The Leader’s Remarks in Meeting with President and Cabinet Members - 25 /Aug/ 2016

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

(Arabic prayer)

I congratulate [you,] the esteemed members of the Cabinet, the respectable president, his deputies, [and] the esteemed ministers and all members of the Executive Branch across the country on the occasion of the Government Week. It is really like what Mr. president pointed out [here], [and] the Government Week belongs to all [members of] the Executive Branch across the country. God willing, the Almighty would appreciate the efforts [made by] all of you and, God willing, He would bless these measures.

I laud and praise the memory of our dear martyrs [former Iranian president, Mohammad Ali] Rajaei and [his prime minister, Mohammad Javad] Bahonar, and as he [the president] pointed out, these two persons were really role models from different viewpoints, [including] from the viewpoint of devotion, [and] from the viewpoint of being hard-working. Of course, they did not have [enough] time to continue [working in their posts] for a number of years, but [as the proverb goes] a good beginning makes a good end, [and] the type of work that these [two man] did – especially the late Rajaei, who well, worked for a longer [period of] time – showed that [their work] would go on like this. [Their work was characterized with] devotion and interest and being popular and hard work [and the likes of these]. God damn those hypocrite and criminal hands who killed these two dear ones. Unfortunately, today, some Western policies are trying to exonerate this disgraced [terrorists], and show the Munafeqeen [MKO members] in a position of innocence one way or another and create an atmosphere of innocence around them; and [of course] they would not be able to do this.

[We cannot forgive] those who killed thousands of people inside the country from a congregational prayers leader and Friday prayers leader to an ordinary businessman to a young student to a revolutionary guard to [members of] a family who were breaking their fast – and others and others and others, thousands of people whose accurate number I don’t know right now – to the high-ranking officials of the country [such as] Martyr [Seyyed Mohammad Hosseini] Beheshti and those prominent figures of that time who were martyred to these two honorable ones. Now, wicked and spiteful political hands – both outside the country and their followers or those who love them inside the country – want to exonerate these [terrorists] and project a justified image of them and show them innocent and, on the opposite, damage the blessed and illuminated countenance of the [late] Imam [Khomeini]. [However,] the countenance of the Imam cannot be damaged and of course, [those who want to do this] have certainly failed [in the past] and will fail [in the future as well].

On this occasion, I must really thank the administration for its efforts. Now, today, the reports presented by these gentlemen were very good reports, both the report by Mr. President [Hassan Rouhani], the report by the esteemed first vice president, [and] the reports [presented by] ministers and [other] vice presidents. Many positive and good points were really in these reports, and it would be good if these [points] were reflected in the real sense of the word and told to people. As they pointed out, people are our main asset and capital. People’s trust and people’s hope assists all administrations. [Therefore,] we need this and, God willing, this measure [telling people the truth] must be taken through the national broadcaster and others must also repeat them so that people would hear [about] them. I appreciate the efforts made by [these] gentlemen [in the Executive Branch].

It is a difficult task to manage the country’s affairs. [The fact] that positive steps are being taken does not mean that there is no shortage, no problems, [or] no weak performance in various sectors [of the country]; yes, there are [such problems and weaknesses] but [nonetheless] management of the country is not an easy task. I remember that sometimes some people met with the Imam and complained of [the performance of] various sectors and the likes of these. The Imam said one sentence [in answer:] “Sir, it is a difficult task to manage the country.” He sufficed to

saying just this sentence; [and] it is really like this. Well, I was president [and] know [its difficulties], [and] I have been abreast of [executive] affairs under various administrations, [and know that] it is really difficult [to run the country]. This diversity, this [wide] expanse, these justified and sometimes – at times they may be like these – unjustified expectations across the country, [in addition to] the devastations and [other] things that have been accumulated in the country from the time of the former regime and through the time, these [problems] naturally make the job more difficult. There are weaknesses – now, I will refer to what occurs to me [and those areas in] which steps are needed to be taken, [and] I will mention certain points under a number of [general] topics – but those steps, which are being taken, are good steps.

Well, the time is rapidly going by. This year's [meeting] seems to be the fourth meeting between me and you. The first meeting, as if took place just yesterday. This is how time goes by, [and] this is how [our] life passes at high speed. [Therefore,] these hours and these days must be taken advantage of. I have mentioned this point in the first year of all administrations – including the administration of Mr. Rouhani – that this period would be over in the blink of an eye. In the meantime, however, four years is not a short period. Well, for example assume that we have an Amir Kabir [a former Iranian prime minister in Qajar era] with that brilliant countenance, who held office for approximately three years. Therefore, three years and the likes of these are a period [to count on]; [and] four years is not a short time. The same is true about this one year, which has remained [from President Rouhani's term]; this one year, which remains from the tenure of this administration, this one year is [valuable as] one year and every day of it can be really used to work and think. What I expect is for these opportunities to be taken advantage of and [these] gentlemen [who are members of the Cabinet must] work up to the last day of the administration. I mean do not think like that, now for example assume, [the term of] this administration will end [and it is not clear] whether I would be in charge of doing this job tomorrow or not. Such ideas should not exist at all, [but on the contrary] effort must be made and work must be done up to the last moment [and] up to the last hour.

Don't get involved in marginal issues, because these months, which are ahead of us, are months which will gradually become associated with election-related challenges. I mean, election campaigns, election-related remarks, [and] political issues keep coming at you. Opponents say one thing, [while] proponents say something else. These [issues] must not preoccupy you; I mean, you must not pay attention to these issue at all [and continue to] do your job. The best publicity for an administration, which is in office, is its performance. That is, if you speak thousands of words in publicity, but present one good job [as well], that one good job would have a greater effect on people than those thousands of words. That is, [if] people see, feel, and observe your work, this would be the best publicity for the administration. [Therefore,] don't think about [getting involved] in [these marginal] issues.

Well, this Government Week is by itself a good opportunity both for the elite, who are outside the administration and for those people who are inside the administration in order to assess [their performance], that is, to conduct a self-test and assess their own work; [as put by the Quran:] "Rather, man has insight into his own soul." All heads of various [executive] bodies can assess their own work better than others. When it comes to talking – well it is talking after all – we may sometimes make a claim about what we have done, [but] when we assess [our work], we see that we ourselves are not very content with it; I mean, this assessment is very important in my opinion. It is the same about the elite outside the administration. The elite outside [the administration] also look at what the administration does. Criticism will do no harm [to the administration], [and] is of no objection, but criticism must be fair. [Of course, I mean] criticism in the sense of presenting problematic points and solutions to those points and untying those [existing] knots; this is correct criticism, which in my opinion would be very good [if] it existed.

I [once again] emphasize and reiterate that [you must] explain to people and to the elite those steps that have been taken, [of course,] without exaggeration and overstatement; I mean, explain to people what you exactly believe in it yourself. This honest tone and this tone, which is indicative of realism and being realistic, will influence the people; [and] there is no doubt about that.

I have jotted down a few topics to explain, which of course, were somehow explained through the remarks [made here today] by [these] gentlemen.

The first topic is about economic issues, as they pointed out. In my opinion, the foremost issue of the country is the issue of economy and economic issues and economic problems and bottlenecks, and these problems must be solved. [First vice president] Mr. [Es'haq] Jahangiri presented a good report about the Economy of Resistance command headquarters. Well, now when he says "my powers have not increased," this is really not good news for me,

[because] I expect that he would command [the headquarters] in the real sense of the word. Well, Mr. president really trusts him, [and] I also have trust in him and, therefore, it would be good if he could command [the headquarters] in the real sense of the word, because there are [certain] points with regard to these steps that have been taken [so far], which I will explain. This report, which I looked at, is a good report. [It explains] about 200 projects and packages and plans [considered] to support production, [and also] cession of 2,500 semi-finished projects to the private sector; these are [prominent] points, which have been mentioned in this report and are important. These are those steps, which are among presentable steps. However, there are a few points [to be mentioned here]:

First of all, follow-up [is necessary] for the final implementation of [these] plans. Look, we make a decision, notify it, [and] also insist on it, but if we do not go all the way to the final phase and if we do not get this water, which has come forth from the spring, to the farm, that job cannot be considered finished. The job would be finished [only] when all these steps, which have been taken by him [the president] and his colleagues within the administration with regard to tasks [assigned to] the Economy of Resistance command headquarters, [and] each and every one of these plans bear fruit. I mean, [administration officials must] follow up [on these plans] and pursue these tasks step by step. This is the first thing, which in my opinion, is very important and must, God willing, be done.

