

## **SPEECH BY TUN DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD AT THE 2ND ROYAL CHARITY DINNER AT PALACE OF GOLDEN HORSES ON 13 MAY 2012**

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1. On behalf of the Organising Committee of this 2nd Royal Charity Dinner, as well as the members of the Board of Trustees and the officers and staff of Perdana Global Peace Foundation (PGPF) and the Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War (KLFCW), I welcome you to this auspicious gathering tonight – the Second Royal Charity Dinner of our Foundation.
2. We are indeed very grateful, honoured and privileged that Their Majesties the Yang di Pertuan Agong and the Raja Permaisuri Agong have both graciously consented to be present with us here tonight.
3. Permit me to say a few words tonight about the Foundation and our efforts towards “criminalising war” since its inception five years ago.
4. On 17 December 2005, the Perdana Global Peace Forum, with the support of thinkers and religious leaders from Malaysia and other parts of the world, agreed that war is a crime.
5. Together we committed ourselves to a declaration called the Kuala Lumpur Initiative to Criminalise War.
6. The forum gave birth to the Perdana Global Peace Organisation, now known as the Perdana Global Peace Foundation, tasked with criminalising war. We work with other non-governmental organisations, in Malaysia and in other parts of the world.
7. The Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War (KLFCW) is a non-governmental organisation established under the laws of Malaysia in March 2007.
8. The main objectives of the Foundation are to change societies’ perception of war, that in war it is legitimate to kill people, millions of people even though all are agreed that killing a person is a crime deserving of the maximum punishment.
9. KLFCW has established, the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission and the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal. The former receives complaints and carries out investigations into war crimes, crimes against peace, crimes of torture etc, and if there is a case to answer proceedings would be carried out against individuals including heads of state and heads of governments. The Chief Prosecutor will then file for criminal proceedings before the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal.

10. The Foundation had sent members to observe the workings of the Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), an international war crimes tribunal established by the United Nations and the Government of Cambodia to try the former leaders of the Khmer Rouge.

11. Members of the Board of Trustees also went to Brussels to witness the proceedings of the International Citizens Tribunal on the Crimes committed by the Israeli Army in Lebanon.

12. In its endeavour to raise public awareness of the plight of the Palestinians in Gaza, the Foundation had organised an "International Forum for Palestine" in February, 2009. A forum was also held in London organised jointly by the Foundation and the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in March, 2009.

13. In October 2009, the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission convened a hearing in Kuala Lumpur where it heard testimony from seven witnesses who were victims of torture by the US military in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

14. This was immediately followed by the convening of the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal, which heard an "Application for an Advisory Opinion" regarding.

"Whether a Head of State and/or Government can unilaterally exempt himself / herself from complying with any provisions of any International Treaties/Conventions (such as the Geneva Conventions) duly ratified by the State without first abrogating the relevant treaty/convention."

15. In delivering its Advisory Opinion, the 5-member panel of Judges unanimously said that no Head of State and no Head of Government can unilaterally exempt himself from complying with any provision of any International Treaties duly ratified by the State.

16. Allow me to focus next on the workings of the Tribunal.

17. The Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal convened a 4-day hearing (in November 2011) in Kuala Lumpur, when the Chief Prosecutor of the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission preferred the charge of "crimes against peace" against former United States president George W. Bush and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

18. At the end of that landmark criminal proceedings, the 5-member Panel of Judges of the Tribunal unanimously found the two accused "had planned, prepared and invaded the state of Iraq on March 19, 2003, in violation of the United Nations Charter and international law".

19. The Tribunal held that the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441 did not authorise any use of force against Iraq but the US nevertheless proceeded to invade Iraq under the pretext of retaliating against that country's September 11, 2001 attacks and Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Later events proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that Saddam was never involved in the September 11 attacks, nor was there any WMDs found in Iraq.

20. The Tribunal ordered that Bush and Blair's names be included in the "Register of War Criminals" of the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission. The findings were made known to all nations who are signatories of the Rome Statute as well as being sent to the International Criminal Court at the Hague, Netherlands.

21. Last week, from 7th to 12th May, 2012, the Tribunal convened again to hear charges of the "Crime of Torture and War Crimes" against 8 accused – namely George Walker Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Cheney, Albert Gonzales, David Addington, William Haynes II, Jay Scott Bybee and John Choon Yoo. At the conclusion of the week-long hearing, the 5-member Panel of Judges held that on the evidence provided by the prosecution and the failure of the defence to rebut the prosecution statements, the eight accused persons were found guilty as charged.

22. NoW, Allow me to explain why war should be made a crime.

23. all wars involve killing people, mostly innocent non-combatants. All wars involve massive killings and unmitigated brutality.

24. I am reminded of what a Greek social reformer, Vassilis Epaminondou, once said – "If you kill one person, you are a murderer. If you kill ten people you are a monster. If you kill ten thousand, you are a national hero".

25. Stalin put it in another way "A single death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic." This attitude of mind cannot be compatible with our claim to be civilised.

26. Slavery like war was once considered legitimate. It took the human community centuries to abolish slavery. It may take an equally long time to criminalise war. But the first steps must be taken now if we wish to abolish war as a means of settling conflict between nations. We must persist.

27. Former US President John F. Kennedy once said "Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind".

28. Regrettably his country is today most guilty of war which it now calls humanitarian war. Can war ever be humane?

29. The campaign against war and the criminalisation of war must continue.

30. Already we have gathered momentum with support from all the four corners of the globe.

31. We seek your support, your being together with us in this fight, this urgent quest to make war a crime. We must stop the killing, the massive killings that is called war.

32. Your presence tonight, matched by your generous donations to our Foundation, will strengthen our resolve and encourage us to undertake More measures towards the realisation of this noble objective.

33. To quote Albert Einstein – “Either man will abolish war, or war will abolish man”.

34. The gracious presence of their Majesties the King and Queen, and of our distinguished guests tonight, signify the recognition of our efforts to carry on our work to educate the public about war and its disastrous effects on human kind.

35. As a voluntary organisation, we need the support of everyone to sustain the tempo of our activities in the years ahead.

36. I would like to acknowledge and express our sincere gratitude to our sponsors, donors, friends and well-wishers for assisting us during the past few years. Without them and the volunteers, we could not have been able to carry out our activities.

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