

ERDOĞAN CALLS FOR PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST

An international conference titled "Arab Spring and Peace in the New Middle East: Muslim and Christian Perspectives" has begun with the participation of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in Istanbul.



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Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said, "What I have learnt, not only from Islam or any of its sects, but also from all Abrahamic religions, is ...at human life is the sacred in all creatures regardless of his faith, sect or status, and all divine religions forbid killing men. Killing human being is forbidden for the Sunni as it is forbidden for the Shiite."

Erdoğan added that Turkey did not have any prejudices toward any ethnical origin, religion or any sect.

"What happened in Karbala 1,332 years ago is what happens in Syria today," said Erdoğan in his speech at the international conference "Arab Spring and Peace in the New Middle East: Muslim and Christian Perspectives".

Erdoğan said further that the name of the oppressor and the oppressed might be different today, but what happens in Syria today is a new Karbala.

The tragedy of Karbala occurred during a battle between supporters and relatives of the Islam's Prophet Muhammad's grandson Hussein ibn Ali on the one side and a military detachment from the forces of Yazid I, the Umayyad caliph, on the other in 680 A.D. in present day Iraq.

Hussein ibn Ali was martyred during the battle of Karbala.

The conference, held by Turkey's Religious Affairs Foundation Islamic Studies Center (ISAM) and

Marmara University Middle East Studies Institute, is being attended by religious leaders of Muslim and Christian communities from ten countries as well as by academicians and analysts.

On the first day of the conference, workshops will be held on the subjects titled "Arab Awakening and Muslim-Christian Relations in the New Middle East" and "Religious Pluralism in the Middle East and Culture of Coexistence."

"Religious and National identities, and Muslim-Christian Relations" and "Social Transition and Religious Leadership" workshops will be held on the second day of the conference.

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