Secondly, there are voluminous activities going on in the field of economy in the country, both by the private sector and the state-run sector. The country is witnessing huge activities and is teeming with and full of economic activities. [Officials must] do their utmost to bring these activities in line with these policies [of the Economy of Resistance] and if there is an activity, which is not in line with [these] policies, they must block it. I mean, this is really one of those basic steps. In the real field of economy – that real economy – many steps are being taken. Well, some of them conform to these policies, [and] some of them do not [conform]. Those [activities] which are [in line with these policies] must be promoted, [and] those which are not must be blocked or, at least, must not be assisted; in the least, they must not be assisted. With regard to a couple of these issues, which were of concern, I sent messages by Mr. Hejazi to ask where among the collection of the Economy of Resistance's policies does this case and this specific project fit? This must be explainable. I mean, every one of these steps, which are being taken must have a place in the gamut of policies, which he [the president] and the administration, in general, have formulated.

The third point, [is that] all the country's capacities must be taken advantage of. Of course, they fortunately pointed out [this in their reports]. I had a meeting with [Minister of Agriculture Jihad] Mohammad] Hojjati quite recently. [As for] Mr. [Mohammad Reza] Ne'matzadeh, [minister of industry, mine and trade] well, his remarks spread through media and the likes of that and one hears about them – well, today, we did not take advantage of these [ministers] to say something. [I mean that] especially with regard to the industry and agriculture [sectors] there are really a lot of [capacities for] work, and these [capacities] must be taken advantage of; I mean, [our] capacities [in these fields] are extraordinary. Now, with regard to agriculture and in the field of forestry, there is something, which I will later tell Mr. Hojjati himself; [and] God willing, I will tell him in private.

The fourth point is [about the necessity of] discourse building. Look, in the remarks made by Mr. [Soorena] Sattari, [vice president for science and technology], stress was put on the issue of science and knowledge-based economy and knowledge-based companies and the likes of these, and it was emphasized –some other friends also pointed out – that this emanates from a discourse, which is 10-12 years old. I mean when the issue of breaking the scientific frontline and the software movement and production of science is raised, followed up, [and] talked about in universities and turns into a discourse, the result would be that when I sometimes sit here and meet with, for example, academics – both students and professors – I see that the same things, which for example I had said [in this regard], they repeat the same things as [their] demands. This becomes a discourse, this is a discourse, [and] this is good. When it becomes like this, then these scientific advances follow.

Today, we have greatly progressed and have [made] important advances with regard to space issues, in nuclear issues, in [the field of] nano[-technology], in biotechnology and other diverse fields; these advances are the result of this discourse building. When a discourse is built, then everybody would think about this; that is, a motivation would be created in everybody, as if a wide road and a highway comes into being, along which everybody is willing to move. Therefore, building discourse is very important. Of course, discourse cannot be built by repeating the "Economy of Resistance" phrase, [and] we must not act in such a way that this phrase would be repeated [without any actual effect] so frequently that it would lose [its real] meaning; no, but [on the contrary, it must be offered with

