

**By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR**  
**Venue : ISLAMABAD**  
**Date : 28 MAY 2005**  
**Title : SPEECH AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE 2ND MEETING OF  
THE OIC COMMISSION OF EMINENT PERSONS**

His Excellency Shaukat Aziz  
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

His Excellency Khurshid Kasuri, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

His Excellency Professor Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu  
Secretary General of the OIC

Excellencies, Distinguished Members of the OIC Commission of Eminent Persons,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and Good Morning

It is a great honour and privilege for me to say a few words before this august gathering of OIC commissioners coming from different parts of the Muslim world.

2. At the outset, let me convey my deepest gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for graciously officiating this Second Meeting of the OIC Commission of Eminent Persons in this beautiful city of Islamabad. May I also convey our sincere thanks to the Government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to me and the participants of this very important Meeting. We are indeed very grateful to the commitment of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting this meeting here today.

3. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Professor Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the OIC and the Eminent Commissioners for their presence.

4. As all of you are aware, the main objective of this Meeting is to follow-up and finalise the draft Report which contains a range of recommendations and proposals made by the Commission, when it first met in Putrajaya on 27-29 January 2005.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. Consistent with the mandate given by the OIC Summit at Putrajaya, the Final Report of the Commission will encompass a strategy and plan of action enabling the Ummah to meet the challenges of the 21st century, recommendations for reform and

restructuring of the OIC system and developing strategies for achieving enlightenment and moderation. The aim of enlightenment and moderation can be achieved through an Islamic civilisational approach which we have termed Islam Hadhari approach in Malaysia.

6. These future-oriented plans are, in fact, intertwined, and together, they would furnish the Ummah with practical steps and measures for the empowerment of the Ummah and the revitalisation of the OIC. As an intellectual product of the Commissioners, the recommendations would embody the results of collective Ijtihad and moral courage to change the Ummah from within, for we all know that :

["Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (Verse al-Racd: ayat 11).]

7. I do hope, that this second and final Meeting would be able to finalise the much-awaited Report, within the allocated time, so that it could be submitted to the forthcoming meeting of 32nd OICFM, scheduled to be held in Sana'a, Yemen from 28th-30th June 2005.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. It is vitally important for all of us to work closely together to ensure the timeline and full implementation of the recommendations of the CEP given the grave challenges confronting the Ummah in the areas of politics, security, economics, science and technology and media misrepresentation.

- In the area of politics, we continue to be marginalized in the setting and influencing of the international agenda;
- In the area of security, we are bogged down by conflict within and among Muslim nations; foreign occupation of Muslim lands continue; there are tensions arising from Muslim minority status in a number of non-Muslim countries; and extremist tendencies continue to persist among certain segments of our society;
- In the area of economics, we are yet to fully optimise our vast potentials despite our abundant natural and human resources;
- In the area of science and technology, Muslim countries are still lagging behind and are unable to compete with our counterparts from outside the Muslim world. In general, we allocate and spend very little of our resources on Research and Development (R&D);
- In the area of media and public perception, Muslims also suffer from media misrepresentation and negative stereotyping of Islam and the Ummah.

9. The challenges before us are extremely complex and intricate, demanding our urgent attention and unified action. Indeed with this plethora of challenges, it has become indispensable to prepare a comprehensive strategy and action plan, which is implementable and assured of producing the desired results.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. The world today, continues to be plagued by poverty, violence, discrimination, ignorance and terrorism. Islam as the religion of knowledge and peace has a critical role to play in addressing these challenges. In recognition of this situation, Malaysia has adopted the comprehensive Islamic civilisational approach (manhaj Hadhari) or Islam Hadhari in Malaysia consistent with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. The elements of Malaysia manhaj Hadhari as expounded in Islam hadhari approach emphasises the following :-

- Faith and piety in Allah
- A just and trustworthy government
- A free and independent people
- Mastery of knowledge
- Balanced and comprehensive economic development
- A good quality of life
- Protection of the rights of minority groups and women
- Cultural and moral integrity
- Safeguarding the environment
- Strong defence capabilities

11. The above approach is not intended to be exhaustive nor exclusive. In this way, we believe the objective of enlightenment, moderation, progress and bringing the Muslim communities into the mainstream of international development can be achieved.

12. Today, OIC is at a defining moment in its history. It is important that the Muslim communities study and understand the methodology of humanistic civilization as contained in the Quran:

" Malaysia as a Muslim nation endeavours to transform the Muslim community into a successful , progressive and developed society to meet the challenges of our times.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

13. I would like to make a special mention here of the important role played by the Secretary General of the OIC, His Excellency Professor Ekmeleddin, in the First Meeting of the Commission in Malaysia last January. The Secretary General's new work culture and work ethics which he has introduced at the OIC Secretariat deserve our appreciation and support. The new work culture, I believe, would make the "engine" of the OIC, more efficient, responsive and professional. We must therefore work together to ensure the success of the reform agenda.

14. Malaysia, as the Chair of the 10th OIC Summit and our Prime Minister, Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is fully supportive of the proposed reform of the OIC. I pray to Allah Subanahuwataallah to grant success and blessings

to this great effort of self-criticism (muhasabah) and reform (islah) consistent with some of the ideas of great Allama Iqbal in his book "The Reconstruction of Islamic Thought."

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. The final Report of the Commission, to my mind, would provide the "New Road Map" for the OIC and Ummah to follow. They would constitute a holistic agenda of self-renewal for Muslim countries and communities to face the daunting challenges of the 21st century.

16. The fact that Muslims used to be leaders and pioneers in all fields of knowledge including sciences, arts, architecture, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine at the peak of Islamic Civilization, should spur us harder to regain the lost status. By doing so, Insya Allah, we can be in the forefront and leaders again in various fields of knowledge.

17. We have to think and act as one Ummah. We should not be divided by sectarian or ideological differences. Above all, we must remain united and advance collectively together guided by the teachings of Islam and the traditions of the prophet Mohamad (S .A. W).

18. May I conclude by conveying my deep appreciation to the Honourable President Musharaff, the Prime Minister of Pakistan for gracing this occasion and the organisers of our Meeting for making it possible for us to meet in Islamabad.

I thank you.

Wabilahitaufiq Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahiwabarakatuh.