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International Affairs

Ottawa, 14 August 2022

To whom it may concern,

It is my pleasure to recommend the candidacy of Dr. Azadeh Momeni for the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Postdoctoral Fellowship in Iranian Studies for 2022-2023 at the University of Toronto.

I have known Azadeh primarily as the external examiner for her doctoral thesis in political science, which she obtained from Carleton University earlier this year. I enjoyed reviewing her thesis, and did not hesitate to recommend that she pass. Overall, her thesis was well written and well documented, and it tackled an interesting set of questions.

Her thesis, which analyzed the foreign policy of Mohammed Khatami, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran from 1997 to 2005, allowed Azadeh to demonstrate a good understanding of the literature on International Relations theory and on former President Khatami's foreign policy preferences.

In particular, Azadeh demonstrated in the thesis a good understanding of the various theoretical and empirical literatures involved. In the introduction, she offered a comprehensive overview of the relevant International Relations literature. In chapter 2, she offered a comprehensive review of the literature on the Islamic Republic's emergence, its system of government, and its foreign policy. Subsequently, she offered in chapter 3 a clear overview of operational code theory. In addition, chapter 4 offered a useful overview of Khatami's thought and worldview. She demonstrated, notably, a sound understanding of the broader societal debates (e.g., Samuel Huntington's clash of civilisations thesis and its critics) in which his thought emerged.

Overall, I would emphasize that in her thesis, Azadeh demonstrated that she is intimately familiar with the details of Iranian foreign policy, both in general and specifically during the Khatami era. The thesis was well organized, comprehensive, and well researched.

At the time of the thesis defence, Azadeh offered a clear, rigorous, and succinct overview of her research. Her oral presentation was solid, and proved that she had acquired a deep understanding of her topic. She was also able to provide detailed and in-depth answers to the many questions posed by the committee.

In this context, it is my pleasure to support Azadeh's candidacy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance,

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