'Anti-US sentiments running high in region' - 24 /May/ 2009

The Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei in a meeting with presidents of Pakistan and Afghanistan on Sunday emphasized that IRI strongly supports the trilateral agreements, hoping they could bear fruit.

Referring to the religious, cultural and historical commonalities of the three neighboring countries, the IR Leader said extremism not only has created many problems for the regional governments and nations, but also threatens other countries.

"Extremism is a grave threat now targeting those bankrolling it," Ayatollah Khamenei added.

The IR Leader described foreign presence as one of the pressing problems, reiterating this has seen anti-America sentiments running high in the region.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran gives importance to progress and security of Pakistan and Afghanistan," IRI Leader said.

Stressing on the need of holding such meetings, Ayatollah Khamenei added, "The three countries' cooperation does not limited to the political and security issues, we can do more on the economic and development fronts."

President Ahmadinejad who was present at the meeting, for his part said the three countries' view points were presented and ways of making them operational were discussed during the Pakistani and Afghan presidents' visit to Tehran.

He also called extremism, military interference, narcotic smuggling and terrorism as the main threats to the region.

Pakistani President Asef Ali Zardari also for his part referred to his previous meeting with the Islamic Revolution Leader and said IR Leader's advices opened new chapters in Tehran-Islamabad mutual ties.

He also expressed hope that three-way cooperation could help three neighbors to tackle the challenges ahead.

President Karzai, in turn, said today's meeting was a step in the right direction to achieve common goals.