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3655 Motamar al-Alam al-Islami (World Muslim  
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Kongresi

# Resume of The First Regional Conference of the Motamar

The Regional Conference of the Muslims of South East Asia and the Far East was inaugurated on January 31, 1963 at Kuala Lumpur. The next day, it divided itself into three commissions—the General Affairs Commission, the Religio Educational Commission and the Socio-Economic Commission—to study all the various problems and to make recommendations and propose resolutions to the final session of the conference for adoption.

The following are the resolutions proposed by the three commissions, which were adopted at the final session of the conference on February 6, 1963.

## General Affairs :

1. The Conference recommended the establishment of a Regional Office of the Motamar at Kuala Lumpur with the contribution of Member countries for the exchange of information, trained personnel and students among member countries.

2. The conference called upon all nations of the world to respect each other's integrity and settle all disputes by peaceful means.

3. It urged upon the Motamar and the Regional Office to compile an authentic history of the Muslims of the region.

4. The conference invited His Eminence Al-Haj Syed Amin el-Husseini to make his statement on the use of money derived as interest from savings in the banks, the use of lottery money and the limit of the fasting period per day in the parts of the world where exist great variation in the length of the day and the night.

## Religio-Educational :

1. The conference appealed to all governments of the region to kindly extend facilities to intending Haj pilgrims of their respective countries and requested Malaysia to cooperate with other countries of the region in that matter.

2. The conference recommended that a Representative Central Religious Advisory Body be set up for the region in Kuala Lumpur for giving of "Fatwa" and directing Islamic missionary work.

3. It proposed the setting up of a central Muslim Publishing House at Kuala Lumpur to meet the grave shortage of good Islamic Literature in the region, both for the school-going children and for public in general. Requested the Motamar to set up a committee to study the feasibility of running the Publishing House on a commercial basis in order to subsidise the press over the possible loss in publishing religious books and also to provide suitable Islamic literature in various languages.

4. The conference urged upon the government of Malaysia to introduce besides Arabic also other languages as the medium of instruction of the Muslim College, Malaya, for the benefit of students from outside Malaysia who may not be well off in Arabic.

5. Aware of an ambition to annex territories adjacent to what is now forcefully occupied in the State of Palestine, the conference recorded its vehement condemnation of such an illegal design and appeals to Muslims the world over to unite against this danger.

6. It recommended that suitable steps might be taken to impart religious education to Muslim children of various age groups. The course should include Islamic history, practice of Muslim prayer and Islamic social and economic concepts.

## Socio-Economic :

1. The conference urged upon Muslim communities of the area to draw up plans for the welfare of orphans by helping the surviving parents of the orphans, by encouraging legal adoptions under the safeguards of the law and by building orphanages for those who are unable to get proper family life.

2. The conference resolved that in order to build up a stable and happy family system in accordance with the teachings of Islam, it is necessary:

(a) that persons are better prepared for the responsibilities of married life :

(b) that steps are taken to prevent the abuse of the permi-

ssion of polygamy, to control the exercise of divorce, to ensure that the wife has an adequate share of the jointly acquired property and to provide the mother with equal right with the father to the custody and guardianship of the children.

3. It resolved that Muslims should pay full respect to their national law and work in complete cooperation with their non-Muslim countrymen in all spheres of political and social activities.

4. It recommended the giving up of such customs which are contrary to the teachings of Islam and lead to waste of money and time.

5. The conference recommended that Muslim women should be given appointment on religious councils and advisory boards to represent Muslim womanhood.

6. The conference urged upon the Motamar to set up through joint efforts of all Muslims in the region a Muslim Multi-purpose Foundation in Kuala Lumpur to ensure financial security to religious, educational and charitable organisations of Muslims of the area.

7. It urged upon all Muslims of the area to make arrangement for the collection of Zakat and Fitrah and the proper administration of Muslim Wakfs.

8. The conference resolved that Muslims of the area should set up an organisation to assist Muslims in various countries of the area in getting teachers, missionaries, publications, equipment and financial help for mosques, schools and charitable institutions.

9. The conference recommended that steps should be taken to increase the commercial and industrial opportunities for Muslims in the area. It requested the Motamar to compile a directory of Muslim traders and manufacturers and Muslim chambers of commerce.

10. The conference recommended Muslim economists and social scientists to undertake a study of the economic concepts and institutions to see how best they can be reformulated to meet the needs of the Muslims of the area.

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Ayub Khan (1958-1969) and in 1978 by General Zia ul-Haq (1978-1988).

Under Ayub Khan political parties were reorganized, while the Muslim League split into two factions; the Council Muslim League opposed the Ayub regime, while the Conventionist Muslim League (now called the Pakistan Muslim League) supported him. In the 1965 election, Ayub was declared president with 63.3 percent of the total vote. His opponent, Fatimah Jinnah, lost the election but had overwhelming support in East Pakistan, now the nation of Bangladesh.

After the secession of East Pakistan in 1971, Prime Minister Zulfikar 'Ali Bhutto came to power with the support of the Pakistan Peoples Party, an offshoot of the All-Pakistan Muslim League. The Bhutto government lasted until 5 July 1977, when General Zia ul-Haq, chief of the army staff, staged a coup. Declaring martial law, Zia suspended the 1973 constitution and banned all political activity.

In February 1985, Zia appointed Muhammad Khan Junejo as prime minister; he resurrected the political parties banned by Zia and himself became president of the All-Pakistan Muslim League. In May 1988 Zia dismissed Junejo, accusing his government of corruption and mismanaging the national economy.

On 17 August 1988, General Zia died in the crash of a Pakistan Air Force craft in the Punjab. Immediately, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, chairman of the Senate, was sworn in as acting president, and he arranged elections in November 1988.

Ishaq Khan appointed leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Benazir Bhutto, prime minister in December 1988, and he himself was elected to a five-year term as president. In this election, the Islamic Democratic Alliance of nine parties, led by the Muslim League, won the majority of the legislative seats in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, bringing a leader of the Muslim League, Mian Mohammed Nawaz Sharif (chief minister of the Punjab, 1985-1988), into the leadership of the Muslim League.

In August 1990, President Ishaq Khan dismissed the National Assembly and the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and announced fresh elections. In the 1990 elections, the Islamic Democratic Alliance and the Muslim League captured the majority of seats in the Federal Legislature, and its leader Mian Mohammed Nawaz Sharif became the prime minister of Pakistan.

President Ishaq Khan dismissed the Nawaz Sharif government in 1993, accusing him of corruption and

mismanagement, although this action was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Fresh elections were held, and the PPP won the majority in the Federal Legislature; its leader, Benazir Bhutto, became prime minister once again.

There seem to be no ideological differences between the policies of the PPP and the Muslim League. The personal charisma of the leaders maintains tenuous cohesion within the ranks of these parties. The struggle between the PPP and the Muslim League indicates that if martial law is not declared again, Pakistan may yet evolve a two-party system.

[See also All-India Muslim League; Pakistan; and the biography of Jinnah.]

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HAFEEZ MALIK

**MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE.** Founded in AH 1381/1962 CE at the height of the Egyptian-Saudi political crisis, the Muslim World League (Rābiṭat al-‘Ālam al-Islāmi) was the product of a meeting of 111 Muslim scholars, intellectuals, and politicians held in Mecca on the occasion of that year's pilgrimage. They convened to discuss the affairs of the Islamic *ummah* in view of the threats posed to it by "communism" in general and the "irreligious" Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser in particular. On 18 May 1962 they inaugurated the Muslim World League as a new transnational Islamic organization, describing it as a "Muslim cultural organization" and an "Islamic peoples' organization," "serving the whole *ummah* and not acting as an agent of any government."

With its head office in Mecca, the League was at first represented by a constituent council (*al-majlis al-ta'sisi*) only. The conference at Mecca chose twenty-one schol-

Rabih al-Islam - Alami - 1381

**THE MUSLIM WORLD**

**BACKGROUND OF THE MOTAMAR AL-ALAM AL-ISLAMI**

The first World Muslim Conference was called in Mecca in 1926 by the late King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud. It was the first big effort to get the Muslims from far flung places to meet around a conference table. This, however, was just the beginning. Before this there had been regional Muslim meetings but not a world Motamar. This was the beginning of all Muslim Motamars and we are its direct successor.

In this Conference were great scholars and leaders of Pan-Islamic Movement. To name a few: Umar Tgokrominoto, the founder of the Sarikat Islam of Indonesia, ulema like Mufti Kifayatullah and Moulana Sulaiman Nadvi and eminent leaders like Maulana Mohd. Ali Jauhar, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Mr. Shoaib Qureshi from India, the grand Mufti of Palestine Al Haj Muhammad Amin el-Husseini, Sheikh Ismail Al Hafiz from Lebanon, Shaikh el-Azhar Zawahiri of Egypt, Adeb Sarwat Bey of Turkey, Sayed Rashid Reza from Lebanon, Hassan Hakim, ex-Prime Minister of Syria.

The second World Muslim Conference was called in Baitul Maqdas (Jerusalem), Palestine, by the Grand Mufti of Palestine, His Eminence Sayed Muhammad Amin-el-Husseini, in 1931. This Motamar also set up a small secretariat which continued to work, till the second World War broke it up.

In the second Conference one could see Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, the great poet philosopher of Muslim India, Sayed Shukri Quwatli, later President of Syria, Sayed Riyad Solh, later Prime Minister of Lebanon, Sayed Ziauddin Tabatabai, ex-Prime Minister of Iran, Mohammad Ali Al-Abid, ex-President of Syria, Ayatullah Muhammad Al-Kashiful Ghita from Iraq, Saeed Shamil from Caucasia.

A World Muslim Conference—the third of its kind—was called in Karachi in 1949 by the Islamic Brotherhood Society of Pakistan and at this Conference it was unanimously decided to have the Conference put on a permanent basis. At this Assembly it was also unanimously agreed to give it the same name as the first World Muslim Conference, viz, the Motamar-al-Alam al-Islami. With formal revival

of the Organisation after the last war a secretariat was again set up, this time in Karachi, to continuously work for the popularization of the purposes and for the attainment of the objects of the Motamar. This organization on its own, called in 1951 the next or the fourth World Muslim Conference, also at Karachi. This was a much bigger affair than all the past Conferences.

The third and fourth Conferences are recent history. Suffice it to say that with it have been associated numerous prominent personalities of post-war era; to name a few, Shahid-e-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, His Excellency Habib Bourgiba (now President of Tunisia), His Excellency Abdullah Osman (now President of Somalia), the prominent Musjumi leaders of Indonesia, Dr. Sukiman and Dr. Muhammad Natsir (both ex-Prime Ministers), Omer Reza Doghrol of Turkey, Dr. Burhanuddin Jaya of Ceylon, Shaikhul Islam Allama Shabbir Ahmad Usmani of Pakistan, Allama Sheikh Muhammad el-Bashir el-Brahimi of Algeria, Shaikh Mustafa Al-Sabai of Syria, Hazrat Ayatullah Kashani of Iran, Prince Abdul Karim, the great Mujahid of Rif, H.E. Abdul Wahab Azzam Bey of Egypt, H.E. Syed Omar Baha Al-Amiri of Syria, H.E. Jawwad El-Murabit of Syria, H.E. Syed Abdul Qadir Gilani of Iraq, Prof. A.B.A. Halcem and Moulvi Tamizuddin Khan, Speaker of the Parliament of Pakistan, and our present President of the Congress.

We have given a resume of the Fifth Conference which was held at Baghdad in 1962 in page 6.

The next World Assembly or world moot is to be held in Mogadishu from to-day. This will be the sixth in the series and the first in Africa. We are happy to go to the Muslim continent of Africa and we do hope that it will open a new chapter for the glory of Islam and the unity of Muslims in Africa.

The Motamar stands for friendship and fellowship between the Muslims the world over, and aims at furthering the ties of their fraternal cordiality. Its declared policy is not to meddle in the internal affairs of any Muslim country. It also steers clear of Inter-Islamic disputes and is anxious to see that all disputes between one Muslim country

and another are settled by means of negotiation, mediation, arbitration or through other peaceful process. The Motamar's motto is the Quranic verse: 'Verily, all Muslims are brethren'. Its guiding principle is another verse of the Holy Quran, "Cling ye to the Chord of Allah and be not divided."

We stand for Unity—unity of Thought and Action—for we know, united we stand, divided we fall. World factors have been militating against this much-coveted unity of the Muslims for the past many centuries. Others naturally took advantage of our failings, our disunity and our lack of vigilance. As a result great—yes, very great—parts of the Muslim world, from Morocco to Indonesia came under the cloud. Thank Allah the clouds are, willy-nilly, breaking up and we are already seeing the silver-lining of a new, a fresh, a vigorous, and we hope, a vigilant and alert Muslim world emerging. We do not want the Muslim world to be caught napping again. We of the World Muslim Congress, are here to serve as a Fire Brigade of the Muslim World; the ones to give the clarion call whenever and wherever we see smokes of danger rising in any part of the Muslim World. We are wedded to the whole Muslim World, each part of which is as dear to us as any other part. We are interested in our brothers-in-faith, wherever they may live. Their welfare is our welfare. Any cause of inconvenience to them is a cause of inconvenience to us. We are sailors of the same boat; we sink and swim together. And it is in this spirit of stout feelings of World Muslim solidarity that the Motamar is marching on.

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