The Leader’s remarks in meeting with the chairman and members of the Assembly of Experts - 17 /Mar/ 2018

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

(Arabic prayer)

I welcome [you] esteemed gentlemen, [and] dear brethren, and I thank [you] for the report that Mr. [Ahmad] Jannati [chairman of the Assembly of Experts], and Mr. [Mahmoud Hashemi] Shahroudi presented and [I also thank] all the efforts that members and excellencies – the presiding board [of the Assembly of Experts] and heads of commissions and members of commissions – have made throughout the year. [I] especially [thank you for] this issue of the “think tank” and this endeavor that you made [to make it operational]. God willing, after this think tank starts its work and becomes operational, then, both its benefits and problems and difficulties [facing it] will gradually become evident, and the great task, which must be carried out by this think tank, will come into the light. I ask for [God’s] mercy and forgiveness for late Mr. Shahabadi (May the Almighty God’s Mercy Be upon Him) and commemorate him. Among the scion of late Grand Ayatollah Shahabadi, he was one of those children, who had close and sincere and compassionate relations with the late Imam [Khomeini]. The Imam took a paternal approach to some of them – including him – and was close to him and he himself, fairly speaking, was a prominent figure both in terms of spirit, and in terms of how he treated others, and in terms of loyalty to the [Islamic] Revolution. May the Almighty God, God willing, elevate his [spiritual] rank.

This meeting is blessed under the sacred name of Fatemeh Zahra (Peace Be upon Her) [the daughter of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)], as this meeting has been held in the period, which is attributed to that Venerable One and [on the occasion of] Her birthday; I take this as a good omen. In addition, we are on the threshold of the [lunar] month of Rajab and this is also really one of the blessed junctures of the year. The month of Rajab is the month of worship, the month of recourse [to God], the month of supplication, the month of getting close to God, [and] the month of asking for God’s help to remove [all] obstacles.

Respectable gentlemen [and] dear brethren! This assembly, in addition to being of very high political sensitivity – because it is in charge of choosing the leader, [and] under certain circumstances, removing the leader [from his position] is [also] a duty for this assembly, [and] this is why it enjoys an extraordinary political standing – is [also] a scholarly assembly; that is, religious scholars have come together in this assembly. This assembly is a living symbol of the intermingling of religion with politics. Religious scholars, in their capacity as religious scholars, also embark on a major political task [in this assembly], which was mentioned before and has been also mentioned in the Constitution, now if, God willing, that think tank is created and its tasks are defined and followed up on, and [if] it grows [properly], then activities and blessings of this assembly will be developed even more.

What I am going to say today is about this scholarly aspect and this religious aspect [of the Assembly of Experts]. I am going to make remarks to [you] gentlemen and talk about this aspect and within domain and framework of this aspect [of the Assembly of Experts].

The introduction to this discussion is that the Islamic Republic is engaged in an all-out fight, [and] nobody has any doubt [about this]. Everybody accepts that the Islamic Republic is engaged in a difficult fight and in an all-out fight, not only in the political arena, [but] we are [also] fighting in the cultural arena, in the economic arena, in the social arena, [and] in the security arena. Of course the military war and military fight existed at a juncture of time, which has come to a halt and does not exist [at the present time], but more difficult than that is [to deal with] security wars, economic wars, [and] cultural wars, in which we are currently engaged and are fighting [in those fronts]; nobody can deny this. Yes, there are people who protest at the fact that we are in this situation – and are fighting – [and say] why we must be at war with the world? There are people who oppose this concept. They think that the Islamic Republic has started this war; therefore, they say ‘well, why we are like this and are in this situation?’ In my opinion, this is [a

sign of] neglect. The Islamic Republic has not started a war with these dimensions against the world, but the mere existence of the Islamic Republic, that is, the ideals and goals and slogans that are put forth in the Islamic Republic – which are summarized in [the establishment of] a religious government, [and] are summarized in [the establishment of] a religious society – make enemies, attract enmity [and] lead to war.
This is the same famous war between the good and the evil, which has existed throughout history; this is not a new thing, [because] anywhere the sound of monotheism has raised and [administration of] justice has been brought up, enemies have come to be right there; this is not special to the present time. [As the Quran says,] “And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy - devils from mankind and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion. But if your Lord had willed, they would not have done it, so leave them and that which they invent. And [it is] so the hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter will incline toward it and that they will be satisfied with it and that they will commit that which they are committing.” [According to this Quranic verse,] various people who are in the evil front cooperate with one another; that is, they both cooperate [with one another] and also find supporters. There are some people who hearken to what these [evil doers] say and follow their example; it is like this. We in the Islamic Republic, our motto is monotheism, is [accepting] the guardianship of Allah and the guardianship of the Chosen Ones of Allah, social justice, [and] veneration of humans. These are mottos, which we have and follow, and these [mottos] have enemies. We are opposed to oppression, [because we have been told to] be hostile to the oppressor and support the oppressed; this is our school of thought; we are enemy of the oppressor [and] support the oppressed. Naturally, this position causes enmities, creates animosity, [and] leads to fighting; this is [the reality of this issue].
Well, that important point is that in this fight, the victory certainly belongs to the front of the good. [This is] not [special to] the present time, [but] in the past, present and future, anywhere that such a fight takes place, the front of the good will be victorious, [but this is] conditioned on some provisos. [If] those who are on the side of the good and support the good make up their mind, endeavor, be patient, stand fast, [and] struggle, they will be undoubtedly victorious. Anywhere this has happened – since ancient times in history – it has been like this. The same can be said about prophets; yes, we have among prophets those cases in which they have been murdered, eliminated, mocked, and things like that have happened to them. However, in the Quran itself and in [Islamic] traditions, there are cases in which prophets have succeeded, [and] have come out on top. This is due to the fact that their conditions were different. In those places, where supporters of the good dawdled, [and] did not act seriously, that [negative] state of events took place. [However,] anywhere they were stable and stood fast, and resisted and fought and had insight and the likes of these, they became victorious. I mean, throughout history, it has been like this. It is also like this at the present time. At the present time, when this move [and] this movement was started by the honorable Imam, well, people followed suit, [and] entered the arena. The old, the youth, men, women, [and] various social classes entered the arena at different places; they were not afraid of getting killed, [and] stood fast [until] they became victorious. It was also like this in [the Iraqi imposed] war, [and] in any other place that we have, as they say it, showed spine, victory has been certainly ours. It is like this at the present time. Today, if we act correctly in accordance with [the existing] conditions, [our] victory will be certain.
And there are many verses in the Holy Quran, which remind us and teach us and inform us of this point about certainty of victory. They include the [Quranic] verse, “if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet;” the [Quranic] verse [which says,] “And Allah will surely support those who support Him;” [and] the [Quranic] verse [which says,] “And the [best] outcome is for the righteous,” this has been repeated in several places [in the Quran, and] all these [verses] are indicative of this [fact]. One of the most promising verses, about which today I want to give some explanation is the [Quranic] verse about God being [with those who do good]; [it says,] “indeed Allah is with us,” [and] God is with us. It is a very important issue that one would feel that God is with him, God is beside him, God is behind him, [and] God looks after him; this is a very important thing, because God is the center of power and the center of dignity. When God is with a front, this front will certainly and without a doubt become victorious. Now, for example, see how the Almighty God has showed off to his chosen ones this [fact that] He is with them. For example, consider [the case] when Moses says [to Almighty God], “And they have upon me a [claim due to] sin, so I fear that they will kill me." At the beginning of this conversation, God says, “No. Go both of you with Our signs; indeed, We are with you, listening.” [God tells them] ‘I am with you, who are you afraid of?’ This was in the [Quranic] chapter of Shu’ara. Or there is another verse in which Moses and [his brother] Aaron say,

“…indeed we are afraid that he (Pharaoh) will hasten [punishment] against us or that he will transgress." [They were afraid that] Pharaoh would do this, [but] God says [unto them], “Fear not. Indeed, I am with you both; I hear and I see.” See, who soothing is this! ‘I am with you, I see, hear, am watchful, [and] take care of you.’

Or in the blessed [Quranic] chapter of Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him), [God] says, “So do not weaken and call for peace while you are superior; and Allah is with you and will never deprive you of [the reward of] your deeds.” I mean, this [concept of] the Almighty God being with the faithful, with prophets, [and] with followers and disciples of prophets is something that the Almighty God has frequently showed off [at us] in the Quran. Then, the result is that prophets have trusted this truthful divine promise [which is explained] in this blessed verse [which says] “And when the two companies saw one another, the companions of Moses said, ‘Indeed, we are to be overtaken!’ [Moses] said, ‘No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me’.” As soon as they saw that the shadow of Pharaoh’s army became visible in the horizon and it was catching up with them – [at a time that] the sea was in front of them, [and] the Pharaoh’s army was behind them – their hearts became shaky, [and] they said, "Indeed, we are to be overtaken" [and] ‘we are done for’. Here, Moses, who had put his trust in the same divine promise, said, “No! This is not going to happen. “Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me." Or [take as another example] the Honorable Prophet [of Islam] when he was [hiding from disbelievers] inside the Thawr Cave; [the Quran says] “If you do not aid the Prophet, Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Mecca] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us." It is on the strength of this very divine promise that the Honorable Prophet says [to his companion that], “Indeed Allah is with us;” [therefore,] ‘do not be afraid [and] do not grieve’. So, both the Almighty God has given this promise decisively and God’s Chosen Ones [like] Moses and the Honorable Prophet [of Islam] have believed and accepted this promise and acted upon it. And this is a fact and one of the unwavering traditions of history; this is one of those traditions [according to] which [as put by the Quran] “you will not find in the way of Allah any change.” Without a doubt, this holds water at all times.

Well, now we want to make sure about this [concept of] God being with us; what is [the best] way [to do this]? This is the important point. This “God being with us” exists, but with conditions; it is not for everybody. A few conditions have been set in the Quran for [the realization of] “God being with us.” Toward the end of Chapter Nahl [God say,] “Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good.” [Therefore,] piety [is one condition]. The Quran has said in several places that “Indeed, Allah is with the patient” and “And Allah is with the patient” and “Allah is with the righteous [and the ones who fear Him]” and “Allah is with believers” and “indeed, Allah is with the doers of good.” This is where we must understand our duty; this is what I want to tell you. It is a duty for both the Islamic government – that is, [all] governmental officials, [including] the executive branch, the judicial branch, [and] the legislative branch – and the ulema to train this nation in a faith-based manner; to train this nation on the basis of righteousness; [and] train both the people and the faithful to be patient [and] to do good; this is how we must train people. Of utmost importance [in this regard] are administrative bodies, which can do this through planning. We have a huge organ called the [Ministry of] Education, have a huge organ called the higher education, [and] have a huge organ called the IRIB [state-run television and radio], [which] are apart from specialized organs of my office. These [organs], which I enumerated, they have them all across the world. There are also those organs, which are special to us, like the leaders of Friday prayers and congregational prayers, [and] like religious tribunes. These religious tribunes and [their] contacts with people are very important.

Therefore, one job [for these organs] is to make training and educational plans in schools, in universities, in mosques, at the Friday Prayers Mosalla [complex], [and] through religious tribunes, especially, as I said before, in those places, which have an extensive reach, like the IRIB; this is one of the major duties of the IRIB. Or those people whose remarks have wide audience, like this humble one, like the president, like other persons whose remarks are heard by people – including famous religious and scientific and political figures whose remarks are heard by people – these [personalities] must focus their important goals on these aforesaid [forms of] training; because if these [forms of] training are carried out, then [as put by the Quran] “and those who are doers of good” will be materialized, “those who fear God” and the likes of them will be materialized, and after that, [the concept of] “verily God is with us” is materialized. I mean, [in this case, the concept of] “God is with us” will be definitely realized, [and] there will be no place for fear and grief. Well, at the present time, we are faced with a huge political and financial and economic and military and security front and the likes of these. Almost all propaganda organs in

the world are speaking and working against us; the financial bodies, which are affiliated with Zionists and are affiliated with America and [other] arrogant powers, are working against us; all of them are working [against the Islamic Republic]. Of course, praise be to God, we are standing [fast against them]; this steadfastness has been a blessing of the same piety and faith, which praise be to God, exists among a large number of our people; I mean, these very youths and these very sacrifices and these [martyrs like Mohsen] Hojaji [who was killed by Daesh in Syria] and the likes of them. We must not underestimate them, [because] they are very important. It is these [people] who have kept the pillars of this [Islamic] establishment [in place] and have realized [the concept of] "God is with us" for us to a large extent.

If we want this to become complete, we must further expand this circle, [and] must work on these issues. One [step that we can take] is the publicity work and publicity planning. People like you, almost all of you gentlemen, are focus of attention in your own cities [and] in certain places. You are either Friday prayers leaders or religious preachers or are teachers, [and] are instructors – some in the university, some in seminary schools – and have room for work in various places and it is possible for you to talk, to work, [and] to train [people]. You are not marginalized people, [because] you have room [to work]. This issue will be asked about [in the Afterworld] by the Almighty God; I mean, this is a potential [for you to work], the Almighty God will ask us about the way in which this potential has been used. [As we say in the prayer,] "[O Almighty, make me do things about which you will ask me [on the Resurrection Day]." This is one of those things. Therefore, this is one step [that we must take].

Another step, which if not more important than this publicity – and I believe it is more important – is no less [important], is our own action. [I do] not [mean] that action, which is taken in full view of people; no, [but] our right action will make an effect; [actions like] stopping committing sins, quitting love of the mundane world, [and] quitting an extravagant lifestyle, very one of which is a difficult job, and an energy-intensive job. When we are with God, the Almighty God gives impact to what we say, [and] what we do. [On the other hand, when] people look at us and do not see any contradiction between what we say and what we do, their faith becomes stronger and tread on this path, [and] move along this path. In my opinion, one reason for the miraculous success of our honorable Imam was that he himself acted [upon what he said], was religious and believed in the Resurrection Day in the real sense of the word, and stood by his faith and his belief in practice and, fairly speaking, the honorable Imam (May God Have Mercy on His Soul) was pure [in soul]. This [character] had [a major] effect [on people]; [of course,] some people may know about this purity [of soul] and some may not know, but it makes its effect [either way]. Therefore, our important duty both as administrative and governmental officials and [as] persons with a duty in various sectors of the [Islamic] establishment, and also as men of the cloth is to move people both through [our] words and actions toward piety and toward doing good and toward patience and the likes of these. Then, if this happened [in practice], and we believed that the Almighty God is with us, its result would be that we move with courage in confrontation with [global] powers. Of course, when faced with powers – [and] this in itself is a form of piety – we must overcome the enemy in the field of politics both courageously and smartly and by being master of what we do; this is among our main and definite tasks.

Praise be to God, [the current generation] is a good one. This [point] that I say is not a slogan, [because] I say this based on information. A new generation, [and] a new growth has come into being in the country. This is not special to a specific place, [and] is not special to a specific intellectual and practical sector either. A big group of youths has come into being in cultural sectors, in publicity sectors, in art sectors, in scientific sectors, [and] in philosophy-related sectors, these [young people] in the real sense of the word have faith in God and have faith in this path, though they have not seen the Imam [and] they have not seen the period of [the Iraqi imposed] war, which was very constructive and effective. This is indicative of how high is the degree of their faith, and although they have not seen those [developments], they still pursue this path with this insistence, with this strength, [and] with this interest. This generation is a good one, [and] is a hope-inspiring generation. And now, the enemy has set its covetous sights on us, old people. They deliberate and calculate [the odds and] say these [leaders of Iran] are old; the Leader is like this and that other one is like that and [they consider] all of us [to be old]. [However,] they do not know that under this old façade, praise be to God, there is a youthful movement in this country, [young people] are moving, are endeavoring, [and] are working [hard] and, God willing, all big and important tasks will bear fruit through their youthful perseverance and through their understanding and smartness.

As time goes by, I come to believe more that, God willing, the future of this country will be much better than its

present and the revolution will continue to move ahead. Of course, we have problems; yes, I am aware of these problems those gentlemen refer to in [their] speeches, and I have been given a report on what these gentlemen talk about. I also agree to most of what you gentlemen said here and am aware of what you brought up about various cities and various provinces with which you are in contact. I know about people's problems, livelihood problems and people's complaints, but in my opinion, all of these [problems] can be solved and can be eliminated. God willing, I will talk to people a few days from now and may talk more in this regard. We have no insolvable problems in the country.

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