



## **Maryam Rajavi: At the turn of the New Year, the clock is ticking in tandem with the footsteps of protesters who yearn for the overthrow of the religious fascism**

*For a democratic and independent republic based on separation of religion and state, a free Iran without the Shah or the Sheikh*

*Speech on the advent of Persian New Year 1400*

**March 20, 2021**

Dear compatriots, Parents of martyrs,

Audacious members of Resistance Units,

Rebels who have resolved to launch more uprisings,

Restless and eager people in rebellious cities,

Happy Nowruz 1400!

May this year be the year of uprisings which would overthrow the regime.

At the turn of the new year, the clock is ticking in tandem with the footsteps of protesters who yearn for the overthrow of the religious fascism, who seek to establish a democratic and independent republic based on separation of religion and state, a free Iran without the Shah or the Sheikh, with no reliance on despotism.

May our heroic people be happy in their quest for the spring of freedom.

Iranians hear the coming of spring in the ticking of the clock after the turn of the New Year, and the mullahs hear the footsteps of protesters who are on their way to uproot the winter of oppression, poverty and pillage. They are coming to build a new Iran, a happy and prosperous Iran, a bright and blissful Iran.

### **The prospects of the New Year**

The past year saw two ominous viruses devastating our nation: The Coronavirus and the Velayat-

e Faqih (absolute clerical rule) virus. They spread death and darkness, and tried to extinguish every flame and every movement, and to impose sorrow and grief all over the country. But Resistance Units and rebellious youths kept these flames alight. And eventually, these flames roared in Saravan, in Sistan and Baluchistan.

The underprivileged and the working masses engaged in protests throughout the year. Fearful and stranded in a deadlock, the regime had tied its hopes to the change in U.S. administrations. The people of Iran were, and still are, struggling amid disease, poverty, and hunger.

But without a doubt, Iran will rise up and will overcome both ominous viruses.

The Persian year 1400 will see the blazing of the flames of uprisings from underneath the ashes of disease and repression. It will see the people of Iran rising up again to overthrow the regime.

With this promising prospect, Happy Nowruz to everyone who is struggling for freedom, and all the rebels who will win victory.

And Happy New Year to the selfless young people in the Resistance Units who risk their lives every day. I extend my greetings to the fighters who embrace the pain of imprisonment and torture in Khamenei's dungeons.

And I congratulate Massoud Rajavi on the advent of spring and Nowruz, the Leader of the Iranian Resistance, who leads this enormous force of rebellion within Iranian society towards uprisings and the regime's overthrow.

My sincerest congratulations to members of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, to all the supporters of the Iranian Resistance and the NCRI around the world.

As we begin the New Year, we salute the executed political prisoners, particularly Mostafa Salehi and Navid Afkari, the brave men who resisted and remained steadfast. We salute the innocent people who lost their lives while working to earn a living. My special salutes to the fuel carriers in Baluchistan and the porters in Kurdish provinces who were shot by Khamenei's revolutionary guards. I salute the mothers of all the martyrs, particularly the mothers of the 1,500 martyrs of the uprising in November 2019.

I hail the national hero, the Mojahed pilot, Col. Behzad Mo'ezzi, and all the PMOI members who passed away last year, particularly the nine proud men and women who lost their lives due to the Coronavirus at Ashraf 3.

In the final moments of this year, we are grateful to God because the PMOI members at Ashraf 3 were able to get through the pandemic safely and collectively owing to the selfless efforts of the organization's members and officials and the unremitting support of their selfless supporters. They thus passed another tumultuous test with pride and vigor over the last year.

We remember the great Mojahed Hamid Assadian who wrote a poem about 100 springs:

In this pleasant spring, odes emerge  
From waters, from dreams, through winds and memories  
One can hear the sound of 100 thousand of them...

Look,  
Look how 100 springs,  
Are on the way  
Each more lively than the other.

### **Boycott of the nationwide election sham**

Fellow compatriots,

Today, the mullahs' religious fascism is stuck in dire conditions which have been unprecedented over the past 40 years. Rouhani's government is broken and crippled.

The turnout for the mullahs' parliamentary sham elections (in February 2020) dropped to its lowest level in 40 years despite all the regime's efforts to tamper with the figures.

The regime's supreme leader Ali Khamenei chose a Revolutionary Guard veteran, Mohammad Baqer Ghalibaf, to head the mullahs' parliament. This was the first step on the path to maximally close in ranks and to consolidate power. Khamenei needs to consolidate power and to preserve his own hegemony in order to ensure the regime's survival. Therefore, he has to eliminate the so-called reformist faction which functions as a protective insulator for the regime. So, what becomes clear as day is the solution offered by the Iranian Resistance, the strategy of overthrowing the regime through popular uprisings.

The Iranian Resistance has always boycotted the clerical regime's sham elections over the past 40 years. Over time, more groups, parties and social strata have realized the veracity of this reaction, and have joined the boycott.

There is a contradiction in terms when Khamenei seeks to hold a vibrant election, but at the same

time, seeks to install his own subservient candidate. The regime's presidential election sham, however, does not bear any vestige of legitimacy in the eyes of the Iranian public. The Iranian people's nationwide boycott of this election is the flip side of popular uprisings, and yet another response to the murderers of 1500 blood-drenched martyrs of November 2019.

The Iranian people have said and will say NO to the mullahs' regime, NO to religious fascism, NO to despotism, tyranny and pillage. YES to freedom, YES to the universal suffrage, and YES to a democratic republic.

Compatriots,

Throughout the past year, the regime's deadlocks surfaced one after the other on various occasions.

In the case of the elimination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the regime's top nuclear weapons official, the regime's Minister of Intelligence acknowledged that this operation had been carried out by an IRGC infiltrator. This incident was a clear show of the hollow nature of the regime and its escalating internal power struggle and the rupturing of the regime.

Regionally, the peoples of Iraq and Lebanon dealt a heavy blow to the regime's strategy of export of fundamentalism and terrorism, particularly since the regime has not been able to fill the void caused by the elimination of Qassem Soleimani.

Economically, the regime's experts are confessing one after the other, that the regime has reached the end of the line. But the truth is far beyond these facts: The bells are tolling for the mullahs' overthrow.

### **Social circumstances for a revolution**

In such circumstances, Khamenei and Rouhani have welcomed and continue to welcome the outbreak of the coronavirus disease all across the county. Their inhuman strategy is to pave the way for the spread of the virus. More than 235,000 of our compatriots have lost their lives to the Coronavirus so far.

In the case of the tragic downing of the Ukrainian passenger airliner [in January 2020], no one could initially believe that the regime had shot down the plane itself. In the case of the disease, initially it was inconceivable for many to believe that Khamenei and Rouhani are deliberately sending people to their demise. But the Iranian Resistance quickly exposed the regime's ominous

strategy from the outset. Massoud Rajavi said: “Khamenei and Rouhani have adopted the strategy of causing massive human casualties and sending people to the minefields of the Coronavirus to protect the regime from the threat of uprisings and from being overthrown.”

And today, the state-run media write: “We were looking for a savior to distract the public’s attention from the incidents in November and December when the Coronavirus arrived and kept the hungry, depressed, and struggling public stranded in a room with a hungry lion.

Since the beginning of the outbreak in February 2020, Massoud Rajavi outlined a list of measures to deal with the Coronavirus. They included:

Khamenei must allocate 100 billion dollars of his wealth and assets of the “SETAD of executing Khomeini’s order” and the enormous wealth accumulated in the cooperatives of the IRGC, Bassij, the State Security Forces, the Mostaz’afan Foundation, and all the money it spends in Iraq, Syria, Gaza, and Lebanon to the provision of medical treatment and cures for the people of Iran. The budget for the regime’s nuclear and missile programs, and the assets and resources of the Red Crescent used for export of fundamentalism and terrorism must be allocated to the medical treatment of people who have contracted the Coronavirus. The assets of the Astan-e Qods Razavi endowment, which are under Khamenei’s control, must be used to pay for the salaries and all the treatment costs of workers, teachers, and government employees. All prisoners, particularly political prisoners, must be released immediately.

Now, one can conclude what the difference would have been if the regime had undertaken any of these measures.

Indeed, the Coronavirus and the virus of the Velayat-e Faqih are allies. Khamenei even accepted the disgrace of his inhuman policy for preventing the import of vaccines to Iran.

Less than two weeks ago, the regime’s Health Minister said: “We face a horrendous storm in Khuzestan which is worse than the storm in Wuhan.” Yes, this is the tragic conditions our country is facing under the mullahs’ rule.

In the face of the mullahs’ cover-up, over the past 13 months, the Iranian Resistance exposed Coronavirus casualties in each of the Iranian provinces on a daily basis. The NCRI did not allow these deaths to be treated as a trivial or normal daily occurrence.

Despite the disease, our disenchanted people displayed their outrage and fury repeatedly during

riots in prisons, social protests, the strike of workers, teachers and educators, retirees and pensioners, students, farmers and bazaar merchants.

The reality is that the circumstances for a revolution are in place in Iran, and the social readiness for overthrowing the regime is beyond the shadow of a doubt.

To contain this tremendous explosive potential, the mullahs stepped up repression, arrests and executions. They resorted to demonization campaigns against the PMOI and the Iranian Resistance and hatched terrorist plots against them. And, they tied their hopes and prayers to the 2020 US elections.

But 2 months after the new U.S. President took office, it has become clear that a return to the previous balance of power is impossible and the regime will not be able to unwind. Its missile launches on Iraq and Saudi Arabia will not solve any of their problems either. So, whatever happens in the future, the outcome awaiting the regime would be the outburst of uprisings leading to its overthrow.

And again, we tell them that if you want, negotiate, and do it fast. But beware, that with the JCPOA or without it, with the sanctions or without them, the regime cannot escape the outbreak of uprisings and its overthrow.

If they escalate repression and close ranks further, the outcome would not be any different. If they were to retreat and drink a “poison chalice,” shattering the spell of repression, the outcome would be much better for everyone and particularly for the people of Iran.

Three years ago, at the Free Iran Grand Gathering in Villepinte, I said: “We welcome any retreat on the part of the mullahs.” I pointed out: “A thousand chalices of poison will serve the cause of 1,000 Ashrafs.”

And I emphasized that “the overthrow of the regime, democratic change in Iran and establishment of a free Iran lies within the realm of our own responsibility and that of our people.”

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## **The advancements of the Iranian people's Resistance**

Compatriots, supporters of the Iranian Resistance,

The Iranian Resistance took a step forward every day over the past year in the course of its relentless struggle.

Everyone sees the activities and operations of Resistance Units on a daily basis across the whole country.

An untiring daily reporting on the Coronavirus casualties in Iran and participation in all the popular protests demanding our people's rights as well as exposing the regime's crimes are among our daily duties.

Internationally, too, there was a bipartisan resolution last June signed by a majority, 222 members, of the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as a resolution supported by 158 members of the new session of Congress, declaring support for the Iranian Resistance's ten-point plan and rejecting both dictatorships of the Shah and the Sheikh. These resolutions are very telling and clear. Both stipulate that the Iranian people have "rejected monarchic dictatorship and are opposing religious tyranny."

The next step was a ruling by the Court of Hamburg against the allegations published by the Frankfurter Allgemeine coming in the wake of the court ruling against allegations published by DER SPIEGEL, shedding light on the demonization strategy of the mullahs' and their accomplices against the Iranian Resistance.

In another development, seven United Nations special rapporteurs recognized the massacre of political prisoners in Iran in 1988 as "a crime against humanity" and called for an "in-depth" and "independent" investigation into it.

The series of Iranian Resistance's virtual international gatherings and conferences, particularly its annual gathering, set new records by leveraging the latest modern technology at the height of the Coronavirus pandemic and connecting 30,000 locations in 102 countries.

Another significant step was the publication of an investigative report by the Treadstone cyber security firm, which revealed that the tweet storm against the Iranian Resistance on July 17, 2020, had been launched by the IRGC's cyber network in cooperation with the regime's Intelligence Ministry.

