Leader's Statements in a Meeting with Residents of Dasht-e-Azadegan, Sousangerd, Bostan, Hamidiyeh and Hovayzeh - 25 /Mar/ 2006

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and greetings be upon our Master and Prophet, Ab-il-Qassem Muhammad, and upon his immaculate and infallible and noble household, especially what remains with Allah on earth.

I consider it a great honor to meet you here. I express my greetings to all the dear brothers and sisters who live in this region and others who have come here from various parts of the county to pay tribute to the memory of our venerable martyrs.

If our dear martyrs and the devoted residents of this region had not blocked the enemy's advance, today the Islamic Republic of Iran would have a different destiny. Therefore, the present and the future of this nation and country are indebted to the self-sacrifice of our honorable martyrs who defended this vast region with their blood and soul. They protected our country's independence and preserved the honor and dignity of our nation.

In this region in the course of the Sacred Defense era, I saw valorous people devoted to Islam and our dear homeland, our Arabic-speaking brothers and sisters who put up such a strong resistance that they refuted all the calculations of the Ba'thist enemy and its foreign supporters. I saw zealous youngsters from various parts of the country that had abandoned the comfort of their homes in order to come here and defend the frontiers of honor and dignity of their Islamic homeland.

Khouzestan Province is the point where the plots and machinations of our enemies proved to be futile. It is a region where the calculations of the enemies of Islam were refuted. The tyrant of Iraq had a calculation of his own, and the supporters of Saddam, namely the United States and other arrogant powers, had a different calculation. But the resolve and perseverance of our people, the zeal and devotion of our youngsters and the deep faith and commitment of the men and women of this land utterly disproved all those calculations.

In this region, precious souls were sacrificed for the sake of noble Islamic objectives. Dr. Mostafa Chamran is one of our prominent martyrs. We pay tribute to the memory of our honorable martyrs, the mujahedin in the way of Allah, and the martyrs offered by various cities of Khouzestan Province such as Ahvaz, Sousangerd, Shadegan, Hamidiyeh, Hovayzeh, Abadan and Khorramshahr. They are the ones who protected this country.

I have something to say to the world's arrogant powers. They should bear in mind that our nation is tempered steel. The men and women of this country, the young and the elderly of this vast Islamic land and the consecutive generations of this great nation have turned into tempered steel in various crucibles. They consider it their mission in life to safeguard Islam and the hoisted flag of Islam in this country.

Today, some one and a half billion Muslims in various parts of the world are looking to this flag. This is the strategic depth of our nation and our revolution in the Islamic countries in the region, in Palestine, in North Africa, in the Middle East, in Central Asia and in the Indian subcontinent. This is what constitutes the strategic depth of the Iranian nation.

My second word is addressed to our honorable government officials. The Iranian officials should duly recognize the

worth and merit of our nation. The existing bonds between the Iranian nation and government officials are quite valuable. The officials should make earnest efforts to serve the Iranian people in various parts of the country, especially in a region like Khouzestan Province which has great potential both in terms of its remarkable workforce and its abundant natural resources, and which is capable of turning into a developed province.

We are grateful to Almighty Allah that the officials of the incumbent government are determined to serve the people and solve the problems that are facing the public. This is what the people expect of their government officials.

Some 10 years ago when I came to Khouzestan Province, I visited most regions of this province personally. I also sent delegations to other provincial regions. If the plans drawn up in those years for this province had been carried out in a proper manner, much more progress would have been made by now. Still it is not too late. Prudent and carefully meditated measures should be taken to promote progress and development in Khouzestan Province and other provinces of the country.

Now I would like to speak to our Arabic-speaking brothers and sisters in the lovable Arabic language.

I once again express my pleasure of being in this region among our honorable Arabic-speaking brothers and sisters, and being here reminds me of many exciting and precious memories.

It was right here among you, the Arabic-speaking Iranian citizens, during the years of the Sacred Defense that I witnessed the grandeur of your jihad and your great sacrifices. Here, in this same immaculate land, I saw men and women full of faith, awareness and valor who managed to overcome the tanks and artillery and mean hirelings of the Ba'thist regime and foil the enemy in its plots and machinations.

The residents of this region are well known for their love and devotion to the Holy Prophet's progeny (greetings be upon them) and for their loyalty to their Islamic homeland, and they are also like unassailable fortresses in defending their country's borders. This reality is corroborated by the jihad and struggle of local residents against British colonialists and their mercenaries and also by their glorious resistance and self-sacrifice for the sake of the Islamic Revolution and the independence and honor of their homeland.

Some 10 years ago, when I met in Ahvaz with our dear and honorable brothers from Hamidiyeh, Sousangerd, Shadegan, Hovayzeh and other regions of Khouzestan Province, I was reminded of these same memories, the memories which were also reflected by the poems of regional poets, and which were heard by all Arab nations.

Today, I am happy that I have once again had an opportunity to meet a number of our Arabic-speaking compatriots. Today, while I am reminiscing about those past memories, I can also see a bright future on the horizon for this sensitive region of our Islamic homeland.

Dear brothers and sisters!

Indeed this province, with its great potential and with the firm determination of the people and officials, is capable of turning into a model of progress and development for the country. If the plans and projects that were drawn up during my last visit to this province had been implemented appropriately, today we would be much closer to the ideal conditions that had been visualized for this province.

However, I am quite sure that the incumbent government, which is determined to serve the public in the best possible manner, will by divine assistance be able to take long steps in this direction and accelerate the implementation of envisioned projects in this province.

I would like to use this opportunity to ask all the residents of this province, including both Arabic-speaking and non-

Arab citizens, to assist the government in the implementation of construction projects and in attaining the ideal conditions.

As you all know, the Iranian nation has certain enemies who do not want our county to make the kind of progress that is commensurate with its grandeur. They are also hatching various plots, including those aimed at undermining security and stability in this country, in order to create obstacles to the implementation of construction projects and to our country's progress and development and in order to preoccupy the government with different problems.

The presence of British occupiers in the Iraqi provinces of Basra and Emara, in view of British hostilities and wicked acts against the Iranian nation over the past two centuries, has prepared the ground for the plots and machinations of the aggressors. But the Iranian nation and government, especially the zealous residents of Khouzestan Province, will overcome all these plots and, by the favor of Allah, cause the stratagems and wicked acts of the enemies to rebound on them.

I pray to Almighty Allah to rid the Iraqi people of the evil of occupiers. I also pray to the Almighty to bestow honor, dignity and progress on the two nations of Iran and Iraq under the banner of Islam and in the light of their devotion to the Holy Prophet of Islam and his noble household (peace and greetings be upon them).

Greetings be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings