

## COMPLAINT TO THE CBC

To: Jack Nagler, Ombudsman; Brodie Fenlon, Editor in Chief and Executive Director of Programs and Standards for CBC News; and Catherine Tait, President and CEO, Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC)

From: Tamara Lorincz, Waterloo, Ontario.

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Date: September 25, 2023

**Re: CBC's failure to disclose Iranian activist Masih Alinejad's funding from U.S. government and her position with Voice of America, to provide any critical perspective of the situation in Iran, and to be honest with the Canadian public about the geopolitical tensions between the West/Israel and Iran**

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I am submitting this formal complaint about the CBC's continuing failure to disclose the fact that a frequent guest, Iranian activist Masih Alinejad, is funded by the United States government, and works as a journalist for Voice of America (VOA) Persia, a U.S. government-funded media outlet.<sup>1</sup> The failure of the CBC to be transparent with the public about who Alinejad is and to provide any geopolitical context about the tensions between the West and Iran during her interviews represents a serious violation of the CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices (JSP). The JSP requires the CBC to uphold the values of accuracy, balance, impartiality and integrity and to represent the public interest, reflect diversity and act responsibly.<sup>2</sup>

According to *USA Spending*, an official open data source of information about U.S. federal contracts, grants, and loans, Alinejad has received at least \$776,670 since 2013 (see last page of this complaint for screenshot of these payments).<sup>3</sup> Last year, she was paid \$106,080 by the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), an institution funded and controlled by the U.S. government. Alinejad is a journalist, host and producer with VOA Persia, which is part of the USAGM network.<sup>4</sup> As it states on its web site, "VOA provides news, information, and cultural programming through the Internet, mobile and social media, radio, and television. VOA is funded by the U.S. Government through the U.S. Agency for Global

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<sup>1</sup> Voice of America (2023) "Iranian Activist and VOA Host Masih Alinejad Among TIME's Women of the Year":

<https://www.voanews.com/a/iranian-activist-and-voa-host-masih-alinejad-among-time-women-of-the-year/6987281.html>; and U.S. Agency for Global Media (2023) FY2023 [https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/USAGMBudget\\_FY23\\_CBJ\\_03-25-22-FINAL.pdf](https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/USAGMBudget_FY23_CBJ_03-25-22-FINAL.pdf) (see p. 157)

<sup>2</sup> CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices (JSP): <https://cbc.radio-canada.ca/en/vision/governance/journalistic-standards-and-practices>

<sup>3</sup> Payments from the United States government to Masih Alinejad, Iranian activist who lives in the U.S., from 2013 – 2024 Source: USA Spending, <https://www.usaspending.gov/>

<sup>4</sup> See USAGM organizational chart at the end of this complaint; and Voice of America:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/6117655.html/> and Voice of America Persia: <https://ir.voanews.com/>

Media.”<sup>5</sup> While on the payroll of the U.S. government, Alinejad launched the social media campaigns #WhiteWednesdays, #MyCamerasMyWeapon #MyStealthyFreedom and #LetUsTalk to encourage protests and uprisings against the Islamic Republic of Iran as she has repeatedly stated in her interviews.<sup>6</sup>

For the past seven years, the CBC has regularly had Alinejad on the radio and on television programs to discuss her campaigns and the protests in Iran.<sup>7</sup> CBC has also published many articles online quoting Alinejad’s views. This month, she was interviewed on the radio on *The Current* and on television on *The National*. Yet, not once has the CBC acknowledged her close ties to the U.S. government. Though this information is publicly available, it has not been concealed by the CBC. Her connection to the U.S. government and her conflict of interest have been purposefully withheld by the CBC.

The USAGM, which administers VOA Persia where Alinejad works as a journalist, is overseen by the U.S. International Broadcasting Advisory Board under the U.S. Department of State.<sup>8</sup> The advisory board is comprised of the Secretary of State and members of Congress on the Committees on Foreign Affairs.<sup>9</sup> The Department of State is the main funder of USAGM. On the board, the Secretary of State is tasked with providing guidance on foreign policy to the USAGM news network. As the *Congressional Research Service* explained in its 2016 report on U.S. International Broadcasting, VOA was created in 1942 by the U.S. Office of War Information to disseminate propaganda during World War II and is under the purview of the Department of State.<sup>10</sup>

In 2019, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo posted a photo of him standing with Alinejad in his office. In his accompanying statement with the photo, Pompeo thanked Alinejad for “her bravery and defending human rights in Iran.”<sup>11</sup> He did not mention that she is funded and employed by the USAGM to which he advises. Unsurprisingly, in its 2021 report, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, a federal watchdog, found that the USAGM did not have an adequate ‘firewall’ to prevent influence from its leadership on the news network, inhibit political meddling and ensure integrity of its journalism.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that Alinejad is on the payroll of the U.S. government and works as a journalist for U.S. government media outlet has never been disclosed by the CBC to its viewers and readers. For example, in July 2021, in the online CBC article and *Power & Politics* video on Alinejad, reporter Brennan

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<sup>5</sup> VOA History: <https://www.insidevoa.com/p/5829.html>

<sup>6</sup> Please see Alinejad’s interviews on the CBC: <https://www.cbc.ca/search?q=masih%20alinejad&section=all&sortOrder=relevance&media=all>; and her videos and posts on her social media: <https://twitter.com/AlinejadMasih>

<sup>7</sup> See archives on CBC.ca

<sup>8</sup> Congressional Research Service (2016) “U.S. International Broadcasting: Background and Issues for Reform,” <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43521>

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Government (2016) National Defense Authorization Action: <https://www.congress.gov/114/plaws/publ328/PLAW-114publ328.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Congressional Research Service (2016) “U.S. International Broadcasting: Background and Issues for Reform,” <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43521>

<sup>11</sup> U.S. State Department (2019) “Secretary Pompeo’s Meeting With Iranian Women’s Rights Activist Masih Alinejad,” <https://ir.usembassy.gov/secretary-pompeos-meeting-with-iranian-womens-rights-activist-masih-alinejad/>

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office (2021) U.S. Agency for Global Media: Additional Actions Needed to Improve Oversight of Broadcasting Networks, Report: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-104017.pdf>

MacDonald did not reveal her affiliation with the U.S.<sup>13</sup> Again on October 9, 2022, on *Power and Politics*, host Rosemary Barton did a 9-minute interview with Alinejad without mentioning her U.S. government funding and VOA position.<sup>14</sup> Barton stated “In 2014 a picture of her [Alinejad] without a hijab started a movement,” but does not reveal that she had been receiving payments from the U.S. government at the same time that she launched her social media campaigns. In their articles about Alinejad last year, CBC reporters Evan Dyer and Murray Brewster described her as an “Iranian feminist” and “a leading voice in global protests against the Iranian regime,” but failed to mention her position in the VOA and her payments from USAGM.<sup>15</sup> On March 9, 2023, *Power & Politics* posted on its Twitter account, a video clip of an interview with Alinejad claiming that Iran is poisoning school children without any evidence, but does not tell the viewers that she is paid by the U.S. government and her views support U.S. foreign policy objectives against Iran.<sup>16</sup>

On Monday, September 18, 2023, *The Current*'s host Matt Galloway had a 12-minute radio interview with Alinejad to discuss the one-year anniversary of the tragic death of the Iranian Kurdish woman Mahsa Amini allegedly in police custody in Tehran and the protests in the country. Galloway described Alinejad as “an activist and journalist in exile in the United States since 2009,” but did not mention her financial and employment ties to the U.S. government.<sup>17</sup> During the interview, Alinejad said “We must get united to end the Islamic Republic of Iran.” There was no other guest to provide any critical or alternative views about the anniversary of Amini’s death and the current situation in Iran (see timelines at the end of this submission).

During her CBC interviews, Alinejad has consistently called for regime change and revolution against the Islamic Republic. On *The Current*, she declared “We are here to end the gender apartheid regime.” Alinejad’s position closely aligns with the U.S. State Department’s “maximum pressure” campaign that includes sanctions against the Iranian state.<sup>18</sup> In 2018, Pompeo established the U.S. Iran Action Group led by State Department official Brian Hook to increase economic and political stress against Iran.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> CBC (2021) “Canada condemns Iran after kidnapping plot alleged in U.S. indictment” by Brennan MacDonald: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-condemns-iran-kidnapping-plot-1.6103032>

<sup>14</sup> CBC (2022) Is Canada putting enough pressure on the IRGC? *Power and Politics*, October 9, 2022: <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2082626115866>

<sup>15</sup> Murray Brewster (2022) “Refugees and a student abroad serve up tears, humanity and grace at Halifax security forum,” CBC: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/iran-ukraine-protests-security-security-conference-1.6658536>; and Evan Dyer (2022) “Stung by criticism, Trudeau government changes course on Iran,” <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/iran-trudeau-protests-poilievre-1.6608756>

<sup>16</sup> CBC Power and Politics on March 9, 2023, “Activist and journalist Masih Alinejad says schoolgirls in Iran are being targeted and poisoned by authorities for leading efforts at regime change. “I want Justin Trudeau to think about it. If it was his own daughter or Canadian girls, what would have been the reaction?”: <https://twitter.com/PnPCBC/status/1633904428427165714>

<sup>17</sup> CBC (2023) *The Current*, September 18: <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-63-the-current/clip/16010102-iran-one-year-mahsa-aminis-death> AND <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/monday-september-18-2023-full-transcript-1.6970744>

<sup>18</sup> U.S. State Department (2021) Maximum Pressure Campaign on the Regime in Iran: <https://2017-2021.state.gov/maximum-pressure-campaign-on-the-regime-in-iran/>

<sup>19</sup> Foreign Policy (2018) “Pompeo Creates New Team to Pressure Iran”: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/16/pompeo-creates-new-group-to-coordinate-punitive-measures-against-iran-brian-hook-policy-planning-special-representative-tehran-middle-east-nuclear-deal-sanctions-trump/>; and (2018) “Iran says U.S. ‘action group’ will fail to overthrow Iranian state”: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/iran-action-group-1.4790879>

Concerns were raised that this was a U.S. regime change operation.<sup>20</sup> However, the CBC has not had one guest to provide this crucial context for the protests in Iran or a critique of Western policy toward Iran.

Worse still, on December 20, 2022 and January 5, 2023, CBC's *The Fifth Estate* aired a 45-minute profile of Alinejad called "The Dissident" on television.<sup>21</sup> This profile was also posted on CBC's YouTube channel and titled "How Iran's regime tries to silence protesters in Canada and the U.S."<sup>22</sup> There were at least 27 CBC staff involved in the production of this *The Fifth Estate* episode including writer journalist Gillian Findlay, director Scott Anderson, senior producer Allya Davidson, research producer Lynette Fortune and associate producer Ivan Angelovski. Despite so many people working on Alinejad's profile, *The Fifth Estate* did not mention her funding from the U.S. government or her employment at VOA.

At the beginning of *The Fifth Estate's* profile of Alinejad, Findlay described her as "the voice of the protestors in Iran" and "is the credited with inspiring the protests." Later at 31:21, Findlay stated that "She [Alinejad] continues to travel the world lobby politicians and



everyone who would listen to help Iranians overthrow their government." At 36:00, Findlay acknowledged that Alinejad has been accused of being "an agent of the West" and "a tool of neo-imperialism." Alinejad replied "Iran accuses me of being associated with MI6, the CIA and Mossad," but deflected the accusation and says that she "meets with anyone who will help her" in opposing the Islamic Republic. At this crucial point of the program, Findlay and *The Fifth Estate* do not probe any further these claims of ties to Western or Israeli governments or intelligence services. They do not disclose Alinejad's ties to the U.S. government and her conflict of interest. They also do not discuss the history of the West's illegal foreign interference in Iran. Despite *The Fifth Estate* being the CBC's premier investigative program, Alinejad's payments from the U.S. government and position with VOA were never revealed. The profile of Alinejad shows the bias and partiality of the CBC against Iran and a violation of the JSP.

Yet this information about Alinejad has been publicly available for many years. In 2020, Eli Clifton, an investigative journalist and researcher with the Washington D.C.-based *Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft*, published an article online entitled "U.S. media outlets fail to disclose U.S. government ties of 'Iranian journalist' echoing Trump talking points."<sup>23</sup> Clifton wrote "Masih Alinejad isn't just an Iranian journalist and activist. She's on the U.S. government payroll and works for the increasingly 'rabidly pro-

<sup>20</sup> The Intercept: <https://theintercept.com/2018/02/05/iran-cia-coup-mossadegh-ayatollah/>

<sup>21</sup> CBC (2022) The Dissidents: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/fifthestate/the-dissidents-1.6692856>

<sup>22</sup> CBC (2022) How Iran's regime tries to silence protesters in Canada and the U.S. - The Fifth Estate, YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nu7TRXdM8zI>

<sup>23</sup> Clifton, Eli (2020) "U.S. media outlets fail to disclose U.S. government ties of 'Iranian journalist' echoing Trump talking points": <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2020/01/06/u-s-media-outlets-fail-to-disclose-u-s-government-ties-of-iranian-journalist-echoing-trump-talking-points/>

