

By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR
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Title : REMARKS AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE OIC ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The Honorable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi
Prime Minister of Malaysia

H.E. Dr Abdelouahed Belkeziz, Secretary General of OIC

Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahhibarokatuh,

I would like to thank The Honorable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia today for his presence at this Special Meeting. I also thank delegates from other countries for their attendance. I know we have given very short notice but your attendance shows the importance and relevancy for this meeting to be held. As Chairman of the 10th OIC summit, Malaysia feels duty bound to call for this meeting amidst the problems and crisis facing the Muslim world and the Ummah. We witness the continued violence in the Middle East, be it in Palestine or Iraq and we also witness the arrogance of power and total disregard for international law and the multilateral process. In other words, we are facing all kinds of pressures in our intention of giving credibility and integrity to the Islamic Ummah. What is obvious is that there is a need for unity and cohesion amongst the Muslims if they want to be counted in the global affairs.

Failing to do this would mean that we would continue to be sidelined, marginalized and deprived in making decisions for our own future. Others will instead make it for us.

Finally, it is in this context that Malaysia has called for this special Meeting, hoping that in the spirit of brotherhood and unity, we will be able to sit down together to look at ourselves and chart our plans. I know that some would consider a meeting of this kind as another rhetorical process but but we would not be fulfilling our obligations as a Muslim and as a member of the international community by remaining silent. It would be better that we speak our minds and state our intentions rather than be muted for fear of being rhetorical.

Mr. Prime Minister,

With the opening address that you are giving us this morning, we hope you will provide us with the necessary guidance and the torch that we need in order to carry forward the struggle of the Palestinian people and the desire of the Iraqi people to

see peace and security being established in their respective countries in a democratic manner. On behalf of all members of the delegation let me thank you for your kind presence in this proceeding.

With these few words, I have great pleasure in inviting the Honorable Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister and Chairman of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference to deliver his address and to officially open the Special Meeting on the Middle East