Leader's remarks on anti-Iran sanctions and Yemen developments - 10 /Apr/ 2015

Leader’s Remarks in meeting with a group of eulogists on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatemeh (PBUH)

April 9, 2015

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Prayer in Arabic

I congratulate this auspicious birthday to all those who love Velayat [leadership of Shia Imams], who love the Prophet [Mohammad (PBUH)], and who love the progeny of the Prophet; those who are infatuated with true virtue. I also welcome you dear ones. Each and every one of you has a high rank and dignity that I will refer to later and will explain about. Before starting my address, I commemorate the late Mr. Ahi (may God have mercy upon his soul), the committed and well-wisher and perseverant eulogist.

I knew the late Ahi since the early years of 1960s. A group of eulogists of the Prophet’s family had come to Mashhad and he was [one of their] active [members]. Of course, we were not introduced to each other, but I came to know him and met him. For many long years, I knew him from afar and, later on, I met him up-close. I wish God will, God willing, elevate his ranks. In the true sense of the word, he was loyal and committed and interested [in this profession] and was especially committed and felt responsibility toward the eulogists community. I met him every year in this place. May God bless his soul; may God have mercy on his soul; [and] may God have mercy on our souls.

I will talk about three topics here: one is about you, about eulogy and about this very honorable profession. The other one is about the nuclear issue, which has turned into a common concern in our country today; [and] one [topic] will be about [the situation in] Yemen. Today, I will discuss these three topics in brief with you, the dear ones, and in fact, with the whole Iranian nation.

As for the first topic, the profession of eulogy is a very honorable profession. Why? Because there have been people throughout the history who eulogized the tyrants, the despots, the oppressors; and they still exist today. There are still people in this world, who open their mouths to the eulogy of the most evil people of the world. Or they use their pens in return for a fee – a dirty and filthy fee – for this purpose. On the contrary, you use your tongue, breath, voice box, and artistic power in the service of eulogizing virtues. The family of the Prophet [Mohammad] (PBUH) is the family of the virtuous. They are nothing but virtue. He who eulogizes the Sun is, in fact, eulogizing himself as well. Indeed, by eulogizing the virtues of the family of the Prophet, you also eulogize yourself and, in fact, show the honor of this profession. A few years ago and in this very place, I read out a poem about Fatemeh Zahra (PBUH) from the late Saghir Esfahani:

“It has been said in hadith that in the night of Asra,

The Prophet saw some camels, and I am a camel in that caravan,

If you don’t believe me and want a reason [to believe],

Look at the book of his eulogy in my hand, which I am carrying.”

God’s blessings on Saghir Esfahani. Therefore, you have in your hands the book of the eulogy of virtue; this is a great honor. Good for you. [You must] know the value of this profession; these peculiarities; and treasure this opportunity. This was the first point about the profession of eulogy. The second point [is that] today, the eulogists community has been offered with a very big opportunity. You hold ceremonies; [and] big crowds, sometimes thousands of people, mostly young people, flock to your minbar and what you tell them, and your eulogy, and mourning. What opportunity can be better [than this]? All this audience, all these wholehearted people who are ready to listen and absorb [what you say], [and] all these souls that are ready to be raised are in your hands; this is an opportunity. [As the hadith goes] value opportunities because they pass like the passage of clouds. Value this opportunity [and] make the most of this opportunity.

The third point is how you can make the most of this opportunity? [You can do this by] propagating the knowledge of religion; by propagating the same thing for which these great people, these beacons of grandeur and virtue, laid down their lives; underwent so much suffering; experienced so much difficulty; created the incident of Ashura; and created the incidents of the early Islam, which still make people cry. What was the goal [of all this]? It was aimed at the promotion of the knowledge of religion. Use this opportunity to propagate the knowledge of religion, to encourage the young generation to act upon religion, to act upon sharia [law], [and to] observe great responsibilities of these times. Today, our country, our nation and the world of Islam need to understand correctly, act correctly and resist. The Iranian nation is a model. Among the nation, the youth are the driving force. These young people are in your hands. That is, a single glance will show you that, in a certain sense, the driving force of the Islamic world is in

your control. Propagate the knowledge of religion.

What people need and what these youth need to remain clean, to live clean, to [observe] the Islamic lifestyle, to be Muslims in true sense of the word, [and] to meet an auspicious fate, you teach them and give them. This is in your hands. When, throughout the history, we have held such ceremonies attended by all these young people listening to you from the bottom of their hearts? In our time and when we were young, if you counted all the eulogists in [the city of] Mashhad, they would not be more than five or six persons. [Even] in Tehran [their number] was only slightly higher. [Now you have] all these ceremonies, all these speakers, all these singers, all this art, all this pleasant voices, [and you see that] poets are also active and write poems [for you]. Take advantage of this opportunity; this is the next point.

And the last point [is about] avoiding deviation, avoiding superstitions, avoiding making problems for young people's beliefs. Sometimes we say a word, which creates a knot in the mind of our young audience; who is supposed to undo that knot? This knot that we have created in the mind of this young person and has caused problems for him to believe as a result of our incomplete remarks, or our wrong remarks, or through our inattention and irresponsible behavior; how this knot will be undone? These [issues] are [our] responsibility. Is it correct that in a ceremony for mourning and eulogy of the Master of Martyrs [the third Shia Imam, Imam Hossein (PBUH)], whose grandeur is owed to martyrdom, his grandeur is due to sacrifice he made for the sake of God, his grandeur is because of his selflessness; [because] he passed over everything, gave up all demands [and] all desires, [now is it correct that his mourning ceremony] be turned into a cheap occasion, a place where a handful of young people take off their clothes, jump up and down, and don't know what they are saying? Is this correct? Is this the way we thank God for this bounty that has bestowed upon us? This good voice is a bounty, this ability to manage the ceremony is a bounty. These are things that God has not given everybody. He has given [this] to you and you should be thankful for these bounties. Therefore, I love the community of eulogists from the bottom of my heart. I pray for you. May the Almighty, God willing, help you succeed and assist you.

The second topic is the nuclear issue. Some people have asked, and still ask, why I have taken no position on the nuclear issue? The answer is that there is no ground for taking a position. Our officials, nuclear officials, and consultants are telling me that nothing has been done yet; nothing binding has taken place between the two sides. What position [I am supposed to take on this]? If they asked me whether I am for or against [nuclear understanding], I would say I neither agree, nor oppose it because nothing has taken place yet; nothing has been done yet. All the problem is about those details that they are expected to sit and hash out every one of them. This is what officials have said; they have told me that, and have said that to people in their interviews. All the problem comes next. It is possible for the opposite side, which is obstinate, untrustworthy, treacherous, looking for excuses, is apt for haggling, is apt to stab [us] in the back, and is apt to do such evil things, to try to encircle our country, our nation, [and] our negotiators when it comes to details. We have still nothing; no obligation has been accepted yet. Now, [the fact that] they congratulate, they congratulate me, congratulate others; this is meaningless. What congratulation? What has been done so far can neither guarantee an agreement and the negotiation that may lead to an agreement, nor [can it] guarantee the content [of such agreement]; nothing. [It] does not even guarantee that these negotiations may reach their end and result in an agreement. What has been done so far is like this. Everything pertains to what happens after this.

Here, I mention a few points about the nuclear issue. Of course, I have never been optimistic about negotiations with the United States. This [pessimism] is not a delusion, but comes from experience; I have experience [in this regard]. Now, if one day, a day when most probably I will not be among you, you were, God willing, informed of the developments and details and notes and writings of these days, you would know where my experience has come from; I have experienced this.However, despite [the fact that] I was not optimistic about negotiations with the America, I did not oppose this case of negotiations. I agreed to it. I supported negotiators with all my power, and still continue to support them. I give my full support to and welcome an agreement, which would meet the interests of the Iranian nation and maintain the dignity of the Iranian nation; everybody should know this. If somebody says that I am opposed to, for example, an agreement or with reaching a point, no [this is not true and whoever saying that] has said something untrue and against the truth. If an agreement is reached and this agreement is the one that would meet the interests of the nation, the interests of the country, I will totally agree with that. Of course, I also said that not reaching an agreement is better than a bad agreement, and Americans also say this. This is a correct formula. Not reaching an agreement is better than an agreement in which the interests of the nation are downtrodden, the dignity of the nation is undermined, [and] the Iranian nation with all its grandeur is humiliated. Not reaching an agreement is much more preferable to reaching such an agreement. This will suffice [in this regard]; this is the first point.

