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## **Ramadan, messenger of peace and friendship to the Middle East and the world of Islam**

Maryam Rajavi addresses a conference on the Holy Month of Ramadan

**March 26, 2023**

On the fourth Iftar of Ramadan, Sunday, March 26, 2023, the NCRI hosted a conference titled, “Religious Tyranny, the main Enemy of Islam of Peace and Equality; United with Iranian Uprising and Resistance for Democratic Republic,” at its headquarters in Auvers-sur-Oise.

The conference featured parliamentarians from Arab countries, former ministers, political and religious dignitaries from France and the Arab world.

Maryam Rajavi attended the conference online, and in her opening remarks told the conference:

Dear friends, sisters, and brothers, and distinguished guests,

Ramadan Kareem! Happy Ramadan to you and to all Muslims, especially in France.

As we enter the holy month of Ramadan, we cannot ignore the stark reality faced by our fellow Muslims in Iran, where the fundamental messages of Islam – freedom, justice, mercy, and emancipation – are being trampled upon by a repressive religious dictatorship.

According to official figures, a majority of Iranians are living below the poverty line, while the military and repressive organs continue to receive increased funding, and public services face devastating budget cuts.

Despite these challenging circumstances, the Iranian people’s uprising has been ongoing for the past six months. However, the regime has responded with a brutal crackdown to prevent its expansion, resulting in the tragic loss of more than 750 innocent lives, including children, at the hands of the IRGC. Yet, the movement continues to gain momentum.

Our Baluchi compatriots in Zahedan have once again taken to the streets to demand the overthrow of the regime, boldly chanting “down with Khamenei” and “down with the oppressor, be it the shah or the mullahs’ leader.”

On March 14, the people transformed the fire festival into a powerful anti-regime demonstration, and on March 16, they gathered beside the tombs of those slain in the uprising, raising their voices in unison with the powerful slogans “down with the dictator” and “down with Khamenei.”

Like any revolution, we faced two deceptions by the regime and its allies.

The regime and its allies abroad are engaging in a deceptive campaign, attempting to insinuate that the demonstrators seek to return to the monarchy in order to derail the uprising. This insidious tactic is aimed at quashing any hope for progress and democracy in Iran’s future.

They seek to convince the Iranian people that their only options are to accept the current situation or to return to the previous dictatorship. However, the Iranian people have reacted with unwavering resolve, both in Iran and abroad, with the powerful slogan “down with the oppressor, be it the shah or the mullahs’ leader.”

### **Support the Iranian people’s Revolution**

Dear friends,

In these critical times, while foreign governments have yet to take concrete actions to support the Iranian people, parliamentary representatives from Europe, the United States, and the UK have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to the Iranian people’s revolution for a democratic republic. This is evident in the resounding majority resolution passed by the US Congress and the numerous declarations signed by elected representatives in European parliaments.

Furthermore, the mullahs’ deceptive campaign seeks to imply that the Iranian people’s uprising is against Islam and the hijab, rather than against the oppressive regime. This blatant lie is easily refuted by the slogans that have been chanted during the protests, which unequivocally target the dictatorship. The Iranian people’s goal is not to ask anything from the regime, but to overthrow it.

The Iranian people’s slogans boldly state their opposition to Khamenei, the IRGC, and the corrupt factions within the ruling clique. It is essential to underscore that this revolution is not a mere protest against the veil, but a bold stand against its compulsory imposition. As one of the women’s slogans eloquently declares, “With hijab or without hijab, onwards to the revolution!”

This uprising transcends all ethnic and religious divisions and belongs to all Iranians.

## **The genuine Islam**

Khomeini and his successor, Khamenei, sought to position themselves as representatives of God and Islam on earth, branding their opponents as enemies of Islam and God, or Mohareb.

Since the outset of the 1979 revolution, the People's Mojahedin of Iran has been steadfast in defending its objectives, which include freedom. It valiantly spoke out against Khomeini and paid a high price for their dissent.

At that time, it was challenging to discern the true nature of the regime, but the PMOI, which championed genuine Islam, made it clear that Islam is a religion of compassion and emancipation, not what the new rulers of Iran claimed it to be. Islam is not misogynistic but founded on freedom, equality, and free choice for all individuals, regardless of their gender or religion, As the Quran says: "The most honorable among you to God is the most pious."

We have staunchly opposed religious compulsion, emphasizing that it runs counter to the teachings of Islam, and citing the Quran to argue that the prophets came to free humanity from bondage. We asked, 'If this is so, why have you come only to chain the people further?'

In this vein, we pointed out that in Islam, sovereignty is a right bestowed upon the people, and that it is their decision to make.

These rights were outlined in Massoud Rajavi's platform for the January 1980 presidential election in Iran, the NCRI Plan for the separation of religion and state in 1985, and the 10-point plan for the future of Iran, which advocates free and fair elections, the separation of religion and state, gender equality, and a non-nuclear Iran.

For us, freedom of choice is both an ethical and a political imperative. The regime would prefer that its main opposition force not be Muslim, but the People's Mojahedin have persevered and deeply impacted Iranian society, precisely because of their unwavering commitment to humanitarian values and genuine Islam.

The PMOI's selflessness in the face of the regime's religious dictatorship has exposed Khomeini and his successors as demagogues who exploit Islam for their own interests, and as criminals who have imprisoned and oppressed the Iranian people, while spreading death, terrorism, and fundamentalism throughout the region.

Dear friends, dear sisters, and brothers,

What is happening in Iran right now is nothing short of a historical transformation, and your support for the Iranian people and Resistance is playing a crucial role in this great upheaval. At

this critical juncture, I urge you to convey the message of the Iranian people's uprising and democratic revolution to the world.

As we enter the holy month of Ramadan, I wish you a blessed and peaceful celebration.

We need your prayers and support during this month.

May this Ramadan bring peace and friendship to the region and the Middle East, and may the Muslim world be freed from the scourge of the mullahs.

Thank you all.