

Iran: U.S. must change if it seeks change

by UPI

TEHRAN -- An Iranian official, responding to U.S. President Barack Obama's call for better relations, said the offer is promising, but old wounds must be treated, too.

"Mr. Obama has talked about his commitment to creating constructive diplomatic ties between the U.S. and Iran," wrote Ali Akbar Javanfekr, presidential press adviser to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in a commentary published in the Los Angeles Times. "He must first begin dressing the deep and old wounds inflicted on the Iranian nation and start to correct the misunderstandings created by the misconduct of previous U.S. administrations in their actions against Iran."

In his message marking Nowruz, the Persian new year, Obama offered an appreciation of Iran's culture, arts and civilization yet accused the republic of terror and pursuing weapons of mass destruction, Javanfekr wrote.

"These two antagonistic approaches are mutually exclusive," he said. "Mr. Obama needs to break with the wrongheaded approach of previous administrations and promote peaceful policies toward Iran.

Obama's claims of responsibility and honesty "must ultimately be put to the test," Javanfekr said. "We are, however, pleased to observe that Mr. Obama seems to be attempting to rehabilitate the tainted image of the United States."

Obama said his presidency would be driven by a policy of change, the adviser said, "and the American people have embraced it. But to remedy its image in the world, the U.S. needs to truly change its past methods."

"Change is mandatory for the U.S. administration," Javanfekr concluded. "For as history demonstrates, either you change, or you are forced to change."

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