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[World](#) **Musharraf berates Muslim world**



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Musharraf wants young Muslims to study in the West

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By [Zaffar Abbas](#) in Islamabad



Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has said Islamic countries will remain backward unless they concentrate more on scientific and technological development.

Muslim nations are internally involved in fratricidal conflicts and perceived by the outside world as terrorists with little attention being given on their uplift, he said.

General Musharraf made his comments in an address to a conference of science and technology attended by ministers from Muslim countries.

President Musharraf said the time had come for Islamic nations to take part in collective self-criticism.

Once such an assessment is made, it would not be difficult to realise that the entire Islamic world was far behind the developed world, he argued.

“ Today we are the poorest, the most illiterate, the most backward, the most unhealthy, the most un-enlightened, the most deprived, and the weakest of all the human race ”

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"He asked the participating countries to review their existing policies"



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'The most unhealthy'

President Musharraf

The Muslim Ummah, or the Islamic world, he said was presently living in darkness.

"Today we are the poorest, the most illiterate, the most backward, the most unhealthy, the most un-enlightened, the most deprived, and the weakest of all the human race," he told the delegates.

President Musharraf then made a comparison of the economic growth in Islamic countries with some developed countries.

While the collective Gross National Product of the all Muslim countries stands at \$1,200bn, that of Germany alone is \$2,500bn and that of Japan \$5,500bn.

He said one of the main reasons for this disparity was that none of the Muslim countries had ever paid any attention to educational and scientific development.

He asked the countries participating in the conference to concentrate on scientific and technological development in order to compete with the developed world.

The real jihad

The Pakistani leader suggested the setting up of a multi-billion dollar fund for such a purpose.

Beside this, he said, there was a need for creating centres of excellence in the field of science and technology.

He also called for the creation of scholarships for young scientists to seek knowledge from universities in developed countries.

President Musharraf described it as the real jihad, or holy war.

Unless this was done, the Islamic world and Muslims would always be perceived as backward, illiterate - those who only indulge in extremism and violence.



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