Supreme Leader's Speech in Meeting with Air Force Commanders and Personnel - 8 /Feb/ 2015

The following is the full text of the speech delivered on February 8, 2015 by Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a meeting with commanders and personnel of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army. The meeting was held on the occasion of the historic pledge of allegiance of Air Force officers to Imam Khomeini (r.a.) on the 19th of Bahman of 1357.

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

I would like to welcome the dear brothers and the officials who have very sensitive occupations in a very important sector of the Armed Forces - that is to say, the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army. I congratulate all of you, all the personnel of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army and your families on this day which is, in fact, the day of the Air Force. Also, I thank the choir for their good performance.

The issue of the 19th of Bahman - which is commemorated by you every year - is beyond remembering a sweet memory. Of course, it is an important and sweet memory and it is necessary for one to evoke these memories, but the issue is beyond this. The event of the 19th of Bahman is a meaningful and eternal occasion. The event that took place - during which the youth of the air force of the monarchic system went and pledged their allegiance to Imam (r.a.) in an outspoken and courageous way - has a certain meaning and significance which should be preserved. This is a revolutionary responsibility. I myself was present in that ceremony. Some of these youth held their identification cards up and showed it to everyone.

Now, what the significance of this? It is the fact that the Revolution was a rightful and attractive claim that managed to attract hearts - pure, well-informed and enlightened hearts which had no ulterior motives - in all areas of the country. This attraction even included a place like the air force of the monarchic army which was the favorite of the ruling system of those days and of America. The air force of the army was treated like a favorite. Both the Americans and their agents inside our country - who unfortunately had affairs in their hands - treated the air force like this. However, the same air force was moved - under the influence of the Revolution's truth - so strongly that it carried out such a great task. In front of the eyes of many agents and while they were under different threats, they went and pledged their allegiance with Imam (r.a.) on Iran Street. They sang songs, they stood firm and they held up their identification cards. The significance of that event is this: the astonishing event of the Revolution and the truth behind it attracted hearts to itself. We should identify, know and preserve this.

The same thing happened in the world. Well, this Revolution had the capability to penetrate and show its presence in all corners of the country. The people - not only in cities but also in villages - used to go to different places and shout slogans. They used to shout slogans in favor of Imam (r.a.) and the Revolution and against the tyrannical and dictatorial regime. This was the way all the people rose up. The same thing happened at a global level. Of course, it happened gradually. It happened all over the world including Asia and the depths of Africa. Even in Latin America, the people were impressed the truth that a people have emerged who have the courage and bravery to stand up against America and to reject its bullying in an outspoken way.

Many people tried to tune in to Iranian radio programs. I saw some people in Arab countries who had learnt Farsi because they used to listen to Iranian radio programs a lot. This is magnetism. This is the magnetism of the Revolution that managed to attract the hearts of the masses of the people, intellectuals, youth and academic personalities in every place throughout the world that was not under the vast influence of the enemy's propaganda.

This happened all over the world. Those peoples who suffered from America's and other western powers' bullying advocated and loved the Revolution because they saw that a people were standing up against bullying and oppression. This love and support existed everywhere in, we shall say, the world of the weak - in Africa, in Asia and in more distant areas in Latin America. We were completely aware of this because many people used to come and go and the influence of the Revolution and the name of Imam (r.a.) was easily visible.

Well, who formed the opposite camp? The opposite camp was formed by those powers against whom this great movement had been launched. The government of the United States of America was the head of these powers. They were extremely agitated at the sight of such a great and ongoing movement that was enveloping all nations under their influence. This was why they became wild and reacted very strongly. The first cure that came to their mind was to silence the center. They wanted to silence the center from which all this excitement emerged so that the issue would be resolved naturally. Therefore, they exerted pressure as much as they could.

Youth should know that the enmity of America towards the Islamic Republic began from the first day. They did whatever they could. America did not fail to take any course of action that was in its power in order to harm our people and our country in military, economic and security areas and in the area of cultural communications. They have done whatever they could until today. Their enmity was and still is towards our Revolution. Their enmity is towards a people who have accepted and cherished this Revolution. Some people wrongly pretend that the enmity of America and that arrogant regime is towards individuals. They think that the Americans were enemies Imam (r.a.) and today, they are enemies of Ali Khamenei. But this is not the case. Their enmity is towards the essence of this concept and movement. Their enmity is towards the essence of this orientation which is marked by resistance, independence and dignity. Their enmity is towards a people who have cherished and implemented these concepts.

This enmity existed in those days, it exists in the present time and it will continue to exist in the future. They bear a grudge against a people who have stood by this claim and who have endured the difficulties. Some American politicians made a mistake by acknowledging this. They gave themselves away and they acknowledged that they are opposed to the people of Iran. In the present time too, any move which is made by the Americans and their allies and cohorts is for the sake of bringing the people of Iran to their knees and humiliating them.

Of course, they are making a mistake and their analyses are wrong. It is a fact that the Americans are wrong about their analyses of the events of the region, particularly the events of our dear country. They are making strategic mistakes and it is the same mistakes that are constantly damaging and frustrating them. They are making miscalculations.

A few days ago, an American politician stated that the Iranians have gotten stuck and that they participate in nuclear negotiations with hands tied. Well, this is a miscalculation. The Iranians have not gotten stuck. By Allah's favor, you will see what the people of Iran will do on the 22nd of Bahman and how they will show their presence in that rally. Then it will become clear if the Iranian people's hands are tied or not. The hands of the people of Iran are not tied and they have shown and will continue to show this in practice.

The same is true of the officials of the country. God willing, the officials of the country too will show with their innovations and courage that the hands of the people of Iran are not tied. He thinks that they have cornered Iran. He says that the Iranians have their backs against the wall. This is not the case and you are making a mistake. It is you who have serious problems. All the realities of our region show that America has failed in its goals inside and outside the region. America was defeated in Syria. It was defeated in Iraq and Lebanon. It was defeated on the issue of Palestine and Gaza. America has been defeated in dominating the affairs of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is hated by the people of these countries. The same is true of the events outside the region. America has been defeated in Ukraine. It is you who have suffered defeats. It is many years now that you have been facing defeats one after another.

The Islamic Republic has moved forward. Today, the Islamic Republic is not comparable with 35 years ago. Are our numerous experiences, feats and achievements, our great regional influence and the deep penetration of the Revolution's principles in the hearts of the youth of this country minor achievements? These events exist and they are facts.

They are making miscalculations on different matters. By Allah's favor and with the determination of the people and you youth, the same things that the honorable commander in this meeting referred to about the activities of the Air Force are being pursued in different other sectors and in all the organizations of the country. And such things are being done while we are under sanctions. They are being done while the enemies are imposing sanctions on us. We have made progress in different sciences and technologies. We have made progress on different social matters. We have made progress on different international matters. Different experiences will constantly provide an invaluable provision for the Islamic Republic. We are moving forward and making progress despite the enemy. It is they who have failed. They wanted to uproot the Islamic Republic. They are not willing to tolerate the Islamic Republic, but today, they have to do so. On different matters, they deliver as many blows as they can with various political, security, economic and cultural tricks and plots, but it is of no avail. The Islamic Republic is making progress with complete power.

Now, they refer to the nuclear issue as an example and they pretend that the Islamic Republic has become desperate in this regard, but this is not the case.

I want to say that first of all, I consent to an agreement that is workable. Of course, I do not mean a bad agreement. The Americans constantly repeat, "We believe that making no agreement is better than making a bad one". We too have the same opinion. We too believe that making no agreement is better than making an agreement that is to the disadvantage of national interests, one that leads to the humiliation of the great and magnificent people of Iran.

Second, everyone should know that our officials, our negotiating team and our administration are doing their best to take away the option of sanctions from the enemy. They are trying to take away the option of sanctions from this deceptive and treacherous enemy. If they can do so, then so much the better, but if they fail, both our enemies and our friends throughout the world should know that there are many solutions inside the country which can slow down the enemy's plot. It is not the case that we think the enemy's plot of imposing sanctions is undoubtedly a practical and effective one. This is not the case. If we show determination and if we pay due attention to our own resources - thankfully, this spirit exists - we can slow down the enemy's plot even if we fail to take it away from his hands.

Third, recently the honorable President raised a good point in a speech which is: negotiation means that the two sides should try to reach a common point. Well, this means that one side should not try to achieve everything that it wants and expects. However, the Americans are like this. They and a few European countries - which follow America like a child and which are making a strategic mistake in doing so - say that everything that they want should be achieved exactly as they want it. Well, this shows their greed and this is wrong. This is not the way to negotiate.

The Iranian side has done whatever it could to reach an agreement. It has done many things: it has stopped developing enrichment machines. Well, it deemed it necessary to stop these machines for a while. It has stopped producing 20-percent uranium which is a very great feat. It was a very great achievement to produce 20-percent uranium. Those who are experts on this matter know that producing 20 percent from 5 percent is much more significant than producing uranium which is higher than 20 percent. However, our youth and our committed scientists did so. In any case, the Iranian side stopped this because negotiations required it. The Iranians have closed the Arak Factory - which was a very great achievement and a very important innovation in the area of technology - for now. They have closed - for now - Fordo which is one of the best innovations made by our domestic forces for the sake of ensuring the security of our centrifuges. They have achieved so many great tasks. Therefore, the Iranian side has acted in a reasonable way. It has acted according to the requirements of negotiation.

On the contrary, the other side is greedy, it behaves in an impolite and impudent way and it wants to blackmail us. Well, if our officials show resistance on such matters, they are right and no one should blame them. They should show and are showing resistance. From the beginning, the Islamic Republic moved with reason on different issues. During the Sacred Defense Era, we made reason and logic our main principle. We acted in a reasonable way in the process of accepting the resolution. We have acted in a reasonable way on different matters after the war and until today. The Islamic Republic has not acted in an irrational way on any matter. On this matter too, it is moving forward with reason. However, the other side does not know anything about reason. They themselves acknowledge their irrationality which is accompanied by reliance on bullying. They say, "We have managed to force Iran into stopping its nuclear machines and different other things. We have made it stop and close such and such a thing". They are right, the Islamic Republic has carried out these tasks, but it has done so according to the requirements of negotiation. However, they show greed. Well, the people of Iran do not give in to greed and bullying.

We are satisfied with the progress that our governmental officials have begun. They are making efforts. They are really making efforts and they are putting time and energy into it. If they make a good agreement, it is fine by us. I myself agree with that and I am sure that the people of Iran are not opposed to an agreement which preserves their dignity, respect and interests. However, these requirements should undoubtedly be considered. The respect and dignity of the people of Iran and the fundamental issue of the progress of the Iranian nation should be preserved and protected.

The people of Iran are not used to listening to the enemies' bullying. They are not used to surrendering to their oppression and blackmail no matter if the other side is America or others. One day, America and the former Soviet Union joined hands against the Islamic Republic. Despite their differences, they used to bully us together, but the Islamic Republic did not give in to their bullying and it became victorious and successful. The same is true of today. Today too, the people of Iran and the Islamic Republic do not give in to bullying.

We have heard that they say, "Let us agree about general principles for the moment. Later on, we can come to an agreement about details". I do not like this. Our experience about the behavior of the other side gives us the feeling that this will become a tool for them to make constant excuses about details. If they want to make an agreement, they should agree about details and general points in one single session and then they should sign it. If they come to an agreement about general points and then they attend to details on the basis of these general points - which are vague, interpretable and analyzable things - this is not reasonable.

Everything that is agreed upon between our officials and the other side should be clear and transparent and it should not be open to interpretation. It should not be the case that the other side - which achieves its goals by breaking its promises and by haggling - continues to make excuses on different matters, go back on its promises and make things difficult. Everything that is done is for the sake of taking the weapon and option of sanctions away from the enemy's hands. If they can do so, then it will be good. Of course, sanctions should be taken away from the enemy in the true sense of the word. Sanctions should really be lifted. Our agreement should be like this. However, if they fail to make such an agreement, the people of Iran, officials, the honorable administration and others have many different options. They should definitely take these options so that they can counteract and slow the plot of imposing sanctions.

By Allah's favor, the people of Iran will show on the 22nd of Bahman that those who want to humiliate the people of Iran will face their counterblow. All the people of Iran and sympathetic personalities share the belief that national dignity is very very important for a country. If dignity exists, security will exist as well and if security exists, progress will be possible as well. But if a people are humiliated, everything that they have - including their security and wealth - will be gambled on. Therefore, national dignity should be preserved and officials know this. By Allah's grace, on the 22nd of Bahman, the people of Iran will bring the enemy to his knees with their presence and by displaying their power and firm determination.

Dear God, bestow Your kindness and blessings on all the people of Iran. Bestow Your guidance on all of us. Dear God, associate the dear martyrs of the Sacred Defense Era, martyrs before and after that and all the martyrs of our Armed Forces and Air Force with the Holy Prophet (s.w.a.). Associate our magnanimous Imam (r.a.) - that great man who launched this blessed movement - with the Holy Prophet (s.w.a.).

Greetings be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings