The Leader’s remarks in a meeting with the President and Cabinet members on the occasion of the Government Week - 27 /Aug/ 2015

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

One of the good and, God willing, auspicious events is the coincidence of this meeting with the birth anniversary of Hazrat Samen ol-A’emmeh [the Eighth Shia Imam (PBUH)]. I hope, God willing, all of us would be able to avail ourselves of the blessings of that purified and lofty soul. One of the greatest honors for our country and [one of the greatest] advantages of our country is the existence of that pure mausoleum. The more we could endeavor toward exaltation of that lofty position and the more we attract people’s hearts toward it, it would be certainly in our spiritual favor and in favor of our country. Now, assume that Mr. Akhoundi [minister of road and transportation] could, for example, think about the issue of the road [that leads] there and the express train and the likes of these, [so that] he would work [to implement these projects and] people would be able to travel there in a shorter interval [of time]; these are among those things that, God willing, can be source of blessing for the administration.

We commemorate the memory of dear martyrs, Martyr [Mohammad Ali] Rajaei and Martyr [Mohammad Javad] Bahonar. Well, the Government Week has been marked since many years ago; it is a tradition that [this week] would be an opportunity for the perseverant officials of the Administration to report on their efforts, on their achievements, [and to report] on their determination for the coming year or the next few years, so that, they would be praised and the works that have been done would be commended and appreciated by [other] officials [and] by people, and possibly a note could be given [to ministers] or, for example, removal of a certain shortcoming would be demanded; this is the purpose of the Government Week; however, the noteworthy point is that the Government Week is like an Eid [a festive occasion] for the Administration; that is, it marks annual recurrence of a certain occasion – and this is what Eid means – and a time for talking and telling and such things.

The occasion that has been assigned to this week is one of the most painful memories in the country; that is, the martyrdom of two prominent loved ones such as Martyr Bahonar and Martyr Rajaei. Now, this year [this occasion] happens to coincide with the Dignity Week, but usually, this week is reminiscent of the disastrous demise of these two great personalities. I believe that the divine philosophy that flew through the hearts and tongues of officials and this incident took place and this occasion occurred at this time is because Martyr Rajaei and Martyr Bahonar would not be forgotten and would remain before our eyes as two indices [and] two measures. Well, these two being [considered] as indices cannot be said to be [simply] due to their powerful management or, for example, assume [that it was] because of their abilities and innovations; [this is true] because these two dear ones’ time in office did not take long; [the tenure] of the late Bahonar was very short, [and] for the late Rajaei [his time in office] was a few months – [it was] about for example assume a year. [Also,] they being [considered as] measure is due to their behavioral as well as their personal and their moral characteristics. This [is one of those points that] we must always bear in mind.

Well, the time changes; the diverse current of cultures and values and the likes of these comes [and] goes – this is the nature of time – [and] alterations take place in minds [and] in thoughts, but there are some unchanging principles, which these principles must be always taken into consideration. For us, the officials in the sacred establishment of the Islamic Republic, these unchanging principles can be sought and found in personalities of these two dear and revered men. Well, I was intimate with them, especially with the late Bahonar for many years, [and I

was] also the same with the late Rajaei; from before the [Islamic] Revolution up to the time of responsibilities [in government offices] and in the Majlis [parliament] and outside the Majlis; they really had characteristics which we must never forget. In my opinion, their faith in this path, in these goals, the goals that Imam [Khomeini] delineated and the Islamic Republic stands for those goals, is a very important index; their devotion, [and] the spirit of serving [the nation] that existed in these [two men], who really worked [incessantly] day and night and worked to be of service [to their country].

[One of their characteristics was] the spirit of being with people and sincerity with people, contact with people, listening to what people said up-close; [and] opening ways – well, due to having [official] responsibility, we face certain restrictions, [and] face some limitations – which could be used as a passage to come to grips with the reality of people's life. I have told Mr. President several times that these provincial tours are very good. This is one of those very positive things to do; [and] I always recommended the previous administrations to do this; this is one of the ways [to contact people]; going into people's homes, visiting the homes of [families of] martyrs – which thank God, this has become somehow common and is a good step – [and finding] a way to make different [types of] contacts with people; these are very important. These steps maintain and keep up the spirit of popularity and [the spirit] of knowing people [in person]. When this [spirit] does not exist, one will ignore the society and will always look to generalities; like a person who is crossing over a city in an airplane; yes [in this state] one sees the general outline of the city better than the one who is on the ground, but [when it comes to] what is going on inside these allies, inside these streets, inside [people's] homes, inside shops, [and] who refers to them, these can be understood by the person who goes and walks in these allies; now even to the same limited extent that is possible; being with people is very important.

They did not use the posts they had for their personal gains; this is one of the important points. it should not be such that we think now that we have [an official] responsibility, [we can] use this as a means of securing our future; as is common among officials in many of the world countries and use this as a means of being member of a given company's board of directors in the future, [or] have a share in a sensitive financial center. Commitment to the fundaments of the revolution and the likes of these; these were [among salient] characteristics of these two personalities; we must take these [characteristics] into account and adapt ourselves to them.

One of the features of officials' behavior is that it builds culture in the society; that is, the way we walk, the way we talk, the way we live, people with whom we socialize, [and] people whom we alienate, this builds culture in the society. Therefore, the work that you are doing, the service that you are providing – in any sector that is – if as it is expected and, thank God, to a large extent [this expectation] has been met in many sectors, it is accompanied with devotion, with a lot of work, [and] with concern, in addition to the impact that this work itself will have on the external reality, it will also produce a long-term effect and that [effect] is this very culture building. People look at us [and] look at you; our behaviors, [and] our conducts shape the public culture of people. Therefore, we commemorate the memory of these two good and dear and well-destined brethren and we hope that, God willing, all of us would be treading this very path.

