Symphony of Roots; The Echo of Iranian Elites' Consultation in Vienna

Vienna hosted the second meeting and consultation of Iranian scholars and elites living in Austria. This event included a key speech by Iran's cultural representative and the presence of Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Imani-Pour, head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization. It focused on the challenges, potentials, and cultural ties of Iranians living abroad.

The cultural capital of Europe, Vienna, on Friday 8 Aban 1405 equal to 30 October 2026, hosted the second session of the series of programs called "Consultation of Elite Iranians Living in Austria." This valuable event was held with the goal of dialogue, exchange of views, and strengthening the ties between elites, scholars, and Iranians living in Austria with their motherland. It took place at the Iranian Cultural Representation (Iranian Wisdom House, Vienna).

Start of the Consultation with Emphasis on Maximum Public Participation and the Potential of Iranians Abroad

The ceremony began with a welcome and speech by Dr. Reza Gholami, university professor and Iran's cultural representative in Austria. He emphasized the basic role of the people and elites in the progress of the country and said:

"No factor creates power as much as the maximum support of the people. Achieving rapid progress requires not only spreading the feeling of belonging to Iran in society, but also recognizing the differences and diversity existing in society and looking positively at this variety. In this way we can prepare the ground for maximum public participation and the production of power in a wide, organized, and systematic path."

Dr. Gholami continued by pointing to the valuable potentials of Iranians living abroad and their diverse and sometimes outstanding specialties. He added:

"Iranians living abroad can play an important part in forming and expanding this participation. Cultural participation is one of the important areas of this presence. The cultural associations set up by the efforts of Iranians in Austria and other European countries are among the platforms that can turn this potential into an effective opportunity for interaction, synergy, and service to Iranian culture. These associations, with the cultural support of governments and the participation of donors, can also expand the range of their activities and play a more effective role in strengthening the cultural ties of Iranians with their motherland and with host societies."

Key Topics of the Consultation

In the continuation of this specialized meeting, the most important issues and concerns of the cultural life of Iranians abroad were discussed and exchanged in the form of two key topics:

- Strengthening identity, mother tongue, and new generations: Examining the role of Iranians as cultural ambassadors, studying the opportunities and challenges of teaching

the Persian language, how new generations connect with religious and faith values (Shiism, since 98 percent of Iran's population are Shia), and evaluating the existing cultural infrastructure and assets in Austria.

- Cultural diplomacy and connection with the motherland: Studying the problems of the presence of Iranian art on the international stage and fixing its shortcomings, together with examining facilitating solutions for strengthening deep and continuous connection with the motherland.

The Most Important Topics Raised by the Participants

In the discussion and exchange of views section, the participants, while emphasizing the need to strengthen the solidarity of Iranians living in Austria and expand cultural activities, presented their views and suggestions on the following topics:

1. Strengthening dialogue and respect for differences: The need to recognize differences in views and tastes, prepare the ground for free dialogue among Iranians, and promote a culture of constructive and sympathetic dialogue.

2. Developing Iranian cultural infrastructure in Austria: The need to create and strengthen cultural spaces such as music and theater halls, art galleries, bookstores, and other cultural centers for a more coherent, lower-cost, and more effective introduction of Iranian culture and civilization.

3. Supporting Iranian artists: Emphasis on the need for greater support from cultural organizations and institutions inside the country for outstanding Iranian artists who try to hold exhibitions and present their artworks in Vienna, one of the cultural capitals of Europe.

4. Producing cultural content suitable for the new generation: The importance of writing and publishing practical, attractive, and short books about Iranian culture, history, and civilization, with the goal of making it easier for new generations to become familiar with the country's cultural heritage.

5. Strengthening Iranian identity in children and teenagers: The need to design and offer attractive, creative cultural products suitable for the needs and current interests of Iranian children and teenagers living in Austria, with the goal of strengthening their feeling of belonging to Iranian culture and civilization.

6. Introducing today's Iran alongside historical heritage: Emphasis on the need to introduce at the same time the ancient history and civilization of Iran, cultural and artistic heritages, as well as the achievements, progress, and contemporary potentials of Iran in recent decades.

7. Improving Persian language education: The need for qualitative development of Persian language classes, effective use of the support and potentials of the Austrian government, and use of modern technologies and up-to-date educational tools to make learning the Persian language easier among new generations.

8. Reviving and promoting valuable Iranian traditions: The importance of introducing and keeping alive positive Iranian traditions and rituals among families and the Iranian community living in Austria, especially with a focus on the young generation.

