



**Khatami, The terrorist Mullah
is challenged by 200 protesters at Harvard**

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**Lily Mazahery
Challenges Khatami**



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"I am Cyrus, King of the world, great king, mighty king, king of Babylon, king of the four quarters.

"Now that I put the crown of kingdom of Iran, Babylon, and the nations of the four directions on the head with the help of (Ahura) Mazda, I announce that I will respect the traditions, customs and religions of the nations of my empire and never let any of my governors and subordinates look down on or insult them until I am alive.

"Until I am the king of Iran, Babylon, and the nations of the four directions, I never let anyone oppress any others, and if it occurs, I will take his or her right back and penalize the oppressor.

Today, I announce that everyone is free to choose a religion. People are free to live in all regions and take up a job provided that they never violate others' rights.

"No one could be penalized for his or her relatives' faults. I prevent slavery and my governors and subordinates are obligated to prohibit exchanging men and women as slaves within their own ruling domains. Such a tradition should be exterminated the world over."

Good afternoon. My name is Lily Mazahery, and the words you just heard were declared by Cyrus the Great, the first messenger of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, during his coronation as the Emperor of Persia (now Iran) in 539 BC. Those words were adopted by the United Nations in 1971 and translated into every official language recognized by the organization. Today, they form the very foundation of what we now know as the basic declaration of human rights.

Unfortunately, the very children of Cyrus the Great – those who live under the Islamic Regime in today's Iran – have been robbed of these rights. The very rights that are the birth-right of each and every human in any civilized society are systematically and routinely denied to Iranians of today by the ruling fundamentalist government that dismantled a once glorious and progressive civilization back in 1979.

Today, under the rule of a religious fundamentalist regime, the children of Cyrus the Great are confined to a prison of 70 million, where intolerance, violence, corruption, and oppression reign supreme. And Mohammad Khatemi, the man who has been invited to speak at this historied institution today, is very much a part of the reign of terror to which the Iranian people have been subjected for the past 27 years.

I can not help but find it terribly ironic that Mr. Khatami is here today to speak about "Ethics of Tolerance in the Age of Violence." That is because during the 8 years that Mr. Khatami occupied the position of presidency in the Islamic Republic of Iran, his toleration was not of ethical standards, human rights, gender equality, or any other basic element of a civilized society. Instead, Mr. Khatami reserved his tolerance for the activities of violent religious zealots, such as Ansar-e Hezbollah and the Basij, who continued to assault and intimidate writers and intellectuals, disrupt gatherings critical of government policies, and carry out violent raids on the offices of magazines and newspapers with which they did not agree.

In fact, during Khatami's rule, Iranians faced some of the most egregious and uncivilized acts of intolerance, violence, and corruption to date. Executions after unfair trials proliferated, protesters of any kind were detained with no explanation or justification, and religious minorities, government critics, and independent thinkers were targeted for persecution. Under Khatami's rule, Iranians faced mass arrests in response to popular unrest over economic problems in different parts of their country.

One of the most violent acts of oppression and intolerance took place in July of 1999, during a peaceful demonstration by a group of students in Tehran University against the closure of a reformist publication. Instead of siding with the students who had voted him into office, Khatami aligned himself with the rest of his fundamentalist Mullahs, and tolerated the violent beatings, imprisonment, torture, and even murder of the students whose only crime had been their support of democracy and free speech.

Among these students were Ahmad Mohammadi, who died a few weeks ago in jail, and Ahmad Batebi, who, to this day, remains in the infamous Evin prison for his participation in that demonstration. But the violence towards students was not the only atrocity that Mr. Khatami tolerated.

A dramatic increase in the execution of minors and women, including those who had been raped or had been accused of committing the crimes of adultery or acts incompatible with chastity was also tolerated by our guest speaker here today. Among the victims of such "tolerance" was Atefeh Rajabi, who was sentenced to death by public hanging for having committed "adultery," even though she was not married, and was only 16 years old.

The judge who presided over Atefeh's sham trial and sentenced her to death by public hanging is reported to have raped Atefeh himself before he personally placed the noose around her tiny neck. The so-called justification for such despicable act of savagery is the Sharia legal system, put in place by the Islamic Regime and championed by Mr. Khatami. Under Sharia law, virgin girls are not allowed to be executed, for their purity might open up the doors of heaven to them. To avoid this, virgin girls, such as Atefeh, who are sentenced to death, are raped before execution to ensure their proper place in hell.

Mr. Khatami was more than tolerant of this type of horror, violence, and inhumane treatment to which young Atefeh and countless others were subjected.

He was similarly tolerant of the uncivilized, unethical, and despicable treatment of Zahra Kazemi, the Canadian photo-journalist who was accused of taking photos of the Evin prison in Tehran. Mr. Khatami demonstrated remarkable tolerance when Ms. Kazemi was imprisoned, violently raped, tortured, and ultimately murdered. And ignoring all forms of civilized practice and ethical standards, Mr. Khatami tolerated the denial of access to Ms. Kazemi's body to not only the Canadian officials who had requested such access, but to Ms. Kazemi's own son, who, to this day, is fighting to bring his mother's killers to justice.

In civilized societies, we are taught to judge people by their actions, not their words. While Mr. Khatami may talk about ethics, tolerance and civilization, it does not take a rocket scientist to recognize that Mr. Khatami's track record is neither ethical nor tolerant under any definition applicable to such concepts in any language.

The stoning sentences of Malak Ghorbany, Nahid Esamilvand, Ashraf Kalhori, Kobra Rahmanpour, and countless other women and girls in Iran speak volumes about Mr. Khatami's so-called ethics. His tolerance for the commission of crimes against humanity with respect to ethnic minorities in Iran, such as mass murders of the Kurds, of repressive measures against journalists, intellectuals, reformists, and Iranian students, including Ahmad Batebi, and of the sadistic treatment, rape, and murder of women and minors prove that his support of and tolerance for a violent militant theocracy supersedes any concern that he could possibly have for human rights, ethics, or civilized behavior.

As children of Cyrus the Great, Iranian people, particularly Malak Ghorbany, Ashraf Kalhori, Hajieh Esamilvand, Delara Darabi, Ahmad Batebi, and countless other victims of Mr. Khatami's so-called "tolerance" and "ethics" will NEVER forget his crimes, nor will they forgive the violations of their most basic rights as human-beings.

And as Americans, who value and respect freedom and individual rights of each and every person, WE neither welcome nor believe Mr. Khatami's empty words about ethics, tolerance, moderation, or civilization. For this man's actions, speak MUCH louder than his sugar-coated and hollow expressions.

WE, as citizens of the world, are ALL children of Cyrus the Great. And WE are here today to remind Mohammad Khatami, a so-called man of cloth and a believer in a God who is merciful and kind, that the victims of his crimes are NOT children of a lesser God.

Ala Khaki Challenges Khatami



Mr. Khatami,

I am not here to protest your presence in America nor your right to speak your mind, no matter what you have to say. But I am here to remind you that in Iran now, as when you were the President, people are still punished for exercising the same right.

You speak of the Dialogue of Civilizations and Democracy among nations. How about dialogue within a civilization and democracy within a nation? Why are you not practicing what you preach?

Your ascendance to the office of Presidency was made possible because the majority of Iranian people, many of whom university students, pinned their hope on you to reform a corrupt and tyrannical state.

Let's not forget that on your watch the same Iranian student movement, which rose with bare hands to topple an armed-to-the-teeth and ruthless regime, and on whose blood the ship of your Islamic Republic sailed to shore, demanded of you not to sit on the fence, and stand up against the continued oppression they in particular, and the society at large were receiving in return for their sacrifices.

Let's not forget that on your watch students were murdered and imprisoned, intellectuals were silenced and newspapers shut down. And you did nothing to reverse permanently this murderous course, even though you had a huge mandate to do so, a mandate that you squandered.

Today, history is giving you a second chance as an emissary of the United Nations to stand up and demand the release of all political prisoners in Iran starting with Ahmad Batebi, the brave student from University of Tehran.

Because if you don't, Mr. Khatami, I must conclude, that you and Mr. Ahmadinejad are the two sides of the same rusted coin, a coin that no Dialogue of Civilizations will shine up, a coin by which the only thing that merchants of deceit and tyranny can buy is more time before their murderous bazaar collapses, and collapse it shall sooner or later, and what will count at the end, the only thing that will count, is the stand you take today.



"We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children. We will only have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us."

Golda Meir