

Three fundamental truths for obtaining freedom in Iran, peace and tranquility in the Middle East

*Speech by Maryam Rajavi
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Honorable guests,
Fellow compatriots in Iran and abroad,

I am humbled in the face of your love and passion for freedom. And I pay my respects to the distinguished personalities who have joined us from five continents around the world in solidarity with a free Iran and to voice support for freedom in Iran.

Last year at this time, the religious dictatorship ruling Iran was busy launching missiles at Camp Liberty to slaughter the members of the Mujahedin-e Khalq (PMOI/MEK). Now, with their triumphant relocation from Camp Liberty Prison in Iraq to Albania, it is the Resistance that is advancing and on the offensive vis-à-vis the regime. We are all jubilant and proud to have PMOI members and officials in Albania joining us live for this gathering.

Dear friends,

Three major developments impact this gathering:

First, the relocation of thousands of MEK members out of Iraq which foiled the mullahs' supreme leader Ali Khamenei's plots to annihilate the Resistance movement. Second, the failure of the policy of appeasing the regime by the United States and Europe. And third, Khamenei's defeat in the sham elections, which means the defeat of the regime in its totality.

The election farce: A setback for the regime in its entirety

By staging the elections sham, Khamenei planned to counter social uprisings and to contain tensions within the regime. For this reason, he picked mullah Ebrahim Raisi, a member of the Death Committee in charge of the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners.

However, social readiness for an uprising forced his defeat. The stage for such readiness against the totality of the regime was set in particular by the campaigns of Iranian Resistance forces and supporters regarding the 1988 massacre, which exposed Raisi's background and called for the boycott of the sham elections. Hundreds of articles and interviews appeared in the state-run press and media to justify the massacre while Khomeini's fatwa (religious decree) on the massacre was published for the first time 29 years after that episode.

Khamenei's representatives were saying that the MEK has resurfaced within the country. Intelligence and security officials were repeatedly boasting about the arrest of MEK members, who were attempting to sabotage the election.

In the final days before the election, Khamenei, cognizant of the volatile state of society, was forced to back down from his plan because he feared a repeat of the 2009 uprising.

The mere candidacy of Raisi meant that Khamenei is at an impasse. That Hassan Rouhani secured a second term does not mean that the impasse has been removed. Despite a vigorous power struggle with the rival faction, Rouhani is complicit in all of the regime's crimes against the Iranian people.

After "engineering" the election and fabricating the vote tally, the mullahs claimed more than 70 percent of Iranians had voted for their own executioners. A month later, however, the Assembly of Experts issued an official statement in which it declared that in the context of the mullahs' version of Islam, "the people's vote, demands, and views" have no importance whatsoever.

With this election, the mullahs had intended to improve the regime's overall situation. Instead, it divided and destabilized the regime. Now, they are planning for and threatening to oust Rouhani.

By spewing slanders against the MEK, they sought to set the stage for bringing to power an executioner (Raisi). But they failed in this respect as well and only managed to show the extent to which they fear the MEK and the Iranian Resistance.

Therefore, to the ruling mullahs, we say: Do whatever you can; Make claims and fabricate whatever you want against our movement in your Friday prayer masquerades. But know that the very people whom you claimed had been annihilated years ago are still standing and have come for you. The same people you hanged and whose graves you concealed have risen again in the form of a new generation of rebellious youths who, with their calls for justice, have encircled your regime. The nooses you tightened around the necks of Iran's valiant youths have turned into rings of fire out of which you have no reprieve.

Three fundamental truths

The light of change is shining on Iran. The ruling regime is in disarray and paralyzed as never before. Iranian society is simmering with discontent and the international community is finally getting closer to the reality that appeasing the ruling theocracy is misguided.

These intense circumstances speak to three fundamental truths related to obtaining freedom and liberty in Iran, as well as peace and tranquility in the region:

First, the overthrow of the ruling religious dictatorship is an imperative.

Second, the regime's overthrow is within reach.

And third, a democratic alternative and an organized resistance exists, which is capable of toppling the theocracy in Iran.

Regime change, the only solution

Now, what do these mean?

The first truth answers the question "what must be done regarding a regime that has held Iran and all Iranians in chains and is the driver behind war and carnage in the region"?

Is this regime really capable of reform? The answer is NO, because claimants of reform were in power for 20 years out of the 38 years of the regime's rule, and they accomplished nothing but serving the Velayat-e Faqih regime.

Would giving concessions to the regime ever lead to its change of behavior? The answer is NO. This is something that has already been tested repeatedly for the past three decades by the US and Europe.

Finally, is it possible to contain this regime? NO, because what has been described as a policy of containment in effect does nothing but obstruct the path towards the adoption of a firm policy against the regime.

Therefore, the conclusion is what the Iranian Resistance has emphasized since the outset and many in the world have reached today: The solution, the only solution, is regime change.

The greatest threat to the regime: The revolts waiting to erupt across Iran

The second truth is that the regime's overthrow is possible and within reach, because the regime is besieged by extensive social discontent. As one of the commanders of the State Security Force has acknowledged, nearly 11,000 protests and demonstrations took place in Iran last year.

Consider "grave dwellers," the 10 million unemployed, the 20 million shanty-town dwellers and the 30 percent of the population who are starving. The mullahs are encircled by these very people. The hand-picked candidates for the sham presidential election admitted that this regime belongs to 4 percent of the population while 96 percent of the people despise it.

Indeed, despite the regime's deafening propaganda, the greatest threat to the regime is not a foreign enemy, but social revolts waiting to erupt within Iran itself.

The reality is that the overthrow of the religious dictatorship is possible and within reach because of the regime's ineptitude and failures, including its inability to contain the country's economic disintegration and environmental disasters, the failure to provide for the most basic needs of our enraged people, its inability to obtain nuclear weapons, and even its failure to consolidate the regime.

Regime change is within reach because the mullahs find themselves stuck in three wars of attrition in the Middle East. Their withdrawal from these conflicts in whatever form or shape will undermine their own existence.

The force for change and the democratic alternative

The third truth is the existence of a force for change and a democratic alternative. This alternative's power emanates from its capability to thrust the regime from a state of crises to ultimate overthrow. In 2009, this democratic alternative formed the main nucleus of the uprisings and transformed the chants of "where is my vote" into "down with the principle of *velayat-e faqih*."

Additionally, since last July, the Iranian Resistance has hoisted the banner of seeking justice for the victims of the massacre of political prisoners 29 years ago, turning it into the main focus of political discourse in Iran today. In the recent sham elections, our slogan of "No to the executioner,

no to the charlatan” (“*na Jallad, na Shayyad*”) was widely embraced by the public to the extent that Khamenei reacted furiously, asking why the place of the executioner and the victims have been swapped.

Yes, the time has come for exposing the executioners until the day arrives when they will be held to account before the Iranian nation.

What force is this alternative relying on? It is relying on an organized and united movement with thousands of trailblazing and selfless members. It relies on the genuine support of Iranians at home and abroad and the tireless efforts of its dedicated supporters. It relies on political prisoners, who reaffirmed their support recently for this gathering from the depths of their cells and torture chambers.

It relies on women, workers, teachers, professionals, and selfless youths. It relies on their unsparing love and generous financial support, those who barrow money and sell their houses and properties to help keep this Resistance stay independent, strong, and resilient. Thanks to the efforts and risk taking of members of the Iranian Resistance, we exposed the mullahs’ secret nuclear sites when no other government was able to even become aware of them.

Now, why is this alternative reliable and can be trusted? Because we have always stood by what we have said and promised. Not a day goes by without the movement fighting relentlessly for the cause of freedom. Some 120,000 members and sympathizers of this movement have been executed, and the movement has been subjected to massive repression and a continuous barrage of propaganda since June 20, 1981; Still, as even the metaphorical mountains could not stand under the heavy weight of all this, your Resistance movement remained steadfast. And it will not relent until it uproots the medieval mullahs’ Caliph, Khamenei.

In the mythologies of Ancient Persia, Kaveh the ironsmith is renowned for his bravery and the flag that he carried. When oppression and injustice had taken over the land, he was the one who invited a nation to rise up and wage resistance. Arash put his spirit in an arrow that travelled long distances to secure Iran’s borders. Siavash passed through fire to secure his purity and innocence.

Now, our Resistance has resurrected Kaveh, Arash and Siavash in itself. This Resistance will continue to pass through as many fires as necessary and it will continue to sacrifice its life in order to thrust the arrow that ultimately shatters the chains in Damavand mountain and liberate Iran; so Iran could flourish as a garden of freedom and justice.

A powerful asset in the quest for freedom

When a nation offers a political alternative, it means that it already possesses a major asset in its quest for freedom. Therefore, in its battle against the beast of religious tyranny, the Iranian nation is proud to have created a democratic alternative by way of resistance, enduring enormous suffering, and making sacrifices. This decisive asset, a guide marker, did not exist at the time of the Shah. Otherwise, Khomeini could not have hijacked the Iranian people’s 1979 Revolution and turn it against them and the peoples of the region.

However, Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the Iranian Resistance, challenged Khomeini and his Velayat-e Faqih regime. Calling for freedom, he founded the democratic alternative and the Liberation Army. When Khomeini unleashed devastation, Massoud directly confronted the

religious fascism by organizing and revitalizing a progressive anti-dictatorial fighting force in the form of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and the National Liberation Army of Iran.

He created an anti-fundamentalist movement in the region. Through perseverance and by taking a great deal of risk at every step of this half-a-century struggle from Evin to Ashraf, he revived a pioneering generation in the fight to free Iran.

Today, Iran's freedom-fighters have gathered in Ashraf number 3 in Albania. It is common knowledge that after 29 ground and air attacks on Camps Ashraf and Liberty, their miraculous flight out of the flames of danger and blood has not come easy.

