

His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Khalid bin Muhammad Manzalawi

Assistant Secretary-General

Head of the International Political Affairs Sector

Before the 15th session of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Summit

“Promoting unity and solidarity through dialogue for sustainable development”

Republic of Gambia, 2024

Your Excellency Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of Gambia,

Your Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah Al Saud, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

Your Excellency Mr. Hussein Ibrahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation,

Your Highnesses and Excellencies in attendance,

Allow me to begin by conveying the greetings of His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, and to extend my heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to the President, government, and people of the Republic of Gambia for assuming the presidency of the 15th session of

the Islamic Summit. I am deeply appreciative of the warm reception and generous hospitality extended to all participants. I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the preparation and successful execution of this significant summit, which has unfolded in such an honourable manner. Furthermore, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its unwavering dedication in addressing common issues and confronting the international challenges of our time during its presidency of the 14th session of the Islamic Summit.

Your Excellencies, esteemed attendees,

As we gather here today, it is imperative to underscore the significance of the Palestinian cause, which stands as a fundamental and central pillar of the entire Arab and Islamic community. This enduring international concern has spanned decades, marked by the suffering of the Palestinian people under the yoke of the Israeli military apparatus. They have endured widespread destruction, displacement, systematic ethnic cleansing, and egregious assaults on their rights, including the desecration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and attacks on civilians.

Since 7 October 2023, the Palestinian people have endured escalating organised crimes, particularly in Gaza, where they face demolitions, hunger, arbitrary arrests, and various other violations of international laws, norms, agreements, and treaties. These relentless attacks and oppressions demand action from nations that stand in solidarity with the Palestinian cause. It is incumbent upon us to advocate for their rights before

international forums, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, to halt the genocidal campaigns and hold perpetrators of these crimes accountable.

In this vein, allow me to extend gratitude and appreciation on behalf of His Excellency the Secretary-General to His Excellency Mr. Hussein Ibrahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, for his impassioned plea before the International Court of Justice. His assertion of Israel's continued policy of apartheid against Palestinians echoes the League of Arab States' call for collective action in international arenas to immediately cease hostilities in Gaza, halt forced displacements, expedite the delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance, and facilitate the reconstruction efforts in the Strip.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed attendees,

It has become increasingly evident to the world that the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda hinges upon the establishment of inclusive partnerships at the global, regional, and national levels, rooted in principles, values, and a shared vision that prioritises the well-being of individuals. This is especially critical given the current geopolitical landscape. To achieve the desired objectives that serve the interests of all peoples, concerted efforts are imperative. Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, Arab countries have taken significant strides to align their national plans with this agenda, despite

facing challenges that have disrupted political and security stability in certain regions.

We firmly believe that forging partnerships through regional and international cooperation is pivotal to advancing these goals. Without collaboration among diverse stakeholders, progress remains elusive. No single government can address these challenges in isolation. Therefore, an integrated approach to sustainable development, founded on partnerships, is essential to ensure tangible outcomes on the ground. Our nations require the engagement of multiple stakeholders and a comprehensive framework for cooperation at various levels—national, regional, and global—to ensure inclusivity and leave no one behind. Partnership is indeed the linchpin for achieving our shared objectives.

As we convene at this summit, we extend our best wishes for its success.

Peace be upon you,