

Welcome speech by
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At the 9th US-Islamic World Forum

In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished Audience,

I would like to welcome you in Doha on the occasion of the ninth edition of the U.S. Islamic World Forum which aims to examine the shape of the relations between the United States and the Muslim world.

We are meeting today as the region witness political and economic changes induced by the Arab Spring revolutions that impact relations between the United States and the Islamic world, and some might wonder whether this period would give birth or not to democratic governments driven by Islamic ideology, and whether they would be pro-Western or not. What stand should Western governments take on Arab Spring revolutions? Would it be wise for the West to support the Arab peoples at the price of undermining its allies? Or is it sounder to stand by client regimes and risk tarnishing the West's image in the Arab world?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must spare no efforts in supporting the Arab Spring revolutions and encouraging regimes that seek political reform dictated by the people's own desire and not imposed by external influences. Also, we must deal positively with the political changes taking place in the region, back the countries that wish for a peaceful transition to democracy, and urge those States that continue to use violence against their citizens to stop doing so and hand them over the right to choose their own future free of any inhumane repressive practices. For history will not forgive authoritarian

regimes and repressive policies has proven useless, it is important for countries experiencing popular revolutions to follow the example of successful democratic experiments that have taken place in Muslim countries such as Indonesia, and to draw lessons from these experiences.

The nature of the change currently occurring in many Arab countries demands that the United States and the Western governments base their future policies on the objective understanding of the substantive nature of the systems produced by the Arab revolts, the search for converging and the bypassing of conflicting points, thus creating a stable common ground that would contribute to the establishment of confidence and the reinforcement of dialogue and mutual understanding instead of conflict that disserves common interest.

In conclusion, we hope that this distinguished gathering will find effective ways of bringing point of views closer in the relations between the United States and the Islamic world.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.