

November 2006

Letter from Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the American People:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

O, Almighty God, bestow upon humanity the perfect human being promised to all by You, and make us among his followers.

Noble Americans,

Were we not faced with the activities of the US administration in this part of the world and the negative ramifications of those activities on the daily lives of our peoples, coupled with the many wars and calamities caused by the US administration as well as the tragic consequences of US interference in other countries;

Were the American people not God-fearing, truth-loving, and justice-seeking, while the US administration actively conceals the truth and impedes any objective portrayal of current realities;

And if we did not share a common responsibility to promote and protect freedom and human dignity and integrity;

Then, there would have been little urgency to have a dialogue with you.

While Divine providence has placed Iran and the United States geographically far apart, we should be cognizant that human values and our common human spirit, which proclaim the dignity and exalted worth of all human beings, have brought our two great nations of Iran and the United States closer together.

Both our nations are God-fearing, truth-loving and justice-seeking, and both seek dignity, respect and perfection.

Both greatly value and readily embrace the promotion of human ideals such as compassion, empathy, respect for the rights of human beings, securing justice and equity, and defending the innocent and the weak against oppressors and bullies.

We are all inclined towards the good, and towards extending a helping hand to one another, particularly to those in need.

We all deplore injustice, the trampling of peoples' rights and the intimidation and humiliation of human beings.

We all detest darkness, deceit, lies and distortion, and seek and admire salvation, enlightenment, sincerity and honesty.

The pure human essence of the two great nations of Iran and the United States testify to the veracity of these statements.

Noble Americans,

Our nation has always extended its hand of friendship to all other nations of the world.

Hundreds of thousands of my Iranian compatriots are living amongst you in friendship and peace, and are contributing positively to your society. Our people have been in contact with you over the past many years and have maintained these contacts despite the unnecessary restrictions of US authorities.

As mentioned, we have common concerns, face similar challenges, and are pained by the sufferings and afflictions in the world.

We, like you, are aggrieved by the ever-worsening pain and misery of the Palestinian people. Persistent aggressions by the Zionists are making life more and more difficult for the rightful owners of the land of Palestine. In broad daylight, in front of cameras and before the eyes of the world, they are bombarding innocent defenseless civilians, bulldozing houses, firing machine guns at students in the streets and alleys, and subjecting their families to endless grief.

No day goes by without a new crime.

Palestinian mothers, just like Iranian and American mothers, love their children, and are painfully bereaved by the imprisonment, wounding and murder of their children. What mother wouldn't?

For 60 years, the Zionist regime has driven millions of the inhabitants of Palestine out of their homes. Many of these refugees have died in the Diaspora and in refugee camps. Their children have spent their youth in these camps and are aging while still in the hope of returning to homeland.

You know well that the US administration has persistently provided blind and blanket support to the Zionist regime, has emboldened it to continue its crimes, and has prevented the UN Security Council from condemning it.

Who can deny such broken promises and grave injustices towards humanity by the US administration?

Governments are there to serve their own people. No people wants to side with or support any oppressors. But regrettably, the US administration disregards even its own public opinion and remains in the forefront of supporting the trampling of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Let's take a look at Iraq. Since the commencement of the US military presence in Iraq, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed, maimed or displaced. Terrorism in Iraq has grown exponentially. With the presence of the US military in Iraq, nothing has been done to rebuild the ruins, to restore the infrastructure or to alleviate poverty. The US Government used the pretext of the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, but later it became clear that that was just a lie and a deception.

Although Saddam was overthrown and people are happy about his departure, the pain and suffering of the Iraqi people has persisted and has even been aggravated.

In Iraq, about one hundred and fifty thousand American soldiers, separated from their families and loved ones, are operating under the command of the current US administration. A substantial number of them have been killed or wounded and their presence in Iraq has tarnished the image of the American people and government.

Their mothers and relatives have, on numerous occasions, displayed their discontent with the presence of their sons and daughters in a land thousands of miles away from US shores. American soldiers often wonder why they have been sent to Iraq.

I consider it extremely unlikely that you, the American people, consent to the billions of dollars of annual expenditure from your treasury for this military misadventure.

Noble Americans,

You have heard that the US administration is kidnapping its presumed opponents from across the globe and arbitrarily holding them without trial or any international supervision in horrendous prisons that it has established in various parts of the world. God knows who these detainees actually are, and what terrible fate awaits them.

You have certainly heard the sad stories of the Guantanamo and Abu-Ghraib prisons. The US administration attempts to justify them through its proclaimed "war on terror." But every one knows that such behavior, in fact, offends global public opinion, exacerbates resentment and thereby spreads terrorism, and tarnishes the US image and its credibility among nations.

The US administration's illegal and immoral behavior is not even confined to outside its borders. You are witnessing daily that under the pretext of "the war on terror," civil liberties in the United States are being increasingly curtailed. Even the privacy of individuals is fast losing its meaning. Judicial due process and fundamental rights are trampled upon. Private phones are tapped, suspects are arbitrarily arrested, sometimes beaten in the streets, or even shot to death.

I have no doubt that the American people do not approve of this behavior and indeed deplore it.

The US administration does not accept accountability before any organization, institution or council. The US administration has undermined the credibility of international organizations, particularly the United Nations and its Security Council. But, I do not intend to address all the challenges and calamities in this message.

The legitimacy, power and influence of a government do not emanate from its arsenals of tanks, fighter aircrafts, missiles or nuclear weapons. Legitimacy and influence reside in sound logic, quest for justice and compassion and empathy for all humanity. The global position of the United States is in all probability weakened because the administration has continued to resort to force, to conceal the truth, and to mislead the American people about its policies and practices.

Undoubtedly, the American people are not satisfied with this behavior and they showed their discontent in the recent elections. I hope that in the wake of the mid-term elections, the administration of President Bush will have heard and will heed the message of the American people.

My questions are the following:

Is there not a better approach to governance?

Is it not possible to put wealth and power in the service of peace, stability, prosperity and the happiness of all peoples through a commitment to justice and respect for the rights of all nations, instead of aggression and war?

We all condemn terrorism, because its victims are the innocent.

But, can terrorism be contained and eradicated through war, destruction and the killing of hundreds of thousands of innocents?

If that were possible, then why has the problem not been resolved?

The sad experience of invading Iraq is before us all.

What has blind support for the Zionists by the US administration brought for the American people? It is regrettable that for the US administration, the interests of these occupiers supersedes the interests of the American people and of the other nations of the world.

What have the Zionists done for the American people that the US administration considers itself obliged to blindly support these infamous aggressors? Is it not because they have imposed themselves on a substantial portion of the banking, financial, cultural and media sectors?

I recommend that in a demonstration of respect for the American people and for humanity, the right of Palestinians to live in their own homeland should be recognized so that millions of Palestinian refugees can return to their homes and the future of all of Palestine and its form of government be determined in a referendum. This will benefit everyone.

Now that Iraq has a Constitution and an independent Assembly and Government, would it not be more beneficial to bring the US officers and soldiers home, and to spend the astronomical US military expenditures in Iraq for the welfare and prosperity of the American people? As you know very well, many victims of Katrina continue to suffer, and countless Americans continue to live in poverty and homelessness.

I'd also like to say a word to the winners of the recent elections in the US:

The United States has had many administrations; some who have left a positive legacy, and others that are neither remembered fondly by the American people nor by other nations.

Now that you control an important branch of the US Government, you will also be held to account by the people and by history.

If the US Government meets the current domestic and external challenges with an approach based on truth and Justice, it can remedy some of the past afflictions and alleviate some of the global resentment and hatred of America. But if the approach remains the same, it would not be unexpected that the American

people would similarly reject the new electoral winners, although the recent elections, rather than reflecting a victory, in reality point to the failure of the current administration's policies. These issues had been extensively dealt with in my letter to President Bush earlier this year.

To sum up:

It is possible to govern based on an approach that is distinctly different from one of coercion, force and injustice.

It is possible to sincerely serve and promote common human values, and honesty and compassion.

It is possible to provide welfare and prosperity without tension, threats, imposition or war.

It is possible to lead the world towards the aspired perfection by adhering to unity, monotheism, morality and spirituality and drawing upon the teachings of the Divine Prophets.

Then, the American people, who are God-fearing and followers of Divine religions, will overcome every difficulty.

What I stated represents some of my anxieties and concerns.

I am confident that you, the American people, will play an instrumental role in the establishment of justice and spirituality throughout the world. The promises of the Almighty and His prophets will certainly be realized, Justice and Truth will prevail and all nations will live a true life in a climate replete with love, compassion and fraternity.

The US governing establishment, the authorities and the powerful should not choose irreversible paths. As all prophets have taught us, injustice and transgression will eventually bring about decline and demise. Today, the path of return to faith and spirituality is open and unimpeded.

We should all heed the Divine Word of the Holy Qur'an:

"But those who repent, have faith and do good may receive Salvation. Your Lord, alone, creates and chooses as He will, and others have no part in His choice; Glorified is God and Exalted above any partners they ascribe to Him." (28:67-68)

I pray to the Almighty to bless the Iranian and American nations and indeed all nations of the world with dignity and success.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
29 November 2006