The Leader’s remarks in meeting with Iranian officials on the 17th day of the month of Ramadan - 13 /Jun/ 2017

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

(Arabic prayer)

You are very welcome dear brethren, dear sisters, [and] esteemed officials. This meeting is one of the blessed meetings in my [working] year. Dear officials are present from various sectors and they hear good reports, just as Mr. President offered a good report. It is usually like this that every one of [the Iranian] presidents in this meeting, submits a report of their positive activities in a way. Well, [through these reports, people’s] minds and thoughts are made familiar with information [and] with news and hear the facts; from this viewpoint, praise be to God, it is also a blessed meeting.

However, what I want to say at the beginning of my remarks here is about the auspicious month of Ramadan, we are already through more than half of this golden opportunity and less than half of this month has remained. Dear brethren, dear sisters, esteemed officials, [and] especially we, must consider this opportunity as very valuable; it is an opportunity for repentance, an opportunity for seeking recourse with the Almighty God, an opportunity for illuminating the heart and refreshing [our] hearts and is an opportunity for supplication; [in this opportunity] we [can] supplicate before the Almighty God. Every one of you in any sector that are busy working, are certainly faced with problems, faced with shortages, need certain elements, [and] need [certain] factors; ask the Almighty God for these. In addition to your own [hard] work, your prayer and your supplication is, no doubt, a necessary condition [for achieving your goals]; we must not forget about [the importance of] this supplication.

It has been mentioned in a few prayers, including in the honorable prayer of Abi Hamza Thumali [that]: “and nothing saves me from you except for supplication before you;” the way to our salvation is supplication before the Almighty God. Well, [we know that] supplication before the Almighty God can save us – [and this is why] we say “and nothing saves me from you except for supplication before you” – [but] how this supplication turns into a means of salvation? Weak people may sometimes show supplication before other humans; what is the difference between these [two] states? What is the difference and discrepancy between supplication before God and supplication before “servants of God?” It is important to pay attention to this point. Supplication before the servants of God is done so that you would soften the heart of the person before whom you supplicate; [however,] supplication before God is done so that we would soften our own hearts, [and] save our own hearts from cruelty; this is the means of salvation. If [the human] heart gets out of the state of cruelty and softens up, it would be illuminated. It is this illumination of one’s heart that opens ways to one, gives hope to one, encourages one to endeavor, [and] guides one toward correct and right paths. When there is piety, the Almighty God bestows his guidance upon one. This piety comes from the same softening of heart and tenuity of heart and illumination of heart; this is the gist of this issue.

It has been said in the blessed [Quranic] chapter of Zumar that, “Then woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah. Those are in manifest error.” A hardened heart, [and] a heart afflicted with cruelty is like this. “Manifest error” has been mentioned in this verse [of the Quran] for these [hardened hearts]. In the blessed [Quranic] chapter of Ma’ida, [God] says about the Israelites that “So for their breaking of the covenant, we cursed them and made their hearts hard.” The manifestation of God’s damnation is hardening of their hearts, which is a result of their own actions. [As the Quran say,] “So for their breaking of the covenant;” [it means that] they forgot about their covenant with the Almighty God, [and] breached it. These are among those things to which attention must be paid in our faithful society, especially by us, officials that every one of us shoulders a responsibility in some sector. [The Quran] says in the blessed chapter of Baqara about the Israelites that “Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder, for indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth.” [The Quran says] your hearts became harder than stone. The Venerable Prophet [of Islam] had

mentioned this point when debating and arguing with Jews in [the city of] Medina and reminded them of their past. All these [points] teach us lessons and [are sources of] awareness and learning and advice; we must try [not to be like this]. There is a hadith in the venerable [book of traditions,] al-Kafi, [which says] “He whose heart is hardened, is far from me.” Being far from the Almighty God is the worst blight for humans. [It is very bad] for a human being to drift away from the Almighty God and it is a feature of hardness of heart, which takes humans away from God. Or there is in another hadith that “what punishment can be greater for a servant [of God] than a hardened heart?”
Well, we must take advantage of these days. The blessed month of Ramadan is a good opportunity; both [due to] prayers [that have been recommended] in this month – both that part, which is special to dawns, and that part, which is special to days or nights – which are prayers whose themes soften our hearts; and [it is also a good opportunity] because of fasting per se and paying attention to one’s [religious] duties; we need this. If our Islamic and revolutionary society neglects the mention of God and remembrance of God and humility before the Almighty God and supplication before the Almighty God, it will be certainly dealt a blow, will be slapped [in the face], [and] will certainly fail [to achieve its goals]. We will achieve those lofty goals, [and meet] those desirable demands if we could pursue a faithful and honest effort and that would not be possible unless through attention to the Almighty God and increasing illumination of heart and [strong] connection between one’s heart and the Almighty God. This is what I want to say about taking advantage of the opportunity [offered by] the month of Ramadan, which in my opinion, is more important than anything else that I will [later] say. This is the basis of what I say; we must be watchful. Of course, I myself am the first addressee of these remarks; my responsibility is heavier than you and the burden I am carrying is heavier than yours; I need these advice more [than you]; [however,] it is necessary for me [and] for you to pay attention [and] take advantage of this month, [and] of this opportunity; [don’t forget that] we have Qadr [Destiny] Nights ahead of us as well.
Well, this meeting is an opportunity for discussing some general and large-scale and important issues of the country so that some issues, which may sometimes give rise to arguments and debates and differences in viewpoint, be raised [and] discussed here. Some issues, which may have been neglected by us, will be mentioned here; from this standpoint, it is a useful meeting [because] officials are present [and] experts are present [as well].
Fortunately, this year we had the phenomenon of elections; holding elections was a big step; the grandeur of elections showed the power of the revolution, [and] showed the power of the Islamic establishment; we must not neglect this. In global propaganda, [and] in remarks that are made about our elections in global radios and media – and, well, you see they keep talking about our elections – they do not refer to this point and do not discuss it at all that these elections were a sign of the establishment’s power; [and] were the manifestation of the abilities and the depth of the establishment’s penetration into [people’s] hearts. They usually do not say this, but this is a reality that exists. Those people who took part in elections on Friday, regardless of who they voted for, all of them, did a common job; this common job is very valuable. This common job must be seen and must be shown to the world; this common job was to trust the establishment, [and] to show trust in the Islamic establishment. Yes, some people voted for this candidate, [and] some others to that candidate; some people to this hopeful, [and] others to that one; however, all of them did a common job. That common job was to trust this ballot box, which the Islamic Republic establishment has put there and to trust this huge move, which has been specified in the constitution of the Islamic Republic, and entered the arena and the scene in order to elect the country’s chief executive official; this is very important.
Let us not undermine this common job. We must not bring [negative] remarks and considerations out of this common job, so that, the essence of this common move would be undermined [and] scuttled, [because] this common job was very important. [However,] if we embark on dividing the Iranian nation [and] say “some people said yes to this issue or [said no to that],” no, [this is not acceptable]; people just took part [in polls] and elected the officials. Why we [should] divide people? Take care that such divisions, [and] such disputes would not come out of a big and common job of the Iranian nation. The entire Iranian nation is opposed to enemies of this nation and to enemies of the progress of this nation. Yes, there may be people who are traitors; there are traitors in all countries, in all nations, [and] in all times, but the majority of the Iranian nation is [comprised of] those who are opposed [and] averse to that enemy, which imposes hardships on the nation, imposes sanctions, imposes war, [and] imposes insecurity; the entire nation is like this.
Today, you see that after our elections, Americans have both increased sanctions with total shamelessness, [and] are

also beating the drums of opposition and fight and enmity and the likes of this more than ever; it is like that anyway. A new atmosphere must be created in view of hostilities, in view of the [existing] situation, in view of needs, [and] in view of sublime goals that are ahead of us. Everybody has a share [and] everybody is a partner to creating this new atmosphere, [which is] an atmosphere of cooperation, an atmosphere of work and an atmosphere of endeavor toward the common goal, which is progress of the country and promotion of the Islamic Republic establishment. We must be able to get ourselves close to goals of the sacred Islamic Republic establishment in a step by step manner. These are those goals, which have existed in slogans of the Islamic Republic from the outset, [and] still exist today; we must get ourselves close to them. [Achieving] this [goal] needs everybody to strive. If we all strive, we will be able to stand [against enemies], will be able to resist, [and] will be able to bring enemies to their knees; [we can do this] if we are all together; this is my constant recommendation. Right now, I persistently recommend [this]. Everybody must help the country's officials, [and] must cooperate [with them], so that, they would be able to work. The country's officials must take people's side in the real sense of the word; [and] officials in charge of different sectors must work hand in hand. It is also my way to always support all administrations that are in office; it is also like this today, [and] it will, God willing, continue to be like this as long as I am alive.

Through a large-scale approach to the country's problems, you who are officials, from high-ranking officials to directors in various sectors, if you want to run the country correctly, if you want to manage opportunities and threats in the real sense of the word – because there are both opportunities and threats; [and] these opportunities and threats must be managed correctly – if you want to take correct advantage of national assets, if you want to activate the country's potentialities, many of which have not been known yet, and take advantage of them, if you want to differentiate between the [right] path and the wrong path – because people, the country's officials, the administration and various sectors sometimes see paths in front of them some of which are wrong paths [and] do not get us to our destination – and [if] we want to take these big steps, we need first of all to determine criteria for our decision-making and choose them correctly. Secondly, we must take advantage of our experiences; this is my [main] point today. We must be able to choose correct decision-making criteria. Oftentimes, errors occur in this regard; [and these errors occur] in the course of time, [and] through various periods [of time], [because they are] not [limited to the] current time; I will explain this later.

Well, what is the criterion for decision-making? Naturally, that general statement that exists here is national interests. I mean, the [main] criterion for [various] administrations to make a decision is meeting [the country's] national interests; whether short-term interests, or long-term ones. The problem is how to define national interests, [and] how to identify them. What we should really consider as national interests and what should not [be considered as such]? That basic point, which I have in mind and want to bring up here, is that national interests are national interests when they are not at odds with national identity of the Iranian nation, [and] with revolutionary identity of the Iranian nation. They are national interests in reality when they are not at odds with the identity of the nation; otherwise, where we consider something as national interests, but [in doing so we] trample upon national identity, we are certainly mistaken, [because] this is not national interests. This [point] has been, unfortunately, unchanging fate of our country since the time of Constitutionalism up to the [Islamic] Revolution; they have trampled upon our national identity. Of course, this state of affairs came about before the time of the Pahlavi [dynasty, and] since later years of the Qajar era. [Our] national identity has been always downtrodden for things, which have been considered by [country's] officials and decision-makers and authorities as national interests of the Iranian nation [and] upon which they have acted; this mean reserving of the proportion.

National interests must match national identity, not that national identity become a function of national interests, [in] which [case] those interests are without a doubt fictional. If someone comes and says, "We must become European from head to toe, so that, we would be able to progress [and] advance," this is tantamount to trampling on national identity. I mean, they tell a nation with [such] historical backdrop, with a rich and powerful culture, with all these beliefs, [and] with all various spiritual assets that "you give up everything you have, throw them away, and become Western from head to toe in order to be able to progress." I mean, they depict and delineate certain interests for the nation the requisite for whose realization is to say goodbye to national identity; this is how a nation is stripped of its identity and is stripped of its [real] existence, [this state] reached its peak in the Pahlavi era; of course, I said before that it started since late Qajar era. The revolution came [and] changed this attitude, [and] altered it.

One of the big steps taken by the Islamic Revolution was to define an identity for the nation and insist on it. [The

revolution also] extracted and inferred and delineated and confirmed and pursued national interests on the basis of that [identity]. In that previous form, we would not have achieved national interests in reality; just in the same way that you observe that our country with all these assets, [and] with all these potentialities did not make any progress commensurate with its [true] status and proportionate to that flood [of advances], which existed in the world due to this very loss of identity from the time of the Constitutionalism up to the revolution. In an advanced and active and lively world, the forward march from a scientific viewpoint, from a technological viewpoint, [and] from the viewpoint of different parts of [human] life, fared differently [than Iran]. [However,] in our country, no, [this was not the case, because] stoppage and stagnation was [a] dominant [feature]. But since the revolution up to the present time, this attitude has changed, [and] conditions have changed. After the revolution, we feel that we are progressing, [and] feel that we are moving ahead. Of course, cases of retardation are numerous, but progress is also tangible.

In my speech at the start of the [Iranian] year, I briefly offered a list of the country's achievements in various fields – [including] in infrastructural fields, in the field of human resources, [and] in [other] different fields – because some people are not willing to own up to and confess to these [achievements]. [Even] some officials themselves neglect the achievements of the revolution. [The fact] that despite all these problems that have befallen the country, despite all these problems, despite the war, despite imposition of sanctions, [and] despite clear and explicit enmity of the world's dominant powers, the country has gained these achievements, [the reason for] these [achievements] is nothing but [the fact] that the country has felt [it has an] identity. [It shows that] the Iranian nation [has] understood its identity, recognized [it], felt that it exists, [and] moved ahead with force and power; this feeling of identity elevates one to such state; [and] it gives such self-confidence to one.

Well, we say "identity of the Iranian nation;" what is this identity? How our national identity is defined? We are a Muslim nation with roots in history and [are also] revolutionary; this is our identity. Being Muslim, our historical depth, and our revolutionary nature are three main elements, which form the identity of our nation. We must not ignore these three [elements].

[The fact] that we are [an] Islamic [nation] means that values and principles of Islam form our identity. [The fact] that we have roots in history means that our manpower through history has had lofty ideas in various sectors, [including] in philosophy, in science [and] in technology, and in view of its temporal position, has done great things through history and has moved humanity ahead; pay attention to this. [It is a mistake] that we think "modern technology and initiative belong to the West and Europe and is related to them and it has been like this from the outset;" no, this is a mistake. There have been junctures [in history] in which was have been pioneer and vanguard in technology; technologies proportionate to that time. Of course, it is the nature of science and technology that the more you go ahead, the speed [of progress] increases. I have brought examples [in this regard] time and again and do not want to repeat them [here]. The more progress is achieved, the speed [of progress] increases. This is the reason why the distance between scientifically advanced countries and underdeveloped countries keeps increasing. Scientific advances increase the speed [of progress]. Of course, at that time, we were vanguards in issues related to technology in proportion to our time; not only us as Iranians, but also many Oriental countries were like this, including us, Iranians. Therefore, being Muslim and having roots in history [are among our characteristics] and then revolution; revolution accounts for an important part for our identity.

Revolution means that great developmental move, which through reliance on Islam, could change conditions in the country and an important item [of its achievements] is that it took the [Iranian] nation out of the margins [of politics] and ushered it into the main context of the country's management. [Before the revolution] the nation had no say in anything; for many centuries, the Iranian nation was basically defined under [various] governments, [and] played no role in establishing [those governments]. Yes, when a king wanted to go to war, they took a group of people under [threat of] weapons and took them to the war; this was the sole role of the nation. However, that the nation could play a role in determining a policy, [and] in electing an official– let alone the country's high-ranking officials – such a thing did not exist. The nation waited for this dynasty to go and the next dynasty to form government; just in the same way that this [previous monarch] ruled, that [other king] would come [to power] and rule; the previous one oppressed [the nation]; now the next one would come and suppress [them as well]! The Iranian nation played no role [in this process]. For the first time in the course of our history – in many centuries of [Iran's] history [and] in history from the ancient times onward – the Iranian nation started to play its role [only] after the revolution, [and] moved from margins [of politics] to the context and determines [its own officials]. As it is clear,

from the highest ranking official in the country, from the leader, [down to] the president [and other] various officials, they become officials and come to office through the nation's election and must answer the nation; [they] have to answer the nation. This item was among the most important incidents, changes [and] developments, which the revolution caused.
Therefore, after the revolution, [the meaning of] national interests changed; I mean, criteria for [defining] national interests naturally changed. After the revolution took place, as I said before, dictatorships turned into democracy, dependencies turned into political independence, [and] backwardness turned into remarkable advances. [As a result,] today, in terms of infrastructure, in terms of manpower, in terms of such important industries as nano[-technology industries], biotechnology, [and other] big industries, we are among top-notch countries in the world and stand among two hundred-odds countries; [this is also true] about [our progress in] science, in higher education, and so forth. Well, these were developments, which were brought about by our revolutionary identity.
So the bottom line [is this]: everything that is at odds with this identity is not [part of our] national interests, even if we assume that this is a benefit or a profit for the nation; no, anything that contravenes our Islam, our revolution, our past and our longstanding historical background cannot be considered among [our] national interests.
Of course, do not take me wrong; this does not mean that we should deprive ourselves of the world's scientific advances or various advances achieved by humanity; no [this is not the case,] because it has become ordinary these days that as soon as [Iranian] officials say something, they [enemies] interpret and twist it in their own benefit on a large scale from Britain's [BBC] radio to, that given internet website. So, they should not turn and twist this statement that I made [and claim that I said] since we have pulled off a revolution, since we are Muslims, [and] since we have a long historical backdrop, therefore, we [must] deprive ourselves of taking advantage of human advances. No, human advances belong to all [humanity], [and] do not belong to a specific person; the entire humanity has the right to avail itself of these advances. Anybody who is wiser, cleverer, [and] more cunning, takes more advantage [of these advances]; we are willing to be wider and more cunning, and [God willing] we will take more advantage [of these advances]. This statement means that our national interests must not be overshadowed by foreign policies. We must define our own national interests, [and] there must be no imposition [in this regard].
Of course, the arrogant powers do not remain idle; they have various methods in order to impose their demands. They deliberate and introduce certain things as international norms. At the present time, for example, the United States introduces something as international norm; for example, "America's interests must be respected all across the world;" this becomes an international norm. [Therefore,] if a country's interests at that given remote corner of the world, which is thousands of kilometers or leagues away from America, come to loggerheads with the interests of America and it wants to meet its own interests, they say that it has acted against the international norm. First of all, they define something as a norm, [then] on its basis, they accuse nations and countries and governments of acting against the norm when they are at odds with the norm that they [Americans] have defined! This is wrong; [but] this is something that they [do] today.
For example, among what Americans recently say about us, "destabilizing the region" [has been highlighted]. Now, this has become a title [in their remarks]: destabilizing the region! First of all, what business do you have in this region? Secondly, you are destabilizing this region; it is America and proxies of America who that made this region unstable; North Africa [has been destabilized] in that way, West Asia region in this way, Syria in another way, [and] Iraq in a different way. [The fact] that they spend money to create that given group, give weapons to it, draw up military plans for it, support it, [and] treat their injured members at hospital, these [measures] are destabilizing the region. Who created Daesh? Who bolstered Daesh? Today, this claim that they make [about having set up] the "anti-Daesh coalition," is a lie; even this is a lie. Yes, they are against a Daesh, which is not under control, but they want a controlled Daesh, which would be under their control and if somebody wants to destroy and eliminate this phenomenon, they will seriously stand against it. You see that today, American [fighter] jets bombard the Syrian forces that are faced with Daesh or something like Daesh.
Something exactly like this took place in Iraq. Daesh sold the Iraqi oil. A visiting governmental official – who was our guest here, [and] is a renowned international personality – told me that the image of Daesh trucks, which stole oil from the Iraqi fields and took them to that given country for sale, was under the eyes of Americans, [but] Americans never dropped a single bomb on them [and] they never stopped them! This was done in front of them, [and] they claimed that they were against Daesh. However, if they are against somebody, they oppose such support

being provided to them; [but in the case of Daesh,] no, [these Americans] even helped [Daesh] as well. Well, these are [those factors which] have caused instability in this region; Iran has not caused instability; these are [examples of] what they say [about Iran].
Now, this recent statement by the American president [Donald Trump] is of the same sort, because [even] after these recent terrorist attacks [in Tehran], they keep accusing Iran of "supporting terrorism," while the root cause of terrorism in this region is American. The issue of "human rights" is also like this. The issue of human rights [in Iran] is being once again brought up by Americans, which is really ridiculous and surprising! I mean, [it is really scandalous for] those people who go there and sit down with chiefs of the medieval [and] tribal system of Saudi Arabia – and this is a scandal, and in my opinion Americans will be never cleared of this stigma [and] it will remain on their brow like a brand – and talk about human rights and that against a country like the Islamic Republic! [It is ridiculous for them] to go and sit down in a country, which knows nothing about democracy and elections and the likes of these, and taunt at and talk [maliciously about] and libel a country like Iran, which is the hub of democracy and the symbol of democracy [in the region]. These are among those things, which will linger [in memory of regional people]. Now, they may be currently lost amid different types of political uproar, but without a doubt, they will remain in history.
Therefore, this is my main point about the issue of making and taking decisions. National interests are the [main] criterion to determine correctness of decisions and a national interest is that thing, which is by no means at odds with identity of the Iranian nation and is not separate from it either. I mean, it must stem from this identity; [in that case,] this [interest] will become the interest of the Iranian nation. This issue must be always taken into consideration by state officials, the respectable administration, the judicial branch, the legislature, [and] all those who make large-scale decisions for the country. Anything, which is possible to be against Islam or be alienated from Islam, [or] be against the revolution or be alienated from the revolution, be against the historical root of the Iranian nation or be alienated from it, or anything of this sort, is not among [our] national interests and no decision can be made on its basis.
And [now it is time to talk] about [the importance of] experiences. I said that experiences must be taken advantage of. I have mentioned a few cases here. One issue is the issue of the impact of national solidarity and unity on the success [of the nation]; this is a very important thing. This was also mentioned in the remarks made by Mr. President, [and] I confirm that national solidarity must be maintained, [and] national unity must be maintained. Common grounds must be always taken into account. This is not incompatible with a person who opposes [some government plans] in a certain sector – who is against that given policy or that given plan – to give voice to his opposition; this does not contradict that. However, this should not mean that there should be skirmish and dispute with regard to the country's large-scale and basic issues.
We have tested this solidarity and unity and its effect throughout this about forty years [after the revolution]. Well, there were a group [of people] during the [Iraqi imposed] war [against Iran], who were opposed [to war]. During the time that we were plagued with the imposed war, there was a group [of people] in these very streets and at Tehran's crossroads – naturally many of you must remember this – [whose members] stood there and handed out communiqués against the war. Opposition may [always] exist, but the majority of the nation, [and] the main part of the nation were on the same page and stood fast on what they said, [and] this is the same thing that I have in mind about national solidarity and unity. The country must not be bipolarized; people must not be divided in two groups; [because it would become like] conditions, which were unfortunately brought about in [the Iranian calendar year 13]59 (1980), by then president who had divided people into two groups of opponents and proponents [of his views], which is a dangerous thing [to do].
Another point, which I need to say about this national solidarity and national unity, is that this unity will become evident and manifest when the enemy is kept at a clear distance. One of those things, which casts doubt on the unity of the nation and creates uncertainty and differences, and if there is a difference makes it evident, is not keeping the enemy at a distance; care must be taken [in this regard]. The enemy is not simply outside the country; sometimes the enemy infiltrates into the country as well. You saw [this] in [post-presidential election riots in the Iranian year 13]88 (2009). [At that time,] there were certain groups [who rallied] in some streets of Tehran – though their number was not high and they were small groups – which explicitly talked against the establishment. The main problem that came about was caused by a group [of officials who] did not distance themselves from these people; they must have

declared their distance [from such people], [but] they did not do that, [and this is why] problems were faced later. When you see that a group is bent on opposing and bent on obstructing and causing problems for the essence of your establishment, for the essence of your revolution, [and] for the essence of your belief and religion, you must keep your distance from these [people] and announce that you are distant from them; this is a necessary measure. Especially we, officials, must be very serious and diligent in this regard. If this happens, then national unity and solidarity finds [its correct] meaning and is realized.

The second point, which is one of our experiences, [is] to give priority to domestic potentialities. This is exactly what I declared this year [when I named it the year of] national production and job creation. National production is one of [the main economic] sectors related to [domestic] potentialities. Here, industrial and agricultural production is the [main] purpose. Of course, production of software and production of science and production of thought are also certainly other parts of domestic production and important, but since the focus was on the economic issues, my purpose was industrial production and agriculture and the likes of these. National production, domestic production, [and] domestic potentialities must be paid attention to. In my opinion, the potentiality of our young manpower is a very good potentiality. A few days before, a group of young students came together in this very Hosseiniyeh, [and] a number of them made remarks. I told some esteemed officials that the level of understanding and grasp and interpretation and attitude of these [students] with regard to the country's problems is really at a very high and advanced level; [therefore,] these [students] must be taken advantage of, [because] this [is] our advanced manpower, [and is made up of] people who can play a role in progress of the country and its forward march. We have made great use of this domestic potentiality with regard to scientific issues. With regard to this very issue of nuclear energy, a few years ago, they once came here – in this very Hosseiniyeh – to give me a report through [holding] an exhibition. There were various stands, which I visited, and in all these stands, there [were] almost young [people] – youths of young age – who were introduced by esteemed officials. These were people who had caused progress in various sectors of nuclear energy and had managed to take those big steps and take this industry ahead. [This] is very important; our youths have such abilities. This is also another [important] issue.

Another issue, which is also among our fundamental experiences, and you, who are involved in the management of the country – in any sector that you are – must pay attention to it, is the issue of not trusting the enemy and enemy's promises; this is a serious statement; [and] this is a serious issue. In some places, where we trusted the enemy, we were dealt blows; although we could have not trusted [the enemy], [and] although we did not think that we would trust, we did. This trusting the enemy and enemy's promise deals a blow to us. It is not right for us to consider this unlikely [and say] that "no, it is unlikely that they would not live up to what they have said." When we have to work with foreigners, emphasis must be put with total care on all details and [those details] must be observed and [we must] be obsessive [in this regard] and be cautious. They must not be trusted; we must neither trust [foreigners] in practice, nor in the quality of [our] expression. Let me also say that some of you dear gentlemen who are present here – apart from high-ranking officials of the country, [including] heads of the three branches [of the government] and the likes of them – there are other different people here who are skillful in speech. I mean, they use the pulpit [to address people] – and I [prefer to] use the pulpit instead of tribune. [They] have a pulpit and can talk [to people] and what they say is heard. [However, when such people speak,] there must not be any feeling of trust in the enemy in the tone they use, [because] this will have a negative impact on the mentality [of people] in the country, while its reflection among our opposition and our enemies will make an effect outside the country. Sometimes, at certain junctures, it has happened that, for example, it has happened that we backtracked [on our positions] for example, with regard to a certain issue, so that, in that given case [we would] "strip Americans or the enemy of any excuses," [but in practice,] this has not happened, [and] we have lost something! [Therefore,] the enemy must not be trusted; [and this is the case] with regard to various issues.

I have frequently said that I had and have trust in those officials, who followed up on the issue of the JCPOA [Iran's nuclear deal with the P5+1 group of countries,] [and] it [is] still like that. I consider these [officials] as insiders [of the Islamic establishment], who are interested [in the revolution] and faithful. However, in this very case of the JCPOA, it happened in many instances that we ignored a point, [and] did not endeavor toward something – due to having trust in what the opposite side, [and] the opposite negotiators said – [and] a void remained [in this agreement]. Right now, the enemy is taking advantage of that void. These are really important issues. Our esteemed foreign minister, Dr. [Mohammad Javad] Zarif, has apparently written a letter to an European official – of course,

this has occurred several times – and [has brought up] various instances of violations of the spirit and text of the JCPOA. Sometimes they said that the spirit of the JCPOA has been violated, [now] he says it is not only the spirit of the JCPOA, [but] in some places the JCPOA itself – that is, the text of the JCPOA – has been also violated by Americans. He has drawn up a list [of the cases of the JCPOA violations] and has sent it to them. I mean, this person is not a person that they could say is among opponents of these negotiations who is saying this; no, he is the esteemed foreign minister himself, who is raising this objection himself, because he is a religious person, is a conscientious person, and is a person who feels responsible [in this regard].

This is because an oversight was committed there on our side; if this oversight had not been committed, [and] if the enemy had not been trusted, the enemy's way would have been closed and it could not do this. Now, I do not want to go into the details of the JCPOA, but that group, which has been set up in order to supervise [the implementation of] the JCPOA – which consists of the esteemed president, the esteemed parliament speaker, the esteemed foreign minister and a few other people – must really be careful with regard to this issue; I mean, they must be careful, must be watchful to see what is happening. At any rate, I have set a few conditions; I have clearly set a number of conditions for the acceptance of the JCPOA, [and] I also put them in writing – it was not [just] oral; I sent [those conditions] in writing – [and] these [conditions] must be observed; they must be painstakingly observed. When the opposite side stands [in front of you] shamelessly and says something, the more we retrace in this regard, it will be construed as a sign of weakness, [and] will be construed [as a sign] that we have no choice, [and] are desperate [to do this]. The feeling of desperation in us will embolden the enemy to increase its iniquitous pressures. This is also another [important] issue.

The next issue that is among our experiences and you must take into account as well in management of the country and running the country and management of the benefits and losses and opportunities and threats, is the issue of the country's military and security might. [This] is very important; this is among those issues to which attention must be certainly paid. Some of our officials are directly military and security officials, whose responsibility is to take necessary precautions and fulfill necessary duties and, well, good steps are being taken as well. A large part of the country's officials are those who are directly not related to security and military issues, but can make an effect indirectly; these [officials] must certainly pay attention to this point. I mean, the factors behind the country's might must be really preserved. Factors behind the might of the country, [including] the Armed Forces, the IRGC (Islamic Revolution Guards Corps), the Basij, [as well as other] faithful and devout elements [must be preserved]. Let me tell you this: that person who stands tall [and] stands against the enemy in various sectors, [and] puts up with difficult conditions, he is the same faithful and revolutionary, and as is commonly known, the devout element. It is him who stands [against the enemy]; [therefore,] you must keep these [elements on your side].

State officials in various sectors, both in the universities and in [various] industrial sectors, and in scientific sectors, and in service sectors, must observe these points. [The fact] that the enemy hates the IRGC, well, [its reason] is clear; do you expect America to like the Quds Force? Do you expect America, for example, to like that given general of ours, who is active in this field? Well, it is clear that it dislikes him! It is clear that it sets conditions and provisions for various sectors! Well, it wants factors of might not to exist among us. This is exactly like that somebody would tell you your wrestling team would be admitted to world championship competitions provided that you exclude those few powerful wrestlers from the national team; what does this mean? It means that you must take part [in those competitions] in order to be defeated. [It is like that they tell you] 'We admit you to international competitions in order to be defeated'; this is what it means. If they say that the condition for taking this step is that, for example, the IRGC must not be as such or the Basij must not interfere or does not take part, [and] does not get involved in that given issue – for example a regional issue – this is what it means. It means that you must not get factors of your might into the arena, [and] do not get them into the scene; [therefore,] we must do the opposite. We must certainly attach importance to military and security might [of the country] and strengthen it and boost it on a daily basis.

The next issue, which is also among those things that are very important, is the issue of the country's economy, about which I have already discussed on many occasions. Mr. President also talked in detail in his remarks about the issue of the economy and steps, which must be taken [in this field]. Of course, he mentioned certain instances in which "this step must be taken [and] this [other] measure must be [also] taken." Who is the addressee of these "musts?" [The President] himself. I mean, the [main] addressee of these musts [is] nobody but Dr. Rouhani himself and his

working team in the twelfth administration. I mean, most of these steps [must be taken by the administration]; now, part of them may be related to the parliament or the Judiciary or to some other places, but the bulk of it is [made up of] steps [that must be taken by] executive officials themselves. These musts should be done by these [executive officials] themselves; these are realities. The issue of economy is very important.

In the case of economy, one issue, which is very important, is domestic production. What he [the president] said about [the need to attract] investment is correct, [and] I also [accept it]. Of course, I [brought up] this need for [attracting] domestic and foreign investment [about] five [or] six years ago in a meeting that was held here in this upper level. A large number of you, who are here, were present there, [and] economic experts [were] also there. In that meeting, I said that we need this given amount of investment, for example, for the oil sector alone and [we also need investment] in various [economic] sectors of the country; these are requirements that exist and must be met, but there is one subtle point. Sometimes, economic officials within the administration, both in this administration and the previous administration – who have sometimes met with me – they usually set very difficult conditions for job creation. For example, sometimes it is said that one hundred million [tomans] is needed, for example, to create a single job; well, yes, there are some jobs where one hundred million [tomans] must be invested in order for a single job to be created, but there are many [other] jobs, which are not like this. Today, in our villages, in our small towns, [and] in various other parts of the country, we can create jobs with much less money. You see some people [who have done this]. A person took part in [an interview, which was aired on] the television – I saw its report in passing – who, for example, had employed twenty people through his own initiative, [and] through his own zeal and flair in that given sector and that given industry, and the total investment made – from the outset to the end – did not amount to one hundred million [tomans]. However, he had managed to get the work done bit by bit, [and] for example, had employed twenty people there [and had done that] for a production work.

If we could attend to the issue of villages – and I have written down the issue of villages as well – in the real sense of the word and solve the problems of villages, and one major part of resolving the problems of villages is about creating rural industries, [then the country's problems would decrease]. Villages need those industries, which are suitable for the state of the rustic life; we have not worked enough in this regard. These rural industries must receive attention and those facilities, which are necessary for villages, [must be provided]. Now, they pointed to the Internet; yes, the Internet is also something [that needs attention], [but] more urgent than the internet, for example, is [building new] roads, [providing] transportation facilities, [and providing] facilities for easy transportation of products. It must not be like that a product one kilogram of which is worth, for example, one thousand tomans at the downtown of that given big city, the villager [selling it at the village] would not be able to earn, for example, one-tenth of this sum from [selling] it and [could not] be benefitted from it; it must not be like that. When we manage to regulate and provide [suitable] communications, [and] when transportation and transaction become easier and are guaranteed for the villager, then villages will naturally remain producers and many of the existing problems will be solved. This slum dwelling [on the outskirts of big cities] is due to unfavorable conditions in villages, which [make villagers] come [to big cities] and at the present time, slum dwelling and corrupt practices taking place on the outskirts of [big] cities are one of the country's problems; and many social maladies [result from this issue].

One issue is the important issue of imports, and of course, with regard to some imported articles, tariffs solve the problem, [but] with regard to some other imported articles, tariffs do not solve the problem. Imports must be curbed in some sectors. Of course, in some sectors, you may [even] encourage imports; there is no problem with this. It depends on the needs and potentialities that exist in the country. [In that sector,] where there is domestic production and imports harm this production, in that case, imports must be prevented with full force. Sometimes, you hear some complaints – they sometimes write to me, [and] sometimes one hears in public reports – that a domestic producer complains that 'we are making this [commodity] with this difficulty, [but] on the other side, it is being imported in an unbridled manner'. Domestic consumer, [which] assume is that given, for example, governmental or semi-governmental organ, [does not buy that domestic product] under the excuse that this [domestic product] is not so good as that foreign product. Well, [at least,] its price is lower, [so] you consume [it], use [it], [and] help [domestic] production, [because by doing this] the next product will be better; this is an ordinary and clear-cut issue. However, if we continue to import luxury products, this would not work and the domestic production will never get anywhere.

The issue of smuggling [is also very important]. One of the important issues [facing the country] is the issue of

smuggling. The issue of smuggling must be [handled] with seriousness.

I have written down here that most ministries can play a role in bolstering national economy. It is really like this. Many ministries have apparently nothing to do with economic issues – for example, Ministry of Science, [Research and Technology] is not an economic ministry – but it can play a role in bolstering national economy. Assume that in doctorate and master's degree theses and in these [research] works that they do, [professors] can guide these [students] [and] direct them [in a way as] to serve national economy, resolve domestic issues, [and] solve domestic problems of the country. These youths of ours are ready [to do this, and] this is one of the important steps [to be taken]. This very relationship between the industry and universities, which I have been emphasizing on for several years, is among [important] things; and the same is true about other ministries.

[Another important step is] correct implementation of Article 44 [of the Constitution], while both under this administration and under the previous administration, it has not been implemented in the way that is suitable and necessary; [it] has not been correctly implemented under this administration, nor it was correctly implemented under the previous administration. Through [implementation] of the Article 44, which [is about] delegating economic responsibilities to the private sector – according to specific conditions that have been set and whose policies have been notified and a law has been also passed for it – [all] lags [in the country's economic development] must be made up for. This [step] will totally help the domestic economy.

And of course, the issue of investment security is very important. Part of the investment security is related to the executive branch, other parts of it are related to other organs, including the judicial branch and various other organs. This is also an [important] issue.

Of course, I talk a lot about economic issues. During recent years, both I and executive officials, and [lawmakers] at the Majlis [parliament] and others, have talked a lot [about economy], [but] we must take practical steps [as well], [and to do this,] a clear roadmap must exist. There [must be] a clear roadmap. One of the first steps that, God willing, must be taken by the administration is to draw up and prepare a clear and complete roadmap, which should be [also] comprehensive, [as a result of] which all these steps could be taken by various concerned sectors.

Another thing, which has an effect on the management of the country – so that you would be able to run the country – is the issue of cyberspace. Cyberspace is very important. In the case of cyberspace, what is the most important of all is the issue of the national information network. Unfortunately, enough work has not been done in this regard, [and] what should have been done has not been done; [but] it cannot continue like this. That we work less than enough in these fields under the pretext that cyberspace must not be blocked, this does not solve any problem and is not a good logic either. Well, today, cyberspace is not special to us, [but] the entire world is currently entangled in cyberspace. Those countries, which have established a national information network and have controlled [cyberspace] in favor of themselves and in favor of their respective values, are not a few. The best countries, [and] the most powerful countries have red lines in these fields, [and] do not allow [unbridled use of cyberspace]. They do not make way for many parts of the cyberspace that has been sent forth by America and those organs, which are behind it and behind the scenes of this issue, [and] control [its content].

We must also control [it]; this control does not mean that we deprive the nation of cyberspace; no, this is not what it means. Today, an avalanche of correct and incorrect propositions is pouring down on those of us who use the Internet; erroneous information, incorrect information, harmful information, [and] quasi-information – [because] some things are not real information, [but they] are fictitious information. Well, [all of] these [different forms of information] are pouring down on us like an avalanche; why should we allow this to happen? Why should we allow those things, which are at loggerheads with our values, are against our unwavering principles, [and] are against the main components and elements of our national identity be promoted inside the country by the same people who wish us ill? No, [this must not happen]. Do something that everybody would be able to make use of benefits and profits and advantages of cyberspace, increase the speed of the Internet – [and] take these steps that must be taken – but [only] with regard to those things, which are not detrimental to your country, are not detrimental to your youth, and are not detrimental to your public opinion; this is a very important point; [and] this step must be taken. Therefore, the issue of the national information network is very important as well.

The last issue that I bring up is the issue of America. Many of problems that we have with America are basically unsolvable, [and] the reason is that the [main] problem that America has with us is ourselves; that is, the Islamic Republic itself; this is the problem. Neither nuclear energy is a problem, nor human rights is a problem; the problem

that America has [with Iran] is with the Islamic Republic per se. [The fact] that an administration, an establishment, [and] a government would come into being, and that in an important place like Iran, and in a rich land like Iran a government would come into being, which would not pay attention to “yes or no” of a power like America and it has its own “yes and no” in [all] issues, this is not tolerable for them; they are against this, [and] are opposed to this. How are you going to overcome this conflict [of interests]? Therefore, our problems with America cannot be solved; [because] these [Americans] have a problem with the essence of the establishment. Let me tell you that apart from the establishment, they have a problem with the country’s independence as well. I mean, if we assume that an establishment apart from the Islamic Republic establishment was in place and was supposed to be independent, they would have had problems with it [as well].

This [past] experience of the [oil industry] nationalization movement is [still] before our eyes. During the nationalization movement, Dr. [Mohammad] Mosaddeq was optimistic toward Americans, and even had respect for them, but was not willing to rely on them. Of course, he was averse to the British [and] was willing for [realization of the country’s] independence. That person, who staged the coup against Dr. Mosaddeq was not a British [officer], [but] was an American and more than the British intelligence service, the CIA was behind him; America is like this. I mean, they could not even get along with an establishment and with a government, which was absolutely not a religious government, [and] was not a revolutionary government – [because the government of] the National Movement [of Iran] was not a revolutionary government, but it simply sought the country’s independence [and freedom] from the yoke of the British [colonialism] and believed that Americans would help it. [They did this because] they are opposed to independence of the country. This country is an attractive country; you [must know] this. Of course, all of you know [this], [but] must know more. We are an attractive country, [because] our position is important, the region in which we live is important, our climatic issues are important, [and] our underground resources are important. Once, I said in a meeting that we account for one percent of the world’s population, [but] a few percent of basic [underground] stocks of main metals of the world exist in our country; now, oil and gas [is important] in its own place; a huge wealth lies dormant here. In addition to all these, [our country] possesses extraordinary manpower.

This country is an attractive country. Those powers, whose business is to encroach [upon various countries] here and there, are not easily willing to pass over such a tempting mouthful unless we do not allow them to swallow it, and we do not; [and] of course, the Islamic Revolution does not [allow them to do this]. Therefore, all these [complaints about Iran] are excuses; human rights is an excuse, this [claim about Iran] destabilizing the region – which has been recently among American’s claims against us – is an excuse, [and even supporting] terrorism [by Iran] is an excuse; and [this is true about] other things that they say. These [Americans] themselves are both terrorists and supporters of terrorists and supporters of a country like the Zionist regime, which is the mastermind of terrorism and mother of terrorism and from the outset, it has essentially came into being through terrorism, through massacre and through oppression; [but] these [Americans] support it. Therefore, these [anti-Iran claims] are all excuses; these [Americans] are averse to the Islamic establishment. We cannot get along with America. [Therefore,] avoid ambiguous and equivocal remarks with regard to these issues, which will be exploited by certain people; everything should be said unequivocally and clearly.

Americans themselves must know that the Islamic Republic will not backtrack on its key positions. We will not desist fighting against oppression, will not desist defending Palestine, [and] will not stop the fight to realize our rights. We are a lively nation, [and] fortunately, the revolution is alive, [and] the revolution is young. They were waiting for the revolution to get old; we get old, [but] the revolution never gets old. The revolution, praise be to God, is at the peak of vibrancy and youth and ability and activity and growth and productiveness. When you look at these revolutionary youths, you affirm that the revolution is still producing and growing; the revolution is characterized with permanent growth. Therefore, this [productivity], God willing, foretells a good future [outlook] for our nation. And I hope, God willing, conditions of the nation would improve on a daily basis and the country would be able to repel threats, God willing, in the best possible manner.

O Almighty God! [We swear you] by [Prophet] Mohammad and the Household of Mohammad to help us appreciate the Islamic Revolution. O Almighty God! [We swear you] by [Prophet] Mohammad and the Household of Mohammad to help us appreciate those pure bloods, which were shed for the purpose of stabilizing this establishment; make us familiar with our duties and help us fulfill them. O Almighty God! In these days that remain

from the [fasting] month of Ramadan – especially the nights and days of Qadr [Destiny] – look upon us with your mercy and grace. O Almighty God! [We swear you] by [Prophet] Mohammad and the Household of Mohammad to make the Iranian nation triumphant in all fields. O Almighty God! Help us achieve full victory and success and salvation [both] in the spiritual field and in the material field. O Almighty God! Make the purified soul of our honorable Imam satisfied and content with us; make the purified souls of martyrs satisfied with us; [and] make the sacred heart of [Hadhrat] Vali-e Asr satisfied and content with us.

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