Supreme Leader's Speech in Meeting with Basij Commanders - 20 /Nov/ 2013

The following is the full text of the speech delivered on November 20, 2013 by Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a meeting with fifty thousand Basij commanders. The meeting was held at the Musalah in Tehran.

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and greetings be upon our Master and Prophet, Ab-al Qassem al-Mustafa Muhammad and upon his immaculate, pure and chosen household, especially the one remaining with Allah on earth.

Greetings be upon you Abi Abdullah and upon those who laid down their lives for you. I will send you God's eternal greetings as long as I live and as long as night and day prevail. May God not make this prayer my last covenant with you. Greetings be upon Hussein, upon Ali ibn al-Hussein, upon the children of Hussein and upon the companions of Hussein - those who laid down their lives for Hussein (a.s.).

This meeting is a very important meeting. Basij is the manifestation of the greatness of our nation and the domestic capability of our country. This meeting is the meeting of commanders. You tens of thousands of commanders of Basij have gathered in this place and one can guess from this large gathering how glorious Basij is. You are a source of satisfaction, hope and trust for the supporters of the Islamic Republic, the Revolution and the country and you are a source of intimidation and fear for the ill-wishers, enemies and those who bear a grudge [against the Revolution and the Islamic Republic].

The coincidence of Basij Week with these days, which are the days of the great epic of the history of Islam, is a good and valuable occasion. What I mean by this great epic is the epic created by Zaynab al-Kubra (s.a.) which complements the epic of Ashura. The epic that Zaynab al-Kubra (s.a.) created revived and preserved the epic of Ashura. The greatness of what Zaynab al-Kubra (s.a.) did, cannot be compared to other great events in history. It should only be compared to the event of Ashura itself and truly, these two events complete one another.

This great personality and this great lady of Islam and all of humanity managed to stand firm in the face of the great mountain of hardships and there was not even a tremble in her voice because of all these events. She stood firm like a glorious mountain peak both in the face of enemies and in the face of hardships and bitter events. She became a lesson, a role model, a leader and a pioneer.

At the bazaar of Kufa, while she was held captive, she made this astonishing speech: "Oh people of Kufa, who are treacherous and disloyal, do you cry for us? May your tears not dry and may your moans not stop. You are like a woman who loosens her threads after she pulls them together" [al-Ihtijaj, Volume 2, page 303]. The words are as firm as steel and the meaning flows like a river and it influences hearts and souls. In such conditions, Zaynab al-Kubra delivered a speech, which was like the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.), and she shook hearts and souls and she shook history with these words. This speech became eternal in history. It was delivered in front of the people while she was held captive.

After that, she delivered a speech in front of Ibn Ziad in Kufa and a few weeks later, she spoke in front of Yazid with such strength that it both humiliated the enemy and the hardships which the enemy had imposed. She said, "Do

you foolishly think that you can defeat, suppress and humiliate the household of the Holy Prophet (s.w.a.)?" "Honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the believers" [The Holy Quran, 63: 8]. Zaynab al-Kubra is the manifestation of dignity, as Hussein ibn Ali (a.s.) was the manifestation of dignity in Karbala on the day of Ashura.

The way she looks at events is different from the way other people look at those events. Despite all those hardships, when the enemy wants to taunt her, she says, "I did not see anything except for beauty" [Lohuf, page 160]. She said, "What I saw was beautiful. It was martyrdom. Although it was difficult, it was in the way of God and it was done for preserving Islam. It was the creation of an epic in history so that Islamic Ummah knows what it should do and how it should move forward and stand firm". This is a great achievement made by the epic of Zaynab (s.a.). This is the dignity of God's saint. Zaynab al-Kubra (s.a.) is one of God's saints. Her dignity is the dignity of Islam and she made Islam and the Holy Quran valuable.

Of course, we are not as aspirational and determined as Zaynab al-Kubra (s.a.) and therefore we cannot say that the behavior of this great lady is our model. We are too inferior to say such things, but anyway, our movement should be in line with the movement of Zaynab (s.a.). Our efforts should be focused on bringing dignity for Islam, the Islamic community and the entire humanity. This is the same responsibility that Allah the Exalted has entrusted to prophets through Islamic obligations and rules.

In the first part of my speech, what I want to briefly discuss with you dear basijis and dear youth is that one of the factors which brought about this spirit and this patience in Zaynab al-Kubra (s.a.) and other divine saints - who moved forward with such spirit and patience - is sincerity and honesty. It is very important to honor our promises to Allah the Exalted and to devote our hearts to the path of God in a sincere way.

In the Holy Quran, this sincerity is necessary for divine prophets as well: "And remember We took from the prophets their covenant, as We did from you, from Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus the son of Mary: We took from them a solemn covenant, that (Allah) may question the custodians of Truth concerning the Truth they (were charged with)" [The Holy Quran, 33: 7-8]. God says that this covenant is very firm and serious. In the phrase "Leyasala" lam signifies results and consequences. The result of this covenant is that these great prophets will be questioned about their sincerity in this covenant. That is to say, our Holy Prophet (s.w.a.) and other great prophets should prove before God the level of their sincerity concerning the conditions of this covenant. This part is related to prophets.

God also says to ordinary people and believers: "Among the Believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah: of them some have completed their vow (fully), and some (still) wait: but they have never changed (their determination) in the least, that Allah may reward the men of Truth for their Truth, and punish the Hypocrites if that be His Will" [The Holy Quran, 33: 23-24]. When addressing great prophets, God referred to unbelievers as the opposite of honest individuals: "And He has prepared for the unbelievers a grievous Penalty" [The Holy Quran, 33: 8]. And when addressing these believers, He referred to hypocrites as the opposite of honest individuals and there are important points in this comparison. You and I will be questioned about our promise to God. We have a covenant with God. In the holy ayah "Among the Believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah", the pledge that believers made to God and that was honored by them is the same as another ayah in this holy sura: "And yet they had already covenanted with Allah not to turn their backs" [The Holy Quran, 33: 15].

All of us should pay attention to such points. Believers promised Allah the Exalted not to escape in the face of the enemy and not to turn their backs. The Holy Quran stresses that abandoning one's positions and retreating in the face of the enemy are among the things which should not be done. One should stand up against the enemy in any military, political and economic war and in any arena which is a test of strength. Your determination should overcome the enemy's determination. Your willpower should overcome the enemy's willpower. This can be done and this is possible. From the viewpoint of the Holy Quran and Islam, running away and retreating from the enemy are forbidden in any arena of jihad and confrontation.

When we used the phrase "heroic flexibility", some people defined it as abandoning the ideals and the goals of the Islamic Republic. Some of the enemies too used it to accuse the Islamic Republic of betraying its principles. These interpretations were wrong and they misunderstood this phrase. "Heroic flexibility" means an artful maneuver for reaching one's goal. It means that the followers of God's path - any divine path - should utilize different methods, in any way possible, in order to reach their goal and this should be done whenever they move towards the different ideals of Islam. "If any do turn his back to them on such a day - unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own)- he draws on himself the wrath of Allah" [The Holy Quran, 8: 16].

Like the arena of war, any movement - whether forward or backward - should be launched in order to reach one's predetermined goals. There are certain goals and at each stage, the Islamic government pursues one of these goals in order to make progress, achieve transcendence and create the great Islamic civilization. The Islamic government should try to achieve this goal at this stage. Of course, there are certain stages and phases to reach these goals. Experts, intellectuals and officials in charge of this are identifying these phases and goals and, as a result, our collective movement will begin. Everyone should try to make any movement, at any stage, reach its goal. This is a proper system which is based on logical and rational measures. All activists in the arena of politics and macromanagement of the country should always keep this in mind. All the people and you dear basijis too - who are activists in the arena of Basij - should always keep this in mind.

