The Leader’s Remarks at Imam Reza (PBUH)’s Holy Shrine in Mashhad on the occasion of Persian New Year - 21 /Mar/ 2016

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

I thank Almighty God that once again He allowed me to meet with you, the dear people of Mashhad and esteemed and dear pilgrims, who have traveled to this sacred court from all corners of the country, on the occasion of the new solar Hijri year. First of all, once again, I felicitate all of you brethren and sisters [on the occasion of] the new year. This year has the characteristic that both its beginning falls on the auspicious birthday of [Hadhrat] Fatemeh Zahra (PBUH) – according to the lunar calendar – and once again, the end of this year will fall on this very auspicious and honorable birth [anniversary]. I ask Almighty God that due to the blessed existence of Fatemeh Zahra (PBUH), who is the Lady of the Two Worlds and the Lady of all Women in the Two Worlds, to make this year for the Iranian nation and for all Muslims of the world and the lovers of the [Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)’s] Progeny a blessed year, so that, everybody would, God willing, avail themselves and take advantage of the blessings of this honorable birth.

The only shortage that I feel this year in this trip and in this meeting is the loss of my dear brother, Mr. [Abbas Vaez] Tabasi [former custodian of Imam Reza (PBUH)’s holy shrine], a combatant and struggling cleric and devoted servant of this holy shrine. His presence was a valuable presence; he was among the pioneering revolutionary figures and his loss is, in the true sense of the word, a major loss for all those who knew him. I ask Almighty God to cover his purified soul by Hadhrat Abal-Hassan al-Reza (PBUH)’s blessings and bestow his mercy and forgiveness upon him.

I start today’s discussion with the motto of the year and later on, God willing, will give some explanation for you, dear brethren and sisters, who are present here, and for those who will hear these remarks later. I am willing for the discussion here to be a solid and logical discussion; [because] today, discussions that are based on slogans are not greatly valued in the mind of our people; [because] our people, our youths, [and] all persons in our society are intelligence and look upon [various] issues with an eye of logic and argument. What I say here, I am willing to be presented to the [public] opinion of our dear people in the form of a solid and logical discussion. The reason for I chose an economic motto as this year’s [motto] was an analysis and a [special] approach to totality of the country’s problems. Perhaps it occurred to some people that it was preferable for this year’s motto to be a cultural motto, or an ethical motto; however, in view of the country’s problems, it seemed that this year, like the past few years, the motto of the year, which must be propagated among people and in the country’s public opinion as a discourse, should be an economic motto. I present this analysis and I am willing for our dear youths to analyze among themselves what they hear and think about it.

At this juncture of time, the policies of the Arrogance, and especially and in particular the policies of America, require that a [special sort of] thought be injected into our nation; firstly, [it must be injected] into the elites of the society and then be gradually transferred to the public opinion; a special kind of thought must be injected into the public opinion. That policy, which is purported by them, is [that they want] to show that the Iranian nation is at a crossroads and has no choice, but to choose between one of the two options. Those two options include either to get along with America or put up with pressures exerted by America and problems resulting from it forever; the Iranian nation must choose between these two options; this is what they want. [Of course,] getting along with America does not mean getting along with any other government. [This is true] because the government of America has wealth, has vast propaganda machines, has dangerous weapons and has many facilities [at its disposal and] getting along with the

government of America would inevitably mean accepting all its impositions. This is the nature of [any] agreement with America; [and] it is like this everywhere; other countries, which reach an agreement with America on any issue, it means that they have withdrawn from their positions in favor of the opposite side without the opposite side having made a remarkable retreat [from its positions] in their favor. In this recent nuclear agreement, although I endorsed this agreement and announced my acceptance for those who clinched this agreement and I accept them, it was like this here as well; our esteemed foreign minister occasionally told me that 'we could not hold [for example] this [position] or this red line'.

This is [exactly] what it means; that is, when the opposite side is a government like America, which has means of propaganda, has facilities, has money, has active diplomacy, has various agents across the world, [and] governments on which it puts pressure are at its service, [then] getting along with it would mean to pass over some of the things on which one insists. This is a crossroads, which according to America's policies that they want to infuse in the mind of our nation, is an inevitable crossroads; this is an inevitable dichotomy: either [we] must recede in the face of America and its demands in many cases, or must tolerate America's pressures, America's threats, [and] losses that result from opposition to America. They want to propagate this as a discourse among the elites of our society and gradually spill it over into [common] people and the public opinion. They are propagating this thought inside the country and outside the country and are spreading it in different forms [and] through different expressions through the mass media of the world; they assign certain people in order to be able to spread this thought among our nation. Of course, as I said before, there are people inside the country who accept this thought and have accepted it and are trying to make others accept it as well.

