

Virtual Embassy of the United States Tehran, Iran

TRANSLATION: [فارسی](#)

Why Virtual Embassy Tehran?

This place is for you, the Iranian People...

The events of 1979 are well-known: the Islamic Revolution, the storming of the U.S. mission and the taking of U.S. diplomats as hostages have all been recounted on film and in print. While the world knows that the United States lost an Embassy in Iran, in fact, we lost more: we were deprived of a relationship with the Iranian people, access to Iranian society, and thousands of daily interactions between American and Iranian citizens. Certainly, Switzerland, our Protecting Power in Tehran, has been invaluable during these last three decades in managing important consular and humanitarian issues, but the absence of an American presence in Iran means we have little opportunity to make our voice heard to a broader Iranian audience.

Meanwhile, the Iranian government is trying – in vain – to close its society from the international flow of information and ideas. The Iranian government, like other authoritarian regimes, tries to limit what its citizens see, hear, think, and feel by placing an “electronic curtain” around its people. It tries to control the content of Iranian media, limit access to the internet, monitor communication, and jam broadcasts from outside Iran. This very expensive endeavor is bound to fail in today’s increasingly interactive world. Such practices also contradict two of our core values, freedom of expression and of the press, which are based on the simple idea that if you can consume multiple viewpoints and draw your own conclusions, you will be both better educated and a better citizen in a democratic society. From our initial discussions on USAdarFarsi and what we hear from Iran, we know the Iranian people remain hungry for information about the United States – information about travel to the U.S., educational opportunities, and our policies towards Iran and the rest of the world.

It was this desire for dialogue that led us to create the USAdarFarsi Twitter account and Facebook page earlier this year. The feedback we have received from ordinary Iranians led us to try something new: a website designed for Iranians– in Persian - shaped by what you wanted, and an opportunity for you to tell us more about what you think and why. In response, we have created Virtual Embassy Tehran to offer you another perspective and another source of information, so you can make up your own minds about the U.S., our concerns about the Iranian government’s activities at home and abroad, and our serious efforts to achieve a resolution to those concerns.

This website is not a formal diplomatic mission, nor does it represent or describe a real U.S. Embassy accredited to the Iranian Government. But, in the absence of direct contact, it can work as a bridge between the American and Iranian people. As President Obama said earlier this year and Secretary Clinton affirmed in her recent VOA and BBC

appearances, "You – the young people of Iran – carry within you both the ancient greatness of Persian civilization, and the power to forge a country that is responsive to your aspirations. Your talent, your hopes, and your choices will shape the future of Iran, and help light the world. And though times may seem dark, I want you to know that I am with you."

It is in that spirit that we launch our Virtual U.S. Embassy Tehran. It is our Mission to the Iranian people. This place is for you. We hope you stay a while.

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