Well, when we say that we want to move forward, does this mean that the Islamic government is warmongering? Does this mean that the Islamic government wants to confront all nations and all countries in the world? Sometimes one hears that the enemies of the Iranian nation - specifically the najis-mouthed dirty dog of the region, the Zionist regime - move their jaws to say that Iran is a threat for the entire world. This is the claim of the enemy, but this is exactly the opposite of Islamic principles. On the contrary, those evil and malevolent forces - including the fake Zionist regime and some of its supporters - that show nothing except for malevolence, are a threat for the entire world.

The lesson that the Islamic government learned from the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet of Islam (s.w.a.) and the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) is a different lesson: "Allah commands justice and the doing of good" [The Holy Quran, 16: 90]. Allah the Exalted invites us to administer justice and do good. The commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said that we should be kind to everyone because "Those who have the same religion as you have, they are brothers to you, and those who have religions other than that of yours, they are human beings like you" [Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 53]. People are either your Islamic brothers or human beings like you. This is the logic of Islam. We want to render services and show kindness to everyone. We want to establish a friendly and kind relationship with all human beings and all nations. We even have no enmity with the American people despite the fact that the government of America is an arrogant, hostile and evil government which bears a grudge against the Iranian nation and the Islamic Republic. The American people are like other peoples.

What the Islamic Republic is opposed to is arrogance. The hostility of the Islamic Republic is oriented towards global arrogance. We are opposed to and fight against arrogance. Arrogance is a Quranic word and it has been used in the Holy Quran to refer to people like Pharaoh and the groups of people who are ill-wishers and who are opposed to truth. Arrogance existed in the past as well and it has continued to prevail until the present time. In all eras, arrogance has had the same structure. Of course, it has used different methods and tactics in different eras. There is arrogance today as well and it is led by the United States of America.

We should know arrogance and its characteristics. We should know the methods and the orientation of arrogance so that we can organize our behavior in the face of arrogance. We are opposed to unreasonable behavior in all arenas. We believe that we should move forward with wisdom and acumen in all arenas, in all collective and individual orientations and in all plans. If we do not know the scene, if we do not know our friends and our enemies, if we do not know imperialism and arrogance in the present time, then how can we move forward with wisdom and acumen?

How can we make accurate plans? Therefore, we should know these things.

What I am saying about arrogance is a few examples regarding the behavior of today's global arrogance in the world. In many of these examples and cases, today's arrogance shares the characteristics of arrogance in previous centuries and previous eras. One of the characteristics of arrogance is egotism. When arrogant groups - those people who have taken everything in their hands as the highest-ranking individuals in a country, in a group of countries or in a global system - consider themselves to be superior to other people, when they regard themselves as the pivot, when they place everyone, except for themselves, on the periphery, then a wrong and dangerous equation will be formed in global interactions.

When arrogance views itself as superior and as the pivot and core [of everything], then the result will be that it grants itself the right to interfere in the affairs of other people and other nations. If arrogance considers something to be a value and if other people do not, this will grant it the right to interfere in their affairs and bully and pressure them. This egotism makes them claim to be the guardian of nations and to be responsible for global management. It also makes them consider themselves to be the boss of all the people in the world.

As you can hear, American officials and politicians speak about the government of America as if it were the leader of all countries. They say that they cannot let this be done. They say, "We cannot allow this person to be or not to be in charge". They speak about our region in a way that it seems they are the owners of this region. They speak about the Zionist regime in a way that it seems regional nations have to accept this imposed and fake regime. They behave towards independent nations and governments as if they did not have the right to live. This egotism and this attitude of considering oneself to have a special position among all people, all nations and all human beings is the main foundation on which arrogance has been built and this is its biggest problem.

This egotism will lead to another characteristic and another criterion for arrogance which is the tendency to ignore other people's rights. They neither accept truth nor the rights of other nations. They do not at all acknowledge other people's rights. In international negotiations, someone says something which is right, but America does not accept it. It tries to deny such rights with different methods and it does not accept truth. This has happened many times. In the present time, one of the examples of this behavior is our current issues related to nuclear activities and industries. Imagine that someone says something which is true. If one is fair, reasonable and rational, he should give up when he faces the truth. But arrogance does not give up. It hears the truth, but it does not accept it. This is one of its characteristics. It does not acknowledge the rights of other nations either. It does not acknowledge the right of a people to choose, to do what they want and to adopt those economic and political measures which they want. They believe in imposing things on other nations.

