

## **FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS**

### **(SESSION OF PROGRESS AND GLOBAL HARMONY)**

**ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY 26-28 RABIULTHANI 1425H  
(14-16 JUNE 2004)**

1. At the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Turkey, the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers entitled *Session of Progress and Global Harmony* was held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, on 26-28 Rabiulthani 1425H (14-16 June 2004).

2. The Conference was opened with a recitation of verses from the Holy Quran. His Excellency Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey, delivered a speech in which he welcomed the Ministers and delegates participating in the Session (Annex).

3. The three OIC regional groups then successively took the floor to respond to the speech of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Turkey: His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Guinea for the African Group, His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Tunisia for the Arab Group and His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Indonesia for the Asian Group. They all expressed their deep gratitude to the government and people of the Republic of Turkey for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to the delegates and participants as well as for the efforts made to make the Conference a success. Based on their proposal, the Conference resolved to consider the statement of H.E. the President of the Republic of Turkey an official document of the Conference.

4. At the beginning of the first working session, H.E. Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Chairman of the 30<sup>th</sup> ICFM, delivered a speech in which he outlined the efforts that the Islamic Republic of Iran made during the preceding of the 30<sup>th</sup> session of the ICFM to promote joint Islamic action. He commended the Secretary General, his aides and the entire staff of the General Secretariat for their efforts to implement the resolutions of the Islamic Conference. His Excellency, Dr. Abdelouahed Belkeziz, the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference then presented a full report on the OIC's activities over the past year. (Annex ) H.E. Hamid Albar, the Foreign Minister of Malaysia in his capacity as representative of the Chair of the Tenth Islamic Summit, and the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations also made statements at the first working session.

5. In conformity with the recommendation of the Senior Officials' Meeting, the Conference unanimously elected H.E. Mr. Abdullah Gul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, as Chairman of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers. It approved the composition of the Bureau as follows: Republic of Tunisia, Burkina Faso, State of Palestine as Vice Chairmen and the Islamic Republic of Iran as Rapporteur.

6. The Conference adopted the report of the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) Preparatory to the current session held in Jeddah from 20-23 Rabiul Awwal 1425H (9-12 May 2004 – annex No. ICFM/31-2004/SO/REP/FINAL). The Conference adopted the Draft Agenda and Work Program that the SOM submitted to it).

7. After considering the reports of the Secretary General and in light of the brilliant statements made and the constructive discussions that took place among the Ministers and Heads of Delegations at the Plenary Session and in the Committees, the Conference adopted a number of resolutions as follows:

8. The Conference stressed the need for an end to Israel's occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967 and called for the withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from all occupied Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif to the 4 June 1967 borders. It also stressed the need to establish an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital in accordance with international resolutions on Palestine, Al Quds Al Sharif and the Middle East, particularly Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 252 (1968), 267 (1969), 465 (1980), 476 (1980), 478 (1980), 1073 (1996), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and General Assembly Resolution 194 on the Return of Palestinian Refugees, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Roadmap as published.

9. The Conference commended with pride the resistance of the valiant Palestinian people and their legitimate leadership headed by gallant President Yasser Arafat against Israeli aggression. It called for an immediate end to the

siege imposed on the Palestinian people and President Yasser Arafat so that they can move freely in and out of the Palestinian territories. It condemned recent Israeli threats on President Arafat's life and reaffirmed its continued political, financial and moral support for the Palestinian people so that they can regain their inalienable national rights, including the right of return, self-determination and an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Sharif as its capital.

**10.** The Conference called on the UN Security Council to assume its responsibility of ensuring international peace and security by compelling Israel to put an end to its aggression and state terrorism such as the killing of civilians, assassinations, detentions, collective punishment, incessant incursions, occupation of cities, villages and Palestinian refugee camps, demolition of homes of Palestinians, and destruction of the institutions and infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority and the national economy. It holds Israel fully and legally responsible for such crimes and requested the international community to compel Israel to put an immediate end to the destruction of homes and to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1544 of 19 May 2004. The Conference called for efforts to secure the release of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons and stressed the need to implement the declaration issued on 5/12/2001 by the Conference of the States Parties to the Geneva Convention of 1949.

**11.** The Conference called on the UN Security Council to deploy UN peacekeeping forces in the occupied Palestinian territories in order to ensure international protection of the Palestinian people and their holy places.

**12.** The Conference affirmed its total condemnation of President George Bush's statements made on 14/4/2004 at a joint press conference with the Prime Minister of Israeli as well as America's letter of guarantees to Israel, which run counter to the resolutions of international legality and to the provisions of peace accords, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Roadmap, and blatantly violate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, especially issues such as borders, refugees, Al Quds and settlements.

**13.** The Conference strongly condemned the recent Israeli unilateral plan and stressed that nobody whosoever has the right to concede Palestinians' national rights to Israel or to negotiate them with the latter on behalf of the Palestinian people and their legitimate and democratically elected leadership.

**14.** The Conference stressed the need for a just settlement of the question of Palestinian refugees in accordance with resolutions of international legality, especially UN General Assembly Resolution 194 of 1948. It condemned all attempts to resettle Palestinians.

**15.** The Conference called on the Quartet to intensify efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East in accordance with the Roadmap and related agreements and resolutions, and on the basis of the principles of the peace process and the Arab Peace Initiative. It also called upon the Quartet to set a specific timeframe that must not be implemented piecemeal. It condemned all unilateral measures that contradict such a stance.

**16.** The Conference condemned Israel's construction of the separation wall and called on the international community to stop its construction and to remove the constructed parts in accordance with Resolution 13/10 (2003) adopted at an extraordinary session of the UN General Assembly. It warned against the adverse effects of the construction of such a wall, since it jeopardizes the establishment of a sovereign and viable Palestinian state and carries risks of a new wave of forced exodus of the Palestinians under harsh living conditions.