Pay good attention so that I explain; I [first] say what the opposite side says, [and] then tell you what is right and truth. What the other side, that is, the same propaganda and thought-making and current-making machine, says is that it says Iran enjoys numerous economic capacities and the goal of the nuclear agreement was that the country of Iran would be able to take advantage of these capacities; well, the agreement was reached, but this agreement is not enough and there are other issues, about which the Iranian nation, the Iranian administration and the Iranian officials must make decision and take action. For example, assume that today in the West Asia region – that is, the same region which Western countries call the Middle East – there are a lot of commotion and disturbances; well, this is a problem for the entire region and if you want your country to be free of these problems, you must try to quench this commotion. What we must do [to achieve this goal]? Cooperate, collaborate, hold sessions, meet with, [and] confer with America and choose a model, which would appease Americans, or [would be chosen] according to an agreement with Americans; another [issue] is this.

Or [some people say] we have other problems, we have many differences with America, [and] we must settle these differences, [because] these differences must come to an end; now, to settle these differences, assume that the Iranian nation may have to give up [some of] its principles, [and] also cross out some of its red lines, so be it; [they tell us that] the opposite side would not give up its principles and its values, but if need be, we must give up [our values] in order to solve problems, [and] so that the country would be able to take advantage of its capacities and, for example, turn into a prominent economy. This is what they say. Therefore, an agreement was reached over the nuclear issue and we called this "Barjam" [Persian equivalent for the JCPOA, or Iran's nuclear agreement with the P5+1 group]; [now they say] another JCPOA about issues in the region, another JCPOA about issues related to the country's constitution, and JCPOA [versions] 2, 3, and 4 and so forth must be created in order for us to live a comfortable life. This is the logic, which they try to [establish] this logic among the elites in the society and [then] transfer it through the elite of the society into the public opinion. What is the meaning of this remark? The meaning of this remark is that the Islamic Republic must give up those basic issues to which it is committed on the basis of Islam and on the basis of prominences of the Islamic Republic's establishment: [they want the Islamic establishment] to change its mind about the issue of Palestine, to change its mind about supporting the resistance in the region, [they want the Islamic establishment] not to provide the oppressed in the region – like the Palestinian nation, like the people of Gaza, like the people of Yemen, [and] like the people in Bahrain – with political backing and support. And with lowering its demands,the Islamic establishment should get itself close to what the opposite side, that is the US,

is seeking to realize. This remark means that just in the same way that some regional countries and regional governments, despite the rule of Islam and despite the demand of their nations, have gotten along with the Zionist regime and have let the issue of Palestine to be overshadowed by other issues, the Islamic Republic should do the same; its meaning is that just in the same way that today some Arab governments are outrageously extending friendship hand toward the Zionist enemy, the Islamic Republic must also get along and reconcile with the Zionist enemy.

Of course, this issue does not end here; the meaning of what is claimed in that political analysis by the enemy is that if America wants it, the Islamic Republic must also change its mind about even [developing] its means of defense. You see what ballyhoo they have initiated over the issue of [Iran's] missiles, which [they say] why the Islamic Republic has missiles, why it has long-range missiles, why the Islamic Republic's missiles hit and target their mark with accuracy, why [you] tested [missiles], why you are conducting military drills, and why and why and why. Now, Americans in the Persian Gulf region, which is several thousands of kilometers away from their country, stage [military] maneuvers every now and then in cooperation with one of the regional countries – while they have no responsibility here – [but when] the Islamic Republic, stages a maneuver in its home [region], in its own environment and in its security domain, they start crying out that 'why you conducted this maneuver, why you took action, [and] why your Navy or your Air Force has taken these measures'. The meaning of that analysis by the enemy is that we must give up about all these [measures]. [However,] the issue goes far beyond this; they will gradually start asking 'why this Qods Force has been basically established, why the IRGC [the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps] has been established, [and] why according to [the Iranian] constitution, the domestic policies of the Islamic Republic must be adapted to [the rules of] Islam; the case will [finally] end up in such places.

When you withdraw before the enemy at a time that you can resist – which I will explain later – the enemy will come forward – the enemy will not stay put – and by and by, they become so blatant that [they would tell you] 'this which you say the administration of the Islamic Republic, the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and the Judiciary must conform to the rules of Islam and the Islamic sharia [law], these are against freedom and liberalism does not accept these'; they will gradually reach this [point]. If we retreated, [our] retreat would end up at such points that [they would say] what role does the Guardian Council play in the society and why the Guardian Council should abrogate laws because they are against the sharia? This is the problem. This is what I have explained frequently that this is [tantamount to] changing the nature of the Islamic Republic. The countenance of the Islamic Republic may be kept in place, but it would be depleted of its [real] content; this is what enemy wants. According to this enemy-purported analysis and according to this analysis that they are injecting into the minds of [our] elites and the public opinion of the nation, if the Islamic Republic and the Iranian nation want to get rid of America, they must give up the content of the Islamic Republic, must give up Islam, must give up Islamic concepts, [and] must give up their security.