Trump' Voice of America." He linked to the *USA Spending* web site that showed the contracts that Alinejad had received.<sup>24</sup>

*The Fifth Estate* also completely ignores the history and broader geopolitical context between the West/Israel and Iran. At the beginning of "The Dissidents", *The Fifth Estate* states, "As demonstrations in Iran continue and its government executes protesters, *The Fifth Estate* sits down with Iranian journalist and activist Masih Alinejad to examine how the regime tries to silence dissidents abroad." The CBC does not explain why the Iranian government is concerned about violent protests in the country and the real possibility that they are being fomented by foreign governments including the U.S., United Kingdom and Israel. This has already happened inside Iran seventy years ago.

In 1953, the U.S. and UK led a coup against the democratically-elected government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, because he nationalized the oil industry in Iran.<sup>25</sup> American and British intelligence officers orchestrated the overthrow by killing people loyal to Mossadegh, paying criminals and mercenaries to instigate protests, and bribing senior military officers to oust Mossadegh.<sup>26</sup> Declassified CIA documents revealed that the U.S. and UK deployed agent provocateurs and "shock troops" on the streets and that the BBC was used to falsely portray the protests as spontaneous and spread propaganda against Mossadegh on the airways.<sup>27</sup> The U.S. and UK then installed the Shah, Mohammad Reza, as the leader of Iran. The Shah ruled as an oppressive dictator for over twenty-five years giving the American and British governments and corporations access to Iranian natural resources.<sup>28</sup> American and Israeli intelligence services, the CIA and Mossad, helped the Shah establish a brutal police force, SAVAK, to repress, disappear, imprison, torture and kill dissidents.<sup>29</sup>

In 1979, the Iranian people's revolution deposed the repressive Shah and occupied the American Embassy in Tehran. Since the revolution, the West and Israel have engaged in illegal interference and assassinations inside Iran. For example, in 2021, Israel assassinated another Iranian nuclear scientist.<sup>30</sup> The US-UK coup against Mossadegh in 1953 set in motion subsequent regime operations from

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<sup>24</sup> Payments from the United States government to Masih Alinejad, Iranian activist who lives in the U.S., from 2013 – 2024  
Source: USA Spending, <https://www.usaspending.gov/>

<sup>25</sup> Democracy Now (2018) "Overthrow: 100 Years of U.S. Meddling & Regime Change, from Iran to Nicaragua to Hawaii to Cuba", Interview with journalist and author Stephen Kinzer:

[https://www.democracynow.org/2018/3/12/100\\_years\\_of\\_us\\_interference\\_regime](https://www.democracynow.org/2018/3/12/100_years_of_us_interference_regime)

<sup>26</sup> See the work of Professor Ervand Abrahamian: 1953 Coup in Iran About Control, The Mossadegh Project:

<https://www.mohammadmossadegh.com/news/ervand-abrahamian/>

<sup>27</sup> *Coup 53*, documentary by Taghi Amirani, The story of Operation Ajax, the CIA/MI6 staged coup in 1953 in Iran that overthrew Prime Minister Mossadegh; and *A Very British Coup* (2005)

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/history/document/document\\_20050822.shtml](https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/history/document/document_20050822.shtml) (see Mark Gasiorowski's interview)

<sup>28</sup> Zinn Project, "Aug. 19, 1953: U.S. and Britain Topple Democratically Elected Government of Iran"

<https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/iran-coup/>

<sup>29</sup> CIA (2010) Declassified, CIA's role in setting up SAVAK: <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp90-00552r000505290007-5>

<sup>30</sup> Al Jazeera (2021) "Iranian nuclear scientist killed by Israeli automated gun: Report,"

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/11/iranian-nuclear-scientist-killed-by-israeli-automated-gun-report>

Guatemala in 1954, Chile in 1973, Panama in 1989, Haiti in 2004, Ukraine in 2014 and most recently Pakistan in 2023 among others.<sup>31</sup>

A search on CBC News online, shows that you did not have any programming to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coup against Mossadegh and the crushing of Iranian democracy. The CBC did not have any article or segment about how the U.S. and UK overthrew the Iranian government in 1953, which is directly related to the current crisis. None of this history is included as background to the CBC interviews with Alinejad or the stories about the protests in Iran today. The CBC does not ask any questions about the possibility of Western foreign interference or covert operations in Iran though this has happened many times in the past. The CBC also fails to critique Canada's aggressive foreign policies toward Iran, such as enacting illegal sanctions and closing down the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa. Additionally, the CBC never has an Islamic Republic official to give an explanation or an academic expert to give an alternative perspective on the situation in Iran to provide a diversity of views.

As well, CBC's framing of its interviews with Alinejad is not impartial. The description by *Power & Politics* shows an obvious bias against the Iranian government with the statement "Rosemary Barton Live speaks with Masih Alinejad, Iranian author and activist, about the ongoing revolt against clerical rule in Iran. Alinejad weighs in on whether Ottawa's recent moves are enough to put pressure on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps." In their recent interviews, CBC hosts Barton and Galloway set Alinejad up to call on the Canadian government to increase sanctions and pressure against the Islamic Republic and to declare its military "terrorists". Yet, there is evidence of both support of the Islamic Republic and opposition to it in the country. The CBC is biased in its portrayal of Alinejad, the current protests in Iran and the historical context.

Furthermore, in her CBC interviews, Alinejad often says that the continued existence of the Islamic Republic puts "Canadians in danger" instilling fear in the public. On *The Current* last Monday, she declared that the "barbaric regime [Iran] is threat to Europe and to democracy." She also called Russia and China "dictators" linking them to Iran. The USAGM and VOA has also been active in propaganda campaigns against Russia and China.<sup>32</sup> There are never any critical perspectives or peaceful alternatives offered on the CBC episodes on Iran, such as lifting the sanctions to help the Iranian people, re-negotiating an Iran nuclear deal, re-establishing diplomatic ties, de-militarizing the conflict, and stopping illegal Western interference in the country etc.

The CBC never interrogates what is behind Alinejad's and the U.S. government's calls for regime change of Iran in its programming. An honest assessment of the record of American foreign policy towards Iran shows that the U.S. is concerned about maintaining its power and access to resources in the region.<sup>33</sup> Iran is situated in the heart of the Middle East bordering seven countries and has long coastal borders on the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf where most the world's oil is shipped. More importantly, as the U.S. Energy Department acknowledges, Iran holds "some of the world's largest deposits of proven

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<sup>31</sup> Blum (2015) *America's Deadliest Export: Democracy. The Truth about U.S. Foreign Policy and Everything Else*; and Democracy Now (2023) "Did the U.S. Push Imran Khan from Power? Leaked Cable Shows How State Dept. Pressured Pakistan," [https://www.democracynow.org/2023/8/17/us\\_pakistan\\_memo\\_imrahn\\_khan](https://www.democracynow.org/2023/8/17/us_pakistan_memo_imrahn_khan)

<sup>32</sup> See the USAGM Annual Reports and the targeted information campaigns against China, Russia and Iran: [https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/USAGM\\_AR2022\\_04-12-23.pdf](https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/USAGM_AR2022_04-12-23.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Blum, William (2005) *Killing Hope: U.S. CIA and Military Interventions Since the Second World War*.

oil and natural gas reserves, ranking as the world's third-largest oil and second-largest natural gas reserve holder in 2021."<sup>34</sup> Iran and Russia have recently signed multi-billion-dollar energy and trade contracts strengthening ties between the countries. It is indubitable that the U.S. and its allies including Canada want to overthrow the Islamic Republic, because the country challenges Western hegemony, has immense natural resource wealth and is strategically situated in the region giving it power and independence.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, as a feminist and peace activist, I care very much about women's rights and equality in Iran, in Canada and around the world. I support women's nonviolent struggles for dignity and freedom. However, women's liberation cannot come through deception and regime change. We risk Iranian civilians being killed in another coup by fomenting covert actions by Western forces. I also deeply mourn all the protestors who died in Iran and believe that there should be investigations and international accountability. I grieve all the people who died onboard Ukrainian International Flight 752 by Iran, but I know that the U.S. drone assassination of Soleimani led to that tragic incident and that cannot be overlooked.

As purportedly Canada's "most trusted news source," I'm calling on you to abide by the JSF principles and tell the truth about Masih Alinejad's affiliation with the U.S. government and to provide the broader geopolitical context and history to help the public understand what is going on between the West/Israel and Iran. In my opinion, by concealing Alinejad's payments from USAGM and her position at VOA in your reporting and interviews, the CBC is lying by omission, misleading the public, and is engaged in propaganda not journalism.