The next point is that I have not interfered in details of the negotiations and will not do this [in future]. I have always reminded state officials of large-scale issues, main [policy] lines, important frameworks and red lines. [I have said these] mostly to the esteemed president with whom I have regular meetings, and on few occasions, [I have said them] to the esteemed foreign minister. [I have told them about] main [policy] lines and generalities. The details of this issue, small specifications, which have no influence on large-scale [policy] lines do not get [my] attention. These [details] are in their control; they can go and work [on them]. If somebody comes out and says that the details of these negotiations are supervised by the Leader, this is not accurate. Of course, I feel responsible [and] I am by no means indifferent toward this issue. There are generalities to some of which I will refer. I have already mentioned them in public speeches to people; [and] I have talked [about them] to officials in more detail.

The third point. As I said before, I trust the officials who are in charge; you should know this. These people who are working, these are persons in whom I trust. I have no doubt about them in what they have been so far. God willing, no doubt will be there after this; I have no doubt about them. Nonetheless, I have serious concern. This concern is due to the fact that the other side is seriously given to deceit and lying and breaching its promises and moving in the opposite of correct direction; the opposite side is like this. One instance of this took place during this [nuclear] issue. A few hours after our negotiators finished their talks, a statement was released by the White House on the details of the negotiations. This statement that they published, which they call “fact sheet,” is mostly incorrect. That is, the story that they tell about negotiations and agreements that have been made, is a manipulated and erroneous story, which is devoid of truth. They [Iranian officials] brought this statement and I saw it; it is four or five pages; this four, five pages have not been prepared within these two or three hours [after the Lausanne statement was read out], [but] at the same time that they were engaged in negotiations, they [had] sat down and prepared this statement. See, the other side is like this. They are talking to you, understanding is reached over an issue [and] at the same time that they are talking to you, they are preparing a statement, which is contrary to what is going on between you and them, and they publish that statement as soon as your negotiations are over! The other side is like this; the [other] side is the side that does not keep its word; is a cheating side. It says something, [and] then says in private that these [things

that we say] are just for saving face. They write certain things in order not to appear weak before their own opponents in their country. Well, this has nothing to do with us. If these [writings] were going to be taken as the basis for action, certainly what they have written would not be adopted as basis for action. Of course, they say the same about us. They said when these negotiations are over, the [Iranian] Leader may express his opposition in order to save face; they think everybody is like them. What we say to our people is based on mutual trust. People have put their trust in me and I trust every single person of this nation. I have trust in this public movement. I believe that God is with people [and] I believe that it is the hand of God, which is doing things now. Just look at the 22nd of [the Iranian calendar month of] Bahman [February 11]. In that cold [weather], despite those problems [people pour into streets]. Look at the Quds Day. In that warm [weather] while [people are] fasting, who brings people into the streets? What benefit does coming into the streets have for them? This is the hand of God; we see the God; put our trust in this popular movement, [and] in this popular sentiment. We trust the honesty and insight of people; [and] we talk together. They [the opposite side] acts differently. They compare us with themselves. Therefore, my concern exists. Even now, I am concerned about what they will do and how they will act.

