

**SPEECH BY  
YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH BIN HAJI AHMAD BADAWI  
AT THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON "THE MAKKAH DECLARATION:  
IMPLEMENTING THE ECONOMIC AGENDA OF THE MUSLIM WORLD" - "THE  
MAKKAH DECLARATION: MAKING VISION REALITY"  
AT NIKKO HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR  
2 SEPTEMBER 2007**

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BISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM

ASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI WABARAKATUH

DATO' SERI MOHAMED JAWHAR HASSAN  
CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF ISIS MALAYSIA,

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

1. TWENTY MONTHS AGO IN DECEMBER 2005, SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE BIRTHPLACE OF ITS RELIGION, THE MUSLIM WORLD MADE A SOLEMN DECLARATION. IT UNDERTOOK TO EMBARK UPON A JOURNEY THAT WOULD TRANSFORM THE MUSLIM WORLD FROM ONE OF THE LESS DEVELOPED COMMUNITIES TO AMONG THE MOST ADVANCED. THE FIRST VITAL STEP IN THIS JOURNEY WAS TO BE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A TEN-YEAR PROGRAMME OF ACTION THAT WOULD EFFECTIVELY CHANGE AFFECTED PARTS OF THE MUSLIM WORLD IN ALMOST EVERY SPHERE – THE POLITICAL AND THE INTELLECTUAL, THE ECONOMIC AND THE SCIENTIFIC, THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL.

2. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS INTERNATIONAL FORUM ORGANISED BY ISIS MALAYSIA IS TO ASSESS OUR PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE MAKKAH DECLARATION AND ITS ACTION PLAN. I COMMEND THIS INITIATIVE AS A MOST TIMELY AND RELEVANT ONE, AND I PARTICULARLY WELCOME THE FOCUS ON THE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES OF THE MUSLIM WORLD.

3. AS THOSE WHO HAVE FOLLOWED MY THOUGHTS WELL KNOW, IT IS MY PASSIONATE BELIEF THAT THE EMANCIPATION OF THE MUSLIM WORLD WILL ULTIMATELY REVOLVE AROUND THEIR COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING. WHEN MUSLIMS ARE NO LONGER POOR AND SICK, WHEN THEY ARE NO LONGER ILLITERATE AND UNEMPLOYED, AND WHEN THEIR NATIONS ARE NO LONGER CRIPPLED BY DEBT, THEY WILL BEGIN TO REGAIN THEIR ECONOMIC WELL-BEING. WHEN MUSLIM NATIONS BECOME RICH IN KNOWLEDGE, WHEN THEY MASTER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND WHEN THEY BECOME LEADERS IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION THEY WILL ASSUME THEIR PLACE AMONG THE PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES OF THE WORLD.

4. BUT TO FULLY RECOVER ITS DIGNITY AND BE WORTHY OF THE TERM "DEVELOPED" THE MUSLIM WORLD MUST BE MUCH MORE. MUSLIM NATIONS MUST NO LONGER BE OCCUPIED BY A FOREIGN POWER OR BE OPPRESSED BY THEIR OWN. MUSLIMS SHOULD BE FREE TO CHOOSE THE WAY THEY WISH TO BE GOVERNED AND THE REPRESENTATIVES THEY WISH TO BE GOVERNED BY. JUSTICE, EQUITY AND THE RULE OF LAW SHOULD BE THE FOUNDATIONS UPON WHICH MUSLIM SOCIETY IS BUILT. RIGHTS MUST BE RESPECTED, WOMEN FULLY

EMPOWERED, AND MINORITIES PROTECTED. ONLY THEN CAN WE CONSIDER OURSELVES FULLY DEVELOPED.