I deem it necessary to thank the esteemed members of the Cabinet, especially the esteemed president, and appreciate the efforts that you make. Today's reports were good reports and it would be very good if these reports were published, [so that] people would hear from you. I ask Mr. Sarafraz to broadcast these reports with the voice of these gentlemen; that is, people would be told by Mr. Nematzadeh, by Mr. Zanganeh, by Mr. Chitchian, [and] by other brethren about those steps that have been taken. This is very good. That is, people should be reassured that [their] brethren [in the Administration] are working, are endeavoring, and all [of them] are busy.

Well, positive steps have been taken, however, it must be always in the minds of all of us that [we must] express that thing that when people look at the reality of their life, they would confirm it; that is, they would see that it is true in reality. When Mr. Dr. Hashemi had started implementing this health plan for a while, I intentionally asked certain people; from my friends and some people among the general public – [including my] relatives, friends, sometimes

during my trips to Mashhad, and in other places – [and] I saw that people felt this [change], that is, they said 'yes, we, for example, went to a hospital and it was like this'; well, this is very good. Some works [that are done] are out of the reach of people and these [works] are not seen by people, [but] they will see their secondary effects. However, there are certain works that are accessible to people; such things should be discussed. What now I am telling you [is that] relative calm and relative stability is tangible with regard to the economic issue; this [issue] has been reported by everybody, [and] reports are sent to me from different places, [which] say this [state of economic stability] exists. This is an achievement that sharp fluctuations have been curbed and do not exist in the field of economy [anymore], which well, care must be taken to maintain this [achievement].

The issue of reducing the inflation [rate] is very good. Of course, I am not satisfied with [even] this amount of inflation that exists now; I mean, a two-digit inflation. Now, Mr. President noted that the inflation has reached, for example, thirteen-odd [percent] – which of course, the main criterion is the annual inflation; point-to-point inflation [rate] is not very significant, [and] is not an important issue; the most important is this very annual inflation – well, there are few countries in the world that have two-digit inflation; [they] are very few and we are among those countries that have two-digit inflation. We must achieve an inflation [rate] of less than 10 percent; I mean, our resolve should be [to achieve] this [goal]; we must endeavor to achieve this [goal]. Now sometimes due to complications – complications that are out of control and sometimes [even] controllable complications – inflation goes up. Well, it is clear that this [high inflation rate] will not last and those high inflations have never continued [for a long time]; at last, they pull these [high inflation rates] to a lower level and, thank God, you have done this; you have been able [to do this]; however, do not stop at this amount; bring the inflation [even lower]. But, well, [the current situation] is good. [The fact] that it has, for the time being, fallen to 13-14 percent, is a great step.

The effort that is being made to get [the economy] out of stagnation – of course, as for the stagnation, I have something to say, [and] I have told certain points to Mr. President in our one-on-one talks – that at any rate, you are making an effort to get [the economy] out of stagnation, [and] this is very important because the issue of stagnation can both affect the inflation, and can affect the employment as well; [therefore,] the issue of stagnation in the country is an important issue. A good effort is being made [to end stagnation].

The issue of health is one of the positive points [of the Administration's performance]. Scientific steps that are being taken at the scientific department [of President's Office] are among valuable steps. The issue of irrigation of lands, which the respectable first vice president has been also active in this regard, and I think you [have gone to] Khuzestan and Ilam and Zabol yourself. (You didn't go to Zabol? Well, then you must certainly go to Zabol; it is a good thing that you said this.) These are certainly good steps that have been taken.

This is also true about the nuclear issue. Well, I have so far talked a lot about the nuclear issue, [and] have said and heard a lot of things and the important point is that [our] officials could finish these negotiations, because after all, the prolongation of the negotiations was itself a problem and they could solve this problem; well, this was a very important thing to do. Now, God willing, if there is a problem on its sidelines, it would be solved through the foresight of you and other officials. At any rate, I thank all brethren and sisters who are working [for their country].

There is one point in my mind about this nuclear issue and the termination of the nuclear issue, which is among my worries, [and] is among my concerns and [that point] is that we must be watchful about those goals that the outright enemies of the Islamic Republic are cooking up in their minds and the steps they want to take. There is no doubt that the hostilities of the enemies of the Islamic Republic have not been reduced from the outset of the revolution up to the present time; yes, there are some places where hostilities and implementation of animosity is reined in – there is no doubt about this – but this does not mean that the hostilities have lessened. I believe that the hostility of the faked and usurping Zionist regime or the government of the United States of America toward us has not diminished an iota since the outset [of the revolution] up to now; of course, each one for a specific reason; the Zionist regime is our enemy for one reason, [and] Americans for another reason; however, they are also averse to us [and] are our enemy to the same degree [as the Zionist regime] and that hostility has not decreased; the same steps that they took on the

first day of the revolution, they are taking right now; however, well, the steps have been altered, [and] their working methods have changed; have become more advanced; once they showed their hostility and dealt blow [to us] in one way, now they [try to deal a blow] with another tool, [and] through another means; this [point] should not be forgotten.