**17.** The Conference strongly condemned Israel's expansionist and colonialist policy and emphasized the need to stop all settlement activities and Israeli measures and practices, which contravene resolutions of international legality and also violate related accords signed by Palestinian and Israeli sides. It requested the U.N. Security Council to prevent such measures, remove Israeli settlements in accordance with Security Council Resolution 465 and revive the International Supervision and Monitoring Committee for the Prevention of Settlements in Al-Quds and the Occupied Arab Territories in line with Security Council Resolution 446. The Conference commended the efforts made by the Al Quds Committee under the Chairmanship of His Majesty King Mohamed VI to safeguard the Arab Islamic identity of Al Quds.

**18.** The Conference hailed the government, people and the resistance movements of Lebanon for their steadfastness and for liberating Lebanese territories and repelling Israeli occupation. It also supported Lebanon in its efforts to liberate its entire territory within its internationally recognized borders. It also called on the United Nations to force Israel to pay damages for all the losses it inflicted or caused as a result of its continuous acts of aggression against Lebanon. It supported Lebanon in its demands for the removal of the mines left behind by Israeli occupation. Having planted these mines, Israel must bear the responsibility for their removal. It called for the necessity for Israel to hand out mine maps to Lebanon. In this connection, the Conference commended the efforts put in by the United Arab Emirates to remove mines in Lebanon. Furthermore, it backed the inalienable rights of Lebanon to utilize its waters in

accordance with international law, and condemned Israel's designs on these waters. It held Israel responsible for any action that may undermine Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, national unity and territorial integrity.

**19.** The Conference strongly condemned Israel's policy of refusing to comply with Security Council Resolution 497 of 1981 and of imposing its laws, jurisdiction and administration on occupied Syrian Golan as well as its policies of annexation, building of settlements, confiscation of land, diversion of water sources and imposition of Israeli nationality upon Syrian citizens. It considered all such measures null and void, and a violation of the provisions and principles of International Law and International Humanitarian Law, particularly the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention of 1949. It demanded Israel to withdraw completely from occupied Syrian Golan to the 4<sup>th</sup> June 1967 borders.

**20.** The Conference noted with appreciation the efforts of the leaders of the OIC Member States in favor of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people, including the efforts of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the exchange of letters between His Majesty the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, and the President of the United States, and called upon the US Administration to commit itself to the contents of these letters and the assurances contained therein.

**21.** The Conference called on Member States to implement the principles and resolutions of the Islamic Boycott against Israel and to adopt national legislations that govern it.

**22.** The Conference stressed the need to reserve a portion for the Boycott on television, on the radio and in the press because they are legitimate instruments of resistance that are based on international law and resolutions of international legality.

**23.** The Conference endorsed the recommendations made by the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Liaison Officers of the Islamic Regional Bureaus for the Boycott of Israel held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 15-17 March 2004.

**24.** The Conference affirmed its firm conviction of the need to safeguard Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence and to be ruled by its own people through a broad-based, inclusive and fully representative government Iraq in conformity with a constitution accepted by the Iraqi people. It also called for peaceful co-existence with the neighbours of Iraq and compliance with international legality as well as the principles of the United Nations and of the OIC.

**25.** The Conference strongly condemned the brutal torture of Iraqi prisoners by the occupying forces in violation of the Geneva Conventions and international law, and called for the punishment of the perpetrators.

**26.** The Conference condemned threats against some Member States, particularly the Syrian Arab Republic, and condemned the American administration's decision to impose unilateral economic sanctions against Syria. It also condemned the so-called "Syria Accountability Act". It urged Member States to further strengthen their brotherly ties with Syria in all fields.

**27.** The Conference expressed firm support for the rightful cause of the Muslim Turkish Cypriots; reiterated its support for the efforts of the UN Secretary General under his Mission of Good Offices, and hailing their affirmative vote on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2004 for the UN Settlement Plan which fundamentally changed the circumstances in Cyprus, decided to put an end within the context of the call made by the UN Secretary General in his Report of 28<sup>th</sup> May 2004 to the unjust isolation of Turkish Cypriots. Through the resolution it adopted by consensus, the Conference welcomed the willingness of the Turkish side for a peaceful settlement of the issue, emphasizing the equal political status of the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriot sides. Recalling that the UN Plan aimed to establish a new state of affairs in Cyprus in the form of a new bi-zonal partnership with two equal constituent states, it acknowledged that neither side may claim authority or jurisdiction over the other, and that the Greek Cypriots do not represent the Turkish Cypriots. The Conference urged Member States to closely associate with the Turkish Cypriots with a view to helping them materially and politically and to increase and expand their relations in all fields and, in particular direct transport, trade, tourism, culture, information, investment and sports contacts. In this context it also called upon the international community to take immediate concrete steps aimed at ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

**28.** The Conference reiterated its determination to preserve Somalia's unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. It affirmed its support for the Somalia Reconciliation Conference in Kenya and called on all Somali sides to ensure the success of the third and final phase of the conference. The Conference urged all states, particularly neighbouring states, to respect the sovereignty of Somalia and refrain from interfering in its internal affairs.

**29.** The Conference reaffirmed its support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their legitimate right to self-determination, in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. It called for respect of the human rights of the Kashmiri people and the ending of their continuous violations. It urged India to end human rights violations against the Kashmiri people and allow international human rights organisations to verify the condition of human rights in Indian-held Kashmir.

**30.** The Conference supported the ongoing peace process between Pakistan and India and commended Pakistan for its continued efforts to create and sustain an enabling environment for a composite dialogue with India. In this context, it also noted the adoption of a road map for talks by Pakistan and India in February 2004 which, inter-alia, includes dialogue on Jammu and Kashmir, peace and security. The Conference, noting with appreciation the positive developments in Pakistan-India relations ensuing from Pakistan's unilateral decision of ceasefire along LOC, expressed deep concerns about the continued suppression of the political aspirations of the Kashmiri people, including their right to self-determination.

