

Did Sanctions Shape the Iranian Election?

by [Mehdi Khalaji \(/experts/mehdi-khalaji\)](#)

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The recent presidential election in Iran proved that the Islamic Republic's instinct for self-preservation trumps its ideology. Hassan Rouhani, the current representative of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the Supreme National Security Council and former head nuclear negotiator, won the election in the first round, a total surprise for both international observers and domestic critics of the regime. Despite his establishment credentials and his status as a cleric, Rouhani was not regarded as Khamenei's favorite candidate. Saeed Jalili, the chief nuclear negotiator; Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, former chief of the national police and current mayor of Tehran; and Ali Akbar Velayati, former minister of foreign affairs and Khamenei's advisor on international affairs, were expected to have Khamenei's support in this election. The nuclear impasse with Iran is by no means over, but at least the Iranian people have shown that they want a change of approach...

Read the full article on the Washington Post website. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/mehdi-khalaji-did-sanctions-shape-the-iranian-election/2013/06/17/dd8a9140-d77d-11e2-a9f2-42ee3912ae0e_story.html) ❖

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