

SPEECH BY
YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH BIN HAJI AHMAD BADAWI
AT THE GLOBAL RISK & CRISIS FORUM: "THE HADHARI APPROACH, ITS
EXPLANATION AND RELEVANCE TO CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL CHALLENGES"
AT INSTITUT KEFAHAMAN ISLAM MALAYSIA (IKIM) KUALA LUMPUR
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ASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI WABARAKATUH AND GOOD MORNING

Y.A.BHG TUN DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD
HONORARY PRESIDENT, PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

Y.BHG TAN SRI AHMAD SARJI ABDUL HAMID
CHAIRMAN, INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING MALAYSIA

Y.BHG DR. SYED ALI TAWFIK AL-ATTAS
DIRECTOR GENERAL, INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING MALAYSIA

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

YOUR EXCELLENCIES

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

1. WE ARE LIVING IN A WORLD FULL OF RISKS, CAUSED MAINLY BY THE ACTIONS OF HUMANS. WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO MANAGE THE RELATED CRISES. THIS IS THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS CONFERENCE, WHICH HAS THE OBJECTIVE OF HIGHLIGHTING SOME OF THE CRITICAL ISSUES. THE PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE EARLY WARNING TO PREVENT CONFLICTS, WHICH ARE MAINLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO HUMAN ERRORS OF JUDGMENT. WE WOULD ALSO NEED TO DEAL WITH THE WRATH OF NATURE, WHICH HAS RESPONDED TO HUMAN DISREGARD FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. THIS IS A RESPONSIBILITY TO BE SHOULDERED BY ALL PEOPLE AROUND THE GLOBE. IT IS A TRUST THAT MUST BE IMPLEMENTED BY POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LEADERS. IT IS IN FACT A DUTY THAT ALL CITIZENS OF THE WORLD SHOULD SHARE. I DO NOT WANT TO SOUND ALARMIST, BUT LET ME BEGIN BY OUTLINING SOME OF THE GLARING ISSUES THAT REQUIRE URGENT AND FOCUSED ATTENTION.

2. THERE IS INDEED AN ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE WORLD.

3. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE – INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN – HAVE SUCCUMBED TO POVERTY AND ITS EFFECTS. FOR EXAMPLE, ACROSS THE WORLD, 1.3 BILLION PEOPLE LIVE ON LESS THAN 1 U.S DOLLAR A DAY. 3 BILLION SUBSIST ON LESS THAN A DOLLAR MORE. ACROSS THE REGION, MILLIONS OF CHILDREN FAIL TO COMPLETE SCHOOL DUE TO THE LACK OF FUNDS.

4. AS WE SPEAK, 54 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S INCOME GOES TO 10 PERCENT OF ITS POPULATION. THE 50 RICHEST INDIVIDUALS IN THE WORLD HAVE A COMBINED INCOME GREATER THAN THAT OF THE POOREST 416 MILLION PEOPLE. OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS, 53 COUNTRIES – REPRESENTING OVER 80 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION – REPORTED AN INCREASE IN INEQUALITY OF DISTRIBUTION. MOREOVER, THE ADVENT OF GLOBALISATION THREATENS TO WIDEN INEQUALITIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND BASED ON CURRENT TRENDS MORE THAN 800 MILLION PEOPLE WILL LIVE IN CONDITIONS OF EXTREME POVERTY BY 2015.

5. THE KIND OF ISSUES I HAVE JUST OUTLINED CONCERN LONG-TERM EQUITABLE GROWTH. THESE ARE ISSUES THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED BECAUSE PROSPERITY AND HUMAN PROGRESS DEPEND UPON THEM. WE MUST FOCUS ON THE INSTITUTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES NEEDED FOR RECOVERY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. WE MUST FOCUS ON THE SOCIAL ISSUES.

6. IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH SOCIAL EMERGENCIES; IF WE DO NOT HAVE LONGER TERM PLANS TO SOLIDIFY OUR INSTITUTIONS; IF WE DO NOT HAVE GREATER EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE; THERE WILL BE NO POLITICAL STABILITY. AND WITHOUT POLITICAL STABILITY, NO AMOUNT OF MONEY PUT TOGETHER IN ECONOMIC PACKAGES OR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WILL OFFER OUR COUNTRIES AND OUR SOCIETIES THE PEACE AND STABILITY WHICH WE NEED. INSTEAD, WE WILL BE DOOMED TO A FUTURE MARKED BY WIDESPREAD POVERTY, ILLITERACY, AS WELL AS WIDENING DISPARITIES BETWEEN RICH AND IMPOVERISHED NATIONS.