**31.** The Conference endorsed the recommendations of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir. It also took note of the memorandum presented by the true representatives of the Kashmiri people to the Contact Group and reaffirmed the OIC's commitment to promote a just and peaceful solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

**32.** The Conference welcomed the efforts of the people and government of Afghanistan to reconstruct their country. It also welcomed the efforts to extend the duties of UN and ISAF Forces to the whole of Afghanistan.

**33.** The Conference reiterated gratitude and appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar for his initiative to establish the Afghan People Assistance Fund. It called on Member States that have pledged donations to the Fund to remit the said donations. It also appealed to all Member States to make donations to the Fund.

**34.** The Conference appealed to the international community to provide the assistance it pledged to Afghanistan during the Tokyo Donor Conference held in January 2002 and the Berlin Donor Conference held on 31 March and 1 April 2004.

**35.** The Conference welcomed the positive development in the negotiations between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People Liberation Movement that culminated in the signing of the six protocols, which constitute the final framework of the peace agreement to be signed in July 2004. It urged the international community to support the agreement and help both parties to implement it. It called on the General Secretariat to speedily implement the resolution of the Tenth Islamic Summit Conference on the Establishment of a Fund for the Reconstruction and Development of War-Stricken Regions in the Sudan. It also urged Member States, the Islamic Development Bank and financing institutions of Member States to contribute to the Fund.

**36.** The Conference reaffirmed the importance of strict compliance with the ceasefire agreement in Darfur, and the pursuit of dialogue in an attempt to arrive at a comprehensive solution to the problem. It commended the Sudanese government for the services it provides to the people and displaced persons and for its decision to allow international relief organizations to move freely and provide humanitarian services to the disaster-stricken population. It also called on Member States to urgently provide humanitarian assistance to the Darfur region before the rainy season in accordance with the recommendation of the OIC delegation that visited the region recently.

**37.** The Conference stressed the need to promote confidence building and security among Member States, uphold Islamic values and refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of States. It also called for greater cooperation, coordination and consultation and for a common stance in international fora.

**38.** The Conference reiterated its condemnation of the continuing occupation of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the Republic of Armenia, and demanded Armenia to implement fully all provisions of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 and to stop illegal Armenian settlement process and all other activities in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**39.** The Conference noted with concern the lack of solidarity and cohesion in the voting patterns of the OIC Member States and called upon all OIC Member States to participate more actively in future voting processes of the United Nations bodies, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the OIC Summits and Ministerial Conferences.

**40.** The Conference welcomed the UN Security Council's resolution to finally lift sanctions imposed on the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and called for the lifting of the remaining unilateral sanctions imposed on the Jamahiriya as a means of political coercion that contravenes UN resolutions.

**41.** The Conference reaffirmed the need for total nuclear disarmament and for the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. It called on Member States to actively take part in all related international initiatives and conferences. It called on all Member States to ratify fair and non-discriminatory international conventions and to encourage the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones. It strongly condemned Israel for developing nuclear weapons and persistently refusing to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency access to its nuclear facilities in contravention of all international agreements on nuclear proliferation. In this connection, the Conference condemned once again the principle of preemptive military strikes against any country under any pretext whatsoever.

**42.** The Conference expressed concern over the proliferation of light and small-caliber weapons and the manufacturing, use and trafficking of anti-personnel mines because such activities hamper economic development and cause instability, insecurity and internecine conflicts in Member States.

**43.** The Conference affirmed that Islamic States have an interest in a reformed United Nations System, including an enlarged UN Security Council. It called on Member States to actively and effectively take part in the UN reform process in accordance with declarations and statements issued by the OIC in this regard.

**44.** The Conference reiterated its condemnation of unilateral economic measures and attempts to impose economic sanctions on Member States. It expressed solidarity with Member States that are affected by such unilateral sanctions and urged that they be lifted immediately.

**45.** The Conference welcomed the Islamic Republic of Iran's signing of the Additional Protocol of the IAEA Guarantees Agreements and its continued cooperation with the Agency. It recognized the inalienable right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to develop its nuclear capabilities for peaceful purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

**46.** The Conference expressed satisfaction with the major developmental and humanitarian activities of the OIC Funds in Bosnia Herzegovina, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone in furtherance of the spirit of solidarity and cooperation within the Ummah. It urged Member States, the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Solidarity Fund to support the Funds and make use of them when it comes to implementing their projects meant for the above-mentioned countries.

**47.** The Conference paid special tributes to the President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf for his timely and important initiative on "Enlightened Moderation", which was adopted by the 10<sup>th</sup> Islamic Summit Conference through its Resolution No. 45/10-P(IS). It requested the Chairman of the Islamic Summit Conference to constitute a Commission of Eminent persons from Member States to follow-up the issue. The report and the recommendations of the Commission will be considered by an Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference to be held by the end of 2004. The Conference also appreciated the efforts of the Government of Pakistan for inviting Islamic scholars to an International Seminar on OIC, held in Islamabad on 1-2 June 2004, to evolve a set of recommendations for consideration of the Commission of Eminent Persons.

**48.** The Conference noted with appreciation the holding of the International Conference of Islamic Scholars in Jakarta on 23-25 February 2004, in particular the adoption of the Jakarta Declaration on *Upholding Islam as Rahmatan lil Alamin* and the Plan of Action.

**49.** The Conference welcomed the statement adopted at the International Symposium on "The Muslim World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" held in Istanbul on 12 June 2004.

**50.** The Conference expressed solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in its efforts to combat the criminal terrorist acts it is faced with. It also stated its stance against all forms of international terrorism and called for greater international cooperation to combat the scourge. It requested the Committee of Thirteen to meet urgently and implement the tasks it has been assigned in this regard.

**51.** The Conference expressed serious resentment and indignation over the confession by Macedonian authorities to the massacre of six Pakistani immigrants, near Skopje in March 2002, in a bid to win Western recognition for Macedonia's fight against terrorism. It strongly condemned the cold-blooded murder of innocent civilians, and demanded full justice for the victims and due punishment for the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

**52.** The Conference reaffirmed the need to communicate with Muslim communities and minorities in the world and to make greater efforts in order to implement related Islamic resolutions. It stressed its total condemnation of all campaigns of hostility and hate that some media are still waging against Islam and Muslims, and recalled that Islam advocates compassion, tolerance and coexistence among all human beings.

