

Maryam Rajavi: Terrorism is the essence of religious fascism; the only way to confront it is firmness

Speech to the third session of the Free Iran Global Summit

July 20, 2020

The third session of the Free Iran Global Summit was held on Monday, July 20, 2020. The conference entitled “Iranian regime’s terrorism; Shut down Tehran’s embassies, expel its agents and operatives,” was held online in connection with PMOI members in Ashraf 3. Hundreds of political personalities from the U.S. and Europe, including the PMOI host country of Albania, and a number of members of the US Congress were in attendance and addressed the conference.

Maryam Rajavi elaborated in this conference on the history of the Iranian regime’s terrorist activities. She said:

Distinguished parliamentarians,

Friends, who have joined this gathering from Albania, which hosts the members of the Mujahedeen-e Khalq (PMOI/MEK), Europe and the United States.

Friends and supporters of the Iranian Resistance,

Greetings to all of you. I am incredibly delighted that we could organize this conference and have an opportunity to see you again, despite the distance.

Your attention to the Iranian issue is motivated by your sense of responsibility about the threat against the vital interests of the Iranian people and people around the world.

This global threat is the velayat-e faqih or clerical regime as the central banker of terrorism in today's world. While carrying out suppression, executions and massacres inside Iran, and flaming conflicts in the Middle East, the regime is also pursuing a nuclear weapon.

Terrorism is the essence and fundamental nature of this regime and it is inseparable from it. You may be surprised to hear that within the regime's judiciary, whose henchmen amputate limbs and stone people as punishment, there is a secretary of a council for human rights. His name is Javad Larijani and is one of the oldest theoreticians of the mullahs' terrorism. His older brother was the former speaker of parliament, and his other brother, Sadeq Larijan, was the head of judiciary. In 1994, on the anniversary of the fatwa for assassinating Salman Rushdi, Javad Larijani formulated the mullahs' state-sponsored terrorism as "a sort of new power," which also includes hostage-taking and issuing orders to kill foreigners. He wrote: "To date, the thinking was that political power must be defined based on military and economic strength. ... The Imam's fatwa (to kill Rushdi) showed that the source of political power is something different."¹

"If the world is realistic, it would have to acknowledge the dignity of Islam and Islamic rule based on such power, and not the level of economic progress," he added.

You can see where the terrorist operations are emanating from.

Partial history of the clerical regime's terrorist operations

We have documented more than 450 acts of terrorism outside of Iran by this regime since 2001. 150 cases happened inside Iraq against the PMOI/MEK. These include roadside bombs targeting buses or sending trucks full of explosives to hit the PMOI/MEK's camp, or firing RPG-18 against the residences of mothers of PMOI/MEK members in Iraq.

¹ Javad Larijani, A new type of power, the state-run Ettela'at newspaper, February 17, 1994

Another list of the mullahs' terrorism outside of Iran relates to the killing of PMOI/MEK and other Iranian groups in Iraqi Kurdistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Switzerland, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, and Cyprus.

Now, consider cases in another category of the clerical regime's terrorism: Hostage-taking and murdering foreign nationals in Lebanon; bombings in Beirut in 1982, killing 241 American service members and 58 French military personnel, which was conducted under the supervision of an IRGC commander who later became the current president Hassan Rouhani's defense minister; killing innocent people in the streets of Paris in 1986; killing Haj pilgrims in Mecca in 1987; bombing in Argentina in 1994, using 275 kg of explosives against a Jewish center, and killing 88 people and injuring 151 more; the Khobar Tower bombing in 1996, which resulted in the killing of 19 and wounding of 500 American service members. These are some of the cases among dozens more plane hijackings and other terrorist crimes.

But after the 2003 Iraq War and the hidden occupation of that country by the mullahs, the era of the regime's mega-terrorism began. The mullahs' record has been horrendous in Afghanistan, Yemen, Lebanon and, more than every other place, in Syria and Iraq. Terrorist explosions in the public and among innocent people, destruction of religious shrines or seminaries, assassination of scientists and professionals, kidnapping, mutilation, forced relocation of millions of people leading to their homelessness, etc., each of which incorporate a shocking scale and magnitude. Let me just highlight some of the facts and figures regarding those conducted against American forces.

Yes, the IRGC has directly been involved in the killing of at least 608 American service members in Iraq. So, you can imagine the suffering inflicted inside Iran by the regime, on women, various ethnicities, and followers of other religions.

One example is the horrific crime committed by the mullahs' former deputy Intelligence Minister, Saeed Hajjarian, an advisor to the regime's former president Mohammad Khatami and a theoretician of the phony reformists. The

director of the state-run media from a rival faction said the following about Hajjarian: "One of these folks was once interrogating one of the PMOI/MEK members in the city of Shiraz. He (Hajjarian) tied the person to a tree and used a rope to tie the person's hand to a tractor. Then he drove the tractor until the person's arm split from their body."²

These are the methods used by the regime, and it is how the regime has held onto power over more than 40 years through suppression and terrorism. Vilification and demonization is the flip side of the regime's terrorism because it sets the stage and paves the way for it.

Why do the mullahs engage in such horrific atrocities? Because, as Massoud Rajavi has said, "If someday, the regime abandons the export of fundamentalism and terrorism abroad and limit itself within Iran's boundaries, it will implode and disintegrate."

You all know that in the past two years, the clerical regime has conducted a large number of terrorist plots and operations.

The two terrorist plots pursued by the regime in the spring and summer of 2018 against the Iranian Resistance are the largest terrorist designs of the regime's 40-year history in Europe.

The Iranian regime's leaders planned to launch a major terrorist attack against the Free Iran Grand Gathering in Paris, in 2018. The terrorists in possession of the bomb were arrested by the Belgian Police. The regime's terrorist diplomat who had handed them the bomb, has been in jail for more than two years.

Last week, the trial of this diplomat and his three accomplices began in Belgium. For the first time, a serving diplomat faces trial in Europe for direct involvement in terrorism. Enjoying diplomatic privileges, the arrested regime diplomat

² Hossein Arbabifar, the state-run ISNA news agency, September 23, 2002

directed this plot under the supervision of the senior Intelligence Ministry officials, the regime's supreme leader Ali Khamenei and its president, Hassan Rouhani.

And this shows that the regime views this Resistance and democratic alternative as the main threat to its survival. And it spares to crime to confront the Resistance; even to the extent that it uses its own formal officials to move explosives.

Merely six days after the start of the December 2017 uprisings, the secretary of the regime's Supreme National Security Council, IRGC veteran Ali Shamkhani, said that the PMOI/ MEK "will be hit by Iran's reaction where they would have no idea." He meant that in their attempts to suppress the uprising, the mullahs will target the uprising's leading force.

After carrying out the bombing plot at the Resistance's rally, the regime reportedly planned to claim that the explosion was the work of the PMOI/MEK itself and the result of their internal feuds. That is why, some time before this plot, notorious agents of the regime's intelligence service in Europe had started to spread lies about "mysterious murders" within the PMOI/MEK.

Dear friends,

Now that the case for one of the regime's large terrorist plots is being investigated in a European court, the opportunity is ripe for answering several fundamental questions in this regard.

First, what is the right policy and what is the right policy with respect to the regime's terrorism?

Second, what are the most important methods of this regime for committing such acts?

And, finally, what steps should be taken to confront it?

Western governments' catastrophic mistakes in confronting the clerical regime

So far, western governments have made catastrophic mistakes in this regard. For example, they have played right into the regime's hands by acknowledging that its terrorism is a sign of its power and strength. However, there has always been a direct link between the escalation of uprisings and intensification of social and economic challenges on the one hand, and its resort to terrorism on the other.

Another mistake was the western government's appeasement of the regime in previous years. In fact, it was not the power of the regime that made the expansion of its terrorism and fundamentalism possible, it was this appeasement policy.

For their part, the ruling mullahs have interpreted western governments' appeasement or their turning a blind eye as a sign of weakness, encouraging them to increase their aggression.

Another mistake has been the false hope and expectation that perhaps the religious fascism will one day abandon its terrorism if it receives concessions or incentives. Or, perhaps there will be a sudden emergence of moderates from the camp of ruling savages who would nudge the regime toward reform and moderation. The regime, of course, put on masks of moderation on a bunch of despised murderers, then took away all the concessions, and yet refused to abandon terrorism.