9. The role of families in transferring cultural identity: Emphasis on the basic role of Iranian families in transferring language, values, and cultural identity to the next generations, and the suggestion of holding educational workshops for families to become familiar with effective methods of cultural upbringing of children and teenagers.

10. Using Austria's supportive potentials: Pointing to the facilities and support of government bodies and municipalities for promoting different cultures, especially through the activities of cultural associations, and the need to inform Iranians about these opportunities and use them effectively.

11. Preventing political differences from dominating cultural relations: Expressing concern about politics casting a shadow over the cultural field in Austria and the stopping or limiting of cultural cooperation following political differences between the two countries; together with emphasis on the need to keep relative independence and continue cultural interactions.

12. Legal pursuit of war crimes against the Iranian nation: Emphasis on the need to use the potential of human rights assemblies and international courts to form legal cases with the participation of outstanding Iranian and international lawyers, in order to pursue the war crimes of the United States and Israel against the Iranian nation, including the unignorable incident of the Minab school.

13. Innovation in introducing Shiism to new generations: The need to use modern methods and a cultural language suitable for the young generation to introduce Shiism in Austria and present a correct, rational image free from superstitions of Shia teachings and traditions.

14. Appreciation for the expansion of Iran's cultural activities in Austria: Expressing happiness about the flourishing and development of the activities of Iran's cultural representation in Austria over the past three years and emphasis on the importance of continuing and strengthening this trend.

Overall, the views raised emphasized the need to strengthen solidarity and collective participation of Iranians, develop infrastructure and cultural support, transfer Iranian heritage to

new generations, and introduce Iranian culture and society more comprehensively to Austrian audiences. Also, the legal pursuit of war crimes against the Iranian nation and keeping cultural relations dynamic were among the other important concerns of the participants.

Emphasis on the Solidarity of Iranians Abroad and the Need to Introduce Iran's Potentials

At the end of this consultation, Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Imani-Pour, a Shia scholar and head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, also expressed happiness about being present among Iranians living in Austria. He considered the common sympathy and concern of the participants for helping the country hopeful and emphasized the need to strengthen solidarity and cooperation among Iranians living abroad.

Pointing to Iran's scientific, cultural, and human potentials, he said that one of the obstacles to using these capabilities is the weakness of self-confidence among some Iranians. He stated that the country's scientific progress, the achievements of young people, and their successes in international competitions deserve wider introduction on the global stage. According to him, Iranians living abroad can, by more accurately recognizing Iran's potentials and presenting a realistic and clear image of Iranian society, play a role in strengthening the knowledge and connection of other nations with Iran.

The head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, pointing to the experience of migration, emphasized that the presence of Iranians in other countries, alongside its own challenges, can provide valuable opportunities for the country. Transfer of knowledge and experience, help to economic development, expansion of international connections, and introduction of Iranian culture and civilization are among the potentials that can be used from this opportunity. He also emphasized the importance of preserving Iranian identity alongside constructive interaction with host societies and considered the role of the behavior, manner, and character of Iranians important in presenting a positive face of Iranian culture and civilization.

In another part of his speech, Imani-Pour counted the Persian language as one of the most important identity links of Iranians and emphasized the need to support its education and expansion abroad. He also considered support for Iranian artists, holding joint exhibitions, introducing contemporary art alongside past artistic heritage, and using the successful experiences of other countries as effective solutions for developing cultural activities. In Imani-Pour's belief, Iranians living abroad can, with synergy and collective cooperation, better introduce Iran's artistic and cultural potentials to the host society.

The head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization also, pointing to the need to record and globally reflect the great and inhuman disasters of the recent imposed war, including the disaster of the Shajareh Tayebeh Minab school, in which 168 students along with their teachers were martyred by guided missiles of the United States, emphasized the importance of using cultural, literary, and artistic potentials to narrate this anti-human event and transfer its human dimensions to world public opinion.

At the end, Imani-Pour, expressing happiness about the formation of such gatherings, considered the continuation and expansion of consultation among Iranians living abroad necessary and noted that the cooperation and synergy of individuals and cultural groups, alongside the cultural support of governments and donors, can help strengthen collective activities, better introduce today's Iran, and expand cultural ties between Iranians and host societies.

The presence of Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Imani-Pour, head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, as the special guest of this ceremony doubled the importance of this event and provided a valuable opportunity for the concerns of elites and cultural activists to be shared directly with the senior cultural officials of the country.