

# Dear President Donald Trump and Honorable Members of Congress,

Today, March 20<sup>th</sup>, Iranians celebrate *Nowruz*, the Persian New Year, an ancient ceremony that ushers in the spring and marks the rebirth of life.

The vision of Iran as a cradle of humanity is manifest in all dimensions of Iranian life and is best captured in the poem "Children of Adam" by Saadi, a 13<sup>th</sup> century poet, whose words grace the entrance of the United Nations:

***The children of Adam are limbs of each other  
Having been created of one essence.  
When the calamity of time affects one limb  
The other limbs cannot remain at rest.  
If you have no sympathy for the troubles of others,  
You are unworthy to be called by the name of a Human.***

In a historic speech before the leaders of more than 50 Muslim nations gathered in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, **Mr. President**, you recognized and affirmed the humanity of the Iranian people:

**"The Iranian regime's longest-suffering victims are its own people. Iran has a rich history and culture, but the people of Iran have endured hardship and despair under their leaders' reckless pursuit of conflict and terror."**

You concluded with a prayer for **"the day when the Iranian people have the just and righteous government they deserve."**

Today, on the eve of the Persian New Year, that day is closer than ever.

After four decades of subjugation and captivity in the dungeons of the Islamic Republic, the Iranian people are not broken.

What is broken is a theocracy founded on fear, force and fraud.

At this historical juncture, we the signatories, who have been struggling for decades for the peaceful prevalence of a democratic secular polity in Iran, as determined by the will of the Iranian people, call upon you, **Mr. President and Members of Congress**, as representatives of the American people, to stand in moral solidarity with the Iranian people.

The conscience of mankind and the interests of all nations dictates that we place our faith in the future of a free and independent Iran, an Iran that is as vibrant, abundant and radiant as her people.

## AN IRAN WAR IS NOT THE SOLUTION

The nuclear deal is not a justification for the appeasement of a theocracy that degrades religion to celebrate tyranny and terror, plunder and corruption, and division and death.

At the same time, as Iranian-Americans, we are strongly opposed to an Iran war that can escalate into a regional or world war with catastrophic consequences for all nations. The world must not repeat the grave mistakes that paved the way for the Iraq war.

**Mr. President**, in an interview with *Esquire* magazine in 2004, you correctly warned about the humanitarian costs of the Iraq war:

**"What was the purpose of the whole thing? Hundreds and hundreds of young people killed. And what about people coming back with no arms and legs? Not to mention the other side. All those Iraqi kids who've been blown to pieces. And it turns out that all the reasons for the war were blatantly wrong. All this for nothing!"**

Shohreh Aghdashloo, Iranian-American Actress, CA

Hamid Akbari, Professor & Higher Education Administrator, MN

Luther Alkhaseh, Businessman, CA

Ari Babakinia, M.D., Professor of Health Sciences, CA

Bahman Fathi, Journalist & Political Activist, CA

Farhang Farahi, Journalist, CA

Manouchehr Ghanbari, Nuclear & Structural Engineer, CA

Mehrangiz Kar, Human Rights Lawyer, DC

Bijan Khalili, Publisher & Journalist, CA

Azar Khounani-Akbari, Early Childhood Educator, IL

Abbas Khosravi-Farsani, Political Analyst, MI

Distinguished current and former American military leaders and statesmen have also warned about the unintended consequences of another war in the Middle East.

An Iran war is not the answer to the Iranian people's prayers.

## AN IRAN WAR IS A GIFT TO IRAN'S SUPREME LEADER.

As the guardian of a bankrupt and broken theocracy that oppresses the Iranian people, he will blame the death of yet another generation of Iranian youth on foreign powers conspiring to destroy Iran.

What will seal the fate of fundamentalism in Iran and beyond is not the resurrection of the myth of the United States as the Great Satan. It is the will of the Iranian people—free from any form of foreign intervention.

Rather than tear up the nuclear deal and rush or stumble into an Iran war, we invite you to reject the false choice between 1) a nuclear deal that benefits the regime and 2) a war that will

lead to the loss of life and treasure for both the Iranian and American people.

**Mr. President and Members of Congress, we invite you to choose a third path:** that of our common humanity as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations.

Stand with the Iranian people secure in the knowledge that in Iran, as in Eastern Europe, life will prevail over death, freedom over despair, and compassion over cruelty.

Remind the world why America remains a friend—and not a foe—of the Iranian people.

## THE IRANIAN PEOPLE DESERVE OUR MORAL SUPPORT

**Mr. President and Members of Congress**, join us in celebrating the Persian New Year **by standing with Iranian people and demanding** that Iran's tyrants end their systematic violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a sacred document that enshrines the universal rights of all Iranian citizens, including women, minorities and children.

Join us in celebrating the Persian New Year by calling for an end to the regime's systematic assaults on the liberties of the Iranian people, press, parliament, and universities as well as on labor, sports, environmental and women's groups and other civil society associations.

Join us in celebrating the Persian New Year by calling for the release of all political prisoners, including American citizens, and the closure of Evin prison.

Finally, join us in celebrating the Persian New Year by lending

moral support to millions of Iranians who, this last December, called for the abolition of the office of Iran's supreme leader, an end to clerical despotism and the establishment of a constitution and a secular government that reflects the sovereignty and protects the interests of the Iranian people.

**Mr. President and Members of Congress**, reject an Iran war. Instead, let us place our faith and trust in the will of the Iranian people.

We invite you to join us in wishing the Iranian people a happy *Nowruz*—may the new year fill the world with joy, life, love and laughter. Rather than rush into yet another war, let us remember that we are all the children of Adam, and that terrorists and extremists can neither divide nor destroy the force that binds the face of all our faiths as one: our common humanity.

Homa Mirafshar, Poet, CA

Morteza Mirafshari, Author & Poet, CA

Assal Pahlevan, Executive Director, Ferdosi Emrooz Publication, CA

Parisa Saed, Ph.D., Journalist, CA

Parviz Sayyad, Playwright & Filmmaker, CA

Khosrow B. Semnani, Industrialist & Philanthropist, UT

Maryam Seyhoun, Founder, Seyhoun Gallery, CA

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