

# Principles and Fundamentals of Islamic Diplomacy From Imām Khomeinī's Viewpoint

Muḥammad-Riḍā Dehshīrī

## Introduction

Imām Khomeinī as a politician-jurist, who used to present his political viewpoints by basing on the juristic principles and rules, is an authority on Islamic diplomacy, which can be a basis of the political teachings of Islam. A study of the late Imām's viewpoints on Islamic diplomacy<sup>1</sup> in that perspective is of utmost importance as it provides a background theoretical framework vis-à-vis the researchers' knowledge in elucidating the Islamic viewpoint on diplomatic relations in the present time. At the present when the geographical demarcations among nation-states have overcome ideological divisions and the cooperation among Muslim countries, which are territorially not integrated under the banner of Islam, with the non-Muslim countries, which have necessarily adopted the policy of entente vis-à-vis the Muslim nations, has cast a shadow on the opposition between the *dār al-Islām* [abode of peace] and *dār al-kufr* [abode of disbelief], and the paradigm based on the abidance of the rules of international law on the relations among countries has been circumvented, the necessity of elucidating the theoretical viewpoints of the Islamic government in the realm of international relations has been felt more than ever.

In relation to this, it is worthy to examine the theoretical principles of Islamic diplomacy as the bases and fundamentals that form the edifice of diplomatic relations of a Muslim country. By explaining the foundations of

---

<sup>1</sup> Islamic diplomacy refers to the prescribed ways based on the sacred laws of Islam in the realm of undertaking foreign policy by the Islamic government through the peaceful means of negotiation, dialogue, and dispatching of political envoys for the expansion of diplomatic relations of the Islamic country with other non-hostile nations and governments. See *Daftar-e Hamkārī Ḥawzah va Dāneshgāh* [Seminary-University Cooperation Office], *Islām va Huqūq-e bayn al-Milal-e 'Umūmī* [Islam and Public International Law]: 209-254 (Tehran: Samt Publications, 1377 AHS), vol. 2, p. 1.

Islamic diplomacy and the principles such as *nafyi sabīl* [protection of independence and rejection of dominance by non-Muslims], *da‘wah* [invitation of non-Muslims to Islam], *tawallā wa tabarrā* [befriending God’s friends and turning against God’s enemies], *ta’līf al-qulūb* [gaining the endearment of others], and compliance with the international agreements and customs, as well as describing objective and practical cases and instances of each of them, new approaches to theory-building and novel methods will be acquired by the foreign policy officials. At the same time, a substantial analysis of Imām Khomeinī’s statements and review of the theoretical foundation of his diplomatic viewpoints will provide the necessary grounds for the academic explanation of the fundamentals of Islamic diplomacy.

### **The *nafyi sabīl* tenet**

Based on verse 141 of *Sūrah an-Nisā’*: “Allah will not give the disbelievers any way (of success) against the believers” and verse 8 of *Sūrah al-Munāfiqūn*: “Honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the Believers,” the tenet of *nafyi sabīl*—hindering the way of the non-Muslims’ influence and domination over the Muslims—is regarded as one of the dominant principles of Islamic diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> While enumerating this principle as one of the rules in understanding jurisprudence in deducing political teachings of Islam, Imām Khomeinī attempts to explain it in two aspects: negative and positive.

The negative aspect of this tenet refers to the negation of aliens’ domination and absence of permission for their interference. Its affirmative aspect refers to the positive basis with which the said negative policy relies to overcome some approaches of the Islamic state in hindering the aliens’ interference.

### **The negative aspect of *nafyi sabīl* tenet**

In this approach, the negative resistances of the Islamic state against the interference of the foreigners are approved. In the political dimension, non-acceptance of protectorate condition; negation of oppression, tyranny and despotism; refusal of the aliens’ interference in the domestic affairs of the Muslim country; non-reliance to the superpowers and non-compromise with the corrupt and domineering powers; non-permission of the aliens’ penetration of the political decision-making system of the Muslim country; negation of structural domination of the great powers and of their sought-

---

<sup>1</sup> For information on the various interpretations and religious bases of this tenet, see Āyatullāh Bujnūrdī, *Al-Qawā‘id al-Fiqhiyyah* [Rules of Jurisprudence], vol. 1, pp. 157-161.

after order; and resistance against the perpetuation of the foreign dominance or the creation of a new form of domination over the Muslim country are taken into account. In the cultural dimension, negation of the foreign cultural domination and avoidance of intimacy or consultation with them on affairs that could make them aware of the internal secrets of the Islamic government are really attempted. In the economic dimension, negation of the dominance of non-Muslim, corrupt and polytheist powers over the resources, minerals and depots of the Muslim country; prevention of their pillage and looting of the Muslim countries; and preclusion of usurpation of wealth particularly through the revenue between the replacement and the replaced [*jam' bayn al-'awad wa'l-mu'awwad*]<sup>1</sup> are highly emphasized.

### **The negative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet* from the political perspective**

Concerning the negation of the aliens' political dominance over the Islamic system, Imām Khomeinī emphasized on the negation of colonial, protectorate and advisory system so that all forms of domineering such as official, quasi-official and non-official would be limited, and the Muslim country could adopt appropriate decisions in an order free from the dominance of the great powers:

The Qur'an says that God, the Blessed and Exalted, will never consent to the dominance of non-Muslims over Muslims. Such a thing should never happen, they should never gain the upper hand, there should be no way open for them to do this: "And never will God grant to the unbelievers a way over the believers."<sup>2</sup> The polytheists should find no way open to them to do this and the corrupt powers should find no way to hold sway over the Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

"We are not in good terms with any of the powers. We will not be subservient to America and the Soviet Union. We are Muslims... We may prefer to live poorly provided we are free and independent."<sup>4</sup>

"On the basis of the precepts of Islam, we are neither oppressors nor oppressed. We could neither be able to be oppressed nor be oppressors."<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> An illustration of this circumstance was Iran's supplying of oil [the replaced] to the United States in exchange for the military weapons and facilities [the replacement], which were also serving the American interests in the Persian Gulf region. [Trans.]

<sup>2</sup> *Sūrah an-Nisā'* 4:141.

<sup>3</sup> *Ṣahīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 3, p. 4; *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 4, p. 317.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 15, p. 209.

“The Islamic nation is a follower of a school whose programs can be summarized in two phrases: ‘Don’t oppress and be oppressed’.”<sup>2</sup>

“We have peculiar Islamic relations. Islam was not oppressive and never been subjected to oppression. We also like to be such, not to oppress or be under oppression.”<sup>3</sup>

“Our logic, the logic of Islam is that others should not dominate you and you should not be under the domination of others. We like also not to be subjected to the domination of others. The essence of our statement is this: America should not be (oppressive); not only America. The Soviet Union should not be so, too. The foreigners should not be such.”<sup>4</sup>

“We are under the protection of no power except God, the Blessed and Exalted. This country of ours that rose up... announced to the world from the very beginning that we are not under the protection of America, not under the protection of the Soviet Union, and not under the protection of any power.”<sup>5</sup>

“In all circumstances our slogan is cutting the hands of the leftist and rightist foreigners off the country. For, growth, independence and freedom with the presence of the aliens’ interference of any kind, creed and nationality in any of the country’s affairs, be they political, cultural, economic, or military, are nothing but nightmare and imagination. Anyone of whatever position and in whatever form who grants permission to the foreign interference in our dear country, whether explicitly or through designs that require the perpetuation of the foreign dominance or the creation of a new dominance is a traitor to Islam and the country.”<sup>6</sup>

#### **The negative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet* from the cultural perspective**

Imām Khomeinī regarded the cultural dominance of the foreigners as the crucial element of political economic dependence and he believed: If the minds are dependent and the culture of a nation not independent, not only that one cannot be hopeful of ensuring the future, but also the dominance of the world-devourers over the nation will be consolidated.

“This West or East that has become dominant over all Muslim countries, the most important of which has been the cultural dominance.”<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 72-74.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 132-141.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 17, pp. 3, 58-64.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 112-115.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 218-221.

