



INTERACTION COUNCIL

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Despite many common concerns that unite Muslim and Western societies, Muslim-Western relations are plagued by multiple crises. Each threatens to spiral out of control. Five major challenges face the world in relations between the domain of Islam and the West: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the situation in Iraq, terrorism and the so-called “war on terror,” nuclear proliferation, and the relationship between the West and Muslim countries. The InterAction Council debated these issues in the 24th Annual Plenary Session entitled “The Islam World and the West” at the Dead Sea in Jordan, 2-4 May 2006.

With respect to these issues, the InterAction Council has endorsed the attached Chairmen’s Report on the High-level Expert Group Meeting, and makes the following observations and recommendations.

ISRAEL VS. PALESTINE

1. A successful and lasting peace between Israel and Palestine requires adherence to three key elements by both sides – mutual recognition, non-violence and adherence to previous agreements.
2. It is imperative that a solution be found that is acceptable to both parties. This solution must be based on the notion of a free, independent, viable and contiguous Palestine and a free and secure Israel, living side by side, within secure and recognised borders. Successful negotiations between the parties require a willingness to listen to one another and an intention to solve the problems they face through dialogue, and not violence or unilateral action.

Therefore, the InterAction Council recommends:

- *Reinforcing the notion that mutual recognition, non-violence and adherence to previous agreements by both sides are essential to the peace process moving forward;*
- *Calling upon both Israelis and Palestinians to respect international human rights and humanitarian law;*
- *Engaging the democratically elected Palestinian government in a political process based on dialogue in order to revive the peace process and allow for renewed economic support to the Palestinian Authority;*
- *Stressing that the Palestinians should not be collectively punished for exercising their democratic choices;*
- *Calling upon states and organisations to resume or increase humanitarian aid and economic support to the Palestinian people;*

- *Urging Israel to cease the freeze on tax revenue transfers to Palestine;*
- *Recognising that isolation of Hamas will only lead to further radicalisation and risks increases internal fighting and fragmentation of the Palestinian society;*
- *Supporting recent initiatives by President Abbas to resume negotiations with the Israeli government;*
- *Underlining that a unilateral decision by Israel on its borders will not produce a durable solution, nor will it give Israel security and legitimacy;*
- *Stressing that only a political settlement based on negotiations, acceptable to both parties, will produce a durable peace and the integration of Israel into the Middle East;*
- *Acknowledging that the political formula for this solution is well known, notably through Security Council Resolution 242, Resolution 338 and the principle of land for peace and that a delay in implementation will only result in further loss of life and human suffering;*
- *Calling upon Israel to comply with the ruling of the International Court of Justice with respect to the construction of the wall on occupied territory, and to recognise that the construction of the separation wall has a negative impact on the overall peace process and aggravates the humanitarian and social situation for many Palestinians;*
- *Encouraging all parties to support the Beirut Declaration agreed upon by 22 regional states at the Arab League Summit in 2002;*
- *Calling upon the Quartet to produce a clear statement and direction on the implementation of the Roadmap for Peace.*

THE WAR IN IRAQ

3. Continued unrest in Iraq threatens security and stability, not only in the region, but also worldwide. One of the key issues for the international community is how the U.S.-led coalition can best extract itself from the Iraqi quagmire. There are no patent answers to this question.
4. What is clear, however, is that without a comprehensive exit strategy for coalition forces, the U.S.-led coalition faces the prospect of humiliating defeat and irreversible sectarian strife. An orderly withdrawal of coalition forces from Iraq is required, and the assistance of Iraq's neighbours in this enterprise is crucial. The international community should discuss alternatives to the U.S.-led military presence and address the current instability in Iraq.

Therefore, the InterAction Council recommends:

- *Committing to a unified Iraq;*
- *Recognising that the continued conflict in Iraq could soon transform into a full-fledged civil war that seriously destabilises the whole region;*
- *Urging the replacement of the U.S.-led coalition forces in Iraq with a multi-national security force comprised of impartial third parties, excluding the immediate neighbours, in full coordination with the democratically elected government of Iraq;*
- *Recognising that the U.S. must contribute to the security and reconstruction of Iraq until the multi-national replacement security force is operational;*
- *Prioritising efforts to rebuild the Iraqi security forces along non-sectarian lines in order for it to ultimately take full responsibility for the security situation;*
- *Increasing global and regional support for economic and social reconstruction, institution building, and the process of national reconciliation in Iraq;*
- *Recognising that religious leaders have a role to play in shaping a harmonious solution for the prevention of sectarianism amongst Iraq's disparate factions.*

