

17 OCT 2003
OIC-Palestine (Communique)
OIC CONDEMNS ISRAELI THREAT ON ARAFAT

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 17 (Bernama) -- The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which ended its 10th summit here today, has strongly condemned the Israeli threats on the democratically elected Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat.

The 57-member organisation has also expressed its deep concern over the disastrous economic repercussions of the ongoing Israeli aggression and called for an immediate cessation.

The OIC appealed to the international community to force Israel to abide by the United Nations resolution requesting Israel to refrain from jeopardising the safety of the Palestinian leader and not to deport any Palestinian citizen out of their homeland.

In its communique released at the end of the two-day Leaders Summit at the Putrajaya Convention Centre, here, the OIC requested the international community to compel Israel to remove the apartheid wall which encroaches upon the Palestinian land.

The OIC also strongly condemned the perpetration by Israel of the crimes of murder, detention, destruction of homes, demolition of infrastructure, the imposition of collective sanctions on the Palestinian people and the violation of the sanctity of Islamic holy places.

The conference requested the international community to ensure the Israeli occupation forces' withdrawal from occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and the lifting of the Israeli siege imposed on the Palestinian people and leadership.

Arafat was unable to come to Malaysia for the summit because of the split in the leadership and an Israeli policy to have him exiled, deported or eliminated.

The 106-point communique, which touched on several topics affecting the Muslim world, also condemned Israeli policy which refused to abide by the UN Security Council Resolution concerning the occupied Syrian Golan apart from reaffirming the need to establish an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Sharif as its capital.

The conference, the biggest Islamic gathering since Sept 11, 2001, also urged the UN Security Council to endorse the "Road Map" and the need to dispatch international disengagement forces between Palestinians and Israelis to guarantee stability in the region.

The summit, the first ever to be held in the Asia Pacific region, was marked by the historic appearance of Russian President Vladimir Putin who delivered a speech at the opening ceremony.

The OIC also welcomed Russia's desire to establish strong relations with the organisation.

On Iraq, the conference reaffirmed the need for all to respect Iraq's sovereignty, political independence, national unity and territorial integrity.

It also stressed the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their own political future and to have full control over its natural resources and to establish a broad-based and fully representative government and the need to accelerate the restoration of the full sovereignty of Iraq.

The conference also hailed the constitution of the Transnational Governing Council of Iraq on July 13, 2003, and the establishment of a cabinet as a step toward the achievement of this end.

In this connection, it showed the central role that the United Nations should play in post-war Iraq.

The OIC also reaffirmed the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Iraq and the need for the latter to establish good relations with all its neighbours and to abide by the existing treaties and agreements, particularly those relevant to internationally recognised borders.

The OIC indicated the obligations of the occupation forces in accordance with the international law, particularly the 1949 Geneva Convention, and this respect, stressed the responsibility of the occupation forces for the protection of the civil and religious rights and the cultural, religious and historical heritage of the Iraqi people.

It reaffirmed the need for these forces to act in such a way that guarantees respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq's neighbouring states.

It strongly condemned the criminal terrorist bombings in Iraq and the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad.

The conference also condemned the genocide acts perpetrated by the former regime in Iraq against innocent people from Iraq, Iran and other countries and the killing of Kuwaiti prisoners of war.

The conference called for the prosecution of the former Iraqi regime's officials who perpetrated these crimes.

It reiterated its commitment and determination to combat terrorism in all forms, including state terrorism, and also to contribute to multilateral efforts to counter this scourge.

It rejected selectivity and duplicity of standards in combating terrorism and all attempts to associate with a particular religion or culture.

The leaders voiced their support for an international conference to be held under the aegis of the United Nations (UN) to define terrorism.

The conference reaffirmed the need to sign a convention on international terrorism to distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination of people living under foreign domination.

It stressed that the cases of alien occupation are governed by international humanitarian law and not by conventions on terrorism and urged member states to ratify the OIC Treaty for Combating International Terrorism.

The conference reaffirmed its contribution to maintain peace and security at the regional and international levels in favour of OIC member states in accordance with the UN Charter.

The leaders also called for the settlement of disputes among states through dialogues on the basis of international law and to respect the principle of non-interference.

On Syria, the conference stressed its solidarity with the Syrians in the face of the external threats and condemned the Israeli aggression, urging the UN Security Council to take measures to prevent a recurrence.

Touching on Afghanistan, the conference commended the efforts made by the Transnational government of Afghan to restore state power and called on member states to lend technical support to the government.

Expressing its concern over the lack of security and instability outside Kabul, the conference wants the UN and the international forces to extend their activity to all regions in Afghanistan.

On Sierra Leone, the conference reaffirmed its support for the reconstruction efforts by the Sierra Leone government and made a strong appeal to member states to contribute to the fund.

On Sudan, it decided to set up an Islamic Fund for the development of

the the country and to prevent obstruction of the peace process.

It strongly condemned the position of Israel aimed at developing nuclear weapons and refusing to place its nuclear installations under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is against all international conventions.

It also reaffirmed its rejection of the principle of pre-emptive military attacks against states under any excuse whatsoever.

The leaders also urged the OIC secretary-general to expedite the peace process in Somali and to ensure peace and stability in the country.

The conference reaffirmed its support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their legitimate right to self-determination by virtue of the resolutions of the UN.

It also supported the ongoing efforts of Pakistan to seek a peaceful solution to the dispute through all possible means, including bilateral talks with India.

In addition, the conference endorsed the Kuala Lumpur Programme of Action for the Development and Promotion of Tourism in OIC states as adopted by the Second Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers in Kuala Lumpur in October 2001.

The conference also reaffirmed the inalienable rights of all states to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purpose.

The leaders called on states that impose arbitrary political or legal measures, unilateral economic sanctions or other coercive measures on any member states to annul those measures as they contradict international law.

The OIC also urged the Philippines to diligently end its military operations in southern Philippines and to implement the peace agreement between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front signed in 1996.

It underlined the need to devise ways and means to minimise the adverse effects of globalisation on the economies of the OIC countries and called for an equitable share in the benefits of globalisation for all countries.

The conference also rejected all attempts to include non-trade issues, such as labour and environmental standards, into the work programme of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or to link such issues with trade deals.

The conference reiterated its appeal to the WTO to strengthen the development in various multilateral trade agreements through a wide range of measures, including preferential treatment for developing countries.

The leaders endorsed the measures proposed by the OIC secretary-general to activate the information and communication sector to fulfil its mission to further promote the just causes of the ummah.

The conference also called for the convening of a ministerial conference on women where an action plan would be proposed on the promotion of women's role in the development of Islamic societies.

It also called for the convening in the near future of a meeting of Ministers of Health in member states on the epidemic diseases that affect humans through the respiratory system, animals, plants and the environment.

The leaders unanimously agreed to award Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad the Certificate of Merit in recognition of his unflinching support, ideas and outstanding contribution to further the causes of the ummah.

-- BERNAMA

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