Ayatollah Khamenei meeting with Friday Prayers leaders from across Iran - 4 /Jan/ 2016

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a meeting on Monday with the Friday Prayers leaders from across the country, highlighted the lofty status of the Friday Prayers, describing it as the “base of faith and insight and ethics,” while mentioning “elucidation of facts as well as cultural and political guidance” as the most important tasks assigned to the Friday Prayers leaders.

Ayatollah Khamenei also touched on the general elections as a very important issue and a really great blessing, and while stressing the need for the massive turnout by people in February 26 elections for the Assembly of Experts and the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis), added: “The profound concept of the ‘right of people’ in such fields as ‘execution, [and] supervision [over election process], [in addition to] candidates’ rights, election lists, protection of people’s votes and acceptance of [the official] election results’ has complementary and meaningful aspects, and given the covetous eye that Americans have on these elections, people must take the issue of infiltration into full consideration.”

At the start of his speech, Ayatollah Khamenei said: “Using the term ‘base’ for the Friday Prayers is because we are in the state of a spiritual, ideological, faith-based, and political confrontation which, like the time of the Sacred Defense (1980-1988 Iraqi invasion of Iran), has been imposed on us and, therefore, defense [on our part] is necessary and essential.”

Referring to the Iranian nation’s self-defense capabilities, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: “In this jihad, ‘faith, insight, piety and ethics’ of people have been targeted and dangerous viruses are being spread across the society.”

Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the most important task for the Friday Prayers leaders is to elucidate facts, adding: “As scholars in cities and inheritors of the prophets, the Friday Prayers leaders must take advantage of the opportunity of the [weekly] Friday Prayers’ congregation to elucidate and shed light on facts.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution noted that face-to-face conversation with people in the weekly Friday Prayers ceremony is much more effective and more important than contacts from a distance and through new communication tools. To that effect, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized: “By benefiting from this unique opportunity, the Friday Prayers leaders must engage in political and cultural guidance through the Friday Prayers, which are the cultural heart of every city.”

Noting that cultural guidance is more fundamental than political guidance, Ayatollah Khamenei said: “One of the main objectives of the enemies of Islam and the Iranian nation is to change the culture and moralities of people, particularly their lifestyle.”

Touching on different aspects of Islamic lifestyle, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: “‘Politeness’ and steering clear of foul language even in speaking with opponents is one of the important issues in Islamic lifestyle, which major efforts are being made so that people would not feel bound by politeness, which in some cases, they have been unfortunately successful.”

Ayatollah Khamenei mentioned such good habits and living methods as book reading as another and very important aspect of Islamic lifestyle, adding: “People and the youth must be encouraged to read books and the elite must be

encouraged to produce books and maybe at the venue of the Friday Prayers in every city, a center could be set up to present and showcase good and up-to-date and desirable books."

Stressing that one of the important issues in the Friday Prayers is to attract the country's youth, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "Attracting the youth is not possible only through words, but the youth should be attracted to the Friday Prayers through their heart and understanding."

Noting that using "solid-based and reasonable words" in political and cultural issues and taking advantage of "new words" can lay the groundwork for attracting the youth to the Friday Prayers, Ayatollah Khamenei added: "New words do not mean heretic words, but new words must come from thinking, musing, and exploring [various kinds of] materials."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said such characteristics in the Friday Prayers leaders as cordiality and kindness, steering clear of vanity and pretence, clerical and fatherly behavior, and avoiding administrative and authoritarian conduct are among other factors that can attract the youth to the Friday Prayers, adding: "At the Friday Prayers' sermons, whatever is correct, even if it does not please the audience, must be explained using the language of reasoning and logic and in friendly words."

Underscoring the necessity of safeguarding the position and status of the Friday Prayers leaders by themselves, the Friday Prayers Policy-makingCouncil and also people, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "The [regular] performance of the Friday Prayers in the Islamic Republic of Iran is a breakthrough which must be appreciated, and therefore, the contents of the Friday Prayers' sermons must be rooted in the society's current needs."

In another part of his speech, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution described general elections as a very important issue and a really great blessing, adding: "This real blessing stems from [the late] Imam Khomeini's profound view and method, who despite some views, regarded elections in the Islamic government as necessary and viewed people as the proprietors of the country, and believed that people's decision and election must be effective."

"In light of this strategic view and decision of the Imam, people have always stood by the [1979 Islamic] Revolution because they see their own decisions as influential in the country," said Ayatollah Khamenei.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also stated that on an internal scale, general elections give rise to a sense of independence and identity and the influence of the nation, while on regional and global scales, it wins the country and the Islamic establishment prestige and credit.

Stressing the need for the highest possible turnout in the forthcoming elections, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "The higher the turnout, the more the strength and credit of the Establishment and the country will be, and for this very reason, I have always laid emphasis on people's massive turnout and I also insist on this issue once more now, because the [Islamic] establishment relies on people's emotions, demands and choice.

Ayatollah Khamenei criticized those who claim that the elections will not be free and fair, adding: "Some people are apparently plagued with a bad habit and disease that in the run-up to [every] election, they always beat on the drums of untrustworthiness of election results and waste the great blessing of elections with such words."

