

Enlightened Moderation in Islam in Today's World

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Congratulations to PML Punjab in taking the initiative on this very important subject. Important since it concerns not only Pakistan and Pakistanis, but also Muslim Ummah.

World Today is truly a **multi-dimensional world** with a vast geography with oceans, plains, deserts, mountains and abundance of natural resources but above all huge human resources. This human resource has immense diversity with different races, cultures, ethnic groups, religions and civilizations.

This complexity is both a challenge and an opportunity. **Challenge** in evolving a common framework in an institutionalized system and an **opportunity** to achieve socio, economic and political harmony towards improving standard of living of the people of this region in an environment of peace and tranquility.

The question is how to convert challenge into an opportunity? There is a dire need for creating an enabling environment to collectively address this challenge for the good of teaming millions of the world. Is this achievable? Certainly yes, because of universality of cultures and specially different religions.

The different civilizations gave birth to different traditions and based on political, economic and social systems experienced by each civilization it has moved to modernity either by an evolution or by revolution. No matter what traditions the societies practiced, with discourse within led to dialogue, which in turn paved the way to modernity. In spite of inherent conflict between the two, generally they co-existed with harmony.

I believe traditions are imparted by cultures and cultures are influenced by religions. Let me take just one major religion of the world **Islam**. In form and content, the Islamic discourse is a human discourse that seeks to promote dialogue, understanding, co-existence and cooperation within the international community in order to spread the values of justice, peace, welfare and modernity (Islam for all times). With Islam as its reference, the Islamic discourse shuns violence and extremism; calls for respect and preservation of human rights and for banishing injustice and hegemony.

In our region, we also have **Christianity**. Muslims believe in Quran and also respect Bible. The Muslims respect all prophets including Christ, thus there is basis for harmony. The other two major religions practiced in our region are **Buddhism and Hinduism** with message of peace and tolerance. Both of these two religions have coexisted with Islam in the world specially in our region for centuries. This is diversity with harmony, as part of traditions and basis for modernity.

In summary world has following challenges:

- Political Conflicts: Kashmir, Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq
- Interfaith and Inter-civilization harmony: OIC, Asia Middle East Dialogue and Western perception of clash of civilization
- Economic Development
- Social demands and needs
- Globalization
- Nuclear capabilities and arms race
- Ambitions of some nations
- Hegemony

Islam

- Teaches us moderation, peace, human rights and enlightenment.
- Fundamentalism in Islam was a phenomenon that came after all other religions experienced fundamentalism
- During the course of the twentieth century, a militant form of religiosity has surfaced in every single major world religion. It's often given the highly unsatisfactory name of "fundamentalism." This is a term that was coined by Christians in the United States to describe their protestant reform movement at above the time of World War 1 and – Muslims and Jews and Buddhists rather resent the use of the Christian term to describe their similar reform movements, too. But the first fundamentalist movement developed in the United States during World War 1 and it developed in the monotheistic faith. Islam was the last of all to produce a full-blown fundamentalism in the 1960s...
- We have fundamentalist Judaism, Christianity, Islam. Hinduism, Buddhism, even fundamentalist Confucianism in China. It presents a widespread dissatisfaction and revolt from modernity, from secular modernity. Fundamentalists feel that religion has been sidelined. They want to drag religion from the sidelines to which

it's been relegated in a secular country culture and put it back to centre stage.

- Fundamentalists typically tend to go through a very similar scenario. First, they tend to withdraw from main stream society and create enclaves of pure faith in a godless world. Examples are Bob Jones University in Indiana, and/or the ultra-orthodox Jewish communities in New York or indeed the training camps of Bin Laden. From these enclaves of faith, some of them initiate a counter-offensive against the secular mainstream society.

Pakistan Scenario

- Historic Perspective: Pakistan Movement, Jinnah and our Constitution
- Polarization and contradictions: MMA- ARD v/s PML and Coalition
- Social scene and laws: NWFP with Hisbah v/s Constitution
- Economic development and feudal resistance
- Inter-provincial harmony
- Genesis of Enlightened Moderation

President's strategy of Enlightened Moderation

- Now to face the fierce and daunting challenges, which are rife with real dangers that besiege and threaten us such as terrorism; we need to close our ranks and fortify against the forces of terror and destruction.
- Towards this, I would like to share with you the strategy propounded by Pakistan President Musharraf towards inter-belief and inter-civilization harmony, namely “**Enlightened Moderation**”, which has three tiers. The first tier is global rapprochement, the second tier relates to Muslims and the third tier relates to individual countries. The first tier has a two-pronged strategy of which first to be practiced by Muslim-world, by rejecting extremism and terrorism, propagated by some misguided Muslims and go on to the path of socio-economic development; which the other prong to be practiced by West by helping to resolve major political disputes in Muslim world namely Palestine and Kashmir. The second tier by Muslims has already been initiated by reorganizing OIC, the only forum which represents the whole Muslim world, to combat illiteracy and poverty which

breeds terrorism and extremism. The third tier by individual countries like Pakistan's efforts, successful efforts, to get Al Qaeda and many other actions to fight terrorism

Key Perils of extremism

- For the world: Peace and insecurity
- For Pakistan: Foreign Policy; Trade and investment eg: Oil pipeline; religious divide; our survival and progress
- For Ummah: Palestine, Kashmir, Iran, Syria and Pakistan

PML

- Responsibility as ruling party: Prime Minister should today have one point agenda i.e. Image of Pakistan, guided and supported by President since it is fundamental to our survival and progress
- Awareness at grass root level: Seminars, corner meetings, all forums national and international
- Dialogue with other parties in the country to develop a National Agenda, rising above party politics
- Galvanize country against all forms of fundamentalists and extremists
- International Conference sharing our sufferings, actions and successes of past and our plans for future and world understanding.
- Incorporate in PML Constitution the national plans

I thank you, ladies & gentlemen.