**53.** The Conference exhorted Member States to give special attention to the causes of Muslim communities in Non-OIC Member States, especially those still suffering from oppression, persecution and ethnic cleansing, and called for greater cooperation and coordination between the OIC, the States concerned and international and regional organizations in this respect in order to restore their rights and ensure respect for their interests, culture and Islamic identity in accordance with the sovereignty, laws and traditions of their countries of residence.

**54.** The Conference urged the Republic of the Philippines to complete Phase II of the Peace Agreement concluded in 1996 between the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and to continue to implement the Comprehensive Plan for the Development of the Muslim Autonomous Region in Southern Philippines in order to restore stability and peace in the region. It also called on it to cooperate with international and regional organizations that provide assistance for the development of the region.

**55.** The Conference stressed the commitment of Member States to respect the rights of non-Muslim communities and minorities living on their territories in accordance with the teachings of our noble Islamic religion. It condemned unfounded allegations made by certain quarters about the treatment of such minorities as well as measures taken as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of Member States.

**56.** The Conference commended the General Secretariat for its efforts to organize symposia and conferences designed to examine matters regarding Muslim minorities in non-OIC Member States, as well as the important recommendations they made to strengthen their ties with the Islamic world. It called on Member States and Islamic institutions to implement such recommendations.

**57.** The Conference stressed its commitment toward Muslims in non-OIC Member States. Given the fact that the Turkish Muslim community in Western Thrace in Greece is an integral part of the Islamic world, the Conference called for an overrule of the court verdict against the elected Muftis of Xanti and Komotini. It also stressed that the interest, rights and identity of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace should be respected and upheld.

**58.** The Conference deplored the continued plight of Muslims in the region of Arakan (Myanmar) and urged the Government of Myanmar to review its policies regarding its Muslim citizens and to repeal the discriminatory laws enacted against them in violation of basic human rights.

**59.** The Conference urged Member States that have not yet ratified the Statute of the International Islamic Court of Justice to complete the ratification process so that the Court can start its functions. It called for greater cooperation in judicial matters and in related research and studies.

**60.** The Conference recognized the need to follow up the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam and further called on the Inter-governmental Group of Experts concerned with the matter to pursue its efforts and formulate Islamic Covenants on Human Rights, each of which would fully address one or more issues in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration. It also called on the sub-committee that is assigned to draft international covenants on human rights in Islam to continue its work.

**61.** The Conference called on Member States to continue coordinating and cooperating positively in the field of human rights, especially at international conferences and meetings on the issue in order to strengthen Islamic solidarity and counter any attempt to use human rights as a means of exerting political pressure on Member States; and to convey the OIC's position on human right issues, including the rights of Muslim minorities to the United Nations organs and agencies concerned. The Conference also supported the efforts made by Member States in Geneva for their common stance on issues of concern and on campaigns to distort the image of Islam as reflected in the resolution of the Human Rights Commission on the issue.

**62.** The Conference expressed deep concern over repeated and erroneous attempts to associate Islam with human rights violations, and over the use of television, the radio and the press to propagate such misconceptions. It called for an end to the unjustified campaigns of some non-governmental organizations against a number of Member States, which demand the abolition of Sharia laws and penalties in the name of human rights protection. It affirmed the right of States to uphold their religious, social and cultural idiosyncrasies, which are legacies that help enrich common universal concepts of human rights. It urged that the universality of human rights must not be used as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of States and flout their national sovereignty. The Conference also condemned the decision of the European Union to denounce stoning as a penalty and what it calls inhumane punishments meted out by some Member States in compliance with Islamic Sharia.

**63.** The Conference urged Member States once again to expeditiously sign or ratify the various agreements concluded under the aegis of the OIC.

**64.** The Conference affirmed the determination of Member States to abide by the provisions of the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, and to co-ordinate efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, including state terrorism. It also called for greater co-operation among the Member States to combat terrorism.

**65.** The Conference condemned all forms of international terrorism, including hijacking and acts against civilian aircraft safety and security. It called on Member States to expeditiously ratify international agreements on hijacking and civil aviation safety and security.

**66.** The Conference considered the report of the Secretary-General on developments over the past year in the field of information and communication. It commended the Secretary-General and the competent departments of the General Secretariat for their efforts to refute misleading allegations in the international media that are designed to tarnish the image of Islam and Muslims. The Conference condemned systematic attempts to associate terrorism with Islam. It also hailed the measures proposed by the Secretary General to enable the information and communication department of the OIC to promote the just causes of Islam and project its image in the best manner possible.

**67.** The Conference urged Member States to implement with greater interest the annual program of the Islamic information plan, provide the financial and technical assistance needed to carry out the program, and help national media institutions to acquire more experience and better vision for joint Islamic information action.

**68.** The Conference urged Member States to enhance their information strategies with a view to keeping pace with new technological advancements in information and communication, and provide material and technical support to the two specialized media institutions charged to implement the strategy: the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic States Broadcasting Organization (ISBO) in order to enable them to achieve their set objectives.

**69.** The Conference called upon Member States to interact more positively with the Islamic Program for the Development of Information and Communication (PIDIC) and to provide the funding needed for the programs submitted by Member States' media institutions, which need to be supported and developed. It requested the Islamic Solidarity Fund to finance some of those projects.

**70.** The Conference stressed the need to implement the conclusions of Phase I of the World Summit on Information Society held in Geneva (December 2003), to help the Republic of Tunisia to organize efficiently Phase II of the Summit (November 2005), and to contribute effectively to its preparatory meetings, which are scheduled for 2004-2005, so that Member States' efforts to prepare related documents can be coordinated.

**71.** The Conference called on the Follow-up Committee of the Sixth Islamic Conference of Information Ministers to meet and draft a charter for the information society and an action plan that would be submitted in the name of Member States at Phase II of the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis 2005).