7. THERE IS ALSO A DEVELOPING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS.

8. A LARGE PART OF THIS PROBLEM ORIGINATES FROM OUR OWN PURSUIT OF DEVELOPMENT, WHICH HAS LEFT A TRAIL OF WASTE UPON THE ENVIRONMENT. CLEARLY, EXISTING CONTROLS OVER AIR AND WATER POLLUTANTS ARE INSUFFICIENT, AS NEW TYPES OF WASTE WITH HIGHER LEVELS OF POLLUTANTS HAVE BEGUN TO APPEAR. THEIR TREATMENT HAS ALSO BECOME MORE DIFFICULT, WHICH IS THE CASE WITH WASTE FROM GAS COMBUSTION, AND WASTE WATER SLUDGE.

9. AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO MERELY IGNORE THE DANGERS POSED BY GREENHOUSE GASES, WHICH HAS RESULTED IN THE DETERIORATION OF AIR QUALITY, THE DEGRADATION OF THE OZONE LAYER, AND ULTIMATELY CHANGES TO THE WORLD'S CLIMATE. FOR INSTANCE, THE GLOBAL ANNUAL MEAN AIR TEMPERATURE HAS INCREASED BY 0.3 TO 0.6 DEGREES CENTIGRADE SINCE 1900. EXPERTS ESTIMATE THAT IF FURTHER TEMPERATURE INCREASES ARE TO BE LIMITED TO 1.5 DEGREES CENTIGRADE BY THE YEAR 2100; AND IF SEA LEVELS ARE NOT TO RISE MORE THAN 2 CENTIMETERS PER DECADE, THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD WILL NEED TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY AT LEAST 35 PERCENT BY THE YEAR 2010.

10. THE STEADY DESTRUCTION OF THE OZONE LAYER HAS ALSO RESULTED IN HIGHER ULTRA VIOLET PENETRATION IN BOTH NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE MID-LATITUDES. WHILE THE OZONE LAYER MAY EVENTUALLY RECOVER, FULL RECOVERY WILL NEVERTHELESS TAKE A LONG TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, IT WILL TAKE 50 YEARS FROM NOW FOR THE OZONE LAYER TO RECOVER FULLY IF EMISSIONS OF OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES WERE ZERO IN 1999.

11. THE WORLD'S SUPPLY OF FRESH WATER IS ALSO UNDER GREAT STRESS. THE GLOBAL CONSUMPTION OF WATER IS DOUBLING EVERY 20 YEARS DUE TO THE GROWTH OF THE HUMAN POPULATION. IF THE TREND PERSISTS, BY THE YEAR 2025 THE DEMAND FOR FRESH WATER WILL RISE BY 56 PERCENT. IN THAT SITUATION, AS MANY AS TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION WILL FACE A SERIOUS WATER SHORTAGE.

12. IN THE LAST CENTURY, THE MOST CONTENTIOUS MATTER WAS OIL. IN THIS CENTURY, WATER IS THE COMMODITY WHICH WILL TAKE THAT POSITION. AS ONE FORECASTER HAS WISELY SAID, WATER HAS THE POTENTIAL OF UNDERGOING A DRAMATIC TRANSFORMATION FROM AN UNLIMITED COMMODITY TAKEN FOR GRANTED TO A RATIONED NECESSITY THAT MAY BE TAKEN BY FORCE. IN FUTURE, WATER MAY VERY WELL BECOME A VALUABLE ITEM OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE OR AN ATTRACTIVE OBJECTIVE FOR INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT.

13. THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE PLANET EARTH IS CURRENTLY UNDER SEVERE STRAIN. THE MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING BIODIVERSITY ARE AGRICULTURE INTENSIFICATION, LAND ABANDONMENT, URBAN AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, THE INTRODUCTION OF ALIEN SPECIES, POLLUTION AND GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS.

