

Text of the Address by His Excellency, Doctor Masoud Pezeshkian, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

At the Seventy-Ninth Session of the United Nations General Assembly New York, 24 September 2024

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

I extend my sincere congratulations both on the opening of the Seventy-Ninth Session of the United Nations General Assembly and to you, Mr. President, on your well-deserved election. I trust that the crucial themes of this session, peace, sustainable development, and human dignity, will illuminate a bright path for both present and future generations.

Last year, the devoted president of my country, Ebrahim Raisi, addressed you from this very podium. He was martyred in the service of the Iranian people. May his soul rest in peace.

This is my first time addressing you as the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a position I assumed after the Iranian people voted for my central campaign platform of “National Empathy”. This guiding principle is rooted in the command of Almighty God, as set forth in the Holy Qur’an.

According to the teachings of the Qur’an:

Mankind was [once] one nation, so God dispatched prophets as heralds and warners. He sent the Book down along with them to bring the Truth, so as to decide among mankind

concerning whatever they had been disagreeing about. However only those to whom it was given disagreed about it out of envy towards one another, after explanations had been brought them. (Quran, II:213)

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) instructed one of his governors:

Embrace the people with all your heart; show them kindness, and extend your compassion towards them. Never treat those under your command with harshness or violence. For people fall into two categories: they are either your brothers in religion or equals in creation.

The mission of all prophets has been to establish and promote truth and justice in society among all people, regardless of color, race, gender, or language. Peace and security in the world will not be achieved unless the rights of all individuals, communities, and nations are upheld with justice and fairness.

Let's ask ourselves: Are the roots of wars and bloodshed we see in today's world anything other than the fact that aggressors have violated the rights of others, overlooked the rights of nations, enforced discrimination and inequality, kept certain groups weak and underdeveloped, and disregarded the rights of individuals?

As long as injustice, oppression, greed, poverty, and ignorance prevail in any region, violence and conflict will continue. Unless we confront the root causes of such disorders, we cannot rescue the future of our children from darkness and destruction.

I embarked on my electoral campaign with a platform focused on "reform," "national empathy," "constructive engagement with the world," and "economic development,"

and was honored to gain the trust of my fellow citizens at the ballot box.

I aim to lay a strong foundation for my country's entry into a new era, positioning it to play an effective and constructive role in the evolving global order.

My objective is to address existing obstacles and challenges while structuring my country's foreign relations in cognizance of the necessities and realities of the contemporary world.

Mr. President,

Over the past year, the world has witnessed the true nature of the Israeli regime. It has witnessed how this regime carries out atrocities in Gaza; and in eleven months has murdered in cold blood over 41000 innocent people, mostly women and children;

Its leaders label this genocide; the killing of children, war crimes, and state-terrorism as "legitimate self-defense";

They label hospitals, kindergartens, and schools as "legitimate military targets";

They label the freedom-loving and brave people around the world who protest against their genocide as "anti-Semitic";

They label an oppressed people, who have stood up against seven decades of occupation and humiliation, as "terrorists".

It is Israel that has assassinated our scientists, diplomats, and even guests on our soil; and supported - both covertly and overtly - terrorist groups like ISIS.

Iran, in contrast, has supported popular liberation movements of people that have been victims of four generations of the crimes and colonialism of the Israeli regime.

We have been siding with the people across the world, who have flooded the streets in outrage against Israeli atrocities; we condemn Israeli crimes against humanity.

It is imperative that the international community should immediately stop the violence and bring about a permanent cease-fire in Gaza and bring an end to the desperate barbarism of Israel in Lebanon, before it engulfs the region and the world.

Israel has been defeated in Gaza and no amount of barbaric violence can restore its myth of invincibility. Naturally, blind Israeli state terrorism over the past few days in Lebanon followed by a massive aggression with thousands of victims cannot go unanswered. The responsibility for all consequences will be born by those who have thwarted all global efforts to end this horrific catastrophe, and have the audacity to call themselves champions of human rights

The only path to end this 70 years old nightmare in West Asia and the world is to restore the right of all Palestinians to self-determination. We propose that all the people of Palestine, both those who live in their motherland as well as those who have been forced into its diaspora, determine their future in a referendum. We are confident that through this mechanism we can achieve a lasting peace, with Muslims, Christians, and Jews living alongside one another in one land in tranquility and peace, and away from racism and apartheid.

Excellencies,

Examine the contemporary history of the region: Iran has never initiated a war; it has only defended itself heroically against external aggression, causing the aggressors to regret their actions.

Iran has never occupied the territory of any nation. It has not sought the resources of any country. It has repeatedly offered various proposals to its neighbors and international fora aimed at establishing lasting peace and stability.

We have emphasized the importance of unity in the region, and establishing a “strong region.” A “strong region” rests on several fundamental principles:

First, we must recognize that we are neighbors and, because of this bond, we will always remain together. The presence of foreign powers in our region is temporary and leads to instability. Our development and progress are interconnected, and outsourcing security to extra-regional powers will not benefit any of us.

Second, the new regional order must be inclusive and beneficial for all neighbors. An order that fails to safeguard the interests of each neighboring country cannot be sustained.

Third, neighboring and brotherly countries should not waste their valuable resources on attritional rivalries and arms races. Our region suffers from war, sectarian tensions, terrorism and extremism, drug trafficking, water scarcity, refugee crises, environmental degradation, and foreign interventions. We can collectively address these common challenges for a better future for coming generations.

I am the president of a country that has endured threats, war, occupation, and sanctions throughout its modern history. Others have neither come to our assistance nor

respected our declared neutrality. Global powers have even sided with aggressors. We have learned that we can only rely on our own people and our own indigenous capabilities.

The Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to safeguard its own security; not to create insecurity for others. We want peace for all and seek no war or quarrel with anyone.

We seek lasting peace and security for the people of Ukraine and Russia. The Islamic Republic of Iran opposes war and emphasizes the urgent need to end military hostilities in Ukraine. We support all peaceful solutions and believe that dialogue is the only way to resolve this crisis.

Mr. President,

In the current globalized world, the security and interests of no country can be attained through undermining the security and interests of others. We need a new paradigm to address global challenges. Such a paradigm must focus on opportunities rather than being obsessed with perceived threats. Through such an engagement approach, we can find fresh opportunities for cooperation.

Iran and global powers achieved a historic nuclear deal in 2015 through that fresh outlook, based on shared opportunities. Iran agreed to the highest, unprecedented level of nuclear oversight in return for recognition of our rights and the lifting of sanctions within the framework of the J C P O A. Trump's unilateral withdrawal from that agreement manifested a threat-ridden approach in politics and a coercion-driven strategy in the economic domain.

Unilateral sanctions target innocent people and seek to undermine the foundations of the Iranian economy. The goal is to securitize Iran; which instead leads to insecurity for all. The policy of the U.S.' so-called "maximum pressure" was in

fact implemented against the Iranian people when Iran was fulfilling all its obligations under the J C P O A, as was verified repeatedly by the IAEA.

We are ready to engage with J C P O A Participants. If J C P O A commitments are implemented fully and in good faith, dialogue on other issues can follow.

Here, I want to address the American people:

It is not Iran that has established military bases along your borders. It is not Iran that has imposed sanctions on your country and obstructed your trade relations with the world. It is not Iran that prevents you from accessing medicine. It is not Iran that has restricted your access to the global banking and financial system. It is not we who have targeted your military leaders; rather, it is the United States that assassinated Iran's most revered military commander at Baghdad airport. My message to all states pursuing a counter-productive strategy towards Iran is to learn from history. We have the opportunity to transcend these limitations and enter a new era. This era will commence with the acknowledgment of Iran's security concerns and cooperation on mutual challenges. Sanctions are destructive and inhumane weapons designed to cripple a nation's economy. The deprivation of access to essential medications is one of the most painful consequences of sanctions, endangering the lives of thousands of innocent people. This measure is not only a blatant violation of human rights but also constitutes a crime against humanity. Our nation has demonstrated resilience in the face of numerous hardships caused by sanctions over the years. Although the wounds inflicted by these sanctions are deep within our society, confronting this bitter experience has transformed us into a stronger nation, with unwavering resolve and self-confidence. In order to build a better future world, Iran

stands prepared to foster meaningful economic, social, political, and security partnerships with global powers and its neighbors based on equal footing. The appropriate response to this message from Iran is not to impose more sanctions, but to fulfill existing obligations to remove sanctions, benefiting the Iranian people and hence laying the foundations for more constructive agreements. I hope that this message from Iran is carefully heard. Thank you, Mr. President.