Meeting with Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev - 5 /Mar/ 2017

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has met with visiting President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on Sunday. The Leader mentioned common religion as the most important factor that creates a sense of closeness and relationship between Iran and the people and officials of Azerbaijan.

Criticizing the low level of ties between the two neighbors, Ayatollah Khamenei noted, “The level of economic cooperation is very low in view of the two countries’ capacities and potentialities, and the volume of [economic] exchanges must increase ten-fold the current level.”

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution lauded as very good the positions taken by the Azeri government toward the Islamic Republic of Iran, including in the case of the nuclear negotiations, and added, “The government of Azerbaijan has always taken sides with Iran in political circles and organizations and these positive positions have brought the two countries closer together than any time before.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution then pointed to how upset are the enemies about the cordial relations between Iran and Azerbaijan and said, “The evil Zionist regime is trying more than all other enemies to weaken the brotherly relations [that exist] between Iran and Azerbaijan and, [so] in return, the cordial ties [between Tehran and Baku] must be safeguarded.”

The Leader also lauded the people of Azerbaijan and their religious tendencies and noted, “It would be better and more expedient for the government of Azerbaijan to get along with the religious sentiments of people, so that, they would have no concern from the government about religious issues.”
Ayatollah Khamenei then described obtaining people’s cooperation and relying on them as the most important factor that creates immunity against global powers. The Leader said, “If the government of Azerbaijan is supported by the people, no power would be able to harm you and I also pray for the success of the government and nation of Azerbaijan.”

During the meeting, which was also attended by Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev touched upon historical, cultural and religious commonalities between the two countries and said, “Iran and Azerbaijan have always been, and still are, close together and the fact that about one million Azeri people traveled to Iran last year is just an example of these cultural and religious ties and commonalities.”

Aliyev then pointed to some efforts made to draw a wedge between Iran and Azerbaijan and noted, “Relations between the two countries are at the highest level and such measures taken by enemies will get nowhere.”

The president of Azerbaijan described the relations between Tehran and Baku as developing and said, “During the past three years, I have traveled to Iran three times and 20 cooperation agreements have been signed between the two sides this year, while the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries has increased 70 percent compared to the preceding year.”

Aliyev, however, noted that the current volume of trade exchanges between the two sides was not satisfactory. He then pointed to some joint projects that are being implemented by the two countries, including a joint railroad project, saying, “Connecting the two countries’ railroads was a very important step, which was taken, and we are still working on the North-South Transport Corridor project as well.”