

MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT KHATAMI FROM PRESIDENT CLINTON:

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED CREDIBLE EVIDENCE THAT MEMBERS OF THE IRANIAN REVOLUTIONARY GUARD CORPS (IRGC), ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF LEBANESE AND SAUDI HIZBALLAH, WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF THE TERRORIST BOMBING IN SAUDI ARABIA OF THE KHOBAR TOWERS MILITARY RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX ON JUNE 25, 1996.

NINETEEN AMERICAN CITIZENS WERE KILLED. THE UNITED STATES VIEWS THIS IN THE GRAVEST TERMS. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE BOMBING OCCURRED PRIOR TO YOUR ELECTION. THOSE RESPONSIBLE, HOWEVER, HAVE YET TO FACE JUSTICE FOR THIS CRIME, AND THE IRGC MAY BE INVOLVED IN PLANNING FOR FURTHER TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST AMERICAN CITIZENS.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ACKNOWLEDGES THE POSITIVE STEPS YOU HAVE TAKEN IN SEEING THAT THOSE IRANIANS INVOLVED IN CORRUPTION, DRUGS, DOMESTIC TERRORISM AND INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES ARE CALLED TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR ACTIONS. HOWEVER, THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE IRGC IN TERRORIST PLANNING AND ACTIVITY ABROAD REMAINS A CAUSE OF DEEP CONCERN TO US.

THE UNITED STATES HAS NO HOSTILE INTENTIONS TOWARDS THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN AND SEEKS GOOD RELATIONS WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT, BUT WE CANNOT ALLOW THE MURDER OF U.S. CITIZENS TO PASS UNADDRESSED.

IN ORDER TO PROTECT OUR CITIZENS, WHICH IS THE FIRST RESPONSIBILITY OF ANY GOVERNMENT, AND IN ORDER TO LAY A SOUND BASIS FOR BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES, WE NEED A CLEAR COMMITMENT FROM YOU THAT YOU WILL ENSURE AN END TO IRANIAN INVOLVEMENT IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY, PARTICULARLY THREATS TO AMERICAN CITIZENS, AND WILL BRING THOSE IN IRAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BOMBING TO JUSTICE EITHER IN IRAN OR BY EXTRADITING THEM TO SAUDI ARABIA.

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL

The allegations contained in the message attributed to President Clinton are inaccurate and unacceptable. The Islamic Republic of Iran views the recurrence of such unfounded allegations in the gravest terms.

Reliable investigations and serious scrutiny leave no doubt that this allegation, which has been repeated on several earlier occasions is solely based on inaccurate and biased information. No agency of or entity connected with the Islamic Republic of Iran had any part, whatsoever, in the planning, logistics or execution of the said incident. Such allegations are fabricated solely by those whose illegitimate objectives are jeopardized by stability and security in the region.

The US Government—which has not only failed to prosecute or extradite the readily identifiable American citizens responsible for the downing of Iranian civilian airliner, but in fact has decorated them— is now seeking the trial or extradition of individuals totally unknown and without any connection whatsoever to the Islamic Republic of Iran. This behavior is unacceptable and must cease immediately.

It is also imperative that the US Government prevents further support of certain official US agencies and institutions for terrorist elements and organizations with irrefutable records of crimes against Iranian people. Any further assistance to these terrorists is indicative of inconsistency between US words and deeds, and shall remain a source of deep concern to the Iranian people and Government.

The Islamic Republic of Iran hears no hostile intentions towards Americans and the Iranian people not only harbor no enmity, but indeed have respect for the great American people. At the same time, they shall vigilantly and resolutely defend their independence, sovereignty and legitimate rights against any threat.

As its irreversible and fundamental strategy, the Government of Iran, backed by a strong national consensus, shall vigorously pursue the policy of détente and institutionalization of the rule of law. The Government is confident and there exists no threat from the Islamic Republic of Iran against any other government or their nationals.