

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM,
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA KUALA LUMPUR
CONFERENCE ON A NEW JUST AND HUMANE INTERNATIONAL
ORDER**

By : DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
: INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (AIAC), KUALA
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YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM, PRIME MINISTER OF

MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR CONFERENCE ON A NEW JUST AND

HUMANE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

14th OCTOBER 2025 (TUESDAY) | 12:00PM ASIAN

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (AIAC)

KUALA LUMPUR

[Opening & Greetings]

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, salam sejahtera dan Salam Malaysia MADANI.

(SALUTATION)

YB Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said,

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department;

The Honourable Mauricio Jaramillo,

Deputy Minister of Multilateral Affairs, Republic of Colombia;

Mr Jeremy Corbyn,

Member of Parliament, United Kingdom; and

The Honourable Dr Rob Davies,

Former Minister of Trade and Industry, Republic of South Africa.

1. Terima kasih atas kerjasama yang diberikan rakan-rakan yang saya muliakan. Apakah kerangka besar yang kita harus kuasai? Iaitu hadam dari sidang seperti ini, tentunya memecah tembok pemikiran usang, memecah tembok pemikiran yang mengongkong kebebasan, kefahaman kita tentang erti kebebasan, kemerdekaan dan keadilan.
2. Apa yang diungkapkan oleh rakan-rakan kita sebenarnya adalah satu usaha yang berani, kerana tanpa kekuatan dan semangat baru ini kita akan terperangkap dengan pola pemikiran lama yang mempertahankan ketidakadilan sistem dalam negara dan tatanan dunia.
3. Jadi sebab itu bagi saya, persidangan seperti ini harus disebar luas. Bila kita bicara dalam kerangka masyarakat bandar ini, MADANI umpamanya walaupun kita masih terikat dengan keperluan menjana pertumbuhan ekonomi, tidak boleh terlepas dari soal ihsan dan kemanusiaan. Ia terlepas daripada melihat kita sebagai sebahagian daripada manusia dengan nilai manusiawi yang harus sentiasa segar dalam pertahankan ketidakadilan dan memperjuangkan, mengutuk ketidakadilan dan menegakkan keadilan, sama ada di Gaza atau di Myanmar atau mana juga pencerobohan penafian hak ke atas manusia.
4. So, thank you again, Jeremy Corbyn, he's a great friend who's been there in all those years, particularly those days when I was down and out and he was there in the House of Commons speaking up for justice. Thank you very much.

5. And thank you, Alvin Oates we look forward to Ramaphosa coming here. It's a great experience and having you to speak is most meaningful because you do experience your country is to me has not only true Mandela and Tambo and the rest, but it portrays that spirit determination to fight and struggle against cross injustice and any form of imperialism, colonialism, fascism that you can think about. I mean, I can't imagine how you have to endure the ordeal, dehumanizing, degrading and clearly something that we cannot comprehend.

6. But when I listened to Jeremy Comyn making reference to Tagore, asking the Indians to be more awake and referring to Frantz Fanon. Jeremy, Frantz Fanon was our text in the 70s and I thought it was over. The wretched of the earth was the then the theme. Of course. We thought that after decades, half a century, one century after independence, we managed to empower our people and challenge the order that is grossly unjust but now, if I've just published rethinking ourselves and Frantz Fanon became so relevant, because the ideals that these countries have achieved independence but sometimes we also subjugated purely plainly what Frantz Fanon have said earlier, his contemporary Malek Bennabi, that those colonized elites post colonialism sometimes as bankrupt of ideas and ideals as the colonizers. So, the wretched of the earth must be reread by us. For those in the younger generation, welcome to the club.

7. Now, as I've said, the world is of course testing the vary ideas of justice and humanity that once defined the international order. Read A Tryst With Destiny by Jawaharlal Nehru, ease the Independence and see how the ideas. Imagining, similar to Sukarno's imagination of

Indonesia, or Jinnah's Cyclonic Revolution that managed to form Pakistan.

8. The ideas and if you associate yourself with that idea and that struggle, or with Mandela for that matter we once thought it was over. That the era of colonization has over. But it is not the case, and it is a challenging task and arduous task. It's not easy, precisely because the dominant force is still strong, politically, militarily, economically.
9. And, in the battle of ideas, our universities or academia need to understand, what you present here is an alternate view, not the dominant mode of thinking, that is so prevalent, dictated by the Western masters. And it's amazing how is it possible, I mentioned this in Germany and in front of Biden how is it possible that these countries that preach and acted democracy, human rights, and justice, not only can't condone but support colonization and all the evils taking place. Of course, the classic case is of course Gaza.
10. So, the moral weather of our age has turned cold. Institutions that once promised to command trust, or rules that were once invoked when convenient, and now ignored. They hinder of course the ambition, the struggle, the attempt to be truly independent and to dispense justice and order.
11. I'm not saying this just to appease these revolutionaries in front of me, but I am sharing with you, contrary to my past positions, the challenge and complexity, even when one assumes the role of Prime

Minister in power. First, you must get the elites, the team, not only to comprehend but to share this vision. Second, you must get the message to be understood.

12. Therefore, I would still say that this sort of discourse reasoned, intellectual discourse to debate more substantive issues on order, the world order, contrary to what is dictated by the West. Of course, we have to see the world as it is, but that does not mean accepting it as it stands.
13. The world will always be imperfect. Yet, to accept injustice as inevitable is to abandon the whole idea of civilization. Power without restraint, it corrupts both order and those who wield it. So, Jeremy, as you mentioned that nowhere has the failure of conscience in recent times have been more visible than in Gaza.
14. I detest this. Not only contradiction, but the hypocrisy of those leaders beside me in the bilateral engagements, in regional meetings, harping about human rights and justice and order, and still condone these atrocities against people. In fact, I asked, are they because they are colored or because they are Arabs or because they are Muslims? I failed to understand. And speaking with such confidence and a clear conscience and condoning these atrocities.
15. When we have watched neighbourhoods erased in minutes, civilians bombed, hospitals flattened and aid convoys turned back. The law is cited but never enforced. So, to me it's not a mere humanitarian

catastrophe. It is the moment when belief in law itself begins to fade. When law becomes selective, it becomes propaganda. When power no longer feels the need to justify itself, barbarism returns, dressed in modern, sophisticated clothes.

16. Malaysia took a stand because silence was no longer an option. We have committed, of course, within our capacity, RM100 million initially in humanitarian aid for Gaza and working with Japan jointly amongst East Asian countries to mobilize more support. We also support the NGOs in the Global Sumud Flotilla. And thank you, it means a lot to us. We have devoted considerable diplomatic and political capital, engaging partners in the Middle East and beyond. Malaysia has spoken up where it matters and wherever we can.
17. Now, with the latest fragile ceasefire in place in Sharm El-Sheikh, we are monitoring by the minute. There is a glimpse, faint but real, of peace. But as you know, Malaysia is one of the few countries with South Africa, Bolivia, Brazil that supports ceasefire with strong reservations. There's no plan for comprehensive peace, no guarantee of return to the Palestinians, and no clear categorical statement to guarantee the formation of an independent state of Palestine.
18. So, we welcome, of course, the initiative, even if by President Donald Trump. But we must be honest enough to state that we do not want another pause between wars. We are dealing with Netanyahu and his cabinet, who made no pretensions, they are not going to honour that. So, the ceasefire, as far as we are concerned, must be a doorway to

rebuilding Gaza, to restoring dignity, and to recognizing the Palestinian right to live freely in their own land.