All different officials – as this is not special to Foreign Ministry and [Foreign Minister] Mr. Dr. [Mohammad Javad] Zarif; various organs, [including] economic organs [and] cultural organs – must absolutely pay attention to this point that we must not fall into the predesigned plot of the enemy and do not play [in enemy's plot], that a given decision that we make, whether in the field of politics, or in the field of economy, or in the field of trade, or in the field of culture, would help that predetermined package of the enemy, which is for [the benefit of] themselves. We, from their own words and from their own writings and from their diverse remarks, can find out about their [main] purposes; that is, when I am saying hostility, it is neither [out of] divine revelation, nor a dream, nor [the result of] delusions and imagination; no, [these] are realities that are before our eyes. Perhaps, their remarks are different [from their actions] but external realities – what is tangible and evident – is demonstrative of hostility and is indicative of hostility; however, [that hostility is shown] through its own special ways. Now, what we must do in the face of this enemy, is a different issue, [but we must] not forget the hostility; this is what I [am trying to] say. When you don't forget that a front is facing you, [and that enemies] are sitting behind a bunker, [and] have prepared their weapons, then [you act upon] exigency; once you may look [and see that] you have to shoot [or] you have to remain silent, [or] you have to go inside the bunker [or] you have to get out of the bunker; these are later concerns; the important point is that you don't forget that there is a front opposite to us – an enemy front – which is bent on hostility. Of course, this is not just addressed to state officials, [but] all people, especially those elements who are concerned about the revolution and those who are ready to serve the revolution, must pay attention to this; however, the responsibility of state officials is, naturally, heavier in this regard and more than other [people who are] faithful to the revolution.

In my opinion, what we must do for the time being is that we must be explicit in adopting revolutionary positions; that is, we must not be shy [in this regard]. [We must] express revolutionary positions, [and] the fundamental ideas of the reverend Imam [Khomeini] outspokenly, [and] don't be ashamed, don't be shy, don't be afraid, and know that [as put by the Quran] "To Allah belong the armies of the heavens and the earth and Allah is the Almighty and the Wise." All potentialities in the world and traditions in the world are divine forces; one can have those divine forces behind them and get their help by putting their trust in God, [and] by treading the path of God.

And we must be vigilant. A few days ago, I said in my speech that these [enemies] are bent on infiltration, [and] are bent on penetrating [the ranks of the nation]; this penetration may be carried out in various places; be careful. Once one is told that, [for example] assume that a given organization has come and is guiding part of our cultural complex – for example, our nurseries – in a special way. One understands this and when he gets closer, he sees that a dangerous step and a major step is being taken [but] he has not been paying attention. These [steps] are [examples of] penetration; in various fields, in economic fields, during visits, in all organs; one [important point] is this issue of candor.

Another [point] is to maintain this solidarity that fortunately exists among people. When I say solidarity, it must not immediately occur to one's mind that now all people in the society are, for example, like brothers or are sincere [with one another]; no, the movement [that shows solidarity] is a public movement. Assume that in demonstrations [that are held to mark victory of the Islamic Revolution] on the 22nd of [the Iranian month of] Bahman, when you look round, everybody is moving in the same direction; are all these [people] alike? Do all of them belong to one [political] faction? Are all of them from a single group? No, but the direction is the same; we must appreciate and safeguard this single direction and we must attach importance to it. [Attention to] marginal issues must be avoided, [because] some marginal issues cause division; that is, they disrupt this unity in direction; [we] must be careful about this issue.

I have written down a few points as the priorities at this juncture [of time], which I present here. Of course, fortunately, in today's report of [these] gentlemen, there were points that were related to these points that I have put down here, but I say [these points] for more emphasis. Some of these remarks are repetitive, but repetition is not a problem; there are certain cases in which the more you repeat [a point], it would be no problem. You just see in the Quran how many times the story of Moses has been repeated. There is no problem in this; it is a reminder that makes us remember our responsibilities and bolsters our motivations.

One point is about maintaining the pace of scientific [progress in the country]. Well, [Iran's] scientific ranking has been maintained; I mean it has not fallen. We are still on the 15th and 16th rank that we were – which is a very high and good ranking – but the pace has slowed down. I have told this to my academic friends as well, and I say that don't let the pace of scientific progress to slow down in the second decade of the [20-Year] Vision Plan – now we have entered the second decade of the Vision Plan. If we continue to move along at the same pace, our scientific ranking will certainly become more valuable and more important; that is, we may even rank below 10; this, in my opinion, is a very important issue. Well, science is the main infrastructure of the country. In all these issues that [these] gentlemen said here, if in industry, in agriculture, in oil [industry], in energy [sector], in health and treatment, and in other sectors, we enter the element of science and if the element of science and scientific innovation and scientific progress and presence of scientists enter the equations, the situation would be totally different; rapid growth would take place; we must not underestimate this; this is what I believe in. I believe that in the field of science and research activity, any cost that we undertake would be [a form of] investment. I mean, we must not be afraid of paying such costs at all. There are certain places when the costs are really not wasted; one of those places is this. The more cost we pay, we have [actually] made investment for the future and this is the best thing that we can do with our funds, with our money, [and] with our resources.

Then a basic point that existed in this first decade – which fortunately according to global statistics, we started scientific progress and reached this point – is that the scientific movement turned into a discourse; that is the work did not remain limited to a few state-run organs; that is, it turned into a general discourse among universities and students. During meetings that I have had with academic organs in this past few years, [I] observed that they come and talk – either as a professor or a student – and as their demand from me, they said the same things that I had said, for example, a few years earlier in academic gatherings; I become very happy [when this happens]. It shows that these remarks have turned into a discourse, have turned into a public space and public demand; this is very valuable. Let's maintain this discourse; that is, I insist that related organs – the academic organs, the Education [Ministry] and especially this scientific department [of the President's Office], whose [officials] are apparently not here today – must certainly persist in this regard, that is, for maintaining this discourse.

