



# Iranian Majles

Chair Letter

## **DEAR DELEGATES,**

Welcome to the Iranian Consultative Assembly (Majles) at CNYMUN 2025! With various issues in our global community today, we are excited to facilitate debate and collaboration between delegates during the conference. Your chairs for this conference will be Elaine Poole and Hari Yoganathan!

### **ABOUT THE CHAIRS:**

Hari Yoganathan is currently a Junior at Fayetteville Manlius High School and he is thrilled and honored to be chairing CNYMUN this year. This year marks his first year as a chair and his third year participating in his school's Model United Nations Club: Behold, the machinations of a madman trapped inside a socially awkward dork. Outside of MUN, you may observe the following behaviors out of this lunatic: He's a Godzilla-obsessive, Dino-crazed worshiper of all things abnormal, and otherworldly. He also has harbored a crazed obsession with sharks since grade one (don't get him started talking about sharks). He spends considerable amounts of time expanding his skills as an artist and musician, alongside participating primarily in his school's class office, Student Council, Science Olympiad team, and National Art Honors Society.. Keeping in line with his passion for marine life, Hari plans to pursue marine biology but also seeks to enrich and continue his creative ambitions. He is honored to be able to chair a committee at this conference and looks forward to meeting you all and overseeing the ensuing debate!

Elaine Poole is currently a Senior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School and she is excited to be a chair again this year for CNYMUN. This is her fifth year in MUN, and she has spent a lot of time with this club, from many away conferences to working on staff as a secretariat and chair. Outside of MUN, she spends her time on a multitude of activities, such as National Art Honor Society, National Theater Honor Society, tech crew, mountain bike racing, hiking/backpacking, reading, crafting, and driving around with her friends. Laney spent her summers as a counselor at an outdoor camp where she found her love of hiking, backpacking, swimming, and anything related to the outdoors. In the future, she hopes to travel and one day become

president of the United States. Yes, I get asked if I'm serious about that a lot (I am). This is her last year of CNYMUN and she's so glad she can spend it with you and this excellent committee.

### **ABOUT THE COMMITTEE**

Your topics for the Iranian Majles at CNYMUN 2025 will be:

1. Discussing the Implementation of Mandates Promoting Gender Purity:
2. Combating Environmental Pollution in Tehran

The Islamic Consultative Assembly, known as the Majles-e Shoraye Eslami or the Majles, is Iran's unicameral parliament. It was established in 1906 when the country was still referred to as Persia until 1936) and had gone through various transformations politically. The contemporary framework as we see it today was established after the Pahlavi dynasty fell in the 1979 Iranian revolution: when Iran was transformed into an Islamic Republic.

Under the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini, the political system is designed to keep in mind both republican and Islamic ideals - operating under a religious scholar and a 12-member body consisting of Islamic jurists overseeing parliamentary activities - the guardian council. It is done to ensure any legislation taking place complies with both Iran's constitution and Islamic principles - even to the degree the public cannot entirely influence lawmaking to ensure the principle is preserved by those working toward it.

There are 290 members in parliament, including the Guardian Council, most of which are conservative and rooted in Islam. Lawmaking, ensuring substantial power over fiscal policy and government spending, ministerial oversight, and public accountability consist of the duties of this parliament: it ensures the majles have a constant check on the executive branch ensuring transparency and accountability. While well constructed, instances have arisen in which non-elected positions such as the guardian council appointed by the main religious scholar curtail consistency through legislation. It can also be explained by the fact of no substantial political parties and a high turnover of duties that remove legitimate consistency and legislative influence.

## ABOUT THE CONFERENCE:

Following CNYMUN tradition, the debate will be conducted in Harvard style, meaning delegates will not be allowed to use pre-written clauses and/or resolutions during committee. Doing so will make a delegate ineligible for awards.

To be eligible for awards, delegates must submit a 1-2 page position paper via email that addresses both topics before the start of the conference. Position papers should outline the stance of your delegation, and display an understanding of the topics, demonstrating research and knowledge of your organization's goals. When deciding on awards, the chairs will look favorably upon delegates who have put significant effort towards research/preparation, collaborate with other delegates during committee sessions, stay within their nation's policies, and get their voice heard without being overbearing.

Furthermore, for the first time, CNYMUN is implementing a tiered structure of committees to ensure similar experience levels for all committee members. The Iranian Majles is designated as an advanced committee, and we would like the debate to reflect that. In turn, the 'Best New Delegate' award will not be offered to any delegates in this committee.

Please share position papers before the conference begins. On top of this, this committee will also feature Head to Head debate as an available motion and may feature a mini-crisis. The procedure for both can be found on CNYMUN.com. Our emails are listed below to contact your chairs about any research, position papers, committee inquiries, or other questions. We also encourage you to look over our delegate preparation resources – and award structure – on [www.cnymun.org](http://www.cnymun.org). We wish you luck, and look forward to what CNYMUN 2025 will bring!

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## TOPIC 1: DISCUSSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANDATES PROMOTING GENDER PARITY

The heart of this issue lies within decades of standards idealizing traditional and biased notions of gender roles and identities, such as misogyny. Women represent half of humanity yet social progress remains stagnant. In the labor market alone women earn 23% less than men globally despite spending 3 times as many hours as men toward domestic labor.<sup>1</sup> Sexual violence and exploitation remain an everpresent reality that, along with the unequal division of domestic work and unpaid care, has surged in recent years, particularly exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.<sup>2</sup> Most health care and social workers globally are women; while this is not necessarily detrimental though it is alarming how much unpaid care women across the globe face due to barriers to education. The UN has recognized and asserted that maintaining a status of gender parity - dispelling any inequality imposed upon individuals for their gender<sup>3</sup> - is to be of grave importance, acknowledging it as part of their sustainability goal program. Gender Parity refers to a culture of beliefs acting as a vow of chastity to traditional notions of gender roles within society, particularly regarding women. National policies, budgets, and institutions have been focal points in ongoing ventures to mitigate the remaining stigma.

As Gender Parity rises as a center of political discourse, especially from countries taking into consideration of their economic status and the percentage of women who face harsh repercussions due to circumstance, legislation can only go as far as to allow these injustices to be mitigated. Such can be said for Iran's Consultative Assembly.

As it stands the current situation of impurity amongst women in Iran affects not only their livelihood, but

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<sup>1</sup> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." *Sustainable Development Goals. United Nations*, [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> "Making Progress to Achieving Gender Parity." *United for Gender Parity*.

*United Nations*, [www.un.org/gender/](http://www.un.org/gender/).

businesses that don't abide by newly constructed legislation, and the ensuing severity of religious beliefs that are growing in influence throughout the Public. Throughout the various eras of leadership and governing one could see the varying degrees of importance of which the roles of women in Iranian Society were. The levels of uprising are directly tied to the evolving policies regarding the status of women in society. Throughout decades of political upheaval. The Hijab stands out as a pivotal symbol of Iran's religious authority and the repression Women in Iran face.

From 1925-1979, Reza Shah Pahlavi (founding ruler of the Pahlavi Dynasty of Iran) mandated significant secularization, and modernization of Iran which in part reduced the influence of religion in public life.<sup>4</sup> This saw the 1936 ban on Hijabs in favor of modernizing and westernizing society; though it empowered certain areas of society, devout women were marginalized and forced to stay within their homes.<sup>5</sup> However, Raza Shah's Son, and successor, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, issued policy changes in 1963 that allowed rights to vote, to divorce to be bequeathed to women as well as more lenient policies on Hijabs: hence why throughout the 60s women could be seen unveiled and wearing westernized attire alongside women fully veiled.<sup>6</sup> By 1979, post-revolution, the remaining Pahlavi rule was sent into exile, and Iran became an Islamic republic. The conservative clerical forces led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini invested in a theocratic government, with ultimate political authority resting on a supreme leader - a religious scholar - along with an assembly of experts: at the start, an 88-body clergy.<sup>7</sup> The rights of women were restricted under the precedent of establishing a "cultural marker." The republic would use this as a means to weaponize the

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<sup>4</sup>Vakil, Sanam. "Iran: Decades of female anger rocks the regime." *Chatham House*, [www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2022-12/](http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2022-12/)

iran-decades-female-anger-rocks-regime.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>"Iran: People and Society." *The World Factbook*.

*CIA*, [www.cia.gov/](http://www.cia.gov/)

[the-world-factbook/countries/iran/#people-and-society](http://the-world-factbook/countries/iran/#people-and-society).

hijab to serve as forced compliance rather than a sacred obligation.<sup>8</sup>

The clerical rule of the republic continued to endorse Women's suffrage at the cost of legal and social losses through the increasing imposition of Islamic Law. Only a month after the revolution, on International Women's Day, 1979, women throughout Tehran began to protest in the streets, objecting against the mandatory belonging which fell upon deaf ears amongst the legislation.