"Of course, there might be sporadic irregularities here and there, but there will be absolutely no organized irregularities to sway the results," said Ayatollah Khamenei.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said the framework of law, supervision by election organizers over elections, and abidance of state and non-state officials by the law in all rounds of elections justify the cleanness of votes, adding: "Some administrations have been 180 degrees different from one another, but their behaviors with regard to

elections have all been correct and [all] elections have been clean and, God willing, this time it will be the same again."

Ayatollah Khamenei then went on to explain the different aspects of the profound notion of the "right of people" in the elections.

Explaining various aspects of the 'right of people', the Leader of the Islamic Revolution referred to 'candidates' right' and said: "One of the fields in which people's right in the elections should be respected is that if someone is qualified, we would not reject him and let him into the race, and on the contrary, if someone is legally unqualified to run for either the Assembly of Experts' elections or the Islamic Consultative Assembly's elections, we should not let him stand through ignorance and carelessness, because ignoring these two points runs counter to the right of people."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described the nation's votes as something left in trust with officials, adding: "Safeguarding this trust is another aspect of the right of people."

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "All those who are involved in the organization, supervision, counting, vote tally, and announcement of [elections] results must be fully trustworthy in terms of safeguarding the nation's votes and the slightest irregularity in this issue will amount to breach of trust."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said accepting the legal results of the elections is another aspect of respecting the right of people, adding: "When official bodies announce and confirm the elections' results, disputing these results runs counter to the right of people."

Referring to the glorious 40-million-strong turnout in the 2009 presidential election, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "In that year, some people claimed [election] fraud by expressing abominable and unacceptable claims and called for the nullification of the election results."

"I was very tolerant of them, whose details are lengthy. I asked them to come and demand the recount of any number of ballot boxes, but they ignored the recommendations, because they did not intend to accept the truth," said the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei recalled that the allegations of vote rigging and the ensuing events inflicted heavy losses on the nation and the country, which have not yet been indemnified and "I do not know" when they are going to be compensated for.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution then highlighted the issue of respecting the right of people in terms of "presenting electoral lists."

Ayatollah Khamenei added: "Respecting the right of people in the proposed lists means that cronyism and factionalism should not be a factor in [drawing up election] lists and the lists must be drawn up based on real merits [of candidates]."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also recommended the people, who are going to choose their candidates, to trust those individuals and groups that have submitted election lists out of sincerity and honesty and interest in the Islamic Revolution, not those who follow specific and sometimes corrupt intentions.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution continued his address to the Friday Prayers leaders from across the country on the issue of elections by referring to the very important and complicated issue of "infiltration."

Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Those who have access to information know what traps have been laid for the country or

are being laid so that [the enemies] would [be able to] infiltrate through the barrier of the nation's willpower and decisions."

Highlighting the necessity of people's vigilance, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "If, assuming the possible, an infiltrator enters the Assembly of Experts or the Islamic Consultative Assembly or other organs of the [Islamic] Establishment, he will start gnawing at the very pillars [of the Establishment] from within like a termite, and weaken them."

"As far as infiltration is concerned, the public opinion must be enlightened without slandering [anybody] and by providing clear evidence," said the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the present circumstances are extremely sensitive for Iran, adding: "The broad-based front of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution and the Iranian nation is making constant efforts by hatching plots, because it feels it is seriously threatened through the propagation of the ideas and thoughts of pure Islam in different regions."

"The pure Islamic thought has spread like a pleasant breeze and the fragrance of a flower, and it has nurtured strong and competent human beings in different regions across the world. Therefore, to counter this reality, the opponents of Islam are targeting the Islamic Republic with their political propaganda campaign," said Ayatollah Khamenei.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution referred to foreigners' use of internal instigation, political and propaganda campaign, financial aid, moral traps and a variety of other methods, saying: "We must all be vigilant vis-à-vis 'infiltration'."

In the final part of his speech, Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the covetous eye that Americans' have on the forthcoming elections in Iran, saying: "Like us, the Americans are looking for change, but the change that we want would reduce the country and society's distance with the goals of Islam and the [Islamic] Revolution, and they (the Americans) stand exactly opposite to the change aimed for by the Iranian nation, as they are seeking to dissociate the society from the goals of the Revolution and bring Iran closer to their own goals."

"To realize this goal, the Americans have a covetous eye on these elections, but the great and vigilant Iranian nation acts contrary to the enemies' demands, both in elections and with regard to other issues, and will deliver them a punch in the mouth like [they did] in the past," said Ayatollah Khamenei.

Prior to Ayatollah Khamenei's address, Hojjatoleslam Reza Taqavi, head of the Friday Prayers Policymaking Council, referred to the gathering of the Friday Prayers leaders, saying: "Currently, with people's cooperation, the Friday Prayers are held in 845 locations in the country."

Taqavi said safeguarding the Imam Khomeini's line and the Islamic Revolution are the most important tasks assigned to the Friday Prayers leaders, adding: "Supporting the three branches of government, enlightening people, and keeping the Friday Prayers podiums away from political factionalism have been among the most important activities and approaches adopted by the Friday Prayers Policymaking Council."

At the end of this meeting, noon and afternoon prayers were held led by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.