What is missing in this analysis and has been ignored is a number of issues, and I single out one of them and it is that in this very agreement, which we clinched with Americans in the case of the [P]5+1 [group], Americans did not act upon their promises and did not do what they should have done. Yes, as put by our esteemed foreign minister, they did things on paper, but prevented realization of the Islamic Republic's goals through a number of detours. You just look today [to see that] all across Western countries and those [countries] that follow them, our banking transactions are still facing problem, [the effort to] return our riches [which are held] in their banks, is still facing problem, [and] various trade deals which need intervention by banks are facing problem; when we follow up, investigate and ask why it is like this, it becomes clear that they are afraid of Americans. Americans have said that 'we remove sanctions' and have removed them on paper, but they act through other means in such a way that no effect absolutely follows removal of sanctions and [their predicted impact] is not realized. Therefore, those who hope that we could sit down and negotiate with America on a given issue and reach a point of agreement – that is, we accept an obligation, [and] the other party accept an obligation as well – are ignoring the fact that [in that case] we would have to act upon all our obligations, [but] the other side would refrain [from doing this] through various means [and] through various methods, with deceit, [and] with cheating, and would not act upon the obligations it has undertaken. This is what we are seeing with our own eyes; that is, total loss.

The problem, however, is even bigger than this. It is necessary for me to say a few sentences to those dear youths who were not born under the tyrant [Pahlavi regime] and have not seen the time of the tyrant and do not know what happened in this country with the victory of the Islamic Revolution. Look, in this region where we are living – the West Asian region – your dear country, Iran, is the centerpiece of the region; from the viewpoint of strategic position and as it is commonly said, strategic situation, it is a unique country; from the viewpoint of abundant oil and gas resources, it stands out both in this region and in one way, in the entire world; there are many other resources other than oil and gas. [Iran] is a big country with a talented population and talented people, [and] with rich history. This [country] is the centerpiece of the region; this centerpiece was once totally and completely in control of America and Americans did anything they wanted to this country and in this country: they plundered [the country], took away its riches, [and] all the things that a colonialist government and an arrogant government does to a weak country, they did in this country and had this country in the palm of their hands and in their powerful clutches; the revolution [however] has come and taken this country out of their clutches, [and therefore,] the policy of America is never devoid of grudge against the revolution. Their animosity would come to an end when they would be able to restore the same domination over this country; this is the goal and they are pursuing this. Of course, they are politicians, are diplomats, know [the knack of] the political work and know [that achieving] any goal and purpose has its own way and they must move in gradual [procession] and take the correct course [of action]; they are doing this. We must keep our eyes open, [and] we must be vigilant.

The Islamic Republic not only got Iran out of their control, but through the spirit of resistance that it demonstrated and through the courage that it demonstrated – about which I will explain later – encouraged other countries [to do the same] as well. Today, you see in many countries in this region and even beyond this region, that they shout "death to America," [and] set the American flag on fire. The Iranian nation showed that it can resist, [and] other nations learned [this as well] and America [finally] lost control [of the region]. Americans have announced that they want to create the Greater Middle East – once they said the New Middle East, [and] another time they said the Greater Middle East – [and by saying this] the goal was that in this West Asia region and at the heart of the Islamic countries, the fake Zionist regime would dominate all affairs in this region from economic and political and cultural viewpoints; this was their [main] goal. Now, you look [and] see those who shouted the slogan of the Greater Middle East have been stalled in the case of Syria, have been stalled in the case of Yemen, have been stalled in the case of Iraq, [and] have been stalled in the case of Palestine, and they blame Iran for all these [failures], [and] blame the Islamic Republic. This is why they show animosity toward the Islamic Republic. Their difference with the Islamic Republic is not over one bit or two bits, [but] the issue is a basic issue; [they] are moving in this direction that they may be able to restore their past dominance.

Our dear youths have not seen the tyrannical regime [of Pahlavi]; let me explain to you dear youths that in our country, during these about 50 or 60 years – that is, the era of Pahlavi rule and a little before that – first the British, [and] then Americans had control of [the country's] affairs and did anything they wanted; for example, they [first] installed the Pahlavi regime; [they] installed Reza Khan and later, when for a reason they were offended by him, took him away [and] brought Mohammad Reza [in his place]; that is in a country so big and so grand, [and] in the face of this nation, Americans or the British easily took away the head of this state at their own will, [and] brought another person in his place and [they made these arrangements] between themselves; this was their situation in Iran [before the revolution]. Well, how they could become so dominant? They had created bunkers here, which at first the British regime and later the American regime in later years or later decades, took advantage of these bunkers in order to continue their dominance on this country. The revolution came and destroyed and devastated these bunkers at the hands of its youths, and in their place, established [new] bunkers for protecting the revolution and for protecting the Islamic Republic and the national interests [of the country]. These [enemies] want to come [again] and rebuild those previously destroyed bunkers and destroy these bunkers that have been made by the revolution and revolutionaries; this is the goal.

Now, I enumerate a number of these bunkers for you. The most important bunker for arrogant regimes – that is, Britain at first and then America – in our country was the proxy tyrannical regime itself. The proxy tyrannical

regime was their bunker. It was through that [regime], which these [arrogant powers] did in this country whatever they wanted; [they did] any economic activity, any cultural activity, any political activity, any change [in officials], any positioning, [and] they dragged this country and the government of this country to this side and that side in any way they pleased; I mean, the tyrannical regime itself has been the most important bunker for America and Britain in this country. This is just one bunker. Well, the evolution came, [and] destroyed, devastated and uprooted this bunker; [it] uprooted the monarchial rule in this country and instead of the monarchial rule and personal rule, created the rule of people. There was once a time in this country, when they said “Mr. the county has an owner; who is the owner of the country? His majesty [the shah]”; this was [the situation in the country]. They frequently said that “Mr. the country has an owner; [and] who is the owner of the country? The Shah owned the country.” That is, a corrupt, incompetent, [and] dependent element, who was often devoid of national zeal, was the owner of the country. Well, the Islamic Republic came and ousted this usurper, false owner, [and] handed the country to its main owners, that is, the nation; [now people] choose, take part [in managing their country’s affairs], want, prove, [and] negate; this was the first bunker of the enemy, the Islamic Republic and the Islamic Revolution destroyed this bunker.

But it was not all this, [and] there were other bunkers as well; psychological factors and objective factors were among those bunkers a couple of which I will explain to you. One [of those factors] was fear, the bunker of fear; fear of [world] powers. They had created a situation in the country when fear of the power of America governed all hearts; I explained that during these later decades [there was fear] of America, [and] before that of Britain; anything that happened in the country they said the British had a hand in it; that is, they considered the British as an absolute power. This fear was not special to people; [even] leaders of the [Pahlavi] regime were afraid of America. These memoirs that agents of the regime have written and later – after the revolution – these memoirs were published, show that in some cases Mohammad Reza himself and agents close to him were angry with Americans due to the humiliation that they did to them, due to their condescending treatment [of the Shah and his agents], but they had no choice and were forced to obey; were forced to obey [Americans] out of fear; [because] they were afraid. The Islamic Revolution came and destroyed this bunker of fear. Today, you cannot find even a single element, who is aware, informed and reliant on religious values that would be afraid of America; the nation discarded the fear. The nation not only discarded the fear of America, but also the fear of the entire arrogance front.

During the period of the imposed war [with Iraq], which took eight years – that once again our youths have unfortunately not seen those golden period, [and] have not seen those illuminated times – America helped Saddam, NATO helped Saddam, the then Soviet Union helped Saddam, Arab reactionaries helped Saddam despite all their incompetence and weakness; everybody helped [Saddam]; that is, both East and West had turned into a single front in favor of Saddam and against the Islamic Revolution; [but] the Islamic Revolution did not bat an eyelid, stood fast and through God’s assistance overcame all of them, [and] prevailed over all of them; [and this is why] after eight years of war, they could not separate [even] a handspan of Iran's soil. They did away with fear in this way. Yes, I explained that today, self-restrained people, informed people, [and] people who rely on Islamic values are not afraid of America, [but] yes, even today, some people may be afraid, but this fear is irrational; if Mohammad Reza’s fear of America was rational, the fear of these [people] is irrational; because they [the Pahlavi regime] did not have a support like the [Iranian] people and today, the Islamic Republic has a support like this great nation.

One of the enemy’s bunkers for domination over our country was to inject [the society] with lack of faith in themselves, lack of trust in themselves, [and] not having national self-confidence; [Iranian people] saw before their eyes the glamour of the Western countries, [and] saw [their] scientific advances and technological advances and the glamour of their materialistic civilization, and such things did not exist in their own [country], such things were not in Iran, [but] there was backwardness. Therefore, [the Iranian people] had a sense of distrust in themselves, [and] had a sense of disbelief in themselves. At that time in Pahlavi era, one of the state officials said Iranians should go and make loulahang (clay ewer)! You don’t know what loulahang is; loulahang [is] clay ewer, [and] it is not [even] a ewer made of metal. In those old times it was common to make ewers of clay. He said ‘Iranian [nation] only deserves to go and make loulahang; what Iranian [nation] has to do with inventions!’ they said this at that time. Another one

of the prominent figures of that time said if Iranian [nation] wants to progress, they must become Westernized and European from head to toe; they must make everything they have similar to them, [and only in this case] they may be able to move forward. I mean, they did not believe in themselves.