By the 1980s, any objection to the clothing requirements imposed by the republic and any inability to uphold dress codes were punishable by law.<sup>9</sup> Morality Police were imposed throughout society, removing any semblance of individual privacy, which was met with incredible resentment.

During this period, new amendments to ongoing laws such as the revisions in the 1981 Penal Code made it so that women were subject to stoning if found guilty of adultery.<sup>10</sup> This blood money would be unequally apportioned to families of the convicted criminal being entitled to only half as much as a man. Within homes, women were expected to follow what their husbands demanded of them: prohibition of working or traveling - and many women who had served positions in the government were laid off.<sup>11</sup> There was no protection from sexual harassment and discrimination: even to this day, contraceptive prevalence rates are indistinguishable in Iran.<sup>12</sup> All

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<sup>8</sup>"The History of Women's Rights in Iran." *Youtube*, uploaded by Brut America, 17

Oct. 2022,

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMDNXPZeiU&t=165s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMDNXPZeiU&t=165s).

<sup>9</sup> Sadr, Shadi. "Iran's Hijab and Chastity Bill Underscores the Need to Codify

Gender Apartheid." *Just Security*,

[www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-te-worlds-support/](http://www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-te-worlds-support/).

<sup>10</sup>Vakil, Sanam. "Iran: Decades of female anger rocks the regime." *Chatham House*

<sup>11</sup>Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Iran: People and Society." *The World Factbook*.

*CIA*, [www.cia.gov/](http://www.cia.gov/)

[the-world-factbook/countries/iran/#people-and-society](http://the-world-factbook/countries/iran/#people-and-society).

through the past four decades women have not been passive about these changes and have consistently sought through petitions and activism to guide Iran into a place of equity.

By 2000 however, a reformist president Mohammad Khatami helped lead Iran into a period of social and cultural relaxation: the age of marriage increased to 13 and women won back the right to maintain a divorce and occupy positions as special advisers in family courts.<sup>13</sup> This time also gave way to the utilization of media from which activism could be secured: the Press, films, and developing NGOs, such as the Stop Stoning Forever campaign.<sup>14</sup> Mothers of imprisoned activists also organized protests and defied hijab laws which prompted two major crackdowns before the pandemic in 2009 and 2017 ending up with over 15,000 women imprisoned and 400 dead by November of 2023.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, the increasing trend of protests can be seen with more and more women using social media - an example of protest through platforming; engaging in “deemed Profanity” - loosely wearing a Hijab or not at all, and engaging more with communities and businesses that do not enforce the strict binding laws established by the public. However, these actions have received brutal responses from civil authorities. It was not until September 16th, 2022 22-year-old Jina Mahsa Amini was brutally beaten to death while under arrest by the ever-growing morality police that saw the biggest reaction from protesters.<sup>16</sup> This has sparked popular uprisings known as the Woman, Life, Freedom movement that for months caught so much public attention leading to the current development of which debate under the framework of this committee should focus upon.<sup>17</sup> The consultative

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<sup>13</sup> Vakil, Sanam. "Iran: Decades of female anger rocks the regime." *Chatham House*, [www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2022-12/](http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2022-12/)

<sup>14</sup>Ibid

<sup>15</sup>Ibid

<sup>16</sup>Thompson, Skylar. "As the Government Turns Up the Heat, Iranians Need the World's Support." *Just Security*, [www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-the-worlds-support/](http://www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-the-worlds-support/).

<sup>17</sup>Ibid

Assembly's 70-article Hijab and Chastity bill targets women who defy mandatory Islamic veiling as well as any business that regularly allows protesting behaviors to be exhibited.<sup>18</sup>

The bill itself is currently under its final steps to become a law in Iran and under it mandates that anyone or any industry that promotes a culture of unchastity and “nudity” so to speak will be punished with monetary fines, license losses, or death. Under Article 85<sup>19</sup> The bill is ensured by legislation to align with the republic constitution and to allow for parliamentary review without public debate.<sup>20</sup> Since most of the opposition exists outside of the actual assembly which consists of Islamic Conservatives, outsider perspectives will be incorporated into the debate in the forms of neighboring press. The chastity bill allows the authorities to ensure complete surveillance throughout the public, with morality police patrolling streets to reassert religious authority (more prevalent after July of 2023). It also calls upon the control of surveillance cameras ordained throughout companies, removing public privacy which has allowed hundreds like Jina Amini to be arrested. Currently, the bill has passed from 152 to 34 with 7 abstentions within the overall 290 in parliament. <sup>21</sup> The new bill also decrees for greater severity in punishments. Jail Time has been extended from 1 month to 10 years, and fines bumped up from 500,000 rials (USD 1) to 360,000,000 rials (USD 720).<sup>22</sup> Experts within the UN have expressed great

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<sup>18</sup>Sadr, Shadi. "Iran's Hijab and Chastity Bill Underscores the Need to Codify

Gender Apartheid." *Just Security*, [www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-te-worlds-support/](http://www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-te-worlds-support/).

