

# A Note on Iran's Sacred Defense by Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Esmaili,

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance

Sacred Defense and Re-Creation of Lofty Human Values



Even though speaking of Sacred Defense and martyrdom, the realm of men of courage and bravery, is a great challenge, it involves insight. The Sacred Defense proved the valuable capacities of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which have left their image in the mind and soul of several generations of the people of Iran. As stated by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, “the outcomes of the eight years of Sacred Defense were not just confined to a particular period of time; they are enormous treasures that

our nation can use and derive lessons from. The gigantic event of these eight years resulted in the emergence of a collection of high capabilities, desirable and lofty cultural values, extraordinary beliefs and knowledge that our nation had inherited in the course of history or had attained the required talent for it and surfaced with the advent of the Islamic Revolution.”

What made the phenomenon of the Sacred Defense admired by many in the world and followed by the perseverance and proved stability on

the part of the Iranian nation, was the culture of seeking martyrdom. Seeking martyrdom means heartfelt belief in God and the Day of Judgement, firm belief in the truthfulness of Islam, faith in the ideals of the Islamic Revolution, belief in the leadership of Vali-e Faqih, resistance and perseverance against the enemy, self-sacrifice to preserve Islamic values and in short, the culture of seeking martyrdom means the culture of Ashura. And this is what makes the spirit of martyrdom victory and salvation. By reviving the culture of Ashura, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom and promoting it in the society, the late Imam Khomeini (ra) became a role model for our youth and it was due to the revival of this very culture, faith, and perseverance that the late Imam had predicted the victory of the Iranian nation vis-à-vis the big powers of the time who had fully armed Saddam's regime.

As regards the role of the commanders and senior officers of the Sacred Defense in ad-

vancing defense strategies and the effects and blessings of the influence of their down-to-earth personality on the combatants, it should be said that undoubtedly, being a role model is a function of certain characteristics. One has to be of strong personality and engage in this holy struggle in order to have an effective and lasting impact on the hearts of people and this was one of the outstanding characteristics of the commanders and combatants of Islamic Iran during the years of the Sacred Defense. What seems to be of great importance is taking appropriate measures for the transfer of these lofty values to future generations.

Although many efforts have been made by artists and members of the media and thinkers, and valuable works of art have been produced in the form of films, paintings, photography, sculpture, novels, and essays, etc. in portraying the values of the Sacred Defense, there are many more areas that been unnoticed and overlooked.

Artists and people of culture must use the capacities of the Sacred Defense in the international and world arenas and convey to everyone the message of peace and justice of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which has been the victim of oppression and injustice by the false claimants of human rights, to the world. Our dear leader had once pointed out that the point to be taken into consideration about narrating the Sacred Defense in the

work of art is that it is a very large field many aspects of which have not really been discovered yet. It is not that people cannot understand and perceive it, as a matter of fact, is not been reflected. It should not be assumed that the themes of sacred defense are repetitive.

Ashura, the Arbaeen March, the struggle against terrorism, and the sacrifices made by the defenders of the holy shrines are some of the examples and topics that can be linked to the issue of Sacred Defense and presented in new formats.

What can be said about the Sacred Defense is that those eight years resulted in the manifestation of the best qualities that a society can be proud of and expect from its own youth. The Sacred Defense was the manifestation of epic, spirituality, religiosity, and idealism and it was the manifestation of self-sacrifice, perseverance, and resistance. Indeed, the Sacred Defense was the manifestation of all the heavenly purities that are bestowed upon man.

It would be a rightful expectation that those working in the field of art, science, and literature enter this vast field with all their might and create works that would bring honor for the name of Iran and Iranians at the world level and fulfill part of our obligations to those who took their lives in their hands and made great sacrifices to defend our beloved homeland and became a source of honor and pride for us.

