

Seeking justice for victims of 1988 massacre is indispensable for the Iranian nation's campaign to overthrow the regime in Iran

*Maryam Rajavi's speech on the anniversary of 1988 massacre of political prisoners
August 19, 2017*

Dear sisters and brothers, the honorable friends of the Iranian Resistance,

I salute you all.

The presence of supporters of Iranian Resistance in this gathering, which is calling for justice for the victims of the 1988 massacre in Iran, is heartwarming.

This is an extraordinary gathering. Among you here today, more than 920 have spent many years in prisons of the Shah and Khomeini. Nearly 10 percent were incarcerated under the Shah and about 90 percent under the mullahs' regime. Some served anywhere from 5 to 10 and 12, 13, 15 and even 17 years.

In 2009, the Iranian Resistance's Leader Massoud Rajavi said that the names of all of you, who were in Camp Ashraf, Iraq, at the time, had been sent to all relevant international organizations.

The renowned American law professor Alan Dershowitz, once described the residents of Ashraf as "the largest concentration of witnesses" to the crimes of the Iranian regime in the world and urged the international community to protect these witnesses.

Hail to each and every one of you!

Paying Greatest Tribute to the heroes of 1988

Every freedom-loving Iranian pays respects to the martyred heroes of the 1988 massacre and honors their memory. The highest and most precious

commemoration, however, is what you did by reaching Ashraf from the regime's torture chambers amid the many mass killings. You bore the scars and the wounds of torture on your bodies, but could not be stopped. You suffered greatly under the regime's blockade in Ashraf and Liberty and persevered despite your injured bodies.

You recounted the innocence of the victims, conveyed their defiance of surrender and their message to everyone.

Indeed, what could be a more effective and appropriate commemoration for those martyrs than what you did?

Time and again, I have heard you speak of the valiant Mojahdein prisoners who hailed Massoud Rajavi when facing the torturers and executioners. They called out his name while bidding farewell when taken to the gallows.

By repeating this forbidden name, they wanted to not only express their love and faith in Massoud but to send a message to every one of us.

Their message was to Mojahedin who were continuing their path, to the generation that would follow them and to the youths who would be hearing their unfinished story. And that message was: to follow Massoud Rajavi's path and ideal, the path of paying the price of freedom, the path of the unrelenting struggle for equality, and the path to fight for a society devoid of oppression, discrimination, ignorance, and duplicity.

The founders of the tradition of standing by one's ideals

Dear brothers and sisters,

Khomeini issued the fatwa for this horrific massacre. In those days, in response to the objections of Hossein Ali Montazeri, his heir apparent at the time, he wrote, "The religious responsibility of this decree lies with me" and stated his wish for the annihilation of the PMOI/MEK.

But now, history has damned Khomeini and the Mojahedin are the flames of hope, inspiring freedom.

September 6 will mark the 52nd anniversary of the founding of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran. Our founders founded this organization to bring freedom and eradicate all forms of oppression. To do so, they sacrificed their lives.

They taught their comrades in arm to be the harbingers of new values and lead the way. They also taught us the secret, which is to be truthful and willing to sacrifice.

The PMOI members massacred in 1988 were faithful to this same teaching. They persevered on their stance in the fight against the ruling religious tyranny. They thus founded a tradition which was later called, "standing by one's ideal."

Indeed, our movement has survived and thrived because it has stood by its ideal to liberate the people of Iran.

Iran's future and the Iranian people's freedom will be achieved by standing by one's ideal, namely keeping aloft the flag and paying the price of overthrowing the mullahs' reactionary Caliphate.

The Martyrs' Final Message

So, in the memory of those massacred heroes, let us recall some of their final words and messages.

Daryoush Rezaii, born in Mahidasht in Kermanshah, wrote in a poem for freedom:

"O' freedom! Neither you thirst for blood, nor do we want to shed our own blood. How unfortunate that the evil executioners have drenched the path between us in blood."

And these are the words of a brave PMOI woman, Zahra Bijanyar, who had been imprisoned for years in Ghezel Hesar Prison, to her relatives:

"I have realized that even if the oppressors mutilate our bodies they cannot take our lives so long as we remain steadfast in our beliefs. They can take our lives only when we sell out our faith and hearts. This is the secret to

resistance and sacrifice in the history of mankind. Pray to God to bestow me faith and belief so that I would never put that which I desire before His.”