<sup>19</sup>"Iran's Proposed Hijab Law Could Amount to 'Gender Apartheid': UN Experts."

*United Nations Human Rights Officer of the High Commissioner. United Nations*,

[www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/Iran's-proposed-hijab-law-could-amount-gender-apartheid-un-experts](http://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/Iran's-proposed-hijab-law-could-amount-gender-apartheid-un-experts). Accessed

<sup>20</sup>

<sup>21</sup>"Parliament Passes New 'Hijab and Chastity' Bill." *Iran Premier. United States Institute of Peace*, <https://iranprimer.usip.org/index.php/blog/2023/sep/25/parliament-passes-new-%E2%80%99Chijab-and-chastity%E2%80%9D-bill>. Accessed 3

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

concern with the draft of the bill which could only be described as “gender apartheid.”

This situation is currently under review, given the ongoing revisions to the Bill. However, while the debate will need to have conservative opinions in the form of legislators that are working toward passing this bill, other forces are present such as neighboring states such as Iraq and Turkey, as well as representatives for NGOs, such as the Center of Human Rights in Iran.<sup>23</sup> Delegations under the Majlis must keep in mind that the main root of this debate is the degree to which culture should play a role in how a country ought to maintain authority and what that means for the general public: *Simply abiding by moral standards even, though those perspectives shouldn't be eliminated, won't work here given the sheer magnitude of conservative Islamic representatives.* Within the factions of parliament represented, conservatives in for the bill, liberalists that have opposed and are assisting in the review of the bill, and outsider forces must keep in mind the fact the actual bill is being made within the right of parliament to deny public input. Delegates must also remember that to attain gender parity, a compromise must be met as this issue spirals further and further into a much more globalized problem that the US must take action upon, leading to parliament to discuss their options within the ensuing ramifications.

As it stands, it will take another 300 years to end child marriage<sup>24</sup>, 286 to be rid of legislations enabling such practices to be imposed, 140 for women across the board to have equal representation politically and economically, and 47 years to earn equal representation in a parliamentary setting. 200 million girls and women alive today have been subjected to violence either from a family member or from an intimate partner, with 137 of these women killed each

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<sup>23</sup>"Parliament Passes New 'Hijab and Chastity' Bill." *Center for Human Rights in Iran*, [iranhumanrights.org/2024/08/un-uncovers-crimes-against-humanity-against-minorities-during-woman-life-freedom-movement/](https://iranhumanrights.org/2024/08/un-uncovers-crimes-against-humanity-against-minorities-during-woman-life-freedom-movement/).

<sup>24</sup>“Women's Job Market Participation Stagnating at Less than 50% for the past 25Years, Finds UN Report." *Sustainable Development Goals. United Nations*, [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2020/10/](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2020/10/)

day.<sup>25</sup> Stigma, institutionalized teachings, and extreme application of cultures are the main instigators of the lack of equity amongst women, which lays significant implications for the livelihoods of these people.

Removing any indifference inherent to research and study, these are real people whose lives are upended simply because of gender, and what is expected of them. The past 25 years have seen 50% of job market participation of women stagnate, and despite efforts like the Beijing declaration and platform for action - progress in each country to stabilize and maintain purity is innocuous at best.<sup>26</sup> Allowing traditional beliefs to dictate and bend legislation into a one-sided vessel for profit gain will only worsen injustices laid upon women daily.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. To what extent should culture be factored within the legislative process of a country?
2. In what ways can the various NGOs that have appeared throughout the republic's history interact with International bodies for global consensus?
3. How can protests and uprisings in the past help assert the public's presence in the future of this new bill?
4. Thinking of the next few decades, what would the long-term political and economic repercussions of this bill look like?
5. What political measures could be made to sustain the voices of activists, and protesters in the case of gender apartheid and similar contexts?

