

Iran hardliners condemn Khatami

Members of Iran's parliament have made a formal complaint to the intelligence minister over remarks made by former President Mohammad Khatami.

On Friday Mr Khatami said the Islamic republic's founder, Ayatollah Khomeini, had not wanted to export the revolution by armed force.

The MPs accuse him of jeopardising national security and want to know if he had clearance to make the remarks.

They say his comments implicate Iran in events it has had no role in.

'Sabotage?'

Mr Khatami's remarks have been interpreted as suggesting that Iran supports insurgents in other countries.

"What did the Imam [Khomeini] mean by exporting the revolution?" he asked in a speech on Friday to university students.

"Did he mean that we take up arms, that we blow up places in other nations and we create groups to carry out sabotage in other countries? The Imam was vehemently against this and was confronting it," he said.

His remarks have been condemned in Iran's conservative media as an attack on the country's Islamist system of government.

Mr Khatami has said his words were not directed at Iranian policy.

The United States accuses Iran of training, arming and supporting Shia militias in Iraq, and of destabilising Lebanon through the militant group Hezbollah.

Tehran denies the charges, saying it is interference from other countries that is causing trouble in Iraq and Lebanon.

Hezbollah was formed with financial backing from Iran in response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

Mohammad Khatami was president of Iran from 1997-2005 and was succeeded by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a conservative.

Mr Ahmadinejad is expected to run for a second term next year.

Hardliners strengthened their hold on Iran's parliament in elections in March and April.