And Ahmad Ra’ouf, from Rasht, said, “They kept beating me all the time and asking me my name. I knew that they knew my name, but I did not tell them anything. I wanted to test myself and see how steel become stained steel.”

Now, let us flash back 29 years, to a scene in the city of Gatchsaran in southern Iran. The body of a young girl was hanging in the city’s main square. It was Massoumeh Barzandeh who was only 20 at the time of her execution. A sign on her clothes said: “She had been a PMOI recruiter.”

Massoumeh rose to the Heavens, but she continues to recruit young people for the PMOI. And today, 29 years on, Amnesty International writes in its report that “younger human rights defenders born after the 1979 Revolution” are targeted for “seeking the truth and justice” for the victims of the massacres in the 1980s.

And finally, I want to pay homage to Monireh Rajavi. Throughout her detention, she cared for all her cellmates. She was a selfless and emancipated woman. Let us not forget the words she said to her cellmates in prison: “They want to kill our humanity and this is what we must fight against. We must show our affection toward each other more than ever.”

Let us applaud for one minute for all these heroes and heroines.

The conspiracy of silence is shattered

Dear sisters and brothers, honorable friends,

The Campaign Calling for Justice for the Victims of the 1988 Massacre has expanded over the past year both in Iran and abroad. In response, the clerical regime undertook enormous effort to neutralize this movement. But it has failed miserably.

The mullahs were forced to retreat from their policy of hiding the 1988 massacre. The conspiracy of silence was shattered. The regime’s officials tried to justify this horrendous crime but they could not convince even many of their own clerics to defend the fatwa issued by Khomeini.

Indeed, the prospect of the regime's overthrow stymied the regime's supporters and allies. In contrast, many spoke out in defense of the PMOI/MEK. Many opened their eyes and saw the righteousness of the PMOI's path and ideal such that throughout the past year, the mullahs repeatedly said and wrote that the PMOI/MEK had been vindicated in society.

This was yet another major defeat for the mullahs' theocratic regime.

After the sham presidential election, when offering an assessment of the state of the regime, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's said the place of victims and executioners had been switched.

Yes, we managed to overcome the regime's official propaganda.

Everyone saw that Khamenei had made a major political investment in Ebrahim Raisi, a member of the Death Commission in the 1988 massacre, to become president. But he was defeated by the Call for Justice movement.

The 1988 massacre is the hallmark of the mullahs' religious dictatorship. In his first term, Hassan Rouhani appointed Mostafa Pour Mohammadi, a member of the Death Commission, as his Justice Minister. Now, in his second term, he has nominated as Minister of Justice another perpetrator of the massacre in Khuzistan Province. The European Union has already designated and sanctioned this man, Alireza Avayi, for being directly involved in violations of human rights. In reality, none of the regime's factions can or want to distance themselves from this crime.

For this reason, in the past year, a number of the regime's most disgraced murderers tried to justify the massacre in the face of the Call for Justice movement. These admissions are among the most important documents incriminating the regime's leaders. They once again proved that it is the Iranian people's inalienable right to overthrow the regime.

That you have compelled them to make such admissions represents one of the achievements of the Call for Justice movement over the past year. These confessions are particularly important because they have been made recently

and can therefore provide a solid basis for an international commission of inquiry into the 1988 massacre.

At the same time, it is essential that the UN Security Council refer this case to the International Criminal Court to arrange for the prosecution of the regime's leaders and those responsible for the massacre.

How the international community approaches this genocide and this crime against humanity is a litmus test of its adherence to the principles of human rights. As Massoud Rajavi said years ago, the prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators and masterminds of the 1988 massacre are the inalienable rights of human society, the people of Iran, and the PMOI/MEK.

Owing to the valuable year-round activities of the Resistance's network inside Iran, today, we have ample evidence and documents. They include many names of the victims, the names of 112 members of the Death Commission in Tehran and other provinces, nearly all of whom hold key positions in the regime. We also have the names and particulars of 213 criminals who carried out the death decrees in 35 cities as well as the information about the locations of several mass graves that had been previously hidden.

A precious achievement to offer to the Iranian people and all activists of the Call for Justice Movement.

The PMOI Investigative Unit has recently acquired the names of hundreds of victims of the massacre in 1988 from inside the country. Each of these names has been thoroughly examined and verified, and their files have been completed. Accordingly, today, we announce the names of 426 members of the PMOI massacred in 1988, but whose names had not been announced previously.

Also, the new edition of the book titled, *Crime Against Humanity*, has been published in English. It contains the names and particulars of more than 5,000 PMOI martyrs as well as the pictures of hundreds of victims and their graves.

This book is presented to the people of Iran on the eve of the 52nd anniversary of the foundation of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran.

The work by the PMOI Investigative Unit is continuing and the names and particulars of many other martyrs are being investigated. Once completed they will be made public.

Here, I would like to call on my fellow compatriots help us in finding new names, pictures and particulars of the martyrs.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to my countrymen and women, particularly the supporters of the PMOI/MEK inside Iran, for their endeavors in the collection of the new names.

Indeed, this tremendous dossier must be made public line by line. It must be made clear what happened in the prisons of Ahwaz, Mashhad, Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan, Kermanshah, Qom, and other cities.

Since the first days of this massacre, the regime started to arrest and subsequently execute many supporters of the PMOI/MEK and former political prisoners who were not in prison. It must be determined who were the ones arrested and executed and what happened in the summary trials in western Iran?

At the time, the courts dealing with crimes committed at the war fronts were given a different mission and placed at the service of the regime's killing machine. Ali Razini, presently a Supreme Court official, and Salimi, a former member of the Guardian Council, are among those who held the summary trials and ordered the execution of several groups of residents in cities in western Iran. They executed youngsters who had assisted the National Liberation Army of Iran. The ruling mullahs, however, have not published any information on those murders and the so-called trials.

Over the past 29 years, we have repeatedly insisted that information on these incidents must be made public.

In 1995, the regime had to agree to a visit by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran, Professor Maurice Capithorne.

In a telegram on February 9, 1996, on the eve of Capithorne's visit, Massoud Rajavi raised 15 important questions:

How many prisoners has the clerical regime executed so far and how many of them lost their lives under torture?

How many were executed during the massacre of political prisoners in summer and fall 1988, to which even Mr. Hossein-Ali Montazeri, then-Khomeini's designated successor protested?

Where were the bodies of those executed buried? Are their families and relatives still not informed of their places of burial and are they not authorized to visit the graves of their loved ones?

And where are the mass graves? How many victims are buried there and what are their names?

Yes, we will not relent until each and every one of these cases are opened and until everyone involved in this crime against humanity is put on trial before the people of Iran.

13 instances of crime and treason committed by the regime

Dear sisters and brothers,

The regime that shed the blood of Iran's most valiant children, subsequently sanctioned every other crime by violating all ethical and humanitarian principles.

Today, the Call for Justice Movement has shaken the clerical regime to its foundations and is focusing on all of the mullahs' crimes and treacheries, including:

The mass executions of the 1980s;

The massacres in the Kurdistan of Iran;

The forced dispatch of thousands of teenagers to the minefields during the war with Iraq and other war crimes;

The chain murders of dissident intellectuals;

The assassinations of hundreds of opponents abroad;

The bloody crackdown on the uprising in Qazvin;

The crackdown on the 2009 uprising and the atrocities which took place in Kahrizak Prison;
The systematic assaults on women in prisons;
The mutilation of Christian priests;
The repeated slaughter of our Arab compatriots in Khuzistan;
The bombing of the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza;
The terrorist operations against other countries, including in Mecca, Saudi Arabia;
And the dossiers of seven bloodbaths at camps Ashraf and Liberty in Iraq, especially the massacre of 52 PMOI members on September 1, 2013.

These 13 dossiers, are some of the most important crimes that the regime has perpetrated.

The more the Call for Justice Movement advances, the more these dossiers are brought out of darkness.

The Call for Justice is the Iranian nation's noble campaign to expand the struggle and resistance

The Call for Justice for the victims of the 1988 massacre is a national issue and an indispensable part of the Iranian people's noble campaign to overthrow the clerical regime.

This campaign seeks to expand the resistance and the battle to bring down the religious tyrannical regime in Iran and establish freedom, democracy, and equality for all citizens.

We salute all those who have risen against the clerical regime. From here, we send our greetings to the political prisoners in Iran, especially those who are presently on hunger strike in Gohardasht Prison. We hail all of them for their determination and resistance.

I am confident that the religious dictatorship ruling Iran will be overthrown by the Iranian people's uprising and resistance, and with their Army of Freedom and 1,000 bastions of rebellion.

The sacrifices made by our martyrs continue to open the way and guarantee our people's victory.

God bless you all.