# Iraqi President Meets with the Leader - 22 /Nov/ 2005

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Visiting Iraqi President Jalal Talebani and his entourage met with the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei on Tuesday, November 22.

Speaking at the meeting, the Leader referred to the religious, cultural and historical bonds between the Iranian and Iraqi nations and stated that the progress, security, independence and national sovereignty of Iraq are also conducive to the power and dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He stressed that Iran is restrained by no limits in its mutual cooperation and the expansion of its relations with Iraq.

Ayatollah Khamenei further hinted at the establishment of a popular government in Iraq and the approval of the new Iraqi constitution by the majority of the Iraqi people. He also described the current stage of the Iraqi history as unprecedented and exceptional.

"The Iraqi nation is a great nation with abundant potentials and capabilities. Thus, by overcoming the present hardships, insecurity and devastation, the Iraqi nation will shine in the Islamic world in a not too far future," Ayatollah Khamenei told the visiting Iraqi president and his entourage.

The Leader of the Islamic Republic also stated, "Your security is our security, and your independence and national sovereignty is a cause of pride and honor to us, and we are going to assist you in these areas."

Further in his statements, Ayatollah Khamenei expressed deep grief and sorrow over recent tragic incidents in Iraq caused by violent and blind acts of terrorism, and the massacre of innocent people at the hands of terrorists.

He emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran holds the United States accountable for the crimes and acts of terrorism being perpetrated in Iraq and the great suffering and hardship that is being inflicted on the Iraqi people.

The Leader stated that the main factors helping the Iraqi people and government to cope with problems and hardships under the present difficult circumstances are unity, solidarity and reliance on the native identity and inherent resources of the Iraqi nation.

"The presence of aliens in Iraq is harmful and destructive to the Iraqi people. The Iraqi government and nation are able to set a timetable for the occupiers' withdrawal from their country. However, it is quite clear that the United States and Britain will ultimately be forced to pull out of Iraq with a bitter experience," the Leader further stated.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Ayatollah Khamenei touched on U.S. attempts at marring Iraq's relations with its major neighboring countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, through uttering lies and making malicious accusations. He noted that the Iraqi president and government have taken a very appropriate stance with respect to such attempts.

"If the Iraqi nation and government do not adopt a firm stance, U.S. demands and pressures will never come to an end. Besides, the efforts made by certain individuals in Iraq to please the United States will bear no fruit, since Iraq and its neighbors will remain in the region forever but U.S. presence is temporary," Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out.

Referring to the Iranian government's readiness to expand its cooperation with the Iraqi government, the Leader of the Islamic Republic expressed hopes that the agreements reached between the two countries during the Iraqi president's visit to Iran and also during the Iraqi prime minister's recent visit to the Islamic Republic would be carried out step by step.

President Talebani, for his part, expressed great pleasure over his meeting with the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and he considered the meeting a cause of honor.

The Iraqi president further emphasized that the relations between Iran and Iraq are strategic and long-lasting.

"We will never forget the Iranian nation and government's role in extending assistance to the Iraqi nation, and we hope that the bilateral relations between the two countries will expand in all areas of activity," he added.

President Talebani also stressed that independence and national unity are the top priorities of the Iraqi nation and government.

"We have always tried to safeguard the rights of all tribes and ethnic groups in Iraq. This has also been taken into consideration in drawing up the new Iraqi constitution," he pointed out.

The Iraqi president said that the votes cast by a decisive majority of the Iraqi people in favor of the new constitution have prepared the ground for the establishment of a free, independent, integrated and powerful government in that country.

Turning to Iraq's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, President Talebani stated, "We consider the Iranian nation and government to be our genuine friends, and we believe that the present solid ties between the two countries and the deepening of bilateral relations will serve the interests of both countries, because these two neighbors will remain in the region forever, but others will leave the region."