The right policy vis-à-vis the clerical regime is firmness

So, what has been and still is the right policy?

The right policy can be summed up in a single word: firmness.

That means firmly dispensing with everything that enables the regime's terrorist activity, and firmly responding to every single criminal act.

Now, onto the second question: What are the most important methods and tactics used by the religious fascism to advance its terrorist objectives in Europe? It is clear that:

- It takes advantage of the legal, diplomatic, banking and technological means and tools, as well as the democratic conditions, made available by western countries;
- It benefits from the silence of western governments in order to have deniability for its terrorist actions;
- It deceives western security agencies through devious intelligence cooperation, and uses such communications to protect its terrorists;
- It paints its agents as "political opponents" and hides its espionage and terrorist activities under the guise of "opposing the MEK."
- And, finally, it propagates the delusion that if western governments show firmness, they would pay a heavy price for it. But, even in the past two years, the world saw that after the courageous measure of the government of Albania and the expulsion of the regime's ambassador, the expulsion of its diplomats from France and the Netherlands, the arrest of its diplomat in Germany, and also the elimination of the commander of the terrorist Qods Force, the regime has been forced to tread more carefully and limit its activities somewhat. Otherwise, it would have become more emboldened.

The conclusion is that governments must firmly stand up to the clerical regime.

The regime's terrorism grows and expands under the shadow of silence, denial, ignorance, turning a blind eye and looking the other way. It is time for all this ignorance about the people of the world's security and peace to end.

As I said at the outset, terrorism is the essence and fundamental nature of this regime and it is inseparable from it. Therefore, the end of its terrorism is inseparable from the end of the regime itself. But, it can at least be curbed and stopped on European soil through some political and tactical measures and steps.

Call on world governments

1. All of the privileges and resources that the regime relies on to carry out its terrorist acts in Europe must be taken away from it. The regime's embassies must be closed.

In its annual report released in June 2019, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution of Germany (BfV) said: "In Germany, the headquarters of the Ministry of Intelligence at the Iranian embassy in Berlin plays an important role in intelligence operations. In addition to independent intelligence operations, this agency also supports activities undertaken by the Ministry of Intelligence [in Tehran]."

In a resolution in June of this year, a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives urged governments to prevent the malign activities of the Iranian regime's diplomatic missions, with the goal of closing the embassies down, including the Iranian embassy in Albania.

2. The front companies, cultural and educational centers, religious associations and so-called mosques that are funded and supported by the Iranian regime are all centers that sustain the regime's espionage and terrorist activities, and so they must be exposed and closed down.

3. Any form of financial transactions internationally conducted by individuals or front companies of the mullahs' intelligence ministry or the Qods Force must be completely stopped.
4. The regime's agents and operatives who function under the cover of commercial, cultural, or religious activities, or pretend to be journalists or opponents, refugees, or citizens, must be expelled from European countries.
5. Western governments must prevent their security and intelligence services from communicating or contacting the regime's notorious Intelligence Ministry or its Qods Force, an exchange that only facilitates the entry of the regime's agents into Europe.
6. Without any commercial and diplomatic considerations, reports about the regime's terrorist plots, operations and the identities of the Intelligence Ministry and terrorist Qods Force agents and operatives active on in Europe must be published in full and publicized. Similarly, the identities of the regime's front entities or lobbies must be published in full and communicated to the public.
7. We urge all parliaments in Europe and also the U.S. Congress to pass effective legislation facilitating the expulsion of operatives of the regime's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) from their countries.

I hope that all governments respond positively to these calls, because their own people's interests and security depend on such acts of firmness.

What the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance have asked, and continue to ask, from these government is to stand firm against devious state-sponsored terrorism and the foremost sponsor and central banker of international terrorism. It is time for all the ignorance about the people of the world's fate, security and peace to end.

Any act of firmness against this regime and any steps taken against it, anywhere in the world, will aid the Iranian's people's struggle to overthrow the regime, and is in line with international peace and security.

I am thankful to all of you.