Their glorious endurance in Ashraf and Liberty and their safe departure out of concrete walls, while surrounded by the Quds Force and agents of the mullahs' Intelligence Ministry, were made possible after more than 70 meetings, briefings and messages by Massoud Rajavi in the final year before Camp Liberty was evacuated. If it were not for his measures and guidelines starting five years ago after the first missile attack on Liberty, the number of victims would have multiplied significantly.

Indeed, this is how the democratic alternative survived and blossomed. And this is how our Resistance kept alight the flames of hope for victory and freedom.

An appropriate response to Iran's most significant political and social schisms

Our unwavering belief in universal suffrage and the people's free choice, our commitment to the separation of religion and state, our emphasis on women's active and equal participation in political leadership, and our defense of the autonomy of various ethnic groups in the framework of Iran's territorial integrity as well as our people's democratic aspirations for a free Iran in the future, represent significant components of the democratic alternative's wherewithal.

This alternative is the appropriate response to the most significant political and social divides in Iranian society: It responds to the differences among various ethnic groups. It responds to discord and divide between Shiites and Sunnis. It also responds to the tensions among Iran and the countries in the region.

The main demand of this democratic alternative is freedom and democracy for Iran. But the Iranian Resistance is also known for its staunch and persistent opposition to the regime's policy of export of terrorism and fundamentalism. From the outset, the regime was at war with the people of Iran. All the other wars waged against foreign countries have been designed to cover up this main conflict. But these wars are not an indication of the regime's strength. They are an indication of the fact that no government in the region has ever attempted to prevent the regime's belligerence.

Two years ago, everyone saw that the clerical regime suffered a defeat at the hands of the Syrian opposition forces. If it were not for foreign airstrikes, the regime would have been evicted from Syria altogether. Likewise, today, the Iranian regime lacks sufficient power to mobilize and send Iranians to Syria. It has placed the country's economy at the service of war in the region.

The flag bearer of peace and freedom, defense of Syrians, and a non-nuclear Iran

Over the past 38 years, the mullahs engaged in war with Iraq for eight years, have been at war with the people of Syria for the last six years, and have pursued confrontation with the international community for more than ten years in their pursuit to build an atomic bomb.

The Iranian Resistance is proud that it has stood up to the mullahs' religious fascism in all these three spheres: It has been the flag-bearer of peace and freedom; it has been a vanguard in defending the people of Syria, and it has led the way for a non-nuclear Iran.

In our view and in the view of the freedom-loving people of Iran, the Constitution of the ruling religious tyranny is illegitimate, discredited, and void. Our people want a constitution based on freedom, democracy, and equality. The time has come for the international community to heed the demands of the people of Iran.

Our demands reflect the demands of Sattar Khan, the revered leader of the 1906 Constitutional Revolution, and Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq, the leader of Iran's Nationalist Movement in the 1950s. As I have reiterated repeatedly, we want neither money nor arms.

We say that the struggle of the people of Iran for regime change is legitimate, righteous and imperative. We urge you to recognize "resistance against oppression." The same notion that is stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in France's Declaration of Human Rights and Citizens' Rights. This right has also been enshrined in the American Declaration of Independence where it says, "Whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of" the people's rights, "it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government" of their liking. Yes, as Massoud Rajavi has said, "Fighting and resisting for freedom is the inalienable right of the people of Iran under any circumstances." And the Iranian Resistance is determined to uproot the regime which the people of Iran despise.

The solution to the crisis in the region

We have welcomed the statements made at the Arab, Islamic, American Summit in Riyadh against the Iranian regime's terrorist and destabilizing activities. Nevertheless, we emphasize that the ultimate solution to the crisis in the region and to confronting groups like ISIS lies in the overthrow of the Iranian regime by the Iranian people and Resistance.

Accordingly, to the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and countries in the region, we say:

1. Recognize the resistance of the Iranian people to overthrow the mullahs' religious dictatorship. Expel the regime from the UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and hand over Iran's seat to the Iranian people's Resistance.
2. Designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization and evict it from the entire region.
3. Khamenei and other leaders of the regime must face justice for human rights violations and for committing crimes against humanity, particularly for the 1988 massacre of political prisoners in Iran and for their war crimes in the region.

The mullahs' time is up, the time has come to march forward

Dear compatriots, I rely on your enormous power and on your restless and passionate quest for freedom and equality. I count on you, the women and youths of Iran, the Kurds, the Balouchis, the Arabs, Azeris, Turkomans, Lors and Bakhtiaries.

There is a power in you that has made the ruling dictatorship desperate in the face of your resistance and protests; there is a power in you which can certainly overthrow the religious fascist regime.

Yes, the time has come to go on the offensive and march forward.

The era of the mullahs has come to an end.

The time has come to erect 1,000 Ashrafs, as bastions of rebellion, and the Army of Freedom.

So, people of Iran, rise up! Rise up!

Rise up and erect the bastions of resistance.

Onwards to freedom and popular sovereignty!