

**Dr. Kharrazi's Speech at the Second Round of the Iran-Arab Dialogue
Doha, June 6, 2023**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Your Excellency, Mr. Adil Abdol-Mahdi, the Former Prime Minister of Iraq

**Your Excellency, Sheikh Hamad Bin Thamer Al-Thani, the Honorable
Chairman of the Al-Jazeera Media Network;**

**Your Excellency, Mr. Abdol-Aziz Hamad Al-Owaishiq, the Assistant of GCC-
SG in Political Affairs**

**Dear Dr. Mohammad Al-Mukhtar Al-Khalil, the Respected President of Al-
Jazeera Studies Institute;**

**Excellencies;
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak at the opening session of the Iran-Arab dialogue in Doha once again. The present meeting is a collaborative effort between the Strategic Council for Foreign Relations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Al Jazeera Institute of Studies. It comes at a crucial moment when global relations, and consequently, relations among the countries in the region, are undergoing significant changes. I sincerely hope that the meeting aimed at fostering a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities in Iranian-Arab relations, particularly in security and economics, will yield positive results. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the exceptional hospitality provided by the Al Jazeera Institute of Studies and the flawless arrangements made by the esteemed government of Qatar for this meeting.

Honored Audience;

During our previous meeting, I emphasized the importance of Saudi Arabia as a major country in the Islamic world and the region. As the host of the Muslim Qiblah and the Two Holy Harams, it's crucial for Iran and Saudi Arabia to recognize each other's significance. As the two leading powers in the region, we must work together and leverage each other's strengths to promote peace, stability, and development in the region.

It is a positive development that Iran and Saudi Arabia have decided to normalize their relations, leading to the reopening of embassies in Tehran and Riyadh. Moreover, the appointment of new ambassadors by the UAE and Kuwait is a significant step towards strengthening diplomatic ties in the region. It is worth noting that Iraq and Oman played a crucial role in facilitating the re-establishment of ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia, while Qatar and Oman have been instrumental in advancing discussions with the United States, on JCPOA, the release of Iranian assets, and the exchange of prisoners. We welcome the upcoming visit of His Majesty Haitham bin Tariq, the King of Oman, to Tehran, which coincides with our meeting in Doha, and further underscores the growing relations between Iran and the Persian Gulf countries.

Dear Friends;

Our region has witnessed significant developments and events in the past two decades, including the United States' intervention in Iraq and some other Middle Eastern countries to change their governance systems in a bid to promote democracy. Philip Gordon, a former Coordinator of Middle East Affairs for the US National Security Council during the Obama administration, provides deeper insights into this issue in his latest publication titled "Losing the Long Game: The False Promise of Regime Change in the Middle East." The proliferation of religious extremism and the emergence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the devastating and fruitless wars of Syria and Yemen; America's geostrategic shift from the Middle East to the Far East; Chinese attempt to fill the created vacuum by pursuing its Belt and Road project and strengthening its economic relations with the countries of the region; the disgraceful failure of the US policy of maximum pressure on Iran, and the impact of the ongoing Ukraine war on our region, including the expansion of Russia's economic relations with the region, and construction of new transportation corridors connecting the south to the north.

On the other hand, the strength and capability of Palestinian and Hezbollah forces in confronting and encircling Israel are increased, and Israel's internal instability, insecurity, and dissatisfaction are intensified, to the extent that reverse migration is upsurged. These facts are repeatedly expressed by Israeli authorities, mass media, and think tanks. According to the 2022-2023 index of the Institute for National Security Studies of Israel, 64 percent of the public is worried about internal social threats in Israel. The current situation has prompted the Israeli regime to beg for the normalization of its relations with the Arab countries to get out of the internal deadlock and external siege, created by the resistance forces.

Honored Audience:

Fortunately, given these developments, the leaders of the region have shown their wisdom in adopting an independent policy based on multipolar balance; developing their economic relations with China and Russia, resolving regional disputes, reopening political relations, returning their ambassadors, and expanding their economic relations with other countries in the region, including Iran, Iraq, and Syria. These developments show the maturity of our countries in exploiting international developments for the benefit of their country and the region as a whole.

Anyway, it is time to look for higher horizons in this region. The economic and security crisis in Europe and America due to the war in Ukraine, the emergence of new technologies, the increasing influence of China, and the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in developing its military and civilian industries and new technologies, including peaceful nuclear technology without any foreign assistance, has put the international system on the path of complex developments. These developments lead the world to a new order, the characteristics of which are still unclear. However, regional organizations will certainly play a crucial role in the upcoming years. Their power, capability, unity, and degree of independence will determine their significance as key actors in shaping the future.

