

Student Handout: *NewsHour* Analysis 1

After Disputed Vote, Iran's Leaders Face Continued Protests

Monday, June 15, 2009

Background: This *NewsHour* analysis segment on Monday, June 15, reviews the situation after a weekend of peaceful protests challenging the results of the Friday election. Review the transcript and streaming video segment at http://www.pbs.org/NewsHour/bb/middle_east/jan-june09/iran2_06-15.html. Take notes on the following questions and be prepared to discuss your findings with members of your group.

Viewing Questions:

1. Why do Gary Sick and Karim Sadjadpour believe the protests in Iran over the election results are a turning point in the Islamic Republic and are different than protests in the past?
2. How have the protests this time signaled a level of discontent among the people that goes deeper than just the dissatisfaction over the results of the election? How do the protests mark a challenge to the government at the highest levels?
3. What is the analysts' view of the government's credibility in conducting a vote recount and the investigation into the election? Why do the analysts feel such actions will not quell the crowds and protests?
4. Though the Supreme Leader is the most powerful official in Iran, according to Karim Sadjadpour, why is the office of president of Iran not an insignificant position?
5. According to Gary Sick, why is it difficult for the leaders of western countries, especially the United States, to express their views on the situation?
6. Why do the analysts feel this is not a revolution but something else?

Group Analysis Questions:

1. What seems to be the significance of the protests after the Iranian election of June 12, 2009 in terms of size, duration, and purpose? How do these protests differ from ones of the past?
2. Though incumbent president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has substantial support among the clerics and a sizable portion of the population, why were early government claims of his victory and a willingness to conduct a partial recount ineffective in quelling the demonstrators?
3. What is the significance of the perceived split between key clerics stand on the legitimacy of the election? What are some of the possible outcomes of this split?

4. What has been the response of the United States on this issue? Discuss whether you think this has been appropriate or if something else is needed and what this might be? Discuss the pros and cons of doing more.
5. What do you feel will be the outcome of the election is allowed to stand as announced and the protests and civil disturbances increase? Do you think this will happen? Explain your reasoning.

Write an Op/Ed piece on the question: What are the chances for substantial democratic reform in Iran as a result the events surrounding the June 12th election?