



PARLIAMENT OF MALAYSIA

**6th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SUPPORTING
THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE**

SPEECH BY

**H.E. TAN SRI DATUK SERI PANGLIMA PANDIKAR AMIN
HAJI MULIA
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PARLIAMENT OF MALAYSIA**

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Excellency Speakers;

Honourable Delegates;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalammualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and Good Afternoon,

Mr. Chairman,

Alhamdulillah, I would like to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to **His Excellency Dr. Ali Larijani**, Speaker of the Islamic Parliament of Iran and the Government of Iran for inviting Malaysia to attend and address this Conference. It is indeed both a privilege and an honour to express my thoughts on so vital an issue that is of great importance to the Muslim Ummah, to such a distinguished group of personalities.

2. To meet again in this beautiful seat of ancient, much respected and highly regarded Persian civilization, to support the cause of Palestine is a further blessing. The Republic of Iran is best suited to hold this vital Conference as it is home to not only Muslims, but houses of other religions i.e Zoroastrians, Jews and Christians.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The year 2017 marks exactly half a century since Israel occupied Palestine territories. If we look closely to iron out issues, we will notice that it is all about the scramble and tussle for land. Despite the many sincere attempts made at reconciliation and peace by international organisations and well-meaning personalities, we have not moved forward in resolving the two-state conflict. We have also seen how the **Oslo Accords, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Geneva Accord, the Quartet Roadmap and the Annapolis Conference** have all been cast to the wind.

4. Having said that, Mr. Chairman I am proud to state here that Malaysia's unwavering and relentless support for the Palestinian cause is demonstrated by its three informal council meetings on Palestine through **two-year membership in the Security Council**. Malaysia, alongside New Zealand, Senegal and Venezuela tabled a draft UN Security Council Resolution on the Palestinian-Israel conflict and called for accountability which received overwhelming support from 15 Council members. Four permanent members, the United Kingdom, Russia, China and France voted for it. This Mr. Chairman, is testimony of our consistent commitment and the moderate approach we adopt. Malaysia has no personal agenda whatsoever in this, except to see a peaceful resolution to the long-standing, painful, distressful and miserable state of affairs.

5. However, Mr. Chairman the blatant disregard for **Resolution 2334 adopted by the Security Council on 23 December 2016**, seems to have led to another dead-end gridlock.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The change of leadership in some nations have caused ripples as well. Against such a backdrop, whilst the odds seem frightening, and it might seem a lost cause to some, we need to triumph. We need not fear the challenges of the future because we shall prevail in the end. As an ancient Chinese philosopher and writer Lao Tsu advised, we *'should set aside difficult things while they are still easy'*.

7. In reaching an amicable solution, there should be no place for emotions, but there is need to be brave and courageous to find solutions in a fair and just manner. We must think afresh and construct a framework based on an unshakeable and sound foundation and one which is realistic. I am persuaded to suggest that the only way to move forwards is to rededicate ourselves to ideals that transcend race, religion, culture and class. We certainly have to stand above sectional interests and think of the larger interests of humanity as a whole.

Mr. Chairman,

8. There is no need for us to take an aggressive stand that will lead to arm conflicts to solve the Palestine - Israel problem.

9. Armed conflicts have a devastating impact on the civilian population, particularly on women and helpless children. UNICEF reported that 2014, was the worst year for children with up to 15 million of them suffering from armed conflicts, including the occupied Palestinian territories. The brutal and relentless attacks by Israel on the Palestinian civilians in Gaza in 2014, had led to the deaths of over 500 Palestinian children, some deliberately targeted and killed and many others massacred while seeking refuge at UN centres. These massive assaults have resulted in more than 3,000 children injured or incapacitated for life and 54,000 children made homeless.

10. At least 373,000 children in Gaza are currently in desperate need of psychosocial support. What is more deplorable is that schools were targets of aggression. Malaysia deplors and condemns all acts of violence against children who are unable to defend themselves? We say all the time that children are gifts from God and yet, some choose to mercilessly target them and kill, maim and injure them.

11. The collateral damage done to the civilian population is mind-boggling. The amount of money and resources spent on armed conflict and the battle for land is astounding, to say the least.

Mr. Chairman,

12. We have witnessed vast changes on the international stage since the first international Conference for supporting the people of Palestine was held. It is an undeniable truth that 9/11 has certainly split the world into two and resulted in some becoming paranoid and obsessed in their perceptions and treatment of those who do not hold similar religious beliefs as themselves. The animosity seems to be more deeply entrenched than ever and shows no sign of abating. The recent brazen attempt by the Israeli Parliament to legalise outposts on private Palestinian lands is unbelievable, to say the least.

Mr. Chairman,

13. I personally believe that the Palestinian cause is not a lost cause. We need to urgently and immediately rise above perceptions and generalizations. Let us not judge anyone by the attire one wears because it is his or her tradition and culture. The basic notions that are to be propounded are the twin pillars of tolerance and compassion and a give and take attitude. Give some territories and take some, not all!!! Mistakes of omission and commission must henceforth be set aside. This would ensure stability in both Palestine and Israel. Stability after all, is the *sine qua non* of progress and preservation of any civilisation, religion and creed.

14. There is no need to flex our muscles to show who is far more powerful or stronger? It is time to look beyond religious affiliations and look at humanity as a whole. It is time to cast aside the perceptions about the other's beliefs. I readily admit that **ISIS or DAESH** has compounded and escalated the two-state conflict to a certain extent as ISIS or DAESH call themselves Islamic jihadists.

15. Here, allow me to reiterate what the Quran says pertaining to Islam. Islam teaches compassion and tolerance. It is therefore totally unfair and unjust to lump us all in one basket and generalise and make a blanket application. More so, when we ourselves have given the thumbs up for the wiping out of ISIS or DAESH.

Mr. Chairman,

16. I do believe too that it is in the interests of the big powers to guarantee the integrity, independence and neutrality of smaller nations without being prejudiced or biased. Adopting a policy of peaceful co-existence by both Palestine and Israel is in the interests of all concerned. Only then can we clearly look forward to a period of stability and peace. Consequently, it will not be necessary for both Palestine and Israel to spend vast sums of money on defence but channel their respective energies and resources to concentrate on economic and social development of their respective nations.

Mr. Chairman,

17. It is the dream of Malaysia that all sides let 2017 be a turning point in the history of the Palestine - Israel conflict. This will be a mark towards maturity. The jostling for land has to end. As we stand on the threshold of a new chapter of human history, more so after 50 years, or half a century, let us not continue this two-state conflict for another century.

Mr. Chairman,

18. May I be humbly permitted to express the hope that all of us gathered here will renew our pledge to uphold the **Charter of the United Nation** and endeavour to realise the objectives of co-operation amongst nations in a peaceful world where there is order, law and justice. Our priority should be to abide by the rule of order at all times.

19. Respect for each other's political sovereignty and territorial integrity is a pre-condition for peaceful living among nations. That is the essence of peaceful co-existence. Let us now try to soften the edges of discord and reverse the spiral of violence and most importantly learn to **TRUST**.

20. Our efforts to support are certainly not meant to interfere with existing peace initiatives, for example, the peace efforts by the Quartet on Middle East Peace Process, but rather to compliment everyone's efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

21. Undoubtedly our deliberations at this conference will add to our store of wisdom of what can be done towards more effective co-operation. This will enable us to move forward and help each other achieve our mutual aims of peace and stability. Whilst we endeavour to do what we can to fill in the gaps and smooth the corners, we must not break the rule of law and usurp what is not ours.

To quote a Greek biographer and essayist Plutarch:

"Only those persons who live in obedience to reason are worthy to be accounted free".

Mr. Chairman,

22. The world will be changed not by our words, but by our deeds. Therefore, if this summit is to be remembered as a milestone and serve as a catalyst for co-operation for peace, let us take the bull by the horns. At times, this will be a small price to pay for ultimate peace and stability.

Mr. Chairman,

23. In conclusion, Malaysia would like to state its continuous full support to address present and emerging challenges that threaten the peace, security, development and human rights of the Palestinian people.

Wabillahi taufik walhidayah Wassalamulaikum Waarahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.
Thank you