elucidation and with explanation and the likes of these.
And the next point – I am saying this to Mr. Jahangiri – is that what is expected in the Economy of Resistance is an energetic work. Look, the administration, well, has conventional steps to take, [and] has ordinary steps to take in economic fields – in various sectors of these numerous economic ministries – which are being taken; these steps, well, must be taken, [but] among those things, which are of concern in the Economy of Resistance is an extraordinary work, and an energetic work. For example, assume – I have jotted this down here – that when Mr. President said "launching 7,000 industrial units," this step [is] good. This is one of those [positive steps, and] this step must be followed up on. He said, "We will launch 7,000 industrial units;" very well, this is good; I mean, this goes beyond the ordinary and normal working of our [state] organs. Such steps, which are kind of energetic workand entail a progress greater than usual, [you must] follow up on these [steps, because] these steps are very good. This is the next point, [that is,] do not be content with daily chores of economic organizations, [but] require them to take such [energetic] steps.
Another point with regard to these economic issues is those steps, which are essential, but also possible; I mean they are not difficult things to do [and they include] for example "distribution of decision-making [powers] among provinces – which now you pointed out and fortunately are thinking about it – [because] this is a good step; I mean, go and put an end to centralized decision-making and distribute [such powers] across provinces. Or "directing bank facilities toward production;" the other day, I told the esteemed minister of economic affairs [Ali Tayyebnia] and Mr. [Valiollah] Seif [governor of the Central Bank of Iran] that all the knowledge that you have and everything you have studied take advantage of it today in order to direct this huge [and] heavy liquidity toward production; I mean, this must be [the goal of] all your efforts, [because] if this is done – which in my opinion is a possible step; that is, it is a possible step for gentlemen who are in control of [the country's] affairs – it would be [an] important [step]. [Another issue is considering] "export incentives." Sometimes we have incentives, [but] there is no stability in these incentives, [because] they wax and wane, they change, [and] the person who is doing exports is not [very] hopeful; that is, he has doubts. Since the issue of exports is very serious and very important, incentives [considered for exporters] must [be also important]. Another [issue] is the issue of "paying the price of agricultural products," and this is also an important issue.
Serious fight against smuggling – this issue of annihilating [contraband] – is very important. Of course, some people, who are concerned with these issues, have told me that some of these [smuggled] articles can be reexported, [that is, we can] return them [to their port of entry] and reexport them; very well, I have no problem with this; that is, I announce this right now. [The fact] that I said [you] must certainly destroy the [smuggled] goods, [and] contraband, this does not include those trivial [amounts of] smuggling and does not include these carriers [of small amounts of contraband] and the likes of these. I [mean you must disband big] smuggling bands and [prevent] big [smuggling] jobs, [and] these [cases of smuggling], which affect the country's market.
[There is also] the issue of bureaucracy, which is an age-old discussion [and] I don't want to repeat it [here]. Sometimes bureaucracy is so intense that our entrepreneur and investor lose patience and they become totally disillusioned and are not willing to do anything.
Another [issue] is the issue of [providing] serious support for the knowledge-based economy. Well, now, thank God, Mr. Sattari said here and, in fact, admitted – from one viewpoint it was admission – that everybody is helping him. This [issue] really needs help, [and] everybody must help the vice presidency for science [and technology], [and] all state bodies must help. If this has really happened, now that everybody is helping you, well, praise be to God. We must take the issue of knowledge-based economy seriously [and] take these knowledge-based companies really seriously. One may say that there are millions of young people in the country right now, who are ready to work and if they are assisted, they can really advance in these fields and [activate] various sectors [of the economy].
I have heard that even in some cases and in some state-run sectors – and now it would be good if Mr. President would, God willing, follow up on this –they assign some of these, as put by those gentlemen, projects to foreigners and provide them with [needed] facilities as well, [but] they don't give [any projects] to this domestic knowledge-based company, which can also do the job. I mean, this is [according to] the reports, which have been given to me, and God willing, are not true, but [anyway] they are [according to] reports, which exist. In my opinion, these [cases] must be followed and pursued and [they are] important. This [would suffice] about the knowledge-based economy.And [another important issue is] the issue of villages. Now, there is a lot to say in these fields, and now the

time is going by.
Another topic, which I want to raise, is the issue of the foreign policy, which well, has been one of the priorities of Mr. Rouhani's administration since the outset, both in [his election] campaign, and in measures taken by [his] administration. This has been an important step [and] well, I agree to it. Since past [years], I believed in diplomatic activity and diplomatic work and was of the opinion that [necessary] effort must be put into this field.
There are a number of points [in this regard]. One [point] is that we [must] distribute our diplomatic capability proportionatelyly across the world; I mean, the share of Asia must be allocated to Asia in proportion to the vastness and potential of Asia, the share of Africa [must be allocated] in the same manner, [and] the share of Latin America in the same way. Therefore, we [must] distribute [the potential of] our diplomacy in a good manner, [and] distribute it proportionately.
Another issue is that in all places, we must take an active position in diplomacy. With regard to issues like the regional issues – which today are very complicated; issues of our region, [including] issues of Syria and Iraq and Lebanon and North Africa, [as well as] this side, on the east, Afghanistan and Pakistan and the likes of these are extremely complicated issues; policies [adopted by various countries] have become very intermingled here and they are facing one another in [both] hostile and effective ways – it is very necessary that one must enter the arena with accuracy and vigilance and the power of action, [in order to] be active and have an effect, well in some places where, thank God, we have entered [the arena],it has been like this.
The third point with regard to diplomatic issues is to take advantage of the diplomatic capacity for economy. Economic organizations must have permanent interaction with Foreign Ministry with regard to economic issues. Well, don't we say, for example assume, that transfer of that given advanced technology [must be done] from that given country or exports [must increase to that given country] – and I put emphasis on exports – well Foreign Ministry should be the main pivot of work in these fields. I have heard and seen cases in which a ministry is doing economic negotiation in a country [but] Foreign Ministry is not aware of that! This is a loss, [and] this is pure loss. Of course, this is a two-way duty, [it is] both a duty for [the state-run] organs to cooperate and collaborate with Foreign Ministry in this regard, and [it is also] a duty for the Foreign Ministry to make plans for this issue; I mean, they must make plans in a special section – of course, an economic section apparently exists in Foreign Ministry, that is, it has been there since past years – [and] activate [those plans]. This is also one point. What must be trusted in diplomacy is that fixed, certain, signed, and arguable work. This is important in our communications with outside of the country, and well, care must be taken in this regard.
Of course, the issue of the JCPOA [Iran's nuclear deal with the P5+1 group] is one part of [Iran's] foreign policy. Since I have talked a lot about the JCPOA, I do not want to discuss it again. In the same way, I have had and [still] have almost incessant conversation in these fields with Mr. Rouhani, the esteemed president.
At any rate, the point, which I want to say about the JCPOA is that firstly, we must take into account untrustworthiness of the Western side, I mean, especially America. [You] must absolutely avoid justifying the trustworthiness of the opposite side and misconduct of the opposite side and treachery of the opposite side one way or another; this [Western side] is reneging on its promises – [and] now it is clear that Americans are reneging [on their promises] – [and we must] take into account this untrustworthiness, [and] pay attention to this.
And [secondly], we must gain experience. [The fact] that, you now assume, this administration or another administration in America or in that other given country may give us a promise and say something, this promise and the likes of these cannot be trusted at all; [they are] absolutely [untrustworthy]. Very well, [if] it gives a promise, you give a promise [in return]. A person had written a poem, sent a message, went to the caliph and read out his poem; the caliph told [his people] to give him, for example, that given amount of gold [coins] – for example, one hundred thousand gold dinars. He wrote this on a [piece of] paper and gave it to this poet and said "go and cash this." He went to the treasurer and gave him the paper and said "Mr.!Give me one hundred thousand [in gold dinars]." [The treasurer] said, "For what?"
He answered, "I have written a poem." [The treasurer] said, "Well, you have written a poem [so what]? You have written a poem, he liked it, [and] he wrote this [and] you liked it; quid pro quo. Now get up and leave!" I mean it is like this. [When] it [the opposite side] says something and gives a promise that we like, [in return] we [must] give a promise that it would like, but do not give it anything cash so that we would later remain in limbo whether it would answer [to our measure] and take account [for its promise] or whether he would settle his debt or not.No, [this is not

wise].
At any rate, I appreciate [the efforts] of those people who took trouble and made effort round the clock with regard to the JCPOA. I am critical of the JCPOA, have objection to it, [and] have said this as well; I have both told you, and said [this] in public, but this objection is to the opposite side; it is not criticism of our own people, [and] is not criticism of our own [negotiating] team, [because] our team did their best and worked as much as they would; the opposite side [however,] is a wicked side, [and] is a treacherous side.
The third topic is the issue of science and technology. Well, with regard to science and technology if the country is going to progress, we really need the issue of science and technology to become the country's top issue; I mean, one of those three main points and three main pillars on which the country relies today – and perhaps this is the most important of them all – is this issue of science and technology, and well, thank God, we have made good progress [in this field]; effort was made, work was done, [and] follow-up took place [in scientific fields], [but] the [speed of] growth of our [scientific] advances has decreased. Mr. [Mohammad] Farhadi [minister of Science, research and technology] sent me a letter – because I had said in a speech that [the speed of our scientific] growth [has decreased] – [noting in his letter] that no, our [scientific] growth is good.
I do not argue [with you], I know [this], [and] what he sent me was not new. What I had said [in that speech] and which did not get [enough] attention was the issue of the speed; [I mean] the speed of the [scientific] growth. We are way behind our opposite sides and our rivals. [Therefore,] if we want to catch up with them, if we go ahead at the same speed that they move, this distance [between us] will remain forever. We must move with a speed and with an acceleration, which would be several times more than their speed in order to be able to catch up with them or probably overtake them. This is my point. We maintained that speed for a number of years. When the speed increases, it is desirable; [however,] the speed has decreased, [and] this is my point. [This is] the point to which Mr. Farhadi must pay attention. At any rate, this is the point which I have in mind; I mean, the speed of [our scientific] growth must increase; otherwise, I know that there is growth; well, we are growing, are moving ahead, [and] this is natural, but ordinary growth is not enough. It was the speed of our growth, which resonated, [and] reverberated across the word, [and caused] some people became jealous, [and] another group became concerned. Some people in the world became concerned about our scientific growth. Well, it was because the speed [of our scientific growth] was a good speed. And I have already talked about knowledge-based entities.
Now, thank God, the vice president for science [and technology is] satisfied. I have written here that "they are not supported by [state] organs," but now he says they are being supported. Very well, if you are satisfied, what else should I say? My case is your case.
And this discourse of scientific growth must also continue; I mean, you must not let this stop. All of you – all friends [present here] - are academics. First of all, my recommendation is that officials must not cut their relationship with university; that is, they must have contacts with university. Wherever you are, in any way, [and] with any academic organ, which you face, put emphasis on the issue of the discourse of science production and scientific progress and this software movement and the speed of growth; it must become such that any professor, any student, [and] any researcher would feel that this is their duty that they must to this job. This is also a [significant] point about this issue.
Another point is the issue of research budget. The research budget, firstly, is inadequate, [and] secondly, all of the same [small budget] which is [allocated] is not handed out. Of course, [head of] one of the [previous] administrations – I don't remember which one of presidents it was – promised me to increase the research budget to 1.5 percent and 2 percent and maximum 3 percent [of total annual budget], [I am not sure about the figure] but well, they [definitely] promised [to raise the research budget to] 1.5 percent [of the total budget]. Then when academics came here and talked, they said, "What are you talking about? [The research budget] is 0.6 percent and 0.5 percent and something like that. And even that [figure] is not allocated in total!" Well, now do something that research budget is allocated.
One [important] issue is cooperation between university and industry on which I have emphasized since many years ago, [and] I have insisted a lot on this. God bless her late father – the late Dr. [Taqi] Ebtekar [father of Massoumeh Ebtekar, head of the Department of Environment] – who came here and I told him that I had asked the president to do this. He said, "Really! This is the main point where we are facing a problem." He said this was the main issue and well, he did not live long enough; may God bless the late Ebtekar. At any rate, this is important. I mean, incentives

must be considered for the two sides; both for that industry, which spends money on research – after all, when industry wants to take advantage of academic research, it spends some money; you [must] take this expense into account; either [consider it] as tax exemption or the likes of that – and also encourage the other side [that is,] the research center and the research institute and the researching university; both sides must be encouraged to get close to each other.

Another topic, which I want to raise here is the issue of security. Well, thank God, the country has a strong security shield [around it] today. Well, you look around us and see what is going on. Afghanistan is on our east and those incidents [are taking place there] and Pakistan [is also like that] and [the likes of them]. To our west [are located] these Arab neighboring countries and Iraq and Syria and Yemen and these incidents, which are going on in this West Asia region and incidents, which are going on around us in Libya and, for example, [in] Egypt and other places, when one looks [at these countries], he would understand what a great bounty is this security is,which today, thank God, we have [in our country]. This security shield which has, fortunately, enwrapped the country is why it is immune to these security threats.

People are living comfortably in terms of security. In my opinion, one of those things, which is good for esteemed officials to bring up in their conversations with people so that people would remember [is security] – because [as the saying goes] “health and security are two unknown bounties” [and their value] is not known.One [of these unknown bounties] is “security.” As long as there is security, nobody would notice that security exists. [Nobody notes how would it be if] it is insecure when you want to go from [your] home to the workplace, it is insecure when you go to school, [or when] university is insecure, [and traveling] from this city to that city is insecure. Thank God, security exists in the country today and this is due to endeavors of our military forces and our security forces. They must be really thanked and they must be strengthened.

In my opinion, three sectors are focus of attention in this regard; one is the national defense barrier, and this is the basis of the work; that revolutionary and religious spirit of people is [another] one of those three main elements that protect security of the country; I mean, it is really that revolutionary and spirit of people and religious [spirit] of people, which incites and encourages our forces to be able to do their jobs in a correct way; this is one [of those basic elements], which must be preserved.

Another [element] is our organized [security] sector, which consists of our military organization and our security organization; these [sectors] must be encouraged, [must] be commended, [and] they must be helped, [because] they are really working.

Another [issue] is our technical issue and our tools, [and] these things they are producing. This missile, which Mr. Rouhani unveiled a few days ago, these are important, [and] these are very important, [because] these [tools] are very effective in maintaining the country’s security. It is very important that a country would be able to defend itself and others would know that this defense power exists in the country. You see what hue and cry they launched over the issue of the S-300 [missile system], which we wanted to purchase [from Russia], and what moves followed this clamor. They made so many trips – coming, going, and so forth – to prevent this [purchase] from happening, while the S-300 is not supposed to hit any city, [but] the S-300 is supposed to hit the aggressor, [and] it is meant to do this. I mean, the enemy cannot tolerate the defense power of the country, [and] cannot tolerate that you would have defense power.

Therefore, one of the most basic things to do is that we strengthen our defense tools and if any of these three factors – that is, people’s spirit, the factor of maintenance and organizational strength of those organs that protect [the country’s] security, and the factor of tools and means – is weakened it would be to our detriment and anybody that would weaken [them] would have really worked against [interests of] the country.

The fifth topic is the issue of culture. Culture is a very important priority for the country. [when I say] culture, from literature and art to lifestyle to public culture to ethics to social behavior, it includes all of these [categories]. We are under obligation in all these fields, [and] have responsibility. Our cultural organs are really responsible in this regard. Now assume that [what would happen to our] movie, theater, [and] cinema, if [concerned officials] are not watchful. You know [that] I do not support dogmatism and pressure and repression in these fields, [but] I firmly believe in freethinking; however, freethinking is different from [cultural] oversight, [and] is different from allowing the enemy who want to deal blow to [the country] through the corridor of freethinking and free acting.

Today, the faithful forces and the revolutionary youths are doing most of the good work in the country.

[Management of] these knowledge-based [companies], [in addition to] these different works [that are being done], [and all] these activities are mostly done by the faithful youth and the likes of these. Now assume that a theatrical play or a movie is produced, which hits at the very roots of the faith of these young people, would this be good? Isn't this something that should alarm any human being? There are two [different] categories of offense and defense. In the field of culture, we are acting feebly both with regard to offense, and with regard to defense. In my opinion, we must work [more] in these fields. Culture [deals] with the essence of religion, [and] with the essence of revolution, [and therefore,] is the foundation for our works, to which we must really pay attention. Cultural products, [including] book, cinema, theater, [and] poetry, the press as well as cultural figures [are of special importance]. Assume that there is a cultural figure who has spent all his life on the path of the revolution and there is another cultural figure, who has taken a swipe at the revolution whenever he could; how would you treat these two figures? You, who are state official or are cultural official or are an official at, for example, the Ministry of [Culture and Islamic] Guidance, or at the Ministry of Science, [Research and Technology], or at the Islamic Development Organization – it is not special to governmental jobs, but this is also true about others as well – or at the IRIB [state-run television and radio], how would be your behavior and your treatment of these two figures? This is very important. That person who has been serving the revolution and serving religion all his life, isn't this the person whom you must venerate and prefer compared with that person, who has not only refrained from taking a single step on the path of religion and the revolution, but has sometimes dealt a blow [to them] as well, [and] taken a swipe [at them]? Well, these [points] are important, [and] these are points to which attention must be paid.

If we do not pay attention to these points and be carried away [by the dominant atmosphere] and refer to, for example, that person who is in essence against the Islamic Revolution and against the Islamic government and against the Islamic establishment, well, this would be against a rational cultural move. Therefore, I believe that there should be both freethinking spirit [and] there must be fair planning as well. Neither lack of planning and cultural oversight [is advisable], nor dogmatism and petrifaction [of thought] and cultural dictatorship; I do not agree with either of the two sides of this issue. The correct path is for us to make plans, provide [cultural] guidance, help good ones grow, and block blows and onslaughts and the likes of these; that is, [I believe in] both offense and defense.

The sixth topic – which seems to be the last [topic] or close to the last – is the issue of [the Sixth Economic Development] Plan, with regard to the sixth plan we lag behind; I mean, the sixth plan is really an important issue. Well, the importance of the plan is evident to you and you know how important the plan is; the [development] plan creates both coordination and synergism, and [at the same time] the chain of plans – when implemented in tandem – takes us toward the goals of the [20-Year] Perspective Plan; I mean, if the chain of [development] plans is cut somewhere in-between, we would not be able to achieve that [final] result; this is clear. Therefore, [implementation of the development] plan is very important.

