Supreme Leader’s Inaugural Speech at the 16th Non-Aligned Summit - 30 /Aug/ 2012

The following is the full text of Ayatollah Khamenei’s inaugural address delivered on August 30, 2012 at the 16th Non-Aligned Summit in Tehran.

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Two Worlds, and may peace and blessings be upon the greatest and trustworthy Messenger and on his pure progeny, his select companions, and all the prophets and divine envoys.

I welcome you honorable guests, the leaders and delegations representing the member states of the Non-Aligned Movement, and all the other participants of this great international summit.

We have gathered here to continue a movement with God’s guidance and assistance and to give it new life and momentum on the basis of the current conditions and needs in the world. The movement was founded almost six decades ago thanks to the intelligence and courage of a few caring and responsible political leaders who were aware of the conditions and circumstances of their time.

Our guests have gathered here from different geographical locations, far and near, and they belong to different nationalities and races with different ideological, cultural and historical characteristics, but just as Ahmad Sukarno, one of the founders of this movement said in the famous Bandung Conference in the year 1955, the basis of establishing the Non-Aligned Movement is not geographical or racial and religious unity, but rather unity of needs. At that time, the member states of the Non-Aligned Movement were in need of a bond that could safeguard them against authoritarian, arrogant and insatiable networks and today with the progress and spread of the instruments of hegemony, this need still exists.

I would like to point out another truth. Islam has taught us that in spite of their racial, linguistic and cultural

differences, human beings share the same nature, which calls them to purity, justice, benevolence, compassion and cooperation. It is this universal human nature which – if it can safely steer away from misleading motives – guides human beings to monotheism and understanding of God's transcendent essence.

This brilliant truth has such potential that it can form the foundation of societies which are free and proud and at the same time enjoy progress and justice. It can extend the light of spirituality to all material and worldly endeavors of humankind and it can create a paradise on earth for human beings in advance of the other-worldly paradise, which has been promised by divine religions. And it is this common and universal truth that can form the foundations of brotherly cooperation among the nations that do not share any similarities in terms of outward structures, historical background and geographical location.

Whenever international cooperation is based on such a foundation, governments will build their relationships with each other not on the basis of fear and threats, or greed and unilateral interests, or mediation of treasonous and venal individuals, but on the basis of wholesome and shared interests and more importantly, the interests of humanity. In this way, governments can relieve their awakened consciences and put the minds of their peoples at ease.

This values-based order is the exact opposite of the hegemony-based order, which has been upheld, propagandized and led by hegemonic Western powers in the recent centuries and by the domineering and aggressive government of America today.

Dear guests, today after the passage of nearly six decades, the main values of the Non-Aligned Movement remain alive and steady: values such as anti-colonialism, political, economic and cultural independence, non-alignment with any power blocs, and improving solidarity and cooperation among the member states. The realities of today's world fall short of those values, but the collective will and comprehensive efforts to change the existing realities and achieve these values, though full of challenges, are promising and rewarding.

In the recent past, we have been witness to the failure of the policies of the Cold War era and the unilateralism that followed it. Having learnt lessons from this historical experience, the world is in transition towards a new international order and the Non-Aligned Movement can and should play a new role. This new order should be based on the participation of all nations and equal rights for all of them. And as members of this movement, our solidarity is an obvious necessity in the current era for establishing this new order.

Fortunately, the outlook of global developments promises a multi-faceted system in which the traditional power blocs are replaced with a group of countries, cultures and civilizations from different economic, social and political origins. The striking events that we have witnessed over the past three decades clearly show that the emergence of new powers has coincided with the decline of the traditional powers. This gradual transition of power provides the non-aligned countries with an opportunity to play a significant and worthy role on the world stage and prepare the ground for a just and truly participatory global management. In spite of varying perspectives and orientations, we member states of this movement have managed to preserve our solidarity and bond over a long period of time within the framework of the shared values and this is not a simple and small achievement. This bond can prepare the ground for transitioning to a just and humane order.

Current global conditions provide the Non-Aligned Movement with an opportunity that might never arise again. Our view is that the control room of the world should not be managed by the dictatorial will of a few Western countries. It should be possible to establish and ensure a participatory system for managing international affairs, one that is global and democratic. This is what is needed by all the countries that have been directly or indirectly harmed as a result of the transgression of a few bullying and hegemonic countries.

