Leader’s Remarks in Meeting with Senior Iranian Officials in the Holy Month of Ramadan - 15 /Jun/ 2016

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

(Arabic prayer)

You are very welcome dear brethren and sisters! I also thank Mr. President [Hassan Rouhani] for his remarks, [because] he offered in-depth and good explanations. One of the blessings of this Ramadan meeting is taking advantage of the spiritual atmosphere of the [lunar] month of Ramadan. It is true that this session is an exceptional session; [because] various officials, prominent personalities of the [Islamic] establishment, people with [governmental] posts and responsibilities from various [political] factions, [and representing] various tastes are present here, [and] an opportunity for dialogue and discussion and renewed meeting and exchange of kindness and the likes of these is provided – [which all of] these are blessings of this meeting – but more important of all these is the same point that was mentioned; I mean, being placed in the spiritual atmosphere of the month of Ramadan. In part of the prayer recommended for the days of the month of Ramadan, we read: “And this is a month for fasting, and this is a month for rising up [to carry out God’s command], and this is a month for repentance – [as put by the Quran]: ‘…and repent to your Lord’ – and this is the month of penitence, and this is the month of forgiveness and mercy.” This month and this atmosphere have these characteristics.
From what sin we [must] repent? Well, humans and the likes of me are [covered with] sin from head to toe, but [generally speaking] there are two types of sins: one [type] is that sin, which only harms a person himself, [and] there is a [second type of] sin which when committed by a person harms others. That thing that this human tooth tears apart and chews sometimes is a hard object, which the tooth itself breaks [when chewing on it, but] it does not cause harm anywhere else [in the body]. [However,] sometimes one uses this tooth to eat a food, which causes human liver to stop working; [here,] the liver is not to blame, [but] this tooth is to blame, [and] this mouth is to blame. Our sins are sometimes like this. We [sometimes] make a move, say a word, [or] take a path, [which] harms the society, [and] harms the country. Such sins are important sins, [and] are major sins. As said [by the Quran:] “And fear a sedition which will not strike those who have done wrong among you exclusively.” Sometimes, one person does wrong, [but] the penalty considered for that wrong by the Almighty God is overarching and is administered to the [entire] society; such a wrong, [and] such a sedition must be avoided. This is addressed to us, officials, [because] lay people are not addressee of this warning; it is us, officials, who can [both] do things, which would harm the society, and can also act its opposite, [and] do something, which would benefit the [entire] society.
The late Allameh Tabatabaei (May God’s Mercy Be Upon Him) has a [special] interpretation with regard to this honorable verse of the Chapter Nisa [of the Quran, which says:] “What comes to you of good is from Allah, but what comes to you of evil, [O man], is from yourself.” He says that human societies, [including] the society in a country, [and] a society special to a [specific] area has an independent identity, [and] has an unified identity, which is different from identity of individuals [living in it]; that is, the society of a country, from one viewpoint, is like a single person; just in the same way that in a single person, a [body] organ may do something that would cause engage other organs, it is the same in the [human] society, where one member can do something, which would cause trouble for all. Incidents happen to a society, in which a group have done nothing wrong; [so] how one can say that “…what comes to you of evil, [O man], is from yourself?” He [Allameh Tabatabaei] says, “No, this is correct [interpretation of this verse], [because even] in this case, “is from yourself” holds water, but “yourself” is a great entity called the society a part of which has committed a sin. Well, if we are supposed to avoid such a sin, we must be very careful; [this] needs care, [and] needs exactness. This atmosphere of the month of Ramadan must teach us this, we must really suggest this to ourselves, [and] really feel responsibility in any place we are.
In this prayer [which has been recommended for the days] of the month of Ramadan, the Almighty God has been

asked many things; it is a very good prayer. If, God willing, you succeed to say this prayer and muse over it, [you will found out that] it is a strange prayer, and those requests [from God] which do not occur to one's mind, Imam [Ali] (PBUH) keeps teaching us in this prayer – according to what has been quoted from Imam [Ali] (PBUH) in this hadith – what to demand from God. Among the things that we requested [from God] is to being saved from these few things, which now I explain: [being] saved from lack of motivation and the illness of not having motivation; saved from lack of liveliness in work – see, these are those things, which do not occur to us that these are illness, these are ailment, [and] we must demand saving from these illnesses and cure from these illnesses from the Almighty God – saved from negligence, saved from hardening of one's heart; [saved from the state in which] a person's heart is hardened both with regard to remembering God, and in the face of advice from sympathizing people when a person gives one an advice and wishes well for one, his heart would be hardened. Those phrases [used to express these demands] are these: [O Almighty] keep away from me in this [month] listlessness and boredom and tiredness and lack of motivation and hardening of heart and negligence and vanity;" we must be saved from all these; [therefore,] we have asked the Almighty God all these.

Well, what are the effects of these sins – now, this is a few of sins, [and] there are also greater sins – on human [soul]? One of the effects is that when one is afflicted with a sin, he will wimp out at a crucial juncture and a difficult time. The verse of the Quran says, "…those of you who turned back on the day the two armies met, it was Satan who caused them to slip because of some [sin] they had committed." In the Battle of Uhud, those [Muslims] who could not hold [their position] tight [against the enemy] and were so engrossed with [war] spoils that they forgot what sensitive responsibility had been given to them and entrusted to them, and [as a result of this] they turned a winning war into a lost war, [the Quran says about them:] "it was Satan who caused them to slip because of some [sin] they had committed;" they had already committed sins [and the effect] of those sons showed itself here.

This is one stage; that is, our sin will cause [us] not to be able to endure [and] resist [against temptation] at a sensitive point, [and] at a difficult point. Well, we are responsible for the country; from this humble one to [all] state officials, judicial officials, officials of the legislative branch, and all the way down the hierarchy of responsibilities, we are all responsible [for the country]; if we do something whose result would be "it was Satan who caused them to slip," and we slip and would not be able to endure in that place where one must resist and endure, [then] a great danger would threaten us. This is one stage.