In closing, I am asking you to please reply to my questions:

1. Why has the CBC failed to disclose or report on the fact that Alinejad is funded by the U.S. government and works for VOA, a propaganda arm of the U.S. Department of State?
2. How did *The Fifth Estate*, the CBC's premier investigative program, fail to mention Alinejad's payments from USAGM and position at VOA?
3. Why does the CBC not provide any geopolitical context or critical perspective on the West's and Israel's policies and actions toward Iran like sanctions, the JCPOA, oil, relations with Russia etc. in its stories on Iran?
4. Why has the CBC not had any programming this year to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the US-UK overthrow of democratically government of Mossadegh in Iran?
5. Why does the CBC not mention Israel's role in causing instability inside Iran through its assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists?<sup>36</sup>
6. Why does the CBC not investigate the possibility of Western and Israeli covert actions destabilizing the Islamic Republic?

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<sup>34</sup> U.S. Energy Department (2021) Country Analysis Executive Summary: Iran, [https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries\\_long/Iran/pdf/iran\\_exe.pdf](https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries_long/Iran/pdf/iran_exe.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Al Jazeera (2020) "U.S. military presence in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Washington has more than 60,000 troops in the Middle East and is planning to deploy more forces amid tensions with Iran."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/1/13/us-military-presence-in-the-middle-east-and-afghanistan>

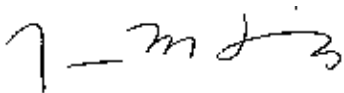
<sup>36</sup> The Guardian (2020) "Iranian scientist's death only the latest in long line of attacks blamed on Israel," <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/27/iran-has-long-accused-israel-of-killing-its-nuclear-scientists>

7. Why does the CBC not include any Islamic Republic officials or other Iranian experts to provide explanations or other perspectives on the protests and the West's strained relationship with Iran?
8. Why is the CBC not more skeptical about U.S. government's allegations about Iran, when there is a long history of it lying about other countries like saying Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and when American officials like Pompeo admitted in 2019 that "I was the CIA director. We lied, we cheated, we stole. We had entire training courses. It reminds you the glory of American experiment."<sup>37</sup>
9. What is the CBC's policy about informing the public about the funding and affiliations of guests who are interviewed by the public broadcaster?

I look forward to your reply.

As the late British journalist and international correspondent Robert Fisk admonished, "journalism must challenge authority, all authority, especially so when governments and politicians take us to war."<sup>38</sup>

Sincerely,



Tamara Lorincz

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<sup>37</sup> Mike Pompeo admitted to lying, cheating and stealing as a CIA Director to an audience at Texas A&M University on April 15, 2019, *Telesur*: <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/We-Lied-Cheated-and-Stole-Pompeo-Comes-Clean-About-CIA-20190424-0033.html>

<sup>38</sup> "CHALLENGE AUTHORITY": ROBERT FISK 1946–2020, Stop the War Coalition:  
<https://www.stopwar.org.uk/article/challenge-authority-all-authority-robert-fisk-1946-2020/>



**TIMELINE of some significant dates:**

August 1953	US-UK overthrew the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh because he nationalized oil and gas sector and installed the monarchy under shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi
February 1979	Iranian people’s revolution against the Shah and U.S. imperialism
1980	Canadian embassy closes for eight years after Canadian government helps take U.S. diplomats out of Tehran during the post-revolution hostage crisis
July 1988	On the 3 <sup>rd</sup> , U.S. shoots down Iran Air Flight 655 killing all 290 passengers
1996	Normalization of relations between Canada and Iran
2003	Large scale protests in Iran Canadian Iranian freelance journalist, Zahra Kazemi, dies in Iranian custody
September 2012	Canada kicks out Iranian diplomats and closes Iran’s embassy in Ottawa
October 2015	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is adopted. Also known as the Iran Nuclear Deal. An agreement between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States—plus Germany) together with the European Union
2016	U.S. revokes some sanctions against Iran IAEA verifies that Iran is in compliance with JCPOA National Endowment for Democracy (CIA front group) spends \$4.6 million on programs related to Iran from 2016-2020
2017	Donald Trump becomes President on January 20, 2017 until January 2021 U.S. says Iran in compliance with JCPOA
April 2018	CIA Director Mike Pompeo become U.S. Secretary of State (takes over from Rex Tillerson)
May 2018 August 2018	U.S. unilaterally withdraws from JCPOA U.S. reimposes sanctions against Iran
August 2019	U.S. State Department's director of policy planning, Brian Hook, and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announce establishment of new U.S. Iran Action Group. Iran says that the U.S. Iran Action Group is a plot to overthrow the Iranian government
November 2019	Protests erupted across Iran after decision by authorities to hike petrol prices as part of efforts to blunt the effects of crippling U.S. sanctions on the country’s economy
January 3, 2020 January 8, 2020	In a targeted drone strike, U.S. assassinates Qasem Soleimani in Iraq, commander of the Quds Force, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 shot down by IRGC. 176 people on board killed. *Very dangerous situation. Threats of war. Protests for peace & grief around the world.
2021	Israel assassinates Iranian nuclear scientist inside Iran
September 16, 2022	22-year-old Iranian woman Mahsa Amini killed in custody in Tehran under suspicious circumstances, protest in Iran, people detained, injured and killed Protests around the world (Masih Alinejad one of the main drivers of these protests)

**MASIH ALINEJAD TIMELINE:**

2009	She leaves Iran and settles in the U.S.
2013	She begins receiving money from the U.S. every year
May 2014	She sets up <i>My Stealthy Freedom</i> , Founder of #WhiteWednesdays & #MyCamerasMyWeapon #MyStealthyFreedom, #LetUsTalk
2019	She meets with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, former CIA director and photo and statement are published on U.S. Department of State
2021	FBI allegations that Iran had a plot to kidnap Alinejad in the US
September 16, 2022	22-year-old Iranian woman Mahsa Amini killed in custody in Tehran under suspicious circumstances Protests around the world (Masih Alinejad one of the main drivers of these protests)
November and December 2022	She attends the Halifax International Security Forum and receives wide media coverage in Canada Her profile is aired on television by <i>The Fifth Estate</i>
2023	Her profile is aired on television by <i>The Fifth Estate</i> She receives \$106,00 USD from U.S. government

**On May 18, 2023 Alinejad wins an award from the *International Republican Institute*, which is one of the main funders of the National Endowment for Democracy that is associated with the CIA.**

<https://www.iri.org/news/iri-honors-the-women-of-iran-at-the-2023-john-s-mccain-freedom-award/>

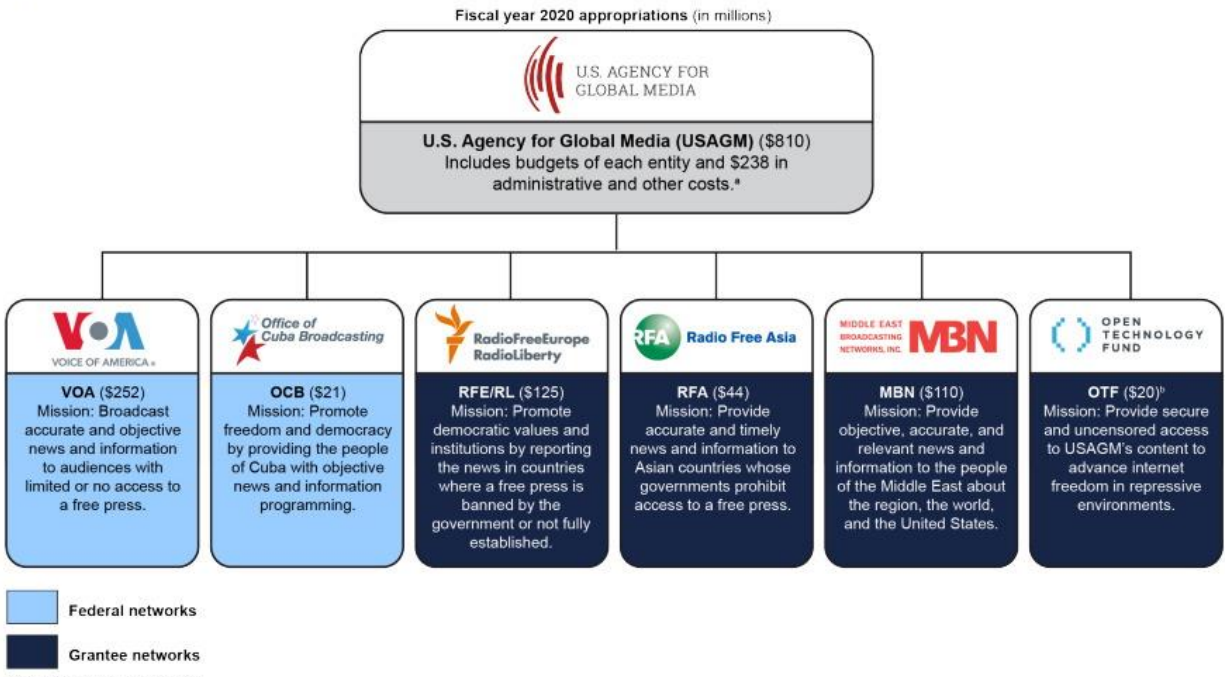
Journalist, Author, Women’s Rights Activist & Founder, United For Navid

