

**SPEECH BY THE HON TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
AT THE GOLDEN CHARTER FOR PEACE “LINUS PAULING” AWARD
AT BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA ON 31 MAY 2005**

I would like to thank the International League of Humanists for Peace and Tolerance for the honour conferred on me by this award as a person who had personally seen the ugliness and the pain of war, the destruction and the human tragedies, I have always hated war. War solves nothing, war is about killing people. Killing is wrong, every one of us regard killing as criminal some believe that no crime, including murder should deserve the death sentence. Judicial killing is regarded as no less wrong than criminal murder. Of course there are people who believe in a life for a life and that judicial killing for murder is justified but justified or not killing a person is still considered as too extreme. A punishment and judges would try to avoid such a sentence as much as possible.

Yet war, i.e. the killing of people in order to promote national policies is still regarded as legitimate countries that are already militarily powerful are still inventing and developing newer and more efficient ways of killing people these so-called civilized people still uphold the primitive idea that war, i.e. the killing of people is an acceptable way to promote their ideologies and objectives.

They gleefully report the success of their new weapons and the effectiveness of their killing power cluster bombs can go on killing and wounding people long after the war is over. Bombs of 13 tons have now been produced which can penetrate deep into the bowels of the earth, so that no one can be safe even if the bunkers are hundreds of feet below the surface. Depleted uranium coated bullets and missiles would kill victims with diseases, if they survive. The initial blast nuclear warheads for rockets can destroy whole cities without exposing to any danger to the people who launched them from a thousand miles away. Whole fleets of unmanned aircrafts can be sent to crash on towns and cities and wipe out whole populations.

Even if it is instantaneous the exploding weapons kill in the most brutal fashion heads and limbs are torn from the body. The pain must have been terrible but some would survive with arms and legs torn away or hanging by strips of flesh to the body and help would not come immediately when continuous bombing is carried out, rescue would be impossible or much delayed and those with severed arms and legs, with bowels spilled on the ground, pinned under the concrete of shattered buildings would suffer the pain of the damned.

The pictures of these sufferings are never shown the sounds of the screaming of the wounded and the dying is never heard. The world is merely told the numbers of the casualty. In the case of Iraq, the death toll of Iraqis and their wounded are ignored as if their lives are worth nothing, as if they are not humans, with families and friends.

The American death is counted but the body bags being flown home are not shown. Their soldiers must not think that would be how they might return their soldiers must believe they would not die, so they would be prepared to fight and kill. In the past battles were fought on battle grounds by soldiers actually lead by their generals. The generals risk being wounded or killed as much as the soldiers. They thought twice before engaging in wars.

Today whole countries become battle fields, exposed to total destructions. Civilians are not spared. They are merely collaterals and the generals stay thousands of miles away, giving orders or pressing buttons to launch missiles and rockets. The damage, the death and the torn screaming wounded they never see they would go back to their drinking, their carousing and their poker games. Now the media is embedded in the military forces, to enable thrilling reports of the deaths and destruction to be made.

The old wars were quite civilized in a way but modern warfare is barbaric and totally devoid of any human quality. Those who wage wars in our time are lower than animals. The world must condemn wars, must regard wars as crimes. A world court must be given jurisdiction over all who precipitate wars or resort to wars to promote national policies. Only by making all who wage wars as criminals can we have peace.

Every child in every school in the world must be taught that war is a crime there should be no glorification of wars in order to instill national patriotism those who teach the history of their past wars as glorious must be condemned. Peace must be explained and promoted in all schools. The media must do the same until and unless humanity comes to regard war as a crime and peace as the normal state of affairs and the most desirable, we are not going to see a secure and prosperous world.

Once again thank you very much for the Linus Pauling Award that has been conferred on me

I thank you.

distinguished guests;

ladies and gentlemen,