Another characteristic of colonialism and arrogance is that it condones crimes against nations and the entire humanity and that it is indifferent towards such crimes. This is one of the greatest disasters of arrogance in modern times. Modern times means the era of scientific progress and the era of the emergence of dangerous weapons. When these weapons became available to arrogant powers, they created a disaster for all nations. They do not attach any value on the lives of individuals - those individuals who do not follow, obey and surrender to them.

There are many examples in this regard. One example is the behavior of arrogant powers towards Native Americans - those people whose financial and natural resources, whose geography and whose entire properties are in the hands of non-natives now. Well, there were native people in America. Their behavior towards these Native Americans was so violent and so disgusting that it is one of the darkest points in the history of modern America. The Americans themselves have written many things about the massacres that took place and the pressures that they exerted. The same thing was done by the English in Australia. The English hunted people, for pleasure, like animals and like kangaroos. They did not attach any value on the lives of human beings. This is only one example. There are hundreds of examples which have been recorded in their own history books.

Another example is the nuclear bombardment that was launched in the year 1945 of the Christian calendar - that it to say, the year 1324 of the Hijri calendar - when the Americans destroyed two Japanese cities and, as a result, hundreds of thousands of people were killed. Over the course of time, the number of people who suffered from deformities and different diseases because of nuclear radiations was several times larger than this and these problems have persisted until the present time. They did not have any cogent reason for this - I will refer to this later on. They easily dropped these bombs. Until now, atomic bombs have been used twice and both times, they were used by the Americans who consider themselves to be the main responsible party for the nuclear issues of other countries.

They like to forget these events, but it is not forgettable. All these lives were destroyed, but it was not at all important to them. For arrogance, the lives of human beings have no value and it is easy for arrogant regimes to commit crimes. They massacred the people in Vietnam. In Iraq, their security services and their mercenary security agencies - such as Blackwater which I referred to in the year 1390 - committed certain crimes. They are still committing crimes in Pakistan with their drones. In Afghanistan, they conduct a number of bombardments and they commit crimes. They are not afraid of committing crimes in each area they can get their hands on and in each area their interests dictate. These crimes include murder and torture. The Guantanamo prison - which belongs to the Americans - still has prisoners. It is 10, 11 years now that they have been arresting a number of people from different countries and putting them in this prison on different charges. They have been keeping them in this prison without any trial and with extremely difficult conditions and they have been torturing them. In Iraq, the Abu Ghraib prison was one of the American prisons. In this prison, they used to torture and set dogs on prisoners.

Looting the vital resources of other nations is easy for them. Capturing and enslaving Africans is one of the tragic events in history which American imperialism and other such regimes do not like to be reviewed. They do not like the issue of enslaving the people of Africa to be reflected on. They used to sail ships from the Atlantic Ocean and anchor them on the coast of West African countries such as Gambia and other countries in this continent. Then, they used to go and capture hundreds of thousands of men and women and old and young people with guns and other weapons which were not available to people at that time. While these people were in difficult conditions, they were taken to America on such ships for slavery. They captivated free people who were living in their houses and in their own cities. In the present time, the black people who live in America are the descendents of those slaves. For several centuries, the Americans exerted such an eccentric pressure and there are many books in this regard such as the book "Roots" written by Alexander Haley. This book is a very valuable book for showing part of these crimes. How can today's modern man forget such events? Despite all these crimes, the white people continue to discriminate against blacks in America.

Another characteristic of arrogance is deception and hypocritical behavior. You should pay attention to this issue. They try to justify the crimes which were referred to and they try to show that they were rendering services by committing these crimes. Global arrogance, which intends to dominate all nations, is frequently using this method in its entire life: the method of justifying crimes and taking on the appearance of rendering services. When the Americans want to apologize for their attack on Japan - that is to say, the two bombs which exploded in Hiroshima and Nagasaki - they say, "Although tens of thousands or perhaps hundreds of thousands of people were killed by the two bombs that we dropped on these two cities, this was the cost of ending World War II. If we the Americans had not dropped these bombs, the war would have continued. If we had not done this, then two million people - instead of the 200 thousand people who were killed as a result of these bombs - would have been killed. Therefore, we rendered a service by dropping these bombs".

Notice that this is a statement which the Americans make in their official propaganda. Now, around 65 years have passed from that day, but they have repeatedly said this. This is one of the deceptive and hypocritical statements and one of the elaborate lies that is not made and told by anyone except arrogant regimes. These bombs were dropped on and exploded in these two cities in the summer of the year 1945 of the Christian calendar and this crime was

committed in that year. This was while four months before that - that is to say, in the early spring of 1945 - Hitler, who was the primary warmonger, had committed suicide. Moreover, Mussolini - the president of Italy at that time, who was the second important element in the war - had been arrested and the war was practically over. Japan too, which was the third important element in the war, had announced that it was ready to surrender. Therefore, there was practically no war, but these bombs were dropped anyway. Why? It is because these bombs had been built and they must have been tested somewhere. Certain weapons had been built and they must have been tested somewhere. Where should they test them now? The best option was to drop these bombs on the innocent people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the excuse of war so that it becomes clear whether these bombs work properly or not. Such is their deceit.

They claim to be the supporters of human rights, but they target the Iranian passenger plane in the air and they kill about three hundred passengers who are unaware of this. Moreover, they do not apologize and they award a medal to the person who commits this crime. You have heard that in recent weeks, the Americans - from the President to lower-ranking politicians - have created uproar about the use of chemical weapons in Syria. They accused the Syrian government of using chemical weapons. I do not want to judge who has used these weapons. Of course, evidence shows that terrorist groups have used them, but anyway, they said that the Syrian government has used such weapons. They created uproar about this and they said that the use of chemical weapons is our red line. American officials said this 10 times or more. But not only did the government and the regime of the United States of America not express any opposition to Saddam's use of chemical weapons during its criminal attacks on Iran, but it also provided him with 500 tons of hazardous and lethal chemicals which could be turned into mustard gas.

Many of our dear youth of those times are still suffering from the effects of those chemicals and it is several years that they have been suffering from various diseases. The Americans helped Saddam to be equipped with such chemicals. Of course, he had bought such chemicals from other countries as well, but it was America that provided Saddam with 500 tons of lethal chemicals - which could turn into mustard gas - and that helped him to use it. After that, when the United Nations Security Council decided to issue a resolution against Saddam, it was America that prevented this. This is the meaning of hypocritical behavior. On the issue of Syria, the use of chemical weapons is a red line, but on the issue of Iran, it can be allowed and supported. This is because on this issue, chemical weapons are used against an independent Islamic government and against a nation which does not want to give in to America.

These are some of the characteristics of arrogance. Of course, the characteristics of arrogance are more than these. Arrogant powers wage wars, create discord and confront independent governments. They even confront their own people when the interests of specific groups dictate so. During the war that Saddam waged against Iran, they offered all kinds of help - which was possible for them - to Saddam. I referred to the case of chemicals, but they also gave him secret information about Iran. After the war, when the head of intelligence services of Saddam was interviewed, he said, "I used to go to the U.S. embassy in Baghdad three times a week and they gave me a sealed package in which all satellite information about the movements of the Iranian Armed Forces existed and therefore, we knew where they were". They offered such kinds of help to Saddam.

