The Leader’s remarks in meeting with university professors - 5 /Jul/ 2015

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

You are very welcome, dear brethren and sisters. I have already noted that having this meeting with our esteemed and respectable and dear professors is, in the first place, aimed at veneration of the position of [university] professors. I want this culture to be established in the country that professors should be respected. This is one of the greatest teachings in Islamic upbringing. About this issue, our past scholars have written book(s), narrated traditions, [and have also] pointed to the verses of the Quran. This is [the main purpose of this meeting] in the first place; this is a symbolic act, in order to praise the [university] professors. The second [goal] and the third goal, which is also important is that I could hear the views of my brethren and sisters [who are] professors orally, and if something occurs to me, tell them [about it].

Today’s meeting was a very good meeting; it is a pity that time was short and I could not take advantage [of the viewpoints] of other professors who were supposed to deliver a speech; however, the things that [my] friends said here were very good; some of them certainly need follow-up, which I will recommend and will follow up [on them].

I offer two, [or] three points. The first point is that [being a university] professor does not simply mean [being a] teacher, but also means being a trainer as well; this is a natural [and] clear secret for everybody. The person from whom we learn a thing and [who] opens a chapter of science to us, will naturally sway a [certain degree of] influence on our hearts and our souls; we can say that a state of being influenced is created in the trainee as a result of this teaching; this is a very great and exceptional opportunity. Youths who are not ready to listen and accept the advice of [their] father and grandfather and mother and family, and at the same time, a word from [their] professor and a motion from [their] professor creates a profound effect on them, are not few. Professor is like this. Naturally, teaching is accompanied with an opportunity to train; this opportunity should be taken advantage of. If our professor is religious, has national zeal, has revolutionary motivation, has the spirit of industriousness, naturally, these [traits] are transferred to the student. If [the professor] is the opposite of these, [it will also have] the same [effect]. If that professor is a fair and moralist person, the possibility of training a fair and moralist student increases; the opposite is also true.

Today, the country needs youths who would be able to be powerful arms for the progress of the country, [be] full of faith-based motivation, [with] religious insight, strong will, the courage to act, [and with] self-confidence, believing that “we can [do anything],” [having] hope in future, seeing future horizons bright and shining, [having] the spirit of needlessness – not in the sense of avoiding learning from foreigners, which I have never recommended this and will never [do this]; I am ready to be student to those who know more than me – the spirit of being needless of [and immune to external] influence, imposition and abuse of the transfer of science, which is today prevalent in the world of the scientist who is [living] in the world of an arrogant power – this spirit of needlessness should exist in the youth – [in addition to] the spirit of correct understanding of the country’s position [to know] where we stand and where we are going to reach and how we can go this way – about which there were really clear points in today’s remarks of these professors – [and] being firm against encroachment, aggression and harm to national independence; we need young people with such spirits.

Professors can induce and inject and create these spirits, [and] these advantages in the young generation that is busy studying and learning science in the country; this is [the true] professor; of course, [they should do this] with [a suitable] method, with [a suitable] demeanor, not by giving moral lessons. I don’t recommend that professors of

science hold moral classes for student; this is a different job. Our professors, with their own behavior, with their own remarks, with their own demeanor, [and] through expression of opinions in various fields, can induce and bring about and create these effects in their students, [and] in today's youths. That I said professors are commanders of the soft war, this is its meaning. If that young person – as I said before – is the officer of the soft war, the professor is his commander and this is how this command is.

It was the same in hard war; whenever the commander himself – the commander of a battalion, commander of a company, [and] commander of a brigade – was present in the middle of the [battle] field in a sensitive point; that is, if he fought himself, it had an extraordinary effect on the soldiers as well. This is not special to us; the others are also like this. Napoleon slept with his soldiers on the ground with his clothes on; the secret of Napoleon's advances in war in his own time, which is an extraordinary thing, is this: soldiers did not simply take order from him orally, they took order in practice. Our youths during the eight-year period of [Sacred] Defense acted like this; division commander was sometimes ahead of the ordinary soldiers in the warfront; was present in the frontlines and sometimes even went on reconnaissance [missions]; the division commander himself went on reconnaissance! Which among world armies this is something meaningless and unacceptable, but this happened and this [was the main factor that] led to huge advances and surprises of the Sacred Defense period. The same is true in soft war. The professor should be present in the middle of the arena of this profound, vital and sacred struggle – that is, the same thing that we call "soft war" which this is also a [form of] sacred defense.

