Grand Gathering of Iranian Resistance - Paris - July 2017

Regime Change Within Reach

Maryam Rajavi: Overthrow of the ruling religious dictatorship is an imperative and is within reach. A democratic alternative and an organized resistance exists, capable of toppling the theocracy.

Rudy Giuliani: My government and your leadership share exactly the same vision of Iran.

Newt Gingrich: This movement will go down in history as one of the great examples of the human spirit defeating the evils of dictatorship.

Bernard Kouchner: Changing Iran will be the beginning of a real change for democracy throughout the region.

Prince Turki Bin Faisal Al-Saud: This gathering is a place of assembly for all Iranians who left Iran due to the oppression of the Velayat-e Faqih regime.

Giulio Terzi: World leaders should stand with the Iranian people and support their Resistance, and freedom and human dignity the Iranians are striving for.
Maryam Rajavi: A Viable Democratic Alternative Exists

Regime change in Iran is imperative and within reach

Three major developments impact this gathering: First, the relocation of thousands of MEK members out of Iraq which foiled the mullahs' plots to annihilate the Resistance movement; Second, the failure of the policy of appeasing the regime by the United States and Europe; Third, Khamenei's defeat in the sham elections, which means the defeat of the regime in its entirety.

These intense circumstances speak to three fundamental truths related to obtaining freedom and liberty in Iran, as well as peace and tranquility in the region:

• First, the overthrow of the ruling religious dictatorship is an imperative.
• Second, the regime's overthrow is within reach.
• Third, a democratic alternative and an organized resistance capable of toppling the theocracy in Iran exists.

The first truth answers the question "what must be done regarding a regime that has held Iran and all Iranians in chains and is the driver behind war and carnage in the region?"

Is this regime really capable of reform? The answer is NO, because claimants of reform were in power for 20 years out of the 38 years of the regime's existence, and they accomplished nothing but serving the Velayat-e Faqih regime.

Would giving concessions to the regime ever lead to its change of behavior? The answer is NO. This is something that has already been tested repeatedly for the past three decades by the US and Europe.

Finally, is it possible to contain this regime? NO, because what has been described as a policy of containment in effect does nothing but obstructs the path towards the adoption of a firm policy against the regime.

Therefore, the only solution is regime change. The second truth is that the regime's overthrow is possible and within reach, because the regime is besieged by extensive social discontent. The greatest threat to the regime is not an external enemy, but the revolts that lie ahead in Iranian society and the growing protests. According to the statements of the regime's authorities, nearly 11,000 protests and demonstrations took place in Iran last year. The hand-picked candidates for the sham presidential election admitted that this regime garnered 4% of the population support while 96% of the people despise it.

Regime change is within reach because the mullahs find themselves stuck in three wars of attrition in the Middle East. Their withdrawal from these conflicts in whatever form or shape will undermine their own existence.

Our faith in the free choice of the people, our attachment to the separation of religion and state, our insistence on the equal and active participation of women in political leadership, our defense of minority self-government within the framework of the National territorial integrity are major points of the strength of the democratic alternative.

The third truth is the existence of a force for change and a democratic alternative. The power of this alternative emanates from its capability to thrust the regime from a state of crises to ultimate overthrow. In 2009, this democratic alternative formed the main nucleus of the uprisings and transformed the chants of "where is my vote" into "down with the principle of velayat-e faqih."

What force is this alternative relying on? It is relying on an organized and united movement with thousands of trailblazing and selfless members. It relies on the genuine support of Iranians at home and abroad and the tireless efforts of its dedicated supporters. It relies on political prisoners, who reaffirmed their support recently for this gathering from the depths of their cells and torture chambers. It relies on women, workers, teachers, professionals, and selfless youths. It relies on their unsparring love and generous financial support, those who borrow money and sell their houses and properties to help keep this Resistance stay independent, strong, and resilient. It was with the efforts and risks accepted by its members that the Resistance was able to reveal the regime's secret nuclear sites when no other government was able to even become aware of them.

Our unwavering belief in universal suffrage and the people's free choice, our commitment to the separation of religion and state, our emphasis on women's active and equal participation in political leadership, and our defense of the autonomy of various ethnic groups in the framework of Iran's territorial integrity as well as our people's democratic aspirations for a free Iran of tomorrow, represent significant components of the democratic alternative's wherewithal.

