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A new popular uprising in Iran

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The recent mobilizations in Iran began on Sunday, 28 December 2025, with a strike by traders in the Tehran bazaar, in the face of the dizzying fall of the national currency and hyperinflation making economic activity unpredictable. They quickly spread to students and the popular classes in many cities, expressing a general rejection of poverty, extreme social inequality and tyranny.

Response from the regime

The government has sought to appease the protesters in the bazaar through tax concessions, while closing the protesting universities and strengthening repression and security measures against the youth and the mobilized popular classes. But the movement continues, affecting at least 88 cities, especially small and medium-sized ones, while some large cities are also experiencing mobilizations in certain neighborhoods.

On the ninth day of this mobilization, more than a thousand people were arrested, including many teenagers, and at least thirty-six demonstrators, including two teenagers, were killed. Two members of the repressive forces also died.

Deep social anger

Young people, and especially students, form the heart of these mobilizations, with a notable participation of the inhabitants of small, disadvantaged towns, hard hit by inflation, the fall of the national currency and the rise in prices.

This mobilization reflects a deep and lasting social anger, stemming from decades of injustice, precariousness and repression, and not from a simple currency fluctuation. The worsening of inequality and poverty is the result of a structural crisis in Iran's political and economic system, reinforced by international sanctions, governance marked by corruption and clientelism, as well as by the policies pursued by the Islamic Republic.

Faced with these mobilizations, the authorities have responded with repression, mass arrests and violence. However, the experience of the movements of 2017, 2019 and 2022 shows that this strategy has never made it possible to impose submission in the long term. The current protests are thus part of a continuity of recurrent protests.

Attempts at instrumentalization and their consequences

The United States and Israel have tried to instrumentalize these mobilizations in the context of their conflict with the Islamic Republic, under the pretext of "defending the Iranian people," despite their role in unprecedented violence against civilians in the region and beyond.

Finally, recent statements by US and Israeli leaders, as well as intelligence agencies, have provided the Islamic Republic with an additional pretext to intensify repression, justify arrests, and accuse protesters of acting for foreign

interests.

At the same time, Reza Pahlavi, the “heir to the crown,” and his reactionary supporters, who favor foreign military intervention, have tried to present themselves as a political alternative to “liberate” Iran. They even manipulated videos and falsified protest slogans in order to present the son of the former Shah as a popular leader. These maneuvers have discredited the monarchist current and reinforced the rejection of the demonstrators, who reaffirm their refusal of any imposed tutelage or authority.

Perspectives and solidarity

As for popular mobilizations, it is difficult to predict their duration or their ability to push back the government, especially since they have not yet entered a structured political phase, despite radical slogans such as “death to the dictator”, and no credible political alternative exists. This widespread anger can only be transformed into an effective force through the convergence of the general protest movement and struggles in the workplaces, working-class neighborhoods and universities.

However, the youth and popular classes of Iran deserve the international support of social and political forces in solidarity in their struggles against the high cost of living, social injustices and tyranny.

9 January 2026

Translated by **International Viewpoint**

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