Next point. Some people have agreed to, [and] some have opposed [the Lausanne statement] in our print media, in these written material of our [country], in cyberspace sites and so forth. Some people have lauded [the statement] and some have opposed it. I believe that exaggeration should be avoided; nor should [we] be hasty [in showing reaction]. We must see what is going to happen. Of course, I have said this to the officials [during] the past few days. The officials should come and inform the people, especially the elite, of the details and the realities. We have no secret thing; nothing is hidden. This is an example of empathy with people; empathy and using a single language that I said [in my new year message]. Empathy cannot be achieved by force. It does not follow an order that somebody orders people to be empathic and they say ‘yes sir’. This is not true empathy. Empathy is like a flower; like a sapling and a single flower. A sapling should be planted; then it should be taken care of; should be irrigated. It should be protected against harm, so that, empathy can grow. Empathy cannot exist in another way. Empathy is better than a single language; [though having] a single language is also good.

Many Hindus and Turks have used the same language,

While two Turks may have treated each other like strangers;

Therefore, the language of intimacy is something else;

Empathy is better than a single language.

Empathy is necessary. Empathy should be created; empathy should be grown. This is my recommendation to all. Now is a good opportunity for empathy. Some people are opposed to [nuclear statement]; some people protest at it. Very well, our officials, who are honest people, are people who are interested in national interests. Very well, they must invite a group of the opponents, those of them who are prominent, [and] listen to what they have to say. There

may be a point in their remarks and if that point is observed, their work would be made easier. Even if there was no point [in what they say, the officials can] convince them. This can be called empathy; this is unification of hearts and feelings, and subsequently, actions. I believe that they [should] sit down, listen [to those who are opposed to them and] discuss [all existing issues]. Now, they may say that we don't have more than three months; well, let three months become four months, nothing will happen. What is wrong with that? At another juncture, they prolonged the time [for the negotiations] by seven months. Very well, if this empathy, [use of] single language and exchange of views among our friends takes a little time; what is wrong with that? Let some time be spent [on this]. [Let] that final decisions be postponed a little; nothing will happen. This was the next point.

The next point is that these negotiations that are under way, part of which is negotiation with the American sides, is only about the nuclear issue; only. At present, we do not negotiate with America on any other issue; nothing. Everybody should know this. Neither on regional issues, nor on various domestic issues, nor on international issues. Today, the only topic for discussion and negotiations is the nuclear issue. Now, this will become an experience. If the other side gives up its usual diversionary tactics, this will become an experience for us that, very well, we can negotiate with them on other issues. However, if we see that the diversionary tactics that we have always seen from them still continue and they are going sideways, well, it will naturally strengthen our past experience. The other negotiating party does not represent the entire world; this point needs attention. Sometimes you hear, and I have also complained about this, that some of our friends say the international community! International community is the term that they [the other sides] use. International community is not against us. It is only the United States and three European countries; that it. Those [countries] that are being obstinate in this issue, use diversionary tactics, do not fulfill their promises and do evil things against the Iranian nation; one of them is America and the other is three European countries. Nobody else is against us. Just two years, [or] two and a half years ago in this very city of Tehran, senior representatives of more than 150 countries came together. About fifty heads of state gathered in Tehran during the Non-Aligned Movement [summit]. This happened only two, three years ago; [it did not happen] a hundred years ago; it is quite recent. These [countries] are international community. [It is not correct] that we say "international community must trust us." Where is the international community? The international community totally trusts us. Even in these [few] countries [that I named] many people do not agree with their governments. This is the next point.

The final point is about my demands. I have demanded certain things from officials and have told them this; both told them and insisted on those demands. One issue is that they [the officials] should know that our current nuclear achievements are very valuable; they should know this. They must not know look at it as something of low value and cheap; it is valuable.