5. THE PEACE AND STABILITY THAT WE ALL SEEK CAN ONLY TAKE HOLD AND FLOURISH IN SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT. PEOPLE WHOSE LEGITIMATE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS ARE MET WILL SEE LITTLE CAUSE TO COMMIT CRIME, JOIN AN INSURGENCY OR ENGAGE IN TERRORISM. IT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE MUSLIM WORLD AND INDEED THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THAT THESE CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR HUMAN DIGNITY PREVAIL IN ALL SOCIETIES.

6. WE OF THE MUSLIM WORLD CAN CLAIM SOME PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN THIS REGARD. PEACE AND STABILITY PREVAIL IN MANY COUNTRIES, AMONG THEM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND MY OWN COUNTRY. THERE ARE MUSLIM COUNTRIES THAT ARE NOT ONLY AMONG THE MOST PROSPEROUS IN THE WORLD, BUT THAT ALSO RANK AMONG THOSE HIGH IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. THEY CAN BE COUNTED AMONG THE MOST ECONOMICALLY PROGRESSIVE IN THE WORLD.

7. THERE ARE MUSLIMS OF GREAT INTELLECTUAL STATURE TOO WHOSE IDEAS AND ENERGY HAVE HELPED, SOMETIMES SINGLE - HANDEDLY, TRANSFORM AN ENTIRE SOCIETY. ONE OF THEM IS NOBEL LAUREATE PROFESSOR MUHAMMAD YUNUS OF BANGLADESH. HE AND HIS GRAMEEN BANK HAVE BECOME AN INSPIRATION TO THE ENTIRE WORLD.

8. REPRESENTATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS ARE ALSO ALIVE AND WELL IN THE MUSLIM WORLD. FROM TURKEY IN EUROPE TO MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA IN ASIA, AND FROM MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES TO MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN INDIA, MUSLIMS THRIVE IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES.

9. WOMEN ENJOY PROMINENT AND DIGNIFIED POSITIONS IN MANY MUSLIM COUNTRIES. IN INDONESIA, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH WOMEN HAVE SERVED AS PRESIDENTS AND PRIME MINISTERS. HERE IN MALAYSIA DISTINGUISHED WOMEN LEAD THE CENTRAL BANK AND HELM KEY MINISTRIES AND UNIVERSITIES. WOMEN IN MANY WESTERN, DEVELOPED SOCIETIES HAVE YET TO ACHIEVE THIS LEVEL OF ACCOMPLISHMENT.

10. ISLAM LIBERATED ITS FOLLOWERS FROM SLAVERY NEARLY FOURTEEN HUNDRED YEARS AGO. SLAVERY WAS STILL LEGAL IN A WESTERN COUNTRY LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

11. THE MUSLIM WORLD HAS ALSO WITNESSED TANGIBLE PROGRESS IN KEY AREAS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RECENT YEARS. REAL GDP GROWTH RATES OF OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES ALMOST DOUBLED IN AVERAGE FROM 2.9 PERCENT IN 2001 TO 5.6 PERCENT IN 2005. SIMILARLY, PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE WITH REGARD TO OTHER INDICATORS LIKE INCIDENCE OF POVERTY, ADULT LITERACY RATES, SCHOOL ENROLMENT AND ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH FACILITIES.

12. THE IDENTIFICATION OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS WITH VIOLENCE AND INSTABILITY, POVERTY AND ILLITERACY, INJUSTICE AND INEQUITY IS THEREFORE HIGHLY MISLEADING. YET IT CANNOT BE DENIED THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION IN RECENT YEARS, LARGE PARTS OF THE MUSLIM WORLD ARE INDEED AMONG THE MOST UNDERDEVELOPED IN THE WORLD, AND SEVERE DEPRIVATIONS AFFLICT THE UMMAH IN MANY SOCIETIES. THOSE OF US WHO ARE GATHERED HERE KNOW ONLY TOO WELL WHAT THESE ARE.

13. WAR, CONFLICT AND PESTILENCE ARE A TRAGIC FEATURE OF THE LANDSCAPE OF SEVERAL OIC COUNTRIES. ONE-FIFTH OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION ARE MUSLIMS, YET THEY OWN ONLY ONE-TWENTIETH OF GLOBAL OUTPUT. HALF THE POPULATION IN IDB MEMBER COUNTRIES EARN ON LESS THAN \$2 A DAY. IN THE OIC COUNTRIES TWO-THIRDS OF THE POOR ARE WOMEN. NEARLY HALF OF THE 50 LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES LISTED LAST YEAR WERE OIC COUNTRIES. IN 2004, THE AVERAGE PER CAPITA GDP OF OIC COUNTRIES WAS LESS THAN ONE-QUARTER THE WORLD AVERAGE.

14. THE UMMAH SUFFERS FROM A SEVERE DEFICIT IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGY KNOWLEDGE AND NEW KNOWLEDGE AS WELL. ALL THE 57 OIC COUNTRIES COMBINED PRODUCED A TOTAL OF 45,425 S&T JOURNAL ARTICLES IN 2005. IN COMPARISON, JAPAN ALONE PRODUCED 95,224 ARTICLES. THE OIC AVERAGE FOR R&D EXPENDITURE AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP IN 1996-2003 WAS 0.38 PERCENT. THE WORLD AVERAGE WAS FOUR TIMES THAT OF THE OIC.

15. IT IS THEREFORE A CREDIT TO THE MUSLIM WORLD THAT TWO YEARS AGO IN DECEMBER IN MAKKAH WE RESOLVED TO NO LONGER TOLERATE THIS SITUATION. IN THE WORDS OF THE HISTORIC MAKKAH DECLARATION, "ALL THE GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES OF THE UMMAH ARE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR CONVICTION THAT REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT ARE THE PRIORITY TO WHICH ALL EFFORTS SHOULD BE CHANNЕLED".

16. WE ACCORDINGLY ADOPTED THE TEN-YEAR PROGRAMME OF ACTION WHICH COMMITTED US, IN ITS OWN WORDS, TO "A NEW VISION AND MISSION FOR A BRIGHTER, MORE PROSPEROUS AND DIGNIFIED FUTURE FOR THE UMMAH".

17. WE HAVE SINCE BEEN HARD AT WORK IMPLEMENTING THIS PROGRAMME OF ACTION. NONE HAVE PERHAPS PERSEVERED MORE THAN THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE OIC AND THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK. IT IS A SIGN OF THEIR COMMITMENT THAT BOTH ARE REPRESENTED HERE AT THIS FORUM AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS. I JOIN ISIS IN WELCOMING H.E. TAN SRI DR. AHMED MOHAMED ALI AL-MADANI OF THE IDB AND H.E. AMBASSADOR THIerno NABIKA DIALLO OF THE OIC.

18. WE OF THE UMMAH SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS AS TO THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK BEFORE US. TURNING ONE COUNTRY AROUND IS ALREADY AN ENORMOUS CHALLENGE. TRANSFORMING ENTIRE PORTIONS OF THE UMMAH ACROSS SEVERAL CONTINENTS IS A COLOSSAL UNDERTAKING INDEED. BUT AFTER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AND MORE ON THE FRINGES OF HISTORY AND IN THE BACKWATERS OF PROGRESS, THE MUSLIM WORLD MUST BE PREPARED TO EXERT EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT.

19. I AM SURE WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED MANY PROBLEMS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION IN THE LAST TWENTY MONTHS. WE WILL NO DOUBT CONFRONT MANY MORE CHALLENGES IN THE YEARS AHEAD. BUT I BELIEVE THAT IT IS FUNDAMENTAL FOR OUR SUCCESS THAT WE ACCOMPLISH AT LEAST FIVE CORE THINGS:

- FIRST, TO SUSTAIN COLLECTIVE POLITICAL WILL;
- SECOND, TO BEGIN WITH THE REFORM WITHIN, IN OUR MINDS AND IN OUR HEARTS;

- THIRD, TO RECOGNISE THE UTTER CENTRALITY OF DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL;
- FOURTH, TO ALLOCATE THE NECESSARY RESOURCES; AND
- FIFTH, TO MOBILISE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND WORK WITH IT TO UPLIFT THE WELFARE OF THE UMMAH.