Today, we have about 70,000 faculty members in the country, which is a cause of pride. I remember that in early years of the revolution – in the first half of the 1980s, perhaps even up to the second half [of that decade] – the number of faculty members was estimated at about five thousand or six thousand. This figure has today reached about seventy thousand; this is a cause of honor for the country and a cause of honor for the revolution and a cause of honor for our university [environment].

Fortunately, a large part of this great and expanded force is [made up of] faithful, pious, religious, [and] revolutionary people and [those who] believe in the fundaments of religion and the revolution; this is also a very important issue; this [is also] a phenomenon. Faithful and revolutionary elements in faculties should be appreciated. I say this to our dear managers, to officials of the Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Health and Medical Education: know the value [of such professors]! Esteemed ministers and managing boards of ministries should appreciate the presence of such faithful professors and [these] professors, who abide by religious values, who have stood firm on their right words and have not been scared and withdrawn in the face of this propaganda onslaughts and sly mischief – of many of which I am aware. Esteemed managers! Appreciate [the value] of faithful elements and faithful professors in universities.

This is the first point about the importance of the [university] professors. If I could meet with all these 70,000 dear professors across the country, I would have certainly done this and if I could hear a word from every one of them, I would have heard [it]; however, well, it is clear that my reach is inadequate and this sweet and valuable date is on a very high date palm.

The second point is about the issue of science. Fortunately, today the scientific movement in the country has turned into a current; this is an established current in the country and there is no doubt about it. During these past 10-15 years, our professors, our scientists, [and] our youths have worked in this field and we observe its outcomes in [the form of] the ascending scientific ranking of the country. We have reached the 16th scientific rank in the world, [and] this is very important; our ranking was considerably behind and lower than this; [they] have taken the country to the 16th rank and this is a valuable issue.

There are few points here: the first point is that reaching a high scientific rank by us was the result of the extraordinary speed of [the scientific] work [in the country]. According to global statistics, the speed of scientific progress in the country has been 13 times higher than the world's average. This has been announced by scientific

statistics centers of the world, which we have already [and] frequently announced before. This speed has [somehow] decreased today. [The fact] that some people say we are lagging behind in terms of scientific progress, [and] others say no, we are not lagging behind and both [of them] produce figures [to back their claims], its key is here: Yes, apparently [we] have not come down from 16th or 15th [scientific] rank – this is true – but we should have advanced more; I mean, that speed [of scientific progress] should have continued; that speed has decreased today. Dear brethren and officials of ministries should pay attention [to this point]; that speed does not exist today. Do something so that the speed of [the country's] scientific growth would not subside; again, in the words of military men in [the arena of] the hard war, this movement should not lose steam. Of course, I know that the more we advance, this speed will naturally reduce; that is, when we are remarkably lagging behind, there are more untapped capacities, which as we proceed, these capacities will naturally reduce because they are taken advantage of – I know this – but that necessary and suitable speed in country's scientific progress should not reduce.

The second point is that the scientific environment of the country should be kept away from marginal issues. Don't get me wrong; I am not saying that politics should not exist in universities – perhaps many [of you] remember that I many years ago in this very meeting in the month of Ramadan [and] in the presence of [university] professors, used a sharp term for [describing] those people who want to get the politics out of universities and out of students' [lives], which caused many people to complain [about what I said] – no, I believe that the environment in the university is the environment of political understanding, political analysis, political science, [and] political awareness; I don't prohibit this; no. [But I say] politicization should be avoided, politicking should be avoided, [getting involved in] marginal issues should be avoided. Such marginal issues harm the main job [of the universities] which is scientific work and [achieving] scientific progress with all characteristics that this issue has.

One of the most erroneous things that happened in these recent one [or] two years was this issue of scholarships. Even if this allegation was right – which of course, they later investigated and it became clear that it was not correct in that form – it was not like what newspapers played with; I was given accurate reports on the basis of probes – it was not right to take this issue to newspapers. A number of people obtained a privilege against the law; very well, there is a legal way [to deal with this]: undo those privileges; no fuss is necessary. To incite uproar is to create marginal issues and this is poison to a scientific environment, which must do its work in peace. Unfortunately, some people gave this poison to universities on the basis of the same grounds of the theoretical view that is rooted in politicization and politicking; why? In addition, [some people] were wronged – many people were wronged – while this step was against the law [and] this step was against the foresight, and was against ethics; then they keep talking about ethics; "why those people who order others to recant, they themselves recant less frequently!" Was this step ethical? [Involvement in] marginal issues should not be allowed. Don't let the higher education environment to be plagued with marginal issues.

The next issue is the issue of humanities. We are lagging behind in the field of humanities. The friends who talked about the humanities, correctly put emphasis on the importance of humanities, even in industry; this is true. This statistics that this dear brother of us gave were interesting for me, who said in industrial progress, about 40 percent, for example, - or 50 percent – is related to engineering issues and is related to technical issues, [and] about 50 [or] 60 percent is related to issues of humanities – such as management, cooperation, [and] hard work; he is right; this is very important. In the field of humanities, today, fortunately, a number of brethren said good things, [which] were what I had in mind; of course, I have said them orally [as well]; these issues have been at times said by me. Humanities are very important. Change in humanities, which is a necessary and imperative step for many reasons, needs dynamism from inside and support from outside. Fortunately, the dynamism from inside exists today.

I see [the report on the proceedings] both at the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution – this [Humanities] Transformation Council and friends who are working there – and in universities, and as you saw today [through remarks] of some friends who talked about humanities, [everything] shows that this internal dynamism from inside universities does exist and that [has been created] by pundits and by erudite people; [therefore] the support from the outside must also exist – various kinds of support – [and] one of the examples of this support is compliance of

university and the Ministry [of Higher Education] with the decisions of the [Humanities] Transformation Council. [They] have made some decisions which today one of these brethren stated that as much as work has been done [so far] this amount [of work] should be put into action; as much effort has been made, [or] work has been done, this must be put into action and become operational. [This work and efforts] should not remain limited to offices and books and files – and as put by him, in the tortuous corridors of the Ministry [of Higher Education] or the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution – it should be made operational; this is completely true. The Ministry [of Higher Education] must pay attention to this point. Mr. Dr. Farhadi [minister of higher education] is sitting here; these are things to which I especially draw his attention to follow up on this issues; this work is a big work. Today, these good brethren of me are at the helm of science in the country and at the helm of university [affairs] in the country; these [people] must follow up on [these issues] in true sense of the word and with due concern.

Another point is the issue of share of the research [sector] from [annual public] budget. Of course, about these issues that I bring up here, some explanation is necessary, but it is close to the prayers call and I cannot expand this discussion very much. The budgetary share of research is important. For a few years, I have been emphasizing on this issue both in this meeting and in other meetings and in private meetings with executive officials of the country. Unfortunately, information that is given to me and the report that is given to me shows that no, what I say is [treated just] like [a simple] advice; an advice [like] somebody, who is delivering a sermon and gives an advice; [what I have said about budget] has been dealt with from this angle; this [however,] this is not the case; effort should be made. Now, in [the 20-year] Vision [Plan] four percent of the public budget has been considered for research. Now, our resolve is not very firm [for the allocation of this amount of budget to the research sector] in the short run; however, the same 1.5 percent or 2 percent which is possible and is being talked about, should be done; the budgets that still exist for research [sector] are limited to some hundredth of percent; this is one issue. One [more issue] is correct and planned spending of financial resources in research; they should be spent correctly and be correctly put in the [right] place.

The next point is the issue of the comprehensive scientific roadmap [of the country]; well, the comprehensive scientific roadmap has been completed through endeavors and efforts of [our] friends and has reached [a certain] point, and a complete [and] good document has been prepared for the country, which is very helpful. Those people who are experts, after the comprehensive scientific roadmap of the country was prepared – according to what has been reported and transferred to me – have confirmed [the roadmap]; namely, it is not the case that a major problem a major fault could be found with this thing [roadmap] that has been prepared at the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution. No such thing exists; that is, [the roadmap] has been confirmed; nonetheless, this comprehensive scientific roadmap should be made operational, the first step of which is to build [the necessary] discourse. I have heard that the friends who travel to cities, [and] attend [various meetings] in the country's universities, they say many professors – let along students – and even [state] managers are not duly informed about the comprehensive scientific roadmap of the country. Now, one of the friends said here that many [people] are not informed about the Resistance Economy that you say; yes, this is one of the weaknesses of our work. If we want a goal to be realized, the first step is to change that goal into an accepted discourse; the issue of science was a case like this, which turned into a discourse and, naturally, entered the practical course, was made operational, and turned into a current; this [issue] is also like that. Issues related to the comprehensive scientific roadmap of the country should be turned into a discourse and be implemented seriously; this is one point.

Among secondary issues there is also another important point and that is the higher education planning document. [The fact] that one of [our] friends pointed out that "if all the things which we have in mind become our priorities, it would mean that we have no priority at all;" this is a true remark and reasonable saying. That they said "we in a number of industrial disciplines [must] clearly say that we want to progress in these disciplines and [we must] make human and financial investment [in them] and [allocate] various [kinds] of resolve and abilities [to them];" this is [also] a totally true saying. I once said this about sports; I said that we can rank first or second [in the world] in a number of sports fields; very well, let's pay attention to them; in some fields of sports, no, we have no hope of ranking first and second [in the world]; I mean in championships and in world competitions. They happened to do

this; that is, they took certain steps in these fields and [those steps] were useful and effective as well. It is the same in this field. Look and see which scientific discipline in which university and in what region of the country enjoys priority; this is the meaning of scientific territorial planning of the country. [We must see] in what universities what disciplines must be followed and [then] invest in them and hold them accountable and demand [results] from them. This is also an issue that this document should be completed and come into force and be worked on.

What I say in conclusion is that dear brethren, [and] dear sisters! Know the value of the work that you are doing. More valuable and more respectable than this, no work, among the works that are available to us, can be found. You have undertaken big works [to do] which [you] are doing. At the Ministry of Science, [Research and Technology], resolve and perseverance to work must be increased day by day, if we want such works to be done.

I, of course, have jotted down certain things. [One of those things is] the issue of the rising number of students in postgraduate courses – which fortunately, that number has remarkably increased in this recent years and this is a very extraordinary advantage. However, correct planning should be done for [making the most of] the output of this important phenomenon. In postgraduate courses, students seek to do research on something, write something, prepare a thesis; [and] this needs a system, needs a large-scale viewpoint, [and also] needs general guidance [to determine] that what should be prepared of which the country would be able to take advantage. If this did not happen, we would have squandered [our] resources; both the professor, and the student, and the money, and the management, and various other facilities would be wasted. Such large-scale viewpoints, such large-scale planning; such large-scale organization of issues related to the Ministry of Science, [Research and Technology] are among basic steps that must be taken and [Gordian] knots facing the country, God willing, must be cut in this way.

The work that you, professors, are doing is an important work. The work that the scientific management system of the country is doing – most of which by ministries and the science [and technology] department of the presidency – is an important work; attach importance to this work; this [work] should be scheduled and assessed in a real way; know what an important work is being done.

Just as some friends pointed out in their speeches, the goal of the enemies of the Iranian nation is not to allow this country and this nation to achieve its rightful position; that civilizational position [that it deserves]; [because] they have felt that this movement has already begun in the county; sanctions [imposed on Iran] are for this reason. Yes, I also believe that the target of the sanctions is not just the nuclear issue, it is not [even] the human rights issue, [and] is not the issue of terrorism. [There is a story that a group of people] asked why that person did not cry to preacher who sang a [religious mourning] hymn for [Hazrat] Ali Asghar [the youngest son of Imam Hossein (PBUH), who was killed in Karbala]? [Others] said [in response] that he himself has beheaded one hundred [children like] Ali Asghar; now you expect him to cry to the mourning hymn of Ali Asghar? These [people] are themselves harboring terrorism, these are themselves against human rights; these are [just] seeking to mount pressure on a country for human rights.

This is not the problem; the problem is a very higher calculation and beyond these sayings; that is, a nation, a movement, [and] an identity has come into being based on resources and fundaments [that are] exactly the opposite of the fundaments of the arrogant system and the system of oppression and being oppressed; they don't want this to get anywhere; we are in such a situation; we are in such a position. We must move, [and] we must try. Sanctions, of course, cause some troubles, but it is possible for them not to prevent progress [of the country]; we [must] take advantage of our capacities. And you, professors, play a role in this regard; and the Ministry of Science, [Research and Technology], and [other] ministries related to the issue of science, play essential and important roles; value these roles and pursue [them] and, God willing, ask the Almighty God for help. This honorable verse [of the Quran] that our friends recited - [also says]: "…if you assist Allah, He will assist you and plant firmly your feet;" – this is

inviolable divine promise.

O Almighty! For the sake of the blessing of these days and these nights, for the blessing of the sanctified blood of Amir al-Mo'menin [Imam Ali (PBUH)] and the pure bloods that have been spilt in the path of Truth during these years – and in our country, martyrs made their appearance and emerged -, for the blessing of these bloods, for the blessing of these struggles, [and] for the blessing of this sanctities, bring our nation close to honor and true happiness day by day. O Almighty! Those who are struggling in this path, those who are active in this path, including esteemed professors and students and [all] those who endeavor in the path of science, bestow your blessings on all of them; [and] resurrect the pure soul of our honorable Imam [Khomeini] and the pure souls of [our] martyrs with the martyrs of the early years of Islam.

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