection while in custody, [indicated](#) “signs of poisoning.”
  - » According to the same report, a detained protester in Shahinshahr would only be [released](#) to his family if he posted bail and received a special “vaccine.” The man was allegedly beaten after refusing the injection.
- On January 31, *Iran International*, citing a senior Iranian official, [reported](#) that authorities were granted “full authority and a blank check” on January 8 and 9 to harm demonstrators and stir “maximum fear to deter the resurgence of protests.”
- On January 29, *The Guardian* [reported](#) that authorities had beaten and detained several medical professionals for assisting injured protesters.
  - » According to the report, at least one surgeon potentially [faces](#) the death penalty for administering treatment to protesters.

## Regime Responses

- On February 2, Ebrahim Azizi, head of Iran’s parliamentary national security and foreign policy commission, [said](#) he had written to the foreign minister urging retaliatory measures following the European Union’s designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization.
- On February 1, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei [spoke](#) on the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, warning that “the Americans should know if they start a war, this time it will be a regional war.”
- On February 1, an Iranian official [informed](#) Reuters that the IRGC had no plans to conduct military drills in the Strait of Hormuz after regime-affiliated *Press TV* reported that the country’s naval forces would carry out “live-fire exercises” over the weekend.
- On January 31, Secretary for Iran’s Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani [posted](#) on X, “contrary to the hype of the contrived media war, structural arrangements for negotiations are progressing” amidst mounting tensions between the United States and Iran.
- On January 30, *Iran International* [reported](#) Larijani informed officials in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar that Iran would target U.S. embassies in the Middle East if the United States struck the Islamic Republic.
- On January 30, Ali Shamkhani, a senior advisor to Khamenei, [threatened](#) to strike “the heart of Tel Aviv” and “all who support the aggressor” in the event of a U.S. attack on Iran.

## U.S. Responses

- On February 2, *Axios* [reported](#) that U.S. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi will meet in Turkey on February 6 to “discuss a possible nuclear deal.”
- On February 1, the Pentagon [hosted](#) Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir and other Israeli military officials to discuss the rising tensions between the United States and Iran.

- On January 30, the United States [warned](#) the IRGC that it “will not tolerate unsafe” actions in the Strait of Hormuz following Tehran’s announcement of a two-day live-fire naval exercise in the waterway.
- On January 30, the Treasury Department [issued](#) new sanctions on six senior Iranian officials responsible for the violent crackdown on protesters.
- On January 28, President Donald Trump [announced](#) via Truth Social that “a massive Armada is heading to Iran,” and called on the Islamic Republic to “negotiate a fair and equitable” nuclear deal.

## International Responses

- On February 2, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi [informed](#) his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi that Jordan would not be a “launching pad for any military action against Iran” if the United States or Israel attacked the Islamic Republic.
- On February 2, the United Kingdom [imposed](#) 11 new sanctions under its Iran regime, including against Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni and Iran’s law enforcement forces, citing alleged human rights abuses.
- On February 2, the Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov [said](#) Russia remains willing to help remove Iran’s enriched uranium as part of efforts to ease tensions over Tehran’s nuclear program.
- On January 30, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoan [told](#) his Iranian counterpart, Maoud Pezeshkian during a phone call that Ankara is prepared to serve as a “facilitator” between the two sides.
- On January 29, the European Union [added](#) Iran’s IRGC to its list of terrorist organizations.