

***Maryam Rajavi: We will take back Iran***

***July 13, 2019***

Speech at the Free Iran Gathering at Ashraf 3

Let me first congratulate the birthday of the eighth Shiite Imam, Imam Reza, the eighth leader of progressive Islam against tyrants, (PBUH)

My fellow compatriots,

Honorable guests and distinguished dignitaries,

Ashraf 3 welcomes you all.

Twenty months ago, this was a piece of land with nothing on it.

At the hands of the Mojahedin, however, through their enormous efforts and hard work, Ashraf 3 was built and now stands tall.

But our final destination is Tehran, freed from the occupation of the mullahs.

The mullahs have devastated our homeland, but we will take it back and we will rebuild this most beautiful country.

We started this journey on June 20, 1981, when the Iranian Resistance's Leader Massoud Rajavi forged a deep-rooted and resolute resistance against the religious dictatorship of the mullahs.

He founded the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and the National Liberation Army of Iran (NLA).

Now, Ashraf 3 stands tall along this long journey, a journey that has had many new beginnings and revivals throughout. On this path, we endured ten years of blood-drenched perseverance at the besieged Camp Ashraf and another four years full of determination at a slaughter house called Camp Liberty (in Iraq).

Now, this marks another chapter in a great march towards freedom, towards a free Iran, towards a glorious destination, of course after undergoing enormous suffering and dedicating a roaring river of the martyrs' blood.

On the first anniversary of the start of resistance against the mullahs, Massoud Rajavi said, "The triumph of our resistance will remove not only one of the greatest obstacles before contemporary revolutions, but in fact, the most important cause of their deviation and disintegration, namely the violation of the sacred parameters of freedom under various pretexts and excuses. The revival of the concept of freedom will resurrect humanity as well as defeated revolutions."

He said, "For a nation to appreciate her own freedom, she must ultimately free herself on her own."

He added, “Everyone can only free himself on his own from the yokes of coercion and oppression. And it is precisely for this reason that we are responsible to advance the goal of a general uprising for the freedom of our people and our country.”

Dear friends,

For the people of Iran, the forty years of the mullahs’ rule is synonymous with an all-out massacre.

From several hundred executions every night in the notorious Evin Prison and the massacre of political prisoners during the first decade of the regime’s rule, to the massacre of the economy and production, environment, culture and art, and the Iranian civilization.

Now, the mullahs’ religious fascism has reached the end of the line and is struggling to survive a crisis leading to its overthrow.

The economic devastation, elimination of over 70 percent of industrial capacity, a ruined banking sector, the monthly exodus of some \$3billion worth of capital, and the ceaseless free fall of the value of the national currency, cannot be contained.

The clerical regime is at an impasse. It neither has the capability to negotiate, abandon terrorism or stop meddling in the region, nor does it have any space to maneuver like it did during the appeasement era.

The regime’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei calls negotiations with the U.S. poison and says it is doubly poisonous particularly with the current administration. Why? Because as he acknowledged, any change in the regime’s behavior is tantamount to regime change and “every step back will bring with it an endless chain of subsequent retreats.”

### **Today, the question is, where is this religious tyranny headed?**

Domestically, it is moving towards further contraction in its ranks and in society, suppression of the people, and demonization and terrorism against the Iranian Resistance which it views as its main threat and enemy; a resistance movement that calls for regime change to replace the rule of the vali-e faqih (absolute clerical rule) with the sovereignty and suffrage of the people; a resistance that has been fighting against this regime for four decades; a movement that as Khomeini’s ousted successor (Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri) conceded, cannot be annihilated through killings but is instead further strengthened.

Internationally, the mullahs are counting on inaction and tolerance on the part of the international community. Their calculation is that terrorist operations and warmongering in the region’s countries will not cost them very much, at least until the next U.S. presidential election.

They say to themselves: let’s wait another 16 months, and may be the U.S. would have another president from whom we can extract the same “super concessions” as we did in the nuclear deal!

At this point, I must recall that since November 24, 2013, throughout the negotiations, and both before and after the nuclear deal, the Iranian Resistance had been constantly warning against circumventing the six UN Security Council resolutions.

We particularly called for a complete halt to uranium enrichment, acceptance of the Additional Protocol, and the inspectors' unhindered access to all IRGC centers and other regime suspect sites.

In April 2015, before the nuclear accord was signed, I declared at a French Senate meeting that, "The experience of the Iranian Resistance shows that the mullahs only understand the language of force and firmness." And I stressed, "The time has come for major powers to stop appeasing and giving concessions to the murderous religious tyranny, the central banker of terrorism, and the world's record holder of executions, and to recognize the right of the people of Iran for resistance and freedom."

On the day of the agreement, on July 14, 2015, we said again, "An agreement that overlooks the human rights of the Iranian people and fails to emphasize and acknowledge them, will only encourage further suppression and incessant executions on the part of this regime. It will also trample upon the rights of the people of Iran, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Charter... because the people of Iran have been the main victims of this ominous nuclear program."

### **A glance at recent developments**

Now, let us review the events that have transpired over the past two months:

On May 29, 2019, in an implicit reference to the terrorist operations in Fujairah (UAE), Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Khamenei said, "If (our) bargaining chips and leverage are used properly, U.S. pressure would either dwindle or cease. But if we are deceived by the American "invitations to talk" and do not use our levers of pressure... (our) loss is inevitable."

As for increasing their uranium enrichment to a level beyond the permissible limits, he made the following threat, "We will not stop at that level. In the next stage, we will use other levers of pressure, if necessary."

Indeed, the attack on the Japanese oil tanker at exactly the time when the Prime Minister of Japan was in Tehran for mediations and the downing of a U.S. drone are among the pressure tactics and instruments mentioned by Khamenei. The regime's President Hassan Rouhani curried favor (with the IRGC) and said that he kisses the hands of the involved Revolutionary Guards [commanders and officers].

Just recently, the regime declared that it had boosted its uranium enrichment to 4.5% and threatened to take the next steps.

Additionally, last week, Rouhani tried to blackmail and humiliate European countries by saying, "We will revert the reactor in Arak back to its previous condition, the very conditions that you used to say were dangerous because of their capacity to produce plutonium."

Indeed, in view of such threats, what can we make of their ridiculous claims that the religious fascism considers nuclear weapons to be forbidden and Khamenei has issued a fatwa in this regard? What happened to those claims? Didn't they simply make a mockery of the media and public opinion using those claims?

And the hide and seek game goes on...

## **The regime's schisms and instability**

Clearly, the regime is fueling tensions in a bid to push back against the international community. They foment turmoil and chaos to hide their fear of being overthrown. They want firmness to be replaced with the policy of appeasement. And they want to allay fears and anxiety of their Bassij forces and Revolutionary Guards and to preserve their internal balance and equilibrium.

A former Rouhani advisor has said that when it comes to determining foreign policy within the regime, the two schools of "confrontation" or "engagement" are facing off against each other. In a bid to consolidate power, in a speech on May 22, Khamenei ordered his audience to "set the stage for the creation of a young, Hezbollahi government."

However, the reality is that schism and instability are among the signs that the regime is in its final chapter. The clerical regime is not going to find a way out of its inevitable downfall.

## **Baptizing the godfather of terrorism**

In line with the policy of appeasing the religious fascism over the past three decades, regime apologists turned a blind eye to its crimes committed both within Iran and abroad. They baptized the central banker and the greatest sponsor and godfather of international terrorism.

Instead of the regime, they targeted its arch-nemesis, namely the Iranian Resistance, leveling fictitious accusations against it. They blacklisted the Mojahedin instead of Khamenei's network, and the National Liberation Army of Iran instead the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

Of course, we proudly prevailed in more than 20 courts. They did not find even a single piece of incriminating evidence against the MEK. This history is reminiscent of the ancient Iranian myth where the hero Siavash safely passes through flames of accusations against him.

## **Velayat-e Faqih, the source of war**

Now the obscuring curtains are being pulled away one by one. Everyone can clearly see that the source of war and warmongering is the velayat-e faqih regime. As the Iranian Resistance said from the outset, fighting against this regime is equivalent to seeking peace because it eliminates the source of war and turmoil.

The spin doctors of the clerical regime used to claim that if the mullahs were to be overthrown, Iran would experience war, turmoil and secessions. Now, everyone can see that so long as this regime remains in place, war and crises will continue and intensify in the region. Therefore, anyone who seeks freedom for Iran, anyone who wants to save Iran from destruction and chaos, anyone who wants global and regional peace and stability, must rise up to demand the overthrow of the mullahs' regime.

## **The big ruse created by proponents of appeasement**

The proponents of appeasement seek to paint the policy of firmness against the regime as being tantamount to warmongering. But this is a big ruse and deception. Giving the mullahs any more chances will only end up emboldening them. Their path must be blocked. Albania is an example in this regard.

Last December, in the wake of the Iranian regime and its embassy's terrorist schemes in this country, the government of Albania expelled the mullahs' ambassador and their Intelligence Ministry station chief and terrorist. Subsequently, the U.S. President praised the efforts of the government of Albania in standing up to the regime and confronting its destabilizing activities to silence its opponents. This was to signal to the Iranian regime that its terrorist activities in Europe and all around the world would have serious consequences.

The essential point is that the clerical regime sees that contrary to the past, each of its actions carry serious repercussions.

Yes, a regime whose crimes and warmongering are increasingly exposed on a daily basis must anticipate many more consequences.

### **Historical mission of the Resistance, removing the velayat-e faqih's veil of fear**

After developing a deep understanding about the nature of the ruling theocracy, the Iranian Resistance has been insisting for four decades that the regime is incapable of reform and therefore it is imperative to overthrow and change it. The NCRI has been underscoring the threat this regime poses to regional and global peace and tranquility, and has called for imposing comprehensive sanctions on the religious fascism ruling Iran.

Indeed, if the reactionary nature of Khomeini and his mullahs had not been exposed;

If the Mojahedin had not endured suffering and made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight against the mullahs' IRGC and Gestapo-like intelligence services;

If they had not forced Khomeini to accept the ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war;

If the Mojahedin had not insisted on their stance at the cost of a massacre;

If they had not remained steadfast in Ashraf and Liberty;

If the mullahs' regime had not been condemned 65 times by the United Nations for its human rights violations;

And if the Iranian Resistance had not published its informative books and evidence;

If it had not exposed the IRGC's terrorism, especially the list of 32,000 mercenaries of the Quds Force in Iraq;

If it had not exposed the regime's secret nuclear projects and facilities in Natanz and Arak;

And if it had not awakened and alerted the world about the mullahs' clandestine bomb making program with over 100 accurate and documented disclosures over quarter of a century;

Today, the situation would have been radically different, and the mullahs, equipped with nuclear weapons, would have created and solidified the empire and Caliphate they had long intended to establish.

Yes, the Iranian people and Resistance have paid the necessary and full price. Otherwise, the groundwork for their terrorist designation would never have been created.

Yes, the Iranian Resistance under the leadership of Massoud Rajavi, has accomplished its historic mission, breaking the atmosphere of fear and intimidation created by the velayat-e faqih and their criminal Revolutionary Guard Corps. It thus has left no future for the mullahs' evil caliphate.

### **The clerical regime's overthrow is the definite solution**

The definitive, ultimate and indisputable solution is the overthrow of the religious dictatorship in its entirety at the hands of the people of Iran and their Resistance.

Those who benefit from the perpetuation of this regime used to give bogus promises of reform and moderation in the past, and today, they beat the drums of demonization and disseminate fake news against the Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance. They want to play the role of the regime's saviors. Over the past year alone, 11,500 completely fake and deceptive regime twitter accounts have been closed.

They want to say that there is no alternative to the regime and everyone would benefit from tolerating the mullahs.

But can they stop the wheels of history from turning? Can they reverse the progress of history? Never!

The mullahs' regime and those backing it in its fight against the people of Iran, keep repeating that the Iranian Resistance does not enjoy any support inside Iran.

And we say and reiterate that if the regime's claims are true, why it does not allow us to hold peaceful gatherings and demonstrations across Iran for one single day and only one day?

Of course, the regime has never allowed this and will never do so. Why? Because the mullahs are fully aware that they will be swiftly swept away from power.

### **Resistance is the only benchmark under repression**

Everyone knows that under absolute repression and intimidation, and as long as there is no chance for gatherings, demonstrations, opinion polls, and free elections, the only genuine benchmark (of legitimacy) is resistance. Nothing else is this essential or relevant.

It is with the yardstick of resistance that one can measure the level of support for this movement.

They can measure it by looking at the resolve of PMOI freedom fighters, the struggle waged by units of rebellion, and the efforts and rallies of exiled Iranians and supporters of the Iranian Resistance who cry out, “We will take back Iran.”

## **Units of rebellion**

The creation and spread of units of rebellion and resistance councils has marked a major breakthrough, demonstrating the rightfulness and precision of this strategy during the December 2017-January 2018 uprising and subsequent developments.

This Resistance has been able to expand and organize its network inside Iran despite the pervasive repression. This is how Ashraf has been replicated in society and among the people of Iran.

From a strategic standpoint, the units of rebellion are the answer to a regime that is incapable of reform and will not fall on its own weight. Rather, it can and must be overthrown through the struggle of the Mojahedin, the units of rebellion and the people of Iran.

In its attempts to confront units of rebellion, the regime has recently set up new patrols called “neighborhood patrols” and “Razaviyoun.” It has even reassigned anti-vice patrols in many parts of the country to focus on arresting members of these rebellion units.

Earlier this year, Mahmoud Alavi, the Minister of Intelligence, announced that 116 PMOI teams have been arrested. Then, the director general of intelligence in East Azerbaijan Province said the regime had arrested and confronted 110 persons with ties to the Mojahedin in that province alone. They subsequently issued death sentences and lengthy prison terms.

But the enemy can neither succeed in breaking the morale of resistance forces in prisons nor is it able to thwart the resistance movement and the units of rebellion in cities.

Yes, every young man or woman yearning for freedom and justice is a potential or de facto rebel. A unit of rebellion wrote from Tabriz: We will stand until the end and will get through all the ups and downs. Victory is ours and the dawn is looming.

113 years ago, after the heroism and sacrifice of Sattar Khan and his Mojahedin in Tabriz in the northwest, the biggest rebellious city at the time, the Mojahedin advanced from Rasht in the north and Isfahan in the center and conquered Tehran. May this time, too, the people of Iran conquer Tehran with their units of rebellion and the great Army of Freedom, liberating the entire country from the mullahs’ occupation.

## **The Land of Lion and Sun embracing freedom**

Today, two sides are facing off against each other over the fate of Iran. On the one side is a deadlocked regime, and on the other is a nation and its Resistance fighting for freedom.

Yes, there is an alternative that wants to reach the destination of freedom through units of rebellion, rebellious cities and the Army of Freedom. This alternative is capable of establishing a

democratic and pluralist republic based on the separation of religion and state, gender equality, autonomy of Iran's ethnic groups, and a non-nuclear Iran.

The National Council of Resistance of Iran has concrete plans and programs. Thanks to its organization and cohesiveness, the NCRI can replace the regime and is able to ensure a peaceful transition of power to the Iranian people's elected representatives.

Yes, the day is not far when Iran, the Land of Lion and Sun, will embrace freedom.

We are determined to create a new future, a new plan devoid of tyranny, reactionary thought, duplicity and discrimination. A new design for a free and prosperous Iran.

So, we will sing in unison as we march toward victory: we will take back Iran and we will build a new homeland.

Yes, indeed, we will take back Iran.