

The Extraordinary Islamic Summit Session Of The Organisation Of Islamic Conference (OIC)

Doha, Qatar 15 March 2003

I am indeed pleased to be able to participate at this Extraordinary Islamic Summit Session of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

2. On behalf of my delegation, may I extend my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to His Highness Shaikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, the government and people of Qatar, for the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Doha. May I also congratulate His Highness for convening this Extraordinary Islamic Summit Session despite short notice. I am confident that under Your Highness's leadership, this Summit Session will further advance the cause of our Organisation.

3. I would also like to thank HE Abdulouahed Belkeziz, Secretary General of the OIC, for his effort in facilitating the convening of this Summit Session.

4. Last week we met in Kuala Lumpur during the XIII Summit Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and also during the Informal Consultation of the OIC Leaders. During those meetings, we discussed and exchanged views on, among others, challenges in the global environment against the backdrop of the worsening situation in the Middle East. The NAM Summit adopted two declarations on Iraq and Palestine respectively. The Informal Consultation among OIC Leaders also discussed these two same issues. The two meetings in Kuala Lumpur sent a very clear message - we are opposed to war against Iraq and we call for a speedy solution to the Palestinian problem.

5. As we meet today, worldwide opposition against war in Iraq continues to be strongly demonstrated. Unfortunately, short of a miracle happening, an attack on Iraq will soon take place with or without the sanction of the United Nations (UN). We as OIC leaders have to help make the miracle happen by joining forces with the rest of the world against war, in particular the war against Iraq.

6. Malaysia remains committed to the fundamental principle of non-use of force in solving conflicts between nations. Malaysia is also opposed to the possession or use of weapons of mass destructions by everyone, without exception. And Malaysia is certainly against unilateral action.

7. In keeping with these stand, Malaysia fully supports the initiatives taken by several members of the UNSC to extend the timeframe for UNMOVIC and IAEA to complete their inspection in Iraq.

8. Malaysia is encouraged by the decision of Iraq to fully cooperate with UNMOVIC and IAEA as well as to comply with relevant UNSC resolutions. If UNMOVIC finds no weapons of mass destruction, it must be assumed that there is none. The UNSC must then refuse to sanction war against Iraq. It is not acceptable that if no weapons are found then it must be because Iraq is hiding them and therefore the UNSC must sanction war against it. Instead if UNMOVIC finds no weapons then sanctions must be lifted. The people of Iraq had already suffered greatly because of the sanction.

9. We are also very concerned over the deteriorating situation in Palestine. Israel is using the excuse of the fight against terrorism after September 11 to conduct terror attacks against the Palestinians. Since the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000, more than 2,800 Palestinians including children have been killed and more than 43,000 were wounded. The bulldozing of Palestinian houses in order to kill the families of suspected terrorists is totally immoral. The Jews who suffered so much during the Holocaust should know the suffering that they are causing. World Jewry must persuade Israelis to stop the killing of Palestinians. Only then can we expect Palestinians not to retaliate in kind.

10. We welcome the efforts of the "Quartet Mediators" in drawing a Road Map for Israeli withdrawal from the West Banks and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State by the year 2005. It is frightening that Israel should be allowed to ignore world opinion while others may not.

11. In the search for a peaceful solution, the Muslim countries have already made a great concession by agreeing to recognise the state of Israel in return for Israel's acceptance of an independent state of Palestine. Since it was the western countries, which created Israel, they must now exert pressure on Israel to accept the Road Map and to stop the senseless killings of innocent Palestinians. To do this Malaysia maintains that a U.N. Protection Force is urgently required.

12. The situations in Iraq and Palestine are linked. The Middle East cannot be stabilised merely by attending to the Iraqi problem alone. Indeed the war against Iraq is likely to worsen the Middle Eastern situation and the terrorist problems of the world. Rendering Iraq totally defenceless and ensuring easy victory will not make the war any more acceptable to

Muslims. Of course permitting Israel to carry out terror attacks and remain in possession of nuclear weapons and threatening to use them will only anger Muslims more and increase recruits for terror attacks. It is for this reason that Malaysia is convinced that the causes of the situation in the Middle East must be carefully analysed so as to formulate a better strategy for a more acceptable result.

13. At this crucial and challenging time, Muslim countries must close ranks and be willing to work together to prevent war against Iraq and to help the Palestinians. For too long, we have been marginalised while important decisions affecting the Muslim Ummah have been decided and imposed upon us from the outside. The OIC's voice has not been shown due consideration because we have failed to speak with one voice.

14. During the Informal Consultation in Kuala Lumpur, we have tried to identify the weaknesses and the strength of the OIC. What remains is for us to formulate a strategy that takes into consideration these factors. If we cannot agree on even this need to think out our strategies then we must accept marginalisation as our lot all the time.

15. With that, let me once again congratulate His Highness Shaikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the 9th Islamic Summit, for organising this Extraordinary Summit.