

Tudeh News

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Tudeh Party of Iran Strongly Condemns the Death in Prison, of Student Activist Akbar Mohammadi

(From the editorial of "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 744, 3rd August 2006)

Once again the guardians of reaction and fundamentalism have created tragedy in their torture chambers, and the life of a freedom seeking student was sacrificed to protect the interests of the ruling reaction and despotism. The torture and murder of dissenters and freedom-loving individuals is not a new in the regime of Supreme Religious Leader ruling Iran. In the past two decades, thousands of people fighting for freedom have perished in the prisons of the “model regime”, only because they did not conform and worked to materialize their dreams of freedom, democracy, and the people’s democratic rights and freedoms. According to various human rights organizations, the Iranian regime has a dark record in that regard. The horrific crime of murdering thousands of political prisoners in the summer of 1988 – among whose victims were some of the country’s greatest thinkers, writers, activists and military officers – was even in contravention of the ruling of the regime’s own courts. During that event, thousands of people were sent to the firing squad within a matter of days. That event is a clear proof of the anti-human and criminal mentality prevailing in the regime’s security and governing apparatus.

The suspicious death of Akbar Mohammadi in Evin prison, after his courageous hunger strike, is a reminder of the scale of violence and repression that the regime has used against students’ movements and student activists. The “crime” of Akbar Mohammadi was that

he participated in protests against the attacks by the “Ansar” pressure groups on student residences and the violation of the human rights of the people of our country. Akbar Mohammadi was sentenced to death which was later commuted to life imprisonment for this “crime”. In his seventh year of captivity, the regime’s system of injustice and oppression finally succeeded in implementing the original death sentence against Akbar Mohammadi, by the hands of their torturers in Evin prison.

The Tudeh Party of Iran expresses solidarity with Mr. Mohammed’s family and alongside all progressive forces in the society, condemns this crime while stressing that the organized and joint efforts for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners should be intensified. Efforts to force the launching of an investigation on the cause of Mr. Mohammed’s suspicious death and also investigating the horrific condition of the political prisoners is the first step in a fight that must culminate in the freeing of all political prisoners.

Imperialism, the “Great Middle-East”, and War

(From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 744, 3rd August 2006)

The full-scale military invasion of Israel on Lebanon on July 12th, supposedly in reaction to the capture of 2 Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah, once again swept the middle-east into another catastrophic and bloody conflict. For the past three weeks (up to the time of publication of the original) Lebanon has been under the air, sea and ground assault of Israel’s military, resulting in the death of hundreds, injury of thousands and displacement of close to 750,000 of Lebanese

civilians. Destruction of houses, hospitals, dairy producing plants, transportation infrastructure, telecommunications systems and power grids has created horrendous conditions, and has once again disrupted normal life in this country, which has been under occupation for 18 years out of the past 25 years. Lebanon is in a full-scale human catastrophe. Air attacks on Qana alone left 60 dead, 37 of whom were children in one morning assault. Even traditional supporters of Israel forced to condemn this act, increasing the pressure on Israel for a ceasefire. In protest at this massacre, the Lebanese government announced that it would call a halt to all negotiations over the crisis, with US officials. Foad Siniora, the Prime Minister of Lebanon declared that Lebanon would cease all talks until the declaration of an immediate ceasefire and the complete cessation of Israel's attacks on Lebanon. He also pointed out that the barbaric assault of Israel on Qana and the massacre of women and children was totally intentional.

Emile Lahoud, the Lebanese President, also condemned these attacks and pointed to the responsibility of the powerful countries who have lent their support to Israel, for the continuation of these criminal acts. Pointing out the US policies in the region that are pursued under the cover of "establishing democracy", Lahoud said: "are these killings an example of your democracy? Is this how you respect human values?"

Why Imperialism Opposes A 'Ceasefire'?

The Israeli government, with complete disregard to world public opinion and the UN demand for the cessation of military actions, claims that it has the right to continue the war until it meets its targets which, as stated formally, consist of complete military defeat Lebanon's Hezbollah, its complete disarming and the establishment of a security zone in Lebanon, parallel to Israel's northern borders. Israeli policies are a clear reflection of USA's conduct during the presidency of George W. Bush, i.e. taking unilateral actions, extensive use of military force, meting out collective punishment of the innocent people who have nothing to do with the conflicts, and hostility

to diplomacy, multilateralism and international laws and organisations.

The brutal militarism of the Israeli government in Lebanon has the openly declared support of the US and UK. John Bolton, the belligerent US representative in the United Nations, and spokesman for the extremist conservative wing in Washington, declared: "the objective is to establish a lasting ceasefire. We can achieve a lasting ceasefire only if we confront the root cause, i.e. Hezbollah which is a terrorist organization". Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State, maintained that US must strive for a lasting peace rather than an immediate cease fire in Lebanon. In her meeting with Ehud Olmert, she said that the time had come for a "new Middle East". "It is time to tell those who wouldn't want a different Middle East, that we will succeed, not them", she said. During the Rome Conference (to which Iran and Syria were not invited), Condoleezza Rice demonstrated Bush's position in full support of Israel. She strongly opposed and resisted the unanimous demand of other participating countries to pass a resolution for an end to all military action. She stressed that Bush sees the events in Lebanon as a crisis but as an opportunity to build a "new Middle East" and to eradicate Hezbollah in Lebanon and to broaden and increase the power of a pro-US administration in Lebanon. The predictable failure of the Rome conference sent a clear message to the Israeli government. Hayeem Ramon, Israel's Minister of Justice said: "yesterday in the Rome conference, the world authorized us to continue this operation, this war, until Hezbollah is displaced from Lebanon and until this party is disarmed".

Why War?

Some point to the capture of Israeli soldiers as the reason for Israel's attack on Lebanon, but this is only what is seen on the surface. The truth is that the process of the developments began not in the last month but long before that. Last year's crisis that engulfed Lebanon following the murder of Rafik Hariri which led to a new government in Lebanon more inclined towards the US, the departure of Syrian forces from Lebanon, and the UN

Security Council resolution 1559 calling for the disarming of Hezbollah, should all be borne in mind. The implementation of resolution 1559 which was prepared in line with the US strategic policies in the region, including the “Great Middle East plan”, needed an effective external factor the ground for which is now laid, with the recent bloody events. It is interesting to note the calculated statements made by George Bush, Condoleezza Rice and Tony Blair on the developments in Lebanon and the necessity to press forward with the “Great Middle East” or “New Middle East” plan. In a joint press conference with Tony Blair in Washington on July 28th George Bush opposed an immediate ceasefire and said: “our objective is to convert this conflict into an opportunity and an effort to make extensive changes in the region.” At this same press conference, Tony Blair talked about the deployment of multinational forces to Lebanon as a solution to “prevent the reoccurrence of conflicts” in future.

Clearly Israel had planned this aggression for months, in complete coordination with the US. The full-scale, pre-planned and calculated attack on Gaza and then on the Southern Lebanon within two weeks, was a calculated attempt to wipe out the Palestinian Authority on one hand, and to destroy Lebanon as an independent state on the other. The erection of the security “wall” of apartheid, evacuating Gaza Strip and organizing and expanding Jewish settlements on the West Bank, are all meant to make the occupation of Palestinian lands permanent. The war in Lebanon should be seen as a new phase in US imperialism strategies that have been precisely planned step by step following the occupation of Iraq. “The recent crisis and the war between Israel and Lebanon’s Hezbollah are the labour pains of the birth of a new Middle East”, said Condoleezza Rice before leaving for the region in late July.

Deployment of NATO in Southern Lebanon
Imposing the condition of the presence of “stabilizing multinational” forces in Lebanon and the composition of the political forces have become key issues in the future of the politics in Lebanon. One of the announced

conditions to put an end on the military invasion of Israel is to deploy powerful armed forces to Lebanon in order to ensure the security of northern borders of this country. Israeli defense minister stated that his government agrees with the deployment of NATO forces in southern Lebanon to keep Hezbollah away from Israel’s borders. It is interesting to note that in the past Israeli authorities have opposed to the presence of international forces under the pretext that they are not strong and efficient enough!

Global Support for Lebanese People

Right from the onset of the military invasion of Israel on the Gaza strip, the world public opinion collectively defended the people of Lebanon and Palestine and their resistance, and condemned the crimes of Israeli army. Hundreds of demonstrations were organized all around the world which had a significant impact on the positions of governments in distancing themselves from the criminal policies of Israel and its American and European supporters. One of the most remarkable aspects of the recent events in the Middle-East was the positions taken by the communist and workers parties of the world which organized an active solidarity movement with the people of Lebanon. Several forthright, revealing statements issued by the Israel communist party in condemning “the aggression of Zionist army and solidarity with Palestinians and Lebanese” indicate the internationalist nature of the workers and communist movement in the world. Most importantly, the remarkable role of the communist party of Lebanon in explaining the stormy events in the region, resistance against the enemy, and developing and strengthening the national resistance movement under the complex circumstances in the region, must be acknowledged. The Lebanese communist party point out that “a ceasefire will benefit the resistance and for Israel that is not prepared to tolerate it, ceasefire is a kind of defeat. Hence, we believe that the military operations would last somewhat longer and could extend to outside the borders of Lebanon, in which case we will face a completely different course of events that could not be predicted now. Anyway, after

July 12th the country has entered a completely new phase the direction of which will be determined by the outcome of this war... Based on this analysis and considering the necessity to defend our country, we believe that the main task is to take a cohesive patriotic position and to comprehensively confront this aggression, a position that would enhance the national unity.”

Iran, Under Threat

One of the most significant aspects of the recent developments in the Middle East is the ever increasing pressure from the extremists in the Israeli and American circles to spread the current conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon into Iran and Syria. The events in Lebanon and the current political developments in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region have had a direct impact on our nation. First of all this very important point has to be mentioned that the US tries to somehow relate the ruling regime in Iran to the crisis in Lebanon and create a powerful lever to exert pressure on Iran, and to confront Iran in political and other grounds. The events in Lebanon and in the region have truly restricted and weakened Iran's maneuvering power in dealing with the US and the EU. The current crisis clearly proved that due to the inappropriate policies pursued by the regime of Velayat-e Faqih (supreme religious leader), and especially the present government, against our national interests, in one of the most sensitive moments in the history of this region, Iran, the most powerful country in the Middle East, is not only unable to impact on key developments, but is deliberately and openly excluded from the most important international meetings, branded as a “rebellious country”. Due to the irresponsible positions taken by the leaders of the regime with regards to Israel, the war in Lebanon and the future of the developments in the region, Iran's strategic position has been jeopardized. During the war in Iraq and occupation of this country and its aftermath in recent years, US imperialism was not able, for various reasons, to organize another conflict involving its own military forces. However, taking advantage of the current crisis and accentuating the role of Iran, it is now seeking the “historic” opportunity to justify any clash

with Iran in the eyes of the world public opinion. Rice's words during the Rome conference that “interference of this government [Islamic Republic of Iran] threatens not only Lebanon but also the whole region”, cannot be ignored. The fact is that due to the policies of the Iranian Velayat-e Faqih regime, Iran is now in a very difficult and dangerous position. Promoting adventurism in such critical conditions can only benefit warmongers in the US and Israeli administrations.

At present, the rejection of the Great Middle East plan is part and parcel of the struggle for peace, respect for the sovereignty and security of the countries in the region. Imperialism's attempts to establish its desired order on the region, conducted under the bogus guise of the “war against terrorism” violates the sovereignty of nations and creates instability and insecurity in the region.

The main problems facing the people of the region are manifold. In the first place, there are the byproducts of the policies of imperialism, and foremost US imperialism, that are implemented under different deceptive guises; from direct military intervention and occupation as in Afghanistan and Iraq, to strengthening the ties of cooperation with oppressive and tyrannical regimes, to organizing imperialism's desired alternative forces with a view to obtaining power and legitimising the influence of imperialism. However, the real purpose of these policies is nothing but to plunder the wealth of nations and to obstruct cultural, social and economic development and reconstruction of their societies and to reinforce the control of the US over the rich oil and gas resources and their transfer to imperialism, and also to maintain imperialism's political, economical and military hegemony over the world. The implementation of “the Great Middle-East” plan which entered a new phase with the war and bloodshed in Lebanon and Palestine, threatens peace, progress and the rights of the Middle East nations. It is imperative that the progressive forces of the region rise to confront this dangerous plan intelligently and resolutely.