“Your culture is an imperialist culture, an erroneous culture.”<sup>1</sup>

**The negative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet* from the economic perspective**

Imām Khomeinī believed that economic dependence leads to political dependence. Thus, the control of the colonialists over the depots and their pillage of the resources must be prevented so as to provide the necessary ground for economic self-sufficiency and independence. For this reason, Imām Khomeinī strongly stressed on the maintenance and preservation of the above the ground and underground resources from the embezzlement and encroachment of the foreigners:

“Is not the American dominance over us nothing but to have control of the resources that we have, the reserves that we have, things underground that we have, and things above the ground that we have, and to take them away?”<sup>2</sup>

“Our total prosperity is the day when the dominance of all colonialists of the East and West, particularly the world-devouring America, will be severed from the Muslims.”<sup>3</sup>

“Blessed is the day when Iran will be free from the dominance of foreigners.”<sup>4</sup>

“Blessed is the day for us when the dominance of the world-devourers over our oppressed nation and other downtrodden nations will be cut off and all the nations will take their own destiny in their hands.”<sup>5</sup>

**The affirmative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet***

The affirmative aspect of the *nafyi sabīl tenet* refers to the approaches and points of reliance, on which the Imām stressed for the preservation of independence and negation of dependency. Since negation of anything necessitates a point of repose and reliance on some values and principles, Imām Khomeinī dealt with the political, cultural and economic infrastructures necessary for the realization of independence and absence of the foreigners’ dominance, and explained them in this manner:

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 105-110.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 289-296.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 146-148.

---

**The affirmative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet* from the political perspective**

In a bid to consolidate the independence in decision-making and the right of choosing foreign policy options of the Islamic state, Imām Khomeinī gave emphasis on criteria such as Islam and the clergy, unity of expression and political rationality so that through reliance on values and facilities, the means of the foreigners' dominance over the Muslim countries will be limited while independence in all dimensions be realized. Concerning this, the Imām laid strong emphasis on both the material and spiritual powers such as the Islamic ideology, freedom and freedom-loving, national quantitative readiness, integration of all strata of the nation, and their solidarity with the government.

“They saw two things that once existing can possibly hinder their way: One is the essence of Islam... and the other is the clergy of Islam.”<sup>1</sup>

“If the people of Iran demand for... the establishment of Islamic government and the severance of the foreigners' domination of the Muslim country... all of these spring from the progressive principles and fundamentals of Islam.”<sup>2</sup>

“We want our people to be free and not to be under the pressure and dominance of others internally and externally. We want our country to be from us, independent, and not under the control of others.”<sup>3</sup>

“If we have also political rationality, everybody must hold hand in hand so that we could move. Today, both America and the Soviet Union want us to be under their control. Now that we are all prey to the wolves of the world and that all want to victimize us, we must cooperate with one another in thought, policy, writing, truth and everything.”<sup>4</sup>

“If the Muslims want to be successful and be released from the commitments with the foreigners and their dominance, their governments should try to win the hearts of their nations. Government over the hearts is a pleasant government, contrary to the government in Iran which the hearts are not with it.”<sup>5</sup>

“With the foreign domination, everything you possess will be lost. This creation of differences, God forbid, will lead to foreign domination.”<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 161-170.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 23-26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 212-213.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 114-116.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 181-185.

“A nation that wants to be alive, independent, and not be a servant and dependent (on others), and want to be free and not to be under domination, should be ready for everything.”<sup>1</sup>

“Don't be negligent of your human force and power of faith. Avoid reliance to the foreigners. Guarantee your independence in all dimensions.”<sup>2</sup>

“If they want to subject the nation under their dominance, they should separate the people from the clergy.”<sup>3</sup>

“The result of this creation of division among the brothers is the domination of foreigners.”<sup>4</sup>

### **The affirmative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet* from the cultural perspective**

For the attainment of cultural independence and negation of intellectual and mental dependency from the colonial powers, Imām Khomeinī stressed on regaining the primordial identity, self-confidence, common sense, awareness and vigilance, spirit of struggle and resistance, reliance on noble national identity, religious values, and freedom and respect for freedom. He considered promotion of rich culture of Islam and reliance on the indigenous human power as ensuring cultural richness and culture of self-sufficiency.

Just as he regarded the value of cultural life in freedom and independence, he believed that cultural independence necessitates long-term comprehensive programs.

“The value of life is in freedom, independence and observance of the religious precepts. We do not believe in life under the domination of others. We know of the value of life in freedom and independence.”<sup>5</sup>

“The duty of the Muslims is to negate the cultural dominance of foreigners and to promote the rich culture of Islam.”<sup>6</sup>

“So long as we do not find ourselves, we cannot be independent. However, if we ourselves do not have political acumen as we do not, if Islam is not realized here, if our country does not become an Islamic country, which has such designs for ‘independence’ and ‘freedom’, then it is not permissible and lawful for a Muslim to forge commitment with a non-Muslim who want to dominate over him.”<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 15, pp. 44-50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 185-188.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, pp. 106-114.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 13, pp. 44-46.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 114-115.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 218-221.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 273-281.

---

“You wanted other powers not to have dominance over you and your resources. It became so and now they do not have dominance.”<sup>1</sup>

“Culture must be from us. Economy must also be from us. So long as this structure is not with the masses and so long as this mentality which is parasitic and colonial is not relieved, and that we do not believe that we are humans, we cannot attain independence.”<sup>2</sup>

“We should produce an Iran that without reliance on America, Soviet Union, Britain and international devourers, can achieve its own political, military, cultural, and economic independence, stand on its own feet and offer its noble identity to the world.”<sup>3</sup>

“In the long-term program we should replace our country’s dependent culture with independent and self-sufficient culture.”<sup>4</sup>

### **The affirmative aspect of *nafyi sabīl tenet* from the economic perspective**

Imām Khomeinī was of the opinion that the realization of independence and economic self-sufficiency lies on reliance on one’s resources and reserves in such a way that by relying on human and underground resources and applying them, the Muslim country could regain its economic independence and stop the pillages of the world-devourers; thus, alleviating its economic condition. Concerning this, the Imām regarded reliance on the Islamic ideology and religious values as the element preventing the pillage of resources of the Muslim countries, saying:

“The only things that could hinder the way of foreigners and colonial powers, and not allow them to have control over the resources of Muslim countries are Islam and the distinguished ‘*ulamā*’ of Islam.”<sup>5</sup>

### **The principle of *da‘wah***

There exists two viewpoints concerning the concept of *da‘wah* or *tablīgh*. Some believe in the propagational [*tarwījī*] role of *da‘wah* in the sense that other countries should be called upon to accept Islam in such a way that the conveyer-receiver relationship is a commander-agent one. Others believe in the ‘explicative’ [*tabyīnī*] role of *da‘wah* in the sense that we will present to the world public opinion our thoughts, opinions and views so that they would find out the viewpoints and approaches of the Islamic country. In the latter

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 13, pp. 283-289.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 273-281.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 91-93.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 121.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 176-178.

conception, *da'wah* means explanation and description of the beliefs, convictions and values of the Muslim country in order to introduce the dimensions of the Islamic movement.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning this, Imām Khomeinī believed in the rule of gradualism [*tadarruj*] in the sense that initially explication of the beliefs and then propagation of the same will be undertaken. Of course, propagation of beliefs does not refer to military campaign, war-mongering, projection of force, or export of the revolution by force; rather, it means introducing the spiritual, cultural and political message of the Islamic Revolution to the world. In other words, by introducing the oppression suffered by the Islamic nation of Iran, its spirit of anti-oppression, struggle against colonialism and arrogance, and freedom and freedom-loving, should be conveyed to the world public opinion so that the attractive and peaceful forms—and not the repulsive and hostile ones—would refer to the message of the Islamic Revolution. Thus, it is worthy to examine the objectives of *da'wah*, principles and fundamentals of *tablīgh*, and then the forms of *da'wah* through a substantial analysis of Imām Khomeinī's statements.<sup>2</sup>

### **Objectives of *da'wah***

Imām Khomeinī believed that the first objective of *da'wah* is the realization of divine and Islamic motives, and the enhancement of spiritual-moral virtues. Among these objectives of *da'wah* are the elevation of human values, awareness, prosperity and happiness of humanity.

### **Promotion of the spiritual, divine and ethical values**

While emphasizing the necessity of implementation of Islamic laws in the world as the ultimate objective of *da'wah*, the late Imām exerted utmost effort to familiarize the people of the world with the basis of the Islamic government's sense of justice and its endeavor to implement justice in order to export the spirituality and culture of the revolution, ethics, Islamic etiquettes and practices, training human beings and enhancing the spiritual virtues of humanity, monotheism and knowing God, and finally, leading the people from darkness to light.

---

<sup>1</sup> To know the reasons and bases of this principle, see *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 11, *kitāb al-jihād al-'adū*, section 11, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> For information on the late Imām's viewpoints on the principle of *da'wah*, see *Tahrīr al-Wasīlah*, *kitāb al-jihād*.

“The Prophet of Islam... invited the people to guidance and invited them to monotheism.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Most Noble Messenger (ﷺ) came and invite his nation to monotheism.”<sup>2</sup>

“The prophets came to invite the people from darkness to light.”<sup>3</sup>

“Basically, invitation to Islam is invitation to unity.”<sup>4</sup>

“The Qur’an is the book of invitation [*da‘wah*] and the book of reforming a society which, after being reformed by the Qur’an, would apply the Prophetic tradition and reported narrations from the Most Noble Messenger (ﷺ) through the Imāms of Guidance and Revelation.”<sup>5</sup>

“It is hoped that... you would succeed and triumph in performing the propagation of Islam and spiritual exportation of the Islamic Revolution in the world.”<sup>6</sup>

“We want to export the spirituality of our Islamic Revolution to the world.”<sup>7</sup>

“We hope that... these divine and Islamic motives will manifest in all parts of the world.”<sup>8</sup>

### **Promotion of human values and welfare**

While stating the need for human building, deliverance of humanity from the bonds of oppression and the tyranny of the despotic and arrogant, and inviting all human beings to rise up to cut off the hands of tyrants and plunderers, Imām Khomeinī laid strong emphasis on the necessity of unity, brotherhood, and awakening and vigilance of human beings, and on the mission of the Islamic government in giving warning and condemning complacency.

“All invitations of the prophets despite the difference in their degrees are all meant to make man human, to make human in potentiality [*insān bi'l-quwwah*] as human in actuality [*insān bi'l-fi'l*].”<sup>9</sup>

“The aim of Islam, the aim of all prophets is to train human beings; to make human faces as spiritual and real human being. The important thing in

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 1, pp. 118-125.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 214-220.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 59-64.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 16, pp. 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-15.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 18, p. 143.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, pp. 278-283.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 16, pp. 104-112.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 233-242.

the view of the prophets is that human must be upright. Once human being is trained, all problems are solved.”<sup>1</sup>

“Invitations are anyway just the beginning for the awakening of man, to make him understand himself, to show to him.”<sup>2</sup>

This was the reason why the Imām used to emphasize the observance of all rights of human being and on the defense of the right to freedom and justice of the deprived and oppressed people of the world as a duty of the Islamic government: “We side with the oppressed. We side with whosoever is oppressed in any pole (of the world).”<sup>3</sup>

### **Principles and fundamentals of *da‘wah***

Imām Khomeinī had particular emphasis on the principles and fundamentals of *tablīgh*, for it is through their observance that the invitation would be effective and useful for the addressees. In relation to this, his viewpoints can be examined in three parts: message, conveyer and recipient.

### **Message of *tablīgh***

The Imām believed that the message must be attractive and plain. That is why he emphasized introducing Islam as it is; the Islam that is based on the fusion of religion and politics. On the other hand, the message must be expressive and clear in the sense that the addressee must have the ability of understanding and comprehending it. The use of expressions, meanings and concepts must be in such a way that they are compatible with the mentality of the addressee. The recipient of the message must have the necessary intellectual and mental backgrounds to grasp it. Similarly, the message of invitation must be documented and reasonable, and based on proof, reasoning and logic so that the addressee, by relying on proper reasoning, would accept them. Finally, the message must be peaceful and based on invitation to peace.

“Through proper propagation, Islam must be introduced to the world as it is.”<sup>4</sup>

“Islam is the religion substantiated by proof and based on logic.”<sup>5</sup>

“The prophets... invited the people to peace.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 171-175.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 15, pp. 199-200.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 185-188.

---

**Conveyer of *tablīgh***

Concerning the characteristics of *muballigh* [conveyer], Imām Khomeinī emphasized the internal reformation and the necessity of self-purification on the individual dimension and correct training of the Muslims at the domestic level as the first principle. Regarding this, by getting inspiration from the *ḥadīth* from Imām Ja‘far aṣ-Ṣādiq (‘a):<sup>2</sup> “Invite the people through other than your tongues,”<sup>3</sup> and another from Imām ‘Alī (‘a): “The best utterances are those that are substantiated by actions,” he used to emphasize the *muballigh*’s practical invitation through exemplary action, behavior and manner as the model pattern of conduct. In this regard, he believed that practical support for the oppressed nations and the downtrodden and exploited Muslims guarantees the acceptance of the message of invitation. As such, concerning the identity of addressees, he regarded the Muslim and other oppressed nations as the primary addressees.

On the other hand, he treated the elucidation of beliefs, discussing the Islamic models and propagating the message of religion through peaceful means—and not through hostile and war-mongering ways—as one of the basic principles of *da‘wah*. Thus, what he had in mind was the principle of gradualism and the rule of [according to one’s] capability. In the same vein, he used to stress on respecting the holy sites and beliefs of the opposite side. Finally, he considered consistency and steadfastness in *da‘wah* and tolerating all problems and difficulties along the way as the basic condition for the success of *tablīgh*:

“Yet, we have to start from ourselves. If we do reform ourselves, naturally the goal that we have will also be realized in this world.”<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 17, pp. 17-26.

<sup>2</sup> Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad (‘a) entitled, *aṣ-Ṣādiq* [The Truthful],” is the sixth Imām from the Prophet’s Progeny (83-148 AH). Many of the Sunnī and Shi‘āh *‘ulamā* and scholars attended his teaching classes and seminars. Narrators of tradition have quoted the number of Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq’s students as four thousand. The socio-economic conditions of his time necessitated greatest efforts to be made by His Holiness in the areas of expanding authentic and original Islamic teachings and in the training and education of faithful students. For this reason the books of tradition and other books quote and cite more traditions from Imām Ja‘far aṣ-Ṣādiq than from any other infallible Imāms. See Shaykh Moḥammed al-Ḥusayn al-Muzaffar, *Imām Al-Ṣādiq*, trans. Jāsim al-Rasheed (Qum: Ansariyan Publications, 1998).

The abbreviation, “‘a” stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, *‘alayhis-salām*, *‘alayhimus-salām*, or *‘alayhās-salām* [may peace be upon him/them/her], which is used after the names of the prophets, angels, Imāms from the Prophet’s progeny, and saints (‘a). [Trans.]

<sup>3</sup> That is, *da‘wah* through actions. [Trans.]

<sup>4</sup> *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 18, pp. 30-38.