The Islamic government is opposed to such arrogance. The Islamic government is not opposed to people and nations. It is not opposed to human beings. Rather, it is opposed to arrogance. This opposition has existed since the time of Abraham - God's Friend - Noah, the Holy Prophet of Islam and other great prophets and it has continued until today. Since that time, the camp of right has confronted arrogance. Why is that? Why does today's Islamic government confront arrogance? It is because arrogance with the characteristics that I described cannot tolerate an Islamic government such as the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is because the Islamic Republic of Iran was formed on the basis of opposition to arrogance. The Revolution was carried out in Iran in opposition to arrogance and the agents of arrogance. It was formed on the basis of this opposition. It grew, it became strong and it challenged the logic of arrogance on the basis of this opposition. Arrogance cannot tolerate this unless it is frustrated.

The Iranian people, the Iranian youth, the Iranian activists and those Iranians who believe in their homeland and

their country for any reason - even if it may be a non-Islamic reason - should do something to make the enemy hopeless. The enemy should become hopeless. It is very difficult for global arrogance and for the government of the United States of America in the present time to see that in this sensitive region - in West Asia, which is the one of the most sensitive regions in the world in terms of politics and economy and which influences the entire world - a country, a government and a people have emerged who do not consider themselves to be dependent on and to be the followers of this self-proclaimed superpower. This Islamic government is independent and despite the strong opposition that it is faced with, it overcomes all problems and hardships. As the Americans themselves admit, this government is challenging the influence of America in the region and it is extending its own influence.

This Islamic government is becoming a role model for regional nations and this is very difficult for the Americans to tolerate. The Americans want to say that the lives of all nations depend on America. Now a people have emerged who not only are not dependent on America, but who also have not been influenced by all these hostilities. From the first day, the Americans did whatever they could, but it was not effective. These people have achieved growth and they have become stronger on a daily basis.

The hostilities that the government of the United States of America has shown against the Islamic Republic happened during the time of different presidents, but all of these hostilities are of the same nature. All of these hostilities are the same. Therefore, no one should say that such and such a plot was hatched during the time of such and such a president and this plot has not been hatched during the time of the current President of America. This is not the case. All of these presidents behave in the same way. First, they provoked ethnicities in Iran, then they launched a coup d'état and after that, they made Iraq attack us. The next thing that they did was to help our enemy - which was the regime of Saddam - in his war against us and after the war, they imposed sanctions on us. Then, they provoked all media networks in the world and they made them align themselves against the Islamic Republic. All of these things have been done during the time of different presidents of America and now too, these things are being done.

In the fitna of the year 1388 - during the term of the current President of America - one of the social networks, which could be used to further the goals of fitna and those who provoked the fitna, needed to fix some technical problems. The government of America asked this network to delay fixing these technical problems because they hoped to overthrow the Islamic Republic with the help of media activities and networks such as Facebook, Twitter and other such networks. They had these foolish delusions. Therefore, they did not let this network fix its technical problems and they said that it should delay it and attend to this task which is more important.

They used all kinds of tools against the Islamic Republic and sanctions are one of these tools. From their viewpoint, this tool is enough for defeating the Islamic Republic. Their mistake is that they do not know the Iranian nation. Their mistake is that they do not know the element of faith and unity among our people. Their mistake is that they did not learn a lesson from their past mistakes. Therefore, they hope that they can bring the people of Iran to their knees by imposing sanctions, exerting pressures and other such measures. Of course, they are making a mistake. The permanent experience of the Islamic Republic during the past 35 years shows that the only way to get rid of the interference of the enemy is national power and national resistance. This is the only factor which can make the enemy retreat. Of course, the enemy is the enemy. He uses all kinds of tools. As I said, he has used and is using sanctions. We should know what it is that can help us achieve our goal.

I would like to say a few things about Basij and after that, I would like to briefly speak about the current issues regarding our foreign policies. As I said, Basij is a source of dignity for the country and the Islamic Republic. Why? It is because the meaning of Basij is the presence of all the people in arenas of fundamental activities for the sake of the people and the country. Any government that has people by its side and any country in which the people show their presence and move towards a specific direction, will definitely achieve victory. This is completely clear. Countries receive a blow and they are defeated whenever the people are not present on the scene or whenever they do not have unity of action. Whenever the people are present on the scene and whenever there is unity among them,

victory and progress will be certain. Basij is the example of such presence. Basij is the manifestation of the presence of the people on the scene and the unity of the people. We should adopt such an outlook towards Basij.