Well, the revolution came and totally turned this [sense of] disbelief into believing in oneself, [and] national self-confidence; today, the Iranian youth says 'we can'. In many cases of scientific advances – apart from what has become, thank God, available up to the present time and [apart from] progresses which have been made [so far] – our youths sometimes come up with new ideas, which responsible organs are not able to put into action; the Iranian youth has self-confidence. When there is no belief in oneself, there will be no progress; when there is belief in oneself, [and] the motto is 'we can', [then] ability will follow; [in this case] the country becomes capable, [and] the nation becomes capable. Today, we are witnessing this.

For fifty years there was university in this country under the tyrant [regime of the Shah], [and] before the revolution; in this university, there were both committed and good teachers and talented students – well, their number was low compared to the present time, [and] from a comparative viewpoint, it [was] much lower than today, but those who were [in the university] were at any rate Iranian youths, [and] they were talented youths – [but] there was never a scientific movement, [and] a new scientific phenomenon throughout these fifty years in Iran. Why? Because they did not believe that they could [do this], [and] did not have trust in themselves; this lack of confidence had been injected into the mind of the nation. Today, we have an innovation in the country on a daily basis; [they include] scientific innovation, [and] technological innovation. When our enemies see these innovations, they become angry. Today, despite sanctions, our country is among top 10 countries in the world in many disciplines of advanced sciences. Now, what is before people's eyes is [mostly] military tools and these very tools of war that you see are at the disposal of the IRGC [Islamic Republic Guards Corps] and the Army and others. Advances that these [Iranian youths] have made in various fields, including in the field of nano[-technology] and in this very nuclear field, are due to believing in oneself. One of the bunkers of the enemy in Iran was the nation's disbelief in itself and one of the great bunkers for the victory for the nation and youths of the nation is believing in themselves and the spirit of "we can." This was also one of the bunkers of the enemy.

Another bunker of the enemy's bunkers was the separation between religion and politics. They had made everybody believe that religion must not intervene in the environment of politics [and] in the environment of people's life and in the social system; they had gotten this believed [by people]. Well, those people who had nothing to do with religion aside, even the religious [people] and even some of the religious ulema did not believe that Islam would be able to intervene in political issues; this was while the very birth of Islam in the first place was through a political approach. The first thing that the Honorable Prophet did in Medina was to form a government. However, they had planted this notion in [people's] minds and used this bunker for [their] activity against the [Islamic] system and against the country and against the people. The Islamic Republic came and destroyed this bunker and demolished it. Today, when it comes to the country's issues from the viewpoint of Islam and the Quran, [even] our youths and your students are working and making effort in universities, let alone the ulema and religious seminaries and the likes of these.

Well, when I say "enemy," I mean the government of America; [and] I don't say this ceremonially. Of course, they say that 'we are not your enemy, [and] we [are your] friend'. They have issued Nowruz message to our people and have shown sympathy for our youths; or they arrange Haft-Sin table at the White House! Well, these are all aimed at duping people; [but] nobody will believe these [ploys]. On the one hand, they maintain sanctions, [while] on the other hand, America's Department of Treasury, through means that they have and to which they have admitted, acts in such a way that big companies, big corporations and big banks would not dare to come close and deal with the Islamic Republic. On the one hand they do such things – impose sanctions and pose threat – which are [nothing but] pure hostility, [while] on the other hand they arrange Haft-Sin table at the White House or issue Nowruz message in which they say 'we seek to create jobs for Iranian youths!" Well, nobody will believe these [claims]. They have not known our nation [yet]; they have not known the Iranian nation. The Iranian nation is an intelligent nation, is aware,

knows its enemies, [and] knows methods of hostility. Yes, we have no problem with the people of America; we have no problem with any nation and with no people; we deal with policies, we deal with politicians; they are [our] enemy.

Let me summarize this issue so that the basic matter I wanted to explain is not lost. There are a number of realities: one reality is abundant capacities and numerous assets that exist in our country; we have both natural assets, and human assets, and international opportunities. Today, our country has an extraordinary capacity for progress inside itself as a result of these assets. This [is] a reality. Today, the Islamic Republic has turned into an influential power at regional level and, in some cases, at global level; this is a reality that exists. [We must] appreciate ourselves, know our value and importance, [and] know the grandeur of this nation.

Secondly, America is our enemy for obvious reasons. Just as I said, I mean American politicians and the policies of America. In the case of JCPOA, they breached their promise and threatened us with other sanctions. As I said before, the American secretary of treasury is diligently working night and day in order not to allow the Islamic Republic to avail itself of the outcomes of JCPOA. Well, these [acts] are [clear examples of] hostility. They keep threatening and keep threatening [Iran] with more sanctions. America's presidential elections will start a few months from now – in [about] seven [or] eight months – and the incumbent American administration will be gone in the next nine months and there is no guarantee that the administration, which will come to office later, would remain committed to even these scant obligations that this [incumbent] administration has accepted. At present, presidential candidates in America are engaged in a race of mudslinging against Iran in their campaign speeches; well this is hostility after all; hostility does not [necessarily] need to be something strange. When I say America is the enemy some people become upset [and ask] 'why you say [America is] the enemy?' [I say, because it] is [really] the enemy; these measures [taken by America] are [nothing] but hostility. This is also a reality. Pay attention, [and] do not forget that I have said the nation and the administration must be empathic and understand each other; don't forget this. Everybody must work and must help the administration. If they have an advice, they must offer that advice to the administration. They must help the administration.

