



## Washington Summit in Support of Iran Uprising, for a free and democratic Republic of Iran

*Maryam Rajavi: The Iranian people strongly reject all forms of dictatorship*

**March 11, 2023**

On Saturday, March 11, 2023, Mike Pence, the former Vice President of the United States, participated in a gathering of freedom-loving Iranians and supporters of the Iranian Resistance in Washington, D.C., where he delivered a speech.

Maryam Rajavi also delivered a virtual speech to the gathering, which was held in support of the Iranian people's uprising and their aspiration for a democratic and free republic.

Notable political figures, including Senator Sam Brownback, General Wesley Clark, Governor Gary Luck, and Senator Robert Torricelli, as well as a multitude of supporters of the Iranian Resistance from the Iranian-American community attended the event.

In her opening remarks, Maryam Rajavi told the audience:

Vice President Mike Pence,

General Wesley Clark, Ambassador Sam Brownback, Ambassador Gary Locke,

Senator Torricelli, Mr. Marc Short,

Distinguished personalities, dear compatriots,

I salute you all.

With special greetings to the distinguished figures of the United States who support the noble struggle of the Iranian people to overthrow the regime and establish freedom and democracy.

It has been nearly six months since Iran's nationwide uprising began.

Despite the regime's widespread crackdown on the protest movement, Iran uprising remains the most significant threat to the existence of the regime.

In a state of weakness, the regime has resorted to committing any crime to stop the uprising, resulting in tens of thousands of arrests and at least 750 deaths. In the past three months, the regime has carried out a horrific crime by poisoning thousands of schoolgirls nationwide through chemical attacks to stop the uprising.

### **The clerical regime will never return to the previous balance**

Despite this brutal suppression, the regime has failed to uproot the uprising. Because:

First, this uprising has roots in the explosive state of the society, poverty, unemployment, and above all the catastrophic situation of women.

Second, the Resistance Units and a nationwide network of the organized resistance inside the country play a serious role in the uprising.

For this reason, the situation in Iran will never return to before the beginning of this uprising.

The cries of death to Khamenei have spread across Iran. People have no fear and nothing to lose.

The regime has become weaker and faces more defections. It cannot prevent the explosive situation, because that needs fundamental reforms, which will in turn lead to the regime's overthrow.

But, the explosive situation of society, does not lead to the regime's overthrow by itself. Without the presence of an organized force ready to make sacrifices, this situation will not have a result in favor of people. To set the great social engine in motion, an organized and dedicated force is inevitable.

### **The center of hope for the Iranian people**

During his visit in June to Ashraf-3, after witnessing a part of the Iranian Resistance's pain and suffering in its confrontation with the regime in the Resistance's Museum, Vice President Pence said, "Resistance Units in Iran are the center of hope for the Iranian people. An engine for change from within during the uprisings and continued protests. And every day it's clear they're growing stronger while the regime grows weaker."

Today, we are witnessing the work of that engine all over the country. Despite the regime's extensive arrests, increasing number of people joined the MEK Resistance Units during the uprising. Recently the Resistance Units undertook dozens of anti-regime operations daily, including burning regime symbols.

As a result, the regime is making every effort to eliminate the MEK, resorting to demonization campaigns in addition to suppression.

The regime has never hesitated to use its so-called opponents to confront its primary enemy, the MEK. This is because the regime sees the MEK as the engine of the uprising and overthrow.

In this context, the regime seeks to overshadow the democratic alternative by promoting remnants of the previous regime, which is nothing but a "transition" from the current regime to the former regime.

The Iranian people fully understand that the monarchy in Iran has always been a manifestation of fascism. During Shah, all freedom fighters were either imprisoned or executed, which enabled the mullahs to hijack the leadership of the revolution. The people strongly reject any kind of dictatorship, including the return to monarchy. One of the most widely chanted slogans has become "death to the oppressor, be it the Shah or the mullahs."

Today the Iranian people are fully aware that they must distance themselves from all forms of dictatorship.

The Iranian Resistance has called for the formation of the National Solidarity Front since 2002. This front has been proposed based on three principles: First, the overthrow of the regime in its entirety, second, the formation of a democratic republic, and third, the separation of religion and state.

Today, the democratic forces and the protesters are uniting around these three principles.

Distinguished guests,

Today, young boys and girls are shouting "we will fight, we will die, we will take back Iran" in the streets of our country. These chants echo over four decades of resistance and the sacrifices of 120,000 martyrs on the path to freedom.

The Iranian people's current situation is best reflected in the famous statement of Patrick Henry in March 1775: "Give me liberty, or give me death."

### **The missing link in Western policy**

We are aware of the difficulties on the path ahead. But no obstacle can deter us from pursuing our objectives. The ruling religious fascism in Iran can and must be overthrown.

The missing link in western policy is its exclusion of the Iranian people and the Resistance from the equation in Iran. This has harmful effects not only on the people of Iran but also on the region and the world.

House Resolution 100, entitled "Expressing support for the Iranian people's desire for a democratic, secular, and non-nuclear Republic of Iran" provides a framework for a principled policy. The resolution affirms that Congress "stands with the people of Iran who are legitimately defending their rights for freedom against repression."

The National Council of Resistance of Iran is the most long-lasting political coalition in Iran's modern history.

The NCRI is fighting for the establishment of a democratic republic in Iran, which guarantees free elections, freedom of speech and assembly, the separation of religion and state, gender equality, autonomy for nationalities, and a non-nuclear Iran.

On behalf of the Iranian people's Resistance, I call on the United States to:

- declare the Iranian people's struggle to overthrow the regime as just, necessary, and legitimate;
- recognize the right of the rebellious youth to defend themselves against the terrorist Revolutionary Guards (IRGC).

Thank you all very much!