“If you train the people with a wholesome training and invite them to know God, to be familiar with the knowledge of God, to be acquainted with the Qur’an, all these were done, then your country will remain upright and this condition will spread to other places.”<sup>1</sup>

“Practically invite the multitude of people to Islam. You should be such that you are the model in your deeds, behaviors and manners for the Islamic Republic, and the Islamic Republic will, God willing, also go elsewhere with you.”<sup>2</sup>

“The politics at the early period of Islam was a global politics. The Prophet of Islam... used to invite (the people) to the politics of Islam, and he established a government.”<sup>3</sup>

“We want to propagate Islam everywhere through *da‘wah*, not through bayonet.”<sup>4</sup>

“The gentlemen know that the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ)... experienced immense sufferings, ordeals and afflictions so as to convey Islam to the people.”<sup>5</sup>

“The Most Noble Messenger (ﷺ) faced all problems in twenty odd years. In a bid to spread the laws of religion he shouldered all difficulties, the economic difficulties that confined them to a cave (i.e., the isolated compound of Abū Tālib).”<sup>6</sup>

### **Recipient of *tablīgh***

Imām Khomeinī regarded as his foremost addressees the Muslims who must cling to unity, solidarity, emphasis on the Book (the Qur’an) and the Sunnah to attain their spiritual goals. At the second level, he used to address the intellectuals of the world who, by relying on reasoning, individuality and rational belief, could attain intellectual consensus on acceptable principles. At the third level, he used to treat the downtrodden of the world as his addressees due to the common political issues, sympathy and unanimity against the interventionist and plundering superpowers:

“Time and again, I have been inviting the Muslim governments to fraternal unity against the foreigners and their agents.”<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 207-212.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 16, pp. 61-62.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 17, pp. 137-143.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 18, pp. 126-132.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 118-125.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 17, pp. 237-240.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 139.

---

“I hope that our Islamic Republic could have an effective role in the solidarity and unanimity of the Muslims.”<sup>1</sup>

“We want to offer to the world a model of Islam—though still having a defect—so that the intellectuals of the world... would know what Islam has brought and want to do in the world.”<sup>2</sup>

“Today, we could see more than ever the prospect of the Islamic revolution exportation in the world of the downtrodden and oppressed.”<sup>3</sup>

“O downtrodden of the world! Rise up and free yourselves from the clutches of the enemies of humanity. More than this, do not yield to oppression since God is with the oppressed.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Forms of *da‘wah***

Imām Khomeinī emphasized on the adoption of all legitimate forms of *da‘wah* including *da‘wah* on the governmental level by applying parliamentary diplomacy; *da‘wah* among nations by making use of great gatherings such as *hajj*; open and secret invitation; individual and collective invitation; invitation to relatives and strangers; verbal and written invitation; and invitation through the channel of official organs and unofficial institutions. By stressing on the notion of unity in diversity, he regarded as permissible and ideal to adopt divergent approaches in achieving the single value and goal:

“The Most Noble Messenger (*s*) when he was first appointed; was appointed alone—just himself. “*Arise and call upon the people.*”<sup>5</sup> The call initially started from the Prophet himself. The day that he announced his prophetic mission, a woman and a child accepted his faith... He did not despair of not being able to call upon the people openly. He was not one to despair. The invitation was covert. He attracted the people toward himself one by one until himself journeyed to Medina, and was given the mission to call on the people to rise up. “*Say, I advise you one thing and that is rise in the way of God.*”<sup>6</sup> Here, it is a call to uprising. The call to the gathering is to arise together; and more importantly is to rise in the way of God... Rise up for the sake of God singly and collectively.”<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 18, pp. 126-132.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 22, pp. 267.

<sup>5</sup> *Sūrah al-Mudaththir* 74:2.

<sup>6</sup> *Sūrah as-Saba’* 34:46.

<sup>7</sup> *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 6, pp. 141-142; *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 7, pp. 244-245.

“Now, it is necessary for the ‘*ulamā*’ of Islam, writers, scholars, artists, philosophers, researchers, gnostics, and intellectuals—of whatever region, school of thought and creed who suffer from these problems and feel sorry for the condition of Islam and the Muslims—to strengthen their resolve in order to prevent this serious threat to Islam and the Muslims and to give warning to the Muslims and urge them not to be complacent.”<sup>1</sup>

“Of the important affairs is to have a periodical in every embassy... A periodical, an ethical-Islamic periodical in which the events that have happened in Iran would be published. In every embassy that you have... you have to allocate those expenditures to propagation.”<sup>2</sup>

“It is necessary to establish Islamic bases for the propagation of Islam and the spread of the inspiring truths in every region of the world wherever possible. They should engage in their activities under a coordinating organization for the promotion of justice and cutting off the hands of the oppressors and plunderers.”<sup>3</sup>

“Establish propagation groups. Invite the people toward religion. Tell the people the affairs of the day. Tell the people the mischief of the day.”<sup>4</sup>

“As what has been recorded in history, he (the Prophet of Islam) wrote four letters to four emperors: one each for Iran, Byzantium, Egypt, and Abyssinia. The letters that have been written for the four emperors have a single content, i.e. their invitation to Islam, and this has just been the beginning.”<sup>5</sup>

#### **The principle of *tawallā* and *tabarrā***

Technically, *tawallā* and *tabarrā* means befriending the friends of God and turning against God’s enemies. In the Islamic diplomatic vocabulary, however, it means prioritizing the establishment of friendly and brotherly relations with Muslim countries as well as aversion and avoidance of forging relations with hostile non-Muslim countries. In their broad sense, *tawallā* means friendship with fraternal and friendly countries including the Muslims and non-belligerent and non-hostile non-Muslims while *tabarrā* means the

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 41-49.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 13, pp. 260-264.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 17-21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 86-100.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118-125.

entire Muslims and the Islamic government's position of denunciation against the atheistic and polytheistic systems."<sup>1</sup>

By seeking inspiration from verse 9 of *Sūrah al-Mumtaḥanah*: "Allah forbiddeth you only those who warred against you on account of religion and have driven you out from your homes and helped to drive you out, that ye make friends of them," one can judge for the permissibility of forging equitable and friendly relations with a non-Muslim who would not violate the Muslims' sanctity and not in pursuit of expansionism and violation of bounds. Of course, the level and criterion of the Muslims' relations with the non-Muslims should not be as that of the Muslim country's relations with other majority Muslim countries in such a way that relations with non-Muslims should not overshadow relations with Muslims.

While taking this principle as fundamental in Islamic diplomacy, Imām Khomeinī said: "*Tawallā* and *tabarrā* are two basic principles of Islam. With the temporary just government you must sympathize with the just ruler and denounce a non-Muslim regime."<sup>2</sup>

Now, by seeking inspiration from the aforementioned verse from *Sūrah al-Mumtaḥanah* and basing on some *ḥadīths* such as one reported from Imām 'Alī ('a): "Be harsh to the oppressors and meek to the oppressed," the edifice of Muslim country's diplomatic relations with other countries can be laid down by applying the rule of *tawallā* and *tabarrā*. In view of this, relations with non-hostile Muslim countries take first priority. Relations with neutral Muslim countries, which at the time of conflict between Muslim country and other countries will not take side, occupy second priority. Relations with non-hostile non-Muslim countries, which at the time of conflict between Muslim country and other countries will take side with the Islamic government, take third priority. Relations with neutral non-Muslim states, which will assume neutrality and impartiality at the time of conflict between Muslim country and other countries, occupy fourth priority. On the other hand, other Muslim countries with open hostility with the Islamic government and have proved their hostility to the Islamic government through upheaval and aggression, will be included among the opponents of the Islamic government. Hostile, belligerent and arrogant non-Muslim countries, which are bent on creating tension and committing aggression

---

<sup>1</sup> For further information, see Abū'l-Faḍl Shakūrī, "*Fiqh-e Siyāsī-ye Islām* [Political Jurisprudence of Islam]," in *Uṣūl-e Siyāsat-e Khārijī* [Foreign Policy Principles], vol. 2, pp. 516-540.

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 2, pp. 17-21.

against the Islamic government, are counted among the archenemies of the Islamic government. Disgust and aversion with both groups is incumbent.

Keeping this categorization in view, Imām Khomeinī used to emphasize the establishment of relations with Muslim countries and then with the Third World and downtrodden countries. Corollary to this, he used to give attention to confrontation and resistance with cruel and oppressive governments as well as with arrogant powers. With regard to neutral Muslim and non-Muslim countries, he had a favorable view or used not to take any action against them.<sup>1</sup> Now, it is worthy to analyze his ideological viewpoint and categorization concerning the relationship with the four groups of states.

