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The Foreign Policy of the Iranian Regime, a Serious Threat to the National Interest

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The inappropriate, and in some cases dangerously provoking statements and actions of the leaders of the Iranian regime in the international arena during the recent weeks, though might not have been widely reflected domestically, but could not but raise the appropriate reaction of the progressive and popular political forces because of the impact these actions and statements could have on the future developments in our country.

It appears that particular circles in the highest decision making levels of the theocratic regime of the Supreme Religious Leadership are consciously and intentionally focusing all their efforts to push Iran into an adventurous international posture, and to provoke the dominating war seeking powers in the capitalist world to a confrontation.

The following events could not have been accidental but were in fact a heavenly gift to the world militarist circles:

- The official complaint of the Nigerian government to the United Nations Security Council regarding the discovery of 13 containers of weapons sent from Iran and destined for Africa, while there are increasing diplomatic pressures by the United States in relation to Iran's nuclear file following the change of the power balance in the U.S. Congress in favor of the right wing Republicans;
- Official protest of the Indian government following the Supreme Leader's short-sighted and interventionist statements on the Kashmir situation;
- Testing of the so-called ballistic missile made by the Guard Corps on November 19th right at a time when NATO was debating and considering in Lisbon the approval of a new strategic doctrine for this offensive treaty;
- Announcement of the heads of the regime about the testing of a long range missile that the regime claims to have been manufactured based on Russia's SS-300 missile technology, on a day when the NATO leaders were meeting to redefine the threats, such as missile attacks by countries like Iran, that might require all of its members to retaliate. Under the circumstances that the United States and its allies show special sensitivity against the actions of this regime and in the recent years have

repeatedly accused it of exporting terrorism to countries in the Middle East and Africa, the question that why would the leaders of the theocratic regime of Iran still carry out a secret shipment of arms to Africa is not a question that one can simply overlook. The discovery of Iranian arms shipment created such a scandal that forced Iran's Foreign Affairs Minister, Manouchehr Mottaki and the Ministry's Spokesperson, Ramin Mehman-Parast, to make a hasty trip to Abouja, Nigeria's capital, to convince the Nigerian authorities to lessen and curb the heightened tensions. According to the reports by the Nigerian newspaper Compass, the Nigerian government did not accept the explanations provided by the Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister and the Gambian President that the arms were destined for Gambia. On November 13th, the Nigerian government submitted an official report to the United Nations Security Council about seizing the ship that was carrying the Islamic Republic's 13 illegal weapons containers. The day before that, Odein Ajumogobia, Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs explicitly expressed that the illegal entry of these weapons is a violation of the Security Council resolutions, and that the unequivocal admission by Manouchehr Mottaki, Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs, that the arms cargo was unquestionably shipped from Iran to Nigeria, could potentially further damage the relationship between Iran and the Security Council.

The reality is that for more than three decades the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic has been the costliest and most dangerous areas of the actions of the

theocratic regime. As a result of these policies, which have nothing to do with the national interests and interests of the working people of the nation and the region, not only has Iran become one of the most isolated countries in the world, but the world peace and the interests of the working people of the world have also been threatened. Our country's progressive and democratic forces have not forgotten how during the November 1980 American presidential election, the regime's calculated timing for freeing the American hostages culminated in a victory for Ronald Reagan and bolstering policies for which the working people of Iran, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Lebanon, Libya, Panama and the then socialist countries have been and are continuing to pay dearly for years. The regime's foreign policy during all these years has been to hide behind false statements and rhetoric such as "supporting the oppressed people of the world" while in reality aligning and cooperating behind the scenes with the most roguish actions. This is the same regime that publicly supported the Nicaraguan Sandinistas while behind the scenes and under the infamous "Iran gate" accord, in coordination with the Reagan administration, financially supported Contras who were fighting against the Sandinista government. The regime's collaboration with the U.S. plans to invade and occupy Iraq and Afghanistan flies in the face of the regime's superficial claims of its vehement opposition to "imperialism's" plans in the region. The regime is pursuing the same policy today as seriously and ardently as before towards the two

