



Imam Khamenei's important speech about recent developments in Syria and region



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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

All praise is due to God, Lord of the Worlds, and may peace and greetings be upon our Master and our Prophet, Abul Qasim al-Mustafa Muhammad, and his untainted, pure, chosen Progeny, particularly the Remnant of God on earth.

I welcome all the dear brothers and sisters who have graced the atmosphere of this gathering with their intimate and affectionate monotheistic feelings, especially those brothers and sisters who have traveled here from other towns.

In our region — one of the world's most sensitive and critical areas — events are unfolding today that must be understood correctly and lessons and insights must be drawn from them. The public opinion in our country is also engaged with these issues and they have questions, comments, and opinions. It is necessary to clarify ambiguities.

I do not intend to analyze the situation in Syria — others do the analysis — but today, I intend to clarify and illustrate. By clarification, I mean conveying what has occurred and what, perhaps, is being deliberately concealed, based on what we see and understand.

By illustration, I mean to outline, during today's remarks, our own situation, our movement, the dynamics of the region and the future of the region, as we comprehend it. This is the essence and summary of the points I will present today, God willing.

First of all, no one should doubt that what has taken place in Syria is the product of a joint US-Israeli plot. Yes, a



government in a neighboring country of Syria has played and is still playing a clear role in what's happening. Everyone sees this. However, the primary conspirators and control room are in the United States and the Zionist regime. We have evidence of this that leaves no room for doubt for anyone.

One piece of evidence is their reaction to this incident. Well in a country, even if you disagree with its government, a war has occurred, with two groups clashing. Such events happen everywhere. But why are you intervening? The Zionist regime, according to reports, has bombed over 300 locations in Syria — why?

If you are not meddling in this event and if the plot behind this incident is not connected to you, then why don't you just sit and watch? Two groups are fighting each other, but [what is the reason for] your involvement in the war and bombing more than 300 locations.

The Americans have also openly admitted — of course until yesterday and perhaps even more since — that they have bombed 75 locations. Some of these targeted sites are Syria's infrastructures, places whose construction or reconstruction is not easily achievable and requires significant effort for a country. Building airports, establishing research centers, and training scientists are not simple tasks. Why have the Zionist regime and the US become directly involved in this situation, become one side of the war, and begun bombing the country? Bombing 300 or 400 locations is no small matter.

The Zionist regime, in addition, has occupied Syrian territories. Its tanks have come close to Damascus. The Golan Heights, which belong to Damascus, had been under



their [the Zionists'] control for years, but now they've started taking over other areas as well. The US, Europe, and governments that are highly sensitive about such matters in other countries — even over one or ten meters — not only remain silent here and refrain from protesting but they are even helping. This is their own doing.

Furthermore, another evidence of their involvement is what occurred in recent days regarding the aid that was supposed to be delivered to the Syrian people, or to a particular region in Syria, especially around the Sayyida Zaynab (pbuh). Resources, personnel, and forces were to be transferred from here to there, but the entire route was blocked by Zionist and American aircraft. F-15 jets hovered in the sky, preventing any aircraft from passing through.

Of course, one of our pilots displayed courage, took the risk, and landed, but much more was needed and more efforts should have been made, which they obstructed. If you are not involved in this matter, if you are not the ones fighting Syria under the guise of some terrorist group or armed faction, if you are not backing them, then why are you doing these things? Why are you intervening? Why are you assisting? Why are you preventing aid from reaching the Syrian people?

Of course, each of those attackers whom I mentioned have their own motives. They have different goals. Some are seeking to occupy land in northern Syria and some in southern Syria. The US aims to strengthen its foothold in the region. These are their objectives and time will show that, God willing, none of them will achieve these goals. The territories that have been seized in Syria will be liberated by the brave Syrian youth — have no doubts that this will happen. The



US won't be able to strengthen its foothold either. By God's grace, by God's strength and power, the US will be expelled from the region by the Resistance Front.

I mentioned the Resistance Front, let me say a few words about it. The elements of Global Arrogance are delighted following these events in Syria. They express their joy, assuming that with the fall of the Syrian government, which supported the Resistance, the Resistance Front has been weakened. They celebrate, saying the Resistance Front is now weak. In my view, they are gravely mistaken. Those who think the Resistance Front has been weakened due to these events do not have a proper understanding of the Resistance and the Resistance Front. They don't know what the Resistance Front even means.

The Resistance Front is not a piece of hardware that can be broken, dismantled, or destroyed. Resistance is a faith, a thought, a firm and heartfelt decision. Resistance is a school of thought — a doctrine. It is the faith of a group of people, not a contractual thing, which I'll now say why it is the faith of people. Not only it doesn't weaken under pressure, it also becomes stronger.

Upon witnessing acts of malice, the motivation of individuals and elements within the Resistance Front grows stronger and the scope of the Resistance Front expands further. This is how the Resistance is. When people see the enemy's brutal crimes, those who had doubts about whether resistance is necessary or not overcome their hesitation. They realize that there is no way for a person to continue on their path except by standing firm against the oppressor, the cruel, and the bully. One must stand firm and resist. This is what the



Resistance is.

Take a look at Hezbollah in Lebanon, or Hamas, [Islamic] Jihad, and the Palestinian Resistance forces. They suffered such immense pressure. Was the suffering inflicted on Hezbollah a joke? Hezbollah lost a leader like Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah. Was that a trivial matter? Yet Hezbollah's attacks, strength, and powerful fist only grew stronger afterward. Even the enemy realized and acknowledged this. They thought that after delivering a blow, they could enter Lebanese territory, push Hezbollah back to a certain point, perhaps as far as the Litani River. But they couldn't advance. Hezbollah stood firm and with great strength forced them to request a ceasefire. This is what the Resistance is.

Take a look at Gaza. They've been bombing Gaza for a year and some months. They killed, martyred prominent figures in Gaza like Yahya Sinwar. Despite these blows, the people have stood firm. They believed they could pressure the people into turning against Hamas and rising up against it. The opposite happened — the people became even more supportive of Hamas. The same is true for [Islamic] Jihad and other Palestinian groups. This is the nature of the Resistance and the Resistance Front that the more pressure you bring on it, the stronger it will become. The more crimes you commit, the more motivated it will become. The more you fight them, the more widespread it will become. And I tell you, with the help and power of God, the span of the Resistance will come to encompass the entire region more than before.

That ignorant analyst who is unaware of the true meaning of Resistance thinks that if the Resistance becomes weaker, Islamic Iran will also become weaker. But I tell you that with



the help and power of God and the Almighty's will, Iran is strong and powerful and it will become even more powerful.

I would like to share a few more words with you regarding the Resistance and what it actually entails. Resistance means standing firmly in opposition to the US domination and any other domineering power. This is the meaning of resistance. Resistance means fighting against dependency on these powers. Resistance is about nations refusing to be subservient to dominant powers like the US and others like them. This is what resistance means. This understanding of resistance is rooted in the beliefs of the nations in the region. I am not talking about governments. The nations place great importance on resistance. The roots of resistance lie in the faith and beliefs of the nations. Did you see what the nations in the region did with respect to Gaza? Those who may not speak their language, have not seen their region, and do not know them, stood up against the Zionist regime and in support of the people of Gaza throughout this region, and now in a way, throughout the entire world. This is the shared belief of nations in the region and this is the reason behind it.

You see, 75 years have passed now since the usurpation of Palestine. An event that took place 75 years ago should gradually fade from one's memory, it should become less prominent and eventually extinguished. Yet today, the steadfastness of the nations in the region, alongside the Palestinians themselves regarding the Palestinian issue, is perhaps tenfold greater than what transpired at the outset. Instead of diminishing, this is intensifying. This is the characteristic of a shared and collective belief and, undoubtedly, it will continue to persist.



