In a meeting with Afghan president Muhammad Ashraf Ghani - 20 /Apr/ 2015

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a meeting on Sunday with Afghan President Muhammad Ashraf Ghani, referred to the myriad cultural and historic ties and commonalities between the two countries.

Ayatollah Khamenei said scholars and literary figures in Afghanistan make a very significant contribution to the promotion of Islamic teachings and the Persian language, saying: “In addition to its rich human and cultural resources, Afghanistan also enjoys abundant natural resources. These potentialities and commonalities should all serve to upgrade cooperation between the two countries.”

Ayatollah Khamenei stressed the need for determination to boost cooperation and rapport between Iran and Afghanistan. He said: “Of course, the Americans and some countries in the region are unaware of the potentialities of Afghanistan and do not favor rapport and cooperation between the two countries either, but Iran regards the security and progress of its neighbor, Afghanistan, as its own security and progress.”

He recalled Iran’s progress in different scientific, technological, cultural and diplomatic fields as grounds for cooperation between the two countries, saying: “Issues between the two countries, including ‘immigrants, water, transportation and security’ are all resolvable and everyone should deal with and settle these issues seriously and within the framework of a timeframe.”

Regarding the necessity of the resolution of the key issue of immigrants, Ayatollah Khamenei said hundreds of thousands of Afghan immigrants are studying in Iran at different levels. “The Afghan people are very talented and smart and this talent should be used correctly in acquiring knowledge because the educated Afghans are needed for the reconstruction of your country.”

The Supreme Leader said Tehran is home to Afghan brethren and while pointing to deep-seated and stable relations and friendship between Iran and its neighboring country, he expressed hope that the Afghan nation and government would witness more success day by day.

In the meeting also attended by President Hassan Rouhani, Ashraf Ghani expressed content with his visit to Tehran.

He touched on deep-rooted and age-old historic and cultural ties between Iran and Afghanistan, saying: “Our objective is [to see] Afghanistan become a communications hub in the region and regain its former status as the linking intersection in the region.”

Noting that Iran and Afghanistan are facing similar threats and common opportunities, the Afghan president said: “Our political will is based on expanding bilateral ties and we have to make efforts to boost common and positive points between the two countries.”

He said that the Afghan government is seeking to turn domestic conflicts and unrest into opportunities for cooperation and referred to some challenges like the issue of terrorism, narcotics, immigrants and common border waters.

“The issues between the two countries should be resolved based on the political will of both governments and based on a timeframe set during this visit,” he said.

Ashraf Ghani said Iran is suffering the most losses in the issue of drug trafficking, adding: “None of our neighbors has been as serious as Iran with regard to the threat of narcotics and no country has fought it like Iran, and we are ready to combat this scourge with the help of Iran.

The Afghan president pointed to the expansion of bilateral ties between the two countries in transportation and investment as well as cultural and economic cooperation, and addressing the Supreme Leader, said: “Under your wise leadership, Iran has stabilized its historic identity and we hope that under the aegis of this wise leadership, we will witness closer cooperation between the two countries.”