19. But Gaza interestingly reminds us that morality and power are never easily reconciled. Morality and power. It reminds me of Desmond Tutu, never easily reconcile. Yet they must coexist if order is to endure. So, it is this struggle between the demands and the dictates of our conscience. And their realities of power that defines the task of responsible leadership today.
20. Outrage has its place. Without moral anger, there can be no justice. But leadership requires us to turn outrage into order – to ensure that moral conviction finds form in policy, and compassion translates into action that endures.
21. Those who seek justice must also master the craft of governance. We have seen enough revolutions to know that tearing down injustice is easier than building what comes after. To reform the world, we must be ready to govern it – wisely, patiently, and without hubris.
22. Malaysia’s approach is what we call active non-alignment. It is not neutrality, and it is not indecision. Here in ASEAN, we popularize the term “centrality.” It used to allow us to engage with everyone, but we have to decide our positions for ourselves, guided by our values and our interests.

23. We will cooperate of course, where it advances peace and fairness, but we will say no when it does not. Active non-alignment is not the refusal to choose. Indeed, it is the freedom to choose with principle.
24. So, I was just in Parliament today for the Prime Minister's Question Time. I don't know why you guys influenced me to have that sort of... I thought it was great as an opposition leader. Now as Prime Minister, I don't know whether it was a wise decision (humorous tone). But anyway, there were questions about our ASEAN invitation to President Trump, and I assured the House, we'll continue to engage, we will state our position verbally and clearly, as we have done so in front of President Joe Biden, Olaf Scholz, and the rest.
25. Diplomacy is not a means to soothe our outrage or to massage our sense of place in the world, as if we alone were exempt from its compromises. It is the practical work of protecting our interests and advancing peace in an imperfect world.
26. True diplomacy is not a dance of convenience, but a contest of endurance. It demands balance, discipline, and the courage to stay the course even when the ground shifts beneath us. And in politics, the shifting tends to be too often.
27. So, around the world, the Honourable Jeremy Corbyn, you have been spearheading this and I share your sentiments. I certainly would support that because nations of the Global South are rediscovering

their voice, and this is something very reassuring, and is supported by many young students, youth, and the general public from the North.

28. And again, I see these contradictions. We were struggling and demonized or arrested under the Internal Security Act. We thought it was just happening in Asia, Africa, Latin America. But now, fortunately, Malaysia is much freer for students to demonstrate and say their peace than those in the UK and the United States.
29. So, you see such contradictions. And to the extent that when my youngest daughter wanted to pursue her studies in the States, I said, "Please come back." And when she wanted to join some series of demonstrations in New York, I hold on, I can't say no because, "See Papa, you are saying no to demonstrations?" I said, "No, I will be the last person to say that." But I said, "You happen to be a foreigner in the United States."
30. You see, these things are unimaginable, unthought of because in the United Kingdom and in the States, not only acquisition of knowledge, but universities became centers of ideas of promoting new ideas or critical thinking. So, I believe now I'm more confident in our system to improve and ensure we excel through our own universities and probably, collaboration with South Africa, Bolivia, and countries like that.
31. So, we have to do more in this sort of collaboration among countries in the South and, of course, extend it to trade, investments, etc. And I

think that's the whole idea of BRICS now, to ensure that we engage and collaborate with one another more than ever before.

32. Here in Malaysia, I talk about domestic resilience. Ours is a trading nation, of course, but domestic resilience is pivotal. And then, other than the regional collaboration within ASEAN, is to engage with countries in the South — more so countries like Brazil and South Africa that share our concerns, our values not only in terms of diplomatic engagement but to enhance our collaboration in terms of trade, investment, culture, education, and research.

33. And I wish the conference success. I am delighted to be, at least, seen to be part of it. I don't have issues with Jeremy Corbyn, I know his influence, I know when he gets angry, you are in trouble. So, but thank you very much Jeremy Corbyn. I mean, I'm really excited when Nurul Izzah told me that you are coming, at last. I was tough with him and I said, "What? You have not been to Malaysia? It is totally unacceptable!" But here you are. Thank you very much again. I wish you success.

Thank you

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