The third reality is that the tools used for showing hostility by this apparently powerful enemy are not unlimited; it has a few basic tools [at its disposal], which are its active tools: one of them is propaganda – [and promoting] Iranophobia – [while] another one is infiltration, [and yet] another one is (imposiong) sanctions. During the past recent months, I have repeatedly talked about infiltration, [and] I don't repeat it here; there is also a lot to say about propaganda. I want to talk about sanctions.
One of three effective tools of the enemy is sanctions. The enemy has the feeling that our country and our nation will be harmed by sanctions; unfortunately, we ourselves have bolstered this notion in it [the enemy]. In some places and at a juncture we continued to magnify [the impact of] sanctions, which 'Mr., there are sanctions, there are sanctions, we must get sanctions removed, if there are sanctions, we will be dealt a blow in this way' and the likes of these [remarks]; on the other hand, we bolstered, magnified, [and] aggrandized [the issue of] the removal of sanctions [by saying] that if sanctions are lifted this will happen, [and] that will happen; [sanctions were removed] but no changes happened and if we go on like this, nothing will happen [in the future] too. However, the enemy has got the feeling that by using sanctions as a tool, it would be able to mount pressure on the Iranian nation; the enemy has felt this. Therefore, what is currently ahead of us [as a problem] mostly consists of sanctions.

What we have to do in order to counter sanctions? At the beginning of my remarks, I explained that the enemy shows us a crossroads; it tells us 'you must either surrender to America and listen to what it says, or pressure and sanctions will continue'; this is a crossroads, which I said is erroneous and false. There is, however, another crossroads: [We must] either put up with problems resulting from sanctions, or resist [those problems] by the means of the Economy of Resistance. Very well, your preparedness is good, however, for the Economy of Resistance [to take effect] preparedness alone is not enough; I said, "practical steps and action." Of course, the esteemed administration has taken steps in the field of the Economy of Resistance; I said a command center must be set up for the Economy of Resistance, [and] they have set it up and put the esteemed first vice president on its top; they have

also done [certain] things, [and] have given its report to me as well, which I said this today in the new year message to our dear nation; however, these are [all] preliminary steps. They have reported to me that as a result of the activities that have taken place, the [country's] trade balance has turned positive, that is, our non-oil exports have surpassed our imports; well, this is a very good news; or for example, assume that our imports have decreased compared to the last year; these are good news, but these [steps] are not sufficient and [our] job does not end with these [measures]; [therefore, more] basic steps must be taken. I have mentioned a few steps here, which must be taken in the framework of "practical steps and action."

Firstly, respectable state officials must identify advantageous activities and economic chains of the country and concentrate on them; some economic activities in the country have priority, [and] have significance, [because] they are like a mother [to other sectors] and from them numerous economic and manufacturing doors open [to the country]; [therefore, state officials] must concentrate on them; must identify them and lay out a roadmap and determine everybody's role.
The second issue with regard to this [idea of] "practical steps and action" that I said should be paid attention to is to revive domestic production. As they have reported to me, today, about 60 percent of our production potential is idle, [and] is shut down; some [plants] work below their [nominal] capacity, [and] some are not working; we must bring production back to life, [and] must revive production. [Of course, doing this] has its own way; many committed economists know this way. I have repeatedly told esteemed state officials to invite these critics that are [out there], [and] listen to what they say, [because] they sometimes offer good proposals; [in this way,] production can be revived and made active in the country.

The third step is that, after all, we have foreign trade, have imports, [and] we need certain things to import from abroad, [and] we have to buy these [items], and there is no problem with that. However, take care that these purchases of us do not weaken our domestic production power. Assume that we want to, for example, import or purchase planes; I am told – state officials themselves say – that if we invest a given percentage of this price [that we pay to purchase planes] in domestic plane industries, its benefit would be more than when we purchase [planes] from abroad, and domestic production would also grow. That we import everything from abroad and don't pay attention to what havoc this purchase of ours, [and] these imports of ours are wreaking on domestic production is a mistake. Therefore, in [foreign] purchases, we must take care that domestic production is not undermined.

