Leader of the Islamic Revolution received officials in charge of protecting natural resources and environment. - 8 /Mar/ 2015

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei met with officials and authorities in charge of natural resources and environmental protection on Sunday, March 8, 2015, noting that resolving environmental issues such as air pollution, the issue of haze and illegal acquisition of forests, pastures, and other green spaces needs planning, foresight, as well as continued and serious follow-up and firmness of related state bodies.

The leader emphasized: “Protection of the environment is a sovereign duty and this very important duty should be fulfilled by formulating a national document on environment as well as environmental annexes for all development and industrial projects in addition to criminalizing destruction of environment.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution then pointed to Islam’s viewpoint on the importance of protecting land and public resources of the Earth, adding, “Islam and divine religions have put emphasis on the need for human beings to act responsibly vis-à-vis environment and maintaining a balance between humans and nature because disruption of this balance is the main factor behind all environmental problems.”

Ayatollah Khamenei noted that the environmental challenge is a universal challenge across the world and while enumerating long-term effects of environmental issues, said, “The experience of various countries shows that many environmental problems can be prevented and have their own solutions.”

The Leader then pointed to air pollution in big cities and the haze phenomenon as major examples, emphasizing that such problems can be solved through patience, foresight and necessary follow-up.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said, “The issue of environment is not an issue for this or that government, and is not an issue for this or that person, or an issue for this or that [political] faction, but is a countrywide and national issue and everybody should take part in solving problems that are related to it.”

Ayatollah Khamenei mentioned air, water and soil as three main elements of environment, noting, “To solve such problems as air pollution in big cities and the haze problem as well as shortage of water and soil erosion, serious work and endeavor, and continued follow-up are needed more than mere publicity.”

The Leader then described forests and pastures as breathing lungs of cities and main factors protecting soil, expressing deep regret about encroachment of profiteering people on forests and natural resources, especially in the northern part of the country.

“All responsible organizations should categorically stop encroachment upon forests under any excuse such as building hotels, attracting tourists, building religious seminaries and other apparently acceptable justifications,” Ayatollah Khamenei added.

The Leader noted that illegal land acquisition, which has recently turned into illegal acquisition of mountainous areas in the form of construction in highlands, was another regretful problem, emphasizing, “Such measures should be considered as crime under the law, and involved people should be put to judicial prosecution with no mercy, and in case of any dawdling on the part of state bodies, people responsible for the dawdling should be firmly punished.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also stressed that protecting the environment is a sovereign duty, adding,

“Drawing up a national document for environment; [considering] environmental annexes for all development, industrial and business projects; revision and amendment of laws to criminalize destruction of environment; and strengthening indiscriminate supervision are among the most important mechanisms to protect the environment and fight profiteers and lawbreakers.”

Ayatollah Khamenei then assessed as important the role played by people in protecting the environment in addition to building a suitable environment culture in the society by the national television, noting, “Anything worthy of mention was said today and from now on, it is for people to judge which state body fulfils its duty for protecting the environment and which body does not take necessary measures for the protection of the environment.”