But the Iranian Resistance is also known for its staunch and persistent opposition to the regime's policy of export of terrorism and fundamentalism. From the outset, the regime was at war with the people of Iran. All the other wars waged against foreign countries have been designed to cover up this main conflict. But these wars are not an indication of the regime's strength but an indication of the fact that no government in the region has ever attempted to prevent the regime's belligerence.

We have welcomed the positions taken at the Arab-Muslim-American summit in Riyadh against the Iranian regime's terrorist and destabilizing activities. Nevertheless, we emphasize that the ultimate solution to the crisis in the region and to confront groups like Daesh (ISIS) is in the overthrow of the Iranian regime by the Iranian people and their organized Resistance. Accordingly, we say to the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and the countries of the region:

• Recognize the Resistance of the Iranian people for the overthrow of the religious tyranny;
• Expel the regime from the UN and Organization of Islamic Cooperation and hand over the seats of Iran to the Iranian People's Resistance;
• Designate the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization and evict it from the entire region;
• Khamenei and other leaders of this regime must face justice for human rights violations and committing crimes against humanity, in particular for the 1988 massacre of political prisoners in Iran and for their war crimes in the region.
I came to bring a very simple message: Iran must be free. The dictatorship must be destroyed. Containment is appeasement and appeasement is surrender. The only practical goal is to support a movement to free Iran. After all, the regime appointed as its justice minister someone who killed 30,000 people which is telling you all you need to know about the core nature of the dictatorship. When I stand here and look at the number of people dedicated to freedom in Iran, I know that this movement is going to be a movement that goes down in history as one of the great examples of the human spirit defeating the evils of dictatorship.

The size and commitment of this gathering sends a powerful message to both our enemies in Tehran and the people of Iran who are yearning for change... The capital, since 1979, of Islamic extremism and terrorism has been in Tehran, and that is why this extremist regime got to go... To just talk about the 30,000 Iranians, mostly members of the MEK, massacred in 1988, to hold Madame Rajavi’s picture up in public places, is a sign of the unrest and growing confidence of the people that change is near. It is time for America to give whatever support we can to those fighting for freedom in Iran.

You stand for freedom of religion, freedom for women, free elections, the rule of law, and respecting human dignity and human rights. That’s what we need in Iran, and that’s why you’re the hope of Iran. We have an alternative, and that alternative is you. It is a democratic alternative. It is a force for change. It is well organized. It has popular support. And it has a vast network of supporters... I can say this with a good deal of authority that the government of the United States supports you. We are behind you, we agree with your values. The US government of the United States needs to export crisis to survive, and that first victims of Khomeini’s crimes, we want to talk about condemnation of the mullah’s crimes, we want to talk about regime change. We want to talk about a future Iran with Maryam Rajavi’s ten-point plan, which gives freedom and human rights to all the people of Iran.

The Iranian regime has been severely weakened; Mullahs are internally and externally very isolated. In Iran, the society is in an explosive state. People are crying out in the streets for change. The country’s official opposition, the Iranian Resistance, is expanding its activities inside the country. Internationally it has emerged as the only democratic alternative to the theocratic regime. Today we do not want to talk about condemnation of the mullah’s crimes, we want to talk about regime change. We want to talk about a future Iran with Maryam Rajavi’s ten-point plan, which gives freedom and human rights to all the people of Iran.

The next step is to free Iran. You all know down deep that regime change is up to the people of Iran, and that means you, that means the Iranian dissidents all around the globe, and in Iran, in Tehran, and all of the different cities. But the United States has to stand firm and stand behind this movement and we will... A free Iran ruled by Madame Rajavi mean peace and security. It will mean an end to extremism and an end to Iran being a hotbed for terrorism. It will mean that women will no longer be persecuted. It will mean that Iranian women and men will have the right to vote. It means that Iran will have an open society.

The regime of the Ayatollah is the base of extremism. So people of Iran are very right and deserve to get at least a better regime. They deserve to have freedom and democracy. They deserve to have free elections through which they can elect their true representatives. Change in Iran will open the way to end extremism, the extremism born in the name of Islam throughout the region. This is not because Islam is a ground for terrorism, instead they are using Islam as a tool for extremism and murder. Change in Iran is certainly the beginning of a real change for democracy in the whole region.

This gathering is a place of assembly for all Iranians who left Iran due the oppression of the regime. Along with the representatives of many countries in the world who have suffered from the terrorism of this regime, the regime that is the biggest sponsor of terrorism.

This regime is legitimate and your struggle is for the liberation of the Iranian people with all its spectrum from Arabs, Kurds, Baluch, Azeri and Fars from the oppression of the Velayat-e Faqih.

Dear friends, you are present here with power, people can move mountains, and I believe in the change through and with people. You have a female leader, Madame Rajavi, but that is unusual. This is a woman with attitude, quite unusual, not leaving people alone, defending and leading dignity.

And you will continue to lead, for accepting democracy did not need guidance, which is a mistake. It is about the participation of the citizens, and and this is what I understand in Islam that every human being has fundamental rights. We will prevail if we fight together for a better world.
It is a resistance movement by Muslims and for Muslims who managed to expose distorted Islam of the mullahs. The calm strength of this movement is represented by a woman, Maryam Rajavi. We love and we admire her courage and intelligence. It is she who, with the support of thousands of Iranians, is on the way to becoming the real anti-terrorist force we need. It is she who is the true democratic alternative for Iran and you are an example to the free world Muslims.

Ingrid Betancourt,  
Former Columbian Presidential Candidate

It is a duty to defend the rights and freedoms for which you are fighting in your country and on the international scene, at a time when in Iran, under the yoke of a religious dictatorship, there is no freedom. Your massive and enthusiastic presence resonates like a referendum against the mullahs’ regime and demonstrates the capacity of this resistance for democratic change in your country. This path will be victorious as was the humanitarian battle in favor of the families of Ashraf and Liberty. We remain loyal to you.

Baroness Verma,  
Member of UK Parliament, House of Lords; Former Minister

European leaders and businesses are ill-advised rushing – at their own risk - to the Iranian market as if Rouhani were making of it a new El Dorado: too often their partners are linked to the IRGC. World leaders should look to the Iranian people, to the expatriate community: they should stand with them, support the Iranian Resistance, the freedom and human dignity the Iranians are striving for. The message to the mullah’s must be: “It's time for them to go.”

Giulio Terzi,  
Former Foreign Minister of Italy

Those who are serious in fighting terrorism must go east and the downfall of the regime in Tehran. You will find that the root of all these terrorist armed militias are there. There must be a collective effort to isolate mullahs’ regime at the highest international level. We must seek to isolate them in United Nations, and condemn its war crimes and crimes against humanity and expel it from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Nasr Hariri,  
Chairman of the Syrian Opposition Negotiating Team

Instead of engagement, accommodation, and appeasement, there is a better way. The time has come for the Iranian people to take charge of their own future. The time has come for regime change in Iran. The crowd at this rally today is the best indication of the desire for the Iranian people to seek a new path. ... I’d like to acknowledge the courageous leadership of all of you in this hall today and especially the courageous leadership of Madame Rajavi.

John Baird,  
Former Foreign Minister of Canada

We are now travelling towards I hope a journey that is filled with inspiration and aspiration for every single person that is residing in Iran. Today we are delivering hope but remember not for ourselves because we can see collectively when we join together and the world is on our side, that we can make a change, you have been the backbone of this discovery of humankind, and Mrs Rajavi has been the brilliant leader that we all needed.

Gilbert Mitterrand,  
President of France-Libertés Foundation

In1988 on a simple fatwa (religious decree) by Khomeini, 30,000 political prisoners were massacred in the space of three months. We must stop the conspiracy of silence. Now is the time to hold accountable those responsible for the last 30 years of the massacre of 120,000 Iranian citizens, and in particular 30,000 political prisoners who were massacred in 1988.

Sid Ahmed Ghozali,  
Former Prime Minister of Algeria

A vast convention hall located north of Paris was the scene of a massive Iranian Diaspora gathering who voiced their demand for a better future through regime change in Tehran. Hundreds of dignitaries from the Arab World, United States and Europe stood alongside the Iranian opposition coalition National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) and its President Maryam Rajavi in condemning Tehran’s meddling throughout the Middle East as the main obstacle to establish peace and security in at least four regional states. Rajavi called on the international community to recognize the NCRI as the voice representing the Iranian people, evict Iran regime from the Middle East, end the appeasement policy and welcome a strong strategy of standing shoulder to shoulder with the Iranian people’s call for regime change.