Emphasis must be put on knowledge-based companies – which now a report was given [on these companies] and it was good –; commercialization of science and technologies, establishment of science and technology parks, and the likes of these are very necessary and good steps [to be taken]. Look! One of our economic problems is the issue of employment; one of the best ways to create jobs is these science and technology parks and entering students in [the field of] technologies that can generate wealth. If some help is provided to these [students], if they are guided [correctly], [and if] a practical and operational – real – work is offered to them, these [students] will start to work. the idea that every [university] graduate must come and turn into a civil servant in a state-run organ and the likes of that, and we keep lamenting that the number of graduates is too high [and] we don't have enough room [and] enough facilities [for them], from my viewpoint, this is a very wrong attitude. The right attitude is for us to clear the way; this [issue] must be thought through; that is, plans must be made so that the way would be clear for our students during the period they study – for example, assume that at the university, or for example, assume that during postgraduate studies; that is when [the student] gains high-level scientific knowledge – so that they could come and do scientific work in some place; and [there are] really endless number of jobs. I believe that jobs that are related to science are endless. The more [educated] persons we have, we can provide them with scientific jobs, provided that we sit down and work [on this issue]. [So,] one issue is the issue of science.

Another issue is the issue of culture. Well, those friends that are here, and especially the country's cultural officials and the esteemed Mr. President himself, are aware of my sensitivity about the issue of culture. Sometimes cultural problems have barred me from going to sleep at night; [I have been sleepless] for the sake of cultural problems; that is, importance of cultural issues is like this.

There are two basic and main steps that must be taken; one is [production of] healthy cultural products in different fields, and [another] one is to prevent harmful production and, as they say, harmful cultural product and commodity; I believe that this is among basic steps [to be taken]. All over the world, care is taken about cultural products and book and the likes of these; where in the world such a concern does not exist? Just show me a place. This Ms. Ebtekar is present here; she told me that the book she had written was not allowed to be published in the United States; no publisher accepted [to publish it]; - not that the publisher is so biased [as not to print a book]; no; if a book is a bestseller, every publisher would do this; [but they did not publish it] out of fear and due to surveillance [by the government] until at last in Canada, for example, assume that she found a publisher and that publisher [accepted her book] with fear and apprehension. [I don't know whether that publisher published the book or not] because she told me these details a few years ago, perhaps I don't remember the [entire] details. You must say this so that these gentlemen would know and understand that this is not true that if we bar a book [from being published], it is only Mr. Jannati [minister of culture] who does this; no, this is also done in America, [and] this is also done in Europe. Nobody dares to talk about the Holocaust; well, Holocaust is not an ideological issue.

Yes, when it comes to publishing insulting cartoons against the religious sanctities of Islam, there they become freedom-seekers and supporters of the freedom of expression! However, when it comes to the Holocaust, no, there is no freedom of expression. The same is true about the issue of hejab; [and] it is also the same about other issues. Yes, every country has certain principles and those principles must be safeguarded and state organs must observe these principles; [there must be] no compromise on this. If you see that a given theatrical play, a given movie, a given book, [or] a given periodical is at odds with the fundaments of the revolution and the fundaments of Islam, ban it and take action against it. Now, how to take action against it is a different issue, [and] it is [an issue] related to the [state-run] organs and [you must] look and see what your regulations say; however, do not be shy and say this clearly. So, [promoting] healthy cultural product and preventing unhealthy and harmful cultural product is the basis of the work [in this field].

It is by no means permissible to leave culture on its own. Management of culture is a very necessary step and management must be based on the revolution's slogans and the fundaments of the revolution; that is, it must be noted that what is important is that the fundaments of the revolution and the fundaments of the independence of Imam [Khomeini]'s country and the likes of these must be protected. This is the second point, which is among the priorities that in my opinion [must be on top of our agenda] at this juncture [of time].

The third priority, which is more extant and available [than other priorities] is the issue of economy; well, fortunately, Mr. Jahangiri has arranged today's session in such a way that it mostly pertained to economic issues. Today, economy is important both for the country in terms of [determining] the country's fate, and [in terms of] real progress of the country; [economy] is also important in terms of the external image of the country; [and] is important from the viewpoint of realities of people's life. Therefore, the issue of economy is in fact the basic priority of the country and any amount of thinking, work, effort, and admonition related to this issue would be deserving.

Firstly about the economy, we believe that the economic progress of the country must be accompanied with justice; we do not accept an economy without justice; that is, the revolution does not accept this; the Islamic Republic Establishment does not accept this. You must be careful not to allow class divide to be created; the poor must not be downtrodden; these are among basic issues in our macroeconomic plans, which I will point out the [issue] of Resistance Economy later; this very issue of justice and meeting the minimum needs [of people] has been foreseen in the policies related to the Resistance Economy.

In my opinion, turning effort and work into a discourse in public sphere is one of the basic steps to be taken in the field of economy; a valuable work among our daily works, which must be [done on a] large scale and its reduction is a major flaw; we must try to denounce laziness, idleness, [and] carelessness about working in the eyes of people in a correct way; that is, idleness must be denounced; working must become a value. In [Islamic] traditions we see that the Reverend Prophet (PBUH) saw a young man; he liked that young man, [and] called him [and] for example asked what his name was, [and] then said, 'what is your job?' he said, 'I am jobless; I have no job'; the Prophet said: '[He] fell out of favor [with me]'; that is, working is like this. The Prophet is not shy with anybody. This must become a norm. of course, both sides must demand from each other; he who is jobless, demands [work] and says 'give me work [to do]'; [and] the side that wants work [to be done] is also demanding and says, 'try to find a job'; there is an intermediate solution, which I may point out in my remarks. After all, we must do publicity about encouraging [people] to work, encouraging creation of value and generation of wealth in the country; both the state officials must say this and those who in magazines, in newspapers and the likes of these have verbal and written tribunes, [must] take advantage of this opportunity and give voice to these issues. This is one point with regard to the issue of working.

Another issue is to set up right channels for job [creation]. This is [just] a saying, is [just] a word, but is a really great and important step to take; channels for job [creation] must be set up. When one is talking about work and employment and encourages [people to work] – as I said before – the opposite side says, 'well sir, I am jobless, what am I supposed to do?' We must show people ways of looking for work. A few days ago, I watched a program on the television, which was a good program; they had prepared a reportage. One person goes there and says 'I have been able to create this job with 10 million tomans, whose income is this much'. It is about [growing] flowers; he says, 'I produce flowers'. Then he points out and says, 'Those who are willing to do this job, there are governmental plots of land in that place and that place, which will be made available to them; go and, for example, grow flowers'. I remember economic officials at a time before your administration had come [to me] and [discussed] that with what amount of money a job could be created; they talked about 100 million [tomans] and for some jobs, 500 million [tomans] and things like that! Well, a job can be created with 10 million [tomans]. Now this is just one example. Another example, which happened to be [shown] on this very television was another program; it was [about] a lady who made things and said, 'I could earn this job by investing 20 million [tomans]'.

Well, it is clear that capacities are too high. I was in another session in this place with officials; they said that our [economic] growth must be high. I said the growth [rate] in some advanced European countries is often two, one, [or] one and a half [percent]; the reason is that capacities have been filled; just, for example, assume a country like China which had growth [figures] of 10, 11, [or] 12 percent, [but] now its growth has fallen because its capacities have been filled; many capacities have been filled and [growth figure] will further fall; our capacities are still very high. Therefore, those friends who had problem with the 8-percent growth [that has been set as target] in the Sixth [Economic Development] Plan, the answer that was given to them by experts and specialist people was that we can [achieve that target] and it conforms to the realities of the country; just in the same way that Mr. President said here today. Therefore, one of the issues is to set up channels so that we could see how [new] job [can be created]. Now, which state-run sector is responsible for this? Mr. Rabiei [minister of labor] always says that 'the issue of employment and the likes of that are not my responsibility' and relieves himself [of this responsibility], but after all, one of the [state-run] sectors, either you or the [State Management and] Planning Organization is [responsible for job creation]. Of course, the Ministry of Economy, in one sense in some places is really responsible; [however,] that I consider the Ministry of Economy as responsible [for job creation] is not incompatible with me being sincerely yours as well! There are things that are related to the Ministry of Economy or banking [sector], which I will also address Mr. Seif [governor of the Central Bank of Iran] as well!

One issue about the economy, one on which I emphasize and insist, is the issue of serious management of foreign trade; foreign trade is a very important issue. During long years, foreigners had gotten used to an attitude with regard to trade about countries like our country that there are raw materials here [and] they [can] come and take the raw materials and create added value for themselves; [these countries] also have a market and a demand that [enabled

foreigners] to bring [commodities here]. Before the revolution, the ruling system had accepted this; once, in some place, I came across a Majlis deputy of that time quite by chance, [and] he clearly told me that this is a very good thing! [He said,] 'Essentially this is very good that we give money and Europeans, like servants come, produce commodities for us and bring [them here]'. That is, they really had a logic to do so; a kind of foolish and silly logic that was taking the country in this direction. We today – that is, after the revolution – have a different approach; we believe that no; very well, part of our markets can belong to foreign producer, but part of the markets of the same foreign producer must belong to us; that is, a kind of equitable exchange and give-and-take must happen here; well, this is a very important issue.

Then with regard to the issue of imports, Mr. Nematzadeh [minister of industry, mine and trade] pointed [to this issue], which of course, one feels ashamed; four ministries have been assigned to Mr. Nematzadeh! In fact, there were four ministries here: industry, heavy industries, mines and commerce. One of the strange measures, which for me it was not clear to the end why this step was taken, was merging the Ministry of Commerce with the Ministry of Industries and Mines; that is, this [problem] has not really been solved for me. The same day that they were doing this, it was not clear to me why they were doing this. Well, officials at the Majlis and the Administration had considered this [necessary] and did it. It is indeed a difficult task, [and] I understand that he has a difficult [job to do], but at any rate, he has to do this; that is, among very important issues, is the issue of management of foreign trade; this [is important] because this [country] must not be merely a market for foreign products, which the car market, this given market, [and] that given market would be entirely given to them. Worse than these is the issue of banks.

Another [issue] is the issue of the Resistance Economy. Well, this year, is the second year of the Resistance Economy; that is last year – the [Iranian calendar] year 1393 (2014-2015) – was the beginning of the implementation of the Resistance Economy policies. Administration officials also gave me some reports, which I personally and orally thanked Mr. Jahangiri when he notified to 15 organs that they must take these steps, [and] fulfill these duties. Then they sent a detailed report, which of course, they summarized that report for me and I read all of it; and went through it. Steps that have been taken in the field of Resistance Economy, some of them are preliminary measures; now, it would take time and time will pass if I wanted to bring examples; some of the measures that have been reported are not related to articles of the Resistance Economy [and] of course, they have been now linked [to the Resistance Economy], but they are among current affairs of the [executive] organs; after all, [executive] organs have some current affairs and they have reported these to you that 'we have taken these steps'; these have been mentioned among the records of [executive] organs with regard to the Resistance Economy; while this is not the case. Some of the steps [that have been taken] are not related to articles of the Resistance Economy at all. This amount [of work that has been done] is not enough. The policies of the Resistance Economy constitute a complete and integrated package; this package is not the product of my personal thought; this is [the product of] collective wisdom. A group has sat down; the economist friends, who are present in this meeting, some of them know and are informed [about this]. An in-depth work has been done on this, then it has come here, has been hammered out, has been discussed through, [well] thought, [and] studied; then it has been sent to the [State] Expediency Council and has been discussed [there]; [and] at last, the [final] result has become these policies. That is, they are the product of a rational and foresighted process; this is why everybody has confirmed the Resistance Economy; that is, I do not know of a single case in which any of economists and of those people who are good to us, and those who are [even] against us, to have criticized this Resistance Economy, [and] these policies; no, they have all accepted [these policies].

Well, this is an integrated package, [and] must be implemented in toto. How can it be implemented in toto? When a so-called integrated executive and operational plan is presented for it; which this was something that I told Mr. Dr. Rouhani a while ago and it was decided that he should tell officials to formulate; [I hope] God willing, they would present this [plan, because] this is necessary; I mean we need an operational plan; this plan, must clarify share of [various] organs [and stipulate] that this is the share of that given organ from the articles of the [Resistance Economy] policies. Then a time must be set; time is very important; a timetable must be prepared [so] it would be clear that [the share of each organ] must be implemented by this set time; otherwise, in the absence of a timetable;

there would be no guarantee that this [plan] would be even implemented under your administration. You want to make this operational, want to execute this [plan], [and] want people to take advantage of its benefits; so, you [must] set a timetable [for its implementation]. Firstly, necessary practical steps [that must be taken] with regard to every article must be made clear; [and] implementers, those organs that would be in charge [must] be determined, [and] in each sector necessary timetable must be set, [and] necessary facilities and the way to provide those facilities must be clarified. After all, these policies represent a practical and field activity; when you offer a solution, in fact, you intend to create a field activity; this has requirements; what are its requirements? How [these requirements] can be met? The [best] way to meet those requirements must be determined. Then, if these steps were taken, you could start monitoring, [and] you could follow up [on the implementation of the plan] to see if it has been [implemented] or not; [and to see if] a given organ has done its task or not. [In this way] the work will be done.

The second point about the Resistance Economy is that all the economic programs of the Administration must be included in this collection of the Resistance Economy and in these policies; even the Sixth [Economic Development] Plan and the annual plans and budgets, all of them must be formulated on the basis of this Resistance Economy; that is, none of these [plans] in any sector must be at odds with these policies; not only that they must not be at odds, but must also totally conform to these policies [of the Resistance Economy].

Another point is that [economic] sectors [that are] outside the Administration must be taken into account; now, you may notify [the Resistance Economy's policies] to ministries and state-run sectors [but] there are sectors outside the Administration; these [sectors] can play a role in [the implementation of] the Resistance Economy, including Basij; I [also] saw a report [in this regard]. In my opinion, it is very necessary – if Mr. President has time, or at least, Mr. Jahangiri – to ask and see what steps can be taken by the organ of Basij with regard to the resistance economy and what capacity they have; [this] is a very good capacity. Basij is not insignificant, [and it] is not a small thing; Basij is a huge and ready-to-work organ; invite these [Basijis to your sessions] and see what steps they can take. They come and present their potentialities and say 'we have taken these steps'. In my opinion [there are good] potentialities. Now, I brought Basij as an example; there are various sectors, economists and the so-called economic activists outside [the Administration]; there are some people who have companies and do [certain] works; their capacities can be taken advantage of. And all these [possibilities] must be included in that general plan; that is, the general plan must not be simply focused on the state-run sectors. Therefore, the first step was to formulate this plan with these specifications.

The next step is to form a powerful and smart and influential headquarters. Of course, I know that Mr. President has formed a council, [and] he himself takes part [in its sessions]. This is a very good step; however, this is not the command headquarters [that I mean]. Well, Mr. President has many other works to do to which he must also attend, [and he] cannot spend all [his] time and effort on this. A headquarters is needed – like command headquarters that we had during the war and other command headquarters have been established for other works which you, Mr. Rouhani, have experience in this regard – a command headquarters is needed to incessantly monitor, look and see which organ has been able and moved ahead, [and] where a problem exists. Because talking is very easy, [and] planning is also not very difficult, [but] taking practical steps is different from all this; well, when one wants to enter the arena and advance, sometimes he faces certain obstacles, which have not been predicted before; some [of the obstacles] may have been predicted, but there are obstacles that just come in your way; that headquarters must be able to remove those obstacles in an urgent manner, open the way, and move ahead; and [it] must be also influential. That is, [other organs] must listen [to what it orders]; it must not be like this that, for example, Mr. Jahangiri frequently said today that [everybody must talk] for five minutes, but these gentlemen increased those five minutes to, for example, seven minutes and ten minutes; whatever that headquarters says, everybody must really comply with.

Then the amount of progress made must be reported to people; [you do this and] see what would happen in reality! For six months, you, for example assume, [work] in this way that I said, [that is,] when this plan is formulated, this headquarters should be established and work for six months; [then you would see that] the work would progress

considerably; then come and say that to people; tell them that 'we have taken these steps, [and we have] taken those steps; people would feel this in their life; [and] that hope and optimism toward future that you want to remain in people would be totally realized; I mean [what is done] must be reported to people and [of course] there must be certain indices for the assessment.