The UN Security Council has an illogical, unjust and completely undemocratic structure and mechanism. This is a flagrant form of dictatorship, which is antiquated and obsolete and whose expiry date has passed. It is through abusing this improper mechanism that America and its accomplices have managed to disguise their bullying as noble concepts and impose it on the world. They protect the interests of the West in the name of “human rights”. They interfere militarily in other countries in the name of “democracy”. They target defenseless people in villages and cities with their bombs and weapons in the name of “combating terrorism”. From their perspective, humanity is divided into first-, second- and third-class citizens. Human life is considered cheap in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and expensive in America and Western Europe. The security of America and Europe is considered important, while the security of the rest of humanity is considered unimportant. Torture and assassination are permissible and completely ignored if they are carried out by America, the Zionists and their puppets. It does not trouble their conscience that they have secret prisons in various places on different continents, in which defenseless prisoners who have no legal representation and have not been tried in a court of law are treated in the most hideous and detestable way. Good and evil are defined in a completely one-sided and selective way. They impose their interests on the nations of the world in the name of “international law”. They impose their domineering and illegal demands in the name of “international community”. Using their exclusive and organized media network, they disguise their lies as the truth, their falsehood as true, and their oppression as efforts to promote justice. In contrast, they brand as lies every true statement that exposes their deceit and label every legitimate demand as roguish.

Friends, this flawed and harmful situation cannot continue. Everybody has become tired of this faulty international structure. The 99 percent movement of the American people against the centers of wealth and power in America and the widespread protests of the people in Western Europe against the economic policies of their governments show that the people are losing their patience with this situation. It is necessary to remedy this irrational situation. Firm, logical and comprehensive bonds between member states of the Non-Aligned Movement can play an important role in finding a remedy.

Honorable audience, international peace and security are among the critical issues of today's world and the elimination of catastrophic weapons of mass destruction is an urgent necessity and a universal demand. In today's world, security is a shared need where there is no room for discrimination. Those who stockpile their anti-human weapons in their arsenals do not have the right to declare themselves as standard-bearers of global security. Undoubtedly, this will not bring about security for themselves either. It is most unfortunate to see that countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals have no serious and genuine intention of removing these deadly weapons from their military doctrines and they still consider such weapons as an instrument that dispels threats and as an important standard that defines their political and international position. This conception needs to be completely rejected and condemned.

Nuclear weapons neither ensure security, nor do they consolidate political power, rather they are a threat to both security and political power. The events that took place in the 1990s showed that the possession of such weapons could not even safeguard a regime like the former Soviet Union. And today we see certain countries which are exposed to waves of deadly insecurity despite possessing atomic bombs.

The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the use of nuclear, chemical and similar weapons as a great and unforgivable sin. We proposed the idea of "Middle East free of nuclear weapons" and we are committed to it. This does not mean forgoing our right to peaceful use of nuclear power and production of nuclear fuel. On the basis of international laws, peaceful use of nuclear energy is a right of every country. All should be able to employ this wholesome source of energy for various vital uses for the benefit of their country and people, without having to depend on others for exercising this right. Some Western countries, themselves possessing nuclear weapons and guilty of this illegal action, want to monopolize the production of nuclear fuel. Surreptitious moves are under way to consolidate a permanent monopoly over production and sale of nuclear fuel in centers carrying an international label but in fact within the control of a few Western countries.

A bitter irony of our era is that the U.S. government, which possesses the largest and deadliest stockpiles of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction and the only country guilty of its use, is today eager to carry the banner of opposition to nuclear proliferation. The U.S. and its Western allies have armed the usurper Zionist regime with nuclear weapons and created a major threat for this sensitive region. Yet the same deceitful group does not tolerate the peaceful use of nuclear energy by independent countries, and even opposes, with all its strength, the production of nuclear fuel for radiopharmaceuticals and other peaceful and humane purposes. Their pretext is fear of production of nuclear weapons. In the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, they themselves know that they are lying, but lies are sanctioned by the kind of politics that is completely devoid of the slightest trace of spirituality. One who makes nuclear threats in the 21st century and does not feel ashamed, will he feel ashamed of lying?

I stress that the Islamic Republic has never been after nuclear weapons and that it will never give up the right of its

people to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Our motto is: “Nuclear energy for all and nuclear weapons for none.” We will insist on each of these two precepts, and we know that breaking the monopoly of certain Western countries on production of nuclear energy in the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is in the interest of all independent countries, including the members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Islamic Republic's successful experience in resistance against the bullying and comprehensive pressures by America and its accomplices has firmly convinced it that the resistance of a unified and firmly determined nation can overcome all enmities and hostilities and open a glorious path to its lofty goals. The comprehensive advances made by our country in the last two decades are facts for all to see, as repeatedly attested by official international observers. All this has happened under sanctions, economic pressures and propaganda campaigns by networks affiliated with America and Zionism. The sanctions, which were regarded as paralyzing by nonsensical commentators, not only did not and will not paralyze us, but have made our steps steadier, elevated our resolve and strengthened our confidence in the correctness of our analyses and the inborn capacities of our nation. We have with our own eyes repeatedly witnessed divine assistance in these challenges.

