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Iran charges French woman, embassy workers with plot

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taking part in unrest ... collecting news and information and sending pictures of the unrest abroad," state news agency IRNA said.

Espionage and acting against national security are punishable by death under Iran's Islamic law.

Reiss, a teaching assistant, confessed her "mistakes" and asked for clemency, IRNA said. Nazak Afshar, an Iranian working for the French embassy, was also charged with "providing information over the vote unrest to foreigners."

"We were not authorized by the embassy to go to rallies but we were told to shelter protesters if necessary," Afshar said.

The British embassy employee, Hossein Rassam, was charged with espionage and confessed to handing information about the unrest to Washington, IRNA said.

"The local staff were asked by their superiors at the British embassy to attend the riots," IRNA quoted Rassam as telling the court. Rassam was freed on \$100,000 bail on July 19.

"Several British diplomats attended rallies ... The British ambassador and the charge d'affaires also went to a rally "

By [Parisa Hafezi](#) and [Zahra Hosseinian](#)

TEHRAN (Reuters) - An Iranian court on Saturday charged a French woman, two Iranians working for the British and French embassies in Tehran and dozens of others with spying and aiding a Western plot to overthrow the system of clerical rule.

The European Union, France and Britain all condemned the trial. The Swedish EU presidency said in a statement "action against one EU country, citizen or embassy staff, is considered an action against all of the EU."

"This is obviously a show trial directed against the EU," Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt told Reuters.

It was the second mass trial in a week aimed at uprooting the moderate opposition and putting an end to protests that erupted after the disputed June 12 presidential election.

At least 26 protesters have been killed and scores arrested in post-election violence. Moderates say the poll was rigged for President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to win, but officials say it was the "healthiest" vote since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The protests have exposed deep rifts within the clerical establishment in Iran, the world's fifth biggest oil producer.

French citizen Clotilde Reiss was charged with "acting against national security by

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