

White House, State Department condemn Iranian response to protests



“There are many reports of peaceful protests by Iranian citizens fed up with the regime’s corruption and its squandering of the nation’s wealth to fund terrorism abroad,” White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement. | Alex Brandon/AP Photo

The White House on Friday night emphasized to Iran that the world is watching, as protesters in the country continued to speak out for the second day in a row.

“There are many reports of peaceful protests by Iranian citizens fed up with the regime’s corruption and its squandering of the nation’s wealth to fund terrorism abroad,” White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement. “The Iranian government should respect their people’s rights, including their right to express themselves.”

President Donald Trump later tweeted out a similarly worded statement.

According to the Associated Press, Iranians gathered in the capital of Tehran and the western city Kermanshah for a second day of demonstrations in a nation that is struggling economically. The AP added such mass protests without police permission are unusual in Iran and those taking part face arrest.

The statements come as the White House and Congress continue to grapple with the future of the Iran nuclear deal. Trump has called the deal the “worst deal ever” and like many GOP presidential candidates promised to end it once he entered the White House.

Earlier, the State Department released a statement that condemned the arrests of protesters.

“Iran’s leaders have turned a wealthy country with a rich history and culture into an economically depleted rogue state whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed, and chaos. As President Trump has said, the longest-suffering victims of Iran’s leaders are Iran’s own people,” said State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert.

Police, according to the AP, arrested a small number of demonstrators in Tehran.

Source: <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/12/29/iran-protests-white-house-state-319782>

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