Masih Alinejad is an Iranian American journalist and political activist known for her tireless promotion of women's rights, freedom, and democracy in her native country. Alinejad was born and raised in a small village in Iran, and was politically active from a young age. She began her career as a journalist within the country, writing critically of the regime for various Iranian newspapers. She fled Iran in 2009 and in 2014 launched "My Stealthy Freedom," a Facebook page that invites Iranian women to post pictures of themselves without a chador. During this time, she also started White Wednesdays, during which women throughout Iran wear white to peacefully protest the compulsory garment. Since 2014, her campaign has garnered more than one million likes on Facebook. Alinejad is the author of multiple books, including her memoir, *The Wind in My Hair: My Fight for Freedom in Modern Iran*, published in 2018. Despite the Iranian government’s multiple attempts to silence her, Alinejad continues to speak out for freedom and liberty for all Iranians, women and men.

# U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) Organizational Chart and Funding

Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office (2021) U.S. Agency for Global Media: Additional Actions Needed to Improve Oversight of Broadcasting Networks, Report: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-104017.pdf>

**Figure 1: USAGM's Broadcasting Networks' Missions and Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations**



Note: Mission statements are based upon mission descriptions on each entity's website. Appropriated amounts are those provided under the joint explanatory statement, 165 Cong. Rec. H11061 at H8783 (Dec. 17, 2019), accompanying the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-94, 133 Stat. 2822-23 (Dec. 20, 2019).

\*Administrative and other costs include funding for the International Broadcasting Bureau, Office of Technology, Services and Innovation, and Broadcasting Capital Improvements.

<sup>b</sup>The Open Technology Fund receives funding through the agency's Internet Freedom program.

**Masih Alinejad with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in 2019.**

Source: <https://ir.usembassy.gov/secretary-pompeos-meeting-with-iranian-womens-rights-activist-masih-alinejad/>



## Payments from the United States government to Masih Alinejad, Iranian activist who lives in the U.S., from 2013 – 2024

Source: USA Spending, <https://www.usaspending.gov/>

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Contracts 14 | Contract IDs 3 | Grants 0 | Direct Payments 1 | Loans 1 | Other 0

Award ID	Recipient Name	Start Date (Period of Performance)	End Date (Period of Performance)	Total Obligations to Date	Total Outlays to Da
95170021K0080	MASIH ALINEJAD	3/1/2021	2/28/2022	\$114,840	--
95170022P0080	MASIH ALINEJAD	3/1/2022	2/28/2023	\$106,080	--
95170023P0085	MASIH ALINEJAD	3/1/2023	2/29/2024	\$103,680	--
95170020K0122	MASIH ALINEJAD	2/27/2020	2/28/2021	\$95,920	--
BBG50E170675	MASIH ALINEJAD	7/1/2017	8/7/2018	\$87,600	--
BBG50E160480	MASIH ALINEJAD	7/1/2016	6/30/2017	\$86,400	--
BBG39P150327	MASIH ALINEJAD	5/27/2015	9/30/2016	\$81,250	--
95170019P0667	MASIH ALINEJAD	9/10/2019	2/29/2020	\$39,200	--
95170019P0630	MASIH ALINEJAD	7/1/2019	9/15/2019	\$17,600	--
BBG39E140028	ALINEJAD MASIH	11/1/2013	5/2/2014	\$12,600	--
BBG39E130436	ALINEJAD MASIH	5/1/2013	9/30/2013	\$10,500	--
BBG39E130671	ALINEJAD MASIH	8/1/2013	7/31/2014	\$7,000	--
BBG39E130297	ALINEJAD MASIH	3/1/2013	9/30/2013	\$7,000	--
BBG39E130241	ALINEJAD MASIH	2/1/2013	9/30/2013	\$7,000	--

Time Period

Fiscal Year | Date Range

All Fiscal Years

FY 2023  FY 2015

FY 2022  FY 2014

FY 2021  FY 2013

FY 2020  FY 2012

FY 2019  FY 2011

FY 2018  FY 2010

FY 2017  FY 2009

FY 2016  FY 2008

Show New Awards Only

Award Type

Agency

Treasury Account Symbol (TAS)

Location

Recipient

Recipient Type