

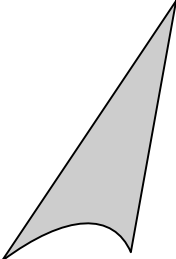
***In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionate, the Merciful***

Once again, the Muslim Ummah have gathered together in millions to observe the glorious annual event of Haj pilgrimage. This unique assembly of people opens the door through which believers can seek divine grace and compassions.

This great Islamic event is unique and exceptional because our hearts and souls become one, and everyone of us will benefit from the endless divine blessings. Haj pilgrimage symbolizes one United Ummah representing peoples of diverse nationalities, races, traditions and cultures, and it is indeed a symbol of coherence, bravery, awakening and self-awareness.

And today these are the urgent and immediate needs of the Islamic world.

For a long time, Muslim societies have been suffering from the political and cultural preponderance of foreign powers, a period of hiatus and frustration during which our enemies have exploited material and human resources in the Islamic world to realize their own development goals. A new era of Islamic awakening has evolved over years to challenge the insatiable greeds and ambitions of the blasphemous forces and coercive powers. The entire Islamic world is now overwhelmed by a new wave of genuine Islamic sentiments seeking to practice the noble teachings of Islam in social and political life. The theory of “Political Islam” has now become the main



preoccupation in the minds of Muslim scholars and thinkers, a situation that has opened new horizons and the prospect of a bright future. With the decline of certain ideologies such as Marxism or Socialism, and with the unveiling of the real nature of western liberal democracy founded on the bases of deceits and hypocrisy, Islam has now emerged as the sole and ideal set of thoughts that can bring justice and freedom long-aspired by the free-minded people of the world.

Muslim youth and heroes in many Islamic-countries are now engaged with dedication and strong resolve in political, cultural and social jihad, aiming to promote Islamic notions of justice and liberty. They heroically challenge hegemony and influence of arrogant powers over their societies. In some parts of the Islamic world, with Palestine at the top, large number of men and women every day create unforgettable scenes of courage and sacrifice making their enemies so helpless and humiliated.

This is the Islamic awakening that has changed all political equations and the prevailing balance system devised by the arrogant powers.

On the other hand, the emergence of new Islamic approaches and thoughts in the context of Islamic fundamental principles in various domains of politics and knowledge amply demonstrates the dynamism inherent in our great religion. Colonial powers of the past that have emerged as coercive powers of the world today trying to keep Muslim societies in a constant conflict between fanaticism and frustration on one side

and submissiveness on the other, now find themselves face to face with an overwhelmingly assertive dynamism.

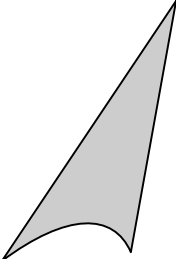
A new Islamic movement reinforced by the genuine beliefs of our faith is flourishing with the tidings of a magnificent tomorrow, a scenario that has sent a tremor of fear in the quarters of the repressive world powers.

Now, the Muslim Ummah must be prepared to face the hysterical and violent reaction of the enemies. There is no doubt, victory is ours, and the forces of evil are doomed.

However, this could be possible only when our side mobilizes its material and moral resources in greater harmony and unity, and uses its foresight and wisdom to march on the right path with reliance on God. This is the only path towards victory as Allah the Almighty promised in the Holy Qouran:

أَنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ، وَ: لَيَنْصُرَنَّ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ، وَ: إِنَّ
الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ.

The cancerous network of Zionism and warmongers in the U.S administration has now appeared to be the most serious threats to the Muslim Ummah. They have employed all sorts of tactics including massive psychological warfare and propaganda campaigns, economic pressures, hostile political actions, violence, terror and military actions to intimidate our nations. They commit every crime to secure their illegitimate interests in the world. A glance at the horrific crimes of Zionists in Palestine and the attitudes of foreign occupiers in Iraq and Afghanistan clearly indicates the very brutal and merciless



nature of the powers pretending to be defending human rights and democracy. In the name of fighting against terrorism, they commit the most horrendous crimes. In the name of bringing democracy and freedom for nations, they impose their domination and tyranny on the people.

The United-States publicly declares military action against-sovereign countries a right that can always be considered as an option to guarantee us interests. The Zionists openly keep threatening Palestinian political figures. They kill Palestinian civilians, old men and women and children. They destroy people's homes. In Iraq, British and US forces attack and open fire to defenseless demonstrators, and they have no respect for people's privacy or public decency. With the flames of fire still raging in these countries, they talk about repetition of military adventurism in other parts of the Islamic world.

These wicked attitudes or reactions are by no means the product of self-confidence or power; rather they represent sheer nervousness and fear. They can sense the danger of Islamic awakening. They know how a dynamic "political Islam" can seriously jeopardize their interests. They are haunted by the thinking that the day may come when the entire Muslim Ummah with millions of hearts in one body, rise up in unity against all these atrocities, the day when the Islamic world, with all its natural wealth, rich historical and cultural heritage, and its geographical expanse, will no more allow these evil powers that have plundered its resources for two-hundred years, to continue their unbridled aggressions and intimidations.

Now, the political thinkers, statesmen, and intellectuals in the Islamic world have a curtail responsibility toward the Ummah. All Muslims must hear the liberating message of Islam. They have the obligation to shed light to the Islamic identity of Muslim nations. Our intellectuals and knowledgeable people must help Muslim youth to understand Islamic approaches towards the concepts of human rights, freedom, democracy, women's rights, fighting against corruption, elimination of discriminations, poverty alleviation, and campaigns against ignorance. We should never believe or be deceived by the western media campaigns on the fight against terrorism or weapons of mass destruction. Today the Western World must be challenged by the world public opinion, both in theory and in practice, on these issues. The west must be held responsible for the massacre of Palestinian children, women's rights and dignity, the right of all nations to self-determination, and even for the freedom of choice of its own citizens. Prohibiting the observance of Islamic code of dress (Hijab) in some European countries is yet another testimony to the fake claims of espousing with the basic principles of freedom. Politicians in the Islamic world must also adhere to their historical responsibilities. They must rely on the power of people and deny the arrogant powers of their endless ambitions and greed in the Islamic lands. They should never ignore the undeniable fact that invoking Islamic identity is the solution to many of the problems we are facing. The interests of the Muslim Ummah and protection of their power must be

considered the main criteria for all decisions.

All Islamic governments must persistently demand withdrawal of occupation forces from Iraq and Afghanistan and transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi and Afghan peoples. Muslim states must morally and materially support the Palestinian people who are defending their dignity and their inalienable rights against the Zionist occupiers. Our religious values and tenets must be further promoted across the Islamic world. Islamic countries should take necessary steps to further enhance their relations and find solutions to the current disputes or conflicts in the Islamic world. The Organizations of the Islamic Conference must take a more active role in the international community and pursue its demand to gain veto right in the Security Council.

The people and the government of Iran are now celebrating the 25th anniversary of the victory of Islamic Revolution in our country. We have been marching on this path with pride. We have saved valuable experiences setting very good examples for others to follow. We will continue to follow our noble goals resolutely, through our reliance on Allah the Almighty and our firm belief in the power of our people.

We have intertwined technology and scientific knowledge with our moral and spiritual values, and independence and freedom with our belief in and our devotion to faith: We exercise democracy on the basis of the teachings of the holy Quoran. All this time Iran has been the target of the hostile policies and coercions of some big powers. Our people

have heroically stood against all these pressures, and in fact we have experienced the truthfulness of Qouranic words in the real life:

ان الله مع الذين اتقوا و الذين هم محسنون...
... و ان الله على نصرهم لقدير.

We see a bright and brilliant future for our country and for the Islamic world. Confident of the divine promise, we continue, more resolute than ever, to march on the path shown to us by our late leader Imam Khomeini.

والعاقبة للمتقين.

والسلام على عباد الله الصالحين

Seyed Ali Khamenei

28 Jan. 2004