The stage higher than this and worse than this is that we sometimes commit a sin, which that sin would cause us to be afflicted with hypocrisy; that is, our intentions would be in conflict with our words. The honorable verse [of the Quran says:] "So He penalized them with hypocrisy in their hearts until the day they will meet Him, because they let down Allah in what they promised Him." [If] a human being does not remain loyal to the promise he has given to God and does not abide by his commitment to God, this will cause them [to be examples of] "He penalized them with hypocrisy in their hearts;" of course, this also has a totally logical mechanism, but now there is not time for me to explain how committing a sin by a human being leads to hypocrisy.

Above this, sometimes our sin and our error and aberrancy will cause us to – God forbid – be afflicted with denying what God has sent down; [as put by the Quran:] "Then the end of those who did evil was the worst [consequence] because they denied the signs of Allah." Carefulness is the solution [to this problem]; [we] must be careful; we must supervise over ourselves, [and] over our group, [and] boost our motivation, work more diligently, [be] hard working, avoid pitfalls, [and] in short, [we must have] piety; [and boost our] piety. The piety – which has been known in the month of Ramadan [as] the philosophy and ultimate goal of fasting – means this. Piety means to take care of oneself; [we] must permanently take care of ourselves. Of course, the addressee of these remarks, in the first place, is myself; we are all responsible; so, [try to] appreciate the month of Ramadan.

Dear brethren [and] dear sisters! [Let's] appreciate this month of Ramadan which we are currently in it. Thousands upon thousands months of Ramadan have come to pass throughout history; [and] thousands upon thousands months of Ramadan will arrive when I and you would not be in that month of Ramadan; now among these billions months of Ramadan throughout history, we are in a few [of these] months or in scores of [these] months, [and] out of these collection of months of Ramadan throughout history, opportunity has been given to us to be [present] in 20 months, 30 months, 50 months, or 60 months of Ramadan from the time of [the start of our] religious obligation to the end of our life. Well, let's appreciate these [months]. Last year, in this very month of Ramadan, there were people from our friends and our relatives, who are not [alive] this year. We don't know which one of us would be [alive] next

year, [and] which one would not be [alive]; [so,] appreciate this month of Ramadan. [It is] a month to ask [God] for forgiveness, a month for repentance, a month for remembering God, a month for paying attention to the Almighty God, a month for worship, a month for crying [in supplication], [and] a month for getting attached to spiritualties. [As put by the Iranian poet:] Many a June and January and May will come when we will be dust and brick.
As for the country's issues, I want to explain the topic in this way that we are in a sensitive situation; the current situation of the country, is an important situation. Well, Mr. president explained [about certain] measures [which have been taken so far]; these measures should be followed up on, be pursued, [and] continue. Those parts of them, which are incomplete must be completed; all of these measures are necessary; [and] other organs in the country, every one of them, are needed to take [necessary] measures.
The country is currently in a special situation; not that [it is special] in this specific month or year, [but it is special] at this specific period of time and at this juncture of time. Why? Because, firstly, on the one hand, awareness has been increased about endless capacities of the country.
In the early [years of the] revolution, we were unaware [and] uninformed about many capacities of the country, [because] we had no experience, [and] were not informed [about them]. Today, our Majlis deputy, our minister, our official, intellectual personalities of the country, [and] politicians of the country have obtained new awareness about this huge spectrum that exists in our country in terms of potentialities and capacities; this is the reality of this issue. [When] I read these articles, which some of these experts write, I see that a lot of attention, thank God, is being paid to these realities. On the one hand, well, these huge capacity [exists in the country]; [Iran] is a very big country, [and] is a strange country. A few years ago, I said here that our population is almost one-hundredth of the world's population, [and] the area of our country is also about one-hundredth of the world's [total] area. However, potentialities that have been bestowed on us by the Almighty God are much more than one-hundredth [of the world]; at that time, I said that [Iran's potentialities are] three hundredth, [or] four hundredth [of the world's]. They recently gave me a report which [shows that this figure is] about six or seven hundredth; that is, our capacities are six [or] seven times [higher] than the average capacities of the world; both in terms of population, and in terms of manpower, and in terms of natural resources. Well, this is one side of this issue.
On the other hand, we have enemy; we are not a country without any concerns, without enemy, [and] without [an enemy who is lying in] ambush [for us]; we have enemy. Of course, animosity among countries, among governments, [and] among powers is nothing new, but with regard to the Islamic Republic, yes, it is a special thing; [and] is a special animosity. Why? What is the reason [behind this animosity]? The reason is that the Islamic Republic is a phenomenon, which has no precedent in the world; global powers are carefully watching this. [The fact] that you have possibly read or heard that, for example, in a few years before this, in that given country which is hostile to us, they have established a special research institute particular to doing research on Islam and the political Islam, it is for this [purpose] that [they want] to see what this phenomenon is. A [political] system was established on the basis of Islam, on the basis of the fundaments of Islam, and in these Islamic fundaments there is opposition to the global arrogance, there is opposition to dictatorship, there is opposition to oppression, there is opposition to discrimination, there is opposition to usury, [and] there is opposition to measures that [global] powers take in the world today.
A [political] system with these theoretical and practical fundaments has come into being and this system is growing on a daily basis and despite what they have done, they have not been able to stop it; [and on the contrary,] it has run its roots deeper and its influence has increased on a daily basis. Now they themselves are crying out that Iran is an absolute power in the region and the influence of Iran cannot be compared to the influence of any other country in the region; Americans are saying this, not that now I would say this to brag about it. Well, [there is] such a system; this means that today, at the global level, a new power is arising and is coming into being, and this power challenges the oppressive interests of the arrogant powers. Animosity toward the Islamic Republic is for this reason; this animosity is not [applied] to any other country. Yes, I explained that governments have differences with each other – [they] have territorial differences, have border [differences], have interests, [and also] have trade [relations] – and are hostile toward one another, but this type of hostility is [only] special to the Islamic Republic. Well, so, we recognized, knew, [and] enumerated these capacities on the one hand, [while] on the other hand, there is a violent and belligerent enemy in front of us.
What this enemy wants to do must be made known, so that, we would know our basic and general plan [to thwart it];

these state plans and executive policies are all embedded and become meaningful within [framework] of those main plans; [you must] pay attention to this. These measures must be taken, but they must be seen within framework of that general and large-scale approach in order to be beneficial. We must know what enemy wants to do, what is its plan against us, and in accordance with this [knowledge] prepare our own plans for [the purpose of] immunization [of the country] and establishing security and [also] to protect and defend [our interests] in the face of the enemy. Now, if I want to summarize it in a short sentence, [I should say] the enemy's plan is to stop [the growth] of the Islamic Republic's capabilities; either to destroy them [totally], or at least prevent their [further] growth; this is the enemy's plan. What we must do? We must increase our capabilities as far as we can. I have frequently repeated in this meeting and in other different meetings during these [past] few years [that] the country must become powerful; I mean, we must boost these various capabilities. If we boosted [them], then we would be able to tell people with ease of mind that "People! Rest in peace," while our own mind is also in peace. However, if we do not boost our capabilities, we will have to live in stress.

Now, what are these capabilities that we have? Of course, I have jotted down [a few] instances of those capabilities, which are more the target of [various forms of] hostilities.

First [of all], is the Islamic faith; the Islamic faith. Some people may be surprised and say, "Sir, today the world is the world of freedom of thought and conviction and the likes of these!" [The answer is] no sir; More than anything else, they are hostile to that pure Islam, which Imam [Khomeini] (May God's Mercy Be Upon Him) explained and [which] is the foundation of the Islamic government and the Islamic Republic. You look at the activities, which are underway in the world today in order to break down the barrier of this faith in any place and especially in the Islamic Republic establishment and among the people [of Iran]. If you are familiar with social networks and are familiar with cyberspace, you understand well and know well to what I am referring; they are taking advantage of all means in order to scuttle our Islamic faith. Who is us? Do I mean seventy- [or] eighty-year-old men? No, they are not very worried about us; [but] they [want to scuttle] the faith of the generation [that comes] after us and the generation that comes after it; effort is being made [to do this]. Well, one of the [good] grounds for our power and [good] grounds for our capability is our Islamic faith; [therefore,] this is one of the targets of their hostilities.

The second [capability] is [our] scientific capability; they even embarked on assassinating our scientists, [and] made plans [to do this]. They even took advantage of evil tools, which are prohibited across the world, in order to stop our scientific movement. This Stuxnet [computer virus], which they sent a couple of years ago into cyber structure of the Islamic Republic, it could have destroyed all our [nuclear] structure; this measure is a crime; I mean, it is an internationally recognized crime and one can sue perpetrators of this crime at international courts; unfortunately, we did not do this; [but] they have gone to such extremes [in their hostility against Iran]. They are strongly against scientific progress [of Iran], which is [the result of] scientific capabilities [of the country]. Well, the pressure [exerted] on the nuclear sector, in my opinion, one of its main reasons was this; [despite the fact] that they kept saying that [Iran is trying to make] the atom bomb and nuclear bomb, they themselves knew that they were lying, of course now, I will say a few sentences about the nuclear issue later.

[The next capability is] the economic capability, which I will explain [later]. Deterrent defensive capability [is also important]; [and enemies] are strongly against this. [From the viewpoint of enemies] the country must be like a fortress whose wall is broken, so that, they would be able to do whatever they want. If our organs have defensive capacities, [and] have reciprocal aggressive capacities, it would be like that a wall has been built around this fortress, [that is,] the country; [but enemies] are against this. These arguments about [Iran's] missile [program] and the likes of these, [actually] mean this: opposition to defensive capability [of Iran].

National political capability [is the next capability of the Iranian nation]. This means unity and solidarity among the nation. I have noted frequently that differences in political choice [of people] are of no objection. [Feeling of] liking and dislike toward this or that person is also of no objection. What is objectionable is that differences about fundaments of the country's basic and large-scale movement are created among the people; this is objectionable, [and] political and social officials should not let this happen. Today, fortunately, this unity does exist; [and] it has existed since the beginning of the [Islamic] Revolution. Not that the revolution or [what happened upon victory of the revolution on] the 22nd of [the Iranian calendar month of] Bahman [February 11, 1979] does not have enemy, [and] does not have opponent; yes, it does have opponent; however, the majority of the [Iranian] nation and the large part of the nation is interested in the revolution and the manifestations of the revolution and the signs of the

revolution and the keepsakes of the revolution, [and] are [also] interested in the name of the Imam and the memory of the Imam; this is a very great bounty; this is the [meaning of] political capability for a nation.

[Another capability is] the capability resulting from [having] young population; [this is] what is [usually] ignored. I have kept warning about the issue of family planning and the likes of these for a number of years; well, fortunately, certain measures have been taken. Some officials have taken good steps [in this regard], but no, the job, which must be done in full, has not been done yet. Today, our young population is a phenomenon, [and] is a bounty; because [a] young [person] is the origin of movement and a gushing spring of motivation and movement and vibrancy and creativity and innovation, [because it is] the youth [who] do the job. If this [youngness of population] is lost twenty years from now – [because] this young [population] cannot be imported – the country would be at a loss; we must not allow this [happen] as of today. These claims that sometimes go around – which of course, I have not done research [on this issue] and am not well informed [about it] – which some wrong methods of the past still continue and abortion or the likes of these still take place in certain places, if these [claims] are right, these specific state officials are responsible for this and must follow up on it. The issue of the youngness of population is a very big and important capability [for our country].

Well, so the enemy does exist, these capabilities also do exist today and these capabilities are target of the enemy's attacks. What is the [final] result? The result is this, which I have always said: the enemy must be known, its methods must be known, [and] the points from which it would start to attack must be known and blocked. [This is] just like a military war; in a military war, people who are specialized in reconnaissance first recon the [war] theater, identify the enemy, guess or understand that the enemy has this intention [in mind] and would attack from this point, [and then] they block that point [of enemy's infiltration]. The importance of this war that exists today in the field of political and economic issues is more than a military war, [and] its scope is also wider; [therefore,] enemy's infiltration points should be identified; this is a duty for all.

