

**Mission of Islamic Republic of Iran
To The United Nations- New York**

In The Name Of GOD

Press Release

**Regarding
the Movie 300**

**Mission of The Islamic Republic of Iran to The United Nations
has issued the following statement regarding the movie “300”**

The Iranian people are outraged by the movie produced by the Warner Brothers Studio titled “300” purportedly about an epic battle fought between the Persian and Greek armies in 480 B.C., but which is full of deliberate distortions and derogatory depictions of ancient Persia.

With its crude demonization of Persians, as the embodiment of evil, moral corruption, the nefarious and the destructive, the movie is a serious affront to both history and the proud Iranian people.

While recognizing that this is not a docudrama and its content is largely fictionalized, that it is a “fantasy” version of a historical past, nonetheless it seems judicious to investigate why the film fails to convey a bare minimum truth about Iranian history and indulges in inventing perverse, demonic images of Persians?

The movie is so overly racist, so overflowing with vicious stereotype of Persians, as a dangerous, bestial force fatally threatening the civilized “free” world, that conveys an implicit

acquiescence to the contemporary discourses of hatred espousing a 'clash of civilizations'.

Indeed, the movie's distorted fabrications about the Persians cannot be isolated from the current concerted efforts by certain Western interest circles to systematically demonize the Iranian nation. The movie's slavish imitation of the anti-Iran discourses by those circles is inextricably tied up with its voice-over metaphoric thrust, reflecting a subtle propaganda that feels no obligation to respecting the sensibilities of the Iranian people.

Although it may fit within the demands of the hegemonic policies, in today's globalized context this movie is bound to incite righteous rage by millions of people who can see through its peculiar, biased representation of a historical past the excesses of a hate ideology over form.

What explains the movie's repeat references to Persian "slaves" while omitting any hint that Sparta at the time was thriving in slavery and that, per the account of Greek historians, Herodotus and Plutarch, the Spartan slaves known as Helots fought in the battles against Persians?

According to the historian Peter Hunt, "That greater number of Helots, whom Spartans called their "slaves," also did defending Greece puts the noble struggle for freedom in a different light." On Sparta, Plutarch has written: "There is nothing to match either the freedom of the free at Sparta or the slavery of the slave."

The movie faithfully depicts the Spartans' attire, e.g., their distinctive red cloaks, but fails to do so for the Persians, this when there are ample pictorial and narrative descriptions of how the Persian kings and their soldiers dressed. All the film's producers needed to do was to consult Herodotus' account of the Immortal Guards, a "body of picked Persian troops" whose attire bore no resemblance to the evil forces shown in 300: "First the Persians themselves: the dress of their troops consisted of the tiara, or soft felt cap, embroidered tunic with sleeves, a coat of mail looking like the scales of a fish, with trousers; for arms they carried large wicker shields, quivers slung below them, short spears, powerful bows, with cane arrows, and daggers swinging from belts beside the right thigh."

History is an acquired, learnt activity and the power of cinematic medium to provide us with historical insights into traumatic events only means that distorting the image of Iranians should not be a tool to sell tickets. It is like re-writing history with poison.

In short, the movie's exploitation of ancient history to launch a thinly-veiled attack on Iranian history and identity is both harshly unfair and morally suspect.