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CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS**

Bismillahirrahmanirahim

His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar,

His Excellency Abdelouahed Belkeziz
Secretary General of OIC

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullah hiwabararakatuh,

I would like to thank His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar and His Excellency the Foreign Minister for hosting this 9th Extraordinary Session of the OIC. This meeting is indeed urgent to address a grave situation confronting the global community, in particular the Muslim world. I would also like to express our appreciation for the hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

Mr. Chairman,

2. We meet today after the terrorist attacks on 11 September in New York and Washington and consequently under the cloud of war on Afghanistan. This war was declared by the US and its allies to punish the Talibans for their actions in protecting, harbouring and allowing their territory to be used as training ground for terrorists.

3. I am sure that none of us present here can say that we are not grieved or saddened by the tragedy in New York and Washington. Our religion does not teach us to take innocent lives. We condemn these senseless attacks and all acts of terrorism whether committed by individuals or states. We support actions taken by the international community for cooperation to eliminate terrorism. We know terrorism is our common enemy and it operates with no specific border. It cannot also be associated with any religion or ethnic group. These people are simply terrorists.

4. As a result of the September 11 incident and the portrayal of Islam by the media, we are saddened by the acts of racism and xenophobia committed against people just because of their colour, race or religion. We deeply regret the tendency to portray acts of terrorism as synonymous with Islam or that Islam breeds injustice or extremities. We tend to forget that extreme acts are also committed in the world by people of other races or religions. It is indeed ironic that they are not referred to in the name of their race or religion. This is the sad fate and story of the Islamic Ummah.

5. Justice and equity require us to reflect unemotionally on the need to resolve the issues of terrorism as a common enemy of mankind. Eradication of terrorism would require examining the root causes of the problem if we are to find a lasting and just solution.

6. We should condemn terrorism, whether committed by states or individuals. There should not be selectivity or discrimination or double standard in the fight against terrorism. In other words there must only be one standard. We must support the struggles for a just and equitable cause for self respect, dignity and sovereignty.

7. OIC should always be the champion of justice and fight all forms of oppression. Herein lies our challenging task to see the resolution on the establishment of the Palestinian State. The right to self determination of the Palestinian should not be sidelined as we focus our intention to the question of combating international terrorism. Israel must be forced to stop its terrorist acts. An international protection force should be dispatched to Palestine. There are still injustice and oppression taking place in the globe. The sanctions against Iraq and Libya, and the conflict in Chechnya are outstanding issues that need to be resolved.

8. Malaysia believes that an effective campaign against terrorism would require the holding of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations to examine and discuss the problem in its entirety.

Mr. Chairman,

9. We have already joined others in condemning acts of terrorism and expressed our readiness to foster cooperation amongst members of the international community in combating terrorism. As we all know, Islam condemns all acts of violence and aggression and teaches us about moderation, tolerance and love. It is therefore important that the war against terrorism must not be allowed to be perceived as a war against Islam under any circumstances. In this regard, the OIC should take concerted efforts and concrete actions in trying to correct and project the true image of Islam.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Malaysia is fully supportive of the joint collaborative efforts to combat terrorism. However, Malaysia feels that military actions will not be the solution to the problem. Malaysia considers victory on the battlefields by no means will bring us nearer to winning the war against terrorism. On the contrary, it may create humanitarian catastrophe on innocent civilians, children, women and old people.

11. It is the duty of member countries to be directly involved in alleviating the sufferings of the Afghan people affected by this war and not leaving to the other international organizations to do the job for us in their humanitarian relief efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

12. Let us show our resolve and commitment as a respected organisation to fight terrorism, to protect the interest of Islam, the ummah and Muslim countries and to help our Palestinian brothers to regain their right. I hope the communiqué to be adopted will incorporate practical steps in dealing with these issues:

- i. The holding of international conference on terrorism under the auspices of the UN;
- ii. Our sympathy to the tragedy that hit the US and condemn strongly the attacks on September 11;
- iii. Coordination by the United Nations on efforts to fight terrorism in accordance with all OIC's Resolutions and the United Nations Security Council's Resolutions;
- iv. Welcome the statement by the US on the establishment of a Palestinian state and would like to see this vision implemented;
- v. Sanctions regime should be reviewed to eliminate oppression and suffering;
- vi. To reject any linking of terrorism and Islam and the stereotyping and profiling of terrorism with any race or religion.
- vii. We should mobilize efforts to provide assistance in the form of financing and other material kinds to help the Afghan refugees;
- viii. Promote inter faith dialogues and interaction for the purpose of explaining the real teachings of Islam;
- ix. Immediately implement OIC resolutions pertaining to the role of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and Islamic State Broadcasting Organisation (ISBO) to prepare appropriate programs to disseminate balanced news and reports about Islam;

Mr. Chairman,

13. In addressing the pressing issues before us, the OIC must be seen to be a relevant organisation. We must be united. The world must take into account our views and feelings and not simply ignore them when global efforts are called to fight

against terrorism. Towards this end our Organization must be respected as a group, otherwise the OIC is seen as unimportant. There will be attempts to continue to divide us. It is therefore up to us to determine our positions and the directions we should take.

14. The current situation is rapidly changing and future events would be shaped with or without our participation. It is therefore a testing moment which requires us to re-examine the roles and relevancy of our organization. We must be seen as a contributor to global peace and stability.

Thank you.

10 October 2001