There are a series of legislative, legal, and judicial requirements with regard to the Resistance Economy; the other two powers are ready to cooperate, both the legislative power – the Majlis – is ready to cooperate in this regard; [for example,] there is a law and you have to change or amend that law or add a new law to these [existing] laws; you would need such things; or sometimes a judicial measure is needed; the other two powers are ready to cooperate with regard to all these measures in order for the [policies of the] Resistance Economy to be implemented.

Reference was made to the issue of stagnation; well, this three-percent [economic] growth that has taken place shows that stagnation has changed; that is, a move has been made; now, [we] must see in which sectors this growth has taken place, [and] in which sectors it is negative; the result of these positive and negative figures has added up to three percent. If stagnation is not seriously tackled, even this three-percent growth would be in jeopardy. The inflation would also increase [and] there would be the unemployment problem as well. Now, let me say here that if Mr. Nematzadeh wants to follow up [on this issue], [he must pay attention to] the number of factories that are not operating now – that is, a factory for which everything is ready and it is not operating –; [they] have come and reported to me [about such factories]; [they have given] an accurate number and figure; they have determined the number of factories that are operating under 50 percent [of their nominal capacity]; [and also] determined the number of factories that are operating under 70 percent [of their nominal capacity].

Well, now 70-percent is somehow acceptable, but under 50-percent [is not acceptable]! Some of these [factories] have problem with liquidity; that is, there is problem with their circulating capital – which this is a task for banks [and] banks must be accountable in this regard; that if in Resistance Economy the aforesaid basic workshop and command headquarters is launched, it could address all these [problems] – however, the problem with some of these [factories] is not the lack of liquidity, they have even obtained [bank] facilities, [and] the factory is now ready and prepared; there is no problem [and as for] machinery, as they have said [to me] machinery [installed at some of these factories] are new machinery, but they are not operating; why? Because they have spent facilities [that they have taken from banks] somewhere else; well, this needs judicial prosecution; these [cases] must be followed up; [and] you must summon such people. This is why I say a command headquarters [is needed]. Such issues [and] such points will be followed up [by that headquarters]. If the issue of stagnation is not addressed, it will affect all economic signs and indices. Of course, this recent law – the law to which you pointed – is a good law, but law [alone] is not adequate. Supporting production firms, supplying [necessary] liquidity, provision of circulating capital, [and] dealing seriously with those people who have mothballed production units, all of these are necessary steps. And in the previous session – a session I had with the officials – I said, [and] I emphasize here [that] the banking system must play its role; that is, the banking system must enter the arena with full force.

One of the steps they have proposed [is that] they have told me and keep telling me that the way is paved [and the solution] is to assign some projects to the private sector. Of course, incentives must be provided to the private sector because there is hot money [in the country] right now, [and] there is no doubt that hot money does exist. As they have reported to me, we have 400,000-billion-toman worth of mothballed projects – all of which are related to the government – [and] if we could assign only 10 percent of these [projects] to the private sector, you see what would happen; 40,000 billion tomans [of capital] would become operational suddenly [and] this is very important. I mean, out of these projects that are currently mothballed – that is, out of these 400,000 billion tomans – if 10 percent is assigned to the private sector, an important development will take place in the country. This is one of those steps for which plans must be made and work must be done.

The agriculture sector is also very important. Of course, I believe that [Agriculture Minister] Mr. Hojjati can really work. In my opinion, he is among ministers with good track records in his work and can really do this; however,

what I expect from him and his organ is to achieve self-sufficiency in production of vital products; that is, [when it comes to] self-sufficiency, do not pay attention to [aimless] talk and gossip [you hear] from this or that [person] that 'wheat is less expensive outside [of Iran]' and the likes of that. We must achieve self-sufficiency; [and] we must achieve self-sufficiency with regard to vital products.

Agriculture engineers must be taken advantage of. Once I told Mr. Rouhani that I had traveled to one of the provinces – I think it was [during my] trip to Hamedan Province – [and] there, officials who went [to various places] and examined [the situation], informed me that agriculture was very prosperous in various parts of that province; [when] they asked [about the reason], it became clear that young agriculture engineers had been hired there and that province, fortunately, had many [of such engineers]. [The engineers] had gone there and helped these [people] and [people] had listened to them. This [issue] helps this [step to be taken]. This needs planning; [and] it is not very difficult either; [it] needs a [public] call, needs identification [of available potentialities], needs planning, [and] needs division [of labor] and these steps you can take in order for these [agriculture engineers] to be taken advantage of.

[Another issue is to take advantage of] modern technology; this very issue of water that they pointed out – [that is,] distribution of water and, as they say, optimal use of water – is very important. Preventing imports [is also important]; look, I once again emphasize. Now you would say 'we have blocked imports', but there are fruits in the market that [are imported]. From where Iran can fetch fruits that would be better than our own fruit? Once when I was the president, a person from an Arab country – whose name I don't mention – had come [to visit me and] as souvenir, he had brought me a very exquisite package of dates. I said 'this is a clear example of carrying coals to Newcastle'. We have all these dates [in our country] – these high-quality dates, [and] these various dates in south of the country, both in Fars province, and in Khuzestan and Baluchestan [provinces] – now, he has brought me dates; but in a package. Right at that time, I took it to the Cabinet [session and] said, 'compare these dates to our dates! Our dates are better than these, but how beautiful is this packaging'. At that time, our dates were [packed] in some kind of bags, [or] were kicked into mats, [then they] tied its top and presented it [to the market]! Now, of course, [conditions] are slightly better. At any rate, fruit imports are unnecessary imports.