Alignment with the Zionist regime is a red line for the nations. I'm not concerned with governments, they speak differently, they say different things. [But] if you ask the people, they are opposed, the vast majority of people are against it. Of course, the Zionist regime also commits crimes, but crime does not make anyone victorious — neither the Zionist regime's crimes in Lebanon, nor its crimes in Gaza, nor in the West Bank where Palestinian groups are fighting. They commit many crimes there, but crime does not make anyone victorious. This is a divine law and today this historic experience is occurring in Gaza and in Lebanon, right before our eyes.

Now a question arises here: given the description we have provided about the issues in Syria, have we or have we not been present in Syria over the past few years? Well, everyone knows that the answer is yes. The Defense of the Shrine martyrs indicate that we were present. However, in what manner? This requires an explanation. One important point is that everyone knows about our presence and our martyrs that we all buried. However, there are a few points that most people are unaware of, or at least many of our youth do not know. We helped the Syrian government. However, the Syrian government provided us with vital assistance during a critical moment [during the Sacred Defense] before we aided them. Not many people know about this. In the midst of war, during the Sacred Defense era, when everyone was working for Saddam and against us, the Syrian government took a significant decisive action in our favor and against Saddam and that was cutting the oil pipeline that transported oil from there to the Mediterranean and to Europe, which would have brought the money back into Saddam's pockets.



It created an uproar across the world. They prevented Saddam's oil from flowing. How much oil was being exported from here? One million barrels a day! A million barrels of oil flowed through this pipeline to the Mediterranean every day. The Syrian government itself benefited from this transit route, they received money from it, but they also waived that money. Of course, they received something from us in exchange. In other words, the Islamic Republic did not leave this service to be for free. [So,] they were the ones who helped us first. That is one thing.

As for the DAESH [ISIS] sedition, DAESH signifies a bomb of insecurity. DAESH sought to make Iraq and Syria insecure. It sought to make the region insecure and then to achieve their main objective and ultimate goal, which was the Islamic Republic of Iran. It sought to make the Islamic Republic of Iran insecure. This was their main and ultimate objective. This encapsulates [the essence of] what DAESH represents.

We established a presence. Our forces established a presence both in Iraq and Syria for two reasons: one reason was to protect the sanctity of the holy sanctuaries because those who were far from spirituality, religion, and faith were hostile to the holy sanctuaries. They intended to destroy them and they did destroy them. You saw in Samarra, where, with the help of the Americans, they destroyed the Holy Dome of Samarra. Later, they sought to do the same thing in Najaf, Karbala, Kazimayn, and Damascus. This was DAESH's goal. Well, it's clear that a young, pious, brave devotee of the Ahl al-Bayt would never tolerate such a thing and wouldn't allow it. That is one reason.

Another reason was the "issue of security." Our officials



quickly realized that if insecurity in those places was not controlled, it would spread and come here and the entire expanse of our great country would be consumed by insecurity. The insecurity of the DAESH sedition was no ordinary matter either. You remember each and every incident that occurred. In [the terrorist attacks] on Shahcheragh, in Kerman, our Majlis, and other places, they committed atrocities wherever they could. They [DAESH] had plans to come here.

The Commander of the Faithful [Imam Ali (pbuh)] has stated a nation that engages in conflict with the enemy in its own home ends up humiliated. Do not let them reach your home (Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 27). Therefore, our forces went there. Our distinguished commanders went there. Our dear Martyr Soleimani and his companions and colleagues went there. They organized and armed the local youth both in Iraq and Syria, initially in Iraq, then in Syria, and stood against DAESH. They broke the back of DAESH and were able to prevail over them. So, that's how we were present in those events.

Take note of this point: the nature of our military presence in Syria, and likewise in Iraq, was not like we deployed our divisions — our Army or our IRGC — to fight there in place of the host country's military. No, this makes no sense. It is neither logical nor acceptable to the public opinion for an Iranian army to go and fight in place of the Syrian army. No, it's the duty of the army of that country itself to fight. What our forces could do, and did, was to provide advisory support. What does advisory support mean? It means establishing key and main central command centers, defining strategies and tactics, and, when necessary, entering the battlefield. But above all, it means mobilizing the youth of that region.



Of course, many of our own youth, our Basij forces, were impatient, eager and insistent on going, and many of them did. We didn't even agree with that, they repeatedly requested, asked questions, wrote to me, sent messages, and even pleaded for permission to go to Syria and confront the enemy. Naturally, it was not appropriate or advisable at the time. However, they found ways to go regardless — as many of you know, some of their stories are well-known. And some of them were martyred, while others, praise God, returned safely.

Most of the job was advisory. Our presence in those regions was advisory. Only in rare, critical situations did our forces actively participate and, even then, they were mainly volunteers and Basij forces [working alongside] local forces. Martyr Soleimani trained, armed, organized, and prepared a group of several thousand young men from among their own people in Syria and they stood firm. Later, of course, some among them, some of their own military leaders, unfortunately, created issues, caused problems, and unfortunately abandoned something that was ultimately in their own best interest.

After the DAESH sedition was extinguished, some of those forces returned, while others remained. Of those who had gone there, a portion stayed and were even present during these events as well. However, as I mentioned, the army of a nation must do the main fighting. The Basij, voluntary forces from elsewhere can only fight alongside the army of that country. If the local army shows weakness, the Basij cannot do anything. Unfortunately, this is what happened [in Syria]. When the spirit of resistance and steadfastness falters, this will happen. The calamities Syria faces today —



and God knows when they will end and when Syrian youth, God willing, rise up to confront them — stem from the weaknesses exhibited at that time.

The Iranian nation honors and takes pride in its Army and its IRGC. High-ranking officials of our armed forces and military organizations write to me about the situation in Lebanon and Hezbollah, expressing their impatience and pleading for permission to go. Compare this to an army that cannot withstand and instead flees! Unfortunately, our army during the regime of the Taghut [Pahlavi] was like that. They too didn't stand firm against enemy attacks in various wars, including WW II. In those days, the enemy came and captured [cities] as far as Tehran and the army did not resist. When you do not resist, this is what happens. One must resist, one must draw on the God-given strength.

Even in these challenging conditions, we were prepared. They came here and told me: "We have prepared all the equipment that is needed for Syria today and we are ready to go there." However, the skies were closed. The Zionist regime and the United States not only closed Syria's airspace, but they also blocked its land routes. It was impossible to help. This is how the situation is. If the motivations within that country had remained intact and its people had been able to voice their opposition to the enemy, the enemy would not have been able to close their skies or land routes. They could have received assistance. Well, that's the overall picture.

There are a few other points I would like to address. The first point is that everyone should know that this situation will not remain as it is. The fact that a group comes to Damascus and other places to celebrate, dance, and invade people's



homes, and the Zionist regime comes and bombards with tanks and artillery will not persist like this. There is no doubt that the courageous youth of Syria will rise up, stand firm, and make sacrifices. They will suffer casualties too, but they will ultimately prevail in overcoming this situation.

The brave Iraqi youth accomplished this same feat. Under the guidance, leadership, and organization of our esteemed martyr [Qasem Soleimani], the brave Iraqi youth were able to drive the enemy out of [Iraq's] streets and alleys, and from their very homes. The Americans in Iraq did the same things there. They would break down doors, force the male homeowners to lie down in front of their wives and children, and press their faces to the ground with their boots. These incidents also occurred in Iraq. However, they stood firm, steadfast and resisted. Our dear martyr [Qasem Soleimani] also devoted all his efforts to this cause. They [the Syrian youth] will follow suit in their endeavors. Of course, it may take time, it may be a lengthy process, yet the outcome is certain and inevitable.