Therefore, we need the establishment of a "Strong Region" comprising "Strong Actors." Our security and economy not only depend on the strength of each of us but the strength of the entire region as a whole. In a strong region, collective security is established, and economic growth and development are realized. To achieve the goal of having a "strong region," a joint effort should be made to reduce tensions, replace competition, fear, and doubt with cooperation, and resolve differences through dialogue and interactions. In a word, we need "regional cooperation" so that in addition to securing security, prosperity, and development for the entire region, to become an active and effective actor at the international level and secure our region's position in international decisions.

It is my recommendation that the esteemed leaders of the region come together to work towards building a "strong region." A crucial step towards achieving this goal is to engage in dialogue to resolve any differences that may exist. It is important to remember that differences are natural and can even present opportunities if managed properly. Fortunately, the countries in this region possess abundant natural resources, and capable manpower, and have religious, historical, cultural, and

environmental commonalities. Despite variations in government type, priorities, strategies, concerns, and challenges, they can work towards actions that benefit them all. This requires a commitment to honest and open dialogue, cooperation in economic, scientific, and cultural fields, exhibiting moderation and tolerance, and forming a collective security mechanism for the region without outside interference. It is essential to recognize that "security" and "development" are continuous and inseparable concepts.

Fortunately, the Secretary General of the United Nations has responded to the mandate outlined in paragraph 8 of Security Council Resolution 598. Furthermore, Iran has demonstrated its commitment to promoting regional security, albeit without foreign presence, by presenting its Hormuz Peace Plan (HOPE).

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

If I may, I would like to address some key issues briefly:

- 1) The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the security of the Persian Gulf and each of its countries to be its own security and commits itself to ensure the region's security and stability, including the security of shipping lines. Our opposition to foreign forces, primarily the United States and Israel, is driven by their contribution to the area's instability. The extensive US presence and military bases in the region have only exacerbated tensions and conflicts. We must learn from history and use it as our guide. We caution all Persian Gulf countries that Israel's presence, will only bring insecurity and create a perilous future for the region.
- 2) The recent progress in Yemen toward resolving conflicts through dialogue rather than military power is a positive development. This approach has already yielded successful outcomes, such as the exchange of prisoners and the supply of humanitarian aid. The Islamic Republic of Iran, since the beginning of this conflict, has always been a strong advocate for the establishment of a government based on the will of the Yemeni people. It is imperative that all countries in the region unite to support this goal and work towards achieving lasting peace in Yemen.
- 3) The return of Syria to the Arab world is a positive development. Syria's importance in the West Asia region cannot be overstated, and recent political exchanges with Arab countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, are indicative of a step in the right direction. We are optimistic that such efforts will pave the way for increased economic cooperation and the reconstruction of the war-torn country. We are also pleased with the recent talks between Syria and Turkey, which were made possible

through the mediation and collaboration of Iran and Russia. The protection of Syria's political sovereignty and territorial integrity is paramount, and we call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Syrian territory to achieve this objective.

4) Lastly, Palestine remains the beating heart of the Islamic world and our primary concern. The resistance of young Palestinians against the occupying forces in the West Bank is spreading, and without a doubt, the brutal killings of the Zionist army, in which even women and children are not safe, and the recent crimes of the regime in killing the people of Gaza cannot create any disturbance in the ranks and the unity of the Palestinian fighters. The attack on the defenseless houses of the people only shows the weakness and passivity of the apartheid regime and its inability to deal with the Palestinian youth.

The efforts of some countries in the region to establish a ceasefire are commendable, but to truly address the crimes committed by the Israeli apartheid regime and uphold the rights of Palestinians, resistance is necessary. We believe that the ultimate resolution to the Palestinian issue should align with democratic principles, which entails creating a single political system via a referendum that would include all original residents of Palestine, and the Palestinian refugees, whether Muslim, Christian, or Jewish. Interestingly, according to the 2022-2023 index of the Institute for National Security Studies of Israel, 46 percent versus 35 percent of Israelis prefer a democratic state, with equal political rights for all, instead of the Jewish majority state.

In the end, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Al Jazeera Institute of Studies for arranging this meeting, and to the government of Qatar for its commitment to enhancing political, economic, and cultural relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is my fervent hope that the next two days of discussions will foster greater comprehension of the challenges and issues between Iran and the Arab world, and inspire ideas for building a stronger and more prosperous region.

Thank you for your attention.