14. THE WORLD MAY ALSO BE IN THE THROES OF ANOTHER ENERGY CRISIS.

15. AN ENERGY CRISIS USUALLY CONCERNS THE SHORTAGE OF OIL, ELECTRICITY AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES. THE PRICE OF ENERGY SUPPLIES IS DRIVEN BY THE PRINCIPLE OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND. THERE CAN BE SUDDEN CHANGES IN THE PRICE OF ENERGY IF EITHER SUPPLY OR DEMAND CHANGES. HOWEVER IN SOME CASES AN ENERGY CRISIS IS BROUGHT ON BY A FAILURE OF THE MARKET TO ADJUST PRICES IN RESPONSE TO SHORTAGES. IN OTHER CASES, THE CRISIS MIGHT BE INFLUENCED BY THE LACK OF A FREE MARKET. TRANSPORTATION REPRESENTS THE GREATEST DEMAND FOR CRUDE OIL, FOLLOWED BY HEATING AND POWER GENERATION. IN ADDITION, THE PLASTICS, PHARMACEUTICALS AND SYNTHETIC FIBER INDUSTRIES RELY ON CRUDE OIL TO MANUFACTURE FEED STOCKS FOR THEIR PRODUCTION. THE WORLD MAY SIMPLY BE FACING A SITUATION WHERE ALL THE SUPPLY CANNOT MEET ALL THE DEMAND.

16. IRONICALLY, THE ISSUE OF DEALING WITH THE EXPLOITATION OF SCARCE NATURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS OIL AND GAS IS AS MUCH AN ETHICAL AS IT IS A MATERIALISTIC PROBLEM. THE WORLD WILL NOT BE ABLE TO EXIST UNLESS HUMANS CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE WORLD THEY LIVE IN. WE MUST

CONSCIOUSLY BEGIN TO VIEW THE WORLD AND ALL ITS BEAUTY AS A GIFT OR BLESSING ENTRUSTED FOR OUR CARE AND PRESERVATION RATHER THAN SIMPLY AS A RESOURCE TO BE EXPLOITED. DEVELOPMENT MUST BE UNDERTAKEN ON A BASIS OF SUSTAINABILITY. INDEED, HUMAN GREED IS A VERY DESTRUCTIVE FORCE IN THE WORLD. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FORCES OF NATURE ARE ALWAYS IN PERFECT BALANCE WITH EACH OTHER. THEY ARE SUSTAINED BY A SINGLE DIVINE LAW AND EXISTS IN COMPLETE HARMONY.

17. LET US NOT FORGET THAT THERE IS A SERIOUS HEALTH CRISIS WHICH IS THREATENING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

18. GLOBAL DISEASES NAMELY H.I.V (AIDS), H.5.N.1, TUBERCULOSIS, GENETIC MUTATIONS, CANCER, AND DIABETES ARE LEADING THE LIST OF LIFE THREATENING ILLNESSES AFFLICTING MANKIND IN THIS DAY AND AGE.

19. OVER AND ABOVE THE PHYSICAL FACTORS WHICH ARE IMPACTING ON THE LIVES OF PEOPLES EVERYWHERE, THE WORLD IS ALSO, SADLY, WITNESSING A CRISIS IN MORAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES.

20. AT THE TOP OF THE LIST IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT UP TO 80,000 CASES HAVE BEEN REGISTERED IN A YEAR. THE NUMBER OF UNREPORTED INSTANCES IS PROBABLY FAR GREATER. THIS IS DUE TO THE FACT THAT CHILDREN ARE OFTEN AFRAID TO DISCUSS SUCH AN EXPERIENCE WITH ANYONE. OFTENTIMES, THE LEGAL PROCEDURE FOR CONFIRMING AN EPISODE IS DIFFICULT. THE PROBLEM SHOULD RECEIVE FULL EXPOSURE, THE ABUSE STOPPED, AND THE CHILDREN INVOLVED SHOULD BE PROVIDED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING. THE LONG-TERM EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DAMAGE FOLLOWING SEXUAL ABUSE CAN BE DEVASTATING TO THE CHILD AND ULTIMATELY TO THE VERY FABRIC OF CIVIL SOCIETY. THE ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN WITHIN THE SEX TRADE MUST BE SUBJECTED TO ZERO TOLERANCE.

21. LET ME CITE ONE FINAL EXAMPLE OF THE GROWING DISENCHANTMENT OF ORDINARY MEN AND WOMEN IN MANY COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD. THEY DISTRUST THOSE IN GOVERNMENT SPECIFICALLY, AND THOSE IN BUSINESS MORE GENERALLY, WHOM THEY SEE RESORTING TO BRIBERY, CORRUPTION AND CRONYISM IN THEIR DEALINGS. THEY SEE INADEQUACIES OF GOVERNANCE IN THEIR COUNTRIES, AND THEY CRY FOUL WHEN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES CAUSE UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH AND UNBALANCED SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

22. THE INTEGRATIVE EFFECTS OF GLOBALISATION, IN PARTICULAR THE ADVANCES IN COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, HAVE BROUGHT PEOPLES OF THE WORLD SO CLOSE TO EACH OTHER. BUT THIS CLOSENESS HAS ALSO BROUGHT

ABOUT A LESS THAN DESIRABLE SITUATION IN THE WAY PEOPLE RELATE TO EACH OTHER. INSTEAD OF CREATING GREATER HARMONY BETWEEN THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD, DESTRUCTIVE FORCES ARE AT WORK AGITATING BELIEVERS TO CHAMPION ONLY THEIR PARTICULAR BELIEF-SYSTEMS, VALUES AND PRINCIPLES. EXTREMIST MOVEMENTS OF ALL SORTS HAVE COME TO THE FORE, EMPHASIZING DIFFERENCE, AND EVEN PREACHING THE POLITICS OF FEAR AND HATE. WE MUST NOT ALLOW OUR GREAT RELIGION, ISLAM, TO BE HIJACKED BY THESE ZEALOTS AND EXTREMISTS.

23. HOWEVER, WE MUST ALSO NOT FAIL TO RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT THERE IS IN THE WORLD TODAY A CERTAIN RESURGENCE OF FEELINGS OF INSECURITY AND ANXIETY WITHIN SOCIETIES, AND BETWEEN PEOPLES AND CULTURES GLOBALLY.

24. TAKE FOR INSTANCE THE RECENT TURMOIL WHICH EMBROILED MANY COUNTRIES IN EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA WHICH WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY AN IRRESPONSIBLE SPATE OF INSENSITIVE ACTS AND GESTURES AGAINST ISLAM BY SOME WESTERN NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALS. IT DEMONSTRATED HOW POWERFUL RELIGION COULD BE AN AS AN IMPERATIVE FOR PEOPLE TO ACT, WITH OR WITHOUT THE GUIDING VOICE OF REASON. IN HINDSIGHT, THAT EPISODE SHOULD SERVE AS A GOOD LESSON INDEED FOR LEADERS AND ORDINARY PEOPLE ALIKE EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST NOW RECOGNIZE THAT IT HAS AN URGENT TASK TO ADDRESS THE STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN WEST AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD. IT MUST BE ADDRESSED BECAUSE THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE WORLD IS AT STAKE, AS CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS MAKE UP MORE THAN HALF OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION.

25. THIS IS THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT IN WHICH I PROPOSE TO ELABORATE ON ISLAM HADHARI AS AN APPROACH IN MANAGING GLOBAL RISKS AND CRISES. LET ME BEGIN BY REPEATING THE 10 PRINCIPLES WHICH REPRESENT THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM HADHARI, NAMELY:

- I. FAITH IN AND PIETY TOWARDS ALLAH;
- II. A JUST AND TRUSTWORTHY GOVERNMENT;
- III. FREE AND INDEPENDENT PEOPLE;
- IV. A RIGOROUS PURSUIT AND MASTERY OF KNOWLEDGE;
- V. BALANCED AND COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;
- VI. A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE;
- VII. PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF MINORITY GROUPS AND WOMEN;
- VIII. CULTURAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY;
- IX. SAFEGUARDING OF THE ENVIRONMENT; AND
- X. STRONG DEFENSE CAPABILITIES.

26. THE ISLAM HADHARI APPROACH IS ONE THAT EMPHASIZES DEVELOPMENT, CONSISTENT WITH THE TENETS OF ISLAM AND FOCUSES ON ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE. IT AIMS TO ACHIEVE THIS VIA THE MASTERY OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE NATION; THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DYNAMIC ECONOMIC, TRADING AND FINANCIAL SYSTEM. IT SUPPORTS AN INTEGRATED AND BALANCED DEVELOPMENT THAT CREATES A

KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PIOUS PEOPLE WHO HOLD NOBLE VALUES INCLUDING HONESTY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS, AND WHO ARE PREPARED TO TAKE ON GLOBAL CHALLENGES. IN SHORT, IT IS AN APPROACH TO CATER FOR THE CHANGING MODERN AGE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE WORLDVIEW OF ISLAM.

