

# Iran Election Update

May 13, 2013

- With the end of the presidential registration period, there are a final [total](#) of 686 presidential hopefuls, including 30 women. The youngest candidate is 19 years old, and the oldest is 87 years old. BBC Persian [posted](#) photos of the last day of registration.
- The last day of registration was reserved for [surprises and big names](#) as former President Hashemi Rafsanjani and President Ahmadinejad's close confidant Esfandiar Rahim-Mashaei both registered. Also registering were the second and third members of the Supreme Leader's 2+1 Committee, Tehran mayor Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and senior advisor Ali Akbar Velayati. Davood Ahmadinejad, the brother of President Ahmadinejad and strong critic of his policies, also registered. The recently resigned Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ramin Mehmanparast, Secretary of the National Security Council and chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, and former Foreign Minister Manucher Mottaki all registered on the final day as well.
- The Supervisory Board of the 11<sup>th</sup> Presidential Elections [announced](#) there will be over 280 polling stations in 120 countries spanning five continents in order for Iranian expatriates to vote.
- Iran's Guardian Council, whose responsibility is to vet candidates, [said](#) that they might refer President Ahmadinejad to the judiciary for breaking electoral rules by accompanying his chief of staff Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei to the election registration headquarters.
- Videos have been [posted](#) of the scene in Tehran as people learned of the presidential candidacy of former President Rafsanjani. Rafsanjani supporters jammed the streets eerily similar to 2009 and chanted, "Peace be upon Prophet Muhammad. The savior of the nation has come. Hello to Hashemi, Hello to Khatami! Viva Hashemi, Viva Reform." Supporters also [chanted and cheered](#) as they saw Rafsanjani's motorcade.
- Former President Rafsanjani created his own official Twitter account to promote his presidential campaign. His first tweet in Persian [says](#), "I have arrived." Chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili also created a Twitter account in which he tweets in Persian, Arabic, and English, and [tweeted](#), "Jalili's coalition is with Iranian people; the coalition of People Plus One."
- Iranian media reported that MP Ali Motahari will serve as spokesman for campaign of former President Rafsanjani. Ali Motahari's father Ayatollah Morteza Motahari was a pillar of the Iranian Revolution and confidant of Rafsanjani. However, Rafsanjani's office put out a statement and [said](#) that no specific individuals have been selected for the campaign yet.

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- There has been a high volume of criticism regarding Rafsanjani's candidacy. Kamran Bagheri Lankarani, the presidential candidate of the conservative Preservation Front [said](#), "I think the registration of Rafsanjani is positive in one way and worrisome in another way. I am deeply worried about his age (79 years old)." The Coalition of 5 candidate, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Mohammad Hassan Abu Torabi Fard, criticized Rafsanjani's behavior after the 2009 presidential election and [said](#) "Hashemi could have played a much better role after the elections." Mahmoud Daghan, member of the Parliamentary Leadership, [said](#) that Rafsanjani will most likely be disqualified by the Guardian Council because of his old age, and "presidential candidates should be under the age of 75 because they would be more lively and hard working."
- 7,456 "law experts" sent a letter addressed to Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati and the Guardian Council's other members and called on the Council to disqualify who they believe to be "conspirators." The letter [asks](#) to disqualify individuals who have been active in past years related to the 2009 post-election unrest and for deviations from the "direct path of the Revolution." The letter was referring to Rafsanjani and Esfandiar Rahim-Mashaie.
- Moderate presidential candidate and Rafsanjani ally Hassan Rowhani has [said](#), "Hashemi (Rafsanjani) told me he would not be running. But I am delighted that Mr. Hashemi has registered and I welcome it because he is one of the pillars of the revolution. My candidacy will be withdrawn by June 14<sup>th</sup>."
- Mohsen Hashemi Rafsanjani, the eldest son of former President Rafsanjani, has received a letter rejecting his credentials for candidacy of the Tehran City Council. Mohsen [states](#) that the reasons given for disqualification were "his lack of commitment to Velayat," meaning not believing in Islamic jurisprudence. He believes that the verdict is not final, but he has not made a decision to protest the results. He also hopes that this is not a political decision and it is not related to the "misunderstandings following the 2009 elections."
- Azeri-English News Trend [reports](#) that candidates in the Iranian presidential elections will each have limited minutes on television and radio. In total, each candidate will have 420 minutes on television and 216 minutes on the radio. The candidates will be able to use a 30-minute autobiography film, a 45-minute roundtable discussion with experts, a 45-minute dialogue on a news program, as well as a 1-hour question and answer session with the audience members.

By Hanif Zarrabi-Kashani



Additional Iran Election Updates are available [here](#).

Election date is June 14, 2013.