

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**SPEECH OF
HIS EXCELLENCY PROF. EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
ORGANISATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE,
AT THE
SECOND SUMMIT OF G-77 PLUS CHINA
DOHA – STATE OF QATAR**

14-16 JUNE 2005.

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**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great honour and a privilege for me to address this important conference. I would like to thank the Government of the State of Qatar for organizing this meeting and for making the preparatory arrangements.

My presence here as the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is a reflection of the close contacts and collaboration that exist between the OIC and G-77. In fact, with the exception of a few, most of the Members of the OIC are Members of the G-77. I am confident that in years to come cooperation

between these two entities will continue to expand with the shared objective of promotion of international peace and security through economic cooperation.

The Member States of the OIC, reaching 57 today, are economically developing countries, which makes them fittingly belong to the Group of 77. The OIC Member States are dispersed over a large geographical region on four continents, extending from Albania in the north to Mozambique in the south, and from Guyana in the west to Indonesia in the east. As such, they account for one sixth of the world land area and for more than one fifth (22 per cent) of its population. They, as a group, are endowed with immense potentials in such sectors as agriculture, energy and mining, and a strategically important vast trading region.

Most of the OIC countries mainly export fuel and non-fuel primary products. Dependence on such commodities brings about a significant exposure of the economies to the risks of external shocks such as fluctuations in international commodity prices or adverse seasonal factors affecting economic growth and long-term policy making.

Therefore, it can be said that the main economic and developmental issues and concerns of the OIC overlap with the ones of the Group of 77.

Actually, both the OIC and the Group of G-77 were established under the same prevailing conditions of the 1960s and their aims are similar to each other: enhancing collective interests of their members, promoting solidarity and consolidating cooperation among them and

improving their joint negotiating capacity on major international issues.

With the backdrop of some important changes that took place on the international plan, the imperatives of our two institutions have assumed renewed urgency. On political scene, a unipolar world replaced the bi-polar configurations of 1970s and the process known as globalization has become more and more an indispensable fact of our life. Its effects are being felt in almost every area, particularly in international trade, finance and investment.

In line with the process of globalization, interdependence of the countries increased. While the changing global conditions brought about globalization and liberalization of economies world-wide, the same conditions also paved the

way for further regionally-based cooperation among the countries.

Meanwhile, we observe that the role played by the specialized international organizations such as IMF, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization is increasing. These institutions have assumed more powers in shaping the international finance and trade matters. They direct the international capital and financial flows through affecting international investment decisions. Trade negotiations under the WTO affect the daily life of our farmers living in even remote areas. Yet, developing countries, individually, are not able to influence the decision-making processes in these international institutions. Nor, they can sufficiently reflect their positions in the conference resolutions. So, there is a need for improving our joint negotiating capacity on issues of interest and concern to us in these organizations. In other

words, one of the basic aims of our sister organizations remains as true as ever.

On the other hand, the international efforts made within the framework of the international community are relatively slow and insufficient in bringing solutions to the problems of the developing countries. The great continent of Africa serves as a prime example of the weakness of the international structures to assist countries in distress. It is therefore essential for all developing countries to intensify their efforts at promoting and strengthening economic cooperation amongst themselves, with the stress laid on trade expansion and increased investment. It is only through such cooperation that they can hope to largely overcome their difficulties and will be enabled to negotiate with the industrialized world from a position of relative equality.

I believe that the organizations of the developing countries should take more initiatives to discuss their own problems with a view to finding pragmatic and practical solutions. I would recall in this connection that in the backdrop of failure of the Cancun Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, the OIC has taken an initiative to assist the cotton producing Sub-Saharan African countries. As a result of this initiative a meeting on cotton was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in on 18-19 April 2005 bringing together the producer African countries and the OIC countries having expertise in cotton manufacturing industries, together with some international financial institutions. Many Sub-Saharan African countries critically depend on cotton production and exports, as 50 to 80 percent of their export earnings come from this single commodity. The declining trend of the world cotton prices has been a disaster for their economies in the short run. Additionally, the

subsidies made to the cotton producers in developed countries will aggravate their troubles by adversely affecting their development goals and plans in the long run.

Similarly, under the initiative of the current OIC Summit Chairman Malaysia, the OIC established a Steering Committee with a view to adopting a set of action-oriented programs on poverty alleviation in the OIC countries. Three approved projects under this program, one each in Bangladesh, Mauritania and Sierra Leone was formally launched at a ceremony in March this year in Kuala Lumpur. I highlight these laudable activities as constructive and remarkable examples of economic and social cooperation among developing countries.

In the coming period, within the framework of our new vision for the enhanced role of the OIC in

the international arena, it is our intention to give more emphasis to the economic, social and humanitarian projects which will alleviate the sufferings of the masses. Therefore, we will be calling and encouraging the OIC Member States for more cooperation among themselves in the capacity building and poverty eradicating projects.

I would also like to take this opportunity to praise the recent announcement of the G-8 to relieve the poorest Third World countries mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, of up to 55 billion U.S. Dollars of their debts. I sincerely hope that the relevant debt-stricken countries will wisely take advantage of this initiative as a booster in their poverty-eradication efforts. I think we should all hail the leading role of Prime Minister Blair in the realization of this initiative.

Let me finish my words by making a sincere call to all participants to pay attention to the scourge of Polio epidemic which is a serious menace for the children in the Developing World. Let us be supportive of the Global Campaign to Eradicate Polio led by the World Health Organization, as the world is in a very critical phase in the struggle against Polio.

Lastly, I would like to assure this august Assembly that the decisions adopted and the declarations made by the G-77 will enjoy the full support of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.
