



## **Student Handout: *NewsHour* Analysis 2**

### **Iran Remains on Edge as Election Recount Begins**

Tuesday, June 16, 2009

**Background:** This *NewsHour* analysis segment on Tuesday, June 16, looks at the increasingly volatile developments in Iran as the Iranian Guardian Council agrees to permit a partial recount of the election votes as dissatisfied crowds increase in number in the streets of Teheran and other cities. Review the transcript and streaming video segment at [http://www.pbs.org/NewsHour/bb/middle\\_east/jan-june09/irananalys\\_06-16.html](http://www.pbs.org/NewsHour/bb/middle_east/jan-june09/irananalys_06-16.html). Take notes on the following questions and be prepared to discuss your findings with members of your group.

#### **Viewing Questions:**

1. According to the analysts, what is the strategy behind calling for a partial recount of votes on the part of the Iranian government? Why did the opposition agree to the recount even though they know it is only partial and probably won't change the election results?
2. What has been the impact of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology on a 20<sup>th</sup> century authoritarian regime?
3. How important is the division between members of the clerical leadership in the aftermath of the election? What are some of the possible outcomes if the split between the clerics becomes great? How might such a split increase the power of second generation revolutionaries like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad?
4. According to Trita Parsi, what is the Obama's view of the little difference between the two leading candidates, Mr. Ahmadinejad and Mr. Mousavi? How does this view align with the Obama administration's response to the Iranian election thus far?
5. How might changing events on the ground in Iran affect the way the United States and other western nations respond to the situation?
6. How will the level of violence on the part of both the opposition and the government play into the situation?

#### **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 12<sup>th</sup> election?