**72.** The Conference called on the international community to ensure that the benefits of globalization are fairly shared among all countries so as to strike a balance between the advantages and obligations of developing countries including OIC Member States. It also called on developed countries to ensure greater trade liberalization and more opportunities for the products and services of developing countries.

**73.** The Conference called on Member States to increase their share of world trade through greater competitiveness at the international level. It further underscored the need to increase intra-trade among OIC Member States.

**74.** The Conference called for the speedy accession of all the developing countries to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and stressed that no political consideration should impede this process. It condemned all attempts to include non-trade issues such as labour and environment standards into the WTO work program or to link such issues with trade transactions. It also reiterated its appeal to the WTO to focus more on the developmental aspects of the various multilateral trade agreements by taking a set of measures such as compliance with the provisions regarding special and preferential treatment for developing countries and due consideration to the special needs of least developed countries.

**75.** The Conference noted with regret the lack of progress at the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Cancun, Mexico in September 2003 and called for an immediate resumption of trade negotiations under the auspices of the WTO.

**76.** The Conference notes with satisfaction that a meeting on the problem of Cotton was held in Istanbul on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2004 with a view to exploring ways and means of developing textile industries in the Cotton producing African

countries, procuring expertise existing in certain Member States and financial resources attainable in the Islamic Ummah.

**77.** The Conference called on the international community to put an end to agricultural subsidies, which are prejudicial to producers in developing countries. It welcomed, in particular, the initiative of some African Member States of the OIC to maintain cotton prices and develop their indigenous cotton industry so that the export earnings of the cotton-producing countries are not eroded. It called on Member States and the OIC institutions concerned to support the initiative.

**78.** The Conference expressed its support for the initiatives taken to promote the basic products of Member States with a view to increasing the added value of such products and the earnings of producers.

**79.** The Conference stressed the need to devise a coherent and a solid international financial system in order to address the major weaknesses of the present financial system and prevent the spread of any negative repercussions of future financial crises.

**80.** The Conference commended the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) for its key role in strengthening economic and commercial cooperation among Member States. It also commended H.E. Mr. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of COMCEC, for his wise leadership.

**81.** The Conference hailed the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Turkey in its capacity as Chairman of COMCEC to hold a high-level ministerial meeting, styled OIC Istanbul Economic Conference, that will focus on the enhancement of OIC intra trade and investment to be held concurrently with the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of COMCEC, which is scheduled to take place in November 2004 in commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of COMCEC. It noted, in this connection, the groundwork being made by the host country in cooperation with the General Secretariat and the Islamic Development Bank. It also called upon Member States to actively participate in the high-level ministerial meeting.

**82.** The Conference stressed the need for a speedy implementation of the OIC Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among Member States. It expressed its conviction that a higher level of economic and commercial cooperation among Member States would lay the foundation for greater economic integration that would lead ultimately to the establishment of an Islamic Common Market.

**83.** The Conference welcomed the entry into force of the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among OIC Member States and the setting up of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC), and noted with satisfaction that the TNC held its first meeting of the First Round of Trade Negotiations among Participating Countries on 6-9 April 2004 in Anatolia, Turkey. It thanked the Republic of Turkey for hosting the First Round of Trade Negotiations under the Agreement, the second meeting of which will be held in September 2004. The Conference also called upon Member States that have not yet done so to sign and/or ratify at an early date the various agreements/statutes finalized under the aegis of the OIC, including the aforesaid Framework Agreement.

**84.** The Conference renewed its appeal to the international community to fully and expeditiously implement the Program of Action for 2001-2010 adopted by the Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries held in Brussels in May 2001. It also endorsed the Cotonou Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference of Least Developed Countries held in Cotonou, Benin in August 2002.

**85.** The Conference expressed concern over widespread poverty in least developed countries, which leads to their marginalization in the global economy. It further affirmed the common objective of Member States to eradicate poverty before the end of the next decade and the need to incorporate micro credit programs into the strategy for poverty eradication.

**86.** The Conference renewed its call to the international community to significantly reduce the indebtedness of African countries and ensure the fresh flow of substantial funds on concessional terms to these countries. It also appealed for assistance to Member States that are afflicted with drought and natural disasters and also to the Inter-governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

**87.** The Conference expressed appreciation for the debt relief initiative called the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) and called for its speedy implementation in order to enable more eligible countries to benefit from the initiative.



**88.** The Conference stressed the major steps taken at the World Food Summit in Rome on 8-13 June 2002, which are aimed at alleviating hunger and achieving food security.

**89.** The Conference emphasized the role of the private sector in giving added impetus to economic and commercial cooperation among OIC Member States. It further emphasized the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the industrial development of Member States. It noted, in this connection, the progress made by the OIC Task Force on SMEs in its effort to work out a strategy for the development of such enterprises.

**90.** The Conference commended the Islamic Development Bank Group's support for development programs in Member States and requested them to harness the various services offered by the Group.

**91.** The Conference commended the role played by subsidiary organs and affiliated institutions of the OIC that are concerned with economic and commercial matters, namely the Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Organization of Islamic Ship Owners' Association, and called on Member States to support their activities.

**92.** The Conference called for the implementation of the Kuala Lumpur Program of Action for the Development and Promotion of Tourism in OIC Member States, which was adopted by the Second Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers held in Kuala Lumpur in October 2001 and endorsed by the Third Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers held in Riyadh in October 2002. It called on Member States to actively participate in the Fourth Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers to be hosted by the Republic of Senegal on 13-15 December 2004 in Dakar.

**93.** The Conference condemned the demolition of Palestinian homes, institutions, facilities and land thereby causing huge losses to the Palestinian economy. It expressed deep concern over the disastrous economic repercussions of the Israeli government's ongoing acts of aggression and called for their immediate cessation. The Conference also appealed for assistance to the Palestinian people so as to help them to rebuild their national economy and institutions and establish their independent state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. In this connection, the Conference commended once again the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its initiative to establish two funds in support of Palestine and for donating USD 250 million to the said funds. The Conference also called for financial assistance for the funds.

**94.** The Conference strongly condemned Israel's actions and their impact on the environment in the occupied Palestinian and Syrian territories as well as the previously occupied Lebanese territories.

**95.** The Conference stressed the need for cooperation and effective measures to protect the environment, which is essential for the sustainable development of Member States. Concerning health, the fight against epidemics and narcotics, the Conference called for greater cooperation among Member States to combat the spread of such scourges.

**96.** The Conference called for a meeting, as soon as possible, of Ministers of Health of Member States on epidemic diseases that affect the respiratory system of humans and also affect animals, plants and the environment. It welcomed, in this connection, the generous offer made by the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the above-stated meeting in Tehran. The Conference decided to charge the meeting to supervise the efforts to strengthen cooperation among Islamic States in the field of health, in general including pharmaceuticals.

**97.** The Conference took note of the programs and deliberations of the Second Meeting of the Consultative Council for the Implementation of the Strategy of Development of Science and Technology in Islamic countries.

**98.** The Conference reaffirmed the need to exchange expertise in science and technology among Member States and to harness them for peaceful purposes, the good of humanity and the socio-economic development of Member States.

**99.** The Conference welcomed the establishment of ISESCO's Center for the Promotion of Scientific Research and urges Member States to support it.

**100.** The Conference commended COMSTECH and ISESCO for their activities and efforts in the service the Islamic Ummah. It therefore requested support for them.

**101.** The Conference commended the activities of the Islamic University of Technology in Dhaka and urged it to continue its efforts to mobilize human resources which the Member States may need in the fields of science and technology. It urged its Member States to provide financial assistance to the University.

**102.** The Conference discussed and adopted the resolutions of the First Conference on Science and Technology for Industrial Development held in Kuala Lumpur on 7-10 October, 2003 and hailed Vision 1441H.

**103.** The Conference adopted the resolutions of the Second Ministerial Meeting on Higher Education and Scientific Research, held in Libya in October, 2003.

**104.** The Conference adopted the Resolution on Global Cooperation in Polio Eradication Programme among OIC Member States.

**105.** The Conference stressed that there is a dire need for an in-depth concept of the unity of the Islamic Ummah, and the need to develop and shape its cultural identity since it constitutes a hard core that resists globalization, which is wiping out peoples' idiosyncrasies and threatening their cultural identities.

**106.** The Conference thanked Member States for their consent to increase their contributions to the budget of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) to help implement the projects and plans adopted by the ISESCO's Consultative Council at its previous sessions.

**107.** The Conference reaffirmed the need to boost the Supreme Council for Education and Culture in the West, which is an Islamic cultural strategy. It called on OIC Member States to provide financial and moral support to the Council through ISESCO.

**108.** The Conference requested the Secretary General to conduct an in-depth study in coordination with Member States so as to safeguard Islamic culture and heritage from the adverse effects of globalization.

**109.** The Conference called on Member States and the Islamic Development Bank to provide financial support to the World Conference of Interactive Dialogue, which the OIC plans to organize in cooperation with its subsidiary organ, ISESCO as well as UNESCO and ALECSO.

**110.** The Conference appreciated the remarkable level and significant conclusions of the international fora held by ISESCO in co-ordination with the General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference under the dialogue programs that the fora were assigned to implement during the United Nations Year for Dialogue among Civilizations. It called on them to keep on holding as many of such conferences and fora as possible and urged Member States and Islamic institutions to further assist ISESCO so that it can keep on implementing the dialogue programs, which is a requirement nowadays.

**111.** The Conference appreciated the scientific standard of the study conducted by ISESCO in coordination with the General Secretariat on its vision and efforts to promote dialogue among civilizations and the publishing of the third revised edition of the White Book, which contains international documents on dialogue among civilizations.

**112.** The Conference expressed satisfaction at the IDB's efforts to promote Waqf, organize seminars and actively help to invest in and develop Waqf assets.

**113.** The Conference welcomed the existing co-operation between ISESCO, the General Secretariat of Waqfs, and the World Islamic Charity Foundation in Kuwait to take care of and develop Waqfs, to organize scientific and specialized conferences, and to publish studies and research on the matter in Arabic, English and French.

**114.** The Conference commended the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat and ISESCO to project the real image of Islam in the Western media.

**115.** The Conference called on the General Secretariat to take the required steps with Member States to convene a ministerial conference on women, during which an action plan to enhance women's role in the development of the Islamic society will be proposed and to create for them more opportunities in various walks of life.

**116.** The Conference hailed the part UNICEF played since its inception in protecting children and ensuring their growth all over the world, especially in developing countries. It commended the on-going cooperation between the OIC and UNICEF in the fields of child care and protection in OIC Member States.

**117.** The Conference called on Member States to combat child trafficking by increasing awareness and building the capacities of law enforcement bodies and establishing centers for the rescue and rehabilitation of victims.

**118.** The Conference took note of the on-going cooperation between the OIC General Secretariat, UNICEF, ISESCO and the World Bank to convene the First Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Children's Affairs.

**119.** The Conference welcomed once again the offer of the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host the First Islamic Conference of the Ministers of Youth and Sports in cooperation with the Islamic Sports Solidarity Federation.

**120.** The Conference exhorted Member States, the IDB and Islamic charity institutions to provide financial and material assistance to the Islamic University in Niger because of its annual budget deficit and inadequate resources.

**121.** The Conference called on Member States and Islamic organizations and personalities to contribute to the Waqf of the Islamic University in Niger, whose statutes were adopted by the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in Burkina Faso and urged donors to redouble efforts to achieve such a goal.

**122.** The Conference welcomed ISESCO's consent to review the University's curricula, award a number of scholarships and printing machines with the standard Quranic typeset, and connect it with a number of Arab and Islamic institutions in order to develop library services and restore its written materials.

**123.** The Conference commended the Islamic Solidarity Fund for funding most of the annual budget of the Islamic University in Uganda. It thanked the Fund for its significant assistance to the University to settle its debts and arrears. The Conference also appealed to Member States and Islamic organizations to provide further financial and material assistance to the University.

**124.** The Conference approved the reports and recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Steering Committee of the King Fahd Plaza in Uganda and requested the Secretary General to follow up the implementation of the recommendations and reports.

**125.** The Conference welcomed ISESCO's review of the University's 2000-2005 strategy and reaffirmed the need to complete the university's appraisal exercise including the staff regulations. It expressed gratitude to ISESCO for the efforts made.

**126.** The Conference expressed gratitude to all the organizations, associations, and charity institutions for their material and moral support for the Islamic University in Malaysia, and for their continuous assistance to the Needy Foreign Students Fund. In this connection, it hailed the Islamic Development Bank, the Islamic Solidarity Fund, the World Islamic Charity Organization in Kuwait, the Iqra' Association and the Rahma Association in Britain for their contributions.

**127.** The Conference thanked the government of Malaysia for establishing the World Institute for the Unification of Muslims of the University and called on it to continue supporting its activities and programs.

**128.** The Conference urged the Islamic University in Bangladesh to strengthen bilateral cooperation with renowned universities and institutions of higher education in Member States with a view to enabling its students and professors to pursue their higher studies and research in institutions of their choice.

**129.** The Conference commended the initiative of the Republic of Tunisia to establish the Higher Institute and Tunis House for Islamic Civilization and Comparative Civilizations and called on Member States, the IDB and Islamic donor institutions to support this significant project.

**130.** The Conference highly appreciated the Tunisian government's initiative to award scholarships to Muslim students all over the world to study at the Higher Institute of Islamic Civilization of Al-Zaitouna University.

**131.** The Conference urged Member States to provide financial and moral support to King Faysal University in N'djamena, Chad.

**132.** The Conference exhorted Member States, the Islamic Solidarity Fund, and other Islamic institutions to continue to lend their financial support to the Regional Institute for Islamic Studies and Research in Timbuktu in order to help it attain its goals.

**133.** The Conference expressed satisfaction at the Africa Muslims' Agency's supervision of the remaining phases of the Islamic Center in Guinea Bissau. It thanked the Islamic Solidarity Fund for providing the funds needed to complete the remaining phases of the project, especially the high school building.

**134.** The Conference called on Member States to award scholarships to Palestinian students wounded during the Al Quds Al Sharif Intifada as well as to other students from families of martyrs of the Intifada. It also called on

universities in Member States to name scholarships after child martyrs of the Intifada and to name one of the scholarships after the martyr Muhammad Durra. The Conference expressed its appreciation for the Member States that awarded scholarships to the students and called on them to reduce their tuition fees.

**135.** The Conference expressed deep appreciation and gratitude to the IRCICA for organizing the International Symposium on Islamic Civilization in East Africa in cooperation with the Islamic University of Uganda in Kampala from 15 to 17 December 2003 under the patronage of H.E. the President of the Republic of Uganda.

**136.** The Conference also expressed its deep appreciation and gratitude to IRCICA for organizing the international forum on "Mutual Cultural Generosity as a Basis for World Civilization" in Sharjah, the United Arab Emirates in cooperation with the American University in Sharjah from 17 to 19 January 2004 under the patronage of HRH Sheikh Dr. Sultan Ibn Mohamed Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of Sharjah.

**137.** The Conference commended the IRCICA's efforts to safeguard the cultural heritage and Islamic identity of Muslim communities in Non-OIC Member States and called on it to continue such efforts. It requested Member States and Islamic institutions and personalities to provide it with the support needed to attain such a noble goal.

**138.** The Conference expressed appreciation to HRH Prince Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for his kind initiative to restructure the Islamic Fiqh Academy so that it can perform the major tasks it is assigned at this critical moment. It called on Member States to continue assisting the Academy and to help it financially and morally to carry out the restructuring exercise.

**139.** The Conference expressed its determination to preserve the Islamic Solidarity Fund, which is a major Islamic institution and a worthy symbol of Islamic solidarity.

**140.** The Conference called on Member States to pledge, within their means, annual donations to the Islamic Solidarity Fund and its Waqf.

**141.** The Conference called upon the Permanent Council of the Fund to continue providing assistance to cultural, Islamic and educational projects in the Islamic world, and to attach special attention to projects approved by the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

**142.** The Conference took note of the report of the Chairman of the Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund concerning the activities of the Fund. It highly valued the donations made by Member States to the Fund and its Waqf, notably the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its on-going generous donations to the Fund. The Conference expressed thanks for the donations made by High Highness Sheikh Zaid Ibn Sultan Al Nahyan, President of the State of the United Arab Emirates amounting to three million US Dollars for the benefit of the Fund and its Waqf for the financial year 2003-2004.

**143.** The Conference commended ISESCO for its major achievements in education, science, culture and communication thereby earning it the deep appreciation of beneficiaries in Member States and Muslim communities. The Conference expressed profound appreciation for the Director General's report on ISESCO's activities between the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> sessions, which was submitted to the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs. It requested ISESCO to make greater efforts to attain its noble goals.

**144.** The Conference expressed its sense of pride at the distinguished position that ISESCO occupies on the international scene because of its cooperation with major international organizations, which has helped to expand its activities, to boost its credibility and reputation internationally, to secure huge additional resources, to mould Islamic civilization, and to fully ensure its rebirth. It commended the new cooperation between ISESCO and a number of international, Arab and Islamic organizations, especially UNESCO.

**145.** The Conference applauded ISESCO's initiative to establish a committee of Muslim experts that would help to restore and maintain destroyed Iraqi monuments, and to formulate a practicable plan for direct intervention in Iraq in coordination with Member States and competent bodies of the Iraqi transitional government and other international stakeholders. It called on Member States and donors to contribute to the ISESCO Fund for the Preservation of Iraqi Heritage, to coordinate efforts in order to counter the trafficking and smuggling of Iraqi antiquities, and to help return found items to Iraqi museums.