The nuclear industry is a necessity for the country. [The fact] that some quasi-intellectuals write that "what do we want the nuclear industry for?" this is a trick. This is similar to the same thing that when in the Qajar era oil had been discovered [in Iran] and the British wanted to take it away, Qajar statesmen said, "What do we want this foul smelling substance for? Let them take it." This is similar to that. The nuclear industry is a necessity for the country; both for [generation of] energy, and for [production of] nuclear drugs, which are very important; and for converting sea water to fresh water, and for many other needs in agricultural and non-agriculture fields. The nuclear industry in the world is an advanced industry, a very important industry.] Our people achieved this [nuclear industry that we have] on their own; this was [representation] of the burst of internal capacities and internal talents of our own people. Now that underdeveloped country says if Iran has [uranium] enrichment, we want to have it as well. Ok, you also go and start enrichment; if you know how, then do it. We did not learn enrichment from anybody, it was our

internal talent. [If] you have internal talents in your nation, do the enrichment. [These] are childish excuses raised by certain countries. Enrichment and what has happened in the field of nuclear [technology] up to the present time is a very great achievement; this is not something insignificant. These are our preliminary steps in this industry. More work should be done in this industry; more movement; more progress. Now a few criminal countries that have already either used nuclear bombs against nations, like America, or have tested them, like France, are trying to preach us! This very France conducted three nuclear tests one after the other in the ocean about 10-12 years ago, which were very destructive and destroyed marine environment. [It conducted] three very dangerous nuclear tests [which caused] a little uproar in the world and then they shut all people's mouths and that was it. We are not seeking nuclear explosion, [do not want] to [conduct] nuclear test. We do not seek nuclear weapons, not because they say so, but because of ourselves, because of our religion and our wisdom. This is both our religious fatwa and rational fatwa. It is our rational fatwa that we don't need nuclear weapons, today and tomorrow and not any other time [in future]. For a country like ours, nuclear weapons are nothing but trouble, though I leave its details now. Therefore, nuclear achievements are very important and pursuing this industry and industrialization of the country is very necessary. This issue needs due attention.

My next demand from officials was that I told them not to trust the opposite side. Fortunately, one of the officials recently said explicitly that we have no trust in the opposite side and this was very good. I told them not to trust the opposite side, do not be deceived by their smile, do not trust the promise that they give you – which is just promise and no action – because, as soon as they get what they want, they will start laughing at you! They are so outrageous. Today that a preliminary agreement has been released in the form of a note and a statement and nothing has been done yet and both sides say nothing is binding yet; even now that they have just made this move, you saw the US president appeared on TV screens with what gesture and what grimace!

The next point that I told the officials and I tell people as well is that the thing that should happen in the details of the negotiations – noting that the next few months are important – is that sanctions should be removed totally and all at once. [The fact] that one of them says sanctions will be lifted six months later, the other one says no, it may take a year, [and] yet another one says it may take more than a year, these are their conventional game. None of these [remarks] should be taken seriously and [are not] acceptable. If it is the will of the Almighty God and they manage to achieve an agreement, sanctions nust be removed totally on the very day of the agreement; this must happen. If removal of sanctions is to be made conditional on another process, why we engaged in negotiations in the first place? What was all [these] negotiations and sitting at the negotiating table and discussing and bickering for? It was for the sake of the removal of sanctions. It is by no means acceptable if they want to make this [removal of sanctions] conditional on something else.

Another point that I told esteemed officials and I tell you as well is that no permission should be given [to the opposite side] to get into security and defense sphere of the country under the pretext of supervision [over nuclear program]. [I] absolutely [forbid this]. Military officials of the country are by no means permitted to let foreigners into security and defense sanctuary and sphere of the country, or to stop development of defense [capacities] of the country under the pretext of supervision and under the pretext of inspection and things like that. Development of defense [capacities] of the country, defense capability of the country, is the nation's powerful fist in the military sphere. This should remain strong and become stronger. Or our support for our resistant brethren in various parts [of

the world]; these [issues] should not absolutely be touched upon in the negotiations.

The next point is that any unconventional supervisory method, which would make the Islamic Republic a specific country in terms of supervision, must be rejected. Just the same conventional supervision that is the rule all across the world, the same kind of supervision [must be enforced here] and nothing more.

