



## **Press release**

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

### **WORLD'S GLOBAL LEADERS OPEN HISTORIC 9<sup>TH</sup> WORLD ISLAMIC ECONOMIC FORUM IN LONDON**

Today sees the opening of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Islamic Economic Forum at the Excel Centre in London, held for the first time outside of the Muslim world. 18 Global Leaders gathered to focus on the importance of building bridges and developing relations between Western and Islamic countries.

#### **The Hon. Tun Musa Hitam, Chairman of the WIEF Foundation made opening remarks:**

*"This morning, I'm standing before such a distinguished list of heads of governments as well as representatives of different countries in London and I would like to say the WIEF has indeed arrived!"*

*"There are three records we hold as of today. Record 1 is that there are 2700 registered participants, which beats our past record. Second, related to that is that the fact that 128 countries are represented – again, another record. And third, it is here that I can say that we are proud that for the first time such a big number of heads of government and of states grace this occasion."*

#### **The Opening address by The Hon. Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, PM of Malaysia & Patron of WIEF Foundation** spoke at length about the role of women in society and the need for their continued empowerment:

*"It is time to put women at the heart of our global growth story. All countries stand to benefit from the economic empowerment of women."*

*"To develop the gender dimension is not just a question of equality, it is the entry card to succeed and prosper in an ever more competitive world".*

*"We should move from why to how. Countries should be unafraid to learn from those who are leading the way... It is my belief that it is neither contrary to our faith nor to our traditions; that instead it honours the founding principles of Islam"*

*"The Qur'an and the Hadith are clear: learning is an honourable pursuit regardless of gender... By leaving women out of economies, we risk leaving ourselves on the wrong side of economic history."*

**President of the Islamic Development Bank, Dr. Ahmad Mohamed Ali Al-Madani:**

*"We have reached another major milestone in fostering collaboration with advanced economies and the Muslim way."*

*"In order to gain global peace and prosperity we must reduce the economic gap for which we must introduce economic programs to foster economic cooperation between advanced economies in a win-win formula."*

*"The role of the private sector in development must be further mainstream as a partner for comprehensive human involvement."*

*"We need to recognise adversity as a strength and create partnerships that will not compromise human dignity."*

**The Forum then saw global leaders each take to the stage and give a special address on what the Forum meant to them in these challenging times. These speakers included:**

**His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam:**

*"The Western and Islamic worlds face these [same] problems together and no country has the ability to solve them alone"*

*"Notwithstanding these positive developments... The division of the world between Islam and the West, as the two are prominently locked in opposition with each other... We need to understand each others' worldview to reduce suspicion."*

**His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:**

*"Unfortunately in more recent times terrorism and violence has also created insecurity and robbed us of the normal path of development."*

*"We need to invest in our human capital which is essential to our development and we need to strengthen our state institutions so they are more accountable to the needs of our people."*

**His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Bahrain:**

*"It is my firm belief that the foundation of any democratic society is a democratic household."*

*"All of us gathered here understand the absolute fundamental importance of economic development that thrives through interdependence."*

*"While we in the Middle East... undoubtedly the world's focus has been on our political development. But the catalyst, the driver and ultimately the solution to our region's issues lie as much in economic development, in enhanced opportunity and in education."*

**His Excellency Bakir Izetbegovic, Member of the Presidency, Bosnia & Herzegovina:**

*“Underdeveloped countries are struggling to find economic models that secure equitable economic development...on the other hand, vibrant new economies are emerging in the east”.*

**Her Excellency Atifete Jahjaga, President of the Republic of Kosovo:**

*“[We] are striving to adapt to open markets... As a region, and as respective countries our capabilities are great... Societies in transition should not forever remain dependent on donations.”*

*“We share tradition and commitment to the same values that can only strengthen the bonds between our people.”*

**His Excellency Md Abdul Hamid, President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh:**

*“There is a great majority without access to technology –a great digital divide. Without education, many will not enjoy a digital dividend.”*

*“The relationship between growth and the environment is most critical. The lives of millions of our people is deeply integrated with the environment and we cannot compromise.”*

**His Excellency Abdelilah Benkirane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Morocco:**

*“The motto of our experience is reform in the framework of stability. We are in a race with time to achieve reforms in this sphere.”*

*“The Arab Spring is faltering, but the Arab Spring is not really a tournament where there are winners and losers. It is a social phenomenon, which speaks to real reforms and change.”*

**His Excellency Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Republic of Pakistan:**

*“We must remember that the future of all mankind is now interdependent. Religions and cultures, in fact, provide the much-desired diversity. Technological and scientific advantage should serve as tools for human development rather than conflict and destruction.*

*“Economic pursuit in this world should not be viewed as a zero-sum game... Allah has bestowed provisions for all mankind... We need to reject divisive ideologies and pursue our common destiny. I sincerely believe that this forum provides a platform for constructive and innovative thinking in this regard.”*