A basic problem, which is mostly [related to] Ministry of Agriculture – but is not limited to Ministry of Agriculture – is to focus on villages. I mean this must be really made one of the basic sections of state planning; we must focus on villages. I have talked a lot about this in different years, but this has not happened in practice. We must take conversion industries to villages, [and take them] to some cities. I saw in [the city of] Urumiyeh that apples were strewn around on the ground! They said 'this is worth nothing. The money we pay workers is much more than the money that we earn by selling these apples, or peaches, [or] apricots, [or] grapes'. Well, conversion industries are needed there. In many various places in the country, we have such fruits which at times it is not profitable for the owner of the garden to collect these fruits. If we have conversion industries [there], [and] if we have drier [facility], [and] we can take advantage of these [industries] there, we must do this. And there are extraordinary capacities [in this regard]; it is really extraordinary. I saw a tomato in [the city of] Iranshahr which was as big as a small melon! It was not just one [tomato]; basically tomatoes [grown there were this size]. There was a garden between Bampour and Iranshahr – when I was in exile there – [and] they invited me and brought me a tomato, [which was] as big as a small melon! [They] brought me an onion [which was] as big as my fist! I remember that I took the onion in my hand, [and] said I want to measure this; I can say [that] it was as big as this [fist of mine]; I could not wrap my fingers round it, when I took that onion in my hand. I mean, it was this big! Well, we have all these. Such potentialities [exist] in many places across the country. If we attach importance to rural industries, if we attach importance to villages, if we attach importance to these orchardists, this would be the best service to villages and to our poor [people] in villages and in other places.

I have also written some notes on the mineral sector here, but the time has passed – [and] let's not put too much pressure on Mr. Nematzadeh! What has been reported to me [is that] we are [currently] extracting at most 15 percent of the country's mineral capacity; [just] 15 percent! We must replace mines with oil; that is, we must be

really able [to do this]. Many years ago – maybe 20 years ago – I said [this to] the Cabinet at that time. We must do something that whenever we wanted, we would put a cap on our oil wells; [we must] neither be afraid of shortage of customer, nor be afraid of not having markets, nor be afraid of not having oil money; we must reach such a point. Well, we must really start to think; [because] we must [find a] substitute for oil. You see at what situation the oil [market] is [at the moment]! Just a gesture by [world] powers and evil elements in the region [who are] in collusion [with each other] will cause the oil [price] to suddenly fall from 100 dollars [per barrel] to 40 dollars!

How many months did it take from the time [that global oil price] started to fall from 100 dollars [per barrel] up to now? Well, this [commodity] cannot be trusted; one cannot [consider] this as part of the economic fate of the country and [a source for] the livelihood of a country and connect it to such a thing. Oil belongs to us, [however,] it is both controlled by others, and most of its revenue belongs to others. More than the advantage that we take of oil exports, that oil importing government in Europe or elsewhere takes advantage [of it], which is levying tax [on oil imports] and levies other [duties]. We are giving our oil to get money, [but] it takes the oil from us and [also] takes money from its own people. Those governments are more benefitted by oil sales than our government. What kind of loss-ridden deal is this? Well, of course, in some cases we have to produce oil, [because] we have no [other] choice. However, I am not happy from the bottom of my heart when I [hear] the statistics of increased [oil] exports and increased [oil] production; I always think that we must find a substitute for this. Therefore, if we wanted to find a substitute, one of the best substitutes is mines.

Then [when it comes to] mines, sale of raw mineral [materials] must be seriously avoided. We have valuable mines. In Kerman Province or in south of Khorasan [Province], there are very valuable stones. [That] we suddenly extract this stone just as it is, send it to Italy so that they would then convert it [to a more valuable product] and avail themselves of its added value [on a scale] of tens times [higher], [and] perhaps send them back to us and export [the processed stone] to our country, [it will cause] one to feel really exasperated that such a thing could happen. Therefore, this is also a problem. And in my opinion, in the case of mines, the issue of the private sector is also important. And in provinces, as they have reported to me, governors general and people of this sort say that they can get the private sector involved in the case of mines and in some other places.

The issue of water, which I have jotted down, is very important. The point [referred to] by Mr. Chitchian [minister of energy] is totally correct. Reduced level of underground water is really important. This plan that now you say you have made, is not enough – [because] planning is only 50 percent of the work or less – [and you] have to move after [making] this plan, [and] start to work. Of course, you are the one to do this, thank God. [In addition to] saving water, correcting irrigation [methods], and cultivation model in every region [are also necessary].

The last word is about the Sixth [Economic Development] Plan, which is getting late. You must, God willing, prepare the Sixth Plan as soon as possible, as I said, in total conformity to [the principles of] the Resistance Economy, and submit it to the Majlis sooner because, in my opinion, it must be approved this year; that is this step must be taken as soon as possible. Bring the Majlis into this, [and] into the middle of the arena as well, so that, our friends in the Majlis will come and seriously follow up [on this plan]. God willing, you would be able [to do that].

The Almighty may, God willing, help you. “He is the one who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers so that they would add [more] faith to their [present] faith;” May God bestow tranquility on the hearts of all of you and us, which this tranquility and serenity would be the opposite of this so-called storminess and turbulence of minds and thoughts, and this causes one’s faith to be increased: [as put by the Quran], "so that they would add [more] faith to their [present] faith;” That is, that tranquility [will lead to stronger faith]. The tranquility comes from the divine power, then the Almighty says in the Quran: “And to Allah belong the soldiers of the Heavens and the Earth, and Allah is All-Knowing and Wise.” The Almighty may, God willing, help you. I, well, like always pray for you. And working for people, working for God, working with devotion, God willing, should be on the agenda of all of us and the Almighty God would, God willing, bestow His blessing and accept [our efforts.]

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