### **Fraternal relations with the Muslim countries**

In the opinion of Imām Khomeinī, considering its ideological nature the Islamic government must always keep in mind the unity and solidarity with Muslim countries for the attainment of the sublime goals and aspirations of Islam. However, this unity and solidarity must be for the preservation of Muslim states' interests and prevention of the arrogant states' oppression against them. It is due to the necessity of these intimate and close relations that by adopting the term 'brotherhood' in relations with Muslim countries, Imām Khomeinī lays stress on sincerity in friendly relations with emphasis on ideological cohesion. Of course, with respect to this, he used to pay particular attention to the spiritual aspects of relations among Muslim nations on the basis of religious fundamentals. This important affair illustrates his attention to the relations among nations at least of the same degree with relations among states.

"Endeavor to improve relations with Muslim countries."<sup>2</sup>

"We are ready to defend Islam, Muslim countries and the independence of Muslim countries at any circumstances. Our program is the program of Islam; the Muslims' unity of expression; unity of the Muslim countries; brotherhood with all Muslim schools of thought in all parts of the world; alliance with all Muslim states of the world; and struggle against Zionism, Israel and imperialist states."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Abū'l-Faḍl Shakūrī, *Political Jurisprudence of Islam*, pp. 516-540; Sayyid Khalīl Khalīliyān, *Huqūq-e bayn al-Milal-e Islāmī* [Islamic International Law], p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣahīfah-ye Nūr*, vol. 21, pp. 169-206.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 83-85.

“We do extend our brotherhood to all Muslim nations and seek their assistance for the attainment of the Islamic objectives.”<sup>1</sup>

“The relations among nations must be based upon spiritual issues. In this regard, the dimension of distance has no effect. There are so many countries, which are near to each other but have no spiritual relationship. Therefore, other relations cannot be effective. Our relations with other countries will be based upon fundamentals of Islam.”<sup>2</sup>

“We hope that the Islamic Republic, which has been founded on the bases of unity and good-will with Muslim countries of the world, could have a decisive role in the realization of the sublime goals of Islam and the prosperity of Muslims around the world.”<sup>3</sup>

“Concerning the great power, it has extended its plentiful and powerful hands for friendship and brotherhood in faith to all Muslims, especially the regional and neighboring nations and states. I admonish them (not to respond positively).”<sup>4</sup>

### **Friendly relations with the non-hostile non-Muslim countries**

With respect to friendly relations with non-aggressor non-Muslim countries, Imām Khomeinī used to give precedence to the downtrodden and Third World countries and in the second degree of importance, he used to regard as permissible the forging of relations with non-arrogant powerful countries provided that they would not interfere in the domestic affairs of Iran and observe the principle of mutual respect.

### **Friendly relations with the non-Muslim downtrodden countries**

In organizing relations with Third World countries, Imām Khomeinī used to hold as the foundation of relations the struggle against the oppression, tyranny and domineering posture of the plundering powers with such countries so that the interference of foreigners and the establishment of oppressor-oppressed relationship between them and arrogant states would be prevented. Finally, the said relations could pave the ground for a just government in the downtrodden countries:

“It is the people who, with the conveyance of the message of their Islamic Revolution, decide to familiarize not only the Muslim countries but

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 122-123.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 16, p. 159.

all downtrodden of the world with the dear Islam and the Islamic government of justice.”<sup>1</sup>

“We pray to God, the Exalted, for the success of all downtrodden nations of the world in the achievement of victory and total freedom from the tyrants of the world, especially the world-devouring America.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Friendly relations with the non-hostile non-Muslim powers**

Imām Khomeinī used to regard as permissible the forging of friendly relations with non-Muslim non-arrogant powers on the basis of the rule of caution or optional dissimulation for the prevention of every possibility and the others’ use of them at the gradual detriment of the Islamic *ummah*—provided that they would respect the religious beliefs and sense of freedom of the Muslim nation of Iran; refrain from interference on the domestic affairs of the Muslim country; and honor the Islamic state’s independence and the right of decision-making. As a whole, humane relations should govern the relations between the two countries:

“We want to have friendly relations with all countries provided that they would not interfere in our domestic affairs.”<sup>3</sup>

“While preserving independence, we will have friendly relations with all countries.”<sup>4</sup>

“If it is humane relations, there is no problem with humane relations with anyplace (any country).”<sup>5</sup>

“Our relations are based on mutual respect.”<sup>6</sup>

“The Islamic state wants to have understanding and wholesome relations with all nations and all states provided that they would reciprocally respect the Islamic government.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Friendly relations with the non-Muslim belligerent countries**

Imām Khomeinī had two fundamental criteria for hostility and belligerence with hostile non-Muslim countries. First, countries, which apart from interference and plundering, are trying to uproot the religion or the Islamic country; in this category, he was referring to the arrogant powers.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 41-49.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 241-242.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 159-167.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 234.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 114.

The other criterion is the countries, which through expansionism, violation of the security bounds of the Muslims and adoption of the policy of racial discrimination and tribal dominance, are trying to weaken the Muslim nations. Under this category are Zionism and Israel. Thus, it is worthy to examine these two categories of countries by analyzing his statements.

### **Hostile relations with the arrogant powers**

Imām Khomeinī used to regard severance of relationship with arrogant states as a means of negating abjectness and preventing their interferences, dominance and plundering. In this manner, the Muslim country would succeed in cutting off the hands of oppression. The Imām used to reject unequal relations between the Muslim nations and imperialist powers, regarding as favorable the severance of such relations as it would lead to the severance of dependencies and interferences. As such, in his statements the Imām used to express aversion and repugnance to such powers as they have hatched the plot of dominating the Muslim countries and defeating the religious movement of Iran:

“All non-monotheist governments want order and justice for dominance.”<sup>1</sup>

“Peace and prosperity of the world depend on the annihilation of the arrogant.”<sup>2</sup>

“The American dominance leads to all adversities of the downtrodden nations.”<sup>3</sup>

“Our nation’s uncompromising struggles with the arrogant will continue unless all dependencies with the superpowers of the East and West were cut off.”<sup>4</sup>

“Our relations with America and the Soviet Union are like the lamb-wolf relationship.”<sup>5</sup>

“All of them are looking for ways to defeat this Islamic movement... for opportunity to shorten the hands of great powers in the world.”<sup>6</sup>

“We do not compromise with any of the superpowers and powers. We are neither under the domination of America nor of Soviet Union. We are Muslims and we want to live.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 4-13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, pp. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 265-266.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 55-59.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 16, pp. 8-15.

“The great powers want to subject the Muslims under their domination. They want to usurp their (Muslims) resources and plunder their wealth.”<sup>2</sup>

“America which is our enemy, if we would need it, it is a humiliation for us.”<sup>3</sup>

“Is our relationship like the relationship of an oppressed with an oppressor, or of a bully with a downtrodden? No, we have no longer such a relationship.”<sup>4</sup>

“We pray to God to cut the relationship. We will not accept abjectness for having relationship with the superpower. It is not honorable to have relationship with the like of America.”<sup>5</sup>

“We take this rupture of relationship as a good omen. For, this rupture of relationship makes America to lose of hope in Iran... The rupture of relationship means putting an end to plunders.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Hostile relations with the Zionist regime**

While highlighting the Islamic nature of the Palestinian Question, Imām Khomeinī emphasized the severance of relationship with the Zionist regime and declared a state of war between the Muslims and this regime. He viewed as unlawful any sort of political, trade and military relationship with this entity as he regarded this regime as illegitimate, usurper and enemy of all Muslims:

“We will reject Israel and we will not have any relationship with it. It is a usurper state and inimical to us.”<sup>7</sup>

“We will cut our relationship with Israel as it is usurper.”<sup>8</sup>

“Assistance to Israel, be it in the form of selling arms, explosives or oil, is unlawful and contrary to Islam. Relationship with Israel and its agents, be it trade or political relationship, is unlawful and contrary to Islam. The Muslims must refrain from consuming Israeli products.”<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 15, p. 209-210.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 13, pp. 225-227.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 221-222.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 159-167.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 26-38.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, pp. 40-41.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 273-277.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 22, pp. 159-162.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 139.

---

### **Hostile relations with the debauchee and treacherous Muslim countries**

Imām Khomeinī emphasized the Islamic government's severance of relationship with two types of Muslim countries. One refers to countries, which by attacking the Islamic country have committed aggression and revolted against the Islamic government. Within this type, Iraq under the leadership of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn can be cited. The other refers to countries, which have betrayed the ideal of the Muslims by concluding a friendship treaty with the Quds-occupier regime. Within this type, Egypt under Anwar Ṣādāt can be cited as it betrayed the Islamic world by concluding the Camp David Accord.<sup>1</sup>

### **Hostile relations with the rebellious countries**

Imām Khomeinī used to treat as corrupt and *fitnah*<sup>2</sup>-monger the countries, which through rebellion, dissenting from the Islamic ruler and violation of the security bounds of the Islamic country, are trying to weaken it. One should be firm, persistent and undertake sacred defense in confronting them so as to put an end to all seditions and corruptions:

“The Qur’an enjoins: ‘Fight them on until there is no more *fitnah*.’ It calls on the entire humanity to fight in order to eradicate *fitnah*; that is, war, war, in order to eradicate *fitnah* in the world.”<sup>3</sup>

“Those who want to draw us to corruption; we do not want to have relationship with them at all unless they reform.”<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Camp David Accord: the name given to accords signed in September 1978 by the president of Egypt at the time, Anwar Ṣādāt, and the prime minister of the usurper Israeli regime, Menachem Begin, with the mediation of James Carter, the then US president, at Camp David, a US presidential retreat in the Appalachian Mountains in Maryland. These accords constituted the greatest act of betrayal to be carried out in the wake of the bloody and heavy battles between the Arabs and Israel and the first step toward compromise. So greatly offended were the sensibilities of the Arab nations by the move that Egypt was expelled from the Arab League. In the early days of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, a revolution which had given self-confidence, fighting spirit and a new assertiveness to the Islamic nations, while at the same time weakening the position of Israel and its supporters, this great act of betrayal led to Ṣādāt's assassination (October 1981) at the hands of a number of soldiers who were supporters of the Islamic Revolution. A few years later, however, the compromising Arab governments, on conciliatory grounds, once more welcomed Egypt back to the fold. [Trans.]

<sup>2</sup> *Fitnah*: sedition, chaos, tumult, etc. [Trans.]

<sup>3</sup> *Ṣahīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 19, pp. 82-86.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 241-242.

### **Hostile relations with the treacherous countries**

Imām Khomeinī emphasized the severance of relationship with countries that have betrayed the aim of Palestine. Concerning this, he used to denounce the government of Egypt which was the pioneer to compromise with the Quds-occupier regime and brought about schisms among the Muslims and discord among the Muslim countries.

“Dear Dr. Ibrāhīm Yazdī! Taking into account the treacherous treaty between Egypt and Israel and the government of Egypt’s unconditional submission to America and the Zionists, the provisional government of the Islamic Republic of Iran would cut its diplomatic relations with the government of Egypt.”<sup>1</sup>

“I directed the government to cut its relationship with the government of Egypt.”<sup>2</sup>

### **The principle of *ta’līf al-qulūb***

Literally, *ta’līf al-qulūb* means spiritual intimacy among hearts. Technically, it refers to financial and spiritual support for the Muslims under oppression or with weak faith, as well as for the oppressed non-Muslims who, through encouragement of them, will incline toward the Islamic government, or will decline coalition with the enemies of the Islamic country. Thus, *ta’līf al-qulūb* in the former meaning can be conceived as financial and spiritual support for the Islamists to enhance their ability to be firm and steadfast against the usurpers and interferers, and to resonate the sound of *Lā ilāha illallāh wa Muḥammadur-rasūlullāh* [There is no god but Allah and Muḥammad is His messenger] in the entire world. In the second meaning, it refers to the support for liberation, freedom and downtrodden movements, which have stood up against all forms of aggression and colonialism for deliverance from wretchedness and abjectness, as well as freedom of their country from the yoke of imperialism. For this, Imām Khomeinī emphasized all forms of support including explicit and implicit ones. He also used to consider such supports as conforming to the religious and Islamic, rational and humane standards.<sup>3</sup>

Now, it is worthy to delve deeper on the prime meaning of the principle of *ta’līf al-qulūb*, i.e. support for the Muslims and the downtrodden.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

<sup>3</sup> For further information, see Abū’l-Faḍl Shakūrī, *Political Jurisprudence of Islam*, pp. 484-514.

### **Support for the Muslims**

Imām Khomeinī emphasized supporting Muslims under difficulty for the realization of his ideal based on the unity of the Islamic world. Based on the noble *ḥadīth*, “Whoever sleeps at night without thinking about the affairs of Muslims is not a Muslim,” he considered helping Muslims—the Muslims of Lebanon and Palestine in particular—as mission of the Islamic government; thus, proving his sense of unity, sympathy and mutual assistance with respect to the Muslim nations and his unsparing support of any sort—be it material or moral—to them.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran wants to assist the Muslim nations and countries on the basis of preserving unity and protection of their interests.”<sup>1</sup>

“Unless the sound of *Lā ilāha illallāh wa Muḥammadur-rasūlullāh* resonates in the entire world, the struggle will continue. As long as the struggle in every part of the world against the arrogant and oppressors exists, so we are. We defend the defenseless people of Lebanon and Palestine against Israel.”<sup>2</sup>

“The duty of every individual Muslim in the remotest part of the world is the same as that of the Palestinians: ‘The Muslims are like a single hand which stands up against others and all have a single responsibility’.”<sup>3</sup>

“In the light of human and fraternal duty and based on rational and Islamic standards, the Islamic nation is duty-bound not to spare any kind of self-sacrifice in the way of uprooting this imperialist hireling (Israel), and to render material and moral supports, and to send blood, medicine, arms, and foodstuffs to their brothers who are in the war front.”<sup>4</sup>

“The Iranian nation has always been supporting the struggle of the freedom-fighters, especially the Palestinian brothers against the aggressor Israel.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Support for the oppressed and liberation movements**

Aiming at promoting the idea of freedom and human dignity, it had been the ideal of Imām Khomeinī to render material and moral support to liberation movements and downtrodden fronts in different regions of the world. For the deliverance of the nations under tyranny and oppression, he considered it a duty of the Islamic system to realize a revolutionary

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 20, pp. 109-133.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 265-266.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 136-138.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 209-210.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 69-72.

mobilization of the supporters of non-alignment with the two blocs of the East and West throughout the world. Nuclei of the struggle in the entire world should emerge to subject the arrogant powers to humiliation.

“We have to support the downtrodden of the world... for Islam... is the champion of all downtrodden of the world.”<sup>1</sup>

“Mobilization is not only confined to the Islamic Iran. Nuclei of the struggle must emerge in the entire world and stand up against the East and West.”<sup>2</sup>

“O you liberation movements and fighting for freedom and independence! Stand up and inform your nations and the Islamic nation that to be under tyranny is worse and more shameful than tyranny.”<sup>3</sup>

“In the Islamic Republic there is no oppression... They must support the downtrodden; the downtrodden must be encouraged.”<sup>4</sup>

“In following the great Islam, we support all... We support every organization that is established for the deliverance of its country.”<sup>5</sup>

### **The principle of observance of the international treaties and customs**

Based on the Qur'anic verses, “*observe the contract*” and “*observe the agreement*”, and the juristic ruling, “The Muslims are identified with their commitments”, persistence in contracts and commitment to agreements are deemed obligatory and mandatory. Apart from treaties, observance of international customs is also considered part of the binding principles of Islamic diplomacy. In this connection, the necessity of observing the diplomatic immunity of ambassadors and envoys, not offending political representatives, and not insulting the sanctities of other nations can be mentioned. Thus, it is worthy to examine the late Imām's viewpoint on these two juristic rulings on treaties and customs.<sup>6</sup>

### **Abidance with international treaties**

In general, international treaties are classified into two: One is the bilateral or private treaties. Mere signing of the treaty by the two signatory

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, pp. 19-24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 21, pp. 52-53.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 22, p. 267.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 235-239.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 227-228.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on this treaty in Islam, see ‘Abbās-‘Alī ‘Amīd Zanjānī, *Fiqh-e Siyāsī-ye Islām* [Political Jurisprudence of Islam], vol. 3, pp. 487-522; Muḥammad Riḍā Ḍiyā’ī Bīgdelī, *Islām va Huqūq-e bayn al-Milālī* [Islam and International Law], pp. 39-42.

countries makes it binding and ought to be observed. The other is the multilateral or public treaties, which will be signed at the international institutional level and are binding for all countries. It is worthy to delve and examine closer the late Imām's viewpoint on this matter.

### **Compliance with bilateral international treaties**

Concerning private treaties, the Imām distinguished between treaties that were concluded as a result of constraint [*iḍṭirār*] on the will and option of the Muslim nation of Iran and the agreements signed in a state of unwillingness [*ikrāh*] and compulsion as a result of domination and command of a certain power over the Muslim nation of Iran.<sup>1</sup>

As such, the Imām acknowledged the agreement between Iran and the United States regarding the claims relevant to the American hostages and other litigations filed at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which were concluded as a result of constraint. By saying, “‘*Ayn tadhhabūn* [Where are you heading for]?” he used to reproof those who opposed these agreements. However, concerning the agreements between Iran and America forged from the time of the Pahlavī regime, firstly, they were not binding due to the existence of the elements of unwillingness and compulsion. Secondly, on the basis of the principle of *rebus sic stantibus* or the fundamental change of circumstances, after the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution these series of agreements used to guarantee the structural dependency of the Muslim nation of Iran to the United States. Invoking the principle of absence of contract in contradiction, he viewed them contrary to the principle of independence and thus declared the same as null and void. Imām Khomeinī used to honor treaties Iran had signed with any other country in which the principle of others' respect to the independence of the Islamic country and non-interference of foreigners on the domestic affairs of the Muslim country have been observed. He used to emphasize on the observance of the principles of equity [*naṣifah*], expedience/interest [*maṣlahah*], no harm [*lā ḍarar*], equality [*musāwāt*], justice [*'idālah*], and non-fraud in international agreements. He believed in the right of reservation at the time of concluding international agreements.

---

<sup>1</sup> What is meant by *iḍṭirār* [constraint, necessity, lack of alternative, helplessness, need] is that due to governmental expediency, the Islamic government was forced to accept a particular treaty under the state of *force majeure*. *Ikrāh* [unwillingness, reluctance, disinclination], on the other hand, means that due to the dictate of another country and having all the means of political and military dominance at its disposal, a country is compelled to accept a certain treaty.

“What we intend to do in the economic field is prevention of the looting of the resources of this nation, not severance of economic relations with other countries of the world. Exactly, within the framework of a just deal, our oil and gas will be supplied to the customers. More significantly, the foreign revenues should be earmarked for economic development and for this purpose we will definitely have full relations with the industrialized world. But we will preserve the right to decide about the direction of our economy.”<sup>1</sup>

“The agreements that are against the interest of our nation will not have any value. But if there is any agreement in which fairness has been taken into account and is useful for our nation, we will correct such agreements... What we know is that they have signed some agreements and taken our oil in lieu of which they have supplied us with weapons that are not useful for us at all. These agreements are detrimental to the interests of our country. A useful agreement is one that is signed to supply a useful item to Iran—useful items for our agriculture and industry. But the items that are not at all useful for Iran, are not useful agreements.”<sup>2</sup>

#### **Abidance with multilateral international treaties**

Imām Khomeinī accentuated on the need to observe the international rules and regulations ratified by international organizations and institutions provided that they contribute to peace and justice in the world. From the perspective of peace-lovingness and peacefulness of the Islamic government and the rule of obligation [*ilzām*],<sup>3</sup> which obliges and requires other countries to implement and commit to the international treaties, he believed it necessary to observe such rules. Of course, he believed that the legitimacy and validity of such treaties lie on the observance of justice and non-discrimination, abidance with their provisions by the other countries, absence of breach of contract by them, and conformity of these treaties with other international treaties, rules and customs. Thus, countries that pursue espionage, sabotage, treachery, disruption of public order, hatching plot to overthrow or oust the Islamic government, or using supposedly instruments

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣahīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 4, pp. 6-8; *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 5, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣahīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 3, pp. 273-277; *Ṣahīfeh-ye Imām*, vol. 5, pp. 149-150.

<sup>3</sup> *Ilzamū an-nāsa bimā ilzamū ‘alayhi anfusahum*: “Oblige to others that which you oblige to yourselves”.

of international organizations, cannot reproach the deal with the Islamic government, for instance, by unilaterally invoking international rules.<sup>1</sup>

“I have to stress again that we are serious in our policy to achieve peace within the framework of the Security Council resolution. We will never make a move to weaken it.”<sup>2</sup>

“This is our right in the world. The whole world knows that it is in all international rules that the criminal must return to the place where he has committed the crime and there he would be tried. From him (Carter) we demand that this criminal be tried here.”<sup>3</sup>

“Do the international agreements demand that the spy in one country be named as ambassador or with the name of chargé-d’affaires, or not? If they were really ambassadors, they are supposed to be individuals who would not betray a country, not do espionage, and not be government ‘agents’. They are the ones who are not right to be taken as hostages. Yet, what has been done by our nation is taking hostage of a host of spies. In accordance with the rules these spies must be investigated, must be tried, and according to our rules these must be done. However, what Carter has done is contrary to the international rules because the criminal in a certain country must come to that country and be tried there. Other country has no right to keep and give refuge to the criminal; it is against the international rules. It is this Carter who has acted contrary to the international rules, and not we.”<sup>4</sup>

“These days indicate that the Security Council (meeting) would be convened to investigate the case of hostages whose espionage in our nation is proven. After a military and political maneuver, Mr. Carter has been satisfied that the Security Council would be convened for the investigation of this case only—not knowing of the fact that our nation knows that any council or court under the direct influence of America that would be convened, their view has been dictated from the beginning and it welcomes the conviction of our oppressed nation. Our nation does not agree with the dictated Security Council whose duty has been obvious from the very beginning. Investigation of the cases of the deposed Shāh and the spies at the center of espionage is impossible except in Iran because the pieces of evidence and proof of the crime are in Iran and not transferable to other than Iran.”<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> These points have been deduced from the statements of Imām Khomeinī.

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣahīfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 21, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 214.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 22, pp. 259-261.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 240.

“The propaganda against us... is against the international treaties.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Observance of international customs**

‘International customs’ refer to the recurring practices of countries that are members of the international community, which over a long period of time have been observed as obligatory. Of course, in Islam custom should be related to the universally recognized, accepted and acknowledged affairs, as well as based on the bases of the savants for it to acquire international validity. For example, the immunity of political envoys discharging a diplomatic function and the affairs of signing of the Most Noble Messenger (ﷺ) can be regarded as acceptable customs. Of course, in custom the principle of mutual dealing or mutual respectful conduct in the political and trade affairs are viewed as prerequisite and necessary. Such a principle on the ancient trade caravans, exception of political envoys in paying taxes and customs duties, life and property immunity of the political envoys, and inviolability of embassies have been customary and widely practiced, on the condition that the diplomatic agents would not engage in espionage or disruption of public order and the embassy should not be converted into a place for designing the overthrow and ousting of the Islamic government.<sup>2</sup>

Through this introduction, it is worthy for us to delve deeper on Imām Khomeinī's viewpoint on international customs in two dimensions: bilateral and multilateral.

### **International customs in bilateral relations**

Imām Khomeinī considered the validity of customs as depending on just and mutual conduct, non-interference on the domestic affairs of each other, observance of the rights of each other, respect to etiquettes, rites and traditions of others. He deemed as ideal the bilateral relations which are based on prevalent international customs and in conformity with religious principles and wisdom.

“It is practiced through mutual respect with respect to foreign countries. We neither oppress somebody nor allow ourselves be oppressed.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on custom and its status in Islam, see Muḥammad Ridā Diyā'ī Bīgdalī, *Islām va Huqūq-e bayn al-Milalī* [Islam and International Law], pp. 38-39; ‘Abbās-‘Alī ‘Amīd Zanjānī, *Fiqh-e Siyāsī-ye Islām* [Political Jurisprudence of Islam], vol. 3, pp. 114-116.

<sup>3</sup> *Shāḥfeh-ye Nūr*, vol. 2, pp. 255-256.

---

“If all countries maintain their respect to us, we will also maintain our corresponding respect. If the countries and states want to impose (their will) to us, we will not accept it. We neither oppress others nor allow others to oppress us.”<sup>1</sup>

“We have to see what role America will play in the future. If America wants to behave with us as it deals with the Iranian nation now, our stance with it is hostile. If America would pay respect to the Iranian state, we will also reciprocally pay our respect. [We will deal with it] justly such that we will not oppress it and it will not oppress us.”<sup>2</sup>

“These are management of the Islamic state; preservation of independence; freedom of the nation, state and country; and mutual respect after total independence. There is no difference between the superpowers and the rest.”<sup>3</sup>

“Severance of relationship with states is contrary to reason and religion and we should relations with all. Yet, that we should have no relations with any state is acceptable to none of reasons or human beings for it means defeat, annihilation and to be buried up to the end.”<sup>4</sup>

“We behave with respect with all nations provided that they do not interfere in our domestic affairs and consider us deserving of the reciprocal respect.”<sup>5</sup>

### **International customs in multilateral relations**

Imām Khomeinī used to regard the validity of international customs at the multilateral level—especially in the UN and other legal entities such as the Amnesty International and human rights associations—as depend on peace-lovingness, pacifism, justice-seeking, egalitarianism, philanthropy, humanitarianism, elimination of discriminatory attitude, and non-taking of stance in favor of the arrogant countries. He used to treat as acceptable a custom that does not contradict another international custom and is accepted by all countries.

This important point can be deduced by applying the logic of Imām Khomeinī’s sayings while taking into account the logical rule of *ta’rafu ’l-ashyā’ bi’adādūhā* [‘Know the thing through its opposite’] concerning the undesirability of international organizations, which are supposed to observe

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88-90.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 72-74.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 38.

multilateral customs. On this account, we will try to examine the types of valid multilateral customs from the Imām's viewpoint through the following statements:

“All these organizations and groups have come into existence to side with the powerful and these groups (human rights groups) have emerged through the powerful ones to dominate the weak and suck the blood of the world's deprived.”<sup>1</sup>

“(Do you think) those who established these human rights groups and similar organizations observe themselves these international rules? Those who are clamoring for human rights—as the time comes when the Ba'ath Party of Ṣaddām has butchered such a number of human beings here and has rendered homeless, infirm and disable so much people here—apart from just ignoring them, they even justify (these crimes).”<sup>2</sup>

By rejecting the ‘guardian’ groups of international customs who do not observe this principle as not binding, Imām Khomeinī used to point to the need for abidance of all countries with the accepted cases of international customs such as non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. He says:

“Those who claim to be supporters of human rights are not ready to listen to the words of these oppressed under the tyranny of the oppressors with the help of the cruel and despotic America from whose hand all our adversities emanate. They are not ready to probe what have transpired. On the contrary, they publish notice; they release declaration for us; and they condemn (us).”<sup>3</sup>

“The Amnesty International which I should label as Fabrication International, Falsehood International, in one of its released manifestos, has made the same accusations, which they used to do at the early period of Islam with Islam, the Messenger of God, his progeny, and companions. They have made accusations to our country more than to him. The same lies that the followers of Yazīd<sup>4</sup> spread, today this (so-called) Amnesty International publishes such lies.”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, pp. 60-61.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 17, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>4</sup> Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah: (26-62 AH) succeeded his father to occupy the office of the Caliphate in the year 60 AH. He was a young man devoid of knowledge and virtues and was well known for his debauchery and other vices. Yazīd ruled for three and a half years. During his first year he killed Imām Ḥusayn ('a) and his votaries at Karbalā and made the latter's surviving kith

“The center of conspiracy and espionage named as the American embassy and the persons there who have conspired against the Islamic movement do not deserve international political respect.”<sup>2</sup>

“Information gathering is different from spying. The discovered pieces of evidence demonstrate that they have designed a plan for every region of Iran. They had hatched a plot in shutting down our *madrassahs*. They had also played a role in the armed conflicts in the different parts of the country.”<sup>3</sup>

Thus, it can be inferred that based on the views of Imām Khomeinī, invoking customs and rules of international organizations from the juristic rule of obligation [*ilzāmī*] requires and obliges the other party to abide with international rules and customs. The Imām used to acknowledge as valid the multilateral customs that all countries unanimously and fairly practice and observe, have no contradiction with other rules and principles of international customs, and not inconsistent with the definite Islamic principles. This was the reason why he believed in the right of reservation for the Islamic state in observing international customs.

### **Conclusion**

From the foregoing, it can be inferred that in the view of Imām Khomeinī, the five principles and rules of *nafyi sabīl*, *da‘wah*, *tawallā wa tabarrā*, *ta’līf al-qulūb*, and international treaties and customs are interrelated and intertwined with one another, though the rule of *nafyi sabīl* has precedence over other principles. The application of the mentioned juristic rules according to him lies on the two rules of ability [*wus‘*] and gradualism [*tadarruj*]. This important point bespeaks of the need to adopt numerous approaches and ways for the attainment of the common value and objective, i.e. the realization of unity and sense of justice in all parts of the world, and will prove the theory of unity in diversity. According to him, Islamic diplomacy is the blending of the value and method that even morality would observe with respect to the means of achieving the goal. In the belief of Imām Khomeinī, the rule of *nafyi sabīl* first prevents the pillages and interferences of foreigners and then guarantees the independence and the right of decision-making of the Islamic state. Concerning the principle of *da‘wah*, first he used to address the nations so that the conveyance of the

---

and kin captives. In his second year as Caliph, he ransacked Medina, (the seat of the Prophet’s rule and his burial site), and in his third year of rule he invaded Mecca. [Trans.]

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 22, pp. 263-264.

message of spirituality, justice-seeking and freedom-loving to the Muslims, downtrodden and governments would be done ideally and correctly. In this respect, he put strong emphasis on practical *da'wah*, in addition to written and oral ones. In his view, the principle of *tawallā* and *tabarrā* is among the main rules on the organization of relations and contacts of the Islamic state with other countries based on ideological demarcations and type of conduct of the other party. In this regard, he used to emphasize the broad conception of the term. At the next level, he viewed *ta'līf al-qulūb* exactly as the support for the Muslims and the downtrodden. Finally, taking into account the rule of obligation and in case of the realization of the reservation clause, the rule of no harm [*lā ḍarar*] and conformity of the objective-operation milieu with the perceptual-psychological milieu of the nation-states, he believed in compliance with the international treaties and customs as necessary for the establishment of peace and justice in the international scene. It is through these juristic rules the Islamic state's approach with other states as well as in relationship with international relations can be determined, and the bilateral and multilateral relations of the Islamic government within the specific framework be formed. From the entire statements of the late Imām it can be deduced that Islamic diplomacy is not confined to the relations with states. Rather, it also includes relations with nations and movements. As such, he viewed Islamic diplomacy as based upon the precedence of relations with Muslim countries, then freedom fighters and finally, non-arrogant powers. He believed in the legitimate and popular foundation of governments as the criterion for the establishment of diplomatic relations.

In conclusion, Islamic diplomacy, in the view of Imām Khomeinī, is considered a form of propagating the vitalizing teachings of Islam and the spread of the message of spirituality, freedom and independence in the entire world. Thus, it must be a means of attaining the goal. Through the influence of the sacred goal, the legitimate means utilized by the officials of diplomatic relations must be determined.