On the issue of sincerity, which I referred to in the beginning of my speech, Basij has emerged victorious out of the test of sincerity. Basij was put to this test during the imposed war and the Sacred Defense Era which was a time when the country was in difficult conditions. Also, during the different events that took place after the Sacred Defense Era until the present time, Basij has emerged victorious out of the test of sincerity. The Basij organization has shown that it enjoys sincerity. Of course, in my opinion, Basij is not confined to this number of people who are active in the Basij organization. There are many people whose hearts are with you. They praise and respect you and they appreciate your value. These people are not active in the Basij organization, but they are basijis as well. In my opinion, those people who believe in and respect your values and who respect your efforts, your services and your jihad are basijis as well. Being present on the scene is one of the most important tasks.

Moreover, the capabilities of Basij help us solve problems. Fortunately, today inside the organization of Basij, there are many scientific, artistic, social and political personalities and there are many social activists and people who can influence the people. Until today, Basij has represented a group of people who have been achieving growth and transcendence on a daily basis and it should act in the same way from now on too.

What I recommend is that we should increase the capabilities of Basij. There are certain prerequisites for this: moral, behavioral and practical prerequisites. Moral prerequisites means that we should build and develop Islamic virtues in our hearts and souls. A number of these virtues are patience, forgiveness, fortitude, self-control and humility. We should strengthen these characteristics in ourselves. Behavioral prerequisites means that we should utilize these virtues when we interact with the people, the environment, society and human beings in general. Imam Sadiq (peace and greetings be upon him) used to say to his companions, "You should act in a way that whenever people see you, they say, ‘These people are the companions of Imam Sadiq. God's mercy be upon Imam Sadiq. You should make us be proud of you'" [al-Kafi, Volume 2, page 233]. Each and every one of you dear basijis, you dear youth with your pure and enlightened hearts and souls should behave towards all the people - as I said, many of the people are basijis in the real sense of the word - in a way that they say, "These people are students of the Islamic government. They are a source of respect for the Islamic government and the Islamic Republic".

And practical, jihadi and social prerequisites are the tasks that should be carried out. That is to say, we should strengthen these virtues in ourselves. It means that we should behave in a kind, diligent and praiseworthy way towards the [social] environment. It means that we should act in a serious way in all arenas including the arena of science, the arena of social services, the arena of work, the arena of politics and the arena of production. Wherever you are, you should work in a serious way without any feeling of tiredness and any laziness. We should work. This great group of basijis - tens of thousands of people from this great group are present in this meeting - can move the country towards positive paths in the real sense of word. This group of people can be a source of solidity and stability. It can be a source of grandeur for the Islamic Republic and thankfully it is playing such a role today. Today, Basij is a source of grandeur and honor for the Islamic Republic.

I would like to raise a point about the recent contentions over the arena of foreign policies, our nuclear issues, the current negotiations and other such things. First of all, I insist on supporting the officials who are in charge of this. I support all administrations and all officials - whether officials in charge of domestic affairs or officials in charge of foreign affairs - and this is our responsibility. I myself have been an executive official. I have been in the middle of the arena and I felt with all my heart the difficulty of the work. I know that the responsibility of managing the country is difficult. Therefore, these officials need help and I help and support them. This is one part of the issue which is clear. On the other hand, I also insist on establishing the rights of the Iranian nation including the issue of our nuclear rights. We insist that these officials should not even take one step back on the rights of the Iranian nation. Of course, we do not interfere in the details of these negotiations. There are certain red lines and limits in this regard. These limits should be observed. We have said this to officials in charge and it is their responsibility to

observe these limits. They should not be afraid of the fuss that the enemies and opponents make. They should show no fear in the face of such fuss and uproar.

