

Address as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement at the 9th Session of the Islamic Summit Conferences

Doha, State Of Qatar, 12 November 2000

Sheik Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Chairman of the 9th Islamic Summit Conference

Your Majesties

Your Highnesses

Your Excellencies

Heads of State and Government

Dr. M. Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC

Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the UN

Dr. Esmat Abdel Meguid, Secretary General of the League of Arab States

Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary General of the OAU

Distinguished Delegates and Guests

Firstly, allow me to express my sincere thanks to His Highness, Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and his government for the warmth with which they received us, as well as our gratitude for being afforded the opportunity to address this august gathering.

On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement I wish you a successful 9th Summit.

The NAM stands and has always stood for multilateralism. Our coming together here, through the kind invitation of His Highness, Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and the OIC, unquestionably promotes this cherished principle.

Co-operation, unity and solidarity among ourselves as like-minded countries and movements, remain the only way to guarantee the effectiveness of the voice of the developing countries in global affairs.

Our comradeship is strengthened and reflected by the fact that we share a common vision through membership of the Non-Aligned Movement of the majority of the members of the OIC.

All of us participated in the recent United Nations Millennium Summit.

Through the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, all of us reaffirmed our commitment, among other things, to the promotion and maintenance of world peace and security.

The Non Aligned Movement fully associates itself with these commitments.

Unfortunately, as we gather here today, the world continues to be plagued by protracted conflicts that impede the realisation of these objectives.

The situation in the Middle East today poses a direct threat to world peace and security.

It demands that firm and effective steps are taken to secure the rights of the Palestinian people, to end the occupation of Arab lands, to end the current violent conflicts that have already claimed too many innocent lives and to create a just and lasting peace throughout the Middle East.

We would like to take advantage of this important Conference to reiterate the long-standing solidarity of the NAM with the Palestinian people. All United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine, including those related to Palestinian refugees, should be implemented as a matter of urgency.

The excessive use of force and the use of sophisticated weapons by the occupation Israeli security forces must be condemned.

The Palestinian people have a right to return to their homeland and to have their own independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. All parties should undertake positive steps necessary to preserve the sanctity of the Holy places in the city of Jerusalem.

It is also critical that urgent steps are taken to ensure the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1322 (2000), adopted by the recent emergency meeting of the Security Council.

The Security Council must remain seized of this vital matter to discharge its solemn responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The seeming inability, or reluctance, to utilise the UN effectively to deal with the long-drawn-out Middle East conflict, by ensuring that Israel complies with the resolutions of the world body will further buttress the conviction that the UN is not allowed by some to carry out its Charter responsibilities.

This situation gives further impetus to the call for the restructuring of the UN so that it reflects more correctly the realities of the world of the 21st century.

The NAM and the OIC should work together and intensify our efforts to ensure the democratisation of the UN as well as all other political and financial global multilateral organisations.

The sharp increase in Europe and the United States of xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance is another issue of common concern to both the NAM and the OIC. It is incumbent upon us to do all within our capabilities to confront this phenomenon.

In this context, the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance, to be held in South Africa in 2001, takes on special importance as a critical platform for us to fight and contain the ideologies of hatred which impact negatively on our peoples.

The majority of people in the member states of the NAM are poor. They have to bear the heavy yoke of underdevelopment.

It was therefore encouraging to see the world unite behind the call made by many at the Millennium Summit for the alleviation and eradication of poverty, which was then spelt out in the Millennium Declaration.

The task that now remains is that we all join hands to mobilise the resources necessary for the achievement of this goal.

This must address not only the implementation of the decisions contained in the UN Millennium Declaration but also those taken by such bodies as the OIC itself, the NAM, the G77 and China, the Commonwealth Heads of Government and the G8.

The NAM is strengthened by the knowledge that it can count on the OIC as a steadfast partner in this common struggle.

That struggle is an important part of our offensive to end the under- development of many of our countries and to bridge the gap in wealth and standards of living between the countries of the North and those of the South.

By acting together, we have to ensure that the process of globalisation does not result in our further impoverishment and marginalisation.

As we enter a new century and millennium, let us pool our collective strength in fact to achieve the shared goals of peace, security and prosperity for all.

It is our wish as the NAM that you will be blessed with wisdom during your deliberations and that your Summit will reach decisions that will impact positively on the issues and challenges that are of concern to the peoples we represent and to humanity as a whole.

I thank you.