Also, the historical verdict of the Court of Antwerp in Belgium was the culmination of the

sacrifices of the martyrs of the Iranian people's Resistance in confronting the long-time policy of appeasement.

Yes, in addition to heavy prison sentences, the verdict revoked the passports and citizenships of the regime's agents, instilling fear among the regime's intelligence agents all across Europe.

On behalf of my compatriots and the dignitaries who took part in the Resistance's annual gathering in 2018 and were targets of the regime's plot, I would like to urge the governments of Germany, Belgium and France, to publish the contents, documents, names and addresses obtained from the notebook of the regime's terrorist diplomat.

No document must be classified or treated as highly confidential. To secure immunity against the regime's terrorism, espionage and demonization, European services in various countries must reveal the names of the agents and contacts working with the clerical regime and its Intelligence Ministry who use the cover of refugees or citizens in these countries.

I have personally heard from many parliamentarians and politicians that a number of these mercenaries act on behalf of both the clerical regime's Intelligence Ministry as well as the associated European countries' intelligence services. This is also one of the mullahs' Intelligence Ministry ploys where it trains its agents to operate as double agents in order to avoid arrest and prosecution. Of course, for any country that respects democracy and human rights, this is a dark stain that must be removed.

In retaliation for the conviction by the Court of Antwerp, the mullahs have set up a theatrical trial to prosecute the officials of the People's Mojahedin.

But this ludicrous show was shattered by the decisive and enlightening response of Massoud Rajavi, where he called on Khamenei, Rouhani and [regime's judiciary chief] Raisi to appear before an international tribunal; An invitation which was met with widespread support by our compatriots in Iran and abroad. Once again, the mullahs noticed that they had entered into a confrontation which they would certainly lose.

### **Resistance Units, the flames of hope**

Dear compatriots,

The Iranian Resistance's major advancement in the Persian calendar year 1399 [March 2020 to



March 2021], was in the form of the overwhelming initiative of Iran's courageous youth to join the PMOI and spread the network of its supporters in Iranian cities. The wave of arrests, instilling of terror and fear, and ceaseless publication of books, movies, TV series and various publications against the PMOI inside Iran by the regime are aimed at denting the younger generation's support for the PMOI.

But as [the late Iranian singer] Marjan said: Even if you strike, cut and kill (the tree), what will you do with the growth of sprouts?

### **Yes, this is how the spring blossoms**

This is how the resilient PMOI prisoners who have been in chains for 10, 15, and even more than 20 years, remain steadfast to their cause and commitment. They gather their cellmates and promote hope and happiness among prisoners. They celebrate Nowruz even if it is with only a sugar cube.

And indeed, which spring and feast is more auspicious than remaining steadfast to one's cause against the enemy of Iran and of all Iranians?

Mothers of martyrs gather at their brave children's graves. They celebrate Nowruz by speaking about their children's courage, goodness, kindness and humanity. Indeed, isn't Nowruz the time for cherishing and promoting such benevolence?

Workers, government employees, and all the impoverished and underprivileged workers celebrate Nowruz with the warmth of their kindness. They will create future uprisings by fostering solidarity among themselves. What Nowruz would be more auspicious than the joining of hearts and wills to bring down the Zahak [mythical evil figure] of our time.

And the PMOI freedom fighters, those who set up the collective leadership organ for leading the uprisings, strengthen their will and determination by new pledges to continue the fight with the ruthless enemy and to realize the Iranian people's political and social Nowruz.

And what Nowruz would be better than the one that involves the forging of a new future and the establishment of freedom?

So, with our hearts filled with hope, and our heads filled with great aspirations we can forge the free Iran of tomorrow. Freedom will be established by selfless protesters and combatants for liberty.

Together, we pray in these moments before the advent of the New Year.

O' God, you open the hearts and eyes of people to discover the immense hidden power in their determination and their movement;

You are the one who brings out the light of freedom from the depths of darkness of despotism and tyranny;

You are the one who changes the times and eras;

Defeat the rule of religious fascism in Iran, replace it with the Iranian people's sovereignty, and spread the spring of freedom all over Iran!

Happy Nowruz and Happy New Year 1400 to all of you.