Honored guests, I deem it necessary to speak about a very important issue, which though related to our region has dimensions extending far beyond it and which has influenced global policies for several decades. This issue is the agonizing issue of Palestine. The summary of this matter is that on the basis of a horrible Western plot and under the direction of England in the 1940s, an independent country with a clear historical identity called “Palestine” has been taken away from its people through the use of weapons, killings and deception and has been given to a group of people the majority of whom are immigrants from European countries. This great usurpation – which at the outset was accompanied with massacres of defenseless people in towns and villages and their expulsion from their homes and homeland to bordering countries – has continued for more than six decades with similar crimes and continues to this very day. This is one of the most important issues of the human community.

Political and military leaders of the usurping Zionist regime have not avoided any crimes during this time: from killing the people, destroying their homes and farms and arresting and torturing men and women and even their children, to humiliating and insulting that nation and trying to destroy it in order to digest it in the haraam-eating stomach of the Zionist regime, to attacking their refugee camps in Palestine itself and in the neighboring countries where millions of refugees live. Such names as Sabra and Shatila, Qana and Deir Yasin have been etched in the history of our region with the blood of the oppressed Palestinian people.

Even now after 65 years the same kind of crimes marks the treatment of Palestinians remaining in the occupied territories by the ferocious Zionist wolves. They commit new crimes one after the other and create new crises for the region. Hardly a day passes without reports of murder, injury and arrests of the youth who stand up to defend their homeland and their honor and protest against the destruction of their farms and homes. The Zionist regime, which has carried out assassinations and caused conflicts and crimes for decades by waging disastrous wars, killing people, occupying Arab territories and organizing state terror in the region and in the world, labels the Palestinian people as

“terrorists”, the people who have stood up to fight for their rights. And the media networks which belong to Zionism and many of the Western and mercenary media repeat this great lie in violation of ethical values and journalistic commitment, and the political leaders who claim to defend human rights have closed their eyes on all these crimes and support that criminal regime shamelessly and boldly and assume the role of their advocates.

Our standpoint is that Palestine belongs to the Palestinians and that continuing its occupation is a great and intolerable injustice and a major threat to global peace and security. All solutions suggested and followed up by the Westerners and their affiliates for “resolving the problem of Palestine” have been wrong and unsuccessful, and it will remain so in the future. We have put forth a just and entirely democratic solution. All the Palestinians – both the current citizens of Palestine and those who have been forced to immigrate to other countries but have preserved their Palestinian identity, including Muslims, Christians and Jews – should take part in a carefully supervised and confidence-building referendum and chose the political system of their country, and all the Palestinians who have suffered from years of exile should return to their country and take part in this referendum and then help draft a Constitution and hold elections. Peace will then be established.

Now I would like to give a benevolent piece of advice to American politicians who always stood up to defend and support the Zionist regime. So far, this regime has created countless problems for you. It has presented a hateful image of you to the regional peoples, and it has made you look like an accomplice in the crimes of the usurping Zionists. The material and moral costs borne by the American government and people on account of this are staggering, and if this continues, the costs might become even heavier in the future. Think about the Islamic Republic's proposal of a referendum and with a courageous decision, rescue yourselves from the current impossible situation. Undoubtedly, the people of the region and all free-thinkers across the world will welcome this measure.

Honorable guests, now I would like to return to my initial point. Global conditions are sensitive and the world is passing through a crucial historical juncture. It is anticipated that a new order shall be born. The Non-Aligned Movement, which includes almost two-thirds of the world community, can play a major role in shaping that future. The holding of this major conference in Tehran is itself a significant event to be taken into consideration. By pooling our resources and capacities, we members of this movement can create a new historic and lasting role towards rescuing the world from insecurity, war and hegemony.

This goal can be achieved only through our comprehensive cooperation with each other. There are among us quite a few countries that are very wealthy and countries that enjoy international influence. It is completely possible to find solutions for problems through economic and media cooperation and through passing on experiences that help us improve and make progress. We need to strengthen our determination. We need to remain faithful to our goals. We should not fear the bullying powers when they frown at us, nor should we become happy when they smile at us. We should consider the will of God and the laws of creation as our support. We should learn lessons from what happened to the communist camp two decades ago and from the failure of the policies of so-called “Western liberal democracy” at the present time, whose signs can be seen by everybody in the streets of European countries and

America and in the insoluble economic problems of these countries. And finally, we should consider the Islamic Awakening in the region and the fall of the dictatorships in North Africa, which were dependent on America and were accomplices to the Zionist regime, as a great opportunity. We can help improve the “political productivity” of the Non-Aligned Movement in global governance. We can prepare a historic document aimed to bring about a change in this governance and to provide for its administrative tools. We can plan for effective economic cooperation and define paradigms for cultural relationships among ourselves. Undoubtedly, establishing an active and motivated secretariat for this organization will be a great and significant help in achieving these goals.

Thank you.