

English (Safe publishable version) — Message No. 56 (SHAMA)

On the anniversary of the Shah’s departure, and amid mourning for the large number of our compatriots who have been killed, will we surrender to the deposed leader—or will we continue the struggle with better organization, stronger leadership, and more effective coordination?

Great Nation of Iran,

In Message No. 45, we compared the killings of students on **January 3, 1979** (in front of Tehran University) and the anger that followed—leading to violence that night—with the recent arson and bloodshed allegedly carried out by “unaccountable forces,” and we stated that the purpose was to create a pretext for further violence by the deposed leader. Considering his mindset and his belief that the monarchy fell because the Shah softened and fled, and in Message No. 49—given the regime’s inability to create economic relief and the character of the deposed and treasonous leader—we concluded that **repression** was his remaining option and called on you to prepare for a **full-scale confrontation**. Sadly, the bloody events of recent days have confirmed the accuracy of these assessments. This leads to a fundamental question: **Do we surrender**—without regard for the blood of the fallen—or do we continue until victory with **stronger leadership and appropriate organization**? We present the following points:

- 1) As the saying attributed to Che Guevara goes: when the pen is in the hands of the unworthy, the gun in the hands of criminals, power in the hands of traitors, management in the hands of the corrupt, and media in the hands of deceivers, the homeland turns into a “jungle.” Today, the actions of violent actors, the reported entry of thousands of foreign militia elements, the presence of foreign intelligence networks, and the risks of external escalation have created a complex and foggy situation, making it difficult to determine the exact share of responsibility for the bloodshed.
- 2) Even if one assumes that all killings were carried out by foreign-linked agents to manufacture a justification for military escalation against Iran, this does not lessen the responsibility of Ali Khamenei and the ruling apparatus—because it would still reflect the government’s incapacity to protect citizens and national security. Moreover, if such atrocities were enabled by negligence and delay on the part of state security structures, that stain will remain a lasting disgrace.
- 3) We have repeatedly said that in a **nonviolent struggle**, one must still apply the disciplines of effective collective action: unity of direction, organization, discipline, strategy, tactics, logistics, communication, and funding. We also said that just as the Iranian people bear the human cost of a just struggle, they must also help sustain its practical needs. Yet we see that even our analyses and warnings often do not reach the public, while high-reach outlets conduct relentless propaganda to impose a weak and unsuitable “command” on the movement. It is painful that wealthy Iranians—despite immense resources—have not stepped forward to help establish a **balanced media presence**.
- 4) We must not assume, as the poet Akhavan Saless wrote, that “the gallows are gone and the blood is washed away.” This is only the beginning. The struggle has a long road ahead, and we must adopt a new formation to push back both repression and manipulation. In this regard:

- **a)** We must recognize the gravity of the moment and ask: does a movement need leadership and coordination? If so, what qualities must such leadership have—and do those heavily promoted by certain media outlets truly possess them?
- **b)** Can those who applauded foreign military attacks on Iran credibly lead this movement?
- **c)** If leadership requires an organized base of support and a resilient “home front,” then if wealthy elites refuse their national and ethical responsibility, can the broader population not create a powerful support network through small, widespread contributions?
- **d)** The National Council of Iran’s Revolution, which considers itself a follower of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh and refuses to become indebted to foreign governments, requires **moral and material support** from the Iranian people to manage this national struggle.

5) Sources have reported that on Thursday and Friday, at least **five million** people participated in protests. If accurate—as it appears—this far exceeds the **3.5%** participation threshold discussed in research by Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan. Therefore, with capable leadership, appropriate organization, and effective coordination, success becomes far more achievable. As it is said: “Do not fear an army of lions led by a sheep; fear an army of sheep led by a lion.”

6) Given the gravity of the situation and the need for a more effective formation, we call for broader and stronger **strikes** and **civil resistance** by all professions and social groups—especially those with social influence: lawyers, merchants, students, workers, artists, pupils, teachers, athletes, women, employees of public and private institutions, farmers, and rights advocates—along with sectors that generate revenue for the ruling apparatus (with exceptions for essential domestic needs).

7) We insist on forming a **Southern Civic Coalition** as a rapid, coordinated capacity involving the people of Sistan and Baluchestan, Kerman, Fars, Bushehr, Khuzestan, Lorestan, Hormozgan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, and Isfahan—drawing on the historic solidarity and resilience of these communities—to help bring about a decisive shift in the balance of power in favor of the people through disciplined, coordinated action.

8) As always, we emphasize the principle of **lawful self-protection** and, in order to strengthen **organization and discipline**, we propose that once a stable and reliable level of coordination is achieved, nationwide protests be held **one day per week, on Fridays**, firmly, peacefully, and across the country.

Proud people of Iran

Long live Iran

National Council of Iran’s Revolution

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