

Iran: Khamenei Speaks on Views toward America

OE Watch Commentary: Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei remains the ultimate authority in Iran, serving as both the commander-in-chief of the Iranian armed forces and above all political bodies. Therefore, what he says sets the tone for the policy of the Islamic Republic. It is in this context that the excerpted speech is important: Khamenei's antagonism toward the United States suggests that he places America in the same category as Israel, that is, an entity with which rapprochement is not possible. He suggests that any Muslim state that cooperates with the United States is acting against Islam and is a participant in an American-led plot to undermine Iran and the entire Muslim world. By extension, any American allies—Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Jordan, for example—are rightful targets of Iranian opprobrium.

While Khamenei describes the notion of resistance differently, in official Iranian rhetoric, the term 'resistance' which Khamenei employs repeatedly, is often synonymous with support for US-designated terrorist groups. Political resistance might therefore entail influence operations and support for pro-Tehran political and civil society proxies across the broader Middle East and Islamic world.

Finally, Khamenei's rhetoric reflects Iran's internal ambition to be a leader of the Islamic world rather than simply the protector of the Shi'ites. From Khamenei's perspective, the Shi'ites are the righteous Muslims while the Sunnis are those whose exegesis erred. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

Source: "Didar-e Mosi'valan-e Nizam va Mahamanan Konfarans Vahdat-e Islami ba Rahbar-e Enghalab (Meeting between Officials of the Regime and Guests of the Islamic Unity Conference with the Leader of the Revolution)," *Khamenei.ir*, 6 December 2017. <http://farsi.khamenei.ir/news-content?id=38415>

Resistance in the arena of military war, in the arena of political war and in the arena of the war of the wills are different from each other. Nonetheless, resistance is necessary in all these arenas. If nations and outstanding personalities do not forget about resistance, victory will definitely be achieved. Of course, today, they have deployed their forces against the Islamic Ummah: America, global arrogance and their cohorts including Zionism – the Zionist regime – reactionaries, global money worshippers, and lustful individuals among Muslims who follow those powers who have deployed their forces against Islam and against the path of the Holy Prophet: "You have indeed bestowed on Pharaoh and his chiefs splendor and wealth in the life of the present." Today, the Pharaohs are these people. Today, the Pharaoh is America. Today, the Pharaoh is the Zionist regime. Today, the Pharaohs are their cohorts in the region who want to gradually pit Muslims against each other and to wage war in the region. Today, this is America's plan.

Everyone should pay attention to this. Everyone should know this. American politicians themselves have acknowledged in their analyses – whether knowingly or unknowingly – that they should wage war and create discord in West Asia and pit Muslims against each other so that the Zionist regime can have security and live a comfortable life. They are doing this in order to prevent Muslims from making progress. They want the body of the Islamic Ummah to lose so much blood in a way that it becomes weak and unconscious and loses its power of resistance. What should we do in the face of this? "So stand straight, and follow not the path of those who know not." We should not follow the path of the ignorant.

Today, there are unfortunately some rulers and some elite personalities in the region who dance to America's tune and do what they want. They work for them against the Islamic Ummah and against Islam. These things are to the disadvantage of Islam. We do not have any motivation to be in disagreement with Muslim governments. We believe in unity. We are interested in unity.



Military officers listening to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.
Source: Khamenei.ir, <http://english.khamenei.ir/d/2017/12/06/4/10268.jpg>, CC BY-SA 4.0