The last point in this regard. Nuclear scientific and technical development in its various dimensions should by no means be stopped. Development must continue; technical development. Now, they [Iranian negotiator] may deem certain restrictions necessary and accept them; I have no objection [to that]. They [can] accept some restrictions. But technical development must certainly continue and go on with strength and force. This is my opinion. This is what I have told my brethren. I have also said these in private sessions; mostly during the past one and a half years [in private meetings] with president and sometimes on rare occasions, I have told them to our esteemed foreign minister who is in charge of the negotiations. These are my views. Now, what negotiating methods they can choose to meet these demands, this is their decision. They [are expected to] go and sit and find correct negotiating methods; Make use of the informed people and trustees; listen to the viewpoints of the critics and do what they have to do. This was about the nuclear issue.

The issue of Yemen. Saudis have introduced a bad innovation in this region and, of course, they erred, they made a mistake. What the Saudi government is currently doing in Yemen is exactly the same as what the Zionists ddi in Gaza. [This] has two aspects: The first is that it is a crime; a genocide and open to international prosecution. They kill children, destroy houses, devastate the infrastructures, [and] ruin national riches in a country. Well, this is a great crime. This is one side of the issue. The other side of this issue is that Saudis will sustain the harm of this issue; they will be at a loss and will by no means emerge as winner. The reason is totally clear; the reason is that military capabilities of the Zionists are many times higher than the military capability of these such and such Saudis; many times higher. They had military power and their other side was the diminutive Gaza [Strip]. Here, the other side is a country; a country with tens of millions [of people]; a nation; a vast and expansive country. If they [Zionists] could succeed in Gaza, these [Saudis] will be victorious here. Of course, even if they [Zionists] had won [the war on Gaza], the chances of victory for these [Saudis] would still be zero. Now, the changes are below the zero. These [Saudis] will be certainly hit hard; they will certainly be humiliated and defeated. We have many differences with Saudis on various political issues. However, we always said that Saudis show a certain degree of dignity and serenity in their foreign policy. Now they have lost that dignity and serenity. A bunch of inexperienced young people have taken charge of the affairs of that country and [as a result] barbarism is taking the upper hand over dignity and pretense. This will be to their detriment. I warn Saudis that they should desist this criminal move in Yemen; this [move] is not acceptable in this region.

Of course, America is defending these [Saudis]; is supporting them. It is the nature of the America that in all issues [of the world] it takes side with the tyrant. Takes sides with the villain character instead of taking sides with the oppressed. This is their nature; [and] they are acting along the same line here. However, they will be hit hard [and]

will be defeated. Now, they will raise Cain that “Iran is interfering in the affairs of Yemen.” Yes, this is interference. [The fact] that we are sitting here uttering these words, [in their opinion] amounts to interference.

[However, the fact] that their criminal aircraft have made the Yemeni sky insecure, that is not interference! For such an intervention, they find foolish excuses. These excuses are neither acceptable in terms of international logic, nor are accepted by nations, nor are accepted by God. Therefore, this is exactly what is needed: they must stop this crime and [creating] catastrophes as soon as possible. The Yemeni nation is a great nation; is an ancient nation; is an old nation. Its [historical] background goes back thousands of years. This nation has the capacity, has the ability to determine the fate of its government on its own. Of course, some people tried to create a power void, to create uproar. [This was similar to] issues that were there in Libya; [and see] what a bad and deplorable situation Libya is experiencing today. They wanted to create the same situation in Yemen [as well], [but] they were fortunately unable to do this. Faithful youth, the youth who are interested and believe in the path of Amir al-Mu’menin [Imam Ali (PBUH] have been able to stand against them. Shias and Sunnis, and Shafe’is, and Zaidis and Hanafis and all kinds of people stood against the enemy’s onslaught and will, God willing, will emerge victorious and victory will belong to nations.

O Almighty God, make our brethren in any place in the world victorious! O Almighty God, humiliate and defeat the enemies of Islam and the enemies of Muslim nations at any place in the world. O Almighty God, make us familiar with our duties; help us fulfill our duties. Please resurrect the pure soul of the dignified Imam [Khomeini] with [Shia] Imams. Resurrect the pure souls of our martyrs with the purified soul of Hazrat Seddiqeh Tahereh [Peace Be upon Her].

Peace be unto you and so may the mercy of Allah and His blessings.