

PRESS STATEMENT

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Bhutto Urges Global Summit Writes 40 World Leaders Proposing Increased Western-Islamic Cooperation

Islamabad – Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, in a letter to the leaders of forty Western and Muslim countries, has called for a global summit to address growing concern that the international community is headed toward a confrontation between Islamic and Western civilizations.

Bhutto cited recent international events, including the American strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan, as “harbingers of a new and dangerous era in relations between the West and Islamic societies,” and stressed the need for a new channel of communication between the leaders of these nations to prevent the demonizing of civilizations.

In the letter, Bhutto called for the creation of a new international body to “manage delicate security issues, combat terrorism, increase co-operation and reduce suspicion” between the Western and Islamic worlds.

Bhutto expressed concern that current efforts to build democratic, moderate Islamic societies will be set back if nothing is done to counter negative actions and impressions.

Urging the participation of her colleagues around the world, Bhutto felt it was an opportune time for a high-level dialogue on these issues to “reduce mistrust, increase cooperation, and build stronger ties between our nations and the multilateral organizations that serve our respective communities.”

The letter was sent to: President Clinton of the USA; Prime Minister Blair of the UK; President Chirac of France; President Cotti of Switzerland; President Havel of the Czech Republic; Prime Minister Chretien of Canada; Chancellor-Elect Schroeder of Germany; Prime Minister-Elect Podi of Italy; President Yeltsin of Russia; Prime Minister Howard of Australia; Prime Minister Shipley of New Zealand; President Aznar of Spain; Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark; Prime Minister Jersson of Sweden; Prime Minister WimKok of the Netherlands; Prime Minister Bondevik of Norway; President Ahtisaari of Finland; Prime Minister Yilmaz of Turkey; President Habibie of Indonesia; President Mubarak of Egypt; King Fahd of Saudi Arabia; President Ben Ali of Tunisia; King Hassan II of Morocco; President Qaddafi of Libya; President Asad of Syria; Prime Minister Hasina of Bangladesh; Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said of Oman; President Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan; President Tarar of Uzbekistan; President Rakhmanov of Tajikistan; President Sheikh Zahid bin Sultan Al Nuhayyan of the UAE; President Khatami of Iran; Prime Minister Al-Salem Al Sabah of Kuwait; President Aleyev of Azerbaijan; President Zeroyal of Algeria; President Niyazov of Turkmenistan; Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia and Prime Minister Hariri of Lebanon.

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