Well, what I must now explain is who the enemy is? I said that we have enemy; [but] who the enemy is? The enemy has presented itself totally naked in front of our eyes; [so,] we do not need to search and find the enemy; the enemy is the arrogant network and the Zionist network; this is the enemy. The arrogant network is topped by the government of the regime of the United States of America and the Zionist network is represented by the fake Zionist regime, [which is currently] ruling the occupied Palestine; this is the enemy. [And] it does not conceal [its enmity] either. America does not conceal its enmity [toward Iran]. Now it is possible for the president of America to arrange a, for example, Haft Sin table on the day of Nowruz [Iranian new year] Eid, but they shoot down [Iran's] passenger plane as well. They approve everything that may be used against the Islamic Republic at the American Congress and [their] president signs the same [approved bill] and implements it.

The position of talking and [exchange of] pleasantry and dialogue and diplomatic smile is a different position, [and] it is different from the position of action, [and] is even different from the position of political remarks. You now observe that what the American president and American secretary of state and security officials of America and America's defense minister and the likes of these say about Iran are not what a friend would say, [but] are what an enemy would say; and [they are remarks of] a belligerent enemy for that matter. [And] there is no need to say more about Zionists. This is the enemy. Our esteemed foreign minister made a good point [during an address] at the Majlis [Iranian parliament] a few days ago – which of course, I read it in newspapers – [where] he had said the nature of America has not changed; he is right, [and] he nature of America is the same nature [that it was] at the time of [former US president, Ronald] Reagan; it is the same nature and has not changed; [this] is the nature of the enemy. Yes, there is party [politics in US] – [there is] the Democrat Party, [and] the Republican Party; this throws the ball to that and that throws the ball to this – but the nature of America is the same. This is a very accurate remark, which he made at the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

Well, there is a misconception here and it is that "we can get along with America; [can] get along with America and solve the problems!" Well, this conception is not a correct conception. We cannot rely on an illusion, [but] we must rely on the realities. Firstly, as I said, from a logical viewpoint, a [political] system like the Islamic Republic of Iran will never be the subject of kindness and favors of a system like America; it is not possible. Secondly, their actions [have been totally hostile]. Since fifty years ago, [or] sixty years ago, since the 28th of [the Iranian calendar month of] Mordad [August 19, 1953], [and] after that under the despotic regime [of Iran], [and] later from the outset of the revolution up to the present day, you look and see how America has treated us. Under the despotic regime [of Iran]

America looked upon the Pahlavi regime as an asset, [and] at the same time, blows dealt to Iran by America during the same period were drastic and effective blows, which those people who are familiar with history, [and] who are familiar with the life at that time, totally understand and confirm this; no need to say more about [what happened] after [victory of] the revolution; since day one, they started [their] evil [plots] and belligerence and have continued it up to the present time; [so,] it is not an issue of misunderstanding.
Sometimes, there is misunderstanding between two governments, well, it can be resolved through negotiation; sometimes the difference [between two governments] is over a territorial region, for example assume, [one says] 'this portion of this part of the border [area] belongs to me, [and] this portion belongs to you'; well, they can solve this [problem] through negotiation, [and] settle it [on a] fifty-fifty [basis]. In this case, the issue is not [reaching a] fifty-fifty [solution]; the issue is the very existence of the Islamic Republic and [this issue] cannot be resolved through negotiation, [and] cannot be resolved through [having] relations; this conception is not a correct conception. What [amount] of power and independence and progress resulting from Islam and corresponding to Islam, which [Iran] has created in the world as a phenomenon, is not acceptable to the Arrogance – which the symbol of the Arrogance is America; [therefore,] this is a misconception that we would think that now it is possible to sit down [for negotiation] with Americans [and] say, 'Sir let's reach a reconciliation with each other one way or another'. Reconciliation [in this case] would need you to give up your views.
Two [or] three years before now, [and] at the beginning of this issue of nuclear negotiations, I said that Americans [should] tell us right now how much the Islamic Republic must retreat [from its positions] so that they would cease their enmity; [they must] say this. If the nuclear issue is resolved, would it be an end to the issue [of US enmity toward Iran]? Well, now the nuclear issue is resolved, see has the issue [of US hostility] been finished? [But] the issue of [Iran's] missile was raised [later]; [if] the issue of missiles is resolved, [it would be turn for] the human rights issue; [if] the issue of human rights is resolved, [it would be turn for] the issue of the Guardian Council; [if] the issue of the Guardian Council is resolved, [it would be turn for] the issue of the leadership and Velayat Faqih [rule of Muslim jurist]; if the issue of Velayat Faqih is resolved, [it would be turn for] the issue of the Constitution and the rule of Islam; these are [main sticking points between us and US]; [our] argument is not over trivial things. Therefore, this conception is [actually] a misconception.
They talked a lot to me and there were people among friends, who thought out of conviction and interest that this can be done, [and therefore,] we sat down and talked during these years, [but] they later admitted that – of course, not before me, [but] in absentia and in official decision-making sessions – which that argument offered by me has no answer; and they are right; the argument that I offer in this regard has no answer. It is like this about us, [and] with regard to many other countries, Americans do not want to get along [with them]. Pay attention and know this; America's basic policy is to digest [other] powers and policies of the world in the stomach of American policies. This [is not] special to [us]. Now, in terms of [US] enmity [toward us] we have a peculiarity, which there is a special form of enmity against us, [but the US] is like this even with regard to other countries as well.
It is like this in the political field, it is like this in the economic field, [and] it is like this in the cultural field [as well]. [Now,] European filmmaking companies are crying foul about domination of the Hollywood; [and] cultural domination [of the United States]. France is not the Islamic Republic after all. [But even there] this is America's policy. They have frequently said this and continue to say this. Even now, these America's presidential candidates, these two [candidates], have started a race to say that America is the master of the world, is the lord of the world, [and] the boss of the world. Before these [two candidates], [the former US president, George] Bush Sr., when the [former] Soviet Union had collapsed, said out of the same vanity and similar things that 'today, we are the unique power of the world [and other countries] must [attune] themselves with us; [and] we must determine the global order'; see, this is the policy [of the United States]. Well, this is the enemy after all. How [can we possibly] get along with this [enemy]?
Let me also explain this: Some people think that enmities against us are because we have been bellicose; [and] we have constantly poked them in the eye, [and therefore,] they are hostile toward us for this reason; no, this is also erroneous thinking, [and] is a misconception. We have never been initiator [of hostility]. In early revolution, the Americans who had been arrested [at the US embassy in Tehran], were held up for a few days, [after which] the Imam said '[Let them] go to their own place, [and] to their embassy with extreme care'. Before this capture of the [US] embassy became an issue – of course it was due to [certain] factors, and had [its own] preliminaries –

[Americans] lived here in total security; they [were free and] easily went around [their business]; and of course, they did mischief. We did not start [the hostage taking crisis, but] they started [it]; they started from the very onset [of the revolution] by malicious talk, by [imposing] sanctions [on Iran], by [putting forth excessive] demands, [and] by giving refuge to the enemy of the Iranian nation; they were the initiating party. By the way, it is not only America [which is hostile to Iran], [but there are] other countries [as well]. Now, for example, assume what belligerence the Islamic Republic has shown toward France?

The country of France, was even lauded by revolutionary forces because the Imam lived there for a while, but well [now] you see what are they doing. You saw that in the nuclear case, in which the French played role of the bad cop – of course, management of the plan was in the hands of Americans, it was clear, but the French [took] the worst position in the nuclear case – what had we done to the French? Had we been belligerent [toward them]? Now [consider] a small country like the Netherlands, for example. In any case, which you look at from those cases to which the Islamic Republic has been a party, in that list of [Iran's] enemies, one of them is the Netherlands! Now, what do we want with the Netherlands? What belligerence? [The Netherlands] is a small country located at the corner of Europe. The issue is not that we have been hostile or belligerent toward them. For example, assume that Canada cut its relations with us. Had we shown any hostility toward Canada? Had we been belligerent? [Therefore,] this is not the reason [for their hostility], [and] the reason is something else. We must not deceive ourselves and say, "Sir, let's stop being hostile [toward them], so that they would stop their hostility;" no, other reasons are involved; there are other issues behind the scenes, which now I explained to some extent.

Well, now, what have we got to do? [First of all,] the country must be immunized; [and] the country's officials must immunize the country. All these steps that the government has taken or is going to take in the field of economy and the likes of these, need the country to be immunized. What we can do to create this immunity, or to boost it if it [already] exists? We must further boost these capabilities, which I enumerated; [and] these capabilities must be increased on a daily basis. This is the same issue, which has been [explained] in the Quran [as such:] "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war." Power includes all of these;

Power is not limited to gun and arms and the likes of these. Power includes both material and spiritual power, both economic and military power, [and] both scientific and moral power. "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power;" increase the power as much as you can. Well, this is the [major] step that we must take; of course, it is up to us; I mean, the one who must take this step is us, officials; [and] people will follow suit with us and enter the arena and do the work. Therefore, we must boost capabilities [of the country]. [Any increase] would include these [instances]: bolstering the Islamic faith, which is a duty for the government, a duty for religious seminaries, a duty for publicity organs, a duty for the Ministry of [Culture and Islamic] Guidance, [and] a duty for the Islamic Propagation Organization; this is a duty for [all] these [organs]. Islamic faith must be bolstered. Any organ, which is in contact with young people, including at university or the [Ministry of] Education [should consider this their duty]. [Bolstering] Islamic faith is a great duty, which is incumbent on all of these [organs], [and] they must do it. [Bolstering Iran's] scientific capability [is also important], [and] this is a duty for the Ministry of Science, [Research and Technology] and a duty for research bodies. These organs, which [are responsible for] bolstering science [in the country] must try to distance themselves from controversial issues. Sometimes one sees certain controversial issues in some of these organs. Now, I assume that gentlemen who are officials of these sectors, are all present here, [so, they must] hear this: distance yourselves from controversial issues, [and instead] focus on that thing, which is [of] basic [importance]; [that is,] the organ [which is responsible for] strengthening science. Economy – now I will say a few sentences about economy, [because] time is passing by – and defense [capability are among important issues]. [Therefore,] all concerned organs related to defense [affairs] – [including] the Ministry of Defense, the army organization, and the IRGC [Islamic Republic Guards Corps] organization – must do whatever they can in the field of defense issues. [And] I also explained the issue of youngness [of the population], [and said that] the issue of the young generation, taking advantage of young people, [and] supporting highly motivated youths [are among important issues]. Now in a speech at the Imam's mausoleum (May God's Mercy Be Upon Him), I said a few sentences about faithful and revolutionary youths; [afterwards, some people] started such a row outside [the country], [and] presumably disclosed [information] that I am supporting revolutionary youths; but this is no disclosure.

First of all, there is nothing new about this, [because] I always do this, [and] will continue to do this. Secondly, it is not covert, [and] is [totally] overt; I have [supported the revolutionary youths] time and time again; it is obvious,

[because] I have [high] respect for the revolutionary [and] religious young people, [and] I support these young people who are across the country, [because] this is our duty. In terms of value, we cannot equate that young person who has spent his youth, his strength, his energy, [and] his motivation on lofty goals of the country with that [other] young person who [simply] pursues carnal desires and aristocratic life and the likes of these. Yes, in terms of social rights, they are all the same, but in terms of value, they are by no means equal. That young person who works, [and] endeavors [and] spends his time, his energy, [and] sometimes his small amount of money – which I am aware of this – on [achieving] goals, on diligent effort, well, it is clear that these [two young persons] are not the same. I have always supported them, and will continue to support them after this.

Well, now [it is time for] notices. I want to notify two points: one is the issue of economy, fortunately, [Iranian President] Dr. [Hassan] Rouhani explained well about the economic issue, [and] I will also mention certain points [in this regard]; the other one is the issue of JCPOA (Iran's nuclear agreement with the P5+1 group).

With regard to the economic issue, we have problems; the country is currently grappling with major problems with regard to the economic issues, and I hope through the administration's plans and steps that are going to be taken, God willing, these problems would be solved. The most important of these problems include stagnation and the issue of employment, [that is] unemployment; these are the most important [economic problems]. We must address these [problems], [and] pay attention to them; I mean the issue of stagnation is very important. When I look at these [problems] – I also said this to the previous administration – I see that most of these [problems] are more related to [our own] management and policies than being related to sanctions; one can see this both in this administration and in the previous administration, and in the administration before that. If our plans are good and correct plans, not that sanctions will cease to have an effect, [but] their effect will be greatly reduced; [therefore,] we must put our plans in order, regulate [them], [and] be careful.

One of the steps, which is clearly important with regard to economic issues, and can to a great extent remedy the problem of stagnation and also solve the problem of employment, is paying attention to small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrial sector. This [domestic] industry, which I have heard [about its dire state], that is, I read in the newspaper that the esteemed Minister of Industry, [Mine, and Trade] has also said in [his address] at the Majlis that the situation of [domestic] industry is catastrophic – [or] something similar to this term, now I don't know what has been the exact term [used by the minister], [but] something similar to this that, for example, it is a catastrophe – this catastrophe is mostly afflicting small and medium-sized enterprises. Revival of small and medium-sized enterprises should be one of the administration's basic plans; [and] this is one of the pillars of the Economy of Resistance. [The fact] that capacities of [domestic] factories are multiple times higher than their [current] performance, that is, they are working way below their capacity, this is among those problems to which due attention must be paid.

Another [point] is the issue of priorities. In [those] decisions that we make about economic issues, priorities must be taken into consideration. Sometimes a step is very important, is very necessary, [but] is not a priority; that is, a more urgent step does exist. In my opinion, this is very important. Well, I have experience with [regard to running] the administration; both I have been in the administration, and I have seen various administrations. Our dear [and] esteemed ministers, every one of them, are trying [as the saying goes] to "drag the oven's fire toward their own bread;" [that is, in] this fire, which has been kindled to bake breads, every loaf of bread belongs to somebody; [therefore,] every one of them tries to drag that fire toward their own bread in order to bake it [sooner]; of course, it is clear what they must do; it is their duty to protect their own sector; I do not scold [them for doing] this. The minister of agriculture in one way, the minister of industry in one way, the minister of road [and urban development] in one way, the minister of energy in one way, [and] every one of them tries to drag the country's potentialities and the country's budget and resources toward their own [sector]; well, here one must look and see which [project] is a priority. Now, assume that our money [which has been blocked] in foreign banks is unfrozen – which of course, it has not been unfrozen and it is not clear when it will be unfrozen, now, I will also [explain about it] – for what purpose this money is going to be used? This is very important. Priorities must be observed. Well, now let me bring an example. Of course, I think I mentioned this example [in talks with] the esteemed minister [of road and urban development] as well. Assume that our air fleet is refurbished; well, this is a very important and necessary step, but is it a priority [as well]? Is this the priority of the country? Assume that, for example, we buy 300 aircraft; it is not clear whether this is a priority. This issue must be studied; I am not offering an expert view, I [only] give a notice in

order for expert work to be done [on this issue]; I give notice, which priorities must be observed. This is one of the very important issues.
A very important issue is paying attention to knowledge-based companies; this will help us progress. Knowledge-based companies, are both [involved in the field of] science and economy. Paying attention to knowledge-based companies is among the most basic of tasks; this is among priorities and it must be attended to. Of course, some knowledge-based companies complain and report to me. Officials [must] pay attention to this point.
One of the important steps, which is necessary, is to prevent [conclusion of] unnecessary contracts. They have reported to me that following the [resolution of the] nuclear issue, we have about USD 2.5 billion of finalized [and] signed contracts; now, [the figure related to] negotiations, agreements and the likes of these are more than this, but what has been signed, according to the report they have given me, is about 2.5 billion [dollars]; I have looked [at these contracts], [some of them] for example, are about [production] of solar energy. Are these [issues] among priorities?
If there are really [financial] resources – there are foreign resources or finance – we must see where the priority [to spend these resources] is, [and] spend these [resources] there; [if] somebody wants to make investment, [we must] say that we need investment in this sector. It must not be like that he would have his way. This is [also] an issue.
Another important issue is the issue of preventing harmful imports, which I have repeated several times recently; I mean, those imported goods, which either have domestic counterpart or if they have no domestic counterpart, are not among current needs of the country or are not among prioritized needs of the country. For example, assume that what need is there to [importing] luxury cars or such and such vehicles with such [a high] speed? They say the private sector brings them [into the country]; well, the administration can prevent this through various – tariff and non-tariff – methods that it has. Resources of the country – [including] various kinds of finance and the money that is unfrozen [by foreign banks] – must not be squandered. Industries that have been shut down, the knowledge-based economic sector, and the sector that converts dilapidated machinery of our industries, these are among priorities.
The agriculture sector which makes us self-sufficient [is also a priority], which well, fortunately, this report they presented today shows that we have progressed in these fields. Of course, I had [received] no [other] report [on this issue].
The oil sector [is also important]. Well, high production of oil is a positive point in the oil culture and [for] selling [more] oil and [gaining more share in] the oil market. Increasing oil production, [and] boosting oil exports, is [therefore] a good thing, [and] the country needs it; there is no doubt about this. However, better than that is for us to make oil have added value. This oil, which we take out of [oil] well(s), send it out [of the country], [and] are being paid for it, has no added value; [on the other hand,] oil is decreasing on a daily basis. If we could convert this oil or this [natural] gas into products, which would bring added value into the country, this would be good. [We must] make this our policy – in parallel to those steps that are being taken for production of oil and selling oil and increasing efficiency of oil wells and things like this – so that, we would be able to produce [oil] products, export [oil] products, [and] export gasoline.
Why we must import gasoline? One of those things, for wich one feels ashamed when sometimes thinking about, is importing gasoline. The Islamic Republic with all this oil – which we continuously boast before people and before the world that our oil and gas [resources] combined are the biggest oil and gas [resources] in the world, which is of course a reality – [and] then we have to import gasoline, or import diesel fuel! We [must] do something that we would not need to import diesel and gasoline; [but instead] produce [oil] products, [and] export oil products. Or in the field of [natural] gas, [let's] activate these downstream petrochemical industries. Well, the upstream parts [of this industry] are fortunately in good shape, [and] good steps have been taken [in that sector], but [we must] activate downstream parts; [by doing this] employment is created, [and] job is created.
[The next point] is serious prevention of smuggling using dedicated and revolutionary methods. The issue of smuggling is a very important issue and it cannot be solved with joking and dawdling and the likes of these; [but] categorical [and] dedicated work must be done [in this regard].
It is said that 'the Economy of Resistance which you keep repeating, needs resources and we do not have resources'. I think resources can be provided to begin the move [toward] the Economy of Resistance. Fortunately, good steps have been started [in this regard].
It has been said that the [total] amount of people's foreign exchange and rial deposits with the country's banks is a

whopping figure; since I have not seen the original report and they have quoted it for me, I do not give the figure, lest it may be mistaken, but it is a walloping and high figure. Well, we must direct these resources. One of the tasks related to the administration's economic organs is to direct resources in that direction, which they are willing, [and] in that direction, which they think is to the benefit of the country; [and they can do this] by [using] various kinds of incentives and the likes of these. This is a very important issue. Of course, the Majlis must also help. Therefore, these are basic steps of the Economy of Resistance, which must be taken; it has musts and must-nots; its musts should be heeded, [and] its must-nots should be also heeded; the combination of these [two groups] becomes the Economy of Resistance, and well, God willing, I hope it would move ahead.

Well, let's pass over this issue, because the sunset is almost upon us; [so let's focus on] the issue of the JCPOA [Iran's nuclear deal with the P5+1 group]. The JCPOA has proponents and opponents. In my opinion, both proponents and opponents, both [groups] have been exaggerating when expressing their viewpoints; [and] have been overstating [their views]. Both proponents, who praise the JCPOA, talk in an exaggerated way, and opponents, who criticize [the JCPOA], are overstating [their views] and sometimes exaggerate. In my opinion, none of these [two ways] is justified.

Yes, the JCPOA has some positive points, and some negative points; it has [also] some advantages and some disadvantages. Its advantages are those things, which prompted and encouraged us to go for these negotiations. Of course, you know that these negotiations had started before the outset of the eleventh administration, and that was due to these very convincing points; I mean, those advantageous aspects, which occurred to one – and of course, not all those advantages were realized, that is, many of them were not realized – but anyway, there were some advantages after all and one felt that these benefits may [really] exist. These negotiations started; later on, and well, they naturally developed more under the administration of Mr. Rouhani and became more active; these are the advantages.

What are the disadvantages? The disadvantages are those things of which I was always wary and kept repeating and saying [them]; I said, 'Sir, these [Western negotiators] do not keep their promise, are evil in nature, renege [on their word], breach their promise, [and] do not act [according to their promise]; these are the disadvantages. [On the other hand,] there are shortcomings in the JCPOA, which [allow] these disadvantages to show themselves and if these shortcomings had been thought of, of course, the disadvantages would be less or did not exist at all.

What I say about the JCPOA has absolutely nothing to do with these dear brethren of us who took part in the negotiations. These [people] did their job, made their effort, [and] really strived and endeavored. Well, I was witnessing and saw [their efforts]; they went [there], stayed – I think it was last year's month of Ramadan, when they spent part of the month of Ramadan there. Well, it was difficult, it was really difficult and they did a hard job [and] I am not [objecting to them]. The Almighty God, God willing, would be content with their work; I prayed for them and [continue to] pray for them; I am talking about the opposite side, about those people with whom we were negotiating.

However, as for the JCPOA itself, the document – as I said before – has some shortcomings, [and] some ambiguous angles, which have caused the enemy to exploit [this document], [and] has enabled the opposite side to exploit them. Of course, we will not initially violate the JCPOA; everybody should know this! We will not violate the JCPOA, but if the other side violates it – as now these people who are presidential candidates of America keep threatening that 'we will tear [the JCPOA] apart, [and] will violate it – if they tear [the JCPOA] apart, we will burn it. [The fact] that we do not violate it now is based on the command of the Quran, [which says:] "fulfill your commitment;" after all, it is an agreement that we have clinched, [and] we do not want to be the party that breaches the agreement; but if they violated it, we would violate it [as well]. This is also based on the Quranic verse, [which says:] "If you [have reason to] fear from a people's betrayal, throw [their treaty] back to them;" [it says] if the other party violated [an agreement], you [can also] violate it. [The Quran says:] "throw [their treaty] back to them," [and] reject it. Therefore, we follow suit with the principles of the Quran, both on this side of the issue and on the other side of the issue.

Well, the duty of the opposite part was to remove sanctions, [but] it has not removed [them]; [and] sanctions have not been removed. These [Western sides] have lifted part of the sanctions in a certain way [in writing], but they have not been lifted in practice. Well, you know that the main subject of discussion [during nuclear talks] was secondary sanctions. They have maintained primary sanctions with full force and this [nuclear agreement only] affects

secondary sanctions. I ask those who are involved to pay attention, [and] be careful; do not keep saying that sanctions have been lifted; no, the issue of banking transactions has not been resolved and big [global] banks do not deal with [Iranian banks]. Americans say 'what it has to do with us?' Well, this is mischievous remark; how [you can say] it has nothing to do with us? It is their business. [Iran's Foreign Minister] Dr. [Mohammad Javad] Zarif – I don't know whether he is in this meeting or not – says in his talks with the American Secretary of State [John Kerry] that [the issue of] banks, big banks and the likes of these [has not been resolved]; he [Kerry] says, 'well, yes, it is not our business'; he [Zarif] immediately retorts, 'yes, you can [solve this problem] if you want; you are the obstacle', that is, America's Department of Treasury is the obstacle.

Yes, in [mere] talk, [the US official] takes part in the meeting with [officials of foreign] banks [and] says, 'Yes, there is no problem if you transact with Iran, [and] there is no obstacle on our side', but in practice and in other remarks, they talk in such a way that he would not dare [to transact with Iran]. For a bank, it is better to enter into transaction with an 80-million strong market like Iran; the bank has no doubt [about this]; [but it] is facing an obstacle and that obstacle is America's threat. That American state official said just two [or] three days ago that 'we will not leave Iran alone, [and] we will not let Iran feel at ease'; well, when they talk like this, [when] a high-ranking member of the American administration talks like this, will that given bank dare to come and transact [with Iran]? Yes, a number of small banks have come, but for [major] transactions – for contracts, real transactions, [and] investment – big banks must enter the arena and they have not entered; [and] it is not clear when they would enter [that arena]. This is among major problems [with the JCPOA]. This American side has committed this big sin, [and] has committed this big violation [of the JCPOA]; [therefore,] we must not justify what Americans do. Yes, they issue circulars [to lift Iran sanctions], but circular is different from the reality.

The issue of insurance for [oil] tankers is like this. Tanker insurance is one of important issues in oil deals. They have accepted insurance [for our ships] up to a limited ceiling, but big insurance firms did not accept to enter [this field] – [for] sums [related to price] of these oil cargoes, which are sometimes measured in billions – [and] did not accept to insure [big ships] and are not insuring [them]. The reason is that Americans are members and are present in those organizations and structures and do not allow this [to happen]. Therefore, Americans have not fulfilled an important part of their commitments.

We have made our dawn payments one after the other: we shut down 20-percent [uranium enrichment], [we] almost [totally] closed the Fordow [nuclear facility]; we shut down the Arak [heavy water reactor], [and] these were our dawn payments, [and] they still expect [more from us]. Now, I say here that – if Dr. [Ali Akbar] Salehi [head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran] is present – do not absolutely accept and give in to these expectations that they have with regard to carbon fibers, which are used in centrifuges, or expectations that they have about measurement of that 300 kilogram. They continue to raise excessive demands; now, we have made all these dawn payments. At any rate, the opposite side has not fulfilled [its commitments].

Today, [if] we want to obtain our oil revenues, it is a difficult task; both difficult and costly. The money that we have [deposited] in other countries is not given back to us, [and] has not been [given back to us so far]; of course, now some of them have given promises. As Mr. President told me, one country of these countries has promised [to return Iran's money], but it is not just one country [which must do this], there are a number of countries. We have money in their banks; however, since our money is in dollars and the issue of dollar is related to America, they cannot give it back [to us], [and] the issue is in a deadlock. Well, this is [sign of] America's enmity [toward Iran]; isn't this enmity? These [American officials] have not fulfilled [their commitments toward Iran].

Therefore, what I want to say [is this]: the nuclear industry is a strategic industry for our country; this industry must remain [in the country], [and] this industry must be developed and must not be harmed. [The mere] existence of this industry is even effective for immunizing and boosting security of the country. Operational capabilities of the nuclear industry and the nuclear organization [of the country] must remain [intact]; its manpower must [also] remain [intact]; [and] the ability to revert to the previous state [of nuclear industry] must be maintained, of course now this ability, fortunately exists. Let me tell you this: in a matter of less than six months, [Iranian scientists] can make the country achieve 18,000 SWU [of nuclear capacity] using the same IR-1 [centrifuges], which are the same old [centrifuge] machines.

Right now, this is possible [to achieve] in less than six months; that is, the opposite side should not think that our hand is tied. By taking advantage of IR-4 [centrifuge] parts – which is an advanced second and third generation

[centrifuge] – and [other] equipment, which we have, we can reach [a capacity of] 100,000 SWU in less than a year and a half.; these are potentialities, which currently exist at the Atomic Energy Organization [of Iran]; [officials must] take advantage of these potentialities, [and] stop [excessive demands] of the opposite side. [However,] no hasty measure must be taken; [officials must] do anything they can in the face of America's stonewalling, and now fortunately, both the esteemed foreign minister, and the esteemed president [have] said – both said here and at the Majlis and in other places – that they will follow up on these [issues], [and] they must follow up [on these issues] in a serious manner. Note that, as it is famously said, "the right must be taken," especially from a wolf like America; it must be taken out of its mouth; it is not like that it would come and give it to you on silver platter. As long as they have not totally violated [the JCPOA], we will not violate it, but in the face of their wrongdoings and their stonewalling, we must maintain our capabilities.

Let me tell [you] that it was through our own scientific and technological power that we took by force what we managed to take by force from Americans in this case; that is, if it were not for [our] 20-percent [uranium enrichment] capability, [and] if it were not for the ability to manufacture advanced centrifuges, we would not be able to force them accept from us and concede that we could have several thousand centrifuges without resorting to [more] excuses; [all this] was due to that might. If this might is destroyed, the pressure from that side will increase, [and on the other hand,] the more this might becomes, the more will be this side's power to put pressure on that side; therefore, we must maintain this [capability].

[In this nuclear case] we have also appointed a supervisory board; let me tell you that what I expect from the supervisory board is that it must be more accurate, be more careful, and at any point, it really feels that the opposite side is being treacherous and malfunctioning at that point, [it must] do whatever is [its] duty to defend the national interests [of the country].

O Almighty! [We swear you] by [Prophet] Mohammad (PBUH) and by Mohammad's Household that make for Yourself and in Your path, whatever we said, whatever we wanted, [and] whatever we intended and endeavored [to achieve]; accept it from us upon Your Grace; extend Your favor and mercy to [all] those who serve the country; [and] extend Your favor and mercy to our honorable Imam, our honorable martyrs, [and] our dear war veterans.

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