Fourthly, we have sums of money outside the country; [for example,] we have sold oil, [but] they have not paid its money to us. In the case of JCPOA, it was decided that these sums of money should return – of course, most of it has not returned, a big part of it has not returned [to the country] and is facing problem; one can see Americans' hand behind this [issue]; of course, there are also other motivations, but mischief of certain American organs has caused these sums of money not to return [to Iran]; though they will finally return. When these available sums of our money in other countries, regardless of how many tens of billions [of dollars] they are get back [into the country], [care must be taken] not to use them for purposes that [would cause] this money to be wasted. This is the money that enters the country, [and] the country needs it and in the first place [a priority it must be spent on] is, for example production; [state officials must] take care that this money, which enters the country should not be squandered, not be wasted, not be spent on unnecessary purchases, not be spent on unneeded measures, [and] not be spent on profligacy; that is, management of financial resources that enter the country from foreign banks and [financial] centers [is quite necessary].

The fifth issue [is that] there are [certain] sectors in our economy, which are important and have significance; for example, [there are] oil and gas sector or a sector manufacturing engines, which are used for cars, for airplanes, for locomotives, [and] for ships. These sensitive and important sectors must become knowledge-based. [This is] what I call knowledge-based economy. Our youths, [and] our scientists have shown that they can innovate, can take us to higher [levels] than the [current] level that we have in technology. Well, is this a small step that [they can] regulate a long-range missile in such a way that it hits the target at [a distance of] 2,000 kilometers with a target deviation of [about] two meters or five meters? Well, the same brain, which can do this, can do [similar things] in other different

cases [as well]. For example, assume that [they can] streamline the automobile engine through an advance [in science], so that, for example, its [fuel] consumption would decrease, or manufacture a train engine in a given form; they can [certainly do this]. Even now, there are economic and production companies in our country, and what they do and produce is either better than their foreign counterpart, or is equal to them; we have [this capacity] right now; well, these [companies] must be strengthened. Therefore, for important sectors of domestic economy, becoming knowledge-based is one of those steps that is a condition [for the correct implementation] of the Economy of Resistance and must be taken.

Sixthly, we have made investment in some [economic] sectors in the past [years]; they must be taken advantage of and be used [to good effect]. We have made good investment in the field of [building] power plant in the country; [and] we have made good investment in the field of petrochemicals. Today, the country needs power plant(s), [and even] other countries need inexpensive power plants that we build. [Therefore,] we must not purchase power plants from outside [of the country and must not] import them, or bring in people [from other countries] to build power plant for us. Efferts have been made and trouble has been taken for these sectors in which investment has been made, [so they must] be revived and taken advantage of.
The seventh issue [is that] in all foreign trades that we do, [we must] include technology transfer as a pre-condition. Of course, my brethren in the administration have told me that 'we have done and are doing this'; I emphasize that repeat this, so that, it would not be neglected. For example, [if state officials] want to buy an implement or a newly produced object, do not buy the produced [object], [but] procure that object along with its special technology and bring it [into the country]; [they must try to] bring technology into the country. [State officials] must pay strong attention to this [issue] in [foreign] contracts.

The eighth issue [is that] fighting against corruption [must] become serious, rent seeking must be seriously fought against, [and] smuggling must be seriously fought against; these [phenomena] are damaging the country's economy and people are bearing the brunt. In case of our oversight in the face of that [given] group, which, for example, seeks rents through wheeling and dealing with regard to economic issues, [whose members] create special privileges for themselves, and/or are afflicted with monetary and financial and economic corruption, the country will certainly pay the price. [Therefore,] there must be no oversight [in dealing with corruption]. Of course, when it comes to rhetoric, and in newspapers and [media] hype, and especially when taking political positions, good things are said, but these [remarks] are to no avail. Now, assume that for example they arrest an economic criminal, [and then] newspapers [start to] write about him and [publish his] photo and details [of the case] and do things like these for factional and political purposes, these are of no good; actions speak louder than words. [Officials] must block the corruption that may emerge today and prevent corruption. This is also true about smuggling; [officials] must prevent smuggling. [They] must fight against smuggling in the true sense of the word.

The next [and ninth] point [is] about energy productivity. Once in this place [and] in one of these new year speeches a few years before this, I said it is claimed and said [by experts] that if we could boost energy productivity, [and] increase it and save [on energy], one hundred billion dollars would be saved; this is no small sum [of money], [but] is a large sum; [therefore,] take this [issue] seriously. All these different measures are being taken in this country, some of them are not necessary, [and] some are [even] harmful. Well, concentrate the work on such sectors. This is [the real meaning of] "practical steps and action." Practical steps are these things – of course, I have heard that this [issue] has been also approved by the Majlis [Iranian parliament]; promoting productivity of energy has been approved by the Islamic Consultative Assembly – [so, officials must] really examine [this issue] that if such a thing does exist, it should be focused on and worked on.
And the tenth [point is that officials] must take a special approach to medium and small industries. At present, several thousands of workshops as well as medium and small factories exist in the country; in the event that these statistics, which they have given me and I said that 60 percent of these [industries] are currently idle and closed, are true, it is a [great] loss. What creates jobs in the society, creates activity, and benefits lower [social] classes is this very small and medium industries. [Therefore, officials] must bolster these [industries] and promote them.

