

The acronym IRGC stands for Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, i.e., it is meant to “defend the Islamic Revolution” first and foremost, and not the territorial integrity of Iran (or Iranians for that matter). The goal and mission of the IRGC, according to its Constitution, are defined as

The Revolutionary Guards is an institution under the Leader’s supreme command. Its goal is to protect Iran’s Islamic Revolution and its achievements and **relentlessly struggle to realize the divine ideals and spread the law of God in accordance with the Islamic Republic of Iran’s laws...** To struggle in accordance with the [Islamic Republic] law against agents and groups that aim to undermine or destroy the Islamic Republic system or act against the Islamic Revolution of Iran.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident from this quoted text that the IRGC has two fields of operation: it fights against all forms of opposition to the IR system in Iran, and “struggles” to “realize the divine ideals” and establish “the law of God” abroad.<sup>2</sup> The IRGC is constituted for these purposes. In other words, its nefarious conduct is not simply incidental on the current Leader of the Islamic Republic (Khamenei) or the present leadership of the IRGC. This conduct logically proceeds from the identity of the IRGC as a constituted body; it is inscribed in its DNA, so to speak. To stop it from doing what it does means to de-constitute it. That is the only way. A multi-lateral international listing of the IRGC as a terrorist organization turns it into a real liability for the Islamic Republic.

In conformity with its goal and mission, the IRGC indoctrinates its recruits in virulent Islamist ideology. It has an Ideological-Political Unit (Article 15) that is in charge of determining the “content of the instructions of the members of the Corps and the Basij, and organizing and implementing these instructions and recruiting instructors for them.” In the Addendum to the article it is stated that the ideological-political instructions of the members must be approved by the Supreme Leader or his representative in the IRGC. More significantly, Article 34 on “qualifications of being a Guard” defines a “Guard” as

a person who has joined the Guards Corps **for the purpose of engaging in comprehensive Jihad in the path of God and defending the Islamic Revolution and its achievements as a religious duty**, possessing the following qualifications:

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<sup>1</sup> In Persian: <https://qavanin.ir/Law/PrintText/83376>; in English: <https://irandataportal.syr.edu/constitution-of-the-revolutionary-guards-3>, emphasis added and translation modified.

<sup>2</sup> The defense of the Islamic Revolution is said to be the mission of the IRGC in Article 150 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. See: <https://ecnl.org/sites/default/files/files/2021/IranConstitution.pdf>.

belief in the doctrines of Islam, the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic regime; belief in and practical commitment to the Sovereignty of the Jurisprudent [*velayat-e faqih*]; practical commitment to the rules of Islam and the laws of the Islamic Republic, and following the precepts of Islamic ethics,” etc.<sup>3</sup>

The IRGC is constituted as an ideological organization for the purpose of imposing by armed violence an Islamist totalitarian sociopolitical scheme in Iran and abroad.

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<sup>3</sup> See note 1, emphasis added and translation modified.