

***The Year of Revolution and Freedom- Maryam Rajavi's New Year speech on Nowruz
1398***

March 20, 2019

Happy New Year to the people of Iran who refused to lose hope even under the oppressive and dark rule of the mullahs.

Congratulations to my compatriots in all cities and villages across Iran and to Iranians across the world on the advent of the Persian New Year 1398,

Congratulations on Nowruz to the families of martyrs, to the resistance units, to supporters of the Iranian Resistance, to political prisoners, to members of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, to PMOI freedom fighters and to Massoud Rajavi.

Congratulations on the year of uprisings, the year of hope and exhilaration, and the year of progress and leaping ahead toward freedom and liberty.

Happy New Year to the people of Iran who refused to lose hope even under the oppressive and dark rule of the mullahs.

Let us all salute our dignified Albanian guests who have joined us today in this Nowruz celebration.

In these moments just after the turn of the year, we stand with Iran's workers whose dinner tables are without food.

We stand alongside our farmers whose farms are dry and without water.

We stand with the honorable teachers of Iran who are discriminated against and humiliated, who are forced to live under the poverty line, and who are imprisoned for their legitimate protests.

And we are in alliance with and fighting alongside the army of millions of unemployed youth and graduates whose numbers grow by the year.

We stand, with all our passion, aspirations and determination to continue the struggle, alongside women and children who are perishing in poverty without any support and shelter and under repressive conditions in the impoverished shanty towns surrounding all major cities.

And in these early moments of the New Year, our thoughts are with our slain Mojahed and combatant children, the political prisoners executed this year in 1397 (2018-2019), the 120,000 martyrs fallen for freedom, those buried in Khavaran (cemetery) and other places in every town and village with no tombstones or any marks bearing their names.

Our warmest salutations to you, the heroes, whose names are sung every day in the crimson-colored anthem of freedom.

1397 was the year of the expansion of resistance units, when the strategy of 1,000 Ashrafs and the army of freedom shined brighter than ever in our occupied homeland.

In 1397, uprisings and popular protests shook the pillars of the regime. The policy of appeasement failed, and the mullahs were deprived of one of their main sources of support for clinging on to power.

The New Year, 1398, will be the harbinger of storms and change. Khamenei has already described it as the year when the enemies will make the final push to overthrow the regime.

In the past year, our homeland was a garden witnessing the blossoming of its political and social spring. The flowers of uprisings, protests, and strikes bloomed. The uprisings in Kazerun, Borazjan, Ahvaz, and Khorramshahr; the uprising in the Bazaar of Tehran; the uprisings in 27 cities in early August; five rounds of nationwide strikes by truckers and truck owners; and consecutive strikes and protests by workers, teachers, educators and the retirees; and, finally, thousands of strikes, protests and demonstrations in at least 700 cities and towns.

Hail to the arisen protesters and those who shape the uprisings! Hail to this freedom fighting generation!

Yes, freedom must be earned. The spring of freedom will be achieved through your determination and your efforts. The spring of freedom for the people of Iran is on the horizon.

In the past year, the mullahs lost the nuclear deal (JCPOA) deal which they claimed was the key to all of the regime's deadlocks and the way out of their predicaments. Many western companies,

who had become the clerical regime's and the IRGC's economic partners contrary to the desire of the people of Iran, left the country.

It is now time that the notorious Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps be placed on the U.S. State Department's list of foreign terrorist organizations.

The long-held U.S. policy of appeasement designed to protect the regime against regime change and overthrow was brought to a halt, and the beginning of sanctions on the regime's oil sales has pushed Tehran into a phase of instability and insecurity. That is why the revolutionary realities of the Iranian society have become more evident and visible.

In the meantime, the mullahs have extracted tens of billions of dollars out of the country. The economic austerity policy of Khamenei paved the way for further plunder of our people's wealth. The value of the country's official currency plunged by a third in less than a year. Inflation swelled four folds. Oil exports fell to a half to one-third and the budget deficit increased by at least 50 per cent.

To preserve their decadent regime, the mullahs sold out portions of the resources and water of the Caspian Sea to northern neighbors, granted largescale fishing rights in the south to the Chinese, and conceded the administration of the Port of Chabahar to India.

Still, this regime, which is close to its downfall, will not be able to save itself with the aid of such treacherous acts.

In short, the mullahs have no way out in the face of nationwide uprisings and protests that are encircling them. This results from an understanding of the essence of the uprisings and offers a summary of the past year's events. The regime's death knell and internal tensions have left no more openings for it to display hollow shows of moderation.

The myth of moderation was put to rest by the appointment of Ebrahim Raisi as the regime's Chief Justice. He is a reviled mass murderer who ran against Rouhani, the charlatan, during the last presidential elections. His appointment represented a coup de grace shot to the illusive myth of moderation in the regime. This is while Rouhani's government is half-paralyzed and the most important face of the cabinet facade keeps sitting at home every other day or resigns.

In fact, the entire ruling regime is undergoing an accelerated rate of decay. Since they have no real chance of survival, the vali-e faqih (Khamenei) has arrayed his regime's resources squarely on suppression, spilling blood and criminal activity. He appointed the regime's previous ruthless Chief Justice as the head of the Expediency Council and one of the most brutal perpetrators of the massacre of 30,000 PMOI political prisoners in 1988 as his Chief Justice. Yes, this is the caliphate

of massacre. The message is one of closing ranks and resorting to more suppression. The mullahs' supreme leader seeks to compensate for his defeat in the 2017 presidential elections. He assumes that if Raisi had succeeded to become president, he could have prevented the uprising of December 2017-January 2018.

Now, he has employed this bloodthirsty goon for the same purpose by appointing him to the Judiciary and the Assembly of Experts.

The mullah who perpetrated the 1988 massacre and the executioner involved in the greatest crime committed in the history of the clerical regime must now close all the cracks within the regime. Otherwise, schisms and defections will not leave Khamenei alone for a minute.

Nonetheless, the regime has no way to protect itself. On a daily basis, it keeps jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. Endless bickering and internal feuds over FATF (Financial Action Task Force), the unbridled plunge of the value of the official currency Rial, the alarming status of the budget and financial resources, the black hole of sanctions, defeats in Syria where IRGC mercenaries face repeated blows, the growing threats posed by at least ten million unemployed, and most important of all the unstable circumstances have forced the regime to be on high alert every waking minute of the day.

At its core, the issue is not this or that crisis faced by the regime; the real issue is that their entire rule is in crisis. Yes, this crisis is the crisis of overthrow. And the prospect of overthrow will never abandon this regime, even as Khamenei orders 80 million Iranians to write his absurd speeches three times.

The mullahs have no chance of survival. Throughout the past year, however, they were dreaming of finding a way out by annihilating the Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance. So, they concentrated the core of their efforts on terrorism and demonization targeting the Mojahedin. But they failed.

They planned a major terrorist plot against the Iranian Resistance in Tirana, Albania; they plotted a major bombing of the annual gathering of the Iranian Resistance in Paris. They also conducted terrorist and espionage schemes against members of the Iranian Resistance in the U.S. Add to this a vast volume of smear campaigns against this movement in the press, websites and social media, particularly inside Iran. Over the past year alone, the regime's hirelings made a plethora of film series and movies against the PMOI aired by state-run TV networks or screened in movie theatres.

Their terrorism and demonization efforts, however, were not successful. But in all honesty, they were truly successful in accomplishing one major task and that was to clearly show, hundreds of

times, that their main threat, and the alternative to their regime are the Mojahedin (the PMOI/MEK), the National Liberation Army and the National Council of Resistance of Iran.

Do you remember how much the mullahs and their collaborators dreamed of dismantling this resistance? They expected that after the relocation of the Mojahedin from Iraq, this organization and the movement as a whole would eventually disintegrate. But again, it was proven that they will have to take those goals to their graves.