neighboring countries. The most important point is that the foreign policy architects of the regime have a convoluted and adventurous understanding of international developments and of how to affect them. The daily newspaper, Keyhan, whose content reflects the main line of the political assessments of the regime leaders, on November 4th in an article about the United States wrote: "According to the Western economists, the imminent downfall of the American empire and its retreat from the world will occur much sooner than expected, and as George Bush, the U.S. former President declared, that time would not be 2025; on that day, the American people will demand to replace oil with another source of energy; on that day, a power that is not under the U.S. dominance will rule the Middle East..." Or while the majority of the world's progressive forces voiced their concern over the potential victory of the Republican Party in the recent U.S. mid-term elections, the propaganda bullhorn of the regime's official policies, i.e. the Keyhan newspaper, regarded both Democratic and Republican parties as having the same influence, and being partners and teammates, and wrote: "in the U.S., congressional elections occur every two years and presidential elections every four years. During these election times, not just for the American people themselves but also for people around the world who follow American politics, the winning and losing of Democrats and Republicans is like the up and down move of a seesaw..." Such analyses emanate from the disastrous reality that those who are steering the country's main foreign policies are not capable of discerning the

critical intricacies in the realm of world politics and their impact on the direction of the policies adopted by the U.S. and other countries toward Iran. Is the demise of American power in the Middle East really imminent and does it bear any truth when we look at what is happening in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine? Or, under the current fragile circumstances of the world, and for the purpose of formulating policies to safeguard the security of our country, would it not matter if a force comes to power whose policies are most aligned with the Zionist and right-wing circles in the Israeli government? No serious analyst can fathom that the rulers of the Iranian regime do not know that George Bush's National Security Advisor, Senator Graham, who has been the most vocal and harshest opponent of Barack Obama, has claimed in a recent speech to fellow Republicans that Obama could be the closest Democrat president to the Republicans if he agrees to just one single compromise: that Obama would resolutely stand up to Iran and its nuclear ambitions and in return the Republicans would play along with all the plans of Obama in the Congress.

When London's Guardian newspaper in its most recent report on George Bush's 497-page book writes: "Bush had ordered Pentagon to review attacks on Iran and Syria"; when Bush in his own official memoirs candidly states that "I had ordered Pentagon to review the on hand plans for attacking Iran"; then the reason the leaders of the regime are not overly concerned about the Republicans' return to power stems from the fact that they see the policies of the extremist and

warmonger American right-wing factions in favor of their own oppressive policies within the country. It is interesting that even the domestic official analysts repudiate the policies of the regime. Dr. Seyed Ali Mahmoudi, a university professor (in Iran) and an analyst of the Iranian foreign policy recently warned that the situation in the U.S. after the mid-term elections would cast dark clouds over the Iranian sky, and attributed the cheering for “Obama’s defeat” and associating it with “victory for the Islamic Republic” to nothing but ignorance, oversimplification and over-optimism.

It is based on this understanding of the regime’s foreign policy that the nationalist and progressive forces have raised serious concerns about the consequences of the ruling regime’s diplomacy structure. They believe that the coup government is mimicking diplomatic activities by spending astronomic amounts of money in Africa and Latin America rather than seriously acting to protect the national interest of the country in future development of rich resources in Caspian Sea or striving to find effective and practical approaches to neutralize and ultimately reverse the hostile positions of the neighboring countries, which in an unprecedented way are all supporting the United States’ strategic plans.

Compared to the two presidential terms of Mr. Khatami from 1997 to 2005, and despite the control of the Supreme Leader office over the major foreign policies at the time, yet Ahmadi-Nejad’s presidency in the past 5 years has not only imposed a heavy cost on the country but has also borne very little results. One example is the Iran-Africa Conference which took

place in September in Tehran. Iran bore the cost of inviting a large number of delegates from small and less influential African countries with a cacophony of publicity in the Iranian media and television. With these extravaganza shows and wild charity activities with the funds that should be allocated to provide for the people’s needs, the regime tries to reinforce the positions of the Shiite Muslim forces in these countries and those who for years were being trained in numerous seminaries in our country. The Foreign Minister’s short trips with large entourage to five or six small African nations, whose names are not even known to the people of our country, cannot be described as effective diplomacy. The economic potential of these countries is not even a few tens of millions of dollars, and the regime claims to seek economic relationship with them. Iran’s total economic trade with Africa does not reach even half a billion dollars. The resolve of the coup government and the theocratic regime of the Supreme Leadership to intensify the international conflicts in relation to Iran, and even steps to curtail diplomatic relations with powerful European and Asian countries, could very well attributed to the extensive political crisis that has engulfed the regime 18 months after the rise of the Iranian people’s protest movement and has now brought the regime to a dead end. The leaders of the regime believe that intensifying the international conflicts could divert people’s attention from the nation’s domestic events and create conditions that oppressors could take advantage to justify further oppression●