Everyone should know that primarily, the sanctions which have been imposed on the Iranian nation result from the arrogant grudge of America. The grudge that the Americans bear against us is like the grudge of a camel. They want to exert pressures on the Iranian nation in the hope that they can perhaps make the Iranian nation surrender. They are making a mistake because the Iranian nation will not surrender to anyone under pressure. You Americans have failed to know the people of Iran. They are a people who can, by Allah's favor, endure these pressures and who will turn these threats and pressures into an opportunity. By Allah's favor, the Iranian nation will do this.

We have had certain weak points in the area of economic decisions and plans. These weak points have made the enemy feel that he can create a rift. This is an opportunity for us to know and eliminate these weak points and, by Allah's favor, we will eliminate them. The Americans should know and I think they know that sanctions do not work. The reason why we say they themselves know that sanctions do not work is the military threats they issue. Well, if sanctions can serve the purpose, then why do they issue military threats? This shows that sanctions have not served the purpose and that they do not work. They have to issue military sanctions. Of course, the act of issuing military threats is a very disgusting and despicable act. Instead of issuing military threats against different countries, you Americans should go and improve your own devastated economy. You should do something so that your government will not be shut down for 15, 16 days. You should go and pay your debts. You should think of improving your own economy.

As I said, the Americans should know that the Iranian nation behaves in a brotherly way towards all nations: "Those who have the same religion as you have, they are brothers to you, and those who have religions other than that of yours, they are human beings like you". The people of Iran respect other nations, but they behave towards transgressors in a way that they become regretful. They slap transgressots across the face in a way that they will never forget. The Americans consider themselves responsible for saying something in support of the Zionist regime and the capitalist Zionists and this is a source of weakness and humiliation for them. In fact, the Zionist regime is a regime whose foundations are extremely shaky. The Zionist regime is doomed to destruction. It is a regime which is imposed [on regional nations] and it has been formed on the basis of bullying. Any phenomenon and any organism which has come into being by use of force cannot survive and this regime cannot survive either. The support of the Americans - who are indebted to Zionist capitalists - for the wretched Zionist regime is a source of disgrace for them. Unfortunately, a number of European countries flatter this regime. These Europeans go and flatter these creatures who do not deserve to be called human beings and they humiliate themselves and their people in front of these creatures. The leaders of the Zionist regime are really like wild animals and one cannot call them human beings.

One day in Europe, the French nation gained a good political reputation because the president of France in those days did not allow England to enter the European Community due to the fact that England was dependent on America. This became a source of dignity for France. On that day, the dignity of the French government increased because it stood up against America and because it did not let England - which was dependent on America - enter the European Community. A people achieve dignity in such a way. Today, the politicians of this country [France] go and humble themselves not only before America, but also before these damned and dirty Zionists. This is a source of humiliation for the French nation. Of course, the people of France themselves should find a cure for this problem.

I would like to speak to you dear youth about a few things. You youth should know that without a doubt, the bright and promising future of this country and the Islamic Republic belongs to you. You will manage to help your country and your people reach the peak of glory. By Allah's favor, you will be able to build a perfect model of the modern Islamic civilization in this country. In order to carry out these great tasks, you should promote and strengthen - as much as you can - religion, piety, morality and purity of soul among yourselves. Today's youth need religion, piety, science, enthusiasm, trustworthiness, morality, social services and physical exercise. These are the things which

today's youth need and by Allah's favor, you dear basijis will succeed in doing this.

Dear God, by the blessedness of Muhammad (s.w.a.) and his household (a.s.), bestow Your blessings on these people and on all the basijis of our country. Dear God, make the Iranian nation conquer the peaks of honor on a daily basis. Dear God, by the blessedness of Muhammad (s.w.a.) and his household (a.s.), make the immaculate soul of Imam satisfied with us and with these people. Dear God, make the pure souls of martyrs satisfied and pleased with us. Dear God, by the blessedness of Muhammad (s.w.a.) and his household (a.s.), make the holy heart of the Imam of the Age satisfied and pleased with us and hasten the re-appearance of this great Imam. Make us be among his companions and his accompanying mujahids and make us be martyrs by his side.

Greetings be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings