

Europe and Iran: List of Terrorists instead of dialogue

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(published in the Austrian daily *Wiener Zeitung*, December 4, 2009: <http://www.wienerzeitung.at/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4445&Alias=wzo&cob=454328>)

While the remarkably resilient liberation movement in Iran continues to defy life-threatening danger by going out on the streets against the "Islamic Republic", having announced new mass protests for "Students' Day" on December 7, politicians at home continue to court a regime that leads on the West with delaying tactics about a nuclear program that is evident to all eyes and that by no means is a massive threat only to Israel.

The day before yesterday, the leader of the ÖVP delegation to the European Parliament, Ernst Strasser, met with the Iranian ambassador to the EU, Ali Asghar Khaji, for a conversation. Strasser, whose party ally Christoph Leitl vehemently promotes an expansion of economic ties to Iran as the president of the chamber of commerce thus continues on the road of Austrian cooperation and appeasement toward a regime that organizes conferences on Holocaust denial and utilizes its profits from external trade to support jihadist terror. Whoever talks to representatives of the "Islamic Republic" declares that the policy of the Iranian regime is worth discussing and stabs the opposition in the back.

Foreign affairs minister Michael Spindelegger has recently expressed "a clear No" toward new gas deals with Iran. And the planned billion deals of OMV may really be frozen. The question now is, why should this impress Austrian businesses that are not in the natural gas business? Especially considering that such statements are only promulgated as political oratory without being translated into legal regulations.

For the time being, such positions are **only** of use in providing some support for the increasingly louder criticism of the tentative actions of Austria. Why should a company like KTM, who are blamed for their motorcycles appearing in military parades in Iran, take seriously the rhetoric of the foreign minister? Or the Graz construction firm Andritz, that has its own office in Teheran and is suspected of involvement in deals with the revolutionary guards, who in the meanwhile are estimated to control up to 70 percent of the Iranian economy.

Anyone in Austria who might be willing seriously to put an end to the 30-year-old ongoing policy of cooperation and appeasement with the Iranian regime could take an example from the Netherlands parliament. This parliament has just resolved to obligate the government in The Hague to promote before the EU the addition of the revolutionary guards to the list of terrorist organizations. Not that this would be enough for consistent action toward the Iranian regime, but it would still be explicitly more than the current statements of Austrian politicians, that are made without consequences.