

**THE GRAND FRIDAY MOSQUE AND ISLAMIC CENTRE
IN MALE**

11 NOVEMBER 1984

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim. Assalamu 'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh. Your Excellency President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and Madame Gayoom; Excellencies; Ladies and Gentlemen.

My wife and I are very happy and privileged to be in Maldives at Your Excellency's kind invitation. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank Your Excellency, Madame Gayoom, the government and people of the Republic of Maldives for the warm and brotherly welcome and the generous hospitality extended to us and members of my delegation since our arrival yesterday.

2. All praise to Allah Subhanahu Wataala for His blessings and salutations to the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings be upon him. It is indeed an honour for me to be invited to this auspicious Official Opening of the Grand Friday Mosque and Islamic Centre of Male', and to be given this opportunity to address this distinguished gathering.

3. Your Excellency, I have looked forward very much to be here today to share with you and the people of Maldives the pride and joy, and together with all who are gathered here to express our profound gratitude to Allah Subhanahu Wataala. As we approached Male' yesterday the tall and imposing minaret of the mosque provided a breathtaking view for my wife and I and members of my delegation, as it would, I am sure, to other travellers to your beautiful country. I feel particularly proud that Malaysians had participated in the designing and construction of this beautiful place of worship. I have no doubt that the distinguished leaders and representatives of Islamic nations who are gathered here today feel equally proud of their countries' own participation.

4. Indeed this Grand Mosque and Islamic Centre is not only a landmark for Male', but it is also another significant landmark of cooperation and solidarity among Islamic countries. It is a standing example that Islamic countries can meaningfully assist and contribute to the progress of one another. I hold in high regard the government and people of Maldives for being instrumental in bringing about this latest testimony of Islamic cooperation and solidarity.

5. Your Excellency, allow me to reiterate the importance of unity among the Muslim Ummah and solidarity between Islamic countries in our pursuit for the economic, social and moral well-being and upliftment of the Muslim Ummah the world over. Let us be reminded that Islam is not purely for the Hereafter. The glory and supremacy of Islamic values and teachings rest on the fact that it is not just to prepare us for the next world but also to guide and motivate the Muslim Ummah on the path of economic and social well-being for them in the present world. It is in recognition of this, that my government is making every effort to inject Islamic values in the administration of our country. We have every faith and confidence that Allah Subhanahu Wataala will bear with us and bless us with success in this endeavour.

6. The last four centuries does us the Muslim Ummah little credit. We have not reflected the essence of Islam that was once the pace setter of progress and humanity. Our future must reflect a new approach. We must have clearly crystallised ideas and well articulated goals. We need to understand Islam within the context of the contemporary world, with the changed and ever changing conditions of life. We cannot recreate the world of the early years of Islam. We should therefore reorganise our political, social and economic life to suit these changes in a way that fully incorporates the injunctions of Islam to ensure that a socially healthy, politically coherent and economically efficient and vigorous Muslim Ummah would emerge and be able to face all challenges. It is my hope and prayer that the Grand Friday Mosque and Islamic Centre of Male' will be a seat of study and research, and in close cooperation with other Islamic centres of learning in this world, push the frontiers of human knowledge even further forward.

7. Your Excellency, may I say once again that it is a pleasure to be back in the "Paradise of the Indian Ocean". This opportunity to address today's distinguished gathering is indeed a great honour and privilege to me personally, and also to my country.

8. In a short while we would all be offering our prayers to Allah in this new Grand Friday Mosque. Let us all pray to Allah Subhanahu Wataala to bless President Gayoom, Madame Gayoom and the people of Maldives with continued good health, happiness and prosperity.

Thank you.