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Iran

# Une elections without electors in Iran

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**In the Islamic Republic of Iran, elections are always held outside the ballot box. Admittedly, the accidental death of the President of the Republic, Ebrahim Raissi, triggered early elections, but above all it rekindled speculation about the succession of the Leader Ali Khamenei. But this does not change the nature of the regime.**

The real power is in the hands of the Leader, those close to him and the Guardians of the Revolution. The Council of Guardians of the Constitution has validated only six of the eighty candidatures submitted.

## **A second round for the second time in history**

Ali Larijani, former Speaker of Parliament, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, former President of the Republic, were not authorized to stand. Similarly, the main candidates from the so-called "reformist" current were rejected.

On the other hand, the Council of Guardians of the Constitution validated the candidacy of Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, former mayor of Tehran and former president of parliament, famous for massive embezzlement of public money and corruption, as well as that of Saïd Djalili, an ultraconservative, former nuclear negotiator, one of the Guide's two representatives on the National Security Council and a supporter of a tougher regime, particularly with regard to the street and women. Facing these two candidates, Mahmoud Pezeshkian represents the "reformist" current. He is supported by former presidents Rohani and Khatami.

The two candidates who qualified for the second round are Mahmoud Pezeshkian and Saïd Djalili, the "reformist" candidate having obtained around 1 million more votes than his opponent. It should be noted that this is the second time in the history of presidential elections that there will be a second round. Coming a distant third, Ghalibaf called on his voters to vote for Djalili on Friday 5 July.

## **“We've got the results, we just don't have the voters”**

The real news lies elsewhere. The first round saw a record abstention rate, marking a massive rejection by the population.

The official results show a national turnout of 39%. While abstention was even higher in outlying regions, notably Sistan-Baluchistan and Kurdistan, it was also higher in Greater Tehran, where the turnout was less than 25%. Even in the holy city of Qom, the turnout did not exceed 25%... To this must be added the percentage of spoilt ballots, which was close to 5%.

Yet the main issue for the Leader, Ali Khamenei, and the dignitaries of the regime is the legitimization of their power. Everything was done to encourage a high turnout. The authorities even extended the opening of polling stations until midnight.

Calls to vote from the highest levels of government went on and on. There were many “incentives” to turn out. Even in prisons, where inmates were put under extremely strong pressure to vote. But following the example of Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi and imprisoned trade unionists, prisoners of conscience called for a boycott.

The Iranian people know that elections in Iran are nothing but a parody of democracy. A popular joke has the authorities saying: “We have the results, we just don't have the voters”.

# A referendum against the Islamic Republic

One year after the “Women, Life, Freedom” uprising, against a backdrop of deep economic crisis and ongoing repression, this turnout is a referendum against the Islamic Republic. The people of Iran have only one objective: to put an end to the capitalist and religious dictatorship that is the Islamic Republic as quickly as possible. The “Women, Life, Freedom” movement has shown the way. Social and political change will come about through massive mobilization of young people, women, national minorities, workers and the unemployed, in the streets, places of study and workplaces.

3 July 2024

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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