



Iran seeking peace, stability in region: Zarif

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National Desk

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said the Islamic Establishment had been wronged in the current election process.

In an address to a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Rouhani added, "We cannot joke with public opinion and voter turnout. We are required to invite people to take part in the election in a real manner," IRNA reported.

Warning against a distortion of the facts in the race for his post, he urged all candidates to observe moral principles and refrain from misrepresenting the truth in order to pave the way for maximum turnout in the upcoming election, according to Tasnim News Agency.

Rouhani said Iran's people must be encouraged to take part in the June 18 presidential election by being informed about the facts.

"Democracy must prevail from the beginning to the end of the election," he added, stressing the need to observe moral precepts, tell the truth, honor pledges, and avoid distorting the facts in the electoral campaigns.

"The election is important, but ethics are even more important. Ethics are in fact the ultimate goal of Islam and the Islamic Revolution," he noted.

Rouhani also advised the presidential candidates to encourage the people to vote by expressing the realities, criticizing the comments aimed at

downplaying the achievements of his administration over the past eight years.

"When the administration is offended, millions of people are offended. The statistics announced in the comments (by the candidates) must be correct; people should not be told lies," the president underlined.

In remarks on May 27, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei advised the presidential candidates to avoid slandering other candidates, or turning the elections into a war of power.

"You should not look at typical American and European elections because they are notorious for their insulting behavior. In our own country, too, whenever candidates adopted the method of insulting, slandering and accusing other candidates during televised debates, with the goal of frightening the people of other candidates, the country was harmed in one way or another. This has happened in the past. It should not be the case that we frighten the people of another candidate, saying that if he wins, such and such a thing would happen. The arena

Rouhani: Establishment wronged in election process

'Moral principles must be respected in June 18 vote'



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani addresses a cabinet meeting in Tehran on June 9, 2021.

of elections is a competition for rendering services," the Leader underlined. Slated for June 18, the 13th

presidential election in Iran will be held simultaneously with the City and Village Council and midterm parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections.

The seven candidates in the race for the highest executive post in Iran, approved by the Constitutional Council, are Saeed Jalili, former nuclear negotiator under ex-president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad; Secretary of Iran's Expediency Council Mohsen Rezaei; Judiciary Chief Seyyed Ebrahim Raesi; former lawmaker Alireza Zakani; member of the Iranian Parliament Seyyed Amir Hossein Qazizadeh-Hashemi; former vice president Mohsen Mehrizadeh; and Abdolnaser Hemmati, the former governor of the Central Bank of Iran.

More than 59.3 million Iranians are eligible to vote this year, according to the Interior Ministry.

Rouhani added that among the inflicted cruelties was the one mentioned by the Leader re-

garding the approval of the candidates, which was an important issue.

Slamming as unsubstantiated claims aimed at negating his administration's achievements completely, Rouhani said, "Can we say that there are no plants [in the country]? Is it possible to deny the inauguration of 17 major petrochemical projects in the previous [Iranian] year [which ended on March 20] and say that no petrochemical plant has been inaugurated? If thousands of kilometers of roads and railways as well as hundreds of other important projects have been inaugurated over the past two years, can we say otherwise?"

He recalled that when his administration took office in 2013, the country was under international sanctions and considerable economic pressure, saying in that year, Iran's economic growth was minus 7.7 percent and inflation was over 30 percent.

In 2014, Rouhani added, inflation dropped to 15 percent, while the country's economic growth reached 3.2 percent.

He noted that for over two years, the country experienced

a single digit inflation rate during his administration's tenure, putting the average economic growth in a four-year period at 4.7 percent.

Rouhani added that during 2016, Iran experienced an economic growth of 12.6 percent, ranking first in the world in this regard.

However, he said, in 2018, the country entered a full-fledged economic war, unprecedented in its history, where the most hostile people in the US came to power with the assistance of Israel and the Zionists.

The Zionist regime sought to bring the Islamic Republic to its knees, Rouhani noted, stressing, however, that the people stood against the US and its allies through promoting unity and solidarity among themselves and emerged victorious.

Under former president Donald Trump and Israel's pressure, the US pulled out of the JCPOA in May 2018 and reimposed Washington's unilateral sanctions on Iran. Mainly targeting Iran's oil and banking sectors, the sanctions have been imposed in a bid to cripple the country's economy and bring the Islamic Republic to the negotiating table to hammer out a new deal. Although the sanctions have troubled the Iranian economy and impeded delivery of humanitarian aid to the country, particularly amid the COVID-19 pandemic, they have failed to produce the desired result thanks to Iranians' maximum resistance.

Araqchi: Key issues unresolved in Vienna talks

International Desk

Iran's top nuclear negotiator said the Vienna talks over the restoration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have reached a point where some key issues still remain unresolved and in need of a decision.

"Of course, the differences are not over new issues, but pertaining to the sides' return to the agreement," Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Abbas Araqchi said on Wednesday, IRNA reported.

He added that the next (sixth) round of the negotiations will begin in Vienna in a few days.

Commenting on his Wednesday meeting with the members of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Araqchi said, "Today, I provided comprehensive explanations on the latest developments in the Vienna negotiations."

He added in his meeting with Iranian lawmakers, discussions are held over certain issues, which help enlighten the nuclear team and contribute to the talks' progress.

Turning to the next round of the Vienna talks, Araqchi expressed hope that progress would be made on different issues.

It is too soon, he noted, to predict whether the next round of the negotiations would be the last one.

The fifth round of the Vienna talks ended a few days ago.

'No sign yet'

Iran's ambassador to the international organizations in Vienna said no sign has been detected yet indicating whether the US is determined enough and prepared to quit its addiction to resorting to unilateral and coercive measures,

respect the international law, fulfill its commitments regarding the complete removal of the sanctions in an effective manner and make the tough necessary decisions on this issue.



with the Islamic Republic and contributes to security in the Middle East and the world.

"Members of the managing board and all pragmatic countries who are seriously concerned about the future of nuclear non-proliferation and international security, need to support the JCPOA talks underway in Vienna," he added.

Envoys from Iran and the remaining signatories to the JCPOA, namely Britain, France, Russia, and China plus Germany, have been holding talks in Vienna aimed at revitalizing the JCPOA and bringing the US back to compliance since April.

A US delegation is also in the Austrian capital, but it is not attending the discussions because Washington is not a party to the nuclear accord.

Former US president Donald Trump abandoned the deal and reimposed the anti-Iran sanctions that the JCPOA had lifted. He also placed additional sanctions on Iran under other pretexts not related to the nuclear case as part of the "maximum pressure" campaign.

Following a year of strategic patience, Iran resorted to its legal rights stipulated in Article 36 of the JCPOA, which grants a party the right to suspend its contractual commitments in case of noncompliance by other signatories, and let go of some of the restrictions imposed on its nuclear energy program.

The Biden administration says it wants to compensate for Trump's mistake and rejoin the deal, but it is showing an overriding propensity for maintaining some of the sanctions as a tool of pressure.

Tehran stresses that all sanctions should first be removed in a verifiable manner before the Islamic Republic reverses its remedial measures.

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