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Global Muslim Leader Urges Good-Faith Negotiations In Peace Plan For Ukraine As He Inaugurates New Complex Of Britain's Biggest Mosque Rebuilt After Fire In 2015

- *"I feel only grief and anguish as I see the world hurtling ever faster towards a terrifying world war"*
- *"As they continue to support Ukraine as it defends itself, world powers should also be making every possible effort to end the war through peace talks and good-faith negotiations."*
- *"Whatever wrongs are being committed by the Russian State, we must keep in mind the broader picture that if the war is not brought to an end, it will lead to a deepening global crisis"*

- ***“What incentive will Russia and its leaders have to cease hostilities if they know that their withdrawal will lead to their certain ruin?”***



On 4 March 2023, the *World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph)*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad delivered the keynote address at the 17th National Peace Symposium hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK.



The event also served as the inauguration of the new five-storey building in the Baitul Futuh Mosque, which was rebuilt after a fire in 2015.



Prior to the formal proceedings of the Peace Symposium, His Holiness unveiled a plaque and led the attendees in silent prayer to mark the inauguration of the new complex which includes two multi-purpose halls, office space and guest accommodation.



The event was attended by more than 1500 people including 500 dignitaries and guests who had gathered from 40 countries, comprising of Ministers, Ambassadors of State, and Members of Parliament.



During the proceedings, His Holiness presented Barbara Caroline Hofman, founder of the charity *ASEM*, with the *2019 Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace*, in recognition of her charitable work to provide for children orphaned by war.



His Holiness also presented Dr. Tadatoshi Akiba, former mayor of Hiroshima, with the *2022 Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace* for his efforts towards campaigning for nuclear disarmament.



In his address, His Holiness warned of the perilous trajectory of the war in Ukraine and urged world leaders to ***“strive to find mutually acceptable terms of agreement”*** and make urgent efforts to find peace, lest the ***“cycle of incessant violence”*** rotates with ***“ever greater fury.”***

His Holiness said that a Third World War is dangerously close and presented verses of the Holy Quran to outline solutions that are direly needed to find a way out.

During his address, His Holiness also highlighted the true purpose of building Mosques and drew attention to the link every Mosque must have with the *Holy Kaaba* in Mecca.



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“Muslims are commanded to build their Mosques in the direction of the Holy Kaabah, the Sacred House in Makkah, and to worship in its direction. Yet, it is not enough to merely turn one’s physical direction towards the Holy Kaabah. Rather Muslims and their Mosques must fulfil the objectives of the Kaabah, outlined in chapter 3, verse 98 of the Holy Quran, where it states that whosoever enters the Sacred House of Allah ‘enters peace’. This Quranic verse means that a true Muslim, upon entering a Mosque, shall himself enter a state of peace and, shall, by fulfilling the rights and commands of God, prove a beacon of peace and security for others.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad further said:

“All our Mosques spiritually mirror the Holy Kaabah, wherein they serve not only as an abode of worshipping God Almighty but are also a means of fulfilling the rights of mankind and establishing peace in the world.”

His Holiness mentioned that for several years, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been hosting events such as the Peace Symposium in its efforts towards establishing peace.



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“Though we have long preached this message, it seems to have fallen upon deaf ears. I believe the fundamental reason is that the vast majority of the world has turned away from God Almighty and consider materialistic gains and worldly pursuits to be their ultimate objective. It was due to such vain and covetous pursuits that mankind was dragged into two calamitous and harrowing world wars during the 20th century. Rather than learn from the horrors of the past, the world is once again engulfed by warfare and conflict.”

His Holiness said that Islam’s teachings serve to provide solutions for creating peace.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“The Holy Quran has instructed that every possible opportunity to achieve peace must be pursued, no matter how remote the chances of success are. In chapter 49, verse 10, Allah the Almighty states that when two nations are at war, third parties should seek to reconcile them and draw them to a peaceful settlement. If the aggressor continues to wage war, it is up to other nations to join forces and use proportionate and legitimate force to stop the oppressor. However, once their cruelties cease, unjust retribution or revenge must not be exacted.”



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad further said:

“Chapter 5, verse 9 of the Holy Quran categorically states that you must not let the enmity of any nation or party prevent you from upholding the true standards of justice and equity. Accordingly, punitive sanctions or other unjust measures that prevent a nation from moving forward post-war and limit its freedom and prosperity should be avoided at all costs.”

Turning towards the present-day war in Ukraine, His Holiness showed how these Islamic principles are extremely pertinent.

The Caliph of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community said that despite the war in Ukraine showing no signs of abating, certain political leaders are proclaiming that ***“once the war does end, Russia should be subjected to extreme sanctions and made to pay for its actions.”***

Shining light on the dangers of such statements, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad commended an [article](#) in the British press and said:

“Recently, a column by the journalist Matthew Parris was published in The Times stating that such statements, in advance of any meaningful peace talks, are ill-judged and serve only to further inflame a volatile situation... I believe he is right to serve this warning. What incentive will Russia and its leaders have to cease hostilities if they know that their withdrawal will lead to their certain ruin?”

Juxtaposing the rhetoric of some bellicose politicians with the teachings of Islam, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“I believe it is essential to keep the channels of communication open and to strive to find mutually acceptable terms of agreement. If, however, the aggressor remains bent on causing misery and destruction and refuses to withdraw, Islam teaches that other nations should join together as one and use proportionate and necessary force to end the cruelties.”



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad continued and said:

“The objective of the intervening parties must remain, at all times, to establish peace instead of seeking revenge or humiliating the aggressor. Nor should the underlying intention ever be to line one’s pockets or to exploit the conflict to advance vested interests. Otherwise, those who have been demeaned will undoubtedly harbour a sense of injustice and resentment. Such frustrations are bound to eventually boil over and lead to further conflict and so the cycle of incessant violence will continue to rotate with ever greater fury.”

His Holiness warned of how the war in Ukraine could ignite further conflict and warfare.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“The truth is that war often begets war. There are genuine concerns that the Ukraine conflict could spread or that other nations could be emboldened to abandon diplomatic efforts to resolve their disputes and resort to force. For example, the situation in Taiwan is becoming increasingly precarious as China seeks to assert its control. Hence, world leaders, the media and others should not fall into the trap of thinking that the war in Ukraine can be easily contained.”

His Holiness said that world leaders and the media should not ***“fall into the trap of thinking that the war in Ukraine can be easily contained”*** and gave example of the conflict over Taiwan to caution that the war may spread further if other nations abandon diplomatic efforts and resort to force.

His Holiness provided practical solutions for ending the cycle of warfare in view of Islamic teachings.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad stated:

“The world is well versed in supporting victims and those suffering injustice, as is the case with the Ukrainian nation at this time. Yet, it may surprise you to hear that Islam teaches Muslims to help not only the victim or the persecuted but also the perpetrator and oppressor. Of course, this does not mean you provide the aggressor with the means or freedom to inflict further cruelties. Rather, to ‘help’ an aggressor means to stop them from committing further brutalities and injustice.



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“Whatever wrongs are being committed by the Russian State, we must keep in mind the broader picture that if the war is not brought to an end, it will lead to a deepening global crisis with potentially catastrophic results. Opposing blocs will become further entrenched. Hatreds will become even more deeply-rooted, increasing the likelihood of a world war. Hence, as they continue to support Ukraine as it defends itself, world powers should also be making every possible effort to end the war through peace talks and good-faith negotiations.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad expressed his grief at seeing what the future may hold and said:

“For many years, I have warned of the risks of a full-scale world war and have spoken of how its deadly and destructive consequences are far beyond our comprehension. Having long warned of such a war, I take no satisfaction in the fact that we are moving ever closer to it and that others are now expressing similar sentiments and fears. Rather, I feel only grief and anguish as I see the world hurtling ever faster towards a terrifying world war in which the lives of millions of innocent people will be lost or permanently destroyed.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“What kind of future will we leave behind to those who are yet to come? Instead of bestowing a legacy of peace and prosperity to our future generations, our parting gift to them will be nothing except death, destruction and misery. Certainly, it is my grave fear that today’s geopolitical tensions could spiral out of all control and ultimately lead to a nuclear war... Thus, with all my heart, I pray that may Allah the Almighty have mercy upon humanity and may the people of the world, especially its leaders and policymakers, see sense before it is too late.”

Prior to the keynote address, whilst accepting the *Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace* for the year 2019, Barbara Caroline Hofman, founder of ASEM, said:

“I am very pleased to share this award, this honour you gave me tonight with all my people, because I didn’t do it alone, we did it together.”



The 2022 recipient of the *Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace* for the year 2022, Dr. Tadatoshi Akiba said:

“You [the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] were one of the first in the world to recognise and protest nuclear weapons in humanity and evilness back on August 10th, 1945. The Second Caliph declared on that day that, ‘It is our religious and moral duty to proclaim to the whole world that we do not consider lawful such bloodshed.’ Belatedly, the world finally came to the same conclusion...Words of Your Holiness give us direction.”

The event, which returned after a 4 years' interval due to the Covid pandemic, concluded with a silent prayer led by His Holiness.



Before the formal proceedings, His Holiness met personally with various dignitaries and guests, whilst the next day, His Holiness met with various international delegations of guests who had travelled to attend the event at his office in Islamabad in Tilford, Surrey.





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For further info contact: pressamjindia@gmail.com