

# UNITED AGAINST DICTATORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

February 11, 2011

## From *Azadi Sq.* in Tehran



## To *Tahrir Sq.* in Cairo

## Dictators Must Go Ben Ali, Mubarak or Khamenei!

The world has been closely following the anti-dictatorship and freedom movements in the Middle East. The people of this region have chosen peaceful civil disobedience to overcome their common suffering under dictatorial regimes. The protests that were brutally and inhumanly crushed by the Iranian regime last year have rekindled in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan.

Iranians all over the world follow and support the brave people of Tunisia and Egypt. Freedom loving citizens of the region and the world share the aspirations of the freedom movements of Egypt and Tunisia, in particular pluralism and anti-authoritarianism. They have realized that despite their ideological differences, the path to

a democratic and just society passes through mutual respect of everybody's rights and the unity in protection of these rights is the key to a democratic society. When authoritarian regimes collapse, establishing a political system that does not favor any ideology or sect is essential for democracy. What followed Iran's 1979 Revolution contains crucial lessons for progressive movements in Arab nations about the dangers and pitfalls of achieving democracy. Similarly, the persistence of Egypt's opposition leadership on the removal of their totalitarian regime while adhering to the principles of pluralism is an invaluable lesson for Iranian activists.

The fate of dictators, including the rulers of the Islamic

Republic of Iran, is clear. Last year, Iranians wanted to reclaim their basic right to vote and assemble. Their peaceful protests were brutally suppressed by military forces and state militia. Imprisonment and execution of political and social activists, news censorship, and media blackouts have not eliminated Iranians' quest for human rights. Neither have they improved the corrupt image of the Iranian regime. High unemployment and extreme economic hardship will only add to people's frustration. On the day that peoples' suffering ignites their anger, nothing can prevent the collapse of a dictatorial regime. This is indeed the fate of all tyrant pharaohs, be it in Tunisia, Egypt, Iran or elsewhere.

SabzHouston is a grassroots organization formed after the massive election fraud in Iran which took place on June 12, 2009, where students and community members in Houston came together to peacefully protest the fabricated election results in Iran.

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