27. AS A GOVERNMENT THAT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT MUSLIMS ARE ABLE TO MEET CURRENT CHALLENGES WITHOUT DEVIATING FROM THEIR FAITH, THE DOORS OF IJTIHAD MUST BE OPENED, SO THAT INTERPRETATIONS ARE SUITED TO THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF THE PREVAILING TIMES AND CONDITIONS. POLICIES MUST BE BALANCED. DEVELOPMENT MUST ENCOMPASS THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE ECONOMY. IT SHOULD INCLUDE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT VIA A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDES THE INCULCATION OF NOBLE IDEALS THROUGH SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE ASSIMILATION OF RELIGIOUS VALUES.

28. THE ISLAM HADHARI APPROACH IS COMPLETE AND COMPREHENSIVE BECAUSE IT EMPHASIZES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMY AND CIVILIZATION THAT IS CAPABLE OF BUILDING THE UMMAH'S COMPETITIVENESS. THE GLORIOUS HERITAGE OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION IN ALL ASPECTS MUST BE USED AS REFERENCE AND BECOME THE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR SOCIETY, AS A WHOLE, TO PROSPER.

29. WE NEED TO USHER A CHANGE OF MINDSET AMONG THE UMMAH. THIS REQUIRES ACTIONS THAT ARE ENCOMPASSING, COMPREHENSIVE AND SYSTEMATIC, REGARDLESS OF SECTOR OR PARTISAN LOYALTY. IT REQUIRES SOCIETY TO CHANGE THEIR TASAWWUR (WORLDVIEW). CONSISTENT WITH THIS, THE CONCEPT OF LIFE AS SERVICE TO GOD AND THE CONCEPT OF WORK AS WORSHIP, HUMANS AS CALIPHS, AND THE OBLIGATION TO SEEK STRENGTH IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE, MUST BE ACCENTUATED. IN PARTICULAR, WE MUST INSTILL THE OBJECTIVE OF MAQASID AL SYARIAH WHICH SEEKS TO SAFEGUARD, DIGNIFY AND EMPOWER RELIGION, INTELLECT, LIFE, PROPERTY AND PROGENY.

30. A CONSISTENT EFFORT TO ENSURE LASTING SUCCESS MUST BE PREPARED. ANY THINKING THAT CONFUSES AND WHICH IS INCONSISTENT WITH ISLAMIC BELIEFS MUST BE REJECTED IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE UMMAH RESILIENCE AND CLARITY IN THINKING. A CHANGE IN ATTITUDE AND CULTURE REQUIRES IJTIHAD AND JIHAD (STRUGGLE). THE CONCEPT OF JIHAD MUST BE GIVEN A BROADER INTERPRETATION, COVERING ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE, INCLUDING THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE, THE MASTERY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. THIS IMPROVEMENT IN QUALITY (ITOQAN) MUST BECOME PART OF OUR CULTURE. IJTIHAD THAT CAN BUILD THE UMMAH IN THE MODERN DAY MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

31. SOCIETY MUST BE GIVEN ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING THAT ENABLES THE APPRECIATION OF, AND PROVIDES THE ABILITY TO FULFILL, A VISION OF A GLOBAL CIVILIZATION. WE MUST AIM TO BE SUCCESSFUL GLOBAL PLAYERS. AS A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE COMPETITIVENESS, THE SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD (UKHUWAH ISLAMIAH) MUST BE INCULCATED AND EXPANDED TO

CREATE A STRONG SOCIAL NETWORK. SOCIETY MUST APPRECIATE SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON OTHERS. NEGATIVE TRAITS AND VALUES MUST BE CHANGED TO ACCOMMODATE THE VALUES OF THE TASAWWUR.

32. THE UMMAH MUST BE A SOCIETY THAT EMBRACES KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERTISE. THESE ARE ESSENTIAL FOR CAPACITY BUILDING. ISLAM MAKES IT COMPULSORY FOR MUSLIMS TO EMBRACE KNOWLEDGE IN ALL FIELDS. THE MISCONCEPTION MUST BE CORRECTED THAT THERE EXISTS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN SO-CALLED SECULAR KNOWLEDGE AND RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE. ISLAM DEMANDS THE MASTERY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF SKILLS AND EXPERTISE. MANY VERSES IN THE QURAN THAT TOUCH ON THE NEED TO MASTER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE STUDIED. ALL MUSLIM STUDENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF ISLAM'S CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THAT BROUGHT ABOUT THE BIRTH OF THE RENAISSANCE IN EUROPE. INITIATIVES TO PRODUCE MORE MUSLIM SCIENTISTS WHO ARE CAPABLE OF MAKING NEW DISCOVERIES MUST BE INTENSIFIED.

33. LIFE ON THIS EARTH IS A JOURNEY THAT REQUIRES US TO DISCHARGE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO SOCIETY IN AN HONEST, TRANSPARENT AND TRUSTWORTHY MANNER. MANKIND WILL NOT FULLY BENEFIT FROM THIS LIFE IF THEIR ATTITUDE AND WORLDVIEW IS NOT AS IT SHOULD BE. INDEED, ALLAH CREATED MAN TO BE TRUSTEES ON EARTH. IT IS THEREFORE IMPERATIVE FOR MANKIND TO ARM ITSELF WITH BENEFICIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO ATTAIN SUCCESS IN THIS WORLD.

34. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE UMMAH TO BE GUIDED IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICE OF ISLAM AS A COMPREHENSIVE WAY OF LIFE AND AS A MEANS TO BUILD A CIVILIZATION. A WHOLESOME WAY OF LIFE WILL CREATE THE BALANCE BETWEEN OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS WORLD AND THE HEREAFTER. ISLAM IS DEFINITELY NOT MERELY RITUALISM. THE GOVERNMENT HAS NEVER PRACTICED SECULARISM THAT REJECTS THE HEREAFTER AND FOCUSES SOLELY ON WORLDLY MATTERS. ISLAM MUST BE LIVED AS A SYSTEM THAT CONSIDERS BOTH THE SACRED AND THE ORDINARY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

35. IN THE CONTEXT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN WEST AND THE MUSLIM WORLD, WE NEED TO EMPHASIZE THAT ISLAM IS A RELIGION THAT UPHOLDS THE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH OTHER RELIGIONS. ISLAM STANDS FOR PEACE AND COOPERATION BETWEEN CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS. IN THIS REGARD, I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT TODAY WHAT I HAVE ALREADY STATED IN SEVERAL OF MY SPEECHES BEFORE THIS, THAT THE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE WESTERN AND ISLAMIC CIVILIZATIONS WILL GROW AND INTENSIFY FOR SO LONG AS ONE SIDE ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL AND DOMINATE THE OTHER. THERE MUST BE MUTUAL RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER. RECIPROCITY SHOULD BE THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLE THAT CONDITIONS RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WEST AND ISLAM. THE WEST SHOULD TREAT ISLAM THE WAY IT WANTS ISLAM TO TREAT THE WEST. BOTH SIDES SHOULD ACCEPT EACH OTHER AS EQUALS. RESPECT, RECIPROCITY

AND EQUALITY: THESE ARE THE ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES FOR A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO CIVILIZATIONS.

36. CHALLENGES, UNCERTAINTIES AND CRISES ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE INCREASING IN FREQUENCY AND RAPIDITY. THE MUSLIM UMMAH AND THE WORLD AT LARGE WILL FACE TREMENDOUS DIFFICULTIES IN NAVIGATING THE INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS TERRAIN AND TREACHEROUS CONDITIONS. IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKDROP THAT THE APPROACH OF ISLAM HADHARI PROVIDES A SOUND FRAMEWORK AND WORKABLE PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE UMMAH AS WELL AS GENERAL SOCIETY THROUGH THE MOST TESTING OF CIRCUMSTANCES. BY BEING CONTEMPORARY, BUT FIRMLY ROOTED IN THE NOBLE INJUNCTIONS OF ISLAM, ISLAM HADHARI OFFERS CLARITY ON THE MOST BASIC YET MOST PRESSING CONCERNS OF GOVERNANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

37. I FEEL VERY PRIVILEGED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF SPEAKING THIS MORNING AT THIS VERY TIMELY CONFERENCE WHICH IS DEDICATED TO ADDRESSING URGENT ISSUES CRITICAL FOR THE UMMAH, AND INDEED FOR THE WORLD AT LARGE. IT IS MY PLEASURE TO WELCOME ALL THE INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS TO THIS GATHERING. I DO HOPE THAT ALL OF YOU WILL HAVE SUBSTANTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS – FOR THE GOOD OF THE UMMAH AND ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD. I PRAY TO ALLAH THAT YOU WILL HAVE A SUCCESSFUL AND FRUITFUL CONFERENCE.

THANK YOU.