



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)  
LEGAL AID BOARD

## **Iran: Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 20 August 2009**

### **Information on the June 2009 Presidential Elections.**

#### **Was the election campaign deemed to be free and fair by international bodies?**

The *UK Home Office* states;

“On June 12, 2009, following a heated campaign between reformist candidate Mir Hussein Musavi and incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iranians turned out in record numbers to vote in the presidential election. Shortly after the polls closed, the Interior Minister announced that President Ahmadinejad had been re-elected by a 62% margin. The announcement was followed by allegations of vote rigging and election fraud and prompted supporters of leading reformist candidate Mir Hussein Musavi and others to hold public demonstrations in several major cities of a size and intensity unprecedented since the Iranian Revolution of 1979.” (UK Home Office (6<sup>th</sup> August 2009) *Country of Origin Information Report* par 4.4)

A report by the *Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly* states;

“Numerous alleged irregularities during the vote evoked by the three defeated presidential candidates, as well as 646 complaints of misconduct lodged with the Council of Guardians, raise justified concerns as regards the fairness of the electoral process as established by Iranian law. In particular, reported cases of opposition monitors being refused access to polling stations and a large number of mobile ballot boxes not subject to monitors' control are in clear contradiction with basic electoral standards” (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009) *The situation in Iran* pg.4)

The report also states;

“The concerns about the fairness of the electoral process were present even before the date of the vote. In his letter to Iran's Supreme Leader of 11 June 2009, Mr Mousavi evoked a number of alleged irregularities such as withdrawing badges from opposition monitors and giving them confusing instructions as to access to the polling stations.” (Ibid pg.6)

The *International Federation for Human Rights* states;

“The ministry of Interior, in charge of organizing the election, had announced two weeks before the election, the following numbers: nearly 48 million voters, and more than 57 million ballot papers printed by the ministry. In each polling station,

there had to be one representative of each candidate, which constituted a progress in comparison with previous elections in Iran. However, on the eve of the poll, sms were blocked in the whole country and foreign television stations were jammed. On the election day, in Shiraz and Tabriz, there were no ballot papers left. All over the country, when the counting of votes was about to start, the representatives of the reformist candidates were expelled from polling stations and were consequently not able to observe the counting process. Last but not least, while the Council of Guardians had not yet announced the official election result, the Supreme Leader congratulated the standing president Ahmadinejad for his reelection.” (International Federation for Human Rights (15<sup>th</sup> June 2009) *Iran: confiscated election, FIDH and LDDHI fear a bloody repression*)

A report by *Euroasia Net* states;

“Under Iran’s tangled, quasi-democratic system, however, voters do not have the final say in elections. The ultimate responsibility for the outcomes of elections falls to two unelected entities -- The Guardian Council and the Interior Ministry -- that are not directly responsible to the Iranian people. Both institutions are packed with Ahmadinejad partisans. Both also have a track record of meddling in elections” (Eurasia Net (11 June 2009) *Iran: Ahmadinejad backers lay groundwork for massive vote-rigging*)

**Was the campaign and election itself, monitored by International Observers; Were such organisations invited to observe the elections; Which organisations engaged in observation in Iran.**

A report by the *US Congressional Research Service* states;

“Since no independent international observers were present for Iran’s elections, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of alleged vote rigging or election violations that may have taken place. The expulsion of most foreign journalists from Iran and the government’s interruption of mobile and internet communication have further complicated efforts to gain a clear picture of the events surrounding the election and its aftermath.” (US Congressional Research Service (22 June 2009) *Iran’s 2009 Presidential Elections*)

A report by *The Guardian* states;

“Only a new vote with new rules and independent monitoring is likely to end the argument, and so far Iran's ultimate rulers have refused to contemplate such an outcome” (The Guardian (16 June 2009) *Iran elections: one poll, two verdicts, 10m suspect votes*)

**According to the original announcement by the IRNA news agency, who won the election?**

A report by *The Associated press* states;

“Moments after Mousavi's news conference, Iran's state news agency IRNA

reported Ahmadinejad the winner. For a few hours after, Ahmadinejad supporters weaved through Tehran's streets on motorbikes shouting "Allahu Akbar," or "God is great." (Associated Press (13 June 2009) *Rivals both claim victory in Iran's election*)

A report by the *Qatar News Agency* states;

"Ahmadinejad, by getting a majority of the votes, has become the definite winner of the 10th presidential election," the Iranian Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) declared" (Qatar News Agency (13 June 2009) *Ahmadinejad Wins Presidential Election with Majority of Votes*)

A report by *Trade Arabia* states;

"State media early Saturday morning declared Mahmoud Ahmadinejad Mahmoud Ahmadinejad -Search using: News, Most Recent 60 Days the winner of Iran's presidential election. However, his challenger and former premier Mirhossein Mousavi alleged irregularities and claimed victory for himself, according to a report in our sister publication, the Gulf Daily News (Trade Arabia (13 June 2009) *Ahmadinejad wins election*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

## References

Associated Press (13 June 2009) *Rivals both claim victory in Iran's election*  
<https://www.lexisnexis.com/>  
Subscription site  
Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Council of Europe Parliamentary Assemle (23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009) *The situation in Iran*  
<http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc09/EDOC11966.pdf>  
Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Eurasia Net (11 June 2009) *Iran: Ahmadinejad backers lay groundwork for massive vote-rigging*  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav061109b.shtml>  
Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

The Guardian (16 June 2009) *Iran elections: one poll, two verdicts, 10m suspect votes*  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jun/16/iran-presidential-election-results>  
Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

International Federation for Human Rights (15<sup>th</sup> June 2009) *Iran: confiscated election, FIDH and LDDHI fear a bloody repression*  
<http://www.fidh.org/Iran-confiscated-election-FIDH-and-LDDHI-fear-a-bloody-repression>

Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Trade Arabia (13 June 2009) *Ahmadinejad wins election*  
<https://www.lexisnexis.com/>

Subscription site

Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

UK Home Office (6<sup>th</sup> August 2009) *Country of Origin Information Report*  
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4a8126cf2.pdf>

Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

US Congressional Research Service (22 June 2009) *Iran's 2009 Presidential Elections*

[http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40653\\_20090622.pdf](http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40653_20090622.pdf)

Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Qatar News Agency (13 June 2009) *Ahmadinejad Wins Presidential Election with Majority of Votes*

<https://www.lexisnexis.com/>

Subscription site

### **Sources consulted**

All Africa

BBC News

Canadian IRB

Danish Immigration Service

ECOI

IRIN News

LEXIS NEXIS

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

IDSN//

Relief Web

Google

Refugees International

UNHRC Refworld