**His Excellency Prof. Dr. Boediono, Vice President of Indonesia:**

*“The world is a fast changing place where all sorts of novel interactions and new forms of partnership are sprouting at the same time, we are also witnessing a growing number of conflicts brewing in many parts of this planet. Many of such regions happen to be where our Muslim brothers live.”*

**His Excellency Sheikh Salem AbdulAziz Al-Saud Al-Sabah, the Deputy Prime Minister of Kuwait:**

*“We would like to work on increasing investments and trade between these countries.”*

**His Excellency Ali Babacan, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey:**

*"We believe that economic interdependency is the best way to produce peace, it produces stability. When we look at the global economy, the huge financial crisis turned into an economic crisis which lead to social and political crisis in many cases. It is really a crisis of confidence.*

*"From now on the sustainability of the recovery is going to be very important to follow. The quality of growth is going to be very important."*

*"We have to be sure that growth is not happening at the expense of government balance sheets. Is growth generating jobs? Is growth improving education and healthcare systems? These are very important questions to follow."*

**His Excellency Dr. Rowsch Nuri Shaways, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq:**

*"Overall the world economy is growing too slowly to generate enough employment and improve wages. Increased inequality is spreading."*

*"At a time of record prosperity, nearly half of least developed countries are getting less to eat than they did 10 years ago."*

*"A strong yes to the empowerment of Islamic women"*

**His Excellency Asset Issekeshov, Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan:**

*"Kazakhstan became one of the few countries to sign a country partnership strategy with the Islamic Development Bank...With this in mind we position ourselves as the best regional investment hub in the region."*

**His Excellency Craig Cannonier, Premier of Bermuda:**

*"Over the last several decades the focus of global economic activity has shifted... There are new opportunities. We are here to discuss these new opportunities. We are here to build and strengthen the new relationships that align with new opportunities."*

**His Majesty King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan:**

*"Globalisation does not mean uniformity, best practice down not mean single-minded thinking."*

*"All Muslims around the world can and must share in global productivity and prosperity...We must actively engage the young men and women who are the heart and the power of our future. The business world must make it a priority to answer the needs of young people around the world everywhere for jobs, good jobs."*

*"This forum recognises the creative drive and the forward-looking enterprises that make up the Islamic world today."*

**The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron,** welcomed leaders to London:

*"I don't just want London to be a great capital of Islamic finance in the western world, I want London to stand alongside Dubai and Kuala Lumpur as one of the great capitals of Islamic finance anywhere in the world.*

*"Investing in London is good for you and opening London up to your investment is good for us"*

*"Never again should a Muslim in Britain feel unable to go to university because they cannot get a student loan simply because of their religion.*

*"Britain is a country ready to welcome your investment, a country that values your friendship and a country which will never exclude anyone because of their race, religion colour or creed"*

*"This government wants Britain to be the first sovereign outside of the Islamic world to issue an Islamic bond... to be launched as early as next year.*

*"New investments that are right for you. New investments that are right for us. New investments that are possible because of the unique openness of the city of London."*

**The World Islamic Economic Forum** is taking place at London's ExCel from October 29-31 2013, meeting outside the Muslim world for the first time in its history. The Forum, entitled 'Changing Worlds, New Relationships', is jointly hosted by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Malaysia. 18 Global Leaders, 5 Central Bank Governors, and more than 2700 CEOs, captains of industry, academic scholars, regional experts, professionals, corporate managers, policy makers, innovators, business leaders and investors from 128 countries will come together to explore the range of investment and business opportunities available across the world.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**Full speeches are available online. Please visit [www.9thwief.org](http://www.9thwief.org) or contact:**

- Shabana Palpanaban [shabana@wief.org](mailto:shabana@wief.org) or +60123754957
- Poppy Mitchell Rose [poppy.mitchell-rose@freuds.com](mailto:poppy.mitchell-rose@freuds.com) or +44 7808 611 345

**FTP - for b-roll and highlight packages:**

**<http://www.wiefpress.com/login.php>**

**Username: 9thWIEF**

**Pass: Forum2013**

Day 1: 9th World Islamic Economic Forum, Arrival Of Leaders

[http://assignments.gettyimages.com/mm/nicePath/gyipa\\_public?nav=pr198737247](http://assignments.gettyimages.com/mm/nicePath/gyipa_public?nav=pr198737247)

Day 1: 9th World Islamic Economic Forum, Opening Ceremony & Leaders Panel

[http://assignments.gettyimages.com/mm/nicePath/gyipa\\_public?nav=pr198737840](http://assignments.gettyimages.com/mm/nicePath/gyipa_public?nav=pr198737840)

Day 1: 9th World Islamic Economic Forum, General Views

[http://assignments.gettyimages.com/mm/nicePath/gyipa\\_public?nav=pr198738560](http://assignments.gettyimages.com/mm/nicePath/gyipa_public?nav=pr198738560)