The second point is that the Syrian incident holds lessons and morals for us — for our officials and for each and every one of us. We must learn from it. One of these lessons is negligence — negligence toward the enemy. Yes, the enemy did act swiftly in this incident, but they [the Syrians] should have anticipated long before the crisis unfolded that such an enemy would take action and do so with urgency.

We even provided them with assistance beforehand. Our intelligence agency had conveyed warning reports to Syrian officials several months in advance. Now, I am not sure if these reports had reached the top [Syrian] officials or if they had gotten lost somewhere on the way up, but our intelligence



officials had informed them. Since when? Since September. Consecutive reports were sent to them in September, October, and November. We must not be negligent toward the enemy. We should not underestimate the enemy, nor should we trust their smiles. Sometimes, the enemy speaks with a pleasant tone and smiles, but they are ready with a dagger behind their back, waiting for the right moment [to strike].

Another point is that the Resistance Front should neither become arrogant from their victories nor despair from their defeats. Victory and defeat are inevitable. The personal lives of individuals are the same: there is success and failure. The lives of groups are the same: there is success and failure. One day a movement is in power and another day it is out of power. This applies to governments and countries as well. Life has its ups and downs and we cannot avoid this. What is necessary is that when we are on the rise, we should not become arrogant, because arrogance brings ignorance and makes a person negligent. When we face a downturn or a failure, we should not become depressed, hopeless, or heartbroken.

The Islamic Republic has faced major, challenging issues over the past forty years or so, major events! The youth of today have not seen those days. The people of Tehran were sitting at home right here in Tehran while the Soviet-made MiG-25 fighter jets belonging to Saddam would fly above us. Even if they were civil enough to refrain from throwing bombs, they frightened people. They frightened people, and there was nothing that we could do. We had no air defenses and no resources. These are the kinds of challenges that we have faced.

One day, right here in Tehran, everyone was sitting in their



homes when, suddenly, Saddam's planes arrived and bombed Tehran. They bombed the airport and other places too. I was giving a speech that day at a factory near Tehran's airport. We heard the sounds, so we got up and looked out the window. I saw an Iraqi plane descending, dropping its bombs on the airport and then flying away. We have witnessed these things. The Islamic Republic has faced these various bitter incidents, but in all these circumstances, it has never shown a moment of passivity.

A believer should never become passive. The danger of passivity is sometimes greater than the event itself. Passivity is when a person looks at a situation and feels that nothing can be done, so they surrender! That is the meaning of passivity. Therefore, in progress and success, "arrogance" is poisonous. In failures and difficulties, "passivity" is venomous. We must be cautious of these two. The Quran says: "When Allah's help comes with victory, and you see the people entering Allah's religion in throngs, celebrate the praise of your Lord, and plead to Him for forgiveness ..." (110:1-3). [It tells us to] praise God and not become arrogant! "Plead to Him for forgiveness." Seek God's forgiveness for the shortcomings you have committed!

Now, there are some people who aim to discourage others. This must not happen. There are those who do this from outside the country, such as foreign television channels, radio stations, and newspapers, broadcasting in Persian, portraying events in such a way that fear and discouragement is instilled in people. Now, dealing with them is a different matter and they should be dealt with separately. But no one should do this within the country. If someone within the country speaks in a way that corresponds to discouraging the hearts of the people in their analysis or statements, it is



a crime and it needs to be pursued.

The Iranian nation is certainly ready to take action. Yet, it is clear that being present in any location requires the cooperation and approval of the government there. When we were in Iraq, the Iraqi government itself requested we go there. When we were in Syria, the Syrian government asked us [to go there]. We were able to go with their request and their approval. If they do not request [assistance], naturally the path is closed and it will not be possible to help them.

However, God willing, the Almighty will help, and the roots of Zionism and the evil Western elements in the region will, by the grace of God, be uprooted.

May God's greetings, mercy, and blessings be upon you



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