Well, these ten working points [are important because] if practical steps and action is going to be taken for [the implementation] of the Economy of Resistance, these ten steps can be taken. Of course, there are other steps that can be taken, and officials [will certainly] consider [them] and examine [them]. I propose ten points in this way. This will amount to flow of the revolution, this will amount to revolutionary movement in the country, [and] this will amount to the Economy of Resistance, which will save the country. If we take these steps, we will be able to resist America and its sanctions will have no effect on us. We do not need to give up our values, our red lines, [and] our principles, so that, America would not be able to impose sanctions on us. By pursuing these very policy of the Economy of Resistance, in the practical sense of the issue and [by taking] practical steps [on this] issue, we will be able to immunize the country; will be able to give immunity to the country, so that, we will not quiver [out of fear] in the face of sanctions that whether they will [impose] sanctions on us [or not]. Well, let them impose sanctions; if [our] economy becomes resistant, enemy's sanctions will not have a remarkable effect. This would be revolutionary movement and faith-based movement. Then if we took these steps, esteemed state officials would [be able to] come at the end of [the Iranian calendar year 13]95 (ends March 2017) and report that 'we have revived these several thousands of workshops and factories and farms and cattle farms' and the likes of them. [Then] they can come and say this; [and] can report to people, [so that] people would see and feel [the change]. When people feel [this change], then they will put [their] confidence and trust [in officials].

And of course, people must help. Let me tell you that people – both political people, and economic people, and ordinary people – must help the administration, [and] must help state officials. Of course, this is not a job for the administration alone; all three branches [of government] must cooperate with one another to do this job; and people must help these [officials]; this help is necessary and seriousness of officials, especially [in] the executive branch, is also necessary. If we could launch this movement, I said [before] that this current is a revolutionary current and will have speed and will have success. Anywhere that we worked [in a] revolutionary [manner], we have had these [achievements]. Look! The job that our nuclear martyrs pioneered in the nuclear fields, which are also very sensitive, the job that Martyr [Hassan] Tehrani Moqaddam pioneered, [and] the job that Martyr [Saeed] Kazemi [Ashtiani, the former head of the Royan Institute] pioneered in the field of stem cells, [they] are [all] very big jobs. In the cultural fields, the work pioneered by Martyr [Morteza] Aveini, and [what was] recently [done] by the late [Iranian film director, Farajollah] Salahshour – who are vanguards of revolutionary work in this country – these [activities] must be promoted, these [people] must be praised and the names of these [people] must be honored. This is revolutionary work. [The fact] that I keep repeating that we must honor the revolutionary forces and devoted forces and must keep them [on our side], is for this reason; when work is done with a revolutionary spirit, it will progress.

[Up to now] I explained about the Economy of Resistance; [now] let me say just a word on cultural issues [as well]. You know that cultural issues are very important to me; I attach great importance to cultural issues and what I want to say today is the same thing, which I think it was last year or a year before that, which I said in this new year meeting that these self-motivated popular groups that are doing cultural work – and now across the country there are thousands of self-motivated popular groups that are working by themselves, think by themselves, endeavor by themselves, and do the cultural work – should be developed on a daily basis; [and] state organs must help these [groups].
State organs, [and] those [organs] that are related to culture, instead of [opening] their arms to those people who neither believe in Islam, nor in the revolution, nor in the Islamic establishment, nor in the Islamic values, open their arms to Muslim youths, to faithful youths, to revolutionary youths, [and] to devoted youths, [because] these [young people] can work and are working; [and] valuable cultural steps are being taken [by these people]. Our revolutionary youths can make effort, [and] work in all fields. Dear youths! The country is yours, the future is yours, [and] the present is also yours; know that if you stay in the arena, if you move with faith in God and trust in God, [and] if you believe in yourselves, America and [powers] bigger than America cannot do a damn thing.

O Almighty! Whatever we said and heard, make it [acceptable] for you and [useful] in your path; [and] accept it from us by your Grace. O Almighty! [I swear you] by [Prophet] Mohammad (PBUH) and Mohammad's Progeny to

make the souls of our dear martyrs satisfied with us; [and] to make the purified soul of the honorable Imam [Khomeini] satisfied with us. O Almighty! Bestow upon this nation increasing dignity, increasing might, increasing power and increasing abilities in all fields. O Almighty! Help us not to stop serving this nation and Islam and Muslims and this country. O Almighty! [I swear you] by [Prophet] Mohammad (PBUH) and Mohammad's Progeny to bestow upon us what we said, what we wanted, and whatever that you know we need, even if we did not say it. O Almighty! Resurrect the purified soul of our dear brother, the late Mr. Tabasi (May God's Forgiveness Be Upon Him) with your Selected Ones.

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