#### HELPFUL SOURCES:

Iran: Decades of Female Anger Rocks the Regime  
<https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2022-12/iran-decades-female-anger-rocks-regime>

Iran Primer: Parliament Passes new “Hijab and Chastity” Bill

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<https://iranprimer.usip.org/index.php/blog/2023/sep/25/parliament-passes-new-%E2%80%9Chijab-and-chastity%E2%80%9D-bill>

As the Government Turns Up the Heat, Iranians Need the World's Support

<https://www.justsecurity.org/88322/as-the-government-turns-up-the-heat-iranians-need-the-worlds-support/>

Iran's Hijab and Chastity Bill Underscores the Need to Codify Gender Apartheid

<https://www.justsecurity.org/94504/iran-hijab-bill-gender-apartheid/>

History of Women's Rights in Iran

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMDNXPZeiU&t=165s>

## TOPIC 2: COMBATING AIR POLLUTION IN TEHRAN

Tehran is the capital city of Iran and is the most populated part of the country with 8.5 million inhabitants, reaching 12.5 million people during the day due to all its commuters.<sup>27</sup> These commuters, although some may not realize it, are a sizable part of the air pollution issue in the city; their use of outdated cars and technology, coupled with Tehran's traffic, result in terrible consequences. Said consequences include some of the worst air pollution in the world, which causes damage to both citizen health and infrastructure alike<sup>28</sup>.

The problem is caused by the cars, the low-quality gas used and produced in Iran, the factories operating in the city's vicinity, and the fossil fuels burned for heating in the winter months. These pollutants mixed with Tehran's climate and geography are a bad combination that has ended up costing 7100 lives and almost the equivalent of 3 billion US dollars<sup>29</sup>.

The vehicles of Tehran are one of the main components of this problem for a multitude of reasons, including the number of them, the gas they use, their outdated technology, and the traffic in the city. The number of vehicular trips in the city on average amounts to 17 million trips a day despite only having 12.5 million citizens living in the city<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Heger, M., & Sarraf, M. (2018, April). *Air Pollution in Tehran: Health Costs, Sources, and Policies*. Open Knowledge Repository. [https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/b277a02b-e8b7-546a-883b-75b6b4170682)

<sup>28</sup> Air quality in Tehran, Iran: Spatio-temporal characteristics, human health effects, economic costs and recommendations for good practice  
Khoshakhlagh A.H., Mohammadzadeh M., Morais S. (2023) *Atmospheric Environment: X*, 19, art. no. 100222

<sup>29</sup> Beyat, R. (n.d.). Health impact and related cost of ambient air pollution in Tehran. In *Environmental Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2019.108547> (Excerpted from *Environmental Research*, 176)

<sup>30</sup> Breathless in Tehran: The struggle with dangerous air quality. (2023, February)

There is an incredible amount of emissions coming from those trips, many of which could be avoided by the organization of traffic and public transportation. The city does have a metro, but it only has 6 lines, as compared to NYC and its 36 lines, 6 times Tehrans, even though Tehran is  $\frac{2}{3}$  the size of NYC. The 6 lines have become just as inefficient as the cars over time. They are never clean and are often full to bursting, causing the system to rank in the world's 25 busiest subways.<sup>31</sup> The buses are not much better, with constant delays and disorderly schedules, they continue to add to the problem. The metro was the original solution to this issue; create a public transport system that minimizes the need for cars, which would work in theory, but in reality, forgets the commuters from outside the city. The metro is unusable for commuters as it does not extend beyond the city into the country, as a result, the commuters have to drive themselves and add to the pollution. In addition to the city's metro, bicycles have been suggested, especially ones that filter air as the cyclist pedals, they would solve some of the crowding while also filtering the already tainted air.<sup>32</sup> As a response to the commuter question, the idea of online workers has been suggested, in desk jobs and other jobs that don't require the worker to be in person, they could work online from home and cut back on the amount of cars and people in the city. While all these ideas have been proposed, none of them have been implemented.

The car problems don't stop with quantity, the issues extend to quality as well, both the car and the fuel.

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1). *Fair Planet*.

<https://www.fairplanet.org/editors-pick/breathless-in-tehran-the-struggle-with-dangerous-air-quality/>

<sup>31</sup> Tehran metro ranks 25 among world's busiest subways. (2018, January 12).