THE ISLAM WORLD AND THE WEST

5. The world must reaffirm the ethic of humanity, reverence for all life, mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding as the basis for all human interaction, be it among individuals, societies or nations.
6. Despite differences among the three main monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam -- they have a common heritage in ethics and share a common goal for peace. They are not static entities, but have developed throughout the course of history. A religion may keep its essence but change its paradigm. An important task of the 21st century will be to engage in a dialogue among religions that rather than exploits differences, capitalises on commonalities.
7. The so-called “clash of civilizations” occurs not only among regions and countries, but also within them. The current culture between the domain of Islam and the West may be best characterised not as a clash of religions or civilisations, but instead a clash of extremisms based on geopolitical and ideological differences. In the clash between extremists, the moderate majority becomes ever more important. Globalisation, poverty and lack of development each play a role in exacerbating international tensions.

8. What is needed is a dialogue both between civilisations and within civilizations. It is in this context that we must begin.

Therefore, the InterAction Council recommends:

- *Recognising that the temptation to treat any faith as a homogenous, social or cultural entity completely understates the rich diversity in which religion manifests itself;*
- *Dispelling the perception of a “clash of civilization” and “war of religions” in order to focus efforts on a dialogue of justice, development and freedom for all;*
- *Developing multi-faceted dialogue between the West and the Muslim world on issues of faith, culture and the sharing of resources;*
- *Engaging in reciprocal communication: for the West to acknowledge that the globalisation process requires respect for Islamic faith and Muslim cultures, and for the Muslim world to communicate that it respects Western cultures;*
- *Promoting dialogue that allows moderate voices on all sides to meaningfully contribute to global solutions;*
- *Correcting a lack of knowledge by teaching the next generation the virtue of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity;*
- *Reinforcing that the ultimate goal is justice and dignity, such that we can all enjoy the fruits of a unified human civilisation;*
- *Encouraging all of us to bring freedom of speech and responsibility into balance by respecting religion and human values;*
- *Urging once again the General Assembly of the United Nations to discuss and adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Responsibility as proposed by the InterAction Council in 1997.*

PRESENT STATE OF THE WORLD

9. The state of the world in 2006 is very much an opportunity. We are in essence facing a test of multilateralism. So many of the issues are global in nature, and require increasingly global solutions. Globalisation gives the world both the opportunity and the necessity to work together to solve problems, in a way that was not the case even a decade or two ago. All countries – from the biggest to the smallest – stand to gain from an international system that delivers.

Therefore, the InterAction Council recommends that the international community:

- *Makes development a key priority by quickly turning the commitments previously made into implementation and by acknowledging that education, particularly in the areas of science and technology, is a global priority and all countries must focus on bridging technological and educational gaps;*
- *Recognises that across parts of Africa, a number of democratic-minded reformers are emerging and there is a renaissance underway in some parts of Africa, although long-term support is needed to back their programmes for reform. The basic principles of The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) serve as a sustainable democratic foundation.*
- *Concludes the Doha round by the end of 2006;*
- *Invites China, India, Brazil and a member of OPEC to the session of the G8 Summit, in order to maintain a contiguous order in the economy of the world;*
- *Recognises that growing global demand will lead to rising oil prices in the long term and therefore should work to avoid great fluctuations in the price of oil and intensify efforts to find alternative and more environmentally sound energy sources;*
- *Assists the parties in finding a political solution in order to end the conflict in Darfur while simultaneously addressing the urgent humanitarian crisis;*
- *Develops global responses to terrorism that are effective and based on international law and respect for human rights;*
- *Agrees on a definition of terrorism in order to distinguish between different types of terrorism, and specifically, that a distinction should be made between the killing of innocent civilians and legitimate resistance to outside impositions;*
- *Concludes negotiations on a comprehensive convention on counter-terrorism and agrees to concrete an effective counter-terrorism strategy under United Nations auspices;*
- *Recognises that a 'military solution' in relation to Iran would carry huge risks for the region and the world, in terms of politics, economics and relationships between religions.*

List of Participants

IAC Members

1. H. E. Chancellor Helmut **Schmidt**, Honorary Chairman (Germany)
2. H. E. Prime Minister Ingvar **Carlsson**, Co-chairman (Sweden)
3. H. E. Prime Minister AbdelSalam **Majali**, Organizing Chairman (Jordan)
4. H. E. Prime Minister Andreas M. **van Agt** (the Netherlands)
5. H. E. Prime Minister Esko **Aho** (Finland)
6. H. E. Prime Minister Valdis **Birkavs** (Latvia)
7. H. E. Prime Minister Jean **Chrétien** (Canada)
8. H. E. President Bacharuddin Jusuf **Habibie** (Indonesia)
9. H. E. President Jamil **Mahuad** (Ecuador)
10. H. E. President Andrés **Pastrana** (Colombia)
11. H. E. Prime Minister Yevgeny M. **Primakov** (Russia)
12. H. E. President Jerry John **Rawlings** (Ghana)
13. H. E. President José **Sarney** (Brazil)
14. H. E. President George **Vassiliou** (Cyprus)

Associate Members

15. H. E. Mr. Jean André **François-Poncet**, President of the Senatorial Committee on Regional Planning (France)
16. Mr. Yasuo **Fukuda**, M.P., Former Chief Cabinet Secretary (Japan)
17. Baroness **Jay**, Chairperson of the Overseas Development Institute, London (U. K.)
18. Prof. Hans **Küng**, Professor Emeritus, Tübingen University (Switzerland)
19. H. E. Dr. **Lee** Seung-Yun, Former Deputy Prime Minister of Korea (Korea)

Special Guests

20. H. E. Mr. Jan **Eliasson**, Foreign Minister and President of the 60th UN General Assembly Session (Sweden)
21. H. E. Mr. Taher **Masri**, Former Prime Minister (Jordan)
22. Prof. Michael **Adler**, Royal Free and University College (U. K.)
23. Dr. Reuven **Aharoni**, Former Fellow Teacher, Tel Aviv University (Israel)
24. Ambassador Tatsuo **Arima**, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan to the Middle East (Japan)
25. Mr. Bassem **Awadallah**, Director of His Majesty's Office (Jordan)
26. H. E. Dr. Munther **Haddadin**, Former Minister of Water and Irrigation (Jordan)
27. H. E. Dr. Nabeel **Kassis**, Former Minister of Planning and Tourism (Palestine)
28. Mr. Kunio **Katakura**, Former Ambassador to Egypt and Iraq (Japan)
29. H. E. Mr. Abdelelah **Khatib**, Foreign Minister (Jordan)
30. Mr. Julius **Liljeström**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Sweden)
31. H. E. Dr. Amin **Mahmoud**, Former Minister of Culture (Jordan)
32. H. E. Mr. Samer **Majali**, CEO and President of the Royal Jordanian Airlines (Jordan)
33. Mr. Fouad **Makhzoumi**, Chairman, Future Pipe Group, Founder, The Makhzoumi Foundation (Lebanon)
34. H. E. Mr. Amre M. **Moussa**, Secretary-General, League of Arab States (Egypt)
35. Dr. Ahmad S. **Moussalli**, Professor, American University of Beirut (Lebanon)
36. Dr. Richard **Norton**, Professor of Anthropology and International Relations, Boston University (U. S. A.)
37. Mr. Dong Soon **Park**, Former Ambassador to Jordan and Israel (Korea)
38. Dr. Georgy **Petrov**, Vice President, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation (Russia)
39. H. E. Mr. **Qian** Qichen, Former Deputy Prime Minister, Former Foreign Minister (China)
40. Dr. Jairam **Reddy**, Director, International Leadership Institute, United Nations University (Jordan)
41. Mr. Ayman **Safadi**, Editor-in-Chief of the Daily Al-Ghad Newspaper (Jordan)
42. Prof. Amin **Saikal**, Director, Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies, The Middle East & Central Asia, Faculty of Arts, Australian National University (Australia)
43. H. E. Mr. Nabiih **Shequem**, Secretary General and Director of the American and European Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Jordan)
44. Dr. Henry **Siegman**, Council on Foreign Affairs (U. S. A.)
45. H. E. Mr. Seiken **Sugiura**, Minister of Justice (Japan)
46. Dr. Samir **Taqi**, Strategic Research Center at Damascus University (Syria)

47. Prof. Teizo **Taya**, Rikkyo University (Japan)
48. Dr. Walid **Turk**, Former Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceuticals (Jordan)
49. H. E. Mr. Moneef R. **Zou'bi**, Director General, Islamic World Academy of Sciences (Jordan)

Secretariat

50. Ambassador Makram **Queisi**, Chief of Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Jordan)
51. Prof. Isamu **Miyazaki**, Secretary-General (Japan)
52. Prof. Nagao **Hyodo**, Tokyo Keizai University, Deputy Secretary-General (Japan)

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