**146.** The Conference highly appreciated the existing cooperation between the Organization of the Islamic Conference and UNESCO, particularly in the areas of education, culture, sciences and the preservation of Islamic heritage, and

commended the efforts of Mr. Koichiro Matsuura in strengthening the cooperation. It expressed its support for the re-election of Mr. Matsuura for a second term as UNESCO's Director General.

**147.** The Conference urged Member States that have not yet done so to expeditiously sign and ratify the Convention on the Establishment of the Islamic Committee of the International Crescent so that it can start its work and achieve its noble objectives. It called on all Member States and Islamic institutions to provide it with material and moral support.

**148.** The Conference called on the Islamic Committee of the International Crescent to put in efforts and protect refugees and prisoners in cooperation with the UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other related regional and international institutions.

**149.** The Conference expressed gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the First Islamic Solidarity Games, which will be held in Makkah Al Mukarramah, Medina, Jeddah and Taif in 1426H (2005). It extended special thanks to HRH Prince Sultan Ibn Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz, President of the Saudi Arabian Olympic Committee and his deputy, HRH Prince Nawaf Ibn Faysal Ibn Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz for their keen interest in the preparations for the games.

**150.** The Conference called on all Member States to give special attention to the First Edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games which will be held in the following Saudi cities of (Makkah, Medina, Jeddah and Taef) in 2005 and to participate in the largest possible number of games.

**151.** The Conference commended the Committee for Co-ordination of Joint Islamic Action for its role in coordinating the various activities of Islamic governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions. It also expressed its satisfaction with the positive decisions taken by the Committee to create a common ground and a coherent vision of Islamic action in the service of Muslims worldwide and safeguard Islam's heritage and brilliant image.

**152.** The Conference lauded the findings and resolutions of international conferences and symposia on Islamic Culture, Dawa and Civilization organized by the General Secretariat to correct the image of Islamic civilisation to the outside world.

**153.** The Conference reiterated the need to rise up to contemporary economic, social and scientific challenges facing the Muslim Ummah, and stressed that it is important to come up with ideas for the Expert Committee on Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the Twenty-first Century to perform its tasks in all areas of concern to the leaders and intellectuals of the Islamic Ummah. The Conference urged the members of the Expert Committee to constantly and consciously devise flexible ways of addressing the ever-changing challenges.

**154.** The Conference emphasized the need to incorporate the joint Islamic action strategy for Dawa into the various education, information, Dawa and other policies of Member States so that it can serve as a guide for joint Islamic action.

**155.** The Conference approved the recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Expert Committee on the Challenges Facing the Islamic Ummah in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which was held in Khartoum, Republic of Sudan from 28 to 30 March 2004.

**156.** The Conference approved the budgets of the General Secretariat and its subsidiary organs for the 2004/2005 financial year without any increase in the budgets of the General Secretariat and most subsidiary organs.

**157.** The Conference urged Member States to pay their annual contributions to the budget of the General Secretariat and subsidiary organs for the 2004/2005 financial year.

**158.** The Conference called on Member States with arrears to expeditiously pay them to the General Secretariat and its subsidiary organs so that they can benefit from the preferential reduction approved by the Tenth Islamic Summit Conference held in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 5 October 2003.

**159.** The Conference welcomed the Secretary General's report on the steps taken to prepare the final study on the "Restructuring of the General Secretariat to Meet the Challenges of the New Millennium".

**160.** The Conference elected members to the OIC Financial Control Organ for the next two years effective from 1/7/2004 to 30/6/2006 in addition to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is a permanent member of the FCO.

**161.** The Conference resolved to confine the agenda of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Member States, which is held on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York to consultation and coordination of the positions of OIC Member States regarding matters of concern to the OIC and are included in the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly. It also resolved that the conclusions of its proceedings should be in the form of a communiqué agreed upon by the Foreign Ministers of Member States or their representatives.

**162.** The Conference approved all the recommendations submitted to it by the Expert Group Charged to Study the Review and Rationalization of OIC Agenda Items and Resolutions, and requested Member States and the General Secretariat to implement them immediately.

**163.** The Conference requested the Secretary General to further contacts with international and regional organizations in order to establish, maintain and strengthen cooperation with them. It also requested him to conduct a study on how to identify the appropriate areas of cooperation that are of common concern and submit it to the next session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers for appropriate decision.

**164.** The Conference decided to hold the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in the Republic of Yemen at a date to be determined in coordination between the host country and the OIC General Secretariat.

**165.** The Conference unanimously elected H.E. Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, as incoming Secretary General for a term of four years starting from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. The Conference also elected Assistant Secretaries General namely: H.E. Ezzat Kamel Mufti (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the host country) for a second term, H.E. Atta El-Manane Bakhit (Republic of the Sudan) for the Arab Group, H.E. Ali Akbar Salehi (Islamic Republic of Iran), for the Asian Group and H.E. Tori Lamagana (Republic of Cameroon) for the African Group, each for a period of four years, starting from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2005.

**166.** H.E. Mr. Abdullah Gul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of the Session, addressed the closing session and hailed the brotherly spirit that prevailed during the deliberations of the Conference as well as its resolutions. He called for support for the OIC so that it can perform its tasks of promoting joint Islamic action.

**167.** The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, Mali and Iran took the floor to express gratitude to the government and people of Turkey for the generous hospitality extended to the delegates and for the arrangements and facilities put at their disposal. They expressed to H.E. Mr. Abdullah Gul their warm congratulations on the wise and skilful way he steered the proceedings.

**168.** On behalf of all the participants, H.E. Dr. Abdelouahed Belkeziz, Secretary General of the OIC, addressed a cable of thanks to H.E. Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey for his country's hosting of the Conference and for the facilities extended to the delegates, which highly contributed to the success of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.



***Istanbul —Republic of Turkey  
28 Rabiulthani 1425H  
(16 June 2004)***

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