Developing consensus, cooperation;

Iranian president's message to world

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian sat down with CNN's Fareed Zakaria to discuss international, and regional developments as well as Iran's internal affairs last week in New York on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly. Pezeshkian stated that "we have started our work based on creating consensus within the country and strengthening cooperation with regional and global countries," and added: "We do not have any problems with our neighboring countries or the region, and we also have a cooperative approach with countries around the world. However, today the Zionist regime is the main factor creating instability in the region."

The full text of the interview is as follows:

Fareed Zakaria: Let's start with the breaking news. Lebanon is witnessing some of the worst and most intense attacks it has seen in the past 15 years. Do you think Hezbollah will respond strongly, or will we see an escalation of tensions in Lebanon or even a wider conflict beyond Lebanon?
Pezeshkian: What is happening now in Lebanon, and what we have heard in the news, before even saying whether Hezbollah wants to respond or not, is a humanitarian disaster. The regime that the US and European countries support is committing crimes in front of the world's eyes, which have no justification in terms of human rights and international law. Before Hezbollah responds to these attacks, the UN and countries that claim to uphold human rights should force the Zionist regime to back down.
Hezbollah is facing a regime that is armed to the teeth, and the US is supporting it by bringing its aircraft carriers to the Atlantic and Mediterranean oceans. It's unacceptable from a human rights perspective for a country to claim it wants democracy, human rights, and freedom in the world, yet support a regime that kills people, children, and the elderly.
As a human being, regardless of my beliefs, I say that any human being in the world would be ashamed to see such atrocities committed by such individuals. It's a disaster for people who have no conventional power and are only willing to give their lives for their country's integrity and preservation.
Now, what will Hezbollah do? What can it do in the face of planes bombing Lebanon? Naturally, it will defend itself with whatever it has. However, given what's happening, there's a risk that tensions will spread throughout the region, which could be dangerous for the world and the future of the planet, leading to many events that must be prevented, and the Zionist regime must be stopped from committing these atrocities. They are committing human crimes, which is unacceptable.
Imagine if you were to kill hundreds of people on the spot with a plane, injure hundreds more, and in front of the world's eyes, no one is there to

prevent this crime; it's completely unacceptable.

Do you recommend that Hezbollah exercise self-control, considering Iran's significant influence over the group?
We must stand by Hezbollah. Naturally, we cannot expect Hezbollah to stand alone against a regime supported by the US and Europe. Therefore, we must make collective decisions on this matter.

Israel claims its attacks are a response to Hezbollah's attacks!
Do you believe that? In Gaza, the Zionist regime has killed thousands of people, over 41,000. What did they do in response to the Zionist regime, which bombs women, children,

Hezbollah, no matter how powerful it is, no matter how many missiles it fires, and no matter what the Zionist regime claims, how many of its own people have been killed that it comes and kills civilians?
The Zionist regime is committing terrorism, attacking other countries, and killing people wherever it wants. You should count the number of people the Zionist regime terrorizes every day with its missiles, drones, and operatives. See how many people they kill? In Iran, on the first day of my presidency, they came and assassinated Ismail Haniyeh. What international law or framework allows such actions? These people (the Israeli regime) are the real terrorists; but they call the ones who wants to defend their

world sees this situation, and unfortunately, some governments still defend the Zionist regime, powers that claim to uphold human rights but defend the Zionists; it's shameful.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has said it reserves the right to respond to the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh. Does this mean you will definitely respond in some way?
If international organizations cannot stop this aggressive regime and prevent a state with power and capabilities from doing whatever it wants, whenever it wants, without anyone stopping it, naturally, we will respond accordingly.

You said something at the beginning of your presidency that

We should be a model, do the right thing, and act humanely, so that others can follow our example. Islam is not a faith that can be imposed on others through force.
Our behavior is what can have an impact, and if we behave in a way that others dislike, it's not based on the teachings of Islam. Islam is a faith based on justice, fairness, and the preservation of human rights, and it's based on brotherhood. If we want to develop our revolution, before we tell others to become what we say, we must first reform ourselves. When we become good and others see that we respect all human frameworks, regardless of their race, tribe, or gender, and treat others like humans, then people will naturally be attracted to our faith.
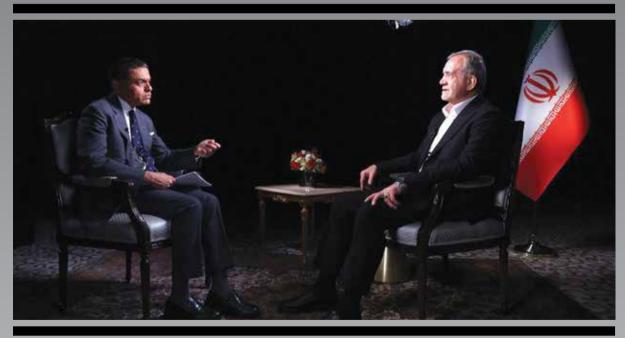Islam, or any other faith, cannot be imposed through force, but through behavior. If our behavior can convey our faith, it will help people grow, but if it can't, then it's not transferable. You can't impose faith through force.
This is what we believe, and we don't believe that faith can be imposed through the force of arms. This is a discussion we have within our own country. Our behavior and actions are what make others view our faith positively or negatively, and this is our main problem within our own country, that we must operationalize our faith and make our behavior reflect our faith, not just our words.

You say that you want the behavior in Iran to be such that everyone's rights are respected and that becomes a model, what do you think about issues like the morality police?
You know that any change takes time, reforming and changing behaviors, whether from the government or from those who take actions outside of it, naturally takes time. We need to follow a path that allows people to behave correctly, whether it's from those in the government who are making unreasonable requests or exhibiting inappropriate behavior, or from those in society who are opposing a certain belief or culture.
The issue at hand, from a developmental perspective, is that respect for human culture is a key indicator

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schools, and hospitals? How many of them (Israelis) have been killed that they are committing such massacres? Have the children, women, and elderly killed anyone? Is someone in a hospital bed a killer?
Today, at the UN, they said the Zionist regime has killed 200 of the UN's own personnel in Gaza. With this in mind, who believes the Zionist regime's claims?

country and land a terrorist!
The numbers are clear and leave no room for argument. Compare the numbers, see how many people the Zionist regime has terrorized and how many people the so-called terrorists have killed, and then you can tell the world who the real terrorists and human rights violators are! Who has disregarded humanity and has no value for human life? The

sparked debates even within Iran. You said that we don't want to export our revolution, can you elaborate on that?
From the beginning, we didn't intend to export our revolution through conflict. The statement made by the late Imam Khomeini was based on the idea that the values of the revolution should be exported through change of behavior.