LET ME ELABORATE ON THESE FIVE IMPERATIVES.

20. FIRST, THE NECESSITY TO SUSTAIN POLITICAL WILL. THE MAKKAH DECLARATION WAS THE OUTCOME OF THE EXERCISE OF COLLECTIVE POLITICAL WILL AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE UMMAH. DECLARATIONS THOUGH ARE ONLY THE BEGINNING; THEY ARE NOT THE END. MANY SOLEMN DECLARATIONS GATHER DUST ON THE SHELVES OF HISTORY, BECAUSE THE WILL TO IMPLEMENT WAS WEAK AND FOLLOW THROUGH SLACKENED. THE MAKKAH DECLARATION SHOULD NOT BECOME ONE OF THESE.

21. THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION IS THERE TO ENSURE THIS, AND THE OIC HAS APPROVED SEVERAL OVERSIGHT MEASURES TO PROMPT AND PLOT THE PROGRESS. BUT AFTER 20 OF THE 120 MONTHS WE HAVE ALLOCATED OURSELVES, WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO MOVE SIGNIFICANTLY BEYOND THE PREPARATORY PLANNING AND COORDINATION STAGES. IT IS TIME THE MEMBER STATES ESPECIALLY PLAYED THEIR PART MORE VIGOROUSLY, AND THAT THEY REMAIN FULLY AND DEEPLY COMMITTED OVER THE LONG RUN.

22. I BELIEVE THAT THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT AND THE OIC ORGANS ALSO NEED TO BE STRENGTHENED IN ORDER TO ENABLE THEM TO EFFECTIVELY DIRECT THE EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION.

23. SECOND, THE NEED TO BEGIN WITH REFORM FROM WITHIN, IN OUR MINDS AND IN OUR HEARTS. THE UMMAH HAVE FALLEN BEHIND BECAUSE WE FAILED TO SUSTAIN THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES THAT DROVE US TO GREAT FEATS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AND DIZZYING HEIGHTS OF CIVILIZATION. UNTIL WE RECOVER THESE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES AND INCULCATE THEM IN THE UMMAH WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DEVELOP AND RESTORE OUR DIGNITY.

24. ONE OF THESE VALUES IS THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE AS A FUNDAMENTAL INJUNCTION OF ISLAM. IT IS IN FACT A RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION FOR MUSLIMS TO SEEK KNOWLEDGE AND TO EXPLORE NEW HORIZONS OF KNOWLEDGE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF HUMANITY. THIS KNOWLEDGE IS NOT JUST RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE BUT KNOWLEDGE IN EVERY REALM BENEFICIAL TO MANKIND. IT INCLUDES THE SCIENCES, THE ARTS, THE PHILOSOPHIES AND BUSINESS. UNFORTUNATELY, IN MANY OF OUR SOCIETIES OVER THE CENTURIES WE CLOSED OUR MINDS AND ALLOWED THE WEIGHT OF TRADITION AND FALSE RELIGIOUS INTERPRETATION TO STIFLE ENQUIRY AND INVENTION. WE LIMITED KNOWLEDGE TO RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE IN SOME OF THE MADRSAHS, AND IN SO DOING WE DID GREAT DISSERVICE TO PROGRESSIVE ISLAM AND MUSLIMS. WE COMMITTED OURSELVES TO ROTE LEARNING IN EVERYTHING, AND THEREBY EXTINGUISHED THE SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

25. ANOTHER ISLAMIC VALUE IS WORK AS A FORM OF IBADAH OR WORSHIP. WHEN WE WORK WE ARE ACTUALLY SERVING AND ENDEAVORING IN THE WAY OF ALLAH.

GOOD AND DEVOUT MUSLIMS ARE DISTINGUISHED NOT ONLY BY THEIR FULFILLMENT OF RELIGIOUS RITUALS BUT ALSO BY THEIR HARD WORK AND INDUSTRY. LAZY MUSLIMS ARE NOT GOOD MUSLIMS. IN MANY SOCIETIES WE HAVE NEGLECTED TO INCULCATE THIS VALUE AMONG THE UMMAH.

26. THE REFORM WITHIN ALSO INCLUDES THE REASSERTION OF GOOD PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE. JUSTICE; THE RULE OF LAW; PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE; RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF ALL, MUSLIMS AS WELL AS NON-MUSLIMS, AND WOMEN AS MUCH AS MEN; AND MODERATION AND COMPASSION – THESE WERE ALL HALLMARKS OF ISLAMIC GOVERNANCE AND CIVILIZATION. THESE VIRTUES HAVE DULLED IN PARTS OF THE MUSLIM WORLD TODAY. WE WILL NOT BECOME FULLY DEVELOPED UNTIL WE HAVE RESTORED THEM.

27. THIRD, THE RECOGNITION THAT DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL NEEDS TO BE THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. OUR GREATEST ASSETS LIE NOT IN THE RESOURCES THAT LIE BENEATH THE GROUND OR IN THE FLORA AND FAUNA THAT FLOURISH UPON IT. IT LIES IN THE POTENTIAL THAT IS LOCKED IN OUR BEING. WE WILL PROGRESS FARTHEST WHEN WE UNLOCK AND DEVELOP THIS POTENTIAL. AS WE MOVE INTO THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY, THIS HUMAN CAPITAL ASSET WILL BECOME EVEN MORE VALUABLE AND INDISPENSABLE. QUALITY EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING WILL BE ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL IF THE MUSLIM WORLD IS TO ATTAIN HIGH HUMAN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

28. IN THIS REGARD, WE CAN NEVER ACHIEVE THE VISION AND THE GOALS OF THE MAKKAH DECLARATION IF IN SOME SOCIETIES WE NEGLECT THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND THE RIGHT TO WORK FOR WOMEN. WOMEN CONSTITUTE HALF THE RESOURCES AND HALF THE HUMAN CAPITAL OF THE MUSLIM WORLD. MARGINALISING WOMEN MARGINALISES THE MUSLIM WORLD. WE ONLY IMPOVERISH OURSELVES. THE MUSLIM WORLD CANNOT REGAIN ITS DIGNITY AND ESTEEM WITHOUT FULLY EMPOWERING AND EMANCIPATING WOMEN.

29. FOURTH, WE MUST COMMIT THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO MAKE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEN-YEAR PROGRAMME A RESOUNDING SUCCESS. NOTHING CAN BE DONE WITHOUT THE NECESSARY RESOURCES. HOW PROMPT AND FORTHCOMING WE ARE IN THIS RESPECT WILL BE A MEASURE OF THE POLITICAL COMMITMENT WE HAVE FOR FULFILLING THE VISION OF THE MAKKAH DECLARATION. THOSE OF US WHO HAVE MORE RESOURCES AND GREATER EXPERTISE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE MORE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE UMMAH. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE GREATEST PRIORITY SHOULD BE ACCORDED TO THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND COMMUNITIES OF THE MUSLIM WORLD.

30. IN THIS CONNECTION, MAY I BE SO BOLD AS TO PLACE ONE SIMPLE IDEA BEFORE YOU. MAY I PROPOSE THAT INDIVIDUAL MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, CORPORATIONS VETTED AND ENDORSED BY THESE GOVERNMENTS, AND EVEN RESPECTED NGOS, BE ENCOURAGED TO “ADOPT” PROJECTS OF THEIR CHOOSING IN THE OIC PLAN OF ACTION, THAT THEY CAN CHAMPION AND IMPLEMENT. ALL PROPOSALS FOR THIS PURPOSE ARE TO BE EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT. I BELIEVE THAT THIS APPROACH CAN YIELD OUTSTANDING RESULTS. IT BESTOWS PRIDE OF OWNERSHIP, EXPANDS THE POOL OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE OIC AND PROVIDES GREAT MOTIVATION FOR SPEEDY EXECUTION.

31. FIFTH AND LAST, THE MUSLIM WORLD CAN ADVANCE MORE RAPIDLY WHEN IT SEEKS COMMON CAUSE WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD. INDEED, WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE. WE ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY. OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES TRADE MORE EXTENSIVELY WITH OTHER COUNTRIES THAN WITH EACH OTHER. INVESTMENT FROM OUTSIDE THE OIC IS GREATER THAN INVESTMENT FROM WITHIN WHILE WE WILL PRESS AHEAD .WITH INITIATIVES SPECIFIC TO THE OIC COMMUNITY SUCH AS A TRADE PREFERENTIAL SYSTEM, WE MUST BE PRAGMATIC. WE MUST ENGAGE WITH ALL WHO CAN HELP US DEVELOP AND GENERATE WEALTH EVEN AS WE GENERATE WEALTH FOR THEM.

32. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOPED NATIONS HAVE PLENTY TO OFFER MUSLIM NATIONS AND COMMUNITIES. INDEED, THEY ARE ALREADY DOING MUCH THROUGH PROGRAMMES SUCH AS THOSE DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, THE NEW ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA AND THE BRUSSELS AGENDA FOR LDCS.

33. I WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE A CLOSE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE MUSLIM WORLD TO HELP ACHIEVE THE DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS OF THE MAKKAH DECLARATION. SUCH A PARTNERSHIP WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN EACH OTHER AND CLOSING THE DANGEROUS DIVIDE THAT HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN THEM. THE WEST HAS MUCH TO GAIN FROM THE EMERGENCE OF A MORE PEACEFUL, STABLE AND PROSPEROUS MUSLIM WORLD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

34. THE GOVERNMENT WHICH I NOW LEAD HAS EMBARKED ON A PROGRAM TO COMMUNICATE A PROPER APPRECIATION OF ISLAM AS A FORCE FOR GOOD. WE CALL THE APPROACH ISLAM HADHARI. IT IS AN APPROACH FOR ACHIEVING A PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH MODERNITY YET FIRMLY ROOTED IN THE NOBLE VALUES AND INJUNCTIONS OF ISLAM. IT IS A CALL FOR EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS. IT IS A CALL FOR MODERATION AND TOLERANCE AS WELL AS THE ASSURANCE OF JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS FOR ALL.

35. THE NOBLE VISION AND LOFTY OBJECTIVES OF THE MAKKAH DECLARATION HAVE A SINGULAR APPEAL FOR ME, FOR I SEE REFLECTED IN THEM THE SPIRIT OF ISLAM HADHARI. INDEED, THE SIMILARITIES ARE TRULY REMARKABLE. VIRTUALLY EVERY PRINCIPLE OF ISLAM HADHARI IS EMBEDDED IN THE DECLARATION AND ITS ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME OF ACTION. LET ME CITE THEM: FAITH AND PIETY TOWARDS ALLAH; A JUST AND TRUSTWORTHY GOVERNMENT; A FREE AND LIBERATED PEOPLE; RIGOROUS PURSUIT AND MASTERY OF KNOWLEDGE; BALANCED AND COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE; PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF MINORITY GROUPS AND WOMEN; CULTURAL AND MORAL INTEGRITY; SAFEGUARDING OF THE ENVIRONMENT; AND STRONG DEFENCE CAPABILITIES.

36. IT IS LITTLE WONDER THEN, THAT I AM SO PASSIONATELY COMMITTED TO THE PROMOTION AND FULFILLMENT OF THE MAKKAH DECLARATION.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

37. MAY ALLAH BLESS YOU AND GUIDE YOU IN YOUR DELIBERATIONS.