Well, now, [implementation of] the plan follows a [specific] process, which has been laid out in the [Iranian] Constitution: [this process consists of] policies, which are proclaimed and announced. According to these policies, the government draws up the plan, then this plan turns into law, and everybody should be obligated to act upon the details of this plan. Therefore, the parliament also becomes part of this process in the course of the implementation of the plan. In my opinion, you should take this step as soon as possible and go on with it; don't let this issue be postponed anymore. Of course, in [the course of implementing] the plan, the basis of the work [must be as follows]: in the economic sector, [the basis] must be the Economy of Resistance; in the cultural sector, [the basis must be] culture with the same coordinates that I explained; and in the science and technology sector – and these three sectors are very important – [the work must be done] with the same characteristics, which were explained before and the focus [must be] on research and the focus [must be] on scientific development [of the country].

Another point is the issue of the cyberspace, which I want to ask Mr. President [to follow up on], because the cyberspace is really a growing [and] unstoppable world; I mean, it really has no end; the more you look, the only thing, which has a beginning but no ending, is the cyberspace. The more you go ahead in this space, it continues indefinitely. This [situation] offers any country with big opportunities, [thought] it also poses threats in parallel. We must do something to make the most of those opportunities, [and] keep ourselves away from these threats as much as possible. Well, this is why the Supreme Council of Cyberspace has been established.

Now, for example assume that Mr. Jahangiri's report happens to pay almost no attention to this issue. He just [briefly] said in a single paragraph that we have done, I don't know, what with regard to that given sector. For

example, about that given sector, which is effective in [launching] the national information network, we, for example, provided this. He [referred to] search engines, because [developing indigenous] search engines has been started for a few years now. They are [designing] search engines and now, young people from here and there, have perhaps designed and made and produced scores of search engines; I mean it is nothing new. He also emphasized on it. However, we have not yet advanced with regard to that national information network – and that domestic [information] network is very important. Well, although [Minister of Information and Communication Technology] Mr. [Mahmoud] Vaezi also believes in this issue and [our] friends [here] all believe in this issue, there has been no progress [achieved] with regard to this issue. This [issue] must be, God willing, followed up on, so that, we would not deal irreparable blows [to country's information infrastructure].

And the last topic is this issue of astronomical salaries, which it also happened to be the last topic in Mr. Rouhani's remarks. I urge you not to easily pass over this issue. Yes, magnifying this issue in that sense – [I mean] as put by him [the president], constantly revisiting [this issue] and giving [new] figures that this person is paid this much and that person [is paid that much] – may not be a very good thing to do. However, on the other hand, what you do in the face of this issue is very important. I mean tell people what you have done. In this case, people's trust [in the Islamic establishment] has been damaged. Look, people cannot digest many of these big figures and the likes of these, but they can understand well [what] a 60-million-toman salary, and a 50-million-toman salary, and a 40-million-toman salary [means]; I mean, a person who is paid one million or one million and two hundred or one million and five hundred [tomans] per month understands well what [a] 50-million[-toman] salary means. The number of people whose salaries stand at this level is not small in the country.

This trust of people – and Mr. Rouhani correctly said that our main asset is people's trust and people's hope – should not be wasted through such measures. [It is not fair that] you would take so much trouble, work, [and] endeavor, then all of a sudden, assume that a person [would render all of it useless] by taking a step [like taking] an unfair salary. Isn't the difference between 50 million [tomans] and one million [tomans] unfair? Don't any of you have anybody in your state-run organ, who is paid one million, one million and two hundred, one million and five hundred, [or] two million [tomans as monthly salary]? [There are] many [of such employees]. Well, then another person is paid 30 million, [or] paid 40 million [tomans]! Isn't this unfair? [Try to] sympathize with people so that people would feel that the same suffering they are going through you also experience, and show that you have a firm resolve to deal with this issue and stop it and do not allow [such payments]; show this to people.

At any rate, this is [an important] point. In my opinion, no excuse should be offered for [the purpose of supporting] a wrong-doer, [but] they must be treated with firmness, [and] this is not special to the Executive Branch. This concept applies to and holds water for all [other government] branches and for all organizations, [and] everybody must observe this [point]. Well, [what] the Executive Branch [does] is before [everybody's] eyes and, now for example, is more expanded than [what] others [do]. [Even] when it comes to taking action, it is not simply the Executive Branch, which must take action, [because] in its right place – in that place where the Judiciary must intervene - the Judiciary must [also] take action.

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