Last year, the Liberation Army was revitalized in 1,000 Ashrafs and resistance units and started flowing like a river in the streets of Iran's cities. Now, the strategy and explicit positions of the Iranian Resistance are echoed in the words and demands of workers, truckers, teachers, students, farmers and all protesters throughout Iran. The overthrow of the clerical regime is the desire and demand of all of the people in Iran. The Iranian nation in its entirety is demanding the overthrow of the regime.

Indeed, resistance units made significant strides through actions against the centres of suppression and the regime's symbols. In some months of the past year, they carried out more than 100 acts to pierce through the atmosphere of repression. So, 1397 was the year of proliferation of the strategy of the Iranian Resistance, a year in which the prospect of the regime's overthrow loomed large and the path and roadmap became even clearer. Yes, now, the Army of Spring is on its way, the army of spring with 100,000 flourishing roses.

Parallel with this year's uprisings, which exhibit the Iranian society's devotion to welcome rejuvenation and spring, there was a continuous effort within the ranks of the Iranian Resistance to improve and advance humanitarian values and ideals. This effort was ongoing throughout the movement, from the Mojahedin organization, to other members and supporters of the Resistance in various countries, and to members of the resistance units in different cities inside Iran.

The remarkable features of these efforts were reinforced resolve, renewed choices, increased motivation and advances by leaps and bounds in realizing the values of the ideals of humanity and struggle.

Yes, this is indeed a new day with a new revolution in the making, bringing about change. Everyone is passionately endeavoring to create new values to reach the glorious destination of freedom. Everyone is trying their best and making their greatest sacrifice to fulfil their commitment to their enchained nation. They are showing that the strength within their collective enterprise and their coherent and robust organization as well as the power of their people is that enormous and undying force that will uproot the mullahs' theocratic regime.

This is why the Iranian Resistance's Leader, Massoud Rajavi, declared that we have entered a new phase. Regardless of how long it takes and despite all the ups and downs, we must be ready

and prepared because the policy of appeasement has failed, a policy which had protected the inhumane mullahs for three decades.

Now the overthrow of the inhumane enemy is inevitable. Before all else, the army of freedom must be determined and get prepared by diving into a sea of rebellion and revolution. The instruments of revolution must be prepared.

My salutations to your unwavering resolve, your vigor, and our people's resistance.

Again, I would like to remind you of Massoud Rajavi's words in his historic (1980) speech in Rasht, when he said, "Life is tied to the future. Life belongs to those who have a future. Now, it belongs to you... If you choose, if you rise up, if you are vigilant, then you would be the ones who will shape the future. It has always been like this, and it will always continue to be like this. Today, walls will only be torn down in this way."

In the beginning of the New Year, I would like to ask mothers and fathers, my sisters and brothers, my young daughters and sons, that in the face of the cruel and criminal mullahs, you must move ahead hand in hand, with hope and vigor, and welcome the New Year 1398 because it is a year of uprisings, upheavals and revolution.

You must revive the sense of solidarity and sympathy in our wounded society. Your solidarity is that great power the mullahs endeavor to limit or destroy day and night.

The people of Iran want freedom and justice. They want equality and independence.

They need trust, solidarity and coexistence. They want economic and social progress. They want a country where everyone is entitled to have a job and to enjoy equal economic opportunities, and where no one feels a sense of shame because they cannot afford to feed their children.

We want an Iran replete with freedoms, where children and youths are happy, where talents and potentials are realized, and where women play their role in the leadership of society; a country that lives in peace, friendship and coexistence with its neighbors.

The people of Iran deserve such a country and they will write and create such a destiny with their own hands.

The gates of Iran are open to embrace a future without oppression, inequality and injustice; a republic based on the separation of religion and state; a country ruled by its people's suffrage and sovereignty, where the people's votes have the first and final words.

So, rise up, winter is on its way out,
Open the garden's gates,
Here comes the scent of Nowruz
and the beautiful song of nightingales
Happy Nowruz to everyone