*Tehran Times*.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/420222/Tehran-metro-ranks-25-among-world-s-busiest-subways>

<sup>32</sup> Khoshakhlagh, A. H. (2023, August). *Air quality in Tehran, Iran: Spatio-temporal*

*characteristics, human health effects, economic costs and recommendations*

*for good practice* (M. Mohammadzadeh, Comp., S. Morais, Ed.). Science Direct.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590162123000229>

Iran's car market is quite small and as a result, if anyone wants a new car they have to get it from another country, which costs too much money, and is too much hassle for most, instead, the citizens of Iran prefer to keep their old inefficient cars. In addition to the cost, there is the obstacle of fear of foreign influence causing a lack of international trading, especially in markets such as the automotive industry. The problem is, that the cars currently in Iran are incredibly inefficient, most of them lack modern exhaust filters, and have subpar gas mileage. The gas used to fuel these already deficient cars is just as bad as the cars themselves. Mazut is the type of oil used and produced in Iran, and this fuel is bad for several reasons, such as high sulfur content, and a major lack of filtration<sup>33</sup>. Companies that produce Mazut like to make as much money as possible and use cheap processes to refine the oil, including zero sulfur filtration, and minimal filtration for other materials. As a result of this oil being such a low quality, no other countries buy it, and it can't be sold internationally, causing it to be sold and used domestically. The government hasn't done much to pressure the oil companies to do anything or put money into refurbishing the outdated refineries, yet they prefer to use domestic oil rather than have to rely on a Western country. In response to discoveries of these pollutants, there have again been suggestions to use bikes and public transportation to reduce pollution, but the oil will still be used in public transportation and for energy. This specific part of the issue puts pressure on the government to turn to international solutions for cars and oil, although that could in turn spell doom for the domestic oil and car industries.

The final piece of the puzzle is the traffic in Tehran. Traffic in the city is some of the worst in the world and is a major cause of pollution, constant traffic jams and pileups lead to compiled emissions from cars sitting idle for an extended period. The government has tried for years to eliminate the traffic problem, but drivers don't care or follow traffic laws. Across Iran, drivers are constantly ignoring traffic

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<sup>33</sup> Khatinoglu, D. (2024, February 12). How Iran's Refineries Became Unprofitable

And Unhealthy. *Iran International*.

<https://www.iranintl.com/en/202402124152>



signs, lights, and lane markers. The emissions from these vehicles could be decreased by less time spent in cars, as a result, the resolution of the traffic problem may lessen the severity of the emissions.

The buildings themselves are another component of the problem, contractors build them in the way of airflow from the mountains and prevent the wind from being able to clear the polluted air. Tehran was built near the Alborz mountain range which disrupts the air currents and temperature regulation in the city, so when the buildings are added on top of that, stale air is trapped in the city indefinitely. To add to this problem, one of the city's sources of revenue is the construction of these buildings, which just so happens to be worsening the problem, and creating the choice of environment or economy for the government.

The effect of these contributors is a hostile environment for the citizens of Tehran. Air pollution causes a plethora of problems, from cardiovascular diseases and diabetes, to visibility problems and threats to building stability. If a solution is not reached, these conditions will continue to worsen. The health and well-being of the citizens are threatened daily, which in turn puts a strain on public health costs. Cardiovascular diseases account for 26.28 percent of health costs, diabetes for 3.77, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease for 3.21, and lung cancers for 2.28.<sup>34</sup> These have all been linked to Tehran's pollution, and show the toll it's taking on the city's people. The lack of visibility leads to more car crashes, which in turn adds to the traffic and its contribution to pollution. The buildings of the city are becoming increasingly less stable and more damaged by the chemicals in the air. Until a solution is found, Tehran's citizens will continue to bear the burden of the city's ever increasing pollution.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Can public transportation be implemented in a way that will lessen emissions and increase efficiency, if so what are the specifics?
2. How do foreign governments affect the issue, and how can working with

international markets help the problem?

3. How can the issue of traffic ignorance be solved? Would it be more beneficial to use educational programs or increased signage?
4. To what extent would redesigning the Iranian oil industry affect the issue?
5. Should the problem be addressed at an industry level, or at a civilian level?

#### HELPFUL SOURCES:

Air Pollution in Tehran: Health Costs, Sources, and Policies

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/b277a02b-e8b7-546a-883b-75b6b4170682>

Health Impact and Related Cost of Ambient Air Pollution in Tehran

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935119303445#:~:text=This%20study%20estimated%20the%20avoidable,has%20been%20estimated%20in%202017.>

Breathless in Tehran: The Struggle With Dangerous Air Quality

<https://www.fairplanet.org/editors-pick/breathless-in-tehran-the-struggle-with-dangerous-air-quality/#:~:text=Air%20pollution%20in%20Tehran%2C%20the,in%20both%20size%20and%20population.>

Air Quality in Tehran, Iran: Spatio